

INTO THE SWING OF THINGS



“SCHWINGEN” is a traditional form of wrestling in Switzerland.

THE COMPETITIONS usually take place on sawdust in an arena.

THE WRESTLING BREECHES made of tear-resistant fabric are the most important piece of equipment.

THE AIM is to force the opponent onto their back.



PHILIPP ROTH

Age: 21

Lives in: Biberist (Switzerland)

Loves: a good cut of meat

Finds impossible: starting the day without a coffee

“ Sport helps me let off steam. It gives me the strength to do my job.”

Philipp Roth, Designer PackSys Global

Philipp Roth is determination and endurance personified. The 21-year-old designer has only been at PackSys Global for a few months. His favourite sport of “Schwingen” gives him the strength to do his job. He was first introduced to this traditional form of Swiss wrestling by his cousin at the age of 14. His two younger brothers have also become part of the wrestling community. Training is held once a week at the wrestling club. “Once you join a club, you’re a member for life,” explains Philipp. Wrestling is not much different to work: young and old work alongside each other, with the more experienced athletes helping the young talents get into the swing of things.

The Federal Schwingfest is held every three years and is the biggest competition for this sport, attracting some 50,000 viewers. The winner is crowned the king of wrestling. Swiss wrestling is a very popular topic in the media. The aim of the traditional Swiss form of wrestling is to force the opponent onto their back. The men’s only aid is the special breeches made of tear-resistant fabric. The athletes grab hold of their opponent’s breeches – and off they go.

The champions are celebrated nationwide, although these strapping athletes don’t earn any prize money. “But there’s a gift temple with non-cash prizes. The bigger the event, the better the prizes,” explains Philipp. Traditional prizes include cow bells and wooden furniture. The main prize is often a bull, called a “Muni” in Switzerland. Philipp takes part in up to 15 small competitions a year – and with great success: the Swiss media is already calling him “Schwingerprinz” (wrestling prince).