

# TWIF MONTHLY FOCUS

FEBRUARY '21



OUR WORLD GAMES

## Greatest Athlete of All Time

*James Kehoe (left) was first told he had been nominated by TWIF as a candidate while he was driving his tractor on the family farm.*

*He felt very privileged to have been selected from such an illustrious panel to represent T.O.W in the **World's Greatest Athlete of All Time** competition.*

Our campaign began on the 8th of Jan and through social media quickly grew momentum with family, friends and the wider T.O.W community right around the world.

We got a major boost in votes when National TV, radio and numerous newspaper and radio interviews both local and national got involved in covering our campaign. An interview with our national broadcaster RTE for their main evening news greatly helped our campaign and boosted our votes.

We were all working hard behind the scenes constantly posting on social media, gathering medals for displays,

taking photos, organising interviews and reminiscing over treasured memories of TUG of War over the years and the wonderful friendships that were formed.

The whole process of everything involved in promoting himself was a daunting challenge to James as a shy humble person, but in the true Boley spirit grabbed it with both hands and accepted his challenge as the true sportsman that he is. He is surprised by how much he is enjoying the attention in these latter days of the competition.

BY

BILL KEHOE & MARTINA O'FARRELL

*Coach/Secretary*

Hopefully it has increased the promotion of Tug of War world wide. Once again a sincere thanks to TWIF for James' nomination.

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# The 'Greatest Athlete of all Time' election

The selection of TWIF's athlete for the selection of 'World Games Greatest Athlete of all Time' was between Peter Odermatt from Switzerland and James Kehoe from Ireland - although that was the opinion of TWIF Exco.

Both athletes have had a great career in Tug of War. Peter Odermatt has pulled at 5 World Games and has been coach for the Swiss ladies team at two World Games (2013 and 2017).

MAAIKE HORNSTRA

Peter has won 4 Gold, 4 Silver and 1 Bronze medal at the World Games as an athlete and is ranked as number 12 in the 'The World Games most successful Athletes' from 10 World Games with his total of 9 medals.

The reason we chose James Kehoe in this election was because James has pulled at 9 World Games - which is an achievement that we think no other athlete will ever repeat. James won 9 medals as well at the World Games - 2 Gold, 3 Silver and 4 Bronze.

On 8th January 2021 the 'World Games Greatest Athlete of all Time' started with a selection of 24 athletes from the following sports: Archery, Beach Handball, Boules, Canoe Polo, Dance Sport, Finswimming, Fistball, Floorball, Flying Disc, Gymnastics, Ju-Jitsu, Korfbal, Lacrosse, Lifesaving, Muaythai, Orienteering, Powerlifting, Racquetball, Roller Sports, Sport Climbing, Sumo, Squash, Tug of War and Waterski and Wakeboard.

The overall winner is **NICOL DAVID** from Malaysia in 'Squash' with the total amount of **318 943 votes**. **JAMES KEHOE** came in 2nd position with **113 120 votes**. **LARYSA SOLOVIOVA** 3rd with 'Powerlifting' receiving **80 790 votes**.

On 20 January 2021, the 10 candidates with the most votes continued in the race. James Kehoe gained votes over the last few weeks and was 3rd for some days and then headed up to the 2nd place. It turned out that there were some fraudulent activities in the voting, also within Tug of War - but especially in Sumo and Powerlifting. The World Games has done research and removed the fraudulent votes in all the sports, which brought James Kehoe back to a solid second place.

*"Within the Tug of War sport, we are used to the longevity and multi-generational participation of our top performers over extended periods. James Kehoe has taken this to the next level and we are extremely proud that he so ably represented our sport in this prestigious competition and ended up being part of the top 3 - yet another example of age only being a number - if you're good enough, a prolonged career at the highest level is possible. I am humbled and extremely proud by which the global tug of war fraternity stepped up to the plate and supported James by voting consistently during this competition. A true reflection of the spirit and ethos of our global TWIF family that is encapsulated in the person of James Kehoe - a wonderful ambassador for our sport".* **ANTON RABE**



*"It's been a very different but exciting few weeks. I am a shy person by nature and prefer to be out of the spotlight, but as the competition progressed, much to my surprise, I enjoyed it even more. I am totally overwhelmed by the amount of support I am receiving. Regardless of what position I finish in it is an honour for me and my club to have been chosen as competitors in this competition".*

Kind regards to everyone. **JAMES KEHOE BOLEY**

James is now 64 years old. (He is from a family of 10 brothers and 2 sisters!)

*"Tug of War runs in the veins of James Kehoe and his beloved team Boley. Little did he know that when he joined the Boley club he would achieve so much - and now, after a lifetime of commitment he was in the running for the 'Greatest Athlete of all Times in the World Games'. Pullers come and go - but James is the exception - for sure a legend in the sport - setting a record that may not be equalled ever again. An ambassador for Tug of War, his club and his country - but most of all a Gentleman".*

**DAN MCCARTHY**

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*Below: James during WC outdoor 2014 Madison USA.*



**JAMES KEHOE**  
A TWIF champion and  
wonderful ambassador  
for our sport

*Below: James during EC 2017 Southport, England.*



*Above: James en Bill Kehoe with a Basque delegation during EC 2017, Soutport, England.*



*James and team during WC 2004 Rochester, USA.*

*Right: James and team during WC 2008 Stenungsund, Sweden.*



# Tug of War Boley

*Boley Tug of War Club first started pulling at local Field Days in the late 1960's and early '70's.*

This was a different style of pulling and it was very popular in Co. Wexford and surrounding Counties. Team Boley were very successful at their competitions. In June 1975 Boley were asked to join the ITOWA and after a few weeks training we competed in our first National Championships which were held in a place called Hegarty's Cross, Co Limerick.

We took part in the 600 kg - winning Silver medals. In 1976 Boley were joined by a few pullers from the Clongeen Club which were very successful at home and internationally in the late sixties and early seventies.

1976 was the first full year that Boley pulled at home in all weight classes - winning both the 600 kg and 640 kg. The fact that Boley won the 640 kg enabled us to represent Ireland in Cape Town, South Africa. This World Championships was our first taste of International Tug of War and it was a fantastic experience meeting all the teams from other nations.



*Father Lar in a suit with Bill Kehoe, Billy Wall, William Kehoe (1st cousin), Seamus Kehoe and Sean Grady in the back row. In the front row are Laurence Kehoe, Richard Kehoe, Patrick Kehoe and Martin Kehoe.*



*Training in Boley in 1980.*

Representing Ireland again in 1977, '78 and '79 we were placed 3rd. In 1980 we pulled in the open clubs Championships in Basel, Switzerland winning the 640 kg without losing one end. 84



*Boley won World title in 1980.*

teams competed - so this was a great win for our small club - we also competed there in the 720 kg weight class with a 4th place finish.

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1980 winners at Oshkosh in the 640 kg - and right the six Kehoe brothers with their mother Bridget Kehoe on return from Oshkosh. Left are Bill, Patrick and Brendan and right front to back are Dermot, James and Laurence, all Kehoe.



**Throughout the past 45 years Boley has taken over 60 international trips to compete across the world - and has won in excess of 120 NATIONAL TITLES in all weight divisions over those years!**

**1981 European Championships, Folkstone, UK** We represented Ireland and won Bronze.

**1981 The World Games, Santa Clara, California USA** This was the first year we pulled in the World Games and we were placed 4th.

**1982 World and European Championships in Cape Town** The winners of the 640 kg were the same team as won in Basel in 1980 with six brothers and their two first cousins - all Kehoe's - 560 kg and 720 kg runners up in the closed. In the open competition they won the 560 kg and the 640 kg - this was an all Boley team who were also runners up in the 720 kg.



The 560 kg team at the World Championships, Cape Town.



In 1982 World Championships in Cape Town the 720 kg took Silver.



London World Games 1985 - the 640 kg and 720 kg winners.

**1985 London World Games** We won 1st place in the 640 kg as well as in the 720 kg. Competing in the World Games

was a fantastic honour for our club and country and a highlight for all our pullers - male and female - to compete in.



1984 640 kg winners at Oshkosh.



1984 after winning all the outdoor nationals.

**1984 WC in Oshkosh** We won the 640 kg and 720 kg and were runners up in 560 kg - an all Boley team in the 560 kg and 640 kg and 5 team members were from Boley in the 720 kg team.

**1985 EC Switzerland** We won the 720 kg and were runners up in the 640 kg.

**1986 WC Netherlands** We were 2nd in the 640 kg and 4th in the 720 kg.

**1987 EC Ireland** Winners of the 640 kg. James was on the 560 kg winning team and we were runners up in the 720 kg.

**1989 World Games, Karlsruhe** We pulled in both weights - winning Silver in the 640 kg and Bronze in the 720 kg.

**1989 EC Italy** We were 2nd in the 640 kg and 720 kg.

**1990 WC Netherlands** We were winners in the 680 kg open and winners of the 640 kg and 720 kg closed.

**1991 EC Switzerland** We were 2nd in the 680 kg open and closed.

**1992 WC in Ireland** We won Gold in the 680 kg open.

**1993 World Games, the Hague** We achieved a Silver in the 640 kg as well as in the 720 kg.

**1993 EC England** We won a Gold for youths in both the 560 kg open and closed; Gold in the 680 kg open; Silver in the 720 kg and Bronze in the 640 kg.

**1994 WC Sweden** We achieved Silver in the 640 kg and Bronze in the 680 kg.

**1995 EC Spain** We won Gold in the 640 kg closed and Gold in the 680 kg open.

**1996 WC Netherlands** We achieved 2nd in the 560 kg and 640 kg open, and 3rd in the 720 kg closed.

**1997 EC Channel Islands** As all Boleys we won the 560 kg open; came 3rd in the 680 kg open; 2nd in the 640 kg closed. 1st in the 720 kg of mostly Boley's.

**The 1996  
WC Netherlands  
semi-final of the  
open club 560 kg  
Boley vs Gaztedi  
was the  
WORLD'S LONGEST PULL  
under TWIF rules,  
55 mins 17 seconds.**



*The World semi-final open club 560 kg - Boley vs Gaztedi. Joey Kehoe, Ollie Kehoe, Laurence Kehoe, Chris Cahill, Dermot Kehoe, Robert Kehoe, James Kehoe and Liam Dillon. With coach Bill Kehoe and assistant Martin Kehoe.*



*James receiving a European Gold in 680 kg in the UK in 2007.*

**1997 Lathi Finland** We won Bronze in the 640 kg and Bronze in the 720 kg.

**1998 USA** We won 2nd in the 640 kg and the 680 kg closed.

**1999 EC Netherlands** We won 2nd in the 680 kg open, and 3rd in both the 640 kg and 680 kg closed.

**2001 Akita** We won 4th place in the 640 kg.

**2001 EC Switzerland** We won 1st in the 720 kg open, and 3rd in the 680 kg.

**2002 WC South Africa** We won 3rd in the 640 kg open.

**2003 EC Netherlands** We achieved 3rd in the 680 kg and 2nd in the 720 kg open; 2nd in the 640 kg and 680 kg closed.

**2004 WC USA** We achieved 3rd in the 720 kg closed.

**2005 Duisburg** We achieved Bronze in the 680 kg.

**2005 EC Italy** We came 3rd in the 680 kg open and 2nd in the 640 kg closed.

**2006 WC Netherlands** We came 2nd in the 640 kg open; 2nd in the 640 kg and 680 kg closed with a mostly Boley team.

**2007 EC England** We achieved 3rd in the 640 kg and 1st in the 680 kg open and 1st in 640 kg closed.

**2008 WC Sweden** We came 1st in the 680 kg open.

**2009** We were not placed.

**2013** We won 4th in the 640 kg as well as in the 700 kg.



*Boley 600 kg Gold Medal Winners - James' last competition.*



*A last pic of the six brothers and two cousins for the 40th.*

*Left: EC Assen 2013 3rd 640 kg.*

**2009 EC Netherlands** We achieved 1st in the 680 kg open. Boley won the 680 kg open for 3 years in a row 2007, 2008 and 2009!

**2011 EC England** We came 3rd in the 640 kg open and 1st in the 680 kg closed.

**2012 WC Switzerland** James won Gold in both the 700 kg open and closed.

**2017 EC England** We came 3rd in the 680 kg closed.