



The Traditional Heavyweight Competition

The Scottish Heavy Events have been a part of Highland Games for centuries. The ancient Heavy Events date back early in Scottish history originating during the reign of King Malcolm Canmore in seven traditional events. At the end of the second day of competition all the points are totaled, the winner being the one with the most points. The basic events are:



The Maglashon Stone

This event, is so gruelling that some athletes opt out (scratch). The Maglashon Stone weighs 220 pounds (100kg). It is round in shaped, the athlete picks up the stone, bringing it to chest height, the competitors have 90 seconds to lift it from the ground to their chest as many times as they can. Tradition tells us that the louder the athlete yells, the more painful they are finding it!

Weight for Distance

This event vaguely resemble the Olympic discus throw because the athlete prepares for releasing the weight by spinning forward in the approach. The great difficulty for the athlete is maintaining balance, whether the weight is 56 pounds or 28 pounds. Holding the linked handle in his/her hand, the athlete takes a good spinning windup and releases the weight. Women use a 14 pound weight.



The Scottish Hammer

The hammer is actually a 16 or 22 -pound steel ball bearing that is bored out, with a cane handle fitted into it. A professional athlete will usually wear custom boots with a long steel shank off the side to help him keep his balance, and he will resin his hands for a better grip. He swings the hammer in a circle overhead several times before releasing it from a twisted position. Because the athlete is throwing the hammer opposite the direction he is facing, spectators are encouraged to stay behind the safety screens.

Burgh Stone Throw

This is a popular event for both the spectators and athletes. The Burgh Stone is Helensburgh's version of the famous Braemar stone, so named because athletes use the "Braemar" style of throwing the stone. Helensburgh competitors throw an 16-pound stone with a natural "thumb depression. The thrower nests the stone in the crook of his neck with arm cocked behind the ear. With toe against the line, he gets a rocking motion going, pulls back and releases the stone.



Weight for Height

In this event the athlete throws a set of steel weights overhead. Male competitors use a 56-pound weight. The weight must clear a bar above the athlete's head. Each athlete gets three attempts to clear the bar and, if successful, can then go on to the next height. The athlete stands under the bar between the cross pieces. First he swings the weight out to the side to gain momentum, swings it between his legs, and pulls it up high to release it overhead.

Local Caber Toss

The Caber toss is considered the most impressive of the Heavy Events. The Caber is generally a spruce log measuring up to 20 feet and weighing approximately 120 lbs. From a crouching position, the athlete cradles the base of the caber in his clasped hands. Carefully adjusting his grasp as he rises, he keeps the caber balanced against his shoulder. Once the Caber is balanced, the athlete runs to build up momentum, he plants his feet and releases it by heaving it so that it goes end over end. Those who successfully turn the Caber in this fashion continue on to compete in the Challenge Caber on day two. A Caber that fails to flip is not recorded. A judge runs behind the athlete and if the toss is successful he calls it with an imaginary clock. The athletes feet are positioned at six o'clock and he attempts to toss the Caber so that it looks like the hands of a clock at 12 o'clock. This would be a perfect throw.



Invitation Caber Toss

The Caber used in this event is usually longer - approx. 20 feet, and about 50 pounds heavier.