

Friends rise to gold medallist's challenge

Maria Conradi reports from Norway on a day with G4S ambassador Olaf Tufte

Olympic champion Olaf Tufte shouts to the spectators as he flips the 180kg tractor wheel yet another time: "Hey, I'm the boss around here,"

He makes jokes and protests cheerfully to the Norwegian Minister of Culture, Trond Giske, who is acting as referee and has just given him 10 penalty seconds for flipping the wheel incorrectly.

We are at Tufte Farm in Horten, one hour's drive from the Norwegian capital, Oslo. Olaf Tufte, rower and gold medallist in a single sculler at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, and a G4S ambassador (see *G4S International*, September 08, page 10), has invited friends and

athletic colleagues to celebrate his success and join him in a friendly battle: The Tufte Farmer Challenge.

On a beautiful and crisp September day, the farmer wanted to test his skills and challenge other Norwegian athletes.

Olaf is known to use his daily work on the farm as part of his training programme. This is vital since, in a country whose rivers are mostly frozen over in winter, an alternative to rowing is essential.

If you are conscious of how you do each task and to what intensity, they can become part of your training routines, he argues.

For instance, lifting 50 kg sacks of grain becomes a good exercise if you run at top speed up the bridge

to the barn carrying the sacks on your shoulder, says Olaf.

The event was educational as well as entertaining. Some 3,000 spectators watched the athletes struggle with the "G4S farmer's walk" – a challenge requiring them to carry two timber logs mounted on bars of heavy iron over a considerable distance.

Inside the logs was a safe key to show how the G4S private household alarms are delivered with a small cylinder built into the walls of the house to ensure the fire fighters can gain rapid access to a burning house.

It was a particularly appropriate demonstration since Olaf is both a farmer and a part-time fire-fighter. ■

BELOW LEFT: Lifting heavy logs is not an alarming prospect for superfit Norwegian rower Olaf Tufte.

BELOW RIGHT: In the UK, judo is getting a £1 million boost from G4S that will encourage its employees' children to take up the sport.

