

REPORT OF 2016 WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS, SZCZYRK, POLAND

The team arrived at different times and on different days, owing to differing financial capabilities; nevertheless, all arrived before their allotted lifting days.

The hotel wasn't all it should be, on top of a mountain, terrific views. One particular fly in the ointment with regard to the competition, was the lack of control of random people who were using the warm-up area for personal training, all coaches had wrist bands indicating their status; this did not work well as there was no control on the two entrances to the warm-up area. I brought this to the attention of an IPF official; he did take action, only verbal action, which worked for a short period, no "sentries" posted to prevent this happening!

First to lift was Parkhead's Joe Sherwood - 66kg sub-junior; Joe's second outing at a World Championships. He knew what was expected of him, never a world champion, but the world's best trier. He came in on a 165kg opening squat, but was denied by the referees. Most in the audience thought different - I couldn't possibly comment. Second attempt at 165kg went better and he was given three white lights, along with a Usain Bolt like pose from Joe! On walking out with his third squat attempt Joe felt a pull in the hamstring area and the attempt at 177.5kg was turned down. He came out to a reduced starter of 82.5kg on the bench press given his slight injury, which he pressed with ease. His second attempt 87.5kg was turned down, but Joe succeeded with his third at 87.5kg. His three deadlifts of 165kg, 177kg and 185kg were all successful, giving Joe a competition personal best total of 437.5kg and Wilks score of 350.61 plus four valuable team points.

Next up was Daniel Sherman, 74kg sub-junior on his second outing at a World Championships. Great things were expected of Daniel and he didn't disappoint. He came out to a 235kg opener, given 2-1; three white lights on his second attempt of 245kg and 2-1 on his third, which was a competition best lift for him. His bench went as expected, 135kg opener good lift, 142.5kg second attempt; third bench of 150kg, would have been a competition personal best, but he couldn't lock it out. His deadlift went very well given that Omani lifter Awlad Thani Al Khattab was a victim of his coach's mathematics on his massive, but unnecessary 265kg final attempt. Daniel deadlifted 235 and 245, but failed his last deadlift of 250kg. Perhaps good fortune played a part, but Daniel deserved his Gold for Squat, Silver in Deadlift and Gold overall. His Wilks score was 465.3 giving GBR another 12 team points.

Next up was Horncastle's Kakub Zareba 83KG sub-junior in his first international and a young man with a great future in equipped powerlifting. He squatted with a wide stance, securing his first two squats, 230kg and 240kg, but his third of 250 kg was turned down. His bench went 130kg, 140kg, but again his 150kg last attempt was

turned down. With hindsight, Jakub was almost out of gas, as in the deadlift he pulled 205kg to open, failed 210kg and Dean then withdrew him due to his lack of strength and energy. Regardless of the above Jakub is a very capable young man and will go on to bigger and better things. He made 394.82 Wilks points and gained GBR three more team points.

Ryan Strang (Parkhead) was next. Ryan has lifted at this level many times during his junior career and knew what to expect. However, he managed only his opening 260kg squat. Bench Press was a different story with 172.5, 182.5 and 192.5kg, all given and rightly so he has been strong on the bench in training leading up to this competition. In deadlift, he pulled 230kg, 242.5kg but missed the final pull of 252.5kg, leaving him with a competition best total of 695kg and competition P.B. of 242.5kg on deadlift. All in all a good days work from Ryan.

Our 93kg lifter John Walsh had to withdraw from the competition due to back problems. John still attended the competition to support and to take in the workings of a competition at World level. Hopefully John can get fit for 2017.

In the 105kg sub-junior class we had Farris Collins from the south coast, at a very light body weight of 95.20. Nothing spectacular was expected of Farris and I am sure he would admit to a very average day's work given that he has just moved up to this weight. Given time I am sure he will shine in the 105kg class. One squat at a respectable 265kg first attempt, one bench at 170kg second attempt and one deadlift at 210kg; well below his capabilities. On the third attempt three factors were prominent; the character of Farris himself, the coaching abilities of Dean Bowring and the 200 plus people in the room willing him to pull the bar off the floor. Unbelievable atmosphere and tension and at the end of it Farris was placed third in the bench press, bronze medal. He finished with Wilks 400.80 points and gained us six team points.

Next up was Steven Barber, a 105kg junior from Birmingham. Steven's in his last year as a junior, but with a great future in equipped lifting and a very likeable young man. Steven took to the platform with P.B.s in mind and achieved his goals with ease, Squat, 250kg, 260kg, 267.5kg, all good lifts. He only got his opening bench of 152.5kg, but still a competition P.B. deadlift 255kg, 265kg and 275kg. All given, a very impressive performance from someone who has been powerlifting for just over a year. More to come from Steven in the senior ranks and I wish him all the best

Jack Johnson 120kg joins the "junior" ranks in 2017. Someone indicated that Jack is not a morning type of guy; a 6.45am kit check and rack heights, weigh-in 7.00am and start at 9.00am. Well he was there and he certainly went to work. Jack was in direct competition with a young American throughout the three lifts. Jack's Squats went as

planned 275kg, 290kg, 300kg; the problem was the USA lifter was a huge 65.5kg up on Jack and some would say game over. Not in this case; Jack benched 225kg, 235kg, 245kg against the American's best bench of 210kg and Jack had reduced the lead by 35kg. Deadlift came along and both opened on 275kg, Jack then pulled an easy 300kg; USA missed 285kg and went for the same weight again. The audience didn't expect him to pull it; a fail by the American would have left Jack needing to pull only 307.0kg for the title. The young American got the 285.0kg second attempt and Jack needed 317.5kg to win. The tension and atmosphere were electric and unfortunately it was just out of Jack's range on the day. He had to settle for Silver overall, Silver on Squat, Gold on Benchpress and Gold on Deadlift; not a bad morning's work. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Jack; he is one hell of a competitor with a glowing future in this sport. Jack told me that it was "the best week ever", great team mates, top coaching and a chest full of medals. He finished with a 845kg total, 487.65 Wilk score and nine valuable team points towards our Sub-Junior Men team's 3rd place.

Last to take the platform was Sam Harvey, 120kg Junior from Suffolk. Another who has recently arrived into the sport and is in his last year as a junior lifter and will do very well in the senior ranks. Sam also was out for P.B. lifts and achieved his goals with seven from nine lifts, Squat 265kg given, 277.5kg fail 282.5kg fail. Bench press, 180kg, 190kg and a 195kg P.B. Deadlift 240kg, 252.5kg and a 260kg P.B. placing him 5th. A superb performance from Sam, who will go on and do well in equipped lifting,

To look back on the whole week, we can claim a success, given the medal haul and the sub-junior team taking third place in the team rankings. We will continue to work towards bigger numbers partaking in "equipped" lifting and encouraging more junior men and women into the equipped side of lifting. What was achieved in Poland may be the spur that some youngsters need to move into equipped. Our squad of mostly new lifters, hopefully will have improved the chances of success. I would like to thank all the boys who lifted for being part of the team and to Charlie Shotton-Gale, Dean Bowring, David Murray and also Ray Bowring for all their hard work, coaching and preparing these fantastic young athletes and playing a massive part in the success they achieved.

Team Manager - Jim McGill.