

England U23 report – UK Outdoor Tug of War Championships – 13/08/2011

Saturday was the U23s first ever outdoor 600 kilos United Kingdom Tug Of War Championships following on from the successful indoor event in Scotland in February. I am pleased to say that our team on the day gave the more established international teams some tough pulling. Weighing ten kilos light, it was a great performance all round especially the pulls against England 'B' and Wales 'A' - some real grit and determination and effort shown by all. We may not have won an end but and I am very encouraged by the way our team performed. You were a credit to England and our Association on your first international - well done team!

On Sunday we entered the open clubs 600 kilos competition we were drawn in a group of six including Norton, Oxney, Totham Bull, Sandhurst and Two Dales. With changes having to be made from Saturday's team Ben and Lloyd came into the team with George as reserve - we weighed 12 kilos light.

Our first pull was Oxney who beat us 2-0 – three of our U23s squad members were in their team so great training for all. Second out we had Sandhurst 'B' which we handled well and won 2-0 - our first points ever at a UK's. Our third match was Two Dales a seven man team but, on weight, a super effort resulting in a 1-1 draw. We then had Totham Bull with Chris and George from our squad pulling for them - another 1-1 draw so nearly 2-0, our weight disadvantage playing a small part on this occasion. Our final pull was Norton and every effort was made to give them a pull. Every member of our team gave 100% to try and stop them, we lost 2-0 but it was a cracking effort by all the team.

When the results came in we finished in third place in the group - an outstanding achievement for our first UK open and I am very pleased with all our teams efforts.

We had to make some hurried changes to the team for the UK Championships this weekend - some due to unforeseen circumstances and others due to pullers not informing me they would not be there on the day. We had dedicated pullers waiting at the scales on Sunday who ended up having to pull for other clubs. This situation is totally unacceptable and disrespectful both to me and the team members who had been let down by these other pullers' lack of commitment. Teams are now being selected for the world championships, so don't moan if you are left out of them. It is a privilege to be selected for the England squad - if you no longer want to be part of the team then let me know and I can concentrate on the dedicated squad members.

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