**BTG Leeds: 28th – 31st July 2022**

After missing BTG for the last two years, it was great to be back in Leeds with a Freeman Heart & Lung Adult team of 22 registered Competitors and 7 Supporters and great to have 7 new team members.

Unfortunately, Covid did mean that our competitor Wendy Caulkin was unable to make any of her events.

**Day 1**

For the Freeman Team this meant Archery, Snooker, Volleyball and Basketball. Our Archers comprised of Alan Le Marinel, Shaun Winter, Ivor Morris, Doreen Collingwood, Ivor Morris and Davie Munro with Susan Wrightson providing valuable coaching tips. A long but great day was had by all with the added bonus of 2 silver and 2 bronze medals for the team!

Meanwhile Steven Firn and Liam Waterworth were our snooker boys, doing what they love and being rewarded by picking up a bronze medal each!

Craig Jones and Graham Kenny joined a mixed Volleyball team and achieved an amazing silver medal!

And an event rarely attended by our team is the Basketball social but was this year attended by our lovely Jordan Wilde who did us proud and rewarded with a medal for her efforts.

**Opening Ceremony**

The team congregated in Victoria Gardens looking great in our new team kit, it was a fantastic atmosphere followed by a short parade to Millennium Square where each team was announced. As usual and understandably the Donor Family Network received an amazing cheer. At the ceremony itself our very own Gordon Paw participated in the handing over of Tom’s Baton. An enormously proud moment.

The ceremony was finished off nicely by a team meal where it was lovely to have the donor family of Jordan Wilde and Gordon Paw join us as well as the lovely Lynne Holt and a few extras from Harefield!

**Day 2**

Early start for the Table Tennis crew Alex and Gordon (and myself, their chauffeur!) who enjoyed their respective matches and an equally early start for our only golfer Sam Alexander who had an enjoyable day of golf also.

A more acceptable time of day for our ten pin bowlers: Doreen Collingwood, Susan Wrightson, Craig Jones, Davie Munro, Lisa Hertwig, Jordan Wilde, Liam Waterworth, Shaun Winter, Rebecca Long and Linzi Saunders. I got to see each play their games and we have sone great bowlers with an added bonus of 3 bronze and 2 silver medals.

The evening saw the Darts Social supported by many including FHLTA’s Debbie Burdon and Adele Lambert. Ivor Morris, Steven Firn and Rebecca Long were competing. Ivor Morris went on to take a bronze medal making it a very late finish which Graham Kenny had to stay and support before returning and disturbing his sleeping family well after hours!!

**Day 3**

Another early start for Alex Bell at Badminton and another enjoyable match. Meanwhile Doreen and Ivor did the walk with Doreen picking up silver medal!

At the bowls Liam and Steven were back in action and Liam managed an amazing bronze medal on what was a long but enjoyable afternoon.

The highlight of the games then took place, the Donor walk/Run. Kirsteen Montgomery and Lisa Hertwig were doing the Mini Marathon. Lisa gained a bronze medal and we were blown away by Kirsteen who did a great run with partner Mark just 12 MONTHS! After receiving a double lung transplant AND raising over £2000 for FHLTA in the process!!

The rest of it walked “Freeman Style” with added transplant guests Vicky Pettersen and Katy Taylor-Hamilton, not to mention two old dears that rocked up (aka Adele and Debbie). Look at the pictures! Think they speak for themselves about the great night it was.

**Day 4**

Athletics Day!! Early start for Doreen, Jordan, Craig and Myself. Doreen started the day with a fantastic Ball throw earning her a silver medal. Jordan attempted Discus having no clue what to do then totally was smashing it by her third attempt thanks to some tips from Craig Jones. Craig then went on to get a Gold in his Discus competition, followed by a Gold in Shot putt (despite being injured)! Shortly after I attempted Javelin (first time since 2015) and came away with bronze.

The late risers then started to join. Our sprinters this year were Graham, Kirsteen, Lisa, Paul and Richard with and picking up a silver and two bronze medals.

More afternoon ball throw from Ivor, Liam, Linzi, Rebecca and Shaun and another bronze medal for Shaun.

The session ended perfectly with a great Team Relay performance from Kirsteen, Paul, Richard and Graham.

And so, the games end but of course not without the Gala Celebration at Leeds Armories Museum. As is tradition, throughout the weekend the team vote for Freeman Awards. The Joan Whitney Award (for new members) went to Ivor Morris. All new members fitted in fantastically and all received votes. The Graham Marsh Award (open to all competitors excluding Team Manager) went to another new member Davie Munro (with Doreen Collingwood and Liam Waterworth in joint second). Both winners were truly worthy for their enthusiasm and efforts all weekend. A glass was also raised, and names read out of our beloved team members who sadly have lost their fight since we were last together in 2019. The list was far too long, but as the candles that each of us have say “Gone yet never forgotten.”

The team totally did themselves and their donors proud and demonstrated what can be achieved thanks to transplantation. It’s never about the medals, nice that they are, it’s always about the being here to have a go.

If you have never attended the games but think you may like to join us next year in Coventry, email Louise@fhlta@mail.com.

Louise McLellan

FHLTA Sports Manager