



Director for England – Powerlifting report 2014

Without doubt 2014 represents the most successful year to date for the GBPF, the large increase in membership, being the most significant development. I now feel that England is part of the GBPF as opposed to being more or less the GBPF as it used to appear to be.

The rapidly growing membership although much needed and welcome does create more work for those involved in either organising events and for the officers of the various divisions and home nations. From an English perspective I am aware that many divisional competitions are attracting far more entries than can be catered for, even the All England championship was oversubscribed. If the membership trend is hopefully continuing it is about being one step ahead and ensuring that there are sufficient places and events available for the members to compete and qualify for national competitions at.

As I have mentioned in the past, it is I think time raise the qualifying standards at national level for 'classic' lifting which would make running the British championships easier. At the same time introducing a secondary qualifying standard and championship as with BALWA in the past, would give lifters additional titles and standards to aim at. Similar action at divisional level would help to keep events to one day affairs, but would necessitate running more competitions. If entries to divisional championships are regularly becoming capped and guest lifters not allowed to compete there are likely to be members who may miss out on an opportunity to qualify for a national competition and some members who will probably look to alternative organisations.

The English Powerlifting Association was originally set up to give the English divisions some independence within the GBPF, which at the time was needed. However since the current GBPF executive has taken over I feel that far less importance and support has been given to the EPA. This to some degree is a positive as there is not the threat as in the past of English divisions being dictated to or subjected to, dare I say mismanagement of the GBPF. Nevertheless The EPA was also set up to ensure that divisions had representation at national level and would provide the appropriate channel for members to voice their views and opinions.

I often skim through social media web sites and can see any amount of moans and groans from members not happy with 'this' or wanting 'that' to be altered. Grumbling about things on sites such as face book does not alter anything, talking to divisional officers and making sure your points are voiced might. However my point here is about what I see as a lack of representation for members in some divisions and the possibility that some members are not having the opportunity to have their points aired. In a similar light not all divisions have provided me with AGM minutes and account details so that they can claim their membership rebates, money the members of divisions' might of course find useful.

I appreciate the difficulty divisions have in trying to attract or encourage new members to take on committee responsibilities but with so many new members there are likely to be some who have time and skills to offer. Representation at EPA meetings is I think becoming more important albeit not for the same reasons as in the past, but there are a growing number of issues that need to be discussed and decisions to be made that would enable the sport to develop further. In particular debating;

- Easing the need for lifters to enter competitions as soon as an event is announced in order to ensure they have a place.
- Whether to introduce a qualifying standard for the All England championships and if what standard.
- Drug testing at the All England and lifters selected to represent the country
- Do we need to re-introduce the English bench press championship in light of needed to select lifters for the Commonwealth.

I produced a report on the Home Nations earlier this year, which for England was a great event and result, not that the other nations can complain as there were some incredible performances from all involved. The All England championships was the biggest to date but I'm still amazed at how many lifters did not turn up to lift on both days. In all around twenty meaning that if I had known earlier those on the reserve list could have been able to compete. There are always a few lifters who become injured or take ill at the last moment, but I do wonder if the possible threat of being drug tested may have also been a deterrent, if so good. The high standard of lifting did make it difficult to select a team for the Home Nations especially as this year those invited wanted to lift. With the commonwealth powerlifting championships taking place this year I envisage even more entries for the All England in 2015.

Kevin Jane - Secretary