

## THE TUG-OF-WAR. ITS ORGANIZATION.

The tug-of-war competition was included in the programme for field and track events when the invitations to the Olympic Competitions were issued, the Committee for Athletics having the management of this event too. At the beginning of October, 1911, the Secretary of the Swedish Olympic Committee issued an appeal in the sporting press of the country, begging those interested in the matter to attend a meeting to be held on the 17 October at the offices of the Olympic Committee "in order to discuss the question of carrying out organized training all over the country and to take other measures to solve the problem of Sweden's participation in the tug-of-war competition". Some 15 persons attended the meeting in question, and, after an animated discussion, a motion was passed for the appointment of a special committee for the tug-of-war competition. The Swedish Athletic Association afterwards approved of the choice of the following Committee for the Tug-of-war competition.

*President:*..... Captain GÖSTA DRAKE.  
*Vice-President:* Lieutenant E. KILLANDER.  
*Secretary:*..... KRISTIAN HELLSTRÖM, Esq.  
*Other Members:* Sergeant A. ALMQVIST,  
 Lieutenant A. DAEVEL,  
 Paymaster NILS DJURBERG,  
 Police-Inspector A. FÄLDT,  
 Lieutenant C. GYLLENHAMMAR,  
 J. AF KLERCKER. Esq.

Police-Sergeant G. H. LINDMARK.  
Sergeant A. HJ. WOLLGARTH.  
Lieutenant B. EKSTRÖM.

The first thing to be done was, of course, to begin the systematic training of our competitors for the event, and then to issue an invitation accompanied with as complete a list of rules as possible. After four preliminary and three final try outs, in all of which the first team of the Stockholm Police was victorious, the team mentioned was chosen to represent the blue and yellow flag of Sweden against the redoubted City of London Police team and other opponents. The Swedish team was composed as follows: Constables A. L. Andersson (Captain), A. Bergman, J. V. Edman, E. A. Fredriksson, C. Jonsson (anchor), E. V. Larsson, — all belonging to the Stockholm Police — Aug. Gustafsson, of the Gothenburg Police, and Mr. C. H. Lindström, Sandhamn. The reserves were Constables D. Larsson, Hj. T. Lundberg, G. S. Strid (Stockholm Police) and Corporal O. E. Sköld, Göta Life Guards.

At first, very short and simple rules had been issued by the Committee for Athletics in the invitation programme for the Tug-of-War competition, but it was now found necessary to revise them and make them considerably stricter. The new rules were specially directed against the turning allowed at the Games in 1908, and also against the plan, adopted by some teams, of making a spring upwards on the word being given to start, so as to get a fast foothold, or hollow, for the feet.

We shall now let the protocol tell its own tale.

#### THE COMPETITION.

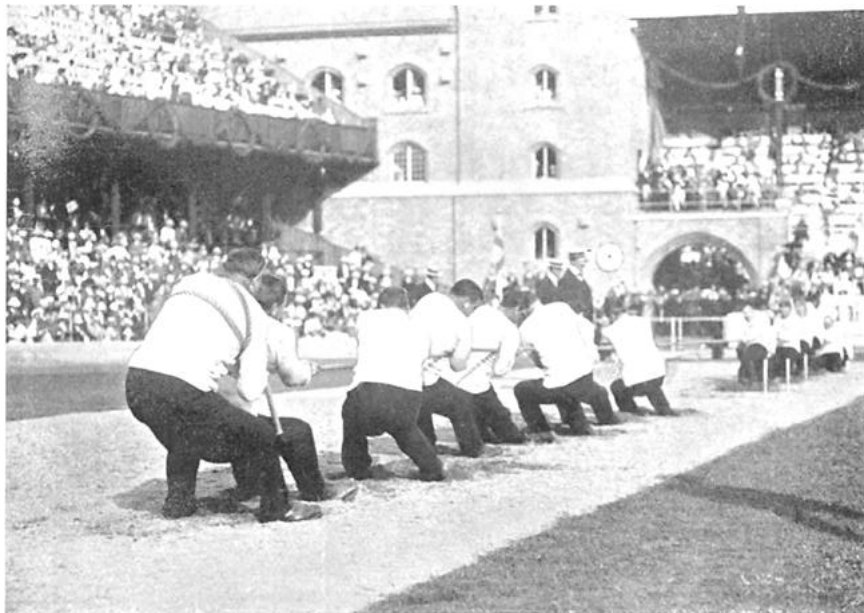
On the close of entries, June 6, five nations had announced their intention of sending a team for the tug-of-war competitions; these were Austria, Bohemia, Great Britain, Luxemburg and Sweden. In order to make the competition as just as possible, the Committee had determined that each team should compete against all the other teams and, after lots were drawn and the dates of the matches fixed, the programme was as follows:

Sunday,	7	July: Bohemia v. Great Britain ; Sweden v. Austria.
Monday,	8	» Great Britain v. Sweden; Luxemburg v. Austria.
Tuesday,	9	» Luxemburg v. Great Britain; Bohemia v. Sweden.
Thursday,	11	» Luxemburg v. Sweden; Bohemia v. Austria.
Friday,	12	» Great Britain v. Austria; Bohemia v. Luxemburg,

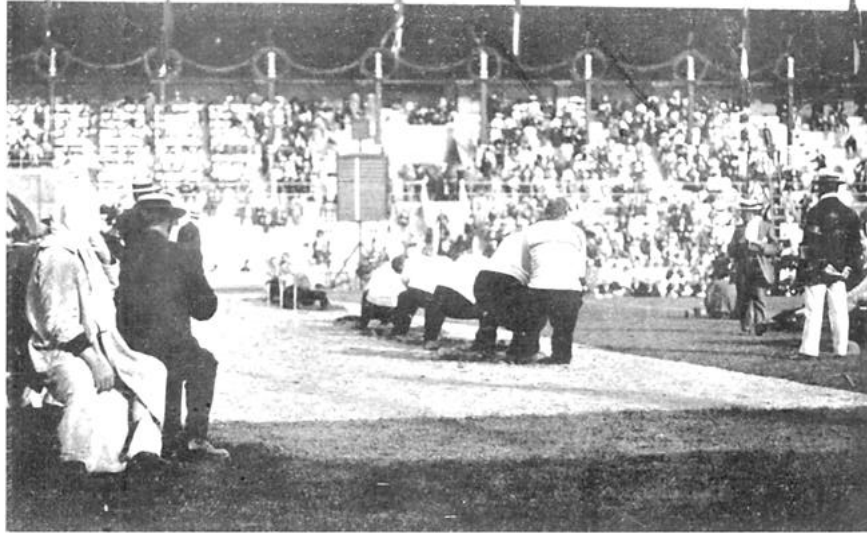
For the competition, the Committee had been given a sand track situated at the north end of the Stadium arena, 40 met. long and 8 met. wide, and before the beginning of the competitions the ground became very good indeed, and of a sufficient hardness. New ropes were procured, and to enable those of the spectators that were seated at a distance to follow the progress of the competition, flag staffs with



GT. BRITAIN'S TUG-OF-WAR TEAM.  
To the left, Mr. CHAFFE, the captain.



TUG-OF-WAR. GT. BRITIAN V. SWEDEN  
The first bout; won by the Swedish team. The British team to the left.



TUG-OF-WAR: GT. BRITAIN V. SWEDEN.



Second bout in Tug-of-War, Gt. Britain v. Sweden. Gt. Britain lost on a foul, several of the team sitting on the ground.

the flags of the competing nations were provided, to be placed at the sides of the track where the respective teams were pulling.

The competition as a whole was disappointing, as, of the five nations entered, only two took part in the event. When, at 3.45 p. m. on Sunday, the 7 July, the match between Bohemia and Great Britain was to begin, the stately British team was the only one that marched into the arena, the Bohemians, for some unknown reason, not putting in an appearance. Great Britain's team was therefore declared the winner of this match.

The same thing happened in the next bout, which was to be held the same day, for, at 5 p. m. the Swedish Police team awaited in vain the arrival of its opponents, the Austrians. The British and the Swedish teams could thus count a win each, without catching even a glimpse of their opponents.

But when at 5.15 p. m. on Monday, the 8 July, notice was given through the megaphones of the beginning of the tug-of-war match for the day, there marched in simultaneously from either tower-entrance, the teams from Great Britain and Sweden. The first-mentioned seemed cast in a more massive mould than the latter, although the Swedish eight seemed a formidable one, in consequence of the finely and harmoniously developed athletic forms of the men.

Great Britain's team was as follows: A. Munro (b. 1870), J. Shepherd (b. 1884), J. Sewell (b. 1882), J. Dowler (b. 1879), E. Mills (b. 1878), F. Humphreys (b. 1878), M. Hynes (b. 1883), and W. Chaffe (b. 1870), all of whom, excepting J. Sewell and M. Hynes were members of the victorious British team at the Olympic Games of London, in 1908.

On drawing lots for sides, the British team won and elected to pull with the sun at its back. The rope lay at full length along the ground, and the teams took up their positions alongside it. The leader of the competition explained the words of command that were to be given, and then everything was in readiness. A feeling of the intensest excitement filled the atmosphere; not a movement was to be seen among the thousands of breathless spectators that filled the stands of the Stadium.

"Ready!" — "Pull!". The rope is lifted from the ground; it tightens and trembles like a well-tuned violin string, for a tremendous amount of massed strength is exerted on each side. The red knots on the rope seem, at first, as if they were nailed fast to the dividing lines, but, after about 30 seconds, the blue band marking the middle of the rope begins slowly but surely to move towards the Swedish side, and, with short, powerful pulls, the Swedish Police draw their City of London comrades gradually nearer to the fatal middle line. For one single moment, which to the spectators seems an eternity, the strife appears uncertain of issue, but then again the Swedish team begins to draw in inch after inch of the rope, until, at last, the judge's red flag is lowered as the signal that the home-team has succeeded in the first pull. A thunder of applause roars through the Stadium, the spectators shouting and stamping with joy at Sweden's success.

The pitch is once more made in readiness and the rope laid down afresh and, after an interval of 5 minutes, the leader summons the teams to meet for the second pull. Having changed sides, the British team now faces the sun, but it gives a tremendous pull, and the Swedes are drawn forward a considerable distance. Then the rope stands still again and, in a short time, the short, intensive "Hej" shout of the Stockholm Police is heard, and the line moves slowly back to their side of the ground. Once or twice the central mark moves in indecision a few inches backwards and forwards, but then the knots on the line suddenly stand still, and the judge's flag falls for the second time. Neither team has succeeded in drawing its opponent across the central mark, but the verdict goes in favour of the Swedish team on this occasion too, as a couple of the British team have become so exhausted during the pull that they sink to the ground, unable to rise again in spite of the repeated admonitions of the judge to do so.

As the Luxemburg team made no appearance when called on, this trial of strength and skill between the chosen representatives of the London and the Stockholm Police was the only match in the tug-of-war competition during the Olympic Games of 1912.

The Gold Medal was thus awarded to Sweden and the Silver Medal to Great Britain.

