

To the Point

Your monthly guide to Fencing in Great Britain
Issue 09 2010

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Latest News from British Fencing

Welcome to this edition of *To the Point*. A great deal of activity has happened since the last issue which is in no small part thanks to all our hard working volunteers and staff. Here are a few headlines...

Independent Chair: British Fencing has recognised the need to recruit an experienced and independent Chair to lead the organisational transformation of our sport in the build up to the London 2012 Olympics. We are searching for an individual who is a powerful leader and has experience of leading a successful business or organisation at Chair, CEO or equivalent level. The ideal candidate will also be able to move effortlessly within the political environment and have an understanding of the infrastructures of, and a passion for, sport. For more information click [here](#). If you know anyone who you think would enjoy the challenge, please forward the information to them.

The National Academy: The National Academy was launched in August at Nottingham Trent University. The Academy introduced almost 90 fencers to life as an international athlete, with a programme which included education on nutrition, psychology, strength and conditioning, athlete mentoring, refereeing and armoury. The National Academy is now being rolled out across the country. For more information click [here](#).

New Events Coordinator: British Fencing welcomes Katie Dolan as our new Events Coordinator. For more information click [here](#).

Competitions and Calendar Committee: British Fencing is currently recruiting a Competitions and Calendar Committee to manage and develop our competitions calendar. If you wish to apply for one of the positions, or for more information, click [here](#).

Youth Trips: British Fencing has now centralised all GB trips for Juniors and Cadets in response to comments and requests from parents over the last few seasons. We have therefore established a new governance structure, including a Chef de Mission to manage each trip, along with an online system to allow athletes to register easily for trips, and a logistics manager to help the Chef de Mission look after the travel and accommodation. We have received a good deal of positive comments, but also some challenges to the

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COACHING COURSES COMING SOON

[Newcastle](#)

(L2 Foil, Epee, Sabre)

[London](#)

(L1/2 Foil or Epee)

Please click [here](#) for an application form.

changes and so we have written some FAQs (see below) and will be organising a parent meeting with our Parent Champion to update everyone. For further information click [here](#).

FAQs

How will this differ from previous seasons?

We have reviewed our committee structure and openly recruited for all positions on the International Committee (IC) and the three weapon committees. The International Committee is responsible for delivering the international programme and managing the weapon committees. [More FAQs...](#)

Performance Parents: Which leads me on to our Performance Parents Group. Mike O'Donnell, Parent Champion, is getting together parents of youth fencers to set up this group, which will aid communication between British Fencing and parents of youth fencers in the GB squads. Click [here](#) for more information.

London 2012: Please keep an eye on our website for important messages about volunteering and tickets – don't miss out!

Website: Our website has been active for a few months now and we are now starting to develop more widgets. For example, we have now set up most of the rankings widgets on the home page (my thanks to Stephen D'Agostino for his assistance) which allow live rankings feeds. Don't forget, you can change which widgets you want on your home page and arrange them to suit you – let us know if you have ideas for more widgets and we'll try and set them up for you. Thank you for all your comments; these are useful to help us develop the site.

Piers Martin

In this issue

GB Youth Trips and Online Entry System FAQs

Anika Ved

North East Fencing News
and much more...

Anika Ved

Anika joined us in October 2009 on a year-long internship as part of her degree at Loughborough University. In the 11 months she has worked for British Fencing as Events Assistant it has been a pleasure to see her grow as an employee and as a person, meeting challenges head on whilst still retaining her positive attitude and helpful nature. Anika played a significant part in organising and delivering the National Academy and the UK School Games this year. Anika has also been involved in several other projects that have and will have a positive impact on our sport. Anika returns to Loughborough to finish her studies next month and I would like everyone within the sport to join me in thanking Anika for her tireless work and to wish her luck for her final year at university.

North East Fencing News

Street Swords project piloted in Darlington

Street Swords is a project that came about through partnership working with North East Fencing Development, SUNEE (Sport Universities North East England) and the prison referral programme called Second Chance, encouraging ex-offenders to become involved in positive sporting activities. Regional Fencing Development Officer Beth Davidson has been teaching fencing to what would initially seem 'disengaged' individuals, but the reality was that the participants thrived on the experience. It took a lot of convincing to put fencing in the activity programme due to misconceptions of some that putting swords in the hands of ex-offenders was a risk assessment too far!

From this work, Beth was keen to offer fencing activities to young people in Darlington to try and reduce the levels of anti-social behaviour in problem areas of the town, by using fencing's disciplined learning process and respect ethos. An integral part of the project is to identify and train potential coaches from the group so they can be put through Level 1 courses and encourage more young people onto the programme. A key element is that activities are not formally advertised and the sessions are set up as a drop-in, using word of mouth to encourage others from the area to try it.

£800 of grant funding from England Fencing and The Co-operative has enabled the project to start with other support from Darlington Youth Services. The first Street Sword coach, David Luxon, is now working with a Darlington youth group using Mini-fencing equipment until he passes his Level 1 coaching qualification, and members are raising money to purchase a full set of beginner fencing equipment. For further information about Street Swords, contact North East Regional Fencing Development Officer [Beth Davidson](#) on 07812078957.

Adverts

COACH WANTED

Three Rivers Young Blades are seeking a coach for youngsters aged between 7 and 18 years, on Monday evenings in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire.

For more information please click [here](#) or contact [Tom Davies](#).

If you wish to place an advert in *To the Point* please contact us [here](#)

Time to Get Moving and tackle mental health stigma

Time to Get Moving is the physical activity component of England's biggest initiative to tackle mental health stigma and improve well-being: Time to Change, a ground-breaking campaign run by Mind and Rethink.

The British Fencing Association is linking up with Time to Get Moving, encouraging clubs to register a regular training session / competition as a Time to Get Moving event. This will raise awareness of mental health issues with participants and help us achieve our national involvement targets.

Publicity within your local press can raise awareness for our campaign, and generate positive publicity for your club. It's also a great way [more...](#)

Sainsbury's UK School Games

Thanks to all the officials and volunteers who made the 5th edition of the UK School Games such a success. This event was held in the North East, the athlete village was in Newcastle and the fencing venue was in Sunderland; fencing ran over 3 days, 2-4 Sept. This year there were 1600 athletes in 10 sports taking part. Thanks also to Olympic medallist Kate Allenby who spent all 3 days in the fencing hall as an athlete mentor.

The Channel 4 hour-long broadcast of the event can be seen [here](#). Photos of the event, including Darren Campbell and Amy Williams fencing, are available [here](#).

This year we had two sets of video refereeing equipment supplied by Leon Paul; these had a new feature of a large screen for the benefit [more...](#)

BDFA News

Club Development:

Do you belong to a fencing club that is in one of the following eight counties – *Beds, Berks, Bucks, Cumbria, Herts, Oxon, Lincolnshire, Suffolk*?

Or are you in a fencing club in Scotland or North Wales and your club is interested in promoting wheelchair fencing?

If so please contact [Dawn](#) on 07787 944042 and be part of the recent club audit. So far 40 clubs have responded.

Wheelchair fencing weekends

The penultimate weekend for 2010 was held on the 16th and 17th October in Stoke Mandeville, and the last will be on the 4th and 5th December in Worcester. New wheelchair fencers are always welcome. Please get in touch with Dawn (details above) for more information. The two days offer excellent coaching and contacts with other wheelchair fencers from across the country.

Next Competition

The next domestic event will be the Rushcliffe competition on the 31st October for epee only. For more information please contact [Colin Swift](#).

Academy News

We have just finished collecting feedback from the summer camp. The link to the online survey was emailed to all participants and the results were presented to parents at the British U17 Championships on the 2nd October. We have now put up some of the key education and strength & conditioning sessions the fencers learned on the [National Academy resources page](#). At the moment we are in the process of selecting the first regions and regional coaches; these will be launched in the next few weeks as soon as the venues and staff are confirmed.

Regional Academies

British Fencing are pleased to announce that we have made agreements with the University of Birmingham and SUNEE (Sport Universities North East England) to deliver the National Academy on a regional level.

The University of Birmingham – The Sports Science and Sports Medicine Unit at University of

Birmingham Sport hosts an interdisciplinary support service for athletes, in addition to an education programme. This support unit has the key aim of providing specialist support to athletes and coaches. The Hi Performance Centre provides cutting edge applied sports science and sports medicine support that contributes to enhanced training and performance, diagnoses of injury, treatment, rehabilitation and recovery. This team will support British Fencing's Talent Development Programme. The Hi Performance Centre is staffed by a number of full and part time specialists who have a wealth of experience working with NGBs. The centre incorporates a BASES Accredited Sports Performance Laboratory, physiotherapy clinic with rehabilitation area and separate medical consultation room through to performance gym with video analysis. The team have over 15 years experience working with high performance athletes and coaches, specialising in the development of talent with transitional athletes (16-23yrs). The unit is also the TASS hub for the West Midlands, has been recognised by TASS as the best practise with regard specialist support delivery and is currently supporting over a 100 funded athletes. The team also have experience working with both able bodied and disability fencers. [More...](#)

Coach and School Development News

Since last month's *To the Point*, two noteworthy items of news on the coaching and schools front have been the first ever National Academy residential and the continuing preparations for the Change for Life Fencing Clubs initiative.

National Academy Coach Development. 13 candidates successfully completed the residential phase of the National Academy Coach Development stream in August, gaining full or partial passes at Level 3 in their chosen weapons. An extremely intense 7 days of studies included not only the teaching and coaching of technical blade-in-hand skills, working with some highly experienced coach tutors, but also expert inputs on strength and conditioning, sports psychology, physiotherapy, anatomy and movement analysis, long-term athlete development, team building, learning, action learning and training theory, and mentoring other coaches.

The feedback from participants, tutors and lead tutors has provided a solid basis on which to plan for next year's National Academy and applications are already being

received from Level 2 and Level 3 coaches who wish to embark on their continuing development with a view to upgrading their coach awards. As the regional branches of the National Academy become established, there will be a progressive pathway of development where coaches can hone their skills whilst supporting the regional performance development activities before attending the residential programme.

Change4Life Fencing Clubs. We continue to gear up for this project and have completed the tutor-training phase. We will be running the first series of volunteer training before, during and after the October half-term and [more...](#)

Events

Course Name	Date
London Team Trophy	30 Oct
Coventry Open	30 Oct
Leeds Open	6 Nov
Team Newcastle International Cadet Epee	6 Nov
Welsh Open	13 Nov
LPJS Wimbledon Team Epee	20 Nov
Nat. Academy, Regional Training	21 Nov
British Universities and College Championships	26 Nov
M8 Open	27 Nov
BSC Cadet Foil	27 Nov
Bay Open	27 Nov
LPJS Bath	28 Nov
Eden Cup	4 Dec
H'ford and Worcs Open	4 Dec
BUCS Nat. Novices Tournament	4 Dec

Courses

Course	Date
Fast Track L1 Foil, Epee, Yorks	Postponed
L1/2 Foil, Epee, Sabre, SE London	Full
L2 Foil, Epee, Sabre, Nottingham	Full
L2 Foil, Epee, Sabre, Newcastle	Nov-Feb
L1/2 Foil or Epee, N London	21-27 Feb

[Coach Education Application Form](#)

British Fencing