



Al Murray

First official GB head coach

Scottish Lightweight champion

Scottish Middleweight Champion

British record holder



Al Murray was appointed as the first official GB Head Coach in 1948 and served until 1972.

He began his working life as a painter and decorator in his native Fife, but his prodigious feats as a young weightlifter led him more and more towards sport.

Murray was a Scottish lightweight and middleweight champion as well as a British record holder in the late 1930s.

During the war he served as a staff sergeant-major during which he began to use his talent as a coach, devising an exercise for anti-aircraft gunners who lifted shells as though they were weights, helping to improve their speed.

In 1948 he became Britain's first national weightlifting coach and moved down from Kirkcaldy to Wood Green in east London. He was only paid by the government for three years, but Murray

continued as national coach on a voluntary basis, and quickly became an adviser on strength training to other sports such as athletics and swimming.

As Head Coach he oversaw Great Britain's most successful period of Olympic success with medals for Jim Halliday, Julien Creus and Louis Martin.

Murray retired from his coaching role in 1972 and was succeeded by John Lear although he continued to offer words of wisdom and advice from time to time. He passed away in 1998 at the age of 82.