

## **EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2001**

The European Championships were held in Marromme, France just out side Rouen, Normandy. It was a well-equipped and spacious venue, and the French people made us very welcome. There were twenty-nine lifters from the BDFPA and all returned with a trophy, some of course with four wins out of four. All our lifters did very well, sometimes under very difficult circumstances.

There were two platforms going at the same time, which is a first for the WDFPF, and on the first day. Which was the powerlifting it went very well, the unassisted and the assisted were all on the same day. The check in and weigh in went fairly smoothly and the results entered onto a lap top computer, which then put the lifters in order and printed out the sheets. Other than there being some confusion regarding the pronunciation of some of the names by the French compere the competition got under way.

Using a new two-platform idea, the Saturday went very well indeed and finished on time with almost all the British team providing some awesome lifting for the French crowd. Certain lifters stood out of the crowd.

Neil Abery broke a 7 year standing World Squat Record with a tremendous 277.5Kg in the Junior 82.5kg Class, and then went on to set a new European Bench Record and Total Record. Neil won the Juniors and came second in the open. On the shwartz, he was the best Junior Lifter.

Matt Saunders, returning from Injury was in great form, setting a European Bench Record with 212.5kg, A European Deadlift Record with 330KG and a new European Total Record with 847.5Kg. On the shwartz, Matt was the Best Senior Lifter.

Audley, also recovered after the Brits, went on to Squat 370Kg and Deadlift 340Kg.

In the unequipped 82.5kg class, Mike Joseph broke the World Total Record in the 82.5Kg Class, previously held by John Williams with 602.5kg, despite not having his best bench press. Having said that, 185kg with a sore shoulder cannot really be sniffed at!

Rick Meldon, having not made his weight class, moved into the 90Kg class and just missed out on a 700 total despite deciding to leave his third squat. I am sure he will come down to the 82.5's for the worlds and go past 700kg.

Carl Granfeld, was unfortunate not to win the 75kg class, after being up 5kg coming into the deadlift, he ended up losing out on the title by only 2.5kg.

Bill Andrews had a very bad start to the weekend by missing all three squats and moving out of the competition.

Dean Mikosv, in a similar situation managed a mediocre performance by his high standards, only getting in one of his squats, only to miss all three deadlifts, despite leading his class moving into the last event.

Julian Mealey, Jamie Ashton and Alasdair Mealey all went on to win their respective classes in the teenagers age classes.

Day two – the single lifts. Unfortunately the day did not run as smoothly as for the power, and included some tremendously bad judgements in running the two platforms. For some reason it was determined to run the unequipped squat and bench at the same time. This proved unfortunate for Alasdair Mealey who had to just do one squat and then run over and do his bench. Later on in the day, it was also decided to run the Equipped Deadlift before the end of the Equipped Bench. This proved very unfortunate for Matt Saunders and Audley Baker, both of whom were supporting John Feehan and the other equipped benchers, when they were called out to start their deadlift! Matt Saunders with a tremendous display of courage had to open on 300Kg, COLD, to stay within sight of the title – he took it with a great lift and then went 317.5 to win the class. Audley had the same problem and ended up having to go 200,250,300! Another problem then became apparent, it turned out after a few officials had been questioned that the Italians, who only came for the single lift competition, turned up two hours late, but were weighed in and allowed to lift. This is what all the confusion and delays were about. When we asked the English-speaking officials about this, it was denied twice and then admitted to. Because of the late entries there were not enough trophies to go around. When we asked about that, we were told the late entries would not get one. It did not turn out like that though and a lot of angry lifters and frustrated officials struggled to get the balance right. It all worked out in the end though and most people came away happy.

Other highlights of the day included Neil Abery, still looking very much worse for wear taking a new world record squat with 260kg!

Del Cope also looked liked coming back too the form we have all come to except and set a new Senior World Deadlift Record with a 270.5! See Del, we all knew you could do it, now, lets see you passing 280 before too long.

Mike Joseph also competed in the unequipped and equipped bench taking 185kg in each. This meant he had done three presses of 185kg over the duration of the weekend! It was quite amusing when someone in his class was mocking him for not wearing a bench shirt – especially when mike went on to beat him by about 40Kg!!!!

John Feehan took the biggest bench of the day with 245kg. He went 252.5 on his third and got the bar up, but was judged to raised his bum off the bench and got failed 2 to 1. The lift itself looked fairly comfortable, well as comfortable as 252.5kg can look! I think John can break the 260 barrier this year.

We also had a great showing from our masters lifters, with most setting p.b.'s and with many records being broken. Special mention has to be given to Les Pilling who once again did the equipped and the raw power, winning the Masters 2 category with some incredible lifting.

Aside from the lifting, the team spirit amongst the English camp was superb, I have never seen anything like it. Everybody supported everybody and pushed all the lifters on every attempt. Big thanks must go out to John Feehan for his support on the first day. As in the British, he was there for everyone – thanks John.

I also want to offer a personal thanks to Roy Olsen for supporting me after I had the worst weekend of my life! Roy you are a true asset to the federation and I can think of no one better to have as our President.

Report by Bill Andrews and Roy Olsen