

THE SWORD

The voice of the membership since 1948

British Fencing Magazine

OCTOBER 2017

World
Championships
Special



WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS REPORT PP7–16
KATE BEARDMORE – MY TV DEBUT PP18–19



SWORD EXCLUSIVE – INTERVIEW WITH PAOLO PIZZO PP20–21
DEVELOPMENT NEWS PP22–26



Editor:

Karim Bashir
British Fencing
1 Baron's Gate
33–35 Rothschild Road
London W4 5HTT
T: 020 8742 3032
E: media@britishfencing.com

Print

Cambrian Printers
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion SY23 3TN
T: 01970 613059

Typeset by:

JS Typesetting Ltd
T: 01656 788551
E: jstype@btconnect.com

Advertising

Karim Bashir
M: 07855 252546
E: media@britishfencing.com

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Cover photo of Olga Kharlan (UKR) taking her third World Title.
Photo: Augusto Bizzi

Safeguarding Hotline

Liz Behnke, Equality and Safeguarding Manager
M: 07526 003030

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Welcome to THE SWORD



Paolo Pizzo with his second World Championship Gold Medal. Photo: Augusto Bizzi

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Report from The President



President of British Fencing, Hilary Philbin
© Augusto Bizzi

The post-Olympic season is always a period of change in the sporting world and this applies in particular to international relations – the main focus of the President's role – with the four-yearly elections taking place early in each Olympic cycle.

The election season kicks off with the Congress of the International Fencing Federation (FIE) – with this season's held in Moscow last November. Elections take place for the FIE President, the Executive Committee (Comex) and the various Commissions – Legal, Medical, Promotion, Refereeing, Rules and SEMI (responsible for matters regarding the control of fencers' equipment and related safety issues). During the same Congress the new Comex announces the key Comex roles including the Secretary-General, the Secretary-Treasurer and the 3 Vice-Presidents, as well as those with specific responsibilities for the Commissions. At this season's Congress the President – Alisher Usmanov – was re-elected unopposed, but most other key roles – including the Secretary-General, the Secretary-Treasurer and 2 of the 3 Vice-Presidents – changed, and this will have a considerable impact on the coming Olympic cycle.

The Comex itself appoints candidates to the various Councils – Coaches, Disciplinary, Veterans and Women in Fencing – as well as the committees for Fair Play, Ethics and Anti-Doping. At an early stage each group meets to elect its own Chair.

Later in the post-Olympic season the Zonal Congresses take place, with this year's European Congress held in Tbilisi, Georgia, in June. Although the organisational structure of the European Fencing Confederation (EFC) is largely similar to that of the FIE, the main

difference is that Commission members are appointed by the EFC's Comex, rather than being elected by the membership as is the case for the FIE.

By the end of the post-Olympic season the international relations landscape looks very different indeed. The FIE elections in particular bring about significant changes in direction resulting from the shift of power. Strategic goals are likely to be reviewed, and the balance of support for proposed developments will have shifted.

This season there will be a further impact resulting from the changes in FIE Head Office. The structure there is based on 3 main strands – Administration, Sport and CMTV (Communication, Marketing and Television) – and the previous Directors of both Sport and CMTV have recently moved on to pastures new.

Also during this period many nations will have re-appointed or re-elected their own key positions, so there are numerous changes in national Presidents and General Secretaries. Therefore the relationships that have been built up over the previous years, which in some cases develop over several Olympic cycles, need building again.

It is clearly important that Great Britain has a voice in the international fencing world, and continuity is increasingly important. We are fortunate to have a number of experienced and knowledgeable representatives in a variety of roles.

Congratulations, and our thanks, are due in particular to our 4 hard-working and widely respected FIE Commission members who are all of long standing. They include:

- Dr Clare Halsted – Medical Commission
- Steve Higginson – Rules Commission (Chair)
- Janet Huggins – SEMI Commission
- Peter Jacobs – Legal Commission

Other post-holders include:

- Georgina Usher, our CEO – re-appointed to the FIE Women in Fencing Council
- Caryl Oliver – elected as the President of European Veterans Fencing (EVF)
- John Mason – EVF Secretary-Treasurer
- Peter Huggins – elected to the Executive Committee of International Wheelchair Fencing, part of the International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation (IWAS), with responsibility for their SEMI Commission

I continue as FIE Chief of Protocol, which means that I attend all World Championships (senior and junior/cadet) as a member of the Directoire Technique. My presence at the Championships assists with maintaining and developing good relationships within the international community, including members of the Comex, Commissions and Councils and within Head Office. I also continue on the Commonwealth Commission for the Re-entry of Fencing into the Commonwealth Games, and as one of the three FIE representatives on the FIE-IWAS Joint Council.

As *The Sword* goes to Press we are awaiting the EFC Comex decisions regarding the appointments to their Commission and Councils, so we wish the best of luck to all our candidates:

- For the Commissions: Peter Huggins – SEMI, Tom Cadman – Legal & Rules, Mary Cohen – Medical, Jon Willis – Competition
- For the Councils: Gillian Aghajan – Veterans, Beth Davidson – Women

With the exception of Peter Huggins, our EFC candidates are new faces in the international relations community. Working together with UK Sport, we now look upon EFC posts as potential stepping stones to their equivalents in the FIE, and there are a number of natural steps to be taken in order to make a contribution at the highest level:

1. nomination as an EFC candidate
2. election or appointment to the EFC
3. becoming fully effective at EFC level / nomination as an FIE candidate
4. election or appointment to the FIE
5. becoming fully effective at FIE level

With elections every four years it's easy to see that a minimum 20 year commitment will be the most effective approach for international relations.

With so many new people in post in so many different areas, we can be sure that there will be significant changes. New arrivals have their own ideas and agendas and this inevitably creates some initial uncertainty. However, it is important to remember that the driving force behind many changes is connected with the long-term development of the sport, even if it sometimes seems that there are short-term drawbacks. The FIE is constantly striving to protect and develop the future of the sport – not least with strengthening our position in the Olympic Games – and our own post-holders continue to make a valuable contribution in many areas.

Report from The President (continued)

A good example of what can be achieved through international relations at the highest level is the recent announcement by the IOC that fencing has been granted its additional two Olympic medals. After many years of effort from the FIE, this is an excellent demonstration of the benefits of long-term co-operation with the IOC's aims and objectives. The result is that in Tokyo 2020 – and hopefully in future Games – fencing will include all six team events instead of needing to drop two at each Games by rotation. This is good news for Great Britain, with the inclusion

of the men's foil team event in Tokyo, and is a significant achievement for Alisher Usmanov and all involved behind the scenes in the FIE.

At home I attended a number of competitions, both domestic and international. I was very pleased to be at the Eden Cup, where I had made special arrangements with the FIE to host an additional foil referees seminar and exam. Congratulations to our 3 successful candidates – Alex Beardmore, Daniel Hazelwood and Chris Lennon – who are much-needed additions to our group of FIE referees.

As always, one of the most enjoyable aspects of my role is to present the BF Honours at the AGM, followed later in the year by participating in the BF Awards Dinner. Both of these occasions are good opportunities to recognise – and thank – the many people who give their time and skills so generously to their sport. Finally, I'd like to congratulate Patricia Aiyenuro for her great achievement in being awarded the British Empire Medal in the recent Queen's birthday honours. Well done Pat!

Hilary Philbin
President

#FUNDFENCING – UPDATE

British Fencing would like to formally thank everyone who pledged to our #FundFencing crowd funding campaign earlier this year.

In total British Fencing received £16,870. As the European Championships were held before all the money had been collected we had to estimate 50% in advance of the final figure. Therefore £8,380 was divided equally between all the 10 athletes competing at the European Championships. The remaining amount, subsequently confirmed as £8,490 was equally divided between all the 10 athletes competing at the World Championships.

Speaking about the campaign, Chief Executive Officer, Georgina Usher said, "We had an incredible response to our campaign which meant that every athlete selected to represent Great Britain was able to participate. We not only received support from across the fencing community (with donations coming in from fencers, coaches, volunteers, BF staff & board members) but many people from outside fencing also responded extremely generously to the situation the athletes found themselves in. On behalf of the athletes and on behalf of British Fencing I would like to extend a 'Thank You' to each and every person that donated."

All the crowd funding prizes (and postage) were funded separately by British Fencing. No crowd funding money was retained by BF for use – every penny was passed directly onto the athletes.



GBR European Championships Team © Augusto Bizzi.

European Championships Report

DAVIS AND MILLER LEAD THE LINE IN TBILISI

The European Championships concluded in Tbilisi, Georgia on 17 June with James-Andrew Davis and Richard Kruse both making quarterfinal finishes in the men's individual foil.

DAY 1

Men's Foil

James-Andrew Davis (V6Do), Richard Kruse (V5D1), Marcus Mepstead (V4D2) and Kamal Minott (V3D3) all progressed through the first round. Davis received a bye through the incomplete round of 64, before beating Tofalides (CYP) 15-14 and Rzakowski (POL) 15-8 but then lost 15-12 to reigning Olympic Champion, Garozzo (ITA) in the quarterfinals. Kruse beat Pranz (AUT) 15-11, Arslanov (RUS) 15-12 and Zhrebchenko (RUS) 15-10 before losing 15-11 to Avola (ITA). Mepstead beat Minott 15-14 in the round of 64 before losing 15-8 to Rzakowski (POL).

Daniele Garozzo (ITA) went on to win the event beating Timur Safin (RUS) in the final as Giorgio Avola (ITA) and Jeremy Cadot (FRA) picked up the bronze medals.

[Full results here.](#)

Women's Sabre

Aliya Itzkowitz was Great Britain's sole representative in this event and she came through the poule stage with three victories from six fights. Facing Zhovnir (UKR) in the round of 64, she fell 15-10.

Surprise package Teodora Kakhiani (GEO) delighted the home crowd by taking the title beating sixteen year old, Liza Pusztai (HUN) in the final, as Rosella Gregorio (ITA) and Bianca Pascu (ROU) were the bronze medal recipients.

[Full results here.](#)

DAY 2

Women's Foil

Kate Beardmore flew the Union Jack alone in this event but was unable to progress through the first round winning one fight from five.

Arianna Errigo (ITA) secured the title beating Inna Deriglazova (RUS) in a brilliant final.

Ysaora Thibus (FRA) and Alice Volip (ITA) sealed the bronze medals.

[Full results here.](#)

Men's Epee

There were no British entries in this event which was won by Yannick Borel (FRA). He beat Paolo Pizzo (ITA) in the finals as the bronze medals were awarded to Nikolai Novosjolov (EST) and Sergey Khodos (RUS).

[Full results here.](#)

DAY 3

Men's Team Foil

Great Britain (Davis, Mepstead, Minott) faced Israel in the round of 16 and beat them 45-39 before losing by the same score to Germany in the quarterfinals. In the placings matches, they lost 45-42 to Poland before beating Turkey 45-18 to finish seventh.

France beat Russia to win the gold medal as Italy took out Germany for the bronze medal.

[Full results here.](#)

Women's Team Sabre

Great Britain did not compete in this event which was won by Italy 45-44 over Russia. France secured the bronze medal over Hungary 45-36.

[Full results here.](#)

DAY 4

Women's Epee

There were no British fencers in this event. Violetta Kolobova (RUS) won the title beating Alexandra Ndolo (GER) 15-10 in the final. The bronze medals went to Julia Belyayeva (EST) and Emese Szasz-Kowacs (HUN)

[Full results here.](#)

Men's Sabre

Will Deary (V2D3), James Honeybone (V2D3), Curtis Miller (V3D3) and Jonathan Webb (V2D4) all progressed through the first round. Miller then beat Honeybone in the round of 64, 15-9 and Deary took out Kosikov (ARM) by the same score, but Webb lost 15-12 to Bazadze (GEO). Both Brits lost in the round

of 32 to Hungarians as Desci overcame Miller 15-7 and Szilagyí defeated Deary 15-6.

Aron Szilagyí went on to make the final where he lost 15-7 to Max Hartung (GER). Sandro Bazadze (GEO) and Luca Curatoli (ITA) picked up the bronze medals.

DAY 5

Women's Team Foil

The seven teams competing in this event did not include Great Britain. Italy beat Russia 45-31 in a one-sided gold medal match as Germany was even more dominant in the bronze medal match where they beat Hungary 45-18.

[Full results here.](#)

Men's Team Epee

Great Britain did not enter this event. Russia edged Ukraine 33-32 to take the title as the Czech Republic beat Germany 23-22 to win the bronze.

[Full results here.](#)

DAY 6

Women's Team Epee

Again there was no British involvement in this event. France surprised Russia by winning the gold medal match 42-41 on time as Romania beat Estonia 45-38 for the bronze medal.

[Full results here.](#)

Men's Team Sabre

Great Britain (Deary, Honeybone, Miller, Webb) drew Ukraine in the round of 16 in the last event of the Championships and lost 45-31. In the placings matches they had a bye through the first match, then lost 45-44 to Poland before beating Turkey 45-31 to finish eleventh.

Russia won the gold medal match over Italy 45-41 as Hungary beat Germany 45-28 to take the bronze.

[Full results here.](#)

Italy topped the medal table with four gold medals, three silver and four bronze. Russia was second with France third.

Worlds Report 2017

Photos courtesy of Augusto Bizzi

The 2017 World Championships took place at the Leipzig Arena in Germany, 19-26 July and were hailed a tremendous success. Two days of preliminaries were held reducing each individual event down to 64 fencers and were followed by three individual event medals days and three team medal days.

DAY 1

Women's Foil

The ninety-one athletes competing in this event did not include any from Great Britain. Eleanor Harvey (CAN) and Nicole Ross (USA), having had great seasons, were the high profile casualties in the round of 64. An indication of how influential home support would be in Leipzig came in the round of 32



Inna Deriglazova (RUS) – Individual Women's Foil World Champion.

as Anne Sauer (GER) took out highly ranked Italian, Martina Batini.

Russian World number one, Inna Deriglazova, survived a 14-14 battle with Fanny Kreiss (HUN) in the round of 32 but then cruised through to the semi-finals. There she faced another favourite for the title, Arianna Errigo (ITA), who wasn't taken to double figures on her way to the medal matches. France's, Ysaora Thibus made steady progress to the top four, beating Sauer (GER) 15-8 in the quarterfinals to guarantee herself a medal. Her semi-final opponent was Alice Volpi (ITA) who had to battle past Innes Boubakri (TUN) in the round of 16.

In the first semi-final Deriglazova danced around Errigo and pulled out a 4-0 lead in a matter of seconds. The Russian's dominance continued and she went into the second period 13-5 up. She closed things off 15-6 early in that period. The second semi-final between Thibus and Volpi was a much closer affair and they went into the first break tied at 5-5. Thibus came out for the second period with attack on her mind but Volpi was resolute in her steady defence and went into the second break 10-9 up. The Italian resumed her defensive approach in the final period and there was nothing that Thibus could do to find a way through. Volpi progressed to the gold medal match with a 15-12 victory.

Deriglazova went into the title fight as clear favourite but Volpi had showed some great form on the day. The Russian came out with intent, taking the fight to Volpi who at 5-2 down showed signs of cramp. Deriglazova demonstrated great sportsmanship after a short injury break to let the clock run down in the first period – allowing Volpi extra time to

recover. When they came out for the second period Deriglazova took a cautious approach, knowing that Volpi could only concentrate on defence. A call of non-combativity was the result and the fencers moved straight onto the final period – and what a final three minutes it proved to be. Volpi, clearly hampered by cramp, worked on trying to get into close quarters. Deriglazova, moving freely, opened up a big lead, only for Volpi to close it down in the closing seconds. Miraculously, Volpi managed to pick away at the deficit and closed to 13-13 as time ran out. Looking rattled, somehow Deriglazova dug deep into her reserves and pulled out an instinctive parry riposte to claim the World title – her third successive season ending crown.

Men's Sabre

Four British fencers lined up for this event in a field of one hundred and thirty and all four qualified for the round of 64. Jonathan Webb's five victories from six first round fights earned him a bye directly to the medal day. Will Deary, James Honeybone and Curtis Miller all qualified through the first round and then beat Imbragimov (KAZ) 15-7, Jaskot (POL) 15-5 and Streets (JPN) 15-12, respectively, to join Webb. In the round of 64, Honeybone beat Ocinski (POL) 15-12 but Deary lost 15-12 to Gemesi (HUN), Oh (KOR) defeated Miller 15-11 and Wagner (GER) beat Webb 15-11. In the next round Honeybone put in a strong performance against double Olympic Champion, Aron Szilagyi (HUN) but lost 15-10.

Olympic silver medallist, Daryl Homer (USA) was the biggest casualty in the round of 64, going out 15-14 to Pascual Di Tella (ARG). Szilagyi (HUN) came into the event as one of



Individual Women's Foil Podium (left to right – Alice Volpi (ITA), Inna Deriglazova (RUS), Arianna Errigo (ITA), Ysaora Thibus (FRA)).



Andras Szatmari (HUN) – Individual Men's Sabre World Champion.



Deriglazova edges Volpi in the Women's Foil gold medal match.

the favourites but was knocked out by Kamil Ibragimov (RUS) 15-12 in the round of 16. The Russian went on to make the semi-finals where he faced Gu Bongil (KOR) who had battled his way past Bazadze (GEO) 15-13 and then in-form Italian, Curatoli 15-11, to get there.

In the bottom half of the draw, giant-killer Di Tella made it to the round of 16 where he fell 15-10 to Ali Pakdaman (IRI). The Iranian then went out 15-10 to Vincent Anstett (FRA) who had just knocked out his teammate, Bolade Apithy 15-12. Konstantyn Voronov (ISR) surprised Kim Junghwan (KOR) in the round of 32, beating him 15-13 and then met Andras Szatmari (HUN) to make the semi-finals. Szatmari had to beat Germany's European Champion, Max Hartung to get there. The Hungarian was too strong for the Israeli and ran away a 15-4 winner.

In the first semi-final between Gu and Ibragimov, the two fencers rarely ventured from the middle of the piste in the first period and went into the break with the Korean leading 8-7. It was much the same in the second period but Gu executed his second

intention actions better than the Russian and eased to a 15-10 victory. The second semi-final between Szatmari and Anstett was a different affair all together. The Hungarian was



Szatmari's reaction to winning the Men's Sabre title.

happy to take the fight out of the middle and dominated the first period in doing so, taking an 8-4 lead into the break. Anstett came out for the second period full of attacking intent and got himself right back in the fight at 12-10 down. Szatmari reverted to using more of the piste and took the fight 15-11.

Szatmari adopted the same approach in the gold medal match but Gu was measured in his attack, throwing in his trademark hops, to take a commanding 8-4 lead into the break. A clear change of tactics saw Szatmari refuse to go backwards in the second period but tellingly he kept varying the pace of his first step. It threw Gu off his game and the Hungarian levelled at 10-10 before marching on to his first World title with a 15-11 victory.

Watch the first day medal matches here, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-Q8EVxJLVA&index=33&list=PLdNA_ybrJjflpVaTnLcJURoj8x1PvO31K.



Men's Individual Sabre Podium (left to right – Gu Bongil (KOR), Andras Szatmari (HUN), Vincent Anstett (FRA), Kamil Ibragimov (RUS)).

DAY 2

Women's Sabre

Aliya Itkowitz was Great Britain's only entry in this event which boasted a field of one hundred and eight. She won three of her six first round matches which meant that she qualified for the preliminary direct elimination where she beat Page (CAN) to qualify for the round of 64. There she faced a tough match against Italian, Irene Vecchi which she lost 15-8.

There were no major surprises in the round of 64 but the 32 proved difficult for some of the high seeds as Egorian (RUS), Gulotta (ITA), Kim (KOR), Lembach (FRA), Marton (HUN) and Wozniak (USA) were all eliminated. In the top quarter of the draw, Marton's victor, Fukushima (JPN), made it through to the quarterfinals but was defeated by Azza Besbes (TUN). She then faced Vecchi in the semi-



Women's Individual Sabre podium (left to right: Azza Besbes (TUN), Olga Kharlan (UKR), Irene Vecchi (ITA), Cecilia Berder (FRA)).

finals who benefited from an abandonment by Sara Balzer (FRA) in the round of 16.

In the bottom half of the draw, much fancied Cecilia Berder (FRA) survived a couple of 15-14 matches against Chadalavada (IND) and Benitez Romero (VEN) to progress to the medal matches. Her opponent there was Olga Kharlan (UKR) who made steady progress to that stage.

In the first semi-final, Vecchi combined brilliant parry ripostes and distance traps to lead Besbes 8-0 at the break. Besbes came out for the second period with refreshed tactics. She started to vary her movement off the line and that made a difference immediately. Besbes clawed her way back into the fight but Vecchi continued to score and got to 14-11 up. The Tunisian remained brave and resolute in her approach and landed two brilliant parry ripostes to draw level before going on to win 15-14 with an attack.

The second semi-final was a fascinating contest as Kharlan took a controlled



Kharlan wins third Women's Sabre World Title.

approach to Berder's more active footwork. The Ukrainian just got the better of the first period, taking an 8-6 lead into the break. Berder came out for the second period varying her footwork to try to outfox Kharlan but the Ukrainian was just too good, adapted every time and won 15-10.



Women's Individual Sabre World Champion, Olga Kharlan.



Men's Individual Epee Podium (left to right Nikolai Novosjolov (EST), Paolo Pizzo (ITA), Andras Redli (HUN), Richard Schmidt (GER)).

Kharlan came into the final as strong favourite to pick up her third World title and she completely controlled the first period. So confident in her ability, the Ukrainian took a measured approach into the middle of the piste and stormed to an 8-2 lead at the break. In what became a total master class, Kharlan came out for the second period, maintained control of the match and completed her hat trick of World titles with a 15-5 victory.

Men's Epee

There were no British fencers in the massive line-up of two hundred and ten in this event and as expected the surprises came early. The Asian fencers suffered in the round of 64 as Korea's Olympic Champion, Park Sangyoung went out along with his teammate Kweon Youngjun and Japanese fencer Kazuyasu Minobe but perhaps the biggest surprise was the demise of Yannick Borel (FRA) – the World number one - in the same round.

The home crowd were delighted with the performance of Richard Schmidt (GER) who took advantage of an open top quarter and beat Satoru Uyama (JPN) to make the medal matches. His opponent was the 2010 World Champion, Paolo Pizzo, who battled his way through Glazkov (RUS), Sukhov (RUS), Verwijlen (NED) and Lucenay (FRA). In the bottom half of the draw, Estonia's double World Champion, Nikolai Novosjolov also had a tough draw but beat Jerent (FRA) to make the semis. His opponent was former European Champion, Andras Redli (HUN) who fought his way through the field and then beat Argentina's surprise package, Jesus Lugones Ruggeri in the quarterfinals.

The first semi-final between Schmidt and Pizzo began slowly but then the German took the fight to Pizzo. A flurry of doubles followed but tellingly Pizzo snatched a couple of single light hits in close quarters and they went into

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Paolo Pizzo celebrates his second World title.

the first break with the Italian leading 13-11. In the second period Pizzo fenced at a longer distance to start with, picking up a single light on the counter and then finished the fight off with a beautiful flick to the inside of Schmidt's wrist.

In the second semi-final Novosjolov pressed and probed around Redli's guard and pushed the fight into the Hungarian's half of the piste. Redli's defence was solid and they went into the first break tied at 2-2. It was much the same in the second period, although the pace slowed a touch. Doubles were the order of the day again but the Estonian claimed a single light hit on appeal to lead 5-4 at the second break. It was a reversal of roles in the final period as Redli had to go after the Estonian. Novosjolov was able to score doubles whilst picking off the odd single counter and as the clock counted down, Redli had to increase his attacking intent. Novosjolov controlled the end of the fight well and won 15-10 to make the final.

The gold medal match between two former World Champions was a battle for distance. Novosjolov started in a defensive mode which suited Pizzo who began launching attacks almost straight away. The Estonian changed



Paolo Pizzo flies to Men's Individual Epee World Crown.

tact mid-way through the first period and started pressing but with longer distance. Pizzo adapted and started taking the blade before launching his attack. The Italian led 9-7 at the first break. Novosjolov came out for the second period with much higher intensity trying to match Pizzo. That approach played right into the Italian's game plan and he quickly extended his lead by two hits. Novosjolov backed off and worked from longer distance goading Pizzo into attacking – the Italian played his part and the Estonian drew level at 12-12. Pizzo slowed down and this time Novosjolov lost his patience and allowed the distance to close up. The Italian claimed his second World title with a superb counter, to the delight of his team.

Watch the second day of medal matches from Leipzig here, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUdyrvRmLSA&index=27&list=PLdNA_ybrJfjPvATnLcJURoj8x1PvO31K.

DAY 3

Women's Epee

There were no British fencers in the line-up of one hundred and thirty-six in this event and surprisingly few shock departures in the round

of 64. Korea's Shin A Lam was perhaps the biggest name to fall early.

Sun Yiwen (CHN) made a shaky start and then came up against a game Olena Kryvytska (UKR) in the last sixteen. The Ukrainian prevailed 15-13 and then beat Russia's Tatiana Logunova to make the medal matches. Her semi-final opponent was Ewa Nelip (POL) who has showed some promise this season. Good wins over Rosella Fiamingo (ITA) and Lauren Rembi (FRA) were the highlight of her progress.

In the bottom half of the draw Violetta Kolobova (RUS) made steady progress to the quarterfinals but then came up against teammate and two-time Junior World Champion, Tatiana Gudkova. The young Russian had impressed on her way to that stage, beating Injeong Choi (KOR) and Irina Embrich (EST). Gudkova won the all-Russian contest 15-11. Julia Beljajeva (EST) completed the top four line-up. She survived a scare in the round of 16 where she just beat Xu Chengzi (CHN) 13-12 and then had to face Alexandra Ndolo (GER) in the quarters. The German not only had the crowd behind her, but she'd also just knocked out reigning Olympic Champion, Emese Szasz-Kovacs (HUN). Beljajeva comfortably beat Ndolo 15-9 though.



Gudkova evades Nelip's low-line attack in the Women's Epee individual gold medal match.

In the first semi-final between Nelip and Kryvytska, the two fencers maintained a close distance and both seemed intent on taking the fight to each other. Nelip got the better of the first period, leading 4-2 at the first break. A highly tactical second period followed as the Ukrainian pressed, but all in an attempt to lure the Pole into an attack. Nelip played a patient game and led 6-4 at the second break. It was much the same in the final period and as time ticked on Kryvytska had no choice but to attack. Nelip's defence was strong enough to stand the onslaught and she took the fight 15-10.



Women's Individual Epee Podium selfie (left to right – Ewa Nelip (POL), Tatiana Gudkova (RUS), Julia Beljajeva (EST), Olena Kryvytska (UKR)).



Total joy! Tatiana Gudkova wins the Women's Individual Epee World title.

In the second semi-final, the usually patient Beljajeva took an aggressive approach to the start of the fight against Gudkova and opened up a two hit lead. The Russian snapped into a more attack-minded tactic herself and the two were tied at 5-5 by the first break. In the second period Gudkova led the tactical battle trying to lure the Estonian into distance but Beljajeva was smart to it and non-combativity was called with no additional score. Beljajeva reverted to a more attacking approach but at 10-9 up with under a minute left, the Estonian attacked from too far away and Gudkova levelled with a counter. The Russian spurred on by this went for a beat attack which she landed. Beljajeva was forced to press and levelled at 12-12 with 20 seconds left on the clock. Both fencers elected to go for the priority minute with the advantage going to Gudkova. The Estonian came straight out of the blocks but in close quarters the Russian took the fight, 13-12.

In the final an attacking Gudkova took on a defensive Nelip, setting up a great fight for the World title. They cancelled each other out in the first period, going into the first break at 3-3. The tactics remained the same at the start of the second period and it was Gudkova who opened up a 6-3. The Russian, rightly, adopted a more defensive approach forcing Nelip to take up the attacking mantle but Gudkova went into the second break 7-4 up. The Russian came out for the final period luring Nelip on and picked up another couple of hits to lead 9-4 at the halfway stage. Nelip pressed with more intensity and tricked Gudkova into attacking, drawing back to within one hit, at 9-8 down. The two traded hits in the dying seconds but Gudkova clung on to claim gold, 11-9 on time.



Zherebchenko won the close quarters battle in the Men's Foil final.

Men's Foil

One hundred and fifty-seven athletes lined up for this event including four from Great Britain. By virtue of his World ranking, Richard Kruse had a bye straight through to the round of 64.

James-Andrew Davis and Marcus Mepstead did enough in the poule stage to earn byes through the first preliminary qualifier. They were joined in the second by Kamal Minott who won two of his five first round matches and then beat Tsevan (BLR) 15-7. Davis and Mepstead made the round of 64 beating Hatoel (ISR) 15-6 and Rzadkowski (POL) 15-14, respectively, but Minott was eliminated 15-14 by Pogrebniak (UKR).

In the 64, Davis lost 15-11 to Cheremisinov (RUS) and Mepstead fell 15-12 to Meinhardt (USA) but a flying Kruse took out Choi (HKG) 15-4 and then Minotto (TUR) 15-5 followed by Meinhardt 15-7 to make the quarterfinals. That bout against Toshiya Saito (JPN) was evenly matched in the first period and they went to the first break with the score level on 5-5. They both went at each other in the second period but Kruse's usually dependable evasive counter-attack failed him on a couple of occasions. Saito was also very disciplined in his defence making sure he used every inch of the piste behind him. An accidental collision left the Japanese fencer on the floor and in need of a medical time-out. When they returned to the piste Kruse was given a yellow card for forcing corps-a-corps even though it appeared that Saito ran into him. Kruse fought back and despite landing one of his trademark stop-hits went into the final period 14-10



Men's Individual Foil Podium (left to right – Toshiya Saito (JPN), Dmitry Zherebchenko (RUS), Takahiro Shikine (JPN), Daniele Garozzo (ITA)).

and landed a closing counter-attack to make the gold medal match.

The final was a blistering contest between Zherebchenko and Saito. The Russian had the early tactics spot on as he picked the right moment to attack into preparation and land his well-prepared attacks. He was so good at the beginning he even managed to land a parry riposte against the fast moving Japanese fencer. Saito changed his tactics and started to play with the distance to make his electric attacks more of a surprise. They went into the first break with the Russian leading 12-11 but the momentum was with Saito. In the second period Zherebchenko maintained his dominance in the timing game, picking the right moments to attack into preparation or run away from Saito's attack. He took the World title with a perfectly executed parry riposte.



Zherebchenko celebrates his World title.

down. Saito immediately came out on the attack to win 15-10.

Saito's semi-final opponent was Italy's reigning Olympic Champion, Daniele Garozzo, who had a comfortable ride to the quarterfinals before where he won an incredibly tight fight against Race Imboden (USA) 15-14. It was a good day for Japan because Takahiro Shikine took out Italians, Giorgio Avola and Alessio Foconi on his way to the medal matches. There he faced Russian, Dmitry Zherebchenko who had knocked out Miles Chamley-Watson (USA), teammate Alexey Cheremisinov and one of the favourites for the title, Alex Massialas (USA).

In the first semi-final, wary of Saito's speed, Garozzo closed the distance right up and went into the lead. It didn't take long for Saito to adjust and he came storming back to take a 12-6 lead. Garozzo dug deep to get back



"Attack touche".

to 12-11 down, winning the close-quarters battles more often than not, but sacrificed his two video appeals in doing so. On four further occasions Garozzo complained about the referees decision but with no appeals left the challenges were turned down. Saito attacked his way to a 15-12 victory.

The second semi-final between Zherebchenko and Shikine was a battle of timing. The Japanese fencer was looking to lure the Russian into a counter-attack whilst Zherebchenko was looking for attacks into preparation. Too many times, Shikine stepped in too close on his approach and gifted hits to the Russian but Zherebchenko only led 10-9 by the time the first break came. Shikine came out for the second period content to attack from a longer distance and approaching from a different line. He was able to draw level at 11-11 but crucially the pace of the fight was more suited to the Russian who pulled away to lead 14-12 at the second break. The Russian waited patiently for his opportunity in the final period

Watch the final day's individual medal matches here, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLTahOVshfU&list=PLdNA_ybrJflpVaTnLcJURoj8x1PvO31K&index=21.



Sixth place for Richard Kruse.

DAY 4

Women's Team Foil

The fourteen teams entered for this event did not include Great Britain. Italy had dominated the season, having won all five World Cup team events. They lined up with Batini, Errigo, Mancini and Volpi and cruised to the semi-finals with a bye through the incomplete round of 16 followed by a victory over Japan. There they faced Germany (Hampel, Golubyskiy, Sauer and Ebert) who beat Hong Kong and then France. In the bottom half of the draw the USA (Kiefer, Lu, Prescod and Ross) eased through to the top four beating Argentina and China. Their opponents were Russia (Deriglazova, Ivanova, Tripapina and Zagidullina) who had a bye and then beat Canada.



Italy totally dominated Women's Team Foil this season.



Men's Sabre Team World Champions – Korea.

Italy beat Germany 45-34 in the first semi-final but the Germans gave them a scare in the sixth leg as Sauer put them in the lead against Batini with a 14-4 leg. It was a much tighter contest in the second with the lead changing hands five times but the USA beat Russia 45-42.



GBR Men's Sabre Team – left to right Jonathan Webb, Will Deary, James Honeybone, Curtis Miller.

Russia took control of the bronze medal match against Germany in the fifth leg and ran out 45-29 winners. Italy dominated the gold medal match right from the start and eased to the title with a 45-25 victory.

Men's Team Sabre

Twenty-eight teams entered this event including Great Britain who lined up with Will Deary, James Honeybone, Curtis Miller and Jonathan Webb. They beat Colombia 45-30 in the round of 32 but then lost 45-29 to Iran in the next round. In the placings matches they lost 45-39 to Belarus and then 45-32 to Canada.

The number one seeds, Italy (Berre, Cavaliere, Curatoli and Samele) had a bye through the first round and then beat Canada and France to make the semi-finals. Hungary were their opponents at that stage as they had beaten Guatemala, Belarus and Iran. In the bottom half of the draw, Korea (Gu, Kim, Kim and Oh) had a bye and then beat China and Romania to make the top four. They were joined there by the USA (Dershwitz, Homer, Loss and Spear) who beat India, Georgia and then Russia.

Both semi-finals could not have been closer. In the first, Italy led throughout and went into the ninth leg 40-34 up but Szilagyi came on against Curatoli and took the match 45-44, with an 11-4 victory. In the second, Korea led



Men's Team Sabre Podium – Gold for Korea, Silver for Hungary, Bronze for Italy.

the USA after three legs and held until the penultimate match where America took the lead 40-38. Oh came on as the Korean anchor against Homer and took the match 45-44.

In the bronze medal match the USA led 15-13 after three legs but Italy wrestled themselves into a 30-25 lead after six bouts. The Italians then eased to a 45-40 victory to claim the medal. Korea took Hungary apart in the middle three legs of the gold medal match to lead 30-16. They stormed to the World title winning 45-22.

Watch the first day of the team medal matches here, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-Um1eNzxZY&list=PLdNA_ybrJfJpVaTnLcJURoj8x1PvO31K&index=15.

DAY 5

Women's Team Sabre

Great Britain did not enter this event so were not present in the line-up of twenty-three. Italy (Criscio, Gregorio, Gulotta and Vecchi) lived up to their billing as the World number one team, making the semi-finals with a bye followed by victories over Belarus and Mexico. They were joined in the top half of the draw by France (Berder, Brunet, Lembach and Queroli) who also benefitted from a bye and followed that up by wins over Germany and Ukraine.

In the bottom half of the draw, Korea (Hwang, Kim, Seo and Yoon), who also had a bye made the top four with victories over China and then the USA. Their semi-final opponents were Japan (Aoki, Emura, Fukushima and Tamura) who beat the Dominican Republic and Poland before stunning Russia with a 45-43 victory.

Italy, twice came back from behind to beat France 45-42 in the first semi-final but Korea dominated Japan in the second, winning 45-32. In the bronze medal match, Japan made a quick start and led 15-7 after the first three legs. France steadied things up in the next three but still trailed 30-22 going into the crucial final three fights and were dead in those fights, winning the bronze medal 45-39.



Italy win Women's Team Sabre gold from Korea and France.

Italy dominated Korea in the final, leading from the beginning and securing the title with a 45-27 victory.

Men's Team Epee

Great Britain was not amongst the field of thirty-seven team in this event. France (Borel, Gustin, Jerent and Lucenay), ranked number



France top the podium in Men's Team Epee, Switzerland in silver, Russia with bronze.

one, had a bye through the round of 64 and then beat Chinese Taipei, Germany and Egypt to make the semi-finals, where they faced Russia. The Russians, (Glazkov, Glebko, Khodos and Sukhov,) also had a bye which they followed up with victories over Iran, Israel and Ukraine. In the bottom half of the draw, Hungary (Banyai, Siklosi, Somfai and Redli) also benefitted from a bye and went on to beat Morocco, Hong Kong and Estonia. Their semi-final opponents were Switzerland (Heinzer, Kuhn, Niggeler and Steffen), who after a bye, beat Colombia, Japan and then Italy.

The first semi-final between France and Russia was tight throughout but the French pulled away by a couple of hits from the off and held on to win 45-43. The second semi-final was equally tight but low scoring. Hungary went

into the final leg with a 15-11 lead but Heinzer anchored for the Swiss and outscored Redli 26-17 in the final thrilling leg to take the fight 37-32.

Russia led Hungary from the beginning in the bronze medal match and despite the Hungarians scoring 22 hits to 15 in the final three legs, the Russians claimed the bronze medal 45-38.

The gold medal match between Switzerland and France was a thriller. The Swiss came out after six legs with a 22-21 lead and then pulled away in the next two legs to lead 32-25 going into the final bout. Borel anchored for France against Heinzer and pulled off a remarkable comeback to take the title 45-43.

Watch the second day of team medal matches from Leipzig here, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2AJEiebVnU&index=9&list=PLdNA_ybrJfJpVaTnLcJURoj8x1PvO31K.

DAY 6

Women's Team Epee

The twenty-four teams competing in this event did not include one from Great Britain. At the top of the table China (Sun, Sun, Xu and Zhu) received a bye and then beat Spain and the USA – just – to make the top four. They faced Korea (Choi, Kang, Shin and Song), who also had a bye and then beat Argentina and France. In the bottom half, Poland (Knapik-Miazga, Nelip, Piekarska and Rutz) beat Finland and Ukraine before a surprising win over Russia. Their semi-final opponents were Estonia (Beljajeva, Embrich, Kirpu and Kuusk) who followed up a bye through the 32 with victories over Hong Kong and Germany – the latter being a low scoring 12-11 victory.

In the semi-finals, China cruised past Korea 40-32 and Estonia dominated Poland to win 37-27. The bronze medal match between Poland and Korea remained tight throughout with Korea leading 20-19 after six legs. One bout of non-combativity was followed by Korea opening up a two-hit lead going into the



Women's Team Epee World Champions Estonia top the podium, silver to China, bronze to Poland.

anchor leg but Nelip outscored Shin 13-6 in the final fight to take Poland to the medal.

Estonia took control of the gold medal match against China early on and led 13-6 after three legs and then 27-18 after six. There was nothing that the Chinese team could do to get back into it and Estonia took the World title 45-33.

Men's Team Foil

Thirty teams took to the piste for the final event at the Leipzig World Championships. Great Britain was represented by James-Andrew Davis, Marcus Mepstead, Kamal Minott and Ben Peggs. They beat Sweden 45-27 before putting in a strong performance against Italy but ultimately losing 45-37. In the placings matches they lost 45-28 to Ukraine but then beat Chile 45-20 and Egypt 45-38 to finish 13th.

France (Cadot, Le Fort, Le Pechoux and Mertine) cruised through at the top of the order following up a bye with victories over Australia and Germany. Their semi-final opponents were Italy (Avola, Cassara, Garozzo and Foconi) who beat Holland before taking out Great Britain and then beat China. The USA (Chamley-Watson, Imboden, Massialas and Meinhardt) made light work of Guatemala,

Poland and Korea to make the top four where they faced Russia (Arslanov, Rigin, Safin and Zhrebchenko). The Russians followed up a bye with victories over Hungary and Japan to get there.

Whilst close at the beginning, Italy led France from the start in the first semi-final and went on to make the gold medal match 45-35. The USA dominated the second semi-final against Russia and stormed to a 45-29 win.

In the bronze medal match Russia pulled out a two-hit lead after the first three legs against



GBR Men's Foil Team (left to right – Marcus Mepstead, Ben Peggs, James-Andrew Davis and Kamal Minottt).

France – 15-13. France snatched the lead off them after six fights but only led by two hits, 30-28. Russia stole the lead back in the next leg but then Le Fort outscored Zhrebchenko 9-4 to put France 40-36 up going into the anchor fight. Dependable, as always, Le Pechoux took France to the bronze 45-37.

The USA came out of the blocks fast in the gold medal match against Italy, leading 15-8 after the first third of the match. They only managed twelve hits in the second third to Italy's twenty-two so went into the final three matches trailing 30-27. Avola then came on for Italy and scored five unanswered hits but Chamley-Watson recovered for the American's to cancel those hits out. Italy led 38-35 going into the anchor leg and Garozzo took the Italians to gold, winning the match 45-41.

Watch the final day's team medal matches here, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ebVfC3NBCo&list=PLdNA_ybrJfJpVaTnLcJURoJ8x1PvO31K&index=3.

COACHES QUOTES ABOUT WORLDS

Pierre Harper, Lead Foil Coach, "I thoroughly enjoyed coaching the GB senior men's foilists, all of whom I have worked with at major championships during their junior careers.

Whilst the individual results achieved (with the exception of Richard's outstanding sixth place) did not compare with previous years, I was really impressed with the performances in the team event. All four GB fencers (Ben, James, Kamal and Marcus) not only showed great determination and team bonding throughout the competition, but they were also able to perform at their very best in different matches - Kamal against Italy, Ben against Chile, Marcus against Sweden and James against Egypt. A major challenge for the future will be for all team fencers to fence at their very best in the same match. Given the fact that two of the men's foil team namely, Ben and Kamal, were new to the GB Senior Team and made their first appearance at a Senior Worlds, 13th place in the event is a very promising start and a result I am looking forward to building upon in the run up to Tokyo."

Cyril Tahon, Lead Sabre Coach, "Above all, I wanted to pay tribute to the organisational quality of the event, with a large number of people attending this edition. These World Championships allowed me to have confirmation of the progress made by some athletes in different behaviours and game compartments but also to see the weaknesses that reappear especially when the tension increases. In this team there are high-quality fencers who can perform well. To achieve this it is necessary to work daily and with determination on each of the parameters that make up the high performance."



Italy top the podium in Men's Team Foil beating America. France take the bronze.

Foreign Friends and the Battle of Medway

By Raymund Crawford

Tenterden Swords Club was started in 1976 and, being so close to the continent we have, from the start, had close contacts with fencing clubs in France and the Netherlands.

To begin with we made the shortest of journeys, across the water to Calais, a friendship which led to fencing weekends as only the French can do them. The climax was the 24 Hours of Calais when teams from Kent, Essex, Ireland, Picardy and Artois met to fence and party under some very unusual rules. The fencing was straightforward enough – team relays had just come in so we fenced each other from midday on Saturday until about 7 in the evening. Then we all joined in a *vin d'honneur* until dinner time. After that each team had to put on a half hour show to entertain the audience. We offered to put on Shaw's "Six of Calais" a wonderful twist to the time-honoured tale. Only when our offer was accepted did we learn that we would have to act the play in French. Finding a team of county-class fencers who can also act in French was a challenge. It became easier when it was decided that the Calais fencers would act the parts of the six burghers, though it meant that the performance had no full rehearsal at all. We needn't have worried. A French audience in high spirits is the best and most appreciative audience in the world, and they carried us along on a tide of bonhomie and alcohol which covered up any slight imperfections – well, major imperfections to be honest. The party went on all night, and the fencing began again at 7 in the morning, and very bad fencing it was too. Finally everything came to an end at midday on Sunday, but who won, I have no idea. But I do have a trophy and some abiding memories. Not least that though the venues for the socialising included Calais' dramatic and huge Flamboyant Gothic Hotel de Ville – the actual fencing took place in a WWII blockhouse.

Sadly the Calais club closed but by then we had made friends with the fencing club in Arras and we exchanged visits for several years until they too declined.

About 15 years ago, some Dutch fencers from the Pallos Club in Utrecht came over for the Invicta and from that visit began the best club friendship of all. In the spring, Pallos fencers would come over for the Invicta Open and Tenterden fencers would travel to Utrecht for the Dom tournament then later in the year

for the Slot Zuylen tournament, a somewhat hazardous team relay event held in a grass field, pitted with hoof marks in the grounds of an ancient castle. In return Pallos would come to Tenterden in the summer for a club match followed by a mixed team event, dinner, barbeque, croquet, swimming and general fun. The weather was invariably beautiful and the match usually resulted in a draw.

This year was slightly different. 2017 is the 350th anniversary of the Dutch raid on the Medway under Admiral de Ruiter, one of the Royal Navy's worst defeats resulting in the capture of the English flagship, the Royal Charles and considerable damage to the ships and the town of Chatham. Chatham Council decided to have a 2-week celebration of the event, somewhat to the surprise of the Dutch. Well, we explained, if we celebrated victories we would never stop so it is more interesting to celebrate a defeat. Pallos agreed to come over early so that we could have our annual match as part of the Chatham celebrations. At first we wanted to hold the match at Upnor Castle where the Dutch fleet were held up by the English gun battery, but the Castle



was already booked so we asked to hold our match in the Chatham Historic Dockyard who generously agreed, and the match, open to the public, became part of the celebrations.

We were able to hold the match on the mezzanine floor of No.3 Slip, the largest building in the Dockyard which could comfortably hold 16 pistes. The only drawback was that the day was very hot and the building, despite its size became uncomfortably hot as well. The wooden floor nearly 200 years old was smooth enough to



cause little problem but the need to protect it meant that only masking tape could go down.

The match result depended on the foil results as Tenterden had the stronger epee team while Pallos had always been strong in sabre. The Tenterden epee team, Ralph Johnson, Patrick Lawler and Nicola Hull picked up 7 victories between them, enough to give them a comfortable result, though Pallos had become much stronger with the inclusion of Dutch international Irma de Ridder, now coaching at Pallos. In the sabre team event, only a win by evergreen veteran Alan Ault over Nathalie van Uden saved Tenterden from a whitewash.

In the crucial foil match all three Tenterden fencers had to work hard, but eventually wins by Jane Clayton and Florence Grant were enough to put together with Paul Baillache's two victories to secure the match.

As has become traditional, the fencers then reformed into mixed teams of three – foil epee and sabre, the order of fights being decided by lot. Though this normally leads to some unexpected results, this time the ranking after the pools was almost the same as the final result. Both semi-finals were very close indeed. Blake (Irma de Ridder, Patrick van der Poll, John Hyde) beating Nelson (Ralph Johnson, Dan Goldring and Eva Weijer) on the last hit, while Duncan (Mariette Mason, Florence Grant and Michiel van Dieman de Jell) won 15-13 against Evertsen (Stafford Moss, Jane Clayton and Evert-Jan Smit). The final turned out to be surprisingly one-sided. Florence had the anchor leg and proved too difficult to hit for Patrick and saw Duncan home 15-9.

After dinner in a mercifully cool cellar we went to the river to watch a film on giant screens showing the 1667 Raid. This was followed by a spectacular firework display to bring the evening to an end.

The next day was saved for the barbeque and the deadly serious croquet matches.

My TV Debut!

FENCING FEATURES IN No7 TV ADVERT

By Kate Beardmore

My trip to Italy was all a bit of a whirlwind. I received a call about a week before the trip, something along the lines of, "Hey, wanna come to Italy to film a major tv ad?" Of course, I thought it was a hoax. Not many people know a lot about fencing in the UK, let alone using the sport in a campaign for a major product. But after sending my photos off and several important looking emails I was convinced. Giving me a few days to gather my kit together – huge thanks to the boys at Leon Paul once again – borrow a few sabre blades and hopefully remember I was now a sabre fencer for the next week.

Off to the airport and on my way to Massa in Italy. I was travelling with a fellow fencer Vicky Carson who was in the same boat as me – we both had no clue what we were in for. We arrived and were met by a car to take us to our hotel, fortunately, situated between the mountains and beach, which of course is where we headed off to first. After a few hours of downtime we met the crew and the star of the show, Team USA, Olympic medalist, Monica Aksamit. That evening at dinner it was soon obvious that everyone was lovely and that we were going to be in good hands for the week. I also met the director, Juan Cabral, who was an absolute babe and not what I had been told directors would be – mean and demanding. I also discovered that the producer lived and grew up only five minutes from where I did and there is no doubt he saw me running around my parents shop as a kid. Crazy small world!

The first day would be easy, or so I was told. Walking down to the lobby for breakfast I was met with fencing kit. Every brand you could imagine in so many sizes hanging everywhere. The hotel foyer had been transformed into a fencing shop overnight. I spent the next several hours trying on kit and standing in different lights for everyone to assess how it would look on camera. Today was all about the set up and ensuring the everything was in place to shoot the advert over the course of the next three days. When the day was over, a sneaky pizza was our reward for a whole day of changing clothes and checking lighting!

The second day started much earlier than the first as it was rehearsal day. It very quickly became apparent that this was my first-time fencing sabre. However, not knowing the sabre moves came in handy as director, Juan, wanted a lot of drama so all I had to do was wave the sabre around in the air and get hit a lot. We spent most of the day learning thirteen different moves so we could

do them at any given point during the filming. The hours flew past and by the time I knew it, it was time to go back to the hotel for dinner and bed, ready for the first day of shooting.

Our third day consisted of another early start to get to the location and what a location it was. This part of the filming would take place in a cave in a marble mine. The very same mine that Michelangelo sourced all his marble from for the Statue of David. The place was not only amazing to look at but the sound was unlike anything I had heard before. It was cold, dark and wet and yet somehow beautiful. The down side to such a remote and stunning place was the heat, the humidity and the wet and slippery floors from the mining machinery. However,



Carrara Marble Mine Fencing Salle.



Monica Aksamit.



Kate - Lights, Camera, Action!



Monica having her hair adjusted before the camera rolls.

Monica and I survived and we managed to get the moves done without breaking our necks. A 12-hour plus day done and dusted despite spending at least five hours just sitting and waiting for direction and camera angles.

The second day of shooting had a lot less sitting around for me. I was needed in filming the whole day. This time the location was different – on top of one of the mountains within the quarry. We arrived at about seven in the morning and it was noticeably hotter than sitting inside the mine. Less than twenty minutes later we were on the side of the mountain in full fencing kit and sweating without even moving. Our first scene just had Monica and I alone on the side

of a mountain. Most of the crew and cameras were across the mountain leaving us with a few of the team on walkie-talkies receiving instructions from the director and few others to keep us hydrated and cool. I even had my own runners to hold umbrellas wherever I moved, to ensure I was in the shade at all times. The day passed in a blur of marble dust and heat. We were kept in an air-conditioned car during the filming breaks but this seemed to make matters unbearable as soon as you left the comfort of the car. The last scene was shot in 40 degrees heat. I had to explode, not quite literally but I had a special fencing jacket prepared with pyrotechnics known as a squib – the same thing they use when someone gets shot in a movie. With no time to prepare or practice I was put in front of the camera and told I would feel a bang in my chest. After a few dry runs, someone shouted action and Monica lunged, I heard a loud bang but thankfully felt nothing. Looking down it looked like I had been shot, red dust had exploded all over me. However, the director was not quite happy with the filming so we had to give it another go. With only one jacket left with a squib it was our last chance to get it right. We nailed it and with that last bang it was all over.



Carrara Marble Mine near Pisa.

I enjoyed my experience on set, filming and made memories I will never forget. The work from everybody involved was tremendous and more than you will ever appreciate for a short advert on TV that we often ignore. I met some great people and made new friends in Vicky and the crew. I also learnt to fall backwards on demand with over 50+ people watching your every move and applauding for no reason when you get your job right. Thank you to everyone who helped me that week.

You can watch the finished advert here <https://youtu.be/HpH23nonnbY>

No7 is a Boots cosmetic range available in stores across the country. British Fencing is grateful to Boots, Mother and MJZ for featuring fencing in this advert.



Kate being framed for a shot.

Interview With a World Champion – Paolo Pizzo

Thirty-four year old Italian, Paolo Pizzo, recently won his second World title in Leipzig and gave *The Sword* an inclusive interview to discuss his fencing career and the challenges that he has faced along the way. Here's what he had to say.

When did you start fencing and why?

I started fencing at the age of seven when I was at primary school. I was offered free lessons at the most famous and oldest school in Catania. I asked my father what fencing was and whether I could try it. He told me that he had fenced in the past and that I should give it a go. I was also playing volleyball and football but the first time I put on a mask, I knew fencing would become my world.

When did you realise that you could be successful and do you remember any early results?

I started with foil before I switched to epee. At ten years old I used to go on adventures to Rome and as far as Venice, dreaming of making the podium. Every time it was so hard with hundreds of foilists competing and it didn't take me long to realise that foil wasn't my weapon because I didn't like the right of way rules. At twelve years old I switched to epee. The reason for the switch was so that I could choose my destiny and not be in the hands of refereeing decisions.

Did you have to move away from home to get better training?

Throughout my Junior career I had to go to the city centre of Catania five days a week. It was a 30-minute journey from my town, Pedara at the base of Mount Etna to training. When I was 22 or 23 years old I realised that I had to do something different to get better and at the age of 25 years old I moved to Rome. That's when my career changed because I met my greatest Maestro, Oleg Puzanov. First he made me a man before he made me an epeeist and that's when my fencing went to a new, higher level.

What is the Italian national squad set up like?

In Italy, all of the fencers who dream of becoming a champion work hard within the national squad. In the morning we work on



Paolo with his wife Livinia.

our physical preparation and everyone has an individual programme. In the afternoon we concentrate on fencing with individual lessons and sparring. It's a very hard day and there's no free time. I also have a special coach to help me with my breathing, a psychologist and nutritionist. My coach also trains me to behave like a champion all of the time, from the minute I wake up.

Italy has a strong history of fencing and it's tough to make the team. How do you stay on top of your game?

We do have a strong fencing tradition in Italy and every city and region has a good fencing centre so you can choose to fence wherever you live. We also have a system that allows retired international fencers to move straight into coaching which may well be my destiny. Once you reach 30 years old as a fencer you are encouraged to learn how to teach fencing by your coaches. So you begin to transition from the mind of an athlete to the mind of a coach. That means that more often than not a great fencer can become a great coach – not always but very often. So we also have a good coaching system which completes the cycle.

How tough will it be for you to make the Tokyo 2020 squad?

Team fencing changes all of the time. The interaction between components of the team changes day-by-day. The interaction changes after good and bad results from any of the individuals in the team. You have to create a good feeling in the team always. In Rio 2016 we had a great result with the team silver medal so a strong Italian team is not a surprise any more in men's epee. But we had a disaster at the Europeans this year and no team medal at the Worlds either so the road is not easy

for us. 2020 is a big target but it seems so far away. We know that the goal is getting closer everyday so we've talked as a team and from September the workload will be heavy to achieve our goal. My opinion is that team fencing is a different sport to individual fencing so we have to work on both.

Tell us about your battle with cancer at such a young age?

When I was thirteen I started to have strange feelings in my head. I can remember once when I was training I started to feel confused and nobody else could understand what was happening because it was inside my head. That was the beginning of the trouble I suffered and it just kept getting worse. After some months of having these "headaches" I started to have epileptic fits but I had to hide this from my family because I was so determined to compete at the national championships in July. The fits began in October and by the following June my sister found me whilst I was having a fit. I told her what had been happening and she told me that I had to go and see a doctor. It was very liberating for me because everything was in the hands of the doctors and I had a lot of tests over just a few days. Then my father came to me and explained that I had cancer. I started to cry immediately but my father told me that the only way to deal with it was to fight hard. He told me that he wanted to see his son grow up so fighting was the only way. That attitude contributed to saving me along with the operation. I put all of my courage and efforts in at that delicate time and every day I say thanks to the doctors and my father. After a few months I wanted to get back to fencing but the doctors told me that I should avoid fencing because of potential contact with opponents. That wasn't possible because I needed to fence so a few months after the



Paolo Pizzo with his second World Championship Gold Medal.



The Italian team celebrate Pizzo's second World Title.

therapy ended I started my "new" life on the piste.

Having been through something so tough would you say the experience has inspired you to two World titles?

I am sure that my early history has changed my life. I was so young when it happened so before it happened I didn't realise how much fight I had to win that battle. After a few years I was mature enough to understand what I had lived through and the suffering that it had caused me and my family. I was able to reflect on what had happened and decided that I would have to be a fighter to experience the joys in life. This is what I bring to the piste every day and perhaps it is why I have won two World titles and why I may win something else in the future. My battle with cancer taught me how to be a fighter and it

is perhaps the reason that I am talking to you today.

Your wife, Lavinia, represented Italy as a Modern Pentathlete. Do you train together and are you competitive with each other?

My wife retired last year from competition but she inspires me every day. She is my idol. When I met her I realised that I had quite an easy life as an athlete. She was training for five sports and I was just training for one. So I started to talk less and train more. Sometimes we trained together in fencing and I am the best but when we go running she destroys me every time. Yesterday we went running for 40 minutes and she had to keep waiting for me because she was so much stronger than me – even though she's not competing any more. It's good for us as a couple to train together. We are so competitive with each other in everything we do but in the right way. Every day we like to create heat between ourselves in fencing in running and now in riding horses – which she introduced me to. I am a lucky man because she is the best woman in the world for me.

What do you do to relax when you're not fencing?

I have many hobbies. I love my garden at home in Rome. It's strange because when I put on my mask I am a fighter but when I've finished training I run to fix everything in my garden. I also love to scuba dive. It's my biggest passion

in my life – even more than fencing perhaps. I love to go snorkelling and to catch fish and I dream of living by the sea. I love the sea all year round. I also love every other sport so I go running, play tennis, mountain biking, riding horses and skydiving. I'm a very sporty person. I also love music and try to discover new music all of the time, especially rock music.

And finally, what would be your top tip to a young fencer who wants to be World class?

Fencing is a fantastic sport. You should feel lucky to practice this sport. Not everyone can do it. You have to be smart and strong to do fencing. I feel so lucky to enjoy this sport. To every young fencer, my message would be, never surrender, never give up. For big results you have to suffer, again and again. One day, maybe you will get paid back for all that suffering. This is how I live – dreaming, suffering and never giving up.



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FIE Coaching Course Budapest 2017

APRIL – JUNE 2017 – REPORT BETH DAVIDSON

The FIE conducted its annual international coaching course between April and June this year lead by Ioan Pop (Sabre) who was assisted by Bela Kopetka (Epee) and Zsoltan Bernat (Foil). Great Britain had two candidates accepted onto the course, namely, Beth Davidson and Sandra Egginton.

The course was based in the Angyalfoldi SportKozpont venue equipped with a fencing salle, accommodation and restaurant which made everything convenient. With all the modern facilities you would expect, candidates were paired up to share ensuite rooms and had use of a large communal area as well as full board. The lack of ice-making facilities did cause some problems due to the physical nature of the course.

Each morning consisted of 1 hour of introduction to different warm-ups using games or more gymnastic/agility group exercises then 1hr of group footwork led by Bela who provided good technical processes, isolating technique and coordination. Later in the course, the candidates were each required

to provide a warm-up and footwork session to the group observed by the lead tutors.

The latter part of the morning and the afternoons the weapon groups were split off with their tutors to start their individual programmes. Each group followed a similar system whereby the tutor would demonstrate an action in a master-student set up that progressed each day through a logical order of simple tactics. (E.g. Simple direct attacks, followed by parries, feints, etc.) The candidates would then have to replicate this with different people both as coach and student.

The last month focussed on developing the candidate's own lessons and practice for the final assessment with preferred students from the weapon group. Candidates were given the choice of the main subject of the lesson which had to last 20 minutes. The practical assessment was based on delivering as coach and as the student.

Twice a week theory aspects were provided by lecturers from the University of Physical Education in Budapest. These subjects were

in, sport management, training theory, physiology, psychology and pedagogy. There was a final written exam for these in the final week.

Speaking about the course Beth said, "All the coach developers are World regarded so it was a fantastic opportunity to tap into that experience, to discuss international fencing and its development over the past 40 years. As a system of coach education, I was experienced in the Hungarian training system so could understand and ask questions. We also moved very quickly through each action so the group felt it very difficult to remember the coaching processes so the video documentation and notes were crucial. It was only the last 3 weeks that we had the freedom to bring our lessons together and Janos started to feedback on our technique both as coach and student.

Generally, I enjoyed the course and feel that my coaching has improved technically. The course provided me with a friendship internationally which I hope to rekindle personally and professionally."



Beth's Sabre Group © Beth Davidson.

My Budapest Course

By Sandra Egginton

I was the first person to arrive for the course, late at night, so I was very happy to see the man with the handmade sign in blue biro that read FIE. At least I was not going to be braving the night bus with all my kit in tow to an unknown destination. On the way to the hotel I had a nice little chat with my driver and was impressed with the fencing knowledge of the average Hungarian taxi driver before realising this was Zoltan Bernat, one of the course leaders. Oh, how we laughed.

From the start it was very different from what I had imagined. It took a while for me to improve my own confidence and find my feet. The pace of the course, initially, seemed slow as we waited for various participants to arrive.

We were invited to film any lessons or activities at TUS fencing club as well as the course itself, which enabled us to compile a huge amount of footage of the course – a lot of which is now available on YouTube. We quickly realised that we needed one lot of footage so took it in turns to film. This enabled me to make extensive written notes, which will be invaluable.

I have already had feedback from clubs as far afield as the Philippines and America commenting on the usefulness of the resources we have created, which I believe entirely supports what the FIE was hoping to achieve through this venture. As far as I know this is the first time this has been done for this course. I hope this will be of use to future participants as well as anyone else wishing to improve their coaching.

As an epeeist I found my schedule allowed for me to get out into the clubs from mid-afternoon which meant I had the opportunity to put into practice some of the approaches explored in class and of course offered me a bigger range of students to work with, besides the coaching course candidates. These included fencers at OSC, VASAS, and Honved. At all the clubs I was particularly impressed with the level of discipline and maturity displayed by the young athletes.

The coach educators were exemplary. We had the benefit of two, Béla Kopetka and Gabor Bogнар. Their passion for the sport was obvious and made them both a joy to work with and they frequently joined in with the games that we had created, as well as acting as practice fodder for our individual lessons.

I also had the chance to see various other coaches including Adrian Pop, (former Swedish national coach) and Jéno Pap to name a couple and to see Bela working with students

of different levels including veterans and young pentathletes, at the national training centre and film lessons given there.

The course organisers managed to produce a course from which everyone could say they gained something, considering the range of experience – from former athletes with little coaching experience to people already working in clubs. This was no mean feat.

I have attended courses which covered more subjects but what this course did was help show coaching methodologies, structured lessons which made more tactical sense and working alternately in a coach-centred and fencer-centred way. Again this was possible because of the length of the course, but besides working with everyone initially, we had a period of working with a training partner intensively for two weeks prior to our exams, which enabled a more in depth coach-student relationship.

There was nevertheless, room for disagreement and debate. I saw some very different lesson structures in some of the clubs.

The more proactive you were as a participant the more you could benefit from this course. It was definitely not for those wishing to be spoon fed information, but for those willing to use their initiative many opportunities existed.

The seminars were of a very high level and admittedly, not ideal for anyone who didn't either have a high level of English, or least good English and a passing knowledge of the subjects. However they stimulated a great deal of research amongst the candidates as the exams approached and I now have quite a reading list to plough through.

The length of the course was a challenge psychologically for most candidates, many of

whom didn't see their families for the entire time. That was one of the biggest challenges.

My advice to anyone thinking of attending this course, would firstly be look after your health. This was stressed repeatedly during the first week or so by our coach mentors but was largely ignored resulting in a lot of illness.

Get out and make friends outside of the course participants. Three months is a long time to spend with a group of people you hardly know and who will have massively different cultures, behaviours and expectations of each other.

There are plenty of opportunities to inject some fun into your training with Margaret Island a short hop from the hotel. Several of us enjoyed regular runs there and amazingly, this was possible any time of day or night I discovered, and in complete safety. It never seemed to be free of energetic city dwellers. It boasts a 5K sprung running track with stunning views of the Danube amongst other features and it is now my firm belief that every park should have it's own power ballad fountain.

Personally I am a great fan of outdoor swimming as well so I headed off to Balaton Lake at the earliest opportunity, which was for me the open water swim of a lifetime.

Meanwhile for aching muscles, the city's many thermal mineral spas provided welcome relief. I really couldn't get enough of those!

This course gave me a good idea of the related coaching subjects that I would like to gain a deeper knowledge to complement my practical coaching. It was a springboard to improving your coaching and not a coaches finishing school. So now that I'm back in the UK, the real work begins.



FIE Coaching Course Alumni 2017 © Beth Davidson.

Muslim Girls Fence Join the Journey

By Josef Thomas

When Olympic bronze medalist, Ibtihaj Muhammad, was asked after the 2016 Olympics what fencing for Team USA means to her, she said, "It's challenging those misconceptions that people have about who the Muslim woman is. That someone is forcing me to wear this hijab. That I'm oppressed. That I don't have a voice."

At Maslaha we are often asked: why Muslim Girls Fence? Participants in the project frequently reflect that Muslim girls and women are represented in the media and stereotyped by wider society in one dimensional terms; as "housewives", "submissive" and "weak". Muslim girls face double discrimination on the basis of both gender and religion. By taking up fencing, a sport that is often perceived as predominantly white, male and elite, Muslim Girls Fence participants are breaking stereotypes and claiming a space for themselves. As one young woman said about fencing, "It's like what you do in life -- you step forward to get what you want."

Muslim Girls Fence is a collaboration between Maslaha and British Fencing, consisting of ten weeks of consecutive Maslaha and fencing sessions with secondary school students. During the Maslaha sessions, we explore issues of identity, gender and Islamophobia, and how to creatively challenge stereotypes.

To date, we have taken Muslim Girls Fence to two schools in East London, the Frederick Bremer School and Beal High School, and to the Stockland Green School in Birmingham. With the amazing group of girls from the Frederick Bremer School and a number of artists, Muslim Girls Fence had its first exhibition at the Southbank Centre as part of the Women of the World festival in March 2016, 'Don't Fence Me In', with the girls also showing off their fencing techniques to a large audience. They are now working on starting up a fencing club at their school to lead younger students. We worked with the girls at Beal High School to produce a zine – a radical small press magazine – inspired by their thoughts on identity and fencing. In Birmingham, we will be beginning a series of podcasts including participants' poetry, thoughts, interviews with role models (we're holding out for Ibtihaj Muhammad!) and more.

We are excited to have the opportunity over the next few years to take Muslim Girls Fence to more schools in London and Birmingham, as well as Rotherham, Sheffield and other UK cities; working with and connecting girls from across the country.



We are looking for clubs to support the project and committed women fencing coaches from areas in or around those cities to deliver fencing sessions. Coaches should be passionate about the project, understand the need for such an initiative and enjoy working with young people and supporting their wellbeing and enjoyment, as well as their sporting development!

If this sounds like you, get in touch! If you would like to get involved with the Muslims Girls Fence journey, or just want to hear more, e-mail us at: info@maslaha.org

maslaha

Talent Programme Update

By Steven Garrett

Background

UK Sport announced their decision not to continue to fund the British Fencing World Class Programme in December 2016. Following this decision, British Fencing took the opportunity offered by Sport England to revise the submitted Talent Strategy based on needing to operate a standalone Talent Pathway system and programme.

The British Fencing Board approved mission for the next four years remains unchanged and continues to provide a clear direction and focus for the pathway: *"To deliver a talent system that enables every talented athlete to access a high-quality pathway that fulfils their potential."* This mission is underpinned by the three core values, honesty, respect and excellence, along with the additional values of professionalism and teamwork.

In February 2017, Sport England confirmed their support for the British Fencing Talent Strategy and awarded £500,000 of funding for the two-year period up to the end of March 2019. Subject to the delivery of the Strategy and Operational Plan, a further £500,000 has been ring-fenced for the period to the end of March 2021 for the continued delivery of the Strategy.

Philosophies

As we seek to implement the Talent Pathway Programme we will embed the following philosophies:

1. **Athlete centred.** Our system will put the progression and welfare of the athlete at the heart of what we do. We will use athlete profiling to measure progression and adopt Sport England agreed tools to measure athlete satisfaction and welfare. We will seek to implement recommendations from the Duty of Care Review (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/610130/Duty_of_Care_Review_-_April_2017__2.pdf) to ensure that athletes are treated fairly and transparently.
2. **Collaborative.** The British Fencing Talent Programme will support athletes and coaches to develop and achieve their goals. Personal coaches with athletes on the Programme will be supported in their personal development so they are able to best support athlete development. In addition, the Programme will engage with the wider athlete support team which

will include parents, clubs and sports science and medicine professionals already supporting athletes.

3. **Progression based.** The Talent Programme is intended to support athletes who have the motivation and capability to progress and improve to international medal winning standards. British Fencing will aim to provide these athletes with the best development opportunities and best training environments.

What does the Revised Performance Pathway look like?

The diagram below shows the whole of the **Performance Pathway** in fencing from club level to senior international. The funding from Sport England is **ONLY** for the Talent element of the Pathway. Talent covers from Talent Development Centres (TDCs) through to the Performance Foundations level (highlighted in red).

Who is leading on the Talent Pathway now there is no World Class Programme?

Ultimately, the Board through the CEO will ensure that the Talent Pathway Strategy is meeting its key aims, objectives and targets in line with the agreements with Sport England.

On a day-to-day basis, the Talent Programme will be led by Maxine McCombie, Talent Pathway Manager. Maxine is currently on maternity leave (until end June 2018) and

during this time, Steve Garrett has been seconded from his role in Higher Education Development to cover this position.

What is the staffing structure?

The Pathway will be led by the Talent Pathway Manager reporting to the CEO. They are supported by a Talent Pathway Administrator (Stuart Haw) who will also help and support the logistics for the TDCs.

We have recently run a recruitment process for a Talent Pathway Coach in Foil and Epee, and Cyril Tahon will continue as Talent Pathway Coach for Sabre.

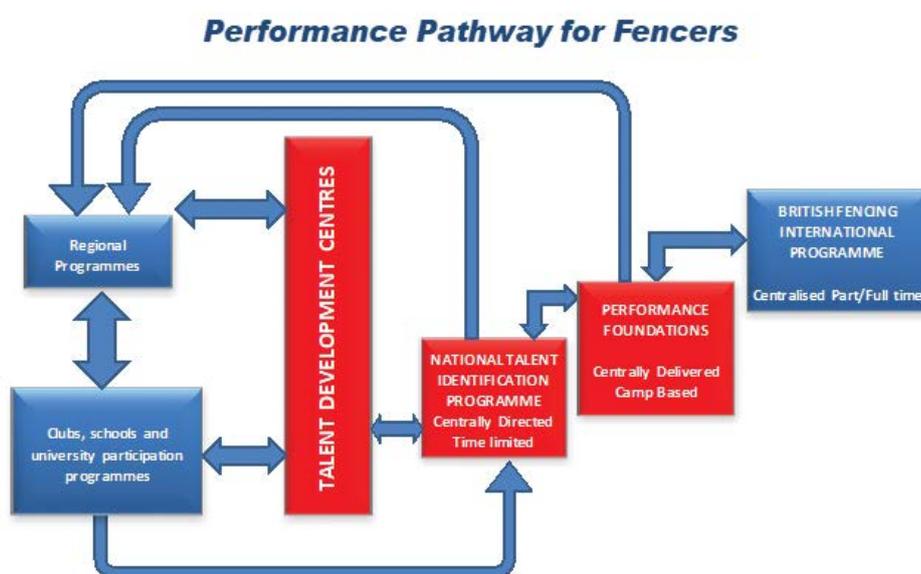
In addition, a pool of talent coaches have also been recruited to support the delivery of the talent programme and TDC coaches are expected to be announced shortly.

What ages are covered?

The minimum age for entry to a Talent Development Centre is typically 15 years. However, we would expect that, in the main, athletes will be at least competing at international Cadet level. Given there is no funded Podium Potential Programme, the top age for Performance Foundations level has now been raised to include U23 athletes.

What is happening now?

- Athletes and their coaches have been invited to join the Talent Programme.
- One-to-one meetings with all nominated athletes on the Performance Foundation Programme.



Development (continued)

- The first pilot TDC launched in Bath in September.
- Athlete profiles underpinned by the *What it takes to Win* model are being created.
- The British Fencing advanced coach development programme will be launched. This forms part of British Fencing's ongoing work to develop coaches and will be underpinned by three modules: Coaching Practice, Coach Development and Athlete Development.
- Talent programme training has started and the full calendar to March is included here.

Talent Programme Dates

Foil	Epee	Sabre
02-03/09/2017 (London)	02-03/09/2017 (London)	16-17/09/2017 (London)
21-22/10/2017 (Manchester)	27-30/12/2017 (London)	24-27/10/2017 (London)
04/11/2017 (Manchester)	16-18/02/2017 (Manchester)	11-12/11/2017 (Manchester)
03/12/2017 (London)	24-30/03/2018 (London)	16-19/12/17 (London)
27-30/12/2017 (London)		27-28/01/2018 (London)
16-18/02/2017 (Manchester)		16-18/02/2017 (Manchester)
24-30/03/2018 (London)		24-30/03/2018 (London)

Case Study: Premier Sport Franchisee

Here is an update from Alistair Hudson who is one of the Premier Franchisees in the South West to help explain how the partnership works at a local level.

Using British Fencing's Core Coach Award, we train Activity Professional's in the skills necessary for children to get accustomed to using plastic foils. The skills taught to our Activity Professionals are developed to correspond to our work in Primary schools, where we have to look at how we solve working with up to 30 children in 1 hour with limited kit and often limited space whilst still ensuring we are giving the children a great initial experience. The children are then taught specific skills, such as: guards 6 & 4, attacks thrust and lunge and also the parry & riposte. In addition, we have Activity Professionals research their nearest fencing club to their location so that those who are competent and wish to carry on fencing are signposted to local clubs.

Within my area we have seen this partnership reach new heights with Wellington Swords in the South West. Jane from the club has been invited to view sessions and also to talk to our Activity Professionals to ensure there is a seamless link into Wellington Swords. This partnership is excellent as it allows us to signpost the children to ensure they can continue to enjoy their fencing, and who knows it may even get a few parents involved as well.

This pathway is at the heart of what we do as we want children to start and stay active throughout their lives, we enjoy the contribution we are able to make to this during our curricular and extracurricular clubs but when a child makes this step its really great.

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Scottish Fencing: Salle Ossian

Content for this section of The Sword was provided by Scottish Fencing. British Fencing is grateful for this contribution which allows us to showcase our Home Nations.

Congratulations to Salle Ossian Fencing Club who were nominated for and won British Fencing Club of the Year in July 2017. Well done to all involved in the Club. For those who do not know the Club here is some background information highlighting the achievements and milestones of the Club leading to this success.

Introduction

Established in 2015, Salle Ossian Fencing Club is a Perth-based fencing club founded with the principle aim of promoting and providing facilities to support the sport of fencing throughout Scotland. A family focussed, community based club, Salle Ossian has had a very successful year both in terms of increasing participation throughout the local area and also in terms of on-piste competitive success.

Guiding Principles

One of the fundamental goals of the club is to provide access and opportunity for new

fencers to learn how to fence, together with a pathway which will allow fencers to grow and improve their level of performance. With this goal in mind, we undertake partnership programs with Perth and Kinross Sports Development, Active Schools, Live Active and St Andrews University to promote the sport in schools and universities across Scotland. We operate on a hub and spoke model, with regular classes running in a number of schools and any interested fencers being encouraged to come along to the Salle, which is open for training four nights a week during term time. We also run training camps and taster sessions in all of the school holidays to further provide opportunity for development and improvement of fencing skills.

Another keystone of the club strategy is the Salle Ossian Awards Scheme. This charitable scheme is designed to reduce any barriers to and to increase opportunity for fencers who hope to excel in their sport. In return for a commitment from the fencer to a high volume of training and a contribution towards the charitable aims of the club, the awardee is given priority access to lessons, coaching support at competitions, access to strength and conditioning resources and financial support towards the cost of travel for competitions. This last point in particular is a key enabler – allowing fencers to progress and compete in situations where it may have otherwise been financially onerous for them.



We have an active program of coach development. Our club has taken the lead in coach education in Scotland and is now the de-facto centre of excellence for coach development in Scotland. We provide a pathway for talented young fencers to train full-time by providing employment as coaches in our schools programme. We also support coach development through a school day release/apprenticeship scheme – providing work-experience and coaching qualifications for young fencers. The effort that we put into coach development feeds back in a virtuous cycle – we have more coaches to allow us to expand our schools program which drives expansion of the club itself.



Competitive Successes

The linear nature of the scheme and programmes we have set up are all about producing top quality competitive fencers. The pathway we have established leads from talent identification in the schools, transitions through development classes in the club and leads to the opportunity to excel with the help of the awards scheme. The success of this strategy is evident in the competitive results from club fencers, highlights of which include -

- Currently Scottish, British and Commonwealth Champions
- British U23 Individual Champion
- British Senior Team Champions
- Multiple Senior World Cup participants
- Salle Ossian fencers took two of the top three places in a recent FIE senior satellite event.

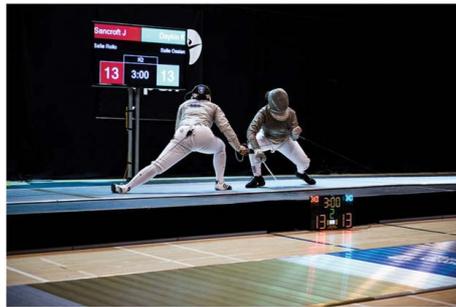


- Three of the top five UK senior women fencers are Salle Ossian members
- Two British Youth Champions in 2016
- Club fencers have won Gold, Silver and Bronze at numerous open events throughout the UK, at the Scottish Youth Development Series, the Scottish School Championship and the Scottish Age Group Championship

Club Milestones

Season 2016/17 has been a fantastic season for Salle Ossian, both in terms of the charitable aims of the club and in terms of the competitive results. Some of the milestones we have reached this year include -

- Providing opportunity for more than 500 children to try fencing for the first time, with the support and encouragement of our experienced coaching team.
- A massive five-fold increase in participation in our school classes. We now have over 150 children fencing in the seven schools which are participating in our programme.
- Our membership numbers have doubled this year as a result of and a testament to the success of our hub and spoke model.
- This huge increase in participation is now necessitating the need to expand the dedicated fencing facility which was only opened in 2015. We're literally bursting at the seams.
- An increase in our coaching capacity to three full-time coaches supported by a



- number of the other senior members/awardees who are making great progress along the coaching pathway
- Local recognition of the work that the club is doing in terms of increased coverage in the local media
- Winning the Perth & Kinross Sports Club of the Year for the second time in three years. Again, a fantastic validation of the club ethos.
- The Salle Ossian Awards scheme has been so successful that it is now running at capacity, providing high performance coaching, support and opportunity to 12 promising young fencers.

Lucy Higham

McLELLAN WINS TROFEU SANT JORDI 29th/30th April 2017, Barcelona:

Thirteen year old, Perth High School student, Rory McLellan won the Trofeu Sant Jordi – one of the largest competitions on the under-14 international circuit. On Saturday, Rory, who fences at Salle Ossian, was faultless with a 6-0 win-loss in the first round of poules and a 6-0 in the seeding round, meaning he went in to the direct elimination round on Sunday seeded no.2.

He got a bye in to the Last 32 round which he won impressively 15-6. His dominance continued into the semi-final with wins of 15-11 and 15-9. However his semi final fight looked in jeopardy as he went 6-8 down and took a blow to his fencing hand causing considerable pain and swelling. He opted to continue and won in courageous style as he did in the final, dominating in a 15-9 win.

Rory is pictured alongside his very proud dad Steve.



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Klaus Härö's Oscar-shortlisted, Golden Globes-nominated feature, **THE FENCER**, which offers a fascinating glimpse into an unknown corner of history, is now available to own on DVD from Amazon and selected HMV stores.

Based on a true-life story, **THE FENCER** is the touching drama about Endel Nelis, a young man who arrives in Haapsalu, Estonia, in the early 1950s. Having left Leningrad to escape the secret police, he finds work as a teacher and founds a sports club for his students. Endel becomes a father figure to his students and starts teaching them his great passion – fencing, which causes a conflict with the school's principal. Envious, the principal starts investigating Endel's background...

The children want to participate in a national fencing tournament in Leningrad, and Endel must make a choice; risk everything to take the children to Leningrad or put his safety first and disappoint them.

Interestingly, the Estonian fencing club Endel Nelis founded in the reign of Stalin is thriving today.

To celebrate the DVD's release, we are offering two winners a prize bundle of **THE FENCER's** cinema poster and a DVD of the film.

To enter please email media@britishfencing.com with "The Fencer Prize Draw" in the subject heading and provide contact details including your postal address. This competition is only open to members of British Fencing who reside in the United Kingdom.



Round Up

TWELVE FENCING MEDALS AT TOKYO 2020

IOC Announce Full Medal Quota for Fencing at Tokyo 2020

In June, after many years of campaigning, the International Olympic Committee announced that the fencing programme for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games will include a full quota of medals. This decision means that for the first time ever fencing will have complete parity for men and women at an Olympic Games – a major goal set by the IOC [Olympic Agenda 2020](#).

Tokyo's Olympic Fencing schedule will now include twelve medal-winning disciplines with

team and individual events for epee, foil and sabre for both men and women.

President of the FIE, Alisher Usmanov said, "The biggest dream of many generations is now achieved. From the very beginning, I had set this goal as my main priority as FIE President. The IOC decision is the most important recognition of our long-term efforts to improve fencing, to make it more visible and popular. From now on, all of our fencers will have equal opportunities to compete at the Olympic Games. Fencers, national federations, and the entire world of fencing are tremendously grateful to the IOC Executive Board, the IOC President Mr Thomas Bach, and the Olympic Program Commission and its President, Mr Franco Carraro, for their decision."

Delighted about the decision, British Fencing's President, Hilary Philbin said, "The IOC's

decision to award fencing our remaining two Olympic medal events for Tokyo 2020 gives us, for the first time in an Olympic Games, our full quota of twelve events. This is great news for the sport of fencing and its continuing development as a major presence in the Olympic Games. It is also good news from the point of view of British Fencing, with the enhanced opportunities it offers to our fencers striving towards Tokyo 2020."

Adding, "These final two medals have been a long time coming, following sustained efforts from the FIE over a number of Olympic cycles. Our congratulations are offered to all those who have worked towards this successful outcome."

Read the official IOC report [here](#) and watch the promotional video about the decision [here](#).

2017 CADET & JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS REPORT

University of Nottingham Host Successful Championships

The David Ross Sports Village at the University of Nottingham hosted the Cadet & Junior Championships for the first time this year, 1-2 July. This excellent facility saw two days of the highest level of cadet and junior fencing.

Day 1 – Cadet Championships

All six individual disciplines were contested on Saturday.

Men's Epee

There were fifty-six entries into this event and Tarriq Roach (Brixton) emerged from the poule stage as top seed followed by Luke Toogood (Activ8), Ethan Kew (Redhill Reigate Epee) and Edward Scott Payne (Swindon). Roach progressed through to the semi-finals where he met Ethan Kew who also came through

the field. In the bottom half of the draw Scott Payne was eliminated by Myles Ashforth (CADS) in the round of 16 but Ashforth fell to Luke Mason (Raven) in the quarterfinals. Toogood also fell in the round of 16 to Dylan Ballard (Delittante) who went on to make the medal matches.

Kew squeezed past Roach 15-13 in the first semi-final and Mason eased past Ballard 15-9. The final was close but Luke Mason became the champion with a 15-12 victory over Kew.

Full results [here](#).

Women's Epee

Sixty-three fencers took part in this event and it was Jacqueline Oien (Leon Paul Epee) who topped the rankings after the first round, followed by Alex Stewart (West Fife), Maia Henderson-Roe (Keszler) and Rachael Lever (Oundle Peterborough Stamford Epee). Henderson-Roe fell in the round of 16 and Lever went out in the quarterfinals but Oien and Stewart progressed to the medal matches.

Ellie Parmar (Redhill Reigate Epee) and Constance Simmonds (Abingdon) won their semi-finals leaving Oien and Stewart having to settle for the bronze medals. It was Parmar who was to clinch the 2017 title in this event with a gold medal match victory over Simmonds.

Full results [here](#).



Epee



Foil



Sabre

British Cadet Champs 2017 – Boys Podiums



Epee



Foil



Sabre

British Cadet Champs 2017 – Girls Podiums

Men's Foil

There were seventy-two fencers in this event and Brij Gautam (Salle Paul) emerged from the poules as top seed followed by Duncan Morrison (Salle Holyrood), William Lonsdale (Louth) and Louis Guennou (Escrime Academy). None of them were to make the medal matches as Gautam and Lonsdale went out in the round of 16 and Guennou and Morrison did not get through their quarterfinal matches.

In the first semi-final Alessandro Gill (Salle Paul) beat Luca Plastow (Salle Boston) 15-10 and in the second Benjamin Udrzal (Newham Swords) defeated Cameron Evans (Unattached) 15-13. Gill took the title beating Udrzal 15-5 in the gold medal match.

Full results [here](#).

Women's Foil

Forty-three fencers took to the piste in this event and Teagan Williams-Stewart (Newham Swords), Henna Raiyat (Much Wenlock), Charity Weeks (Laszlo) and Madeleine Gale (Brentwood) topped the rankings after the first round. Gale fell in the round of 32, Raiyat and Williams-Stewart in the 16 and Weeks in the quarterfinals.

Bronwen Granville (Bath Sword) beat Phoebe Dawn (Russell Swords) 15-10 in the first semi-final and Phoebe Newton-Hughes (Sheffield

Buccaneers) defeated Rachel Jones (Salle Kiss) 15-11 in the second. Granville went on to clinch the title with a 15-14 victory over Newton-Hughes in the final.

Full results [here](#).

Men's Sabre

There were forty-six fencers in this event and after the first round Ian Ren (Leon Paul Sabre) was the number one seed for the elimination stages. He was followed by Archie Watts (Shakespeare Swords), Mark Alvares-Peres (Salle Ossian) and Gabriel Van Hoffelen (Leon Paul Sabre). Only Ren was able to make the medal matches as Watt went out in the round of 16 and Alvares-Peres and Van Hoffelen were eliminated in the quarterfinals.

Ren fell 15-14 to Luke Haynes (Truro) in the first semi-final as Julian Richards II (Unattached) beat Samuel Boorne (Truro) 15-6 in the second. Haynes took the title edging a tight gold medal match 15-14 over Richards II.

Full results [here](#).

Women's Sabre

A small field of twenty-five lined up for this event and Maia Fashokun (Truro) emerged from the poules as top seed followed by Elsie Llewellyn (Sancroft Blades), Lumeng Yang (Camden) and Bea Abram-Moore (Truro). All four held their seeding throughout to progress to the medal matches.

Fashokun overcame Abram-Moore 15-10 in the first semi-final and Llewellyn defeated Yang 15-13 in the second. Llewellyn took the 2017 title with victory over Fashokun in the gold medal match.

Full results [here](#).

Day 2 – Junior Championships

All six individual disciplines were hosted on Sunday.

Men's Epee

Seventy fencers took part in this event and George Morris (Leon Paul Epee) topped the rankings for the elimination stages followed by Owen Jordan (Leon Paul Epee), Matthew Cooper (Wingerworth) and Max Kurz Jordan (Haverstock). Kurz Jordan was eliminated in the round of 32, Morris fell in the round of 16 followed by Jordan in the quarterfinals.

Cooper made the medal matches and beat Antoine Belot (Escrime Academy) 15-11 in the semi-finals. Matthew Dickinson (Laszlo) defeated Dylan Morrison (Edinburgh) 15-10 in the other semi-final. The extremely tight final was won by Cooper, 15-14 over Dickinson.

Full results [here](#).

Women's Epee

Sixty-one fencers took part in this event and after the first round, Laura Sheffield (Brixton) topped the rankings. Abigail Watkins (Malvern Hills Sword), Eleanor Taylor (Salle Hadalin Stevenage) and Danielle Lawson (Malvern Hills Sword) completed the top four seeds. Taylor went out in the round of 16 and Watkins went out in the quarterfinals.

Sheffield and Lawson made the semi-finals where they faced each other. Lawson prevailed 15-7. Alex Stewart (West Fife) beat Jacqueline Oien (Haverstock) 15-9 in the other semi-final. Lawson dominated the final over Stewart, winning 15-4.

Full results [here](#).

Men's Foil

There were seventy-three entries in this event and Matthew Abrahams (ZFW) topped the rankings after the first round. Edmund Howlett (Fernwood Sword), Sebastian Pallier (Fencers Club London) and Dougie Ashby (St Benedicts) were the next highest seeds. Ashby fell in the round of 32 and Abrahams, Pallier and Howlett were all eliminated in the quarterfinals.

Conor Head (Salle Boston) beat Ciaran Archer (Newham Swords) 15-12 in the first semi-final and Ben Bates (Bath Sword) took out Samuel Wilson (Salle Boston) 15-4 in the second. Bates went on to claim the title, beating Head 15-11 in the gold medal match.

Full results [here](#).



Epee



Foil



Sabre

British Junior Champs 2017 – Girl's Podiums



Epee



Foil



Sabre

British Junior Champs 2017 – Boy's Podiums

Women's Foil

There were forty-two fencers competing in this event. Alice Campbell (Newham Swords) topped the rankings after the first round, followed by Isabella Gill (Salle Paul), Yasmin Campbell (Fighting Fit) and Teagan Williams-Stewart (Newham Swords). Williams-Stewart went out in the round of 32 and Alice Campbell fell in the quarterfinals.

Yasmin Campbell and Gill made the semi-finals, where they faced each other. Campbell won that fight 15-10. In the other semi-final Arianna Balestrieri (Newham Swords) beat Amy Home (Salle Kiss) 11-10. Balestrieri went on to claim the title, beating Campbell 15-8 in the gold medal match.

Full results [here](#).

Men's Sabre

Fifty-three fencers took part in this event. Jamie Craze (Truro) was the number one seed after the first round followed by teammate Bertie Holdsworth, James Edwards (Marshall) and Noah Mattricianni (Queens City). All four made the quarterfinals but James Edwards fell to George Suddards (Truro) at that stage.

In the first semi-final Craze beat Mattricianni 15-7 and in the second Suddards beat Holdsworth 15-10. Craze continued his domination by winning the gold medal match and the title, 15-13.

Full results [here](#).

Women's Sabre

There were thirty-nine entries into this event and Maria Chart (Truro) emerged as the top seed after the poule stage. She was followed up in the rankings by teammate, Caitlin Maxwell, Sophia Potter (Shakespeare's Swords) and Jessica Corby (Salle Ossian).

All four progressed to the semi-finals where Chart beat Corby 15-9 and Maxwell defeated Potter 15-6. In the all-Truro final Maxwell took the title again, beating Chart 15-13.

Full results [here](#).

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Letter to the Editor

MEMBERSHIP – ANOTHER OPTION

Ever been with a circle of friends, among whom is one while enjoying your company, is reluctant or completely avoids ever buying a round of drinks? In polite terms you regard them as a free rider and privately something of far stronger expression! Yet is it not exactly the same with membership of BF. Everyone who fences gains from its existence. We may moan and groan about it and have a long list of things we feel it should do but doesn't etc, but the hard fact remains, that without BF we would not be taking part in this fantastic sport. Should therefore we not all contribute and become members?

We've implemented a system at my club where as members join we include some level of BF Membership. However I understand that there are numerous reasons why some clubs don't do this (e.g. cash-flow or a lack of knowing whether or how often fencers will compete) which is why I propose considering another membership option.

In essence it is a 'pay as you go' option. This would be in form of day membership, added to the entry fee, collected and passed onto BF by the competition organiser. Say, £3 for a county event, £6 for a regional, £10 for a National. Thereby you remove this hurdle that discourages people to have a go. Is it not a fair assumption, that once someone has a go, they get hooked and are back to compete again?

In providing a 'pay as you go' option we also meet the fencer who has a cash flow problem and to whom forking out £48 in one go is just too much. It could well be that over a year they may pay BF far more than £48, but that is what matches their circumstance.

What is more, by putting a face value of day membership on each competition, the fencer who enters a number of events, could then perceive 'full' membership in a different way: pay £48 and enter as many competitions as you wish – 'wow, that is a real bargain!'

Jim Pilkington

Dear Jim,

You put forward a very interesting proposal here, so I decided to ask our CEO, Georgina, for her thoughts on the matter. Here is what she had to say.

There is no doubt that a pay-as-you-go membership can encourage participation. This model was considered as part of the membership review with the Home Countries in

2014-15. However at that time the technology and processes to make that work were not in place.

There is value in giving people a choice – either to enter events as a member with a reduced rate, or to buy a one-off competition membership upgrade. I use the word 'upgrade' as many people who compete will be training week in and week out in clubs and should

therefore still be a Recreational member and be covered by insurance and contribute to the development of the sport.

Your suggestion will be discussed with the Home Country Working Group and in the meantime if any other readers would like to contribute to this debate please contact me at headoffice@britishfencing.com.

We are always looking for stories from youth internationals.

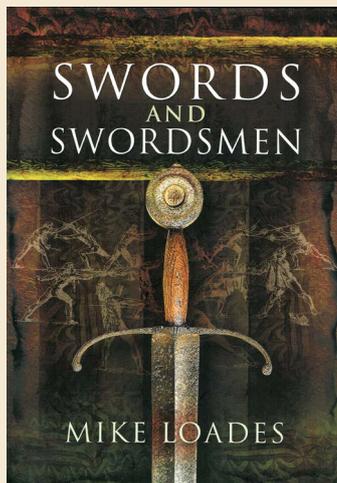
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Book Review

Swords and Swordsmen by Mike Loades



I remember in my youth a time when my father would take me to Museums during the summer holidays on the pretext of encouraging a love of history into my soul – actually, more a case of keeping me out of my mother's hair for a couple of hours. However, on one memorable occasion, the museum staff had opened up a case of Romano-British artefacts and had taken out a short Roman legionnaire's dagger excavated at Hod Hill in Dorset. It was passed round the small group until I had it in my hands. Here was a mid-first century AD weapon that had been forged and used in battle here in England and whose owner had obviously chosen it with care, kept it by his side for years and which had become a part of his life and death. My school history lessons suddenly came alive and in that moment I was spellbound. Weapons and their historical context became one and fencing became a natural by product of that day.

Now, Mike Loades has achieved the same effect in this newly reprinted volume of his 2010 publication. At just under 500 pages it is not an afternoon's read but a riveting tour de force linking particular swords from around the world with their owners and setting them in the world in which they were used. As the Introduction announces, "the sword remains at the heart of our romantic imagination. It is the weapon that gives the hope that skill can triumph over brute force." With that in mind, Mike takes the reader on a roller coaster ride of swords and their masters through the centuries, from Tutankhamum's khepesh in ancient Egypt, King Raedwald's pattern-welded iron sword from Sutton Ho, the beautiful Sancho of Uesugi Kenshim, the legendary Samurai Warlord from 1250 AD, the gilded

longsword of Maximilian 1st, Holy Roman Emperor in 1500 AD, Oliver Cromwell's mortuary sword from the massacre at Drogheda in 1649 and ending with General Custer's "Tiffany Sword" from the American Civil War. In between, the descriptions of fighting techniques, the chivalry, the duelling codes of honour intertwine with the social history of each period. This is a book for both the fencer and the martial arts "aficionado", written and illustrated by one of today's foremost historical weapons experts and fight and battle scene arrangers. Mike Loades has produced numerous TV documentaries on medieval sword fighting and even pioneered the practical interpretation of our much quoted medieval and renaissance fight manuals. This edition allows us to really understand what each weapon meant to the man wielding its power and how he was viewed by those around him. However, in case I am accused of being too chauvinistic by assuming that only men were fighters and duellists, the last chapter contains some wonderful vignettes about our lady duellists whose weapons were "épées de combat" (The Epée Club might like to note these duels for their next competitions at the Hurlingham Club) and who fought stripped to the waist in case infections were caused by cloth being driven into the wound!

At £25.00 and published by Pen and Sword, this is a historical masterpiece and a fascinating voyage of discovery for anyone who sees swords as objects of beauty that can be imbued with the spirit of the person wielding it, whether in battle or merely as a display on your wall.

Lawrence Burr

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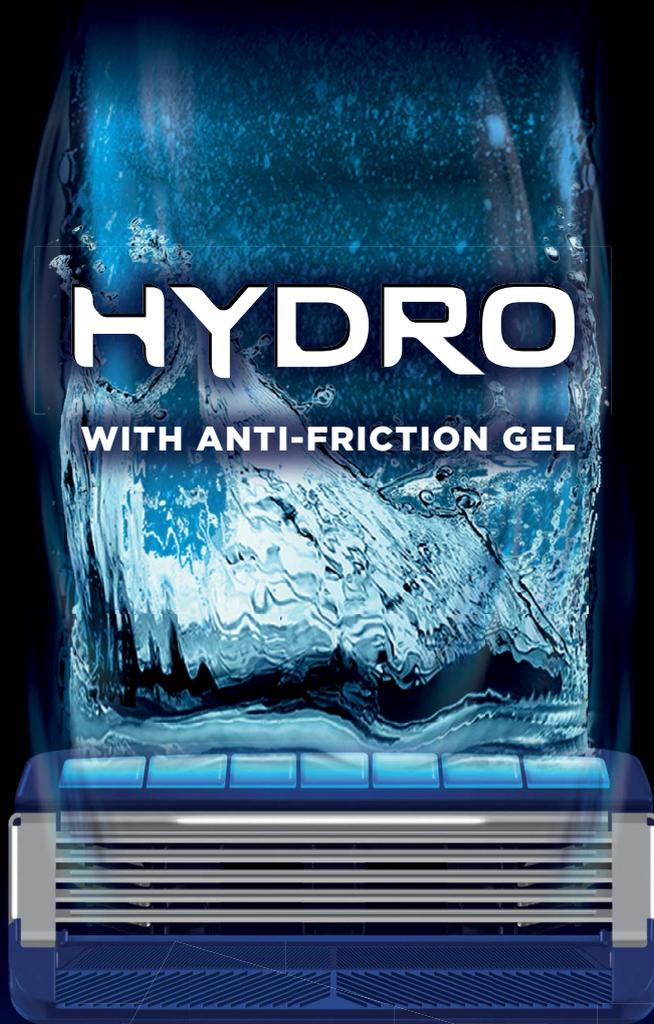
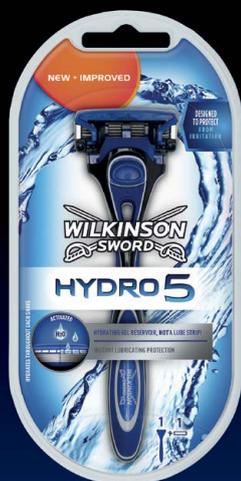


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End of Season International Rankings

Men's Epée

1	BOREL Yannick	FRA
2	PIZZO Paolo	ITA
3	NOVOSJOLOV Nikolai	EST
4	FICHERA Marco	ITA
5	PARK Kyoungdoo	KOR
6	KWEON Youngjun	KOR
7	JERENT Daniel	FRA
8	LIMARDO GASCON Ruben	VEN
9	JUNG Jinsun	KOR
10	NIKISHIN Bogdan	UKR

Women's Epée

1	KOLOBOVA Violetta	RUS
2	BELJAJEVA Julia	EST
3	NELIP Ewa	POL
4	LOGUNOVA Tatiana	RUS
5	SZASZ-KOVACS Emese	HUN
6	SUN Yiwen	CHN
7	KONG Man Wai Vivian	HKG
8	NDOLO Alexandra	GER
9	GUDKOVA Tatiana	RUS
10	KRYVYTSKA Olena	UKR

Men's Foil

1	MASSIALAS Alexander	USA
2	GAROZZO Daniele	ITA
3	SAFIN Timur	RUS
4	FOCONI Alessio	ITA
5	IMBODEN Race	USA
6	KRUSE Richard	GBR
7	ZHEREBCHENKO Dmitry	RUS
8	AVOLA Giorgio	ITA
9	CHAMLEY-WATSON Miles	USA
10	HA Taegy	KOR

Women's Foil

1	DERIGLAZOVA Inna	RUS
2	ERRIGO Arianna	ITA
3	KIEFER Lee	USA
4	VOLPI Alice	ITA
5	THIBUS Ysaora	FRA
6	ROSS Nicole	USA
7	BATINI Martina	ITA
8	NAM Hyunhee	KOR
9	TRIPAPINA Svetlana	RUS
10	MANCINI Camilla	ITA

Men's Sabre

1	GU Bongil	KOR
2	CURATOLI Luca	ITA
3	SZATMARI Andras	HUN
4	SZILAGYI Aron	HUN
5	ANSTETT Vincent	FRA
6	KIM Junghwan	KOR
7	OH Sanguk	KOR
8	HARTUNG Max	GER
9	HOMER Daryl	USA
10	SAMELE Luigi	ITA

Women's Sabre

1	MARTON Anna	HUN
2	BERDER Cecilia	FRA
3	KIM Jiyeon	KOR
4	BRUNET Manon	FRA
5	EGORIAN Yana	RUS
6	KHARLAN Olga	UKR
7	VECCHI Irene	ITA
8	LEMBACH Charlotte	FRA
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Please forward all your suggestions for additional on-line fencing results to: amy.grant@britishfencing.com



