

SUMMER 2022



**50th
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATED
AT SINS**

A total of 770 athletes took part in the 50th anniversary of international rope pulling held on 27 and 28 May '22 in the village of Sins.

Eleven different nations enjoyed the great atmosphere and great rope pulling was presented.

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A Message from our President

As we now rapidly approach the World Games in Birmingham, USA, some normality seems to have returned to participation at various levels with competitions and training sessions globally.

The World Games remain the apex event and highest level of competition on our tug of war calendar and we once look forward to top level performance in the 3 weigh classes on the WG programme. The tug of war events normally attract lots of interest with excellent spectator support. I'm quite sure this time around it will not be different.

In this regard, I therefore wish the qualified countries and athletes all the best for the final weeks of training and preparation for the event. Whilst Covid continues to create challenges for international travel, I trust that our participants and officials that have been appointed for the event will experience smooth travels and transfers from their various departure points.

As indicated some developmental events have also been hosted in various parts of the world. Reporting on most of these are included elsewhere in this publication. **CONTINUED ON PG 2**



**Anton Rabe,
President of TWIF**

Photo: Eddie van Raamsdonk

My thanks to the experts who managed to find the time to travel and to share these expertise and experience at grass roots level.

In the mean time we also managed to have a very successful seminar and congress in Sursee, Switzerland (see below). Thanks again to our hosts - you were extremely hospitable and we are already looking forward to the World Championship 2023 in Switzerland.

Exco continues to try to find a feasible solution for a World Indoor event early in 2023. We feel that waiting until 2024 would be too big a gap from the last Indoors in 2020. At the time of writing a firm option has not yet been identified. Whatever the outcome, this will be communicated asap to all interested parties.

Until next time, keep well and healthy. Regards **ANTON**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE TWIF CONGRESS IN SURSEE, SWITZERLAND 8th & 9th APRIL 2022

The hybrid Seminar & Congress was held at the Campus where the World Outdoor Championships will take place in 2023. REPORT BY MAAIKE HORNSTRA

The competition field of Sursee next to the Campus.

Fifteen countries attended as well as ten online paid-up members. (More countries attended online but they had no voting rights). Below are some highlights and results of the proposals that will be enforced during World Games and at next TWIF events. We had one tender to host the World Outdoor Championships 2028 and after a positive vote it was given to St. Gallen, Switzerland. The organizers will be Seilziehclub Mosnang in co-operation with the Schweizer Tauziehverband.

The Seminar & Congress of 2023 will be held in Mannheim, Germany, on 21st and 22nd April 2023.

We had more proposals for discussion and voting during Congress, but to follow I only mention the proposals that passed the votes.

PROPOSALS:

1. WEIGHT SUBSTITUTION PULLER = voted for in favour.

(Proposed by the Netherlands)

PROPOSAL 1: ARTICLE 6.4 & 35(4). Similar to the proposal of Sweden brought in 2018.

a) The weight of the substitution puller may be increased by the weight difference of the team weight at the start of competition and the maximum allowed weight of that weight class.

b) When teams are on equal points at the end of the qualifying competition/group rounds and the weight of the teams is required to determine the ranking

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of the teams, the highest weight of the team (which can be either before or after a substitution) will be applied.

Note: Currently the certified team weight, which is always the heaviest weight, documented on the team weighing sheet, is used.

2. SPORT GEAR = voted for in favour

(Proposed by the Netherlands)

The existing rule states: SPORT DRESS PULLER: Teams will wear proper sports clothing consisting of shorts, sports shirt or jerseys and knee-stockings or socks. The sport dress of the pullers in the teams shall be uniform.

THE PROPOSED WORDING OF THE RULE: Teams will wear proper sports clothing consisting of shorts, sports leggings (without shorts) or shorts with sport leggings, sports shirt or jersey, and knee stockings or socks. The sports dress of the pullers in the team shall be uniform as detailed below:

1. All sports shirts/jerseys will be the same colour but may be a mixture of short and long sleeves;
2. A team may have a mixture of shorts or sports leggings but if any member is wearing shorts all members must wear shorts or wear shorts over the sports leggings;
3. Shorts must be the same colour;
4. Sports leggings may be worn without shorts if all pullers are without shorts;
5. Sports leggings don't have to be the same length but must be all the same colour. They can be the same colour as the shorts or may be either black or white;
6. Knee stockings or socks must all be the same colour.

3. CHANGE RULE 6.2 = voted for in favour *(Proposed by Switzerland)*

6.2 MEMBERS OF A NATIONAL TEAM: Members of a national team must be citizens of the country the team is representing. Proof of citizenship is only accepted by passport or by a national government issued identification card. Members of the team include pullers, coach and team attendant.

WE WANT THIS TO CHANGE - so that 'members' mean only the pullers and do not include the coach and team attendant. To bring our sport to a higher level it is important that the coach can be from another country in order for him to share knowledge with the pullers. This is possible in football for example and this helps to get more teams to a higher competition level.

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A presentation was given by the Organizing Committee of Sursee.

4. ACCREDITATION FEE = voted for in favour (*Proposed by Belgium*)

Amendment to the "organization manual": ACCREDITATION FEES - EXCO NOTE: This is not a proposal to amend the accreditation fee but to recommend that some lower cost accommodation should be provided. This is a proposal for the Organisers Manual which, in general, is a guide and not a 'Law or Rule'.

TWIF will promote the use of the accommodation package as provided by the Organisers. In a case where the Organiser provided

enough low budget accommodation and participants chose not to book this through the Organisers, Organisers may levy an accreditation fee. The income from the accreditation fees would cover the cost of administration and making the accreditation cards. A reasonable fee would not exceed the equivalent of £100 (British Pounds Sterling). A reasonable low-budget accommodation would not exceed the equivalent of £350 (British Pounds Sterling).

MOTIVATION: About 16 years ago the TWIF congress agreed to institute an accreditation fee of £100 (British Pound Sterling). The motivation was to promote the use of the official accommodation package and thus be able to decrease the cost of this package. The accreditation fee was and is a multiple of the real cost and should discourage members to not use the official package. Belgium had agreed to this modification, but now realizes that we have seen only one side - we did not include a trigger for the Organizer to decrease the fee for the accommodation package. In contrast, we noticed that prices can be more reasonable when there are a higher number of participants. We are aware that organizing costs a lot, but if we want to grow the sport, we should not simply pass these costs on to the participants. A very high price can cause the participants to seek other avenues. If the organizer really fails to find cheaper accommodation, participants will also not find them and there will be fewer bookings outside the package.

CONCLUSION: There will be an amendment to the Organizers Manual while the proposal is approved. There is already the option to have a lesser day package, for example 3 days accommodation. This was never promoted by organizers, due to costs. The motivation of Belgium to put this proposal forward is that if an organizer adds more low price accommodations, it will be more attractive for athletes that only pull in the open club competition.

MISSION STATEMENT



As an International Federation our mission is to provide the structure and good governance necessary for the well-being and development of the sport of Tug of War throughout the world.

Our Primary Objective is to attain a sufficiently high level of excellence and universality to expedite our acceptance by the International Olympic Committee as a sport within the programme of the Olympic Games, a status held by our sport in the early years of the 20th century.

During the seminar we also had a presentation by the Organizing Committee of Sursee and of course we had a field check. The competition field is next to the Campus, where some of the athletes will stay. Other accommodation is in hotels in the area of Sursee.

Israel's technical course in Hazon



Israel TUG Federation held a long weekend training session (19-21 May 2022) in the city of Magar (North of Israel) with Jost Waser. The training included early morning running and warm up exercise, 8 hours of tactical pulling, anchor workout and a lot of fun!! The Israeli Federation would like to thank Jost for all his help and thank TWIF for the support.

YOEL GOLDING

Ayelet Federation of non-Olympic Sport in Israel

Yoel Golding, representative of Israel and coach Fandy Tarboush organised the training camp with the aim to improve and fine tune technique. The main feature was back training - the active and

defensive technique which took place over two days. The course was challenging for all participants due to the warm temperatures of up to 35°C.

JOST WASER



FRANCE

National Tug of War Course in Bordeaux

On April 30th and 1st May, FNSMR organized a national Tug of War course in Lussac les Châteaux in Gironde under the eye of Jost Waser. The objective: to continue the structuring of the discipline in France and to allow the fencers to progress in view of international competitions to come.

In July 2021, the FNSMR organized the first national Tug of War course in its history in Louroux Hodement (Allier) with the main ambition of preparing for the 2021 World Championships in Getxo. The course was led by MAAIKE HORNSTRA and JELLE VAN DER VELDE, who were present as international official of TWIF and trainer/coach.

A little less than a year later, and a month before the national championships, the main French Tug of War clubs met again in Gironde at the end of April to perfect their preparation, not only in view of the national deadline at the end of May, but also with the aim of preparing for the World Championships in Holten in the Netherlands next September.

Nearly forty pullers from Allier, Brittany, Loire Atlantique, Basque Country and Gironde benefited from the recommendations of the Swiss technician, JOST WASER, who was present as international official of TWIF. Valuable technical advice on rope grip, body positioning, collective approach, coordination, warm-ups, stretching. . . all will contribute, little by little, to France's progress on the international level.

Jost's presence, like that of Maaïke and Jelle last year, also reflects the support of TWIF and the valuable assistance it offers to the FNSMR.

Of course, we are in France.

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GUILLAUME PASQUIER REPORTS





Tug of War is mainly done barefoot. But pullers know that this practice does not conform to the international organization of TWIF. The experience of Getxo has shown us that if we want to progress and defend our colours in international competitions, we must encourage Tug of War with shoes. Therefore, clubs are starting to equip their athletes with shoes and to offer them specific training sessions.

This awareness is accompanied by TWIF - although it does not provide barefoot pulling, nevertheless encourages the development through the presence of international officials.

Even if we know that it is still a long way to go to compete with the best nations in the world, the organization of this type of technical course is part of a logic of progression. Other courses are planned in the weeks and months to come.

But until then, see you in Holten !





7TH TRY FOR GOLD

KIM BOOGAARD *The Netherlands*

*The Dutch Women's Team
at the World Games in
Poland in 2017.
Kim Boogaard is the
fourth puller from the left.*

TWIF organised the first world championships for indoor tug of war in 1991, in Getxo, Basque Country. This led to them being added to the world games of 1993 in The Hague, The Netherlands, as a demonstration sport. The organisers of these games wanted to shove us into an impossible space between the field and the stands and this wouldn't have been enough space to practice our sport. After we protested a time was negotiated - inbetween the indoor hockey matches - for us to use the main field of the sports hall. Coached by GERRIT BRUIL and HARRY HERMANNNS, the Dutch ladies teams won the gold medals in the 520 and 480kg classes - I was part of the 520 kg team.

Four years after this the Dutch women's teams qualified for the world games again - this time at the world championships in Torbay, England. However our performance there was not as good as we had hoped for, so a new coach was appointed as a result. This new coach, FEIKE VAN DER HEIDE, taught us better techniques for the world games in Lahti, Finland. Sadly indoor tug of war was still a demonstration sport at these world games but we still put in a lot of effort. The improved techniques paid off, as the Dutch women's teams won again in both weight classes. Just like in The Hague, I was a part of the 520 kg team.

The world games of 2001 took place in Akita, Japan; the women's/indoor tug of war was still a demonstration sport, but because of this we were still allowed to take part with two weight classes. The travelling costs were rather high and to be able to pay these we searched for sponsors. This proved successful and a large part of the travel costs were covered by the sponsors. In Japan we were amazed that there was a special opening ceremony for the women's tug of war and the entire sports hall was sold out. So much so that even the athletes from the outdoor tug of war couldn't get tickets. We hadn't realised beforehand that the sport was so popular in Japan.

Here the Dutch women's teams were successful again; in the 480 kg class a bronze medal was won, in the 520 kg we won a gold medal for the third time.

In 2005, indoor tug of war was officially admitted to the world games, in the form of one women's weight class, this being the 520 kg class. I couldn't participate at these world games as my child was only a year old and was still too young for me to attend all the training.

In 2009 I could train again along with the national women's team, that were now being coached by HENK VEURINK and JELLE VAN DER VELDE. These world games took place in Kaohsiung, Chinese Taipei, where tug of war is a college sport.

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The Dutch Women's Team at the World Games in the Hague in 1993.

We were allowed to train in the basement of one of these colleges. It turned out that the shoes of the Taiwanese athletes had better grip than ours, so we exchanged shoes and in the end we borrowed shoes from students to use during the competition. After a tough struggle, in which all teams were well matched, we won the silver medal. The gold medal was won by the Chinese Taipei women who won a home victory in a once again sold out sports hall.

In 2013, the world games were hosted in Cali, Colombia. It was hard to get a team together at first - we didn't have a coach and we only had 8 available women for the team. In the end, TANJA DOBBE decided to train us and JELLE VAN DER VELDE was able to coach us during the games itself. Our situation was precarious, since we had no replacement in case anyone got sick or injured, nonetheless, we didn't worry. While in Cali we were not allowed to go anywhere without a police escort, and we found this quite peculiar and didn't deal with it very well.

The matches were thrilling, three countries ended in a shared third place and we were lucky to win the half final after struggling in the final, just like the prior games, we won silver behind the victorious Chinese Taipei team.

The 2017 world games were held in Wroclaw, Poland. We travelled by bus, together with the men's/outdoor team and because of this we felt more like one Dutch, rather than separate men's and women's, team. In Wroclaw we were allowed to use public transport for free using our athlete's passes, which gave us the chance to watch a range of other sports, as well as allowing other athletes to come and support us. Seeing Lucia

Rijker win a gold medal in kickboxing was a special experience.

When our competition started, the first match was against the Swiss, who were using a new "squat" technique, which we luckily were able to parry, meaning we started off strong. Again, all teams were well matched and it was a hard struggle to reach the best 4 teams. However we lost the half final and battled for 3rd place. Chinese Taipei won 1st place for the 4th time in a row, China and South Africa won silver and bronze respectively.

In July of this year (2022), we will travel to the world games in Birmingham, Alabama, USA. The program has been altered, there will be no indoor tug at war this time. Instead the women's tug of war will also be outdoors,

with a 540 kg weight class. These games will be an entirely new experience for us. Many of our women have not taken part in previous world games, but we'll do our very best to show our strength and hopefully go home with a gold medal around our necks.



The strongest twins in Nidwalden

Kai and Robin Burch are successful pullers at Stans-Oberdorf. A highlight is in store for the two of them in 2022.

Reported by
CLAUDIO ZANINI

Robin is a little taller and heavier than Kai. He is also "a bit" stronger, he says and smiles. Kai agrees. But that was not always he adds. "I used to be the taller one. In the upper school, however, Robin gained quite a bit of weight." Visually the twins are different, but otherwise they have a lot in common. They live together in a shared flat in Wolfenschiessen. Both belong to the Tug of War Club Stans-Oberdorf. On Saturday they will be competing in the Swiss Championships in the same team. Kai and Robin Burch, both 25 years old, come from a Tug of War family from Oberrickenbach. Father Armin is hooked on rope pulling. In the past he was an athlete, now he's a coach. He makes and experiments with resin in his spare time, and his sons test how the resin behaves in a real match. When it's warm, you need harder resin on the hands than when it is cold. Armin Burch can talk about it in detail. He met his wife Klara at a Tug of War

event. Their partnership produced Kai and Robin. Even as toddlers they spent whole Saturdays at Tug of War events. They almost couldn't miss this sport.

Kai and Robin have different roles on the rope. Robin is usually in front. The rope is tensed to the maximum, you see and feel your opponent immediately, you anticipate.

Kai is often in position six or seven, out of eight. There you have less overview, the rope is livelier, the movements are bigger. In the back positions smaller athletes are usually used, as the rope is closer to the floor.

You can compare Tug of War with rowing. Also because there are weight classes. Robin and Kai Burch will be competing on Saturday at the Swiss Championships in the 640 kilogram weight category. In this category, they are currently doing very well. After one of five tournaments, they lead the ranks by one point over Ebersecken. The Lucerne team is currently the rivals of the Nidwalden team.

When Tug of War was still Olympic

At 640 kilograms, each athlete may weigh an average of 80 kilograms. It is not much weight for a solidly built man. Robin changed his mass quite a bit before the season. If you like, he comes in a winter and a summer version. In winter he weighs 102 kilograms, in the summer, during the season, he weighs only 86 kilograms.

A remarkable difference of 16 kg. Sometimes he notices during the phase of weight loss that he lacks energy, says Robin, especially during his work at a recycling company.



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You have to be serious about it. You can't just eat nothing. For Kai, a trained carpenter, the fluctuations are less extreme. He weighs a maximum of 82 kg in winter and 76 kg in summer. Before the competition everyone sticks to what's been agreed. It goes without saying that everyone sticks to the agreed weight limits. "You do it for the team," says Robin.

The article printed in
Luzerner Zeitung
Newspaper

There was even a time when Tug of War was Olympic. Between 1900 and 1920, it was on the competition programme of the Olympic Games. International comparisons take place as part of the World Championships or the World Games. In mid-July in Birmingham, US state of Alabama, the next World Games will be held. Kai and Robin Burch will be competing with the national mixed team. It is a colourful, large-scale event where all non-Olympic disciplines are given a platform. Some will be Tug of War, others will be sumo wrestling, swimming or playing ultimate frisbee.

For the two from Nidwalden the trip to the USA will be the highlight of their careers. Robin is likely to take it in his stride, as he says he is the calmer of the two. Kai is rather wilder. Robin says, Kai quickly catches fire at tournaments. Kai smiles. "I know... sometimes I overdo it. But I am calmer in everyday life. I'm not the kind of person who bangs on the door". I'm sure they could use a little fire whether in Stans or in the States.



Photo by Jenny Barker

The following teams participated at the 75th ANNIVERSARY TOURNAMENT of Felton Eccles:

- Mulcair, G&B, Ballinastoe, Goiherr,
- Monnickendam, Ebersecken,
- Stans-Oberdorf, Sins, Bancran,
- Garvagh, PowerZell, Kaiserberg,
- Philippinenburg, Goldscheuer, Derryogue,
- Lagerweij, OKIA, Heure,
- Lincoln Tug of War Club,
- Sandhurst Tug of War Club,
- Bedford Ladies Tug of War.