

Team Managers Report for World Masters Equipped Competition at Potchefstroom 07-12/10/19

We had enormous misgivings regarding the Elgro Hotel having read nothing but terrible reviews however the truth was much better than expected. The hotel is a little tired and aged, but the staff were all superb, the greeting was very welcoming, the rooms clean, the beds comfortable and the food good, quickly allaying our concerns.

The Men:

The competition started well with the master's 4 men Stan Macrow and I in spite of Stan recovering from a shoulder operation and my knee injury currently diagnosed as a torn/displaced meniscus in my right (dominant) knee. I was unable to train for 7 weeks up to the Worlds and Stan only limited training, straight silvers for Stan, one silver and three golds for me was very acceptable in the circumstances. Phil Richard was sublime as always although stumbling with the last two deadlifts when his grip failed so the numbers were not as high as usual but still good enough for three golds and one bronze. Phil Frost started well but a back injury reared its head to spoil the party only achieving a token deadlift leaving Phil with fourth place and a bronze bench-press medal and valuable team points.

Out of 4 male competitors we achieved two golds one silver and a fourth, all good points for the team.

The Ladies:

The lady's competition was a much bumpier ride, Amanda Hughes lifted very well, although unopposed, pulling a creditable 327.5 total for Gold equalling her PB squat. Joanne Barnes arrived sporting the aftereffects of a heavy cold exasperated by the long-haul travel but still produced an intelligent, gutsy performance with a silver on the bench for Bronze overall. Michelle Brand had a positive start with a 160kg squat, but it all unravelled at the bench, the opener looked terrible, the second little better, the last attempt was much better but in changing the line mid press the bar went down earning two red lights. The appeal was worth a try but I had to agree with my Jury colleagues decision, Michelle continued to a 145kg deadlift but this was for nothing of course. This was a shame as Michelle was on for silver or a possible gold, but this is the way of equipped lifting. Kelly Clark lifted very well in a strong group achieving a fourth place and a PB deadlift, this was a creditable performance in her first international. Maureen Gordon unfortunately also had a stinker bombing on the squat, the impression was that something was wrong from the get-go as Mo just didn't settle, even her deadlift was disappointing, I understand an injury showed up after the event. Melissa Wall lifted well but was outgunned to straight fourth places in spite of getting personal best lifts. Dawn Morrell lifted straight bronzes after a very smooth performance.

Out of 7 female competitors we achieved 1 Gold, 2 Bronze, 2 Fourth places and 2 bombs, all but the last 2 giving good points to the team's tally.

Unfortunately, I finished up working every day due partly due to Hannie losing his voice and Gaston's bereavement making it difficult for me to give the team the attention I would have preferred. Charlotte worked every day on the scoring table, with the efforts of Joanne, Phil, Michelle and Stan the British team punched well above its weight. A huge vote of thanks to Steve who worked tirelessly everyday both coaching and supporting in every way and indeed to all the team for their inimitable support in the warmup room and on the platform. As always, the British Masters Equipped Team rocks!

In conclusion I would like to add that this was a difficult environment to compete at elite level, the air is very dry, the temperatures high and the elevation at 4000 feet making breathing harder. I personally travelled for 31 hours from door to door and many had a longer trip. I am very proud of our team in every way, we were the largest team at the Europeans and one of the smallest at the Worlds but still came away with 3 World Champions, 1 Silver, 2 Bronze. Best lifter awards we had 1 Silver Phil Richard and 1 Bronze Stan Macrow, Team awards we took Bronze in M2 women and M4 men. Not too shabby!