



ENGLAND

English Powerlifting – Commonwealth team report.

At one time or another 80 lifters plus 4 officials arrived at St. John's Newfoundland to represent England in the Commonwealth Powerlifting Championships. England were the largest team outside of the hosts Canada and to begin with deserve some credit for negotiating their way to this difficult venue to reach. Most had at least 2 flights which more than doubled the actual time it would realistically take to fly for England to St. John's direct. Although in comparison to lifters from other nations such as South Africa where five flights were necessary we were fortunate.

I personally arrived at my accommodation a kilometer from the venue at 3.00am on Sunday 15th Sept. after a mere 19 hours of travel, managed a few hours sleep then off to the venue (holiday Inn Hotel) for the 10.00am technical meeting and later returned to officiate at the Special Olympics. Just 13 lifters in this opening session 11 from Canada, one South African and our own Daniel McGauley who competed in the 3 lift event with 9 from 9 and gold medals for everything, setting the place alight with a smile throughout his polished performance, a hard act to follow. Daniel also carried the flag for England at the opening ceremony the following day.

Equipped lifters. Hugo Duarte (93kg sen) who ideally wanted lift in the Classic event is now I think beginning to excel and establish himself as an equipped lifter, squatting 300kg (gold) and benching 200kg (gold) in setting an impressive 787.5kg total and a well deserved overall silver medal. Next up was Loius Phelps (105kg sen) also secured a squat gold medal with his 290kg third attempt and a silver overall medal fitted in between his scuba diving feats around the island.

Romina Basting (52kg sen) collected silver medals for each discipline and overall to maintain the team standard.

Classic Junior Men

Up first was Tom Hitchcock-Wyatt, although lifting unopposed in the 59kg category Tom in his first international showed plenty of confidence and a positive attitude in his workmanlike performance. In the 83kg class Sonny Nash (4th) and Josh Steen (6th) were up against tough opposition but both competently went about their business with Sonny earning a bronze for his 235kg squat. In the 93's Erik Mata who had already secured a gold in the individual classic bench press, just lost out on bodyweight to Canada's Kwaku Antwi, both making impressive 742.5kg totals.

In the 120kg class Bradley May took Gold, (S) bronze, (BP) and silver (DL) and overall silver just missing out on gold when not quite able to finish his last 315kg dealift.

Classic Men open.

Ben Hampson was on his own in the 66kg class and at just 61.91kg squatted and deadlifted over 3 times his body weight. In the 74kg class Nathaniel Wiesendanger-Shaw took all four golds in beating off the Irish opposition with a 580kg total. In the 93kg class we had two lifters Pierre Shillingford and Daniel Bedford who finished 2nd and 3rd respectively with very creditable totals of 730kg and 710kg. In the 105kg class Inderraj Singh-Dhillon was on fire taking gold on the squat, dead lift and overall and with a lift to spare, had a good attempt at a 342.5kg deadlift. On to the 120kg men and Dave Richardson won his first battle in this comp by making weight! After that it was plain sailing with all golds. His aim was I think to set a new world dead lift record of 373kg which he attempted on his second lift but could on this occasion only get to his knees, hopefully he will have another opportunities to achieve this goal.

Classic Masters men

In the M1 83kg's Malcolm Long held off a strong challenge from Canada's Rob Dyke to win overall gold by just 2.5kg.

In the 105kg M1 class the battle was between Dean Dyble and Adam Anderson for the bronze, an exciting domestic scrap with Adam just losing out on body weight (or too much breakfast!)

Andy Plant in the 120's, a little light at 114kg took all silvers. And Mark Townend with a few injuries still managed a respectable overall bronze in the 120+kg class.

Shaun Hudon (M2 83kg) collected 4 bronze medals as our only M2 male competitor and John O'Riordan our only M3 won a bronze(S), silver (BP) and Bronze (DL &T).

Classic sub junior women

Our lone competitor Daniella placed third in the 72kg class in her quest to follow in big sister Charlie's foot steps, not a bad start!

Classic junior women

Team winners England with 4 golds, (Tiarna Pearce, Karenjeet Bains, Sophia Ellis, Charlie Chester) 3 silvers, (Stacie Jones, Sian Arterton, Drew Fackrell) and a bronze (Sabrina Rew) and all on the rostrum. The closest contest was between Karenjeet Bains and Canada's Kirstie Armstead in the 63kg class, decided by just 2.5kg. Sophia Ellis in the 72kg class with a 726.13 IPF points score also won the best lifter award for this age group.

Classic women open

At 57kg Jodie Cook and Moya Williams placed 2nd(397.5kg) and 3rd(392.5kg) respectively, both high totals but were up against a world class act from Canada (Maria Htee).

Moa Wikner (432.5kg) and Stephanie Pike (380kg) occupied the first two places on the podium in the 63kg class, Moa taking all the golds. In the 72's Sheri Miles had to pull out all the stops on the deadlift after only making her first bench, hoisting a massive 207.5kg deadlift to pip Canada's Melissa Garron by 2.5kg. Emily Greenway with a gold on the squat (167.5kg) was just 2.5kg behind Garron in third spot. Just missing out on the finishing podium in the 84kg class was Nicola Stimpson who did receive a silver for her huge 185kg squat.

Classic Masters1 women

Another top team performance with 2 golds (Sofia Rufus, Emma Taylor, 3 Silvers (Michelle Ryder, Emma Drackford, Kelly Phasey and a bronze (Lucy Hyde). In terms of IPF point scores for our team members the two gold medal winners (Sofia and Emma) had the highest scores.

Classic Masters 2 & 3 women

In the 63kg class Tree Grennan (3rd) and Mona Smith (4th) both I think enjoyed the experience of competing at this level and as youngsters I hope will continue to progress and have further opportunities to represent England. Georgina Hazell after winning the silver on the squat took golds thereafter to win the 84kg class with a 370kg total. Jillian Bowers made a bronze on the bench (62.5kg) and a 4th place overall. Caroline Calver was also 4th in the M3 72kg class.

Equipped women's Bench press

Romina Basting one of our only two equipped bench press entries won the gold in the 52kg class with 72.5kg and Kelly Layden-Farrer in the M1 84+kg class took gold and best lifter in her age category with her 125kg best.

Classic sub junior men Bench press.

A very light (67.22) but unopposed 74kg lifter Luca Kawahara-Musiu was successful with his second attempt of 110kg and the second highest IPF score in his age category. Jamie Green the next highest IPF scorer in winning the 105kg class with his 137.5kg lift.

Classic Junior Men Bench press

Was this England's finest hour? 5 lifters five gold medals (Tom Hitchcock-Wyatt, Chris Gallagher, Josh Steen, Erik Mata, Josh Pollard) Team winners and best lifter (Chris Gallagher)

Classic Mens open Bench press.

4 golds (Dan Magee, Paul Marsh, Nathan Oxford, Joseph Watson) 1 silver (Christopher Horton, 1 bronze (Toby Caswell) Paul took a few moments off from his coaching duties to win his title, although in reality I think he made a significant contribution the medals and successes of all those who represented England and I for one am extremely grateful for his help.

Classic men's Masters Bench press

Malcolm Long 83kg M1 silver, Nigel Seymour 83kg M2 Gold, and John O'Riordan M3 93kg Silver

Classic junior women Bench press.

Lydia Forrest (2nd) Joely Hawke (3rd) were separated by body weight (*slice of toast!*) both achieving 67.5kg. Karenjeet Bains was slightly down on her 3 lift bench with 77.5kg to earn her a silver in the 63kg's. In the 72kg's Sophia Ellis won yet another gold and a second best lifter award for her 100kg effort. Holly O'Shea failed to total but hopefully will learn from the experience and be back again.

Classic Women's Bench press.

Vicky Mirecta gave Malaysia's Stephanie Ensol a run for her money losing out on the gold medal on bodyweight with Krishnaa Mahbubani coming 3rd earning the privilege to help officials with the weigh-in later in the week.

Emma Ludlow (3rd) and Anastasia Harmer (4th) in the 57kg class. Sophie Hardy took the 63kg title unopposed with a 75kg lift. And Rachel Bradish beat Bea Wright into second place in the 72kg class with a 90kg success.

In the 84+kg class Rebecca Coggle beat the heaviest female in the competition with a 107.5kg third attempt.

Classic Women's Masters Bench press.

Local lifter (to me Northampton) Kerys Lee-Knight made all three attempts to finish second with 70kg. Lincoln Rose went one better in the 72kg's to win gold on bodyweight from Canada's Tracy Wise with 80kg. Lisa Pilkington also made all her attempts to finish in second place with her 95kg bench.

In the M2 category Rita Shergold won the most competitive class of the whole championship with the first three lifters all lifting 72.5kg, Rita (*probably no eggs on her toast*) won on bodyweight. Melanie Kaye was 4th. Jillain Bowers on her own in the 84+kg class secured another gold for the team with her 60kg best.

In the M4 our most senior lifter in the team Judith McGualey took the 63kg title to keep the golds coming.

On reflection it was somewhat disheartening that so many lifters entered in the competition could not participate due to issues with visa's and ETA's. I believe there were in the region of 120 competitors who did not have the opportunity to perform, mainly those from India and Sri Lanka, which would have had a distinct bearing on the results. As is often said you can only beat what is there on the day and as a team we did a lot of that. There were some very close confrontations and some unbelievable feats of strength witnessed by an appreciable crowd of spectators. Team members all helping one another, and in the true comradery of the sport encouraging and applauding any opposition.

As mentioned I and the team are indebted to the head coach Paul Marsh who worked tirelessly throughout the championships and in the lead up, to help so many achieve their goals. Also many thanks to Sam Coombes who came with the team purely to coach and support the needs of each of our lifters, and like Paul was constant throughout.

One person who was present for every session as an official who should not be overlooked was the CEO of British Powerlifting and President of the CPF Richard Parker. (SIR!)

The competition organisers Jeff Butt and John Smart in my opinion staged a memorable championship that ran virtually to time each day, with a reliable loading crew and few noticeable problems despite the limited number of officials. To keep the audience on their toes and for

generating an incredible atmosphere throughout the competition everyone's favourite MC Geno, who must be commended.

There are always things that people will criticise although I think it more professional to list things that might improve such championships if run again. I am aware for instance of the issues several of our team members raised regarding the 100 euro fine for not staying in the designated Holiday Inn hotel. In future I think this could be rectified by better clarification on the initial invitation i.e. if a lifter stays in the designated hotel for at least one night does this mean that they are exempt from paying any fine and if so does this have to be the night before they compete. There were also some misleading issues around banquet tickets, some people being fined if they only stayed at the hotel for one night and wanting to go to the banquet, all I think should have been clarified prior to the start of the competition. I wonder if the same ruling re fines applies to the lifters from the host nations.

I personally had a number of difficulties in communicating with the staff at the designated hotel, at one point having five different e-mails and some staff going on leave. This led to some confusion and mixed messages such as the hotel being full and rooms not available plus a few problems still to be resolved. So it would again be helpful if in future this communication was made easier with perhaps just one person to contact.

There was prior to the competition an obvious lack of international officials, I for instance pulled out of competing in the World Masters to help at this event as an official. I for one officiated on 9 sessions, which at times I found hard to concentrate for and very tiring, consequently not really fair on the lifters and others doing similar stints. It is therefore advisable to ensure sufficient officials are attending such events in future and as a suggestion incentives such as relaxing the rule re staying in the designated hotel and giving a free banquet ticket to officials might be worth consideration.

I appreciate that the CPF does not have much funding or generate much income and championships have to at least break even, but there are other ways of generating income at venues like this such as running a snack bar, holding a raffle each day, selling programmes etc.

Kevin Jane

English Team Manager