

MINUTES SEMINAR & TWIF
CONGRESS
ONLINE ZOOM MEETING
APRIL 16th & 17th 2021



TWIF SEMINAR 16 APRIL 2021

Opening: Anton Rabe, President of TWIF welcomed all attendees to the online seminar and gave instructions of how to use the online questions and remarks via the chat box.

1. Presidents Report – Anton Rabe (AR): AR provided a brief summary of the report which was sent out to all the members prior to the meeting. Financial demands are increasing due to high standards of our Sport partners. AR thanked fellow TWIF Exco members for their hard work, mostly behind the scenes. Given the postponement of the WC outdoor 2020 to 2021, AR thanked the Netherlands and Switzerland for agreeing to postpone their respective events as well. It is still not clear if the WC in Getxo 2021 can take place. Input and advice on various options and alternatives from the members will be gauged before a final decision is taken. Given the full program of the Championships, it was also proposed and agreed that a Competition Manager will in future assist with the smooth execution of TWIF events. Anton Botha (South Africa) has been appointed to run the next event in this capacity. AR also referred to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Protocol Sports which was entered into in 2019. Despite numerous efforts, they do not respond to emails so we assume that they are not existing anymore, due to Covid-19. We all will have to deal with challenges in our sport as the global restrictions are not yet over and will have an ongoing effect on our operations.
2. Financial report/Budget 2021/22 – Dan McCarthy (DM): DM provided a brief overview of the financial situation of TWIF. Both the Balance Sheet/Income & Expenditure Account and the proposed 2021/22 budget were distributed prior to congress. DM has put 220,000 GBP in a savings account, but due to very low interest rates, interest accrued is extremely low. In 2020 TWIF had less costs than previous years, due to less traveling and events. The costs of the Andi Doping are rising however and were about 17.000 GBP in 2020. This cost is expected to rise even further in future given the compliance requirements in this regard. DM advised the meeting that Dwyer Accountants had undertaken a review of the TWIF income and expenditure for year ending October 31st 2020. Sample checks were performed on supporting data against the accounts. The concluding letter was included in the presentation.
3. Commission reports :
 - a. TAC – Jost Waser (JW): The report was distributed prior to the event. JW briefly highlighted some items included in the report. JW is working on an updated Training Handbook, which will be ready by the end of April 2021. In addition, the Judges course material will be updated. TAC is dealing with the Privacy issues for the athletes during the weigh-in and are also discussing the belts and anchor vests.

Regarding new members: Kyrgyz Republic has fulfilled all requirements and will be brought forward for voting as official TWIF members during Congress. Trinidad & Tobago have delivered all their paperwork, but have not yet paid the TWIF membership fee, so there will be no voting on their membership.
 - b. PR – Maaïke Hornstra (MH): The report was distributed prior to the event. MH briefly highlighted some activities dealt with during 2020. There are two new active PR members in the committee. TWIF celebrated its 60th year Anniversary, so a jubilee magazine was made and distributed online. When we can meet again, it will be printed and distributed. The PR Commission started a TWIF Monthly Focus, to keep everyone updated and involved in Tug of War. There has been a lot of PR around James Kehoe in the election from the World Games and a TWIF Instagram account has been started. Next step is to get the TWIF Youtube Channel activated again.
 - c. Anti-Doping/WADA – Pete Dyer (PD): The report was distributed prior to the event. PD has received information about the antidoping program from 28 countries in

their Annual Year report. The anti-doping control program has to start again in all countries. The anti-doping committee have done 8 in competition tests during EC Castlebar 2019, with one positive test (which resulted in a 2 year ban) and 8 in competition tests during WC Letterkenny 2020, also with one positive test (which resulted in a 3,5 year ban). These bans are aligned with the WADA directives which TWIF has to follow. In 2019 there were 12 out of competition tests, which were all negative. We have to increase these numbers in the run-up to the WG as agreed with WADA. PD also highlighted various aspects of the new TWIF anti-doping rules (ADR) (see powerpoint presentation attached). There are some key changes around sanctions for individual athletes, Teams and National Federation not just on Anti-Doping test failures but also such things as Whereabouts. WADA wants to see an increase in testing and hence TWIF will look to every National Federation to do more tests. Some Governments or NADO's pay for these tests, but most countries don't. The new ADR's is a huge document so PD will add the highlights to the TWIF website. The 2021 list of prohibited substances & methods is already updated on the TWIF website. A TUE is necessary before you use medication NOT just before a Championships when you have already been taking it. The anti-doping committee has a new email address: anti-doping@thetwif.org. A website with a lot of information about prohibited medication is: www.globaldro.com/home. Also PD recommends that members conduct online learning via their respective NADO's.

4. Progress reports events awarded:
 - a. WOC '21 – Getxo, Basque Country: Mikeldi Uribe-Etxebarria informed the meeting about the Reset plan that every member has received based a worst case scenario. The Organizers hope for a vaccine passport in the EU and if the event can continue, registration will be from 1 June till 12 August 2021. It is still very uncertain if there can be a WC in Getxo. PD requested clarity about spectators accompanying athletes: It was indicated that spectators can't come into the arena or area where tents are for athletes and officials. There will be a limited number of people allowed in the team tents. Ralf Bräuninger from Germany proposed that a smaller WC with only the three World Games weight classes for qualification be considered as an option. Johan Krols from Belgium asked what will happen when one athlete is positive: Will that person only have to leave the WC and the other team members can stay in the bubble? AR mentioned that these and other issues will have to be resolved in the next month (by mid May) in order for a final decision to go ahead or not, can be taken.
 - b. WIC '22 – Singapore: Singapore did not attend the seminar to give an update, however, they have indicated via email that they may not be able to continue with the WC indoor in 2022. MH will assess the formal position prior to congress in order to inform members of the current status in order that other countries can consider if it is possible for them to organize a WIC in 2022.
 - c. World Games '22 – MH provided an update on the World Games. There will only be outdoor in three weight classes: Women 540, Men 640 and Mix 580. Day of arrival for people outside the USA will be 11 July 2022 and for people from with-in the USA, 12 July. 13 July 2022 will be training day and competition will be on 14 July 2022 for the 640 M, 15 July for the 540 W, 16 July for the 580 Mix. 17 July will be the departure day for everybody. TWIF is allowed a total of 176 athletes and 21 officials with separate invitations for the President and Secretary General. We are able to enter our qualified athletes till 31 January 2022.
 - d. WOC'22 – Holten, Netherlands: Simon Koetsier provided an update on the event. The whole event will be accommodated in a holiday park of Landal and the field is next to the park.
 - e. WOC'23 – Sursee, Switzerland: Pirmin Steinmann provided an update on the event via a presentation which is shared with all the members. There will be different categories of accommodation with the whole event being organized on a University complex.

- f. WOC '24 – Mannheim, Germany: Germany will give a full update on the WC 2024 outdoor during Congress 2022.
5. Tenders for future events:
(Voting will take place on Saturday, 17 April 2021 as per agenda)
- a. WIC '24 – Sweden: The bid material was distributed prior to the meeting. Mats Hamberg and Henrik Gidlund presented key points on the Swedish bid and facilities for Helsingborg indicating the focus on schoolsport and disability sports. .
- b. EOC '25 – England, Sweden: The bid material was distributed prior to the event. Gavin Corden presented information on the facilities of the University Complex of Nottingham where the EC will take place. Tom Waldron-Lynch from Nottingham University provided information on additional facilities at the University and the host city.
Mats Hamberg and Camilla Eklund from Malmö provided information on the facilities in Malmö - which will be the same for their bid for WC outdoor 2026. The field will be similar to the one during WC 2016 and there will be a choice of various accommodation packages.
- c. WIC '26 – Chinese Taipei: The bid material was distributed prior to the event. Dates will be 12-15 March 2026. The event will be in Taipei and there will be free visa for 66 countries for max. 90 days.
China again confirmed that if the WIC 2026 is awarded to Chinese Taipei, it will be hosted in accordance with IOC regulations and the agreed international conventions. AR confirmed that this will be the case as TWIF is aware and fully compliant with the IOC directives in this regard.
- d. WOC' 26 – Italy, South Africa, Sweden (to be voted before EOC '25): Bid material was distributed prior to the meeting.
Nicola Cappelletto and Chiara Berto provided information on the facilities, city Caorle and airports close to the city. There will be financial support for this event from the region.
Anton Botha is updating everyone about the tender for 2026 in Hartenbos and Mosselbay on the Garden Route in South Africa. There will be various packages for accommodation and the plan is to create an Olympic Village atmosphere and set-up.
- e. EOC '27 – Italy, as above WC outdoor 2026 in the city of Caorle.
These events will be voted on during the congress scheduled for the next day.

TWIF CONGRESS, Saturday, 17 April

AGENDA – CONGRESS: SATURDAY, 17 APRIL 2021

Members attending: Basque Country, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, China, Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Haiti, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Poland, Scotland, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Chinese Taipei, Turkey, USA, Kyrgyz Republic.

1. **Opening address. By the President**

Anton Rabe (AR) welcomes everyone to the first online Congress ever. It is new for all of us, but the seminar went well. He corrected the numbering of some Agenda points. Covid-19 has an impact on all of us but some of us lost beloved ones, so a moment of silence was held to honor those people.

2. **Roll call of the members. By the Secretary**

2.1 Confirmation of a quorum. The Secretary General (MH) confirmed that a quorum is represented. With 24 members in good standing of which 23 are in attendance with one proxy vote on two items.

It was confirmed and agreed that Pete Dyer (Senior Vice-President) will act as co-host in case of linkage problems. He will also deal with the NemoVote system which was tested with voting members prior to the event.

3. **Confirmation of members in good standing. By the Treasurer**

Dan McCarthy (DM) confirms the members in good standing.

4. **Confirmation of the Minutes of Congress 2020 (Online voting)**

23 members are in favour. Minutes of the electronic reports and voting for 2020 are therefore accepted.

5. **Matters arising not covered elsewhere:**

None.

6. **Report covering the period since the last Congress. By the President**

See Attachment (A): The report was dealt with during the seminar. On a vote, 23 votes are in favour, so the report for 2021 is accepted.

7. **Finance. By the Treasurer**

7.1 Submission and vote on the balance sheet and accounts: The finances were reported on and discussed during the seminar.

On a vote, 23 members are in favour of the balance sheet and accounts so the financial report is accepted.

7.2 Approval of the budget (2021/2022): The budget was reported and discussed during the seminar.

On a vote, 23 members are in favour, so the budget is approved.

On a question raised wrt what would happen if costs rise due to Covid-19 events, AR mentioned that the constitution allows adequate discretion to the Exco and, if required, a special vote and approval could be requested from the members.

8. **World Games 2022:**

MH reported on the WG'22 during seminar.

After discussion it was agreed that by the end of May 2021 at the very latest (preferably earlier) there needs to be a final decision on whether the WC'21, as qualifying event, will take place or not.

There are various options, two of which are: 1) full event and 2) a smaller event. Members were again invited to share ideas and proposals with the Secretary General on other alternatives. Members will also be requested to provide some indication on their intent and ability to participate or not in the next few weeks.

The Organizers asked for confirmation in the first week of May 2021, otherwise they will get problems with hotels. However, it was agreed the deadline for the decision will therefore be 15 May 2021.

9. **Strategic matters/Policy Plan 2019-2023– Feedback/Update**

AR briefly highlighted the main pillars of the policy plan, being 1) Administration, Governance and compliance (including WADA/Anti-Doping); 2) Presentation of the sport, media and communication; and 3) Development, Training and Capacity building. Exco will continue to facilitate TWIF activities along these lines as also echoed in the budget.

10. **Reports by the Commissions:** See Attachment (B, C, D)

10.1 Technical Athletes Commission – Jost Waser (attachment C)

10.2 PR Commission- Maaïke Hornstra (attachment D)

10.3 Anti-Doping – Pete Dyer (attachment B)

10.4 Medical Panel – (no report/no activity this past year)

10.5 Appeal Commission – (no report/no activity this past year)

All reports were submitted and discussed during the seminar and were unanimously accepted by members.

11. **Affiliation of new members:** Kyrgyz Republic has fulfilled all requirement and paid the TWIF membership fee. Ms. Lubintsova Kseniya Nikolaeva briefly informed members about the status of Tug of War in her country. The sport is popular at schools and youth levels. They had Tug of War competitions during the Nomad Games in 2019 and they hope to get more experience and would like to participate at international level.

On a vote 23 countries voted in favour of TWIF membership. Kyrgyz therefor becomes the 75th TWIF member.

12. **Proposals and question submitted by the members and all other matters which the Executive Committee wish to propose** See Attachment (E)

13. **TWIF Championships: Past, others already dealt with during Seminar**

13.1 European Outdoor Championships 2019, Castlebar, Ireland;

13.2 World Indoor Championships 2020, Letterkenny, Ireland.

MH shared the summarized feedback from the two events with members. Overall both Championships were rated good. There were several comments and suggestions which will be used to improve future events not to repeat mistakes. That is also a reason why TWIF has introduced a Competition Manager to ensure that

learnings from past events can be effectively utilized to improve future events.

14. Voting for the award of **future Championships (as presented during seminar)**:
- 14.1.1 WIC 2024 – Sweden: 22 in favour and 1 abstention. Sweden will therefore organize the WIC 2024 in Helsingborg.
- 14.1.2 EOC 2025 – England and Sweden: England 17 votes, Sweden 5 votes and 1 abstention. England will therefore organize the EOC 2025 in Nottingham.
- 14.1.3 WIC 2026 – Chinese Taipei: 21 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. Chinese Taipei will therefore organize the WIC 2026 in Taipei.
- 14.1.4 WOC 2026 – Italy, South Africa and Sweden: 16 votes in favour for South Africa, 2 votes in favour for Sweden and 4 votes in favour for Italy with 1 abstention. South Africa will therefore organize the WOC 2026 in Hartenbos.
- 14.1.5 EOC 2027 – Italy: 22 votes in favour and 1 abstention. Italy will therefore organize the EOC 2027 in Caorle.

AR informed members that Singapore has confirmed that they will not be able to organize a WIC in 2022. They would like to postpone till 2023 or cancel the event. Exco will discuss a proper way forward to assess the interest of other potential hosts as a WIC in 2022 remains the first choice. A formal communique from the Secretary General will be sent to members in this regard as soon as possible.

15. **Election of TWIF Exco** (period 2021 till 2025 for Senior Vice President and Treasurer)

See nominations as received and distributed earlier as attachment F. On a vote:

- Senior Vice President – Pete Dyer has been re-elected with 23 votes in favour.
- Treasurer – Dan McCarthy has been re-elected with 23 votes in favour and 1 abstention.

16. **Other Business for the good of Tug of War**

In relation to the Covid-19 restrictions, Pete Dyer has set up some questions for the members in order to assess the situation and conditions in the different member countries:

- 16.1 Training of senior athletes: 13 countries are already in training, 2 countries expect to start training within 8 weeks and 7 countries indicated that they do not know when training will start.
- 16.2 Active Competitions: 6 countries already have competitions going on, 7 countries are planning to start within 8 weeks and 9 countries indicated that they do not know when competitions will start.

17. **Future meetings**: AR expressed the hope that everyone will be able to attend in Getxo or during Congress 2022 in Sursee, Switzerland scheduled for 8 and 9 April 2022.

China again requested confirmation that the WIC 2026 awarded to Chinese Taipei will be held in accordance with IOC regulations and the agreed international conventions. AR confirmed that TWIF will work closely with Chinese Taipei and will ensure that the IOC directives will be fully adhered to.

18. **Closing by the President**: AR thanks everyone for the good support during seminar & congress especially those in very early or late time zones. He wished everyone to be safe and well. He again invited members to come forward with ideas for qualification for WG'22 if the WC in Getxo cannot take place. Communication as to WIC 2022 in Singapore will also be shared asap.

Attachment A:

TWIF PRESIDENT's REPORT – APRIL 2021

It is with a sense of relief that I provide this brief report on the TWIF activities during the past year. Certainly a period with no clear end in sight with continued and different levels of disruption experienced in a global rolling wave. Covid-19 has certainly challenged us all on so many fronts, but through which we as a global TWIF family somehow managed to survive in one form or another.

Given the various levels of lock down and related travel restrictions, it was not possible for the TWIF Exco to meet as in the past, but we managed to continue to operate very effectively via numerous online/virtual meetings and e-mail exchanges as and when required. This is no doubt one of the positives from the Covid pandemic in that we have all very quickly adapted to online means of dealing with meetings and issues for which we jumped on airplanes in the past.

I for one did not miss the travelling but our personal engagement and socialising which is such a feature of our sport, was certainly greatly missed. Hopefully we will all be able to gather safely soon and would no doubt value and treasure such engagement even more than in the past.

As indicated, we managed to deal with the core Exco portfolios and workings of the various commissions. Reports on these activities should therefore be read in conjunction with this report.

In recent years I have indicated the ever-increasing demands on time, pressure on financial resources and increasing compliance requirements linked to governance, financial oversight, anti-doping and the activities related to PR/Communication and Technical matters relating to training, judging and recording. This have not been less during the past year with especially the adoption of the new anti-doping rules having taken a lot of time and effort to adapt to a team sport environment. The effort of Pete Dyer in this regard, including the dealing of 2 positive dope test and sanctions aligned with the WADA requirements, has been immense and deserve a huge thank you from us all.

We in particular had to deal with the complex challenge of postponing the 2020 WOC planned for Getxo to September 2021 after the domino effect of many global events being cancelled, and both the Olympics and the World Games being postponed by one year. At the time of writing this report, we still have huge uncertainties as to whether the WOC could in fact be hosted in 2021 given various levels of rolling and ever-changing lock downs in virtually all countries, 2nd waves and 3rd & 4th waves being predicted going forward with the resultant global travel restrictions. The global roll out of effective vaccinations programmes in light of a continually mutating virus, will hold the key to some normality going forward.

Local safety protocols and compliance matters at the time of the event is impossible to predict at this stage. A complicating factor is the qualification for the three World Games '22 events and the financial model of events which requires a fair number of participants during the open days of our events.

In this regard, I wish to again thank the OC's of Netherlands (Holten) and Switzerland (Sursee) for their open-minded willingness to move the dates of their allocated events to 2022 and 2023 respectively. This is testimony of the family spirit and ethos our sport is so renowned and envied for.

We maintained contact with the Getxo OC and preparations continue with the hosting of

the event as planned. A final call to ensure fairness and the potential participation of as many countries as possible, will however need to be taken not later than May 2021. We will also discuss this during Congress 2021 and gauge the opinions of our members with regard to their respective local outlooks for the 2nd half of 2021.

For some time now I have argued for a re-look at the nature, structure and format of TWIF events. We need a reduction in weight classes especially in the outdoor discipline where we cannot just add to an already full programme. In this regard the introduction of a Competition Manager (CM) to assist Exco and key appointed officials with a focussed integration and umbrella coordination of activities is being looked forward to with keen anticipation. Anton Botha from South Africa has been appointed for the next TWIF event which will serve as a pilot to fine tune the strategy and approach with this idea going forward.

We also managed to update the Rules Manual in electronic form and publish on the website. Any further amendments will be done after Congress with printing of a new version to be aligned with our next physical get together. Under the leadership of Jost Waser, the TAC is also working on a new training manual which will be followed by an update of the training and judging videos.

The PR Commission with Maaike Hornstra at the forefront, have successfully managed to issue a monthly newsletter during the lock down phases. This has been a huge success including the 2nd place claimed by James Kehoe in the "all-time greatest athlete" competition to celebrate 40 years of the IWGA. Indeed a huge achievement and again testimony of a significant global effort to vote faithfully and regularly during the weeks of the competition. On behalf of the TWIF family my congratulations to James for a unique achievement.

Many activities were postponed and re-scheduled for 2020. This included the annual Sport Accord and related meetings/AGM's of a number of umbrella sporting bodies such as ARISF, IWGA and GAISF of which TWIF is a member. A comprehensive report on the virtual meetings and discussions were distributed earlier. For 2021, we foresee these events to be virtual again (week of 24 – 28 May). A report will be submitted in due course.

Unfortunately, many commercial activities were hugely impacted on by Covid-19. This seems to include the agreement entered into with the International Media and Sponsorship agency, Protocol Sports. Recent efforts to contact the agency was fruitless so we will have to revisit this ambition in the near future in a totally new environment where sponsorship and public (government) funding of minor sports will no doubt be under even more pressure than in the past. We will have to think and do out of the box!

My sincere thanks and appreciation to my fellow Exco members for their continued support, dedication, wisdom, guidance and hard work during this period.
My sincere thanks also to the members of the various Commissions, our ICT support and DCO for their contributions.

Various other items dealt with by the Exco and/or Commissions are included in the agenda and will be reported on during Congress.

THANK YOU FOR THE CONTINUED OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE YOU.
I TRUST THAT THIS REPORT PROVIDES SOME CONTEXT TO THE DIVERSE CHALLENGES WE FACE AND HOW WE PLAN TO ADDRESS THEM.

KIND REGARDS,

ANTON RABE

TWIF PRESIDENT

Attachment B:

DOPING REPORT TO CONGRESS video conference 16th and 17th April 2021.

1. New TWIF Anti-Doping Rules (ADRs)

As many of you are hopefully aware, WADA updated their Anti-Doping 'Code' which is now the 'Anti-Doping Code 2021' at the end of 2019 which replaces the 2015 version. TWIF has extensively engaged and worked with WADA to adapt this version of the Code, where possible, for Tug of War purposes and context. These amended rules have therefore become the TWIF Anti-Doping Rules (ADRs) 2021.

The TWIF ADRs have now been adopted by the TWIF membership and came into force on 1st January 2021 and are published on the TWIF website. Please take time to review the new rules, we will, before Congress produce some additional guidance to help you through the new rules and highlight some key points.

In the meantime, some key Articles of the TWIF ADRs that have been adapted include, but not limited to, the following;

- Article 5.5 - Athletes Whereabouts, and specifically 5.5.10, 5.5.11 and 5.5.12 the latter covering sanctions for failure to comply.
- Article 9 - Automatic disqualification of individual athletes.
- Article 10 – Sanctions on individuals specifically 10.10, 10.11 and 10.12 that provide details of sanctions.
- Article 11 – Consequences for teams – these are the sanctions associated with the team, very important as Tug of War is very much a team sport.
- Article 12 – Sanctions by TWIF against other sporting bodies – this includes National Federations (NFs).

It is important that your National Federations and your athletes understand not only the rules but also the significant consequences, which have changed, to individuals, teams and ultimately the National Federations. Be clear, you have been notified

2. TUE's and prohibited list.

WADA have issued the **2021 LIST OF PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES AND METHODS** which came into force on the 1st January. As part of our obligation as a member of WADA and to maintain our Olympic recognition we, and hence ALL of our membership, are mandated to comply with this latest list. The prohibited list is updated annually based on intelligence and medical developments. Tug of War is generally considered a clean sport and we wish to stay that way, making yourselves aware of items in this prohibited list is important to ensure you remain compliant.

TUE's should be applied for **PRIOR** to taking any medication – justification for using a prohibited substance is required based on medical evidence not just a Medical Practitioner's signature. We have published guidance on the TWIF website of the application process and also a typical checklist of what supporting evidence is required to accompany a TUE application. It isn't a taken that your TUE will be approved. **If you do not receive an approval certificate your TUE is NOT approved and is not valid.**

We have subcontracted the TUE approval process to the International Testing Agency (ITA) and if you receive correspondence from them asking for more information, you must respond. If this isn't responded to and the appropriate information provided then ITA's TUE panel are unable to consider your TUE and it will not be approved.

TWIF has adopted a new email address for TUEs and other Anti-Doping correspondence which is specific for this purpose and more secure. The email address is anti-doping@thetwif.org Please send all TUE's and any other Anti-Doping correspondence to this email address.

You should also be aware that even if you are prescribed something by a medical practitioner, you must inform them that you are an athlete who is required to be compliant with WADA regulations, they may have a choice of what to prescribe you so that you remain compliant. If not, it will be necessary, with their assistance, to complete a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) form that can be downloaded from the TWIF website.

I cannot stress strongly enough the importance of all of our athletes remaining compliant as both in competition and out of competition testing continues both by TWIF and your countries National Anti-Doping Organisation (NADO), so be careful don't take risks.

REMEMBER – You, as an athlete, are solely responsible for any banned substance found in your system.

There is a useful website that can also help identify 'over the counter' products that may contain prohibited substances, that is <https://www.globaldro.com/Home>. If you are not sure ask the Pharmacist.

3. European and Junior World Outdoor Championships 2019

During these championships in Ireland, 8 tests were done, some at the weigh-in, some during the open club competition and some during the national closed competition. Athletes from the following countries were tested; Netherlands, Ireland, Basque Country, Chinese Taipei, Scotland, Sweden and Switzerland.

We did have one positive test which has been finalised and has resulted in a two-year ban for the athlete, full details are published on the TWIF website, which is a mandatory requirement of WADA.

4. World Indoor Championships 2020

During the World Indoor Championships in Ireland 8 in competition tests were carried out some at the weigh-in, some during the open club competition and some during the national closed competition. Athletes from the following countries were tested; Ireland, Basque Country, Scotland, Netherlands and Chinese Taipei.

We did have one positive test that has resulted in the athlete receiving a three-and-a-half-year ban. Again, full details are published on the TWIF website, which is a mandatory requirement of WADA.

5. Annual Reporting Forms.

At the time of compiling this report 28-member countries, had completed their reports. Their reports show, not surprisingly, that during 2020 with the restrictions of COVID-19, that only one country undertook any Anti-Doping tests. While we totally understand this position, we must stress that it is important that for 2021 each National Federation makes contact with their respective NADO and encourages Anti-Doping tests to restart, or if they currently haven't been undertaken, to push hard for your NADO to undertake Anti-Doping testing in Tug of War in your country.

It is important all countries complete their annual report forms as the information within

these reports is required by both the IOC and WADA, I therefore stress to each and every International Representative to complete and submit their forms.

6. Going Forward.

There will be more testing, particularly 'in competition'. The qualifier for the World Games, in Birmingham, Alabama, which is the pinnacle of our sport as it stands, are the forthcoming World Championships in Getxo (hopefully) where there will be substantially more testing.

7. Whistle blowing

Anti-Doping and testing are intelligence led activities, and every athlete can assist in ensuring our sport is and remains a clean sport. If you have any suspicions or even substantive evidence of a breach of the TWIF Anti-Doping rules then you can, and should, report this, in confidence, to TWIF using the dedicated Anti-Doping email address anti-doping@thetwif.org

8. Education

While TWIF will be doing what it can to educate athlete and support staff in Anti-Doping by, predominately, online learning, it is also the responsibility of every National Federation to educate their athletes in Anti-Doping. I strongly encourage you to make contact with your NADOs, if you haven't done so already, and urge them to provide education to your athletes. Anti-Doping has to be about education in the first instance, especially with new or young athletes, before punishment is prescribed.

Finally, I would like to thank Birute Zachariene, our TWIF Anti-Doping administrator, for her continued hard work in this area.

Pete Dyer

Chairman of TWIF Anti-Doping Commission

Attachment C:

Report Technical and Athletes Commission (TAC)

The Technical and Athletes Commission exists of the following members:

- Chairman: Mr. Jost Waser / ExCo
- Secretary: Mrs. Marga t'Lam / Netherlands
- Mrs. Rachel Lewis / England
- Mr. Galder Gobantes / Basque country
- Mrs. Jennie Andersson / Sweden
- Mrs. Shelby Richardson / United States
- Mr. Ralf Bräuninger /Germany
- Mr. Vincent Chen/Chinese Taipei
- Mr. Matthias Arnouts / Belgium
- Mr. Bennie Geldenhuys / South Africa

This Year we had the first-time election by mailing. The reason was the topic COVID-19 Pandemic worldwide with travel restrictions.

The commission got new members and it is gratifying that the proportion of women has increased.

Contacts with possible new members are underway. Kyrgyz Republic (if membership fee paid apply this congress as new member), Trinidad and Tobago, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, United Arab. Emirates, New Zealand, etc.

Since 2016 we have decided to have one formal meeting a year, which is held during the European- or World Outdoor Championships. So, in 2020 we had one informal meeting during the WC indoor in Letterkenny, February 2020.

We had a formal meeting with members of the TAC during the Year by mailing.

The anchor protection still is a topic of discuss. We agreed to work out a proper solution. Especially the added parts under the protection.

The resolution of it is to force the Judges to implement the given rules of TWIF Rules Manuel to during competition.

The Indoor WC was the first step in this direction. Still it will need more force to do it.

The belt is a serious problem. Especially in Indoor and swap over to outdoor as well. It is used as a lock system. Therefore, are discussions ongoing. No belt is allowed, nowadays the competition dress is patched with protection. Will be continued.

Items for the TAC to work on are the following:

- Chief Evaluator are briefed in Indoor 2020 to act more directly if something happens on the field, so talk to the judge when a mistake has been made, but also mention the good things, good feedback is very important and necessary to keep judges motivated and sharp; Discussed the result and we will improve it.
- Briefing with the current rules, pictures of mistakes, changes in the rules and get discussions between judges to get everyone on the same level. During briefing in Letterkenny at indoor WC we used a PowerPoint presentation for the briefing. After result still improvement necessary.
- Chef Judge Evaluation report used in Letterkenny 2020 first time. Will need updated.

- No Pull system is now implemented. Still need update for judges during the briefing; will use bullet points to refresh.
- Updating the TWIF Rules Manual
- Trainer Handbook will be new written and updated
- Trainings Video for Judges to visualize

After that the TAC will have a meeting once a year during a World- or European Outdoor Championships. If necessary, the TAC can have extra meetings, but we try to do the rest of our consultation and discussion by email. The next meeting will be in Gexto, Basque Country, in September 2021.

I would like to thank all the TAC members for their hard work.

Especially to Shelby, I wish you much strength and hope in your hard time.

As well the whole ExCo team for support.

A great thank you to Marga 't Lam, as Secretary of the TAC. She does a lot of work behind the screens.

Jost Waser
Chairman TAC
TWIF Vice President

Attachment D:

Report Press and Publicity Commission (PR)

Current PR commission Members:

- Chairwoman Ms. Maaïke Hornstra/ ExCo
- Ms. Christine Yang/Chinese Taipei
- Mrs. Shelby Richardson/United States
- Mr. Alan Knott/England
- Mr. Anton Botha/South Africa

In 2020 we had the election for a new PR Commission. We had a various offer of new members and have chosen for the four people above after approval from the TWIF members. Voting on this election was by paper/email, while we were not able to organize our annual Congress. Anton Botha and Shelby Richardson were already part of the PR Commission and Alan Knott and Christine Yang are the new members. We have almost a world wide spread of the Commission members now.

With the PR Commission we have had several contact moments by email and discussed some topics for TWIF.

In 2020 TWIF celebrated her 60th Year Anniversary and we had hoped to celebrate this with our members during Congress 2020 and the World Outdoor Championships in Getxo 2020. Both events had to be cancelled/postponed, so we hope to celebrate this event this year in Getxo. We have made a 60th year Anniversary Magazine with input from members and the history of TWIF till now. This magazine has been published online but will be printed for members and Sport partners when we are able to meet each other again.

While we didn't have any events, we were trying to keep the connection with our members and introduced the TWIF Monthly Focus. This newsletter can be send out regular but depends on news and input from the members. We will also keep our regular TWIF Newsletter to share stories and information. Of course this is not possible without the input from our members, so please inform us about Tournaments, events and share pictures and video's with us.

While TWIF celebrated her 60th year of Anniversary, the World Games celebrated their 40th year of Anniversary and instead of electing the best Athlete of the Year, they started the World Games Greatest Athlete of All Time election. When this request came, it was no doubt that we should forward an athlete. Our choice for this election became James Kehoe, from TOW Boley, Ireland, who has participated in 9 World Games, a record. With a lot of help from Martina O'Farrell from TOW Boley, we were able to send in pictures, videos and a summary of James' participation in the World Games for this election. James had an average start in this election, but due to a lot of promotion in Ireland with interviews in newspapers, magazines, radio stations, tv etc. and all the support from Tug of War lovers all over the world, James reached the top 10 in the first round, after which the voting in the second round continued till 1 February 2021. We have to be honest, number 1, Nicol David (Squash, Malaysia) was far out of reach, but how proud can we be that 'our' James became the runner up in this election. Thank you all for voting and promoting James. This is a boost for Tug of War all over the world.

The World Games also gives TWIF the opportunity to take part in a Social Media Research program. A student from India is doing research on the media exposure of World Games sports and as TWIF, we think we can benefit from it. At this moment TWIF is only active on Facebook. TWIF has a Youtube Channel, which is not updated for some years. We will try to activate our Youtube Channel in 2021 and most likely we will start an Instagram account as well, while we notice this is more popular with younger people. The first results of the research are expected in April and final results in June 2021.

Another great activity we had on Facebook, was the text of women all over the World to keep the spirit high during this difficult period of Covid-19 (***text: we miss you all. Together we are strong, stay safe and hopefully see you soon again. Love from all the Tug of War ladies***). Let's hope we can continue with these spontaneous actions to keep the friendship in this sport on a high level.

Maike Hornstra
Chairwoman PR Commission
TWIF Secretary General

Attachment E:

PROPOSALS/QUESTIONS FOR TWIF CONGRES 2021

1. Protective Clothing

Proposed by: England

Seconded by: Scotland

Rule 8.1.4. Protective Clothing and Belts (applicable to pullers 1-7).

Clothing or elasticated belts, with a Velcro fastening, used to protect the skin may be worn under the sport clothing subject to the judge's approval. No construction may be attached to clothing or belt. If a protective rigid belt is worn, the lumbar support should be in the correct position with the centre of the lumbar support in the centre of the back and the buckle at the front. When worn, either inside or outside of the sport clothing, the belt should not be moved from its original position, if the belt is seen to be worn incorrectly (loose enabling movement), this will be classed as an infringement (locking). This may result in a caution. **It is the puller's responsibility to ensure that the belt is worn correctly for this not to occur. Under no circumstances will the rope be permitted to run BETWEEN the protective clothing or belt and the pullers' body. Any protective clothing and/or belt should be made available for inspection by a judge at any time during a tournament.**



The lumbar support should not exceed a third of the length of the belt and each of the sections either side of the lumbar support should be approximately equal. The lumbar support should not be any wider than 150mm and the sections either side no wider than 60mm. The picture below is of a typical belt.

Reasons for proposed changes: TWIF ExCo had planned to bring forward a proposal in 2020 to ban the use of belts, but this proposal was not discussed while we had no Congress. England thinks that the use of a belt is to protect the athlete and it has to be used as support, not as a lock. The belt has to be easy to obtain and absolute no adding or modification. Just a plain belt.

Reason for permitting a rigid belt outside of the sport clothing;

It is felt that lumbar support is important for pullers to avoid any damage to the spine, thus avoiding any potential injury claims against TWIF, (as is happening in World Rugby due to neck injuries resulting in dementia).

The proposed belt is easily available in most countries and do not need any modifications.

Question from the Netherlands about the current rules. The rules are ok, the judges have to be more strict on the rules. Also the question why TWIF ExCo withdrew their proposal? AR explains that the proposal from England is a more practical approach. Northern Ireland is happy with the rules as they are, also depending on position on the rope.

Voting: 12 members in favour, 8 against and 3 abstention. The proposal from England has passed and will be implemented at the coming TWIF events.

2. Awards presented at Close Competitions (page 35 of Organisers' Manual)

Proposed by: South Africa

Seconded by: Sweden

The current prescript is that for the Closed Competition, every team that participates, must get an Award, indicating its position during the competition.

It is proposed that Awards for the Closed competition, ALSO be limited to four awards only (as it is currently prescribed for the Open competition). This implies that only those teams that participated in the finals, will get awards (no's 1 to 4).

Motivation: To procure Awards for a TWIF Championships, is a costly affair. During the 2018 World Championships, quite a number of countries did NOT bother to come and collect their awards, resulting in a financial loss for the organising country. In addition to this, it is difficult to correctly determine the number of Awards to be procured beforehand.

To limit the number of Awards/Trophies to four in the case of the Closed competition as well, will not only lead to eliminating uncertainty regarding the number of Awards to be made, but will also result in a cost saving. This cost saving might even be used to procure higher value Awards.

South Africa, England and Maaikje Hornstra explained how reality is during medal presentations and even if you mention at briefing, tell them in the program, countries or Representatives do not care in collecting their trophy.

Belgium agrees with 4 awards, but would like to see a reward (certificate or something else) for those 6 countries that qualify for a World Games.

Every athlete/official like to receive a medal, which will be no change.

Voting: 20 in favour of this proposal, 2 against and 1 abstention. The proposal from South Africa has passed and will be active at the coming TWIF Event.

3. Promotion of inter-regional junior tug of war events

Proposed by: Belgium

Seconded by: Netherlands

To promote mid-level junior tug of war, between TWIF top-level and National base-level, TWIF can provide a maximum amount of £5,000 a year for interregional junior tournaments. Each full member of TWIF may submit a project 6 months before the start of the event.

Project requirements

- Organizer organizes a tournament exclusively for youth (U19) and / or juniors (U23). It may NOT be added to or supplemented by a senior tournament.
- At least 2 other TWIF member countries must support the application and promote the tournament to their youth.
- The tournament is open for Boys and Girls.
- The organizer offers budget-friendly accommodation for participants and companions for the maximum cost of £100 pp (for a 2 night stay, including 2 x breakfast and 2 x dinner)
- Organizer prints in all its publications "with the support of TWIF"

Dividing the budget

- £500 in advance for each valid project submitted ... refundable if tournament is cancelled.

- The remaining budget is divided among the projects at the end of the year in proportion to the distribution key of points achieved in evaluation
 - 1 point for each participant more than 100
 - 10 points per TWIF country participating with a minimum of 8 people.
 - Money used by the Organizers and budget friendly

Belgium is clarifying their proposal together with the Netherlands. There is a lot of money in the TWIF bank account and the money should be used for the Youth, invest in the future of Tug of War.

The event can be organized interregional or international.

AR commented on the proposal, that there was almost an official agreement between TWIF and GENSB, financial but also to attract non GENSB countries to participate. It did not work out at the time and was an idea that was tried too early.

AR also requested that if passed, TWIF ExCo be allowed to develop terms of reference and procedures for applications and sustainable implementation.

Voting: 19 votes in favour of the proposal, 1 against and 3 abstention. The proposal from Belgium has passed and will after refining by TWIF ExCo, be introduced.

Questions

4. Netherlands: Is it possible to have more privacy during the weigh-in at a WC or EC? Last WC indoor in Ireland, it was compulsory for everybody to show up in the shorts/sportbra's before entering the weigh-in area. It was not allowed to wear a jacket or something like that. Some pullers did not feel comfortable during waiting like this before going on the scales.

Also, several people are making pictures and movies from the pullers which are waiting to go on the scale and put this on social media. We need some more privacy for the pullers in the weigh-in area, especially for women and youth. In our opinion some new rules are needed for this.

Clarification by the Netherlands on this question: there are coming lots of pictures on social media about the weigh-in so proposal is no photographers allowed during weigh-in. Jost Waser (JW), chairman of TAC, indicated that the TAC has already started to work on a proposal to split the weigh-in in a men and women section and that no pictures will be allowed, also not by the athletes themselves.

5. Netherlands: There was a proposal of Exco concerning the regulations of the belts. Our opinion is that the basis of this issue has nothing to do with the belts in general but with the consistent application of the rules and the quality of the judging should address this. We know that TAC does their utmost to get all judges on the highest level.

JW indicated that the TAC will develop very clear guidelines and description of the use of the belt and the meaning of a belt. This includes Velcro type belts.

Attachment F:

Election of TWIF ExCo

Nominations for TWIF ExCo

Senior Vice President:

Pete Dyer (England)

Nominated by England

Treasurer:

Dan McCarthy (Ireland)

Nominated by Singapore & South Africa