

THE SWORD

British Fencing Magazine

APRIL 2016

THEY DID IT!



GB MEN'S FOIL TEAM QUALIFIES FOR RIO 2016 pp 7-8
CADET AND JUNIOR GB CHAMPS 2015-16 pp 9-14



KARIM'S DIARY p 5-6
CLUB MATTERS – SPORT ENGLAND'S NEW ONE-STOP-SHOP p 23

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Front cover image

GB Men's Foil Team at
Bonn World Cup 2016
Photo: Augusto Bizzi

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Welcome to THE SWORD

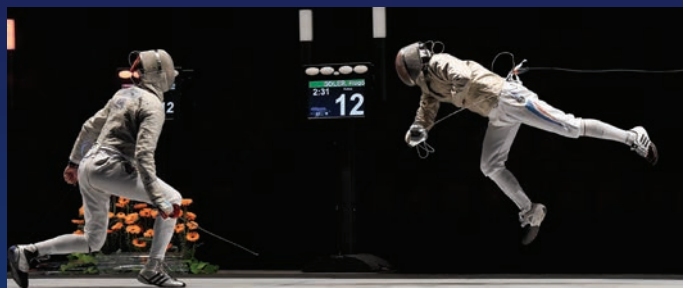


Photo: Augusto Bizzi

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NEXT DEADLINE: 27th MAY

News

JUNIOR MEN'S FOIL Eden Cup

London

Saturday 9th January 2016

This junior men's foil event is the only under-20 international to take place in the United Kingdom, hosted by British Fencing, and took place at the SportsDock, University of East London, Dockland Campus. Francesco Ingargiola (ITA) won the gold medal for the third time consecutively – a remarkable achievement. Pietro Velluti Franzi (ITA) won silver, with Meddy Elice (FRA) and Daniel Giaccon (NED) winning bronze.



Francesco Ingargiola successfully defended his title for the third time. (photo: Graham Morrison)

SPORT RELIEF AT THE QEOP IN MARCH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LONDON YOUTH

British Fencing are delighted to be working in partnership with London Youth to be able to deliver an exciting introduction to fencing at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on Sunday 20th March. We will be delivering taster sessions throughout the day and anyone can come and have a go! The sessions will be supported by some of the young leaders that we have been working with through our development work with London Youth and it's a great opportunity for them to show off their leadership skills and inspire others to get involved!

4 THE SWORD JANUARY 2016

ARCHWAY TEENAGER SECURES GOLD MEDAL DOUBLE AT NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

ISLINGTON GAZETTE – 18 FEBRUARY 2016



Fighting Fit fencers (left to right) Yasmin Campbell, Dominic de Almeida, Kate Beardmore. (Photo: Dieter Perry)

Archway teenager Dominic de Almeida claimed a memorable double with gold medal successes in two separate age groups at the national cadet championships. The 17-year-old, who competes for Fighting Fit Fencing Club in Crouch End, triumphed in the Under-17 section before repeating that feat at Under-20 level the following day. It was a second successive Under-17 victory for de Almeida, a member of the GB cadet squad, but the first time he had secured the national title in the higher age group as well. His father, Luiz de Almeida, said: "We are so proud of our son – he has worked extremely hard and it has paid off. My only regret is that Dom is not a few years older. The Olympics is in my home country, Brazil, this summer and it would have been great for my family to see him, even though he would fence for Team GB!"

In the Under-17 preliminary rounds, de Almeida barely conceded a hit and he went on to record 15-4, 15-3 and 15-6 victories in the knockout rounds en route to the gold medal. He was joined in the Under-20 category by Fighting Fit team-mate Kate Beardmore, who dominated her preliminary round, conceding only four hits in five matches. Beardmore won her first two knockout contests 15-3 and 15-9 before facing the champion of the past three years in the semi-final – and it looked as if her run had come to an end when she trailed 14-12. Yet the Fighting Fit fencer pulled off the comeback of the season with a series of annihilating attacks to triumph 15-14 and she went on to win the final, 15-11.

The club also fielded a group of fencers at the prestigious Marathon foil event in Paris, where Yasmin Campbell produced a superb performance to finish third in the Under-17 section. Aidan Woolley, Sebastian Sacchi-Wilson, Emily Beardmore, Heloise Hardie, Rhiannon Hales – who won her first England cap – Theo McGlone, Oscar Lhoste and Edward Christophers also did themselves proud at the Paris tournament.

Club owner Jed Beardmore said: "Our guys did ever so well – they are all starting to look like international fencers and exceeded our expectations."

Fighting Fit run classes for both children and adults at Mount Carmel RC College for Girls, Holland Walk, Duncombe Road, and anyone interested in giving the sport a try can call 07832 241 215 to book a free taster session, or visit www.FightingFitFencing.com for more details.

Message from the chair

As ever in our sport – there's much to talk about.

Up and down the fencing country, we talk in admiration and smiling delight at the Olympic qualification of our Men's Foil Team. It took several cliffhangers, but in the end our team made it, and will have the honour (and excitement, and pressure, and tingling nerves) of representing all of us, and Team GB, at the Rio Games. We can't wait.

We say, well done to the athletes, well done to the coaches, and well done to Alex Newton and the support team.

Let's all of us in this community also say – good luck! – to the athletes going to the Euro zonal qualifier. This is another test of skill, strength and nerve, it's more sport at the top level – just what we seek for all our developing fencers.

And we won't forget the key officials – of which we have a good share of the international talent and expertise. I'm very proud that Janet and Peter Huggins are going to Rio with Hilary, our President, to play key roles. It all starts soon, with the Test event. Janet and Peter give up most weekends to our sport – and they are always on the look out for the young talent we need to work with them in future.

From the Board's perspective, we are never without challenges, in finance, governance and strategy. I can report that, as John Troiano explained to members at some length at the AGM last Autumn, we have secured a strong and steady state in financial management and planning. There is no complacency. But we are

confident that despite the loss of Beazley's sponsorship we shall balance the books again this year and next. We are again rated "Green for governance" by Sport England and UK Sport. The annual tests are not easy, by the way! – and I don't recall any stones being left unturned by those appointed to inspect and review sports governing bodies like ourselves.

The members are familiar now with our aims, values and strategy, looking ahead to 2024. This year brings further challenges, with the new Government strategy now due to be followed by Sport England's strategic changes, on which they have been consulting in meetings across England in the last four weeks.

Which leads me to the news that your British Fencing has been shortlisted for "Governing Body of the Year" – one of the prestigious awards given out each year on behalf of the sports industry. I'm sure many members with long memories will appreciate that such recognition reflects the journey we have all undertaken in the last 5/6 years – and the continued hard work, by successive Board Directors, our CEO, the executive team and staff. Wish us luck on April 28 when the winners are announced.



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KARIM'S DIARY

A short report from our Special Correspondent on his travels in the run-up to Rio 2016

Thursday, 31 March 2016

I'm currently sitting in Bourges, France staring down on an empty preliminary hall ahead of the start of the Cadet and Junior World Championships. The competition is due to start tomorrow and this is the first chance in three weeks that I've had to collect my thoughts on what has been a crazy tour of world fencing.

An introduction to the new Director of Communications at the FIE started as a simple friendly conversation. We discussed the live stream - which I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of – and my thoughts on how it should be developed in the future. Of course the conversation quickly moved on to marketing of the sport, my involvement with British Fencing and fencing in general.

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Karim's Diary (continued)

I saw the conversation as a simple transfer of knowledge from a fencing fan to the new man in charge of promoting the sport worldwide. You can only imagine my surprise when I got the call asking me if I'd like to work at the remaining Olympic qualifiers and then the last Grand Prix events ahead of the Olympics. Let's just say, it didn't take me long to say yes!

It wasn't long before I was heading to Heathrow and a flight to Havana, Cuba. I consider myself fairly well-travelled but Cuba was a mystery to me. Knowing that the new agreement with the USA would change the country forever I was excited about having the chance to visit before those changes took place. I was not disappointed. A new phrase was coined amongst my FIE colleagues – "It's all part of the Havana adventure!" Despite nothing being simple there, the people are friendly but extremely poor. Everyone is looking to make money however they can but once you realise that, the charm of the place comes alive. We've all seen pictures of the old cars and the big cigars but what grabbed me the most was the relaxed approach to life that is very becoming.



Havana

The event itself was like no other! Fencers stepped off the piste after completing their first rounds and within 60 seconds were dipping their toes in the ocean. Bizarre but fun at the same time! We all know what a brilliant result Richard (Kruse) had there but you can relive it here: https://youtu.be/JZZqxkww95I?list=PLdNA_ybrJfjkqDr8ZAxK6_IL_wLeW8syb

I returned home for about 36 hours which was great but all I had time for an evening with my family and a quick walk with D'Artagnan (my Dalmation) before I was packing again. Next stop, Budapest! I love Budapest. Fond memories of under-20 trips as a fencer flooded back but there was no time to waste. It was an in-and-out job as you'd expect in Europe. No real major surprises in terms of hotel, transport and logistics – everything

was perfect. I did get to ride on a tram which is not something I can do in my home town of Torquay and I also had one of the best desserts I have ever tasted. Let's just say a combination of pancakes, hazelnut praline and a lemon and chocolate sauce works for me.

The venue was tight but made for an excellent atmosphere. Fight after fight had a massive impact on who would qualify for the Olympics. Emotions were high as tears of joy and upset were split in equal measure. Both finals were out of this world but for me, Gauthier Grumier has now got to be the favourite for the individual gold at the Olympics. With the strength of French epee as it is, he could walk away from Rio (and perhaps his competitive career) with two gold medals! Highlight of the finals can be watched here: https://youtu.be/2lANMPPc4tg?list=PLdNA_ybrJfjkqDr8ZAxK6_IL_wLeW8syb.

Another 36 hours at home and it was time for my first visit to Korea and it's capital Seoul. Wow! Jet lag is something I have never really suffered from but I arrived at the airport in what can only be described as a state of emptiness! Fortunately (and despite a lost booking) the hotel staff took pity on me and put me in a room on arrival. I usually like to get everything prepared for work when I arrive but on this occasion I simply lay on the bed and passed out! I work up a few hours later, still wearing my shoes but slightly refreshed. Korea hosted the 1988 Olympics and the fencing was being held at the old Handball arena. A short but lovely walk across the Olympic park and I was at the venue. Once inside, I could have been at an international. The brilliant set up we have all become used to is now the norm. The main difference for me from a work perspective was that my commentary position was at the end of the finals piste. Not ideal but "Magic" Tristan – the Swiss timing engineer that I work with – sorted me out with a big preview screen, so I called the fights from there without a problem.



Seoul at night

Seoul was yet another place where the story of Olympic qualification played out right in front of me. What a privilege to be there. Other than Richard winning in Havana, Seoul gave me a memory that I will not forget for a long time. Last year's Junior Men's Sabre World Champion, Eli Dershwitz (USA), winning the final in explosive style – and qualifying to compete at Rio 2016 at the same time. He is taking men's sabre by storm and is surely at the start of the journey of becoming a global fencing superstar! Watch the final hits here: https://youtu.be/FRwUjTPGXww?list=PLdNA_ybrJfjkqDr8ZAxK6_IL_wLeW8syb

So an almost perfect circle sees me return to the Cadet and Junior Worlds and a chance to see who could be the next Eli Dershwitz. I confess to being a little tired but an early night tonight will sort me out and then it's time for eleven more days on my unexpected fencing commentary journey.

It would be remiss of me not to thank the people who helped me out in the commentary box – Dave Baker, Mary Cohen, John Chow and Vasil Milenchev. I really could not have done it without your interesting insight and the chance that you gave me to rest!



Karim and D'Artagnan (a year ago)

Additional reports available using the following links:

Epee <http://fie.org/media/news/329>

Foil <http://fie.org/media/news/324>

Sabre <http://fie.org/media/news/332>

Karim's update on Rio 2016 Team Qualifications can be found on p16.

GB Men's Foil Team

Qualifies for Rio

By Karim Bashir *with*
photos by Augusto Bizzi

RESULT AT BONN WORLD CUP CONFIRMS OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION

Great Britain's Men's Foil Team today secured qualification for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games by finishing ninth at the Bonn World Cup. The team won their trip to Rio as the highest European World ranked team outside the World top four.

The day did not start well as they lost to their nearest rivals for that qualification birth, Germany. However results over the course of the season meant that Germany had to finish in the top two at this World Cup in order to overtake the British team. They could only manage eighth place losing to France in the quarterfinals. China also presented a threat but they had to win the event and lost to Russia in the semi-finals.

Alex Newton, British Fencing's Performance Director, said; "Today has been a roller coaster of emotions after yesterday's high of James's gold medal. We fenced so well against Germany and to lose by one hit meant we had to play a waiting game to see how all the teams finished. Whilst continuing to focus on our own fencing to get the highest finishing spot we could took all of the fencers' concentration. With France beating Germany in the quarterfinal, it meant that we needed China to finish below the gold medal spot. With Russia putting on an amazing display of fencing to beat China convincingly in the semi-final we secured our qualification spot. I



am thrilled for the boys and Andrey that they have, subject to BOA ratification, secured their place at the Olympic Games. This has been a long journey which doesn't end here. Now the focus turns to Rio where we will focus all our efforts on delivering a medal."

Londoner, James Davis, who won the individual event on Saturday added; "It's been a great weekend and we have finally qualified. It's been a long year but so pleased to be working with these boys. Now looking forward to the preparation for Rio."

The other team members were equally pleased – Marcus Mepstead, 25, said; "I am really proud of what me and the boys have achieved. I am now looking forward to the opportunity to make history in Rio."

Laurence Halsted, 31, said, "I'm incredibly proud of the hard work that the whole team put in to bring us slowly but surely from an outside place to having qualified. I am looking forward to continuing our upward trajectory to make the most of this fantastic opportunity."



Reports (continued)



Richard Kruse, 32, summarized by saying; "I'm delighted that we have managed to secure qualification of a British men's foil team for the Rio Olympic Games this summer. The team I'm currently in is the strongest British foil team that I've ever been part of. We have put in some world class performances this season and were always in a good position to qualify. I'm just pleased that it's a done deal now."

British Fencing's Chief Executive Officer, Georgina Usher, concluded; "This is a great achievement for the team. Olympic qualification demonstrates the tangible progress made by British Fencing's World Class Programme with the backing of UK Sport. All those involved with the Programme deserve great credit. It is also important to recognise that behind every success there is a wider team of supporters; the families, personal coaches, clubs and sponsors – and they also deserve our thanks and recognition at this time."



7th February 2016

WORLD RANKING BOOST FOR LONDONER JAMES DAVIS

Londoner James Davis, 24, boosted his world ranking by winning the gold medal at the individual Men's Foil World Cup in Bonn on Saturday. He faced Miles Chamley-Watson (USA) in the final and romped to a 15-9 victory. By securing an early lead in the fight he was able to control the match throughout, earning valuable individual ranking points in the race to Rio 2016.

Speaking straight after the medal ceremony Davis said; "Job done today! I stayed focused and in the moment all day. I just kept my focus on each touch. I will have a good rest tonight and then move on to the next job which is beating Germany in the team event tomorrow morning."

Davis had to beat teammate, Alex Tofalides on his way to the podium before knocking out three strong Italian fencers. It was a good day for the other members of the British squad as Richard Kruse and Marcus Mepstead both secured top sixteen finishes.

6th February 2016

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GB Cadet and Junior Championship 2015–16 *with photos* by Eileen Jacus

DE ALMEIDA, MAXWELL, PALLIER, RUSSELL & SHEFFIELD IMPRESS IN LONDON

The 2015-16 British Cadet & Junior Championships were held over the weekend of 16-17 February at the University of East London's SportsDock Arena. A total five hundred and ninety-three entries over the twelve events made for a busy weekend.

It was a double gold medal winning weekend for Caitlin Maxwell (Cadet & Junior Women's Sabre Champion) and Dominic De Almeida (Cadet & Junior Men's Foil Champion) and special mention also goes to Sebastian Pallier (Cadet & Junior Men's Foil silver medallist), James Russell (Cadet & Junior Men's Epee silver medallist) & Laura Sheffield (Cadet Champion & Junior Silver medallist in Women's Epee).

Cadet Men's Epee

Sixty fencers entered this event and it was George Morris (Stockport) who raised the trophy at the end of the day. He beat Will East (KRFC) 12-9 in his semi-final whilst his opponent, James Russell (Royal Tunbridge Wells) beat Connor Head (Whitgift) 15-12 in the other semi-final. The gold medal match was a tight affair but Morris prevailed 15-14.

Watch the full gold medal match – Morris vs Russell, here: <https://youtu.be/gbjBRznG9nw>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/cadetbritishchamps1516/cme/>



Cadet Men's Epee podium (L to R): James Russell, George Morris, Will East, Connor Head



Cadet Women's Epee (L to R): Eliza Woodhouse, Laura Sheffield, Sarah Spice, Charlotte Summers

CADET WOMEN'S EPEE

Fifty-four fencers took part in this event which was won by Laura Sheffield (Brixton). Sheffield beat Charlotte Summers (Pentathlon GB) 15-11 in her semi-final as Eliza Woodhouse overcame Sarah Spice (Crawley Sword) by the same score in the other semi-final. A brilliant final followed which Sheffield won 15-11.

Watch the full gold medal match – Sheffield vs Woodhouse, here: <https://youtu.be/L4FdPdnOo-o>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/>

Reports (continued)

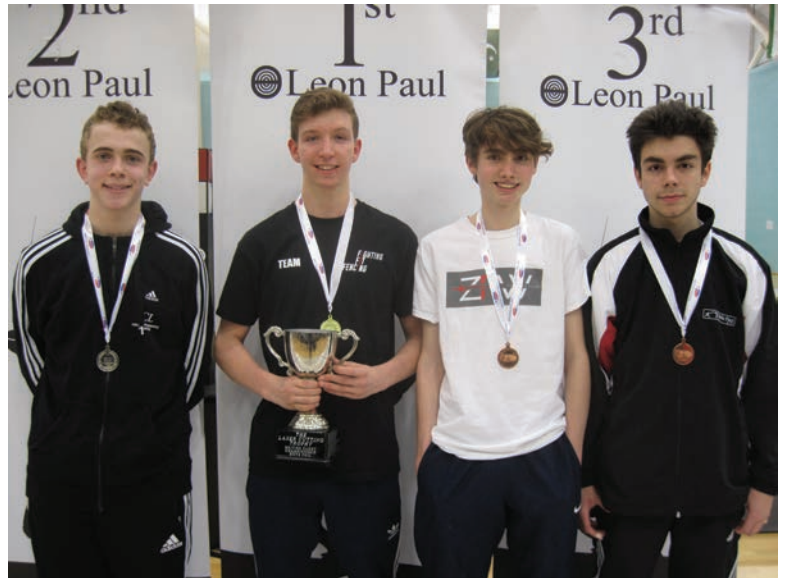
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Cadet Men's Foil

Dominic De Almeida (Fighting Fit) came through a field of fifty-three to defend the title that he won last year, in this event. He beat Matthew Abrahams (ZFW) 15-14 in the semi-final and his gold medal match opponent, Sebastian Pallier (Fencers Club London), beat Benjamin Stezaker (Salle Paul) on the other side of the draw. De Almeida came through a tough final with a 15-11 victory.

Watch the full gold medal match – De Almeida vs Pallier, here: <https://youtu.be/6KH-RBlntU>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/cadetbritishchamps1516/cmfi/>



Cadet Men's Foil (L to R): Sebastian Pallier, Dominic De Almeida, Matthew Abrahams, Benjamin Stezaker



Cadet Women's Foil (L to R): Mhairi McLaughlin, Isabella Gill, Madeleine Brown, Kayleigh De Lange

Cadet Women's Foil

Thirty-one fencers took part in this event with Isabella Gill (Salle Paul) coming out on top. She beat Kayleigh De Lange (Salle Oxon) 15-10 in the semi-final and faced Mhairi McLaughlin (Sally Holyrood), who beat Madeleine Brown (Laszlo) 15-14 on the other side of the draw, in the final. Gill dominated the fight for gold, winning 15-5.

Watch the full gold medal match – Gill vs McLaughlin, here: https://youtu.be/jgnKxHSE_Ds

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/cadetbritishchamps1516/cwfi/>



Cadet Men's Sabre podium (L to R): Noah Matricciani, Joe Pocknell, James Edwards, Sam McLellan

Cadet Men's Sabre

Joe Pocknell (Shakespeare Swords) won this event, coming through a field of fifty-seven. He beat Sam McLellan (Salle Osian) 15-10 in the first semi-final as Noah Matricciani (Foothills) beat James Edwards (Marshall) 15-14 in the second. Pocknell came through a good final match with a 15-11 victory.

Watch the full gold medal match – Pocknell vs Matricciani, here: <https://youtu.be/-lrTSrh8LUE>

Results: <http://www.engage-service.com/files/britishfencing/cadetbritishchamps1516/cms/>

Cadet Women's Sabre

Caitlin Maxwell (Truro) topped the field of thirty-seven at the end of this event. She beat Lizzie Moffat (Shakespeare Swords) 15-8 in their semi-final. In the other semi, Maia Fashokun (Truro) beat Ellen Robbins Wilkinson (Marshall) 15-7. The all Truro final was dominated by Maxwell who went on to take the title 15-8.

Watch the full gold medal match – Maxwell vs Fashokun, here: <https://youtu.be/VWITwtGreng>

Results: <http://www.engage-service.com/files/britishfencing/cadetbritishchamps1516/cws/>



Cadet Women's Sabre (L to R): Maia Fashokun, Caitlin Maxwell, Lizzie Moffat, Ellen Robbins Wilkinson

Reports (continued)

Junior Men's Epee

Sixty-one fencers entered this event and it was Harrison Nichols (Redhill and Reigate Epee) who raised the trophy at the end of the day. He beat Daniel McGlade (Brixton) 15-4 in his semi-final whilst his opponent, James Russell (Royal Tunbridge Wells) beat Harry Peck (Brixton) 15-14 in the other semi-final. The gold medal match was a tight affair but Nichols prevailed 15-12.

Watch the full gold medal match – Nichols vs Russell, here: <https://youtu.be/1zp4LOOd7cl>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/juniorbritishchamps1516/jme/>



Junior men's epee podium (L to R): James Russell, Harrison Nichols, Daniel McGlade, Harry Peck



Junior women's epee podium (L to R): Laura Sheffield, Jessica Gundry, Rose Grimshaw, Frances

Junior Women's Epee

Fifty-nine fencers took part in this event which was won by Jessica Gundry (Truro). Gundry beat Rose Grimshaw (Stockport) 15-13 in her semi-final as Laura Sheffield (Brixton) overcame Francesca Summers (Pentathlon GB) 14-12 in the other semi-final. A brilliant final followed which Gundry edged 15-14.

Watch the full gold medal match – Gundry vs Sheffield, here: <https://youtu.be/dZERQgnvOok>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/juniorbritishchamps1516/jwe/>



Junior Men's Foil podium (L to R): Sebastian Pallier, Dominic De Almeida, Harry Bird, Alexander Jones

Junior Men's Foil

Dominic De Almeida (Fighting Fit) came through a field of sixty-eight to follow up his victory in the cadet event. He beat Harry Bird (Salle Boston) 15-12 in the semi-final and his gold medal match opponent, Sebastian Pallier (Fencers Club London), beat Alexander Jones (Salle Kiss) 15-11 on the other side of the draw. De Almeida came through a rematch of the cadet final with Pallier a 15-13 victor.

Watch the full gold medal match – De Almeida vs Pallier, here: <https://youtu.be/En80ZG-8NM>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/juniorbritishchamps1516/jmf/>

Junior Women's Foil

Thirty-one fencers took to the pistes in this event which was won by Kate Beardmore (Fighting Fit). She beat last year's winner, Ayesha Fihosy (Salle Boston) 15-14 in their semi-final as Katie Smith (Edinburgh) beat Jade Rowland (Premier Fencing) 15-7 in the other semi-final. Katie Beardmore controlled the gold medal match, going on to win 15-11.

Watch the full gold medal match – Beardmore vs Smith, here: <https://youtu.be/PvuD4xlBJZI>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/juniorbritishchamps1516/jwf/>



Junior women's foil (L to R): Katie Smith, Kate Beardmore, Ayesha Fihosy, Jade Rowland

Reports (continued)



Junior men's sabre (L to R): Jonathan "JJ" Webb, Will Deary, Jamie Craze, George Suddards

Junior Men's Sabre

Fifty-one fencers contested for the title in this event and it was Will Deary (Truro) who stole the spoils. He beat teammate, Jamie Craze, 15-12 in their semi-final. Jonathan "JJ" Webb (Camden) was his gold medal match opponent, having just beat George Suddards (Shakespeare Swords), 15-14, in the other semi-final. Deary came through a tough final 15-13 to claim the gold.

Watch the full gold medal match – Deary vs Webb, here: <https://youtu.be/gGtedgijgal>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/juniorbritishchamps1516/jms/>

Junior Women's Sabre

Cadet Champion, Caitlin Maxwell (Truro), made it a double gold medal winning weekend by coming through a field of thirty-one to claim this title. She beat her teammate, Maria Chart, 15-13 in the semi-finals as Jessica Corby (Salle Osian) beat her teammate, Sarah-Jane Hampson, 15-4 in the other semi-final. Maxwell made light work of the final, taking the title with a 15-8 victory.

Watch the full gold medal match – Maxwell vs Corby, here: <https://youtu.be/gfRdGY17UhQ>

Results: <http://www.engarde-service.com/files/britishfencing/juniorbritishchamps1516/jws/>



Junior Women's sabre (L to R): Jessica Corby, Caitlin Maxwell, Maria Chart, Sarah-Jane Hampson

British Fencing wish to give a special thanks the organising staff, volunteers, referees, armourers, officials, fencers, coaches and parents, for making this event so successful.

The Championship in Numbers

593 – entries
 301 – Junior entries
 292 – Cadet entries
 350 – male entries
 243 – female entries
 234 – epee entries
 183 – foil entries
 176 – sabre entries

For Cadet and Junior Euro Reports try:

Cadets – <http://www.britishfencing.com/news/latest-news/?n=1527>

Juniors – <http://www.britishfencing.com/news/latest-news/?n=1530>

19th February 2016

The Cambridge Winter Tournament 2016

By Dan Tozer

The Cambridge Winter Tournament

was held on the 2nd/3rd January with 185 fencers rising from their holiday related torpor and experiencing a new, and much warmer, venue, the University of Cambridge sports centre. This venue is much newer than those previously used and allows all the fencing to be held in one hall.

The epee competitions were held on the Saturday, in the men's competition the 2nd and 4th seeds (Thomas Toolis and Stephan Domek) being knocked out in the early rounds the first semi-final was a cagey affair with top seed Christian Gustavsson defeating Calum Maynard 7-5 with passivity being called during the first two periods. The second semi-final showed the superiority of experience over youth with OPS fencer Theo Edwards suffering a 15-14 defeat at this stage for the second year running, this time to veteran Howard West. In the final, however, Howard could not cope with the speed and accuracy of Christian who ran out 15-9 winner. In the Women's competition top seed Christine Steiner was beaten in the last 16 and defending champion Julie Henson lost in the quarter finals, the first semi saw Megan Redding win relatively comfortably being Niamh Noble 15-7. While in the second 2nd seed Elsa Phillipson beat 3rd seed Sofia De Martin 15-9, Elsa then beat Megan 15-10 in the final to take the title.

The foil and sabre competitions took place on the Sunday. The Women's foil saw all four of the top seeds make it through to the semi-finals. Last year's champion Amy Hyman, again, made it through the pools as top seed, but suffered a semi-final defeat to 4th seed Seville Babaeva on the final hit. The other semi-final saw 2nd seed Amber Hall beat Tamara Carnac 15-9. The final was a very tense affair poised at 14-14 with a number of off-target hits with priority prolonging the bout. To the referee's relief the final hit was a single light going Amber's way. In the men's competitions the latter stages contained a number of fencers with local links. Top seed and Cambridge Sword old boy Pascal Delaney faced Cambridge University Richard Morris in the first semi-final with Richard facing semi-final defeat in consecutive years with Pascal prevailing 15-12. With 2nd seed Matthew Powell being knocked in the last 16, Chris Lennon and Phil West faced off in the second semi-final. A high octane match saw Cambridge based Dragon fencer Phil win 15-13. This match (and his advancing years) may have taken too much out of Phil with Pascal dominating the final to win 15-7.

In the Men's sabre competition a reduced field was weakened when defending champion Marc Oakes failed to appear, however all four of the top seeds made the penultimate round. In the top half top seed Callum Wilson won a close match against local fencer Loek Janssen 15-13, while in the bottom half George Burton scored a 15-11 victory over Julian Ghosh. The final was more one-sided with George prevailing 15-5. A field of only 11 in the Women's competition produced an early surprise when 2nd seed Annelise Whitaker lost to 7th seed Caroline Clancy. Caroline then continued her good form defeating Laycy Elys (the 3rd seed) 15-13 in the semi-final. The top half of the draw saw top seed Harriet Davies lose her semi-final to 4th seed Helen Fairhead 15-9. Helen then went on to take the title beating Caroline 15-5.

The organisers would like to thank the fencers for turning up, the referees for dealing with the fencers and Steve Hyman and Nick Murphy for sterling work in fixing various weapons.



Women's epee medal winners: (L-R) Megan Redding (Cads), Elsa Phillipson (Essex Uni), Sofia De Martin (Durham Uni) and Niamh Noble (OPS). Photo by Ian Whittingham.



Men's epee medal Winners: (L-R) Howard West (LTFC), Christian Gustavsson (Fff), Theo Edwards (OPS) and Calum Maynard (Egham). Photo by Ian Whittingham.



Women's foil medal winners: (L-R) Seville Babaeva (Escrime), Amber Hill (Arnold and Carlton), Amy Hyman (N/A) and Tamara Carnac (Touche). Photo by Ian Whittingham.



Men's foil medal Winners: (L-R) Phil West (Dragon), Pascal Delaney (Birmingham Uni), Chris Lennon (N/A) and Richard Morris (Cambridge Uni). Photo by Ian Whittingham.



Women's sabre medal winners: (L-R) Caroline Clancy (NLSC), Helen Fairhead (Camden), Harriet Davies (Bath) and Laycy Elys (Pegasus). Photo by Ian Whittingham.

Reports (continued)



Men's Sabre medal winners: (L-R) Calum Wilson (Shakespears Swords), George Burton (Bristol Uni), Loek Janssen (Cambridge), Julain Ghosh (Camden). Photo by Ian Whittingham.



The Women's foil quarter finals. Photo by Ian Whittingham.

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RIO 2016 TEAM QUALIFICATIONS

Team fencing qualification for Rio 2016 is now complete with France and Russia boasting the largest fencing contingents so far. Both countries have achieved the maximum quota of qualified athletes so far securing team berths in men's and women's epee, men's foil and women's sabre.

This means that each country will field a minimum of twelve fencers (plus four reserves) in Rio later this year and the qualification period isn't over yet.

By the time this edition goes to print the final qualification events – the Grand Prix's in Havana (Foil), Budapest (Epee) and Seoul (Sabre) – will have happened and we will know which individual fencers have qualified by ranking. These events will then be followed in April by special zonal qualifiers which represent the last chance for fencing qualification.

The last piece of the jigsaw will be who the hosts Brazil selected for their eight host nation places – which must be confirmed in early June.

This table shows that only France and Russia have the maximum quota of athletes qualified by teams for the Games.

Men's Epee	Women's Epee	Men's Foil	Women's Sabre
France	Romania	Russia	Russia
Ukraine	China	Italy	Ukraine
Italy	Russia	France	France
Switzerland	Estonia	USA	USA
Russia	South Korea	China	South Korea
South Korea	USA	Great Britain	Italy
Venezuela	Ukraine	Egypt	Mexico
Hungary	France	Brazil	Poland

Countries qualified for team events.

KB

Domenico Angelo

HIS LIFE

Domenico Angelo was born on 6 February 1717 in Leghorn, Italy. He began fencing as a young boy and became very skilful under his first fencing master, Andrea Gianfaldoni of Pisa. As a young man Domenico was sent by his father to Paris to learn trading and banking. However, he spent most of his time learning horse-riding and fencing. Under the famous French master Teillagory, the finest swordsman in Europe, Domenico learned the classic French school of foil fencing which served mainly as a preparation for duels with small swords. He went to England in about 1750, accompanied by Peg Woffington, a well-known Irish actress whose beauty took society by storm. It is alleged they met when Domenico was participating in a fencing demonstration. Peg, a member of the audience, on impulse presented him with roses from her corsage. Not one to miss an opportunity to impress, he pinned these to his right breast and offered this target to his opponents. Of course, not a petal was disturbed and as in all good stories the swordsman and actress became lovers. The affair did not last very long and soon after establishing himself in London he married Elizabeth Johnson with whom he lived happily for many years.

In London, he established a large and impressive riding school and Salle d'Armes. He was fencing master to George, Prince of Wales (George III) and Edward Duke of York. In about 1780, he handed over his fencing school to his son, Harry (1760-1839) and the school continued to be governed successfully by his grandson and great-grandson until the end of the Nineteenth Century. Domenico moved to Eton where he taught fencing in the famous school and where he died in 1804.

In 1763 he wrote a manual of fencing, "L'École des Armes" – one of the best known books in the history of fencing. It presents the classical foil fencing of the French school. The forty-seven illustrations, each of which is a chef-d'oeuvre, were drawn from life by the famous John Gwynn, a founding member of the Royal Academy, with Domenico posing as the main figure

THE DUNEDIN CONNECTION

In 1858 Domenico's great great-grandson Stewart was an early settler in the Otago region of New Zealand. Two direct descendants, Maurie and Gio Angelo, are foundation members of Salle Angelo in Dunedin, and two further generations of Angelos are also fencing in New Zealand.

SALLE ANGELO

The principles espoused by Domenico were the inspiration for the formation of Salle Angelo, one of three fencing clubs in Dunedin. Fencing at the Salle is non-electric using only French or Italian grip handles. Rules for bouts are based on those used in the 1930s. Members believe that the attraction of visual fencing is that it relies to a greater extent on fencing technique and less on athleticism. Prospective members are required to fence a duel in public with a designated Salle champion, both protagonists supported by seconds. The duel is judged on demonstrating good fencing technique rather than on winning the bout. Social events are important components of Salle activities.

CELEBRATING DOMENICO'S 300th BIRTHDAY

The Angelo family are gathering for a reunion in Dunedin on 3rd – 6th February 2017 As well as celebrating the birth of their ancestor they will be developing their family network and exploring the life and times of Domenico Angelo and his descendants.

As part of the celebrations of Domenico's 300th birthday Salle Angelo in association with Claymore Swords Club are organising a fencing weekend for electric foil, epee and sabre competitions together with visual foil and sabre competitions. It is intended to be a fun weekend but with some serious fencing.

Further information from www.salle.angelo.gen.nz or email mandb@es.co.nz

Brian Ellis,
Dunedin, New Zealand
January 2016

(top to bottom) Fencing in Dunedin Botanical Gardens, at Hayward's Point, the Winter Tournament at Naseby

We are interested in contacting other similar (traditional fencing) clubs – there aren't any in New Zealand. There are some other quirky activities that we engage in – balloon sabre (bursting the balloon) for end of year and Master at Arms. This can only be done with non-electric fencing. Bouts are to 5 hits with the weapon changed after every hit, sabre-foil-epee-sabre and so on until victory. The 2 weapons not in use being held by a second. Of course hits are scored against not for in traditional style! We are interested to know about any other traditional fencing clubs and how they organise their activities. We have been in contact with the UK Salle Angelo in the past and will send them details of our event next year.



Three of the Best (Part 3)

ALLAN JAY MBE

by Himself

Fate decreed that I should be a world class fencer.



In 1959

When at my public school, in the summer term, pupils had to choose which extracurricular activity they preferred out of (1) cricket – which I never liked, (2) gardening – which was out of the question, and (3) shooting. Like too many others, I chose shooting. The worst shots – and I was one of them – had to choose one of the first two, or fencing; which had just been added to the list. If it had been tiddlywinks, I was in it.

In the public schools fencing championships I did not excel, though my results could have been worse. I abandoned fencing when I left school and sold my equipment.

At 17, it was decided that I should emigrate to Australia, to which a cousin of my mother's had done, a year or so earlier. The cousin and his wife were wonderful to me, but I did not know anyone of my own age, so decided to take up fencing again to remedy my solitude. I joined the Sydney Swords Club and immediately started to blossom, winning the Club's 'Best Man at Arms' tankard. We then had the first New South Wales Championships, when I came second and got the same result at the first Australian Championships in Melbourne. Before I knew what day of the week it was, I found myself representing Australia in the 1950 British

Empire (now called the Commonwealth) Games. Although none of our epeeists had ever fenced with an electric weapon before, nor even seen one; these arrived in Auckland a week or so before the event. I came 5th in the individual – beating the English captain and the ultimate winner – Charles de Beaumont. Unbelievably, we beat all the other teams 5-4, but our last match was against England, whom we beat 4-all on hits. We had won a gold medal! Charles was livid, as well he might have been. England won everything else.

The gold medal stood me in good stead when, on my return to England in June 1950, I was trying to get into an Oxford College to read Law. Only non fencers were impressed by my gold medal and at my interview I was asked what my chances were of getting a Blue. I had just won the junior GB epee title, so I replied, honestly, that I hoped that my chances of getting a degree were as good! I was then asked what my chances were of going to next year's Helsinki Olympic Games. At the time, I wasn't even on the Olympic training squad. I prefer not to repeat my reply to this question! However, I wasn't lying, as in early 1952 I won the national senior epee championship for the first time. Also, I got into the final of the national foil championship – then steam foil – and was one from the bottom, having been robbed for the first and not the last time.

My first proper international match was at foil against France A and B teams in Paris. I won 9 out of 10 fights and these included – for the first and only time – beating their genius three times World Champion and twice Olympic Champion – Christian d'Oriola – ultimately voted the FIE fencer of the 20th Century. That match got me into the Olympic foil team. I didn't fence in the individual foil event, but I did in the epee and got into the semi-final to be fenced on day two. I was so excited that I was afraid I wouldn't be able to sleep, so for the first and last time, I took a sleeping pill. It worked both that night and for the beginning of the next day, when I lost my first four fights easily, but won the next five. I came sixth, but as only five were promoted. I had to wait until the next Olympics in Melbourne to get into a final – and that was at foil. Also, I got into Oxford. Things were going well by then and were scheduled to get much better.

Just before going up to Oxford, I fenced in the Maccabiah Games in Israel and won the individual epee; and when at Oxford, was a silver medallist in the World Student Games. Apart from that, I won a few individual

competitions, both at home and abroad; but most importantly, I got to know Bill Hoskyns, who was OUFC captain the year before me. Bill and I became simultaneously, rivals and friends, and our friendship endured for over 60 years until his death.

We knew that there would only be a small fencing team at Melbourne, since the cost of air tickets was prohibitive. In an endeavour to qualify for places, Bill took Gillian Sheen and I to Hungary in early 1956 in his plane; having first obtained permission to cross the Hungarian border, at a particular time, on a particular day, at a particular place and a particular height. Ours was the first non-commercial private plane to go to Budapest since before World War Two! We followed instructions to the letter and the absence of MIG fighters was appreciated! We duly landed at the airport, but had a problem with our rudder – I had to get out and push! I christened the line 'Air Hoskyns' and added 'the world's most unreliable airline'. Subsequent trips confirmed the accuracy of the description.

The Hungarian competition went very well. I came second to the great Italian fencer Edoardo Mangiarotti, in the foil event and undoubtedly this helped me to get selected for Melbourne.

A short while after being selected, I had a phone call from Charles, our team manager. He asked me if I had been to Israel. I had been there for the Maccabiah. He asked me if I had any Israeli stamps in my passport and I told him that I had. Apparently we were due to have a refuelling stop in Cairo on the way out. Charles asked me to change my passport and if I was asked my religion, I should say I was anything other than Jewish. I agreed to change my passport but told him that I couldn't bring myself to deny my religion, even though I was not religious. Charles did not make any further comment. In the event, there was no problem in Cairo. However, it was a different story on the way home, which was just after the Suez fighting in which GB, France and Israel invaded Egypt after the Egyptians nationalised the Suez Canal, and prohibited Israel and possibly some other countries from using this vital sea route. We landed in Karachi to refuel and the next stop for the same reason was in Basra, Iraq, then a kingdom. We were given landing cards which asked for certain details, including religion. I completed my card and gave my religion as Jewish. The plane captain sent for me and explained that a Hungarian plane had recently stopped in

Three of the Best (Part 3)

(continued)

Basra to refuel. There were both Jews and communists on board. Apparently, only the intervention of the Hungarian ambassador procured its release, but the Iraqis said that any more planes carrying Jews or communists would be impounded; thus he could not take me. Charles tried to get me to comply by stating that I was of a different religion, but I refused. I had to leave the plane and watch the others flying home. I was taken to a hotel and told to phone our embassy every day, in case there were any planes flying to London via more reasonable countries. Three days later, I heard that there was a Qantas plane arriving that night whose next stop was Bahrain, where they weren't so particular. The only available seats were in first class, so I returned in style. Some while later, Charles forwarded me a letter from the Secretary of the BOA. It said that they had received a bill for I think £1100, for the separate first class travel of Mr Allan Jay from Karachi to London – and what were his proposals for payment? At that time, I was a solicitor's articled clerk earning £3 a week. On Charles' instructions I went to see Sandy Duncan and told him of my original conversation with Charles. Ultimately I received a letter from the BOA apologising for any inconvenience caused to me and stating that they did not want any money from me. I was only worried that I had become a nuisance and they wouldn't take me to the Rome Olympics. In the event, I had nothing to worry about.

We did have a small team in Melbourne, but all went very well. The star was Gillian Sheen, who won the women's foil. I saw her do it. When on the podium, she tried very hard not to start grinning and didn't entirely succeed. Who could blame her! Also, Raymond Paul and I got into our first Olympic final – I had one more coming. I won my first four fights – I beat Raymond 5/4 – but lost the other three fights and came 4th. The GB team was small and particularly short of 'sabreurs', so I became a sabre international!!! I fenced in the first team match against a strong Polish team. Unfortunately, but unsurprisingly, I lost all my fights, which didn't help and we went out in the first round. After the Games, we had a few days free. I remember going on a boat trip with an Australian epeeist, Jimmy Wolfensohn – better known later for being chairman of the World Bank.

The world championships in 1957 were in Paris and I came 3rd in the foil (Rene Paul came 7th) and 3rd equal, but 5th on hits, in the epee. In 1958 I had to make an agonising decision. Do

I fence and study for my solicitor's finals and if not both, which do I choose? It took me two seconds to realise that if I studied and fenced I would fail as both. I wanted to fence, but I needed to pass my final exams. I had no choice but to study. So apart from fencing in the Commonwealth Games in Cardiff, without training, I gave up fencing for some 15 months; which included getting married and going on honeymoon. Miraculously, I passed my solicitor's finals first time – it was the happiest day of my life.

The 1959 World Championships were held in Budapest and Bill took Gillian and me there in his plane. By then the Hungarian revolution had long since taken place and the capital looked much better on our second visit. The fencing went better also. I got into the final and looked like coming third. Claude Netter (France) was having his last fight against Sveshnikov (USSR) in his first final – he won the world championship twice, subsequently. Netter was leading 4-2 and started to shake with nerves – he only wanted one hit to win. Sveshnikov made three fleche attacks and beat Netter. I remember jumping up and yelling 'YES!!!' I was now in a triple barrage with Netter and Midler (USSR), who at that time was probably the world's best fencer. Netter beat Midler and I beat Midler also. The last fight was between Netter and me. It started well and I was leading 4-2. I got nervous and to use Charles' words, I made a couple of half hearted attacks and got hit. We were at 4 all. I didn't feel able to attack again and retreated. We were stopped when I got to the metre line. Netter started to try to push me over the back line, when I would lose a hit and with it the world championship. I reckoned that about 4 inches would have done it. In my desperation I did a disengage fleche and it went through!!! The green light came on, but the president was too busy to see it, as he was looking at my feet, waiting to count me out. Netter took his mask off, shook hands and his face was grey. I was totally drained and couldn't even raise a smile. A minute or two later, that changed. When the result was officially declared, I ran up to the top of the podium, to be joined by the other two and we shook hands. The presentations were made and 'God Save the Queen' was played. It was the sweetest music that I have ever heard and I would happily have stayed up there all night.

The final finished late, so I couldn't phone my wife, Carole, until the next morning, after a



On the podium after the 1959 World Foil Championships

sleepless night. After expressing her delight, she told me to go win the epee! I didn't want to fence epee, as if I did badly, it would detract from my foil result. Charles agreed with Carole and said, and I quote: 'with the form you are in, you could indeed win the epee'. I allowed myself to be persuaded and fenced. To my surprise, I got into the final quite easily. I lost my first fight to Sakovits, the 1953 World Champion, but won the rest of my fights; so found myself in a barrage for the title against Bruno Kharbarov, the reigning Junior World Champion. I got the first hit, but then lost the next, three hits in a row, doing ripostes en fleche; which had served me well in our fight in the poule. Leading 3-1, Kharbarov went for a double hit. I retreated and kept my hold on his blade, until he lost direction and balance. I then hit him and the score was 2-3 in his favour. To my surprise, he tried the same move again, but the result was the same and we were 3 all. Stupidly, I did yet another riposte en fleche, being hit on the way in. That made 3-4. We then had a double hit and that was that. Still, to win a gold and silver at the same world championships equalled the world record. I was the fourth and as far as I know the last one to achieve this. I went back to the podium, but this time, unfortunately, not to be on the top.



During the epee final at the 1959 World Foil Championships, being congratulated by Charles de Beaumont (already having won the foil). 'On having won my last fight to get into a barrage for first place' – AJ.

The result in my solicitor's final and those mentioned above, proved beyond doubt that I had made the right decision, when deciding to study and not to fence in 1958, until after I had taken my examinations.

My results in Hungary earned me an AFA gold medal, to add to the silver medal I had received after the 1957 World Championships. I could hardly believe it, but I must have been the only fencer ever to win a world title, before winning a national championship in that weapon! That situation was only rectified in 1963.

I was naturally selected for the Rome Olympics. Unfortunately, it was very hot and the fencing salle was not air conditioned. That, coupled with the fact that we did not have much time to acclimatise, had the result that I got cramp when fencing the foil individual and went out in the quarter-final. The epee went a lot better. I got into the final easily and with a poule of eight and won my first five fights. Still to go were Khabarov (USSR) and Delfino (Italy), respectively 1st and 3rd in 1959. Both had already lost one fight and still had to fence each other, so things were looking up. Delfino beat Khabarov. Unfortunately, I lost to Khabarov and also lost 4/5 to Delfino – whom I had beaten in the team final in 1957 and individual final in 1959. That put me in a barrage for the gold medal. Unhappily, I lost comfortably in the barrage, so had to settle for silver. We then had the epee team event, which went very well, and as *The Sword* put it, 'I was the architect of our silver medal'. In the final our opponents were Italy, whose team had three individual Olympic gold medallists in their team of four. I beat them all, which included Delfino; but lost to Pelegrino, their junior fencer. Unhappily, we lost 9-5, but two Olympic silvers is still a good result. As a result, I have won more World



As the flag holder for the closing ceremony at the Tokyo Olympics

Championship and Olympic medals than any other GB fencer, living or dead – to date.

After Rome, I resigned myself to the necessity for fencing to take a second place to my solicitor's practice. I was never to be in an individual World Championship or Olympic final again. Nevertheless, in the years that followed, I acquitted myself with honour and remained in the team.

1964 was an exceptional year for me. At the Olympics in Tokyo, we had two gold medallists and the BOA did not like to pick one over the other, to be our flag bearer at the closing ceremony. They looked for a compromise candidate so as not to upset either of our two gold medallists. They found one who was in his 4th Olympics and who had won two silver medals in Rome, so I was the one they chose. Things did not quite go according to plan. For the closing ceremony, the flag bearers of all countries were taken together in coaches to the stadium. We then looked for the local kids who were waiting for us. Each was holding a wooden plaque with the name of one of the countries. Naturally, I went to the kid who was holding the GB plaque and someone handed me the GB flag. I was told to dip the flag when I was about to pass the Emperor's box. Off we went at the appropriate moment. I duly dipped the flag. Horror of horrors, one of the two ribbons which held the flag to the pole had not been properly attached, and half the flag became detached from the pole!!! This was seen by millions on their TVs! I

nearly had a fit, but sense told me that if the weight of the flag on the remaining ribbon was too much for it and the flag fell off, I would have to dump the pole and pick up the flag. Happily, this did not happen. As soon as the closing ceremony ended, I was told that some journalists wanted to see me; however, I was less than keen to be seen and disappeared to the party that followed. I was VERY embarrassed to see the following day's Sunday Times In the middle of the front page there was a picture of me holding the dipped and drooping flag. The caption under the picture was 'The flag that flagged'. Not good!

The World Championships in 1965 were in Paris and we did not have any fencers in the individual final. However, we managed to get into the final of the team epee and won a silver medal – me winning my usual three fights out of four in the final match against France. We have not seen any medals since then – more's the pity.

In 1966 the Commonwealth Championships were in Jamaica and at long last in my 5th Games (to include the first one when I represented Australia), I won the individual foil; which completed a very respectable trio of National, Commonwealth and World individual championships; but unhappily, only silver in the Olympic Games.

After my 5th Olympic Games in Mexico, for the first time, a qualification points system was inaugurated. To qualify for future Olympics, a fencer needed to earn at least three points, one of which had to be earned in the Olympic season. I and four others qualified – there being five places. The other four were sent and I was made the non-travelling reserve. One well known fencer described the selection as grotesque and in a recent issue of *The Sword*, another wrote that my non-selection was improper. I was heartbroken and did not sleep properly for over three years – my mind kept returning to that fateful committee meeting. Typing this now brings it all back to me. I ceased to fence in foreign competitions and resisted all efforts to make me change my mind.



1960, Jay fleches at Delfino in Olympic team epee final

Muslim Girls Fence

MUSLIM GIRLS FENCE, SHOWCASING AT INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

with photographs by
Rehmat Rayatt

On Friday 11th and Sunday 13th March as part of the **Women of the World Festival** the students from Frederick Bremner School will be showcasing the work they have been undertaking over the last couple of months, as part of the **Muslim Girls Fence Project**.

'Muslim Girls Fence' is a collaboration between Maslaha, British Fencing and Sport England aiming to challenge misperceptions of and raise aspirations among young Muslim women, a group facing double discrimination on the basis of both faith and gender, by tapping into the confidence-building and empowerment associated with fencing. To date the project has engaged over 20 young girls, which has not only seen more girls fence, but has allowed them to feel more confident in themselves and raise their aspirations.



A selection of photographs from the Muslim Girls Fence Project

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Criminal Record Checks

By Alex Agrenich

Criminal record checks have become a part of life these days, but they continue to cause a certain amount of confusion. Firstly let's sort the name out. When I refer to criminal record checks I am talking about the whole host of different checks that exist across the UK. We have:

- England, Wales, Jersey, Guernsey, Isle of Man – Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS)
- Scotland – Protecting Vulnerable Group Checks (PVG)
- Northern Ireland – Access NI Checks (ANI)

All of these are slightly different and have different systems, but they all seek to check that an individual's criminal record so that British Fencing can verify a person's suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This is important because it is a legal offence to deploy a volunteer or employ someone who is barred from working with children and/or vulnerable adults.

So that's the easy bit. There are three different levels of checks that can be undertaken, all coaches have to have what is known as an enhanced (against the barred list DBS only) check. This is the highest level of check and the only one that checks the "barred lists" for children and/or adults. It is important to note that this check can only legally be undertaken if you come into what is known as Regulated Activity or Work.

Regulated Activity is defined as:

"teaching, training, instruction, care for or supervision of children (except if the person undertaking the activities is under regular supervision) if carried out by the same person frequently or overnight" (DBS referrals guide: Summary of Regulated Activity with Children – DBS)

The test of frequency is:

- Once a week or more
- Four days in a thirty day period
- Overnight between the hours of 2am and 6am

It is clear that coaches definitely fall into the category of Regulated Activity and therefore have to be checked at the highest level. Other roles may also fall into this category. If you are not sure then please check with British Fencing

Having a criminal record does not necessarily mean that someone is not suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults. When a criminal record check comes back with content then a panel will review the potential risk that their offence might pose. For example if they have two offences for driving 20 years ago and they have had no further convictions then the time lapsed and the lack of reoffending would be taken into account and it is likely that they would be cleared to take on their role.

Criminal record checks can be a bit of a minefield, but if you are not sure then please ask.



Liz Behnke

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For further information please contact us below and remember for updates please follow Club Matters social media.

Fencing ... a Sport for All

Interview by Rebecca Downey

Chris Howser discusses the art of combat, the physical and cognitive benefits of learning to fence and the future of the sport in this country.



Chris Howser with his British Veterans Fencing Champion award

No longer a sport only for the elite, fencing is now available to even the youngest of the Nene region's residents thanks to Chris Howser, founder and head coach of the Oundle, Peterborough & Stamford Epee club (for those aged 10 to adult), several after-school clubs and The Yarwell Musketeers for younger fencers.

Developed in the Renaissance period, fencing encompasses the elegance and sophistication of that age and is often described as a 'physical game of chess'. Some educators have suggested that fencing enhances mathematical performance and decision-making skills, while also teaching good sportsmanship, self-discipline and problem analysis.

With 30 years' experience and several National and International titles under his belt, Chris has coached many local children to victory at home and abroad. He is the organiser of some of the biggest fencing events in the country and is the reigning champion of the Veterans Commonwealth championships. Chris's teaching style is a combination of tough training and discipline (one can never be too careful with weapons in hand!) combined with humour and enthusiasm. One student describes him as: "constantly motivating us with boundless energy and support".

When and how did you begin fencing?

I started when I was about 10 years old. My older brother attended the old Redhill club and I was being dragged along. At the time I was not deemed old enough to learn, but after much nagging, the coach relented and 30 years later I still love the sport. Nowadays coaches introduce kids as young as five to proper metal fencing and yet we have also had beginners aged 60. It is truly a sport for all.

What is your greatest achievement in the sport?

I have had the privilege of fencing for Great Britain/England at a number of Championships. Internationally, I would say winning three Commonwealth Silver medals as part of England's senior team. Domestically, I have won British Championships in Under 17, Under 18 and Under 20, but my British Senior Championship in 2005 is the most important to me.

How would you like to see the sport develop in the future?

Fencing has been seen traditionally as a 'public school' sport; however this is an out-dated viewpoint. I coach over 100 kids, of which 85 per cent are State school pupils. I would like to see the sport expand locally, however I am limited by a lack of other coaches available. I've been teaching fencing within the PE curriculum at local State schools which has been an enjoyable experience and gives children, who may not otherwise have tried the sport, a good introduction. I am hoping that some of these pupils will join our community club and be the stars of the future.

What are the qualities one needs to be successful and how does fencing benefit other life skills?

Fencing, though obviously a physical activity, is a tactical sport. Often it is not the fastest or strongest that wins, but who sets up the best traps for their opponent. So, even well into my 40s, I am able to upset high-ranking, younger, faster fencers and I suspect few are happy to draw me at events. The sport attracts a wide range of personalities; the quick mind will often

out-think a more 'sporty' opponent, however a combination of the two is ideal.

Fencing improves confidence, social skills and enhances quick thinking. If your mind wanders, you will get hit pretty quickly. Unlike team sports where blame can be cast in all directions, fencing highlights personal improvement; if someone puts the effort into training it will show in performance.

Also, we try to support all our fencers to learn how to referee. With supervision, even five-year-olds can referee matches competently and in so doing, develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and fellow competitors. For example, we have a female referee aged 13, who attends events at the highest level and has complete authority over a group of adult men, twice her age. There is never a problem on that piste.

Fencing is being removed as one of the recognised sports for GCSE and A level PE. What affect will this have on the sport's future?

Any action that restricts the reasons for a school to support a sport cannot be a positive thing, especially when this affects what is described as a 'minority' sport. It is a shame that secondary school fencers who have attained International level in the sport will now have to do another sport for their GCSE/A level qualifications. This diminishes their focus on fencing training, which could be the difference between winning an Olympic medal, or not.

If you feel that fencing should stay on the national curriculum for GCSE and A level PE, go to: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/110802> where you can sign a petition organised by Rochelle Dazeley, Executive Director, England Fencing Ltd.

For all information regarding classes and clubs go to: www.elitepee.com or the OPS Epee Club facebook page: www.facebook.com/OpsEpeeClub/, or email Chris at: chrishowser@hotmail.co.uk.

British Fencing wishes to express its thanks to Gillian Bendall, the Editor of Nene Living, for permission to reproduce this article – www.neneliving.co.uk

First Team Fencing

Interview by Karim Bashir

FIRST TEAM FENCING QUALIFICATION FOR GB SINCE 1992

Performance Director, Alex Newton Discusses Fencing's World Class Programme

Great Britain's Men's Foil Team, qualified for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games – a first for a British fencing team since 1992¹.

Olympic fencing qualification became more difficult from the 1996 Games in Atlanta when countries had to qualify by region. Until the last decade, Europe was the heartland of fencing and therefore the hardest zone to qualify in, made all the more difficult with the breakup of the Soviet Union.

British fencers have qualified at every Games since then but only in individual disciplines. Two teams (men's and women's foil) were entered into the home Games in 2012 but only with the use of host nation "wild cards". Qualifying a team for Rio 2016 though, shows the progress made as a direct result of a programme underpinned by funding from UK Sport combined with the dedication and hard work of a group of athletes and their support team.

British Fencing's Performance Director, Alex Newton, recently discussed the past, present and future of the programme. Here is what she said.

About the programme

My first job was to introduce a more professional approach to fencing as a performance sport. When I arrived there was little in place that UK Sport would expect to see in a performance programme. We trained in a venue in Mayfair, thanks to the support of a long-term partner of British Fencing. We did not really address any of the science and medicine elements that you would normally associate with performance sport at the highest level. Now we are in a purpose built fencing centre, the Leon Paul Fencing Centre, with an Elite Training Centre (ETC) attached. This has changed not just the professionalism of the programme but of the athletes as well.

About the plan for Rio 2016

We have always had a twin track approach within the programme since we were given additional funding by UK Sport to establish a men's sabre programme. One focusing on the foilists given their stage of development and one on the sabreurs. Over the next cycle there will be less definition between the two, as the sabre programme starts to improve their performances. In terms of the Olympics we had a plan in place for if the foil team qualified and we will now be following that plan. It includes all the guys that are currently funded on the programme in addition to those that have been involved in qualifying a team, in case of injury or illness. We have a fairly detailed selection document and so on 4th April we will be able to select the team knowing we will be putting together the strongest team we can.

The post-Rio 2016 plan

We have put our draft strategy in to UK Sport for the Tokyo cycle. This is about consolidation of the work we have done over the last four years rather than a revolution. We will also move the focus on to the development of teams from the start as this is the best way to ensure the maximum numbers of athletes qualifying. To ensure the longevity of the programme we need to focus on the team not the individual, even in a cycle where that weapon might not be in the Games².

Rio 2016 medal hopes

We now have two real medal chances in Rio – one in the individual men's foil event with three athletes in the top 30 of the world rankings and one in the team. With the team one of only eight who will be contesting for medals at the Games, qualifying in the Europe zone is the hardest, which is demonstrated by four teams from Europe being represented from eight teams.

Qualification for the fencing events in Rio 2016 is on-going and there are still chances for other British athletes to qualify for the individual disciplines. The Performance Team will be supporting all of those athletes as well as preparing the men's foil team for what will be their best chance of Olympic success in over two decades.

Notes

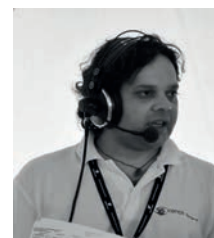
1. The British team that qualified for the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona was also a men's foil team comprising of Tony Bartlett, Jonny

Davis, Bill Gosbee and Donnie McKenzie. Conrad Chin was a travelling reserve but did not compete in Barcelona. Great Britain also fielded a men's foil team (James Davis, Laurence Halsted, Richard Kruse and Husayn Rosowsky) and a women's foil team (Anna Bentley, Martina Emanuel, Natalia Sheppard and Sophie Troiano) at the 2012 London Olympic – but those teams were only possible with the use of host nation places.

2. Since the introduction of the women's epee and sabre events two team events are rotated out of each Olympic cycle. The disciplines that will not be on show in Rio are men's team sabre and women's team foil.

For further information please contact Karim Bashir on 07855 252 546 or media@britishfencing.com

Catch Sport, working in partnership on communications with British Fencing.



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Round Up

Awards for Pierre Harper and Alice Campbell By Linda Strachan, et al.

Newham Swords received two important awards today (9th January 2016) at the Eden Cup competition in London. Pierre Harper received the British Fencing Silver award for services to fencing from British Fencing President Hilary Philbin, and Ziemek Wojciechowski, British Olympic coach for many years, presented Alice Campbell with a cheque from the Susan Wojciechowski Fund for being the most improved female cadet foilist.

Pierre, Head Coach of top junior fencing club, Newham Swords, has now been involved in the sport (as a coach and fencer) for just over 50 years. During that time he has produced a total of twenty five internationals who have gone on to win titles at national cadet and junior level as well as titles at Senior and Junior Commonwealth Games, as well as at Cadet and Junior Europeans. His most recent success was coaching Paul Wedge to Gold



Pierre Harper receiving his British Fencing Silver medal from BF President, Hilary Philbin (photo Graham Morrison)

in the Men's Foil Individual at the last World Veteran Championships as well as Gold and Silver in the Men's Foil Individual with Paul Wedge and Tony Bartlett, at the last European Veteran Championships. His Award comes just after his partner's (Linda Strachan), BEM Award in November. "I am very pleased and proud to receive such an Award from British Fencing. I would like to thank them for all the opportunities which they have given me as a fencer and coach, and now look forward to helping more individuals achieve success", said Pierre.

Alice joined Newham Swords at the age of 8, in the Mini Fence class. After working hard with Olympic fencers, Linda Strachan and Pierre Harper, Alice has been able to win LPJS titles, medals at the BYCs and EYCS (British and English Youth Championships) as well as compete for England at U15 level and at the Cadet Commonwealth Games. This season, she was selected to compete for GB at both cadet and junior level and managed to gain the top junior result at the Junior World Cup held in Romania. Her biggest achievement this season was gaining top place in the Junior Women's Foil Rankings in October. "I am so pleased with this award, it will help immensely. Thank you, Ziemek. I would also like to thank my coaches, Pierre Harper and Linda Strachan who have given so much of their time to help me get to where I am now", she said.



Alice Campbell receiving the Sue Wojciechowski award from Ziemek Wojciechowski

Susan Wojciechowski (née Wrigglesworth) was the youngest Olympic female foilist in the history of British fencing. At the age of 18 she fenced in the 1972 Munich Olympic Games. Susan made World Youth final and came 13th in the individual Olympic event in Montreal in 1976 and competed in Moscow 1980. She represented Great Britain at every world championships from 1973 to 1981. She achieved remarkable results without any funding demonstrating the degree of her natural ability.



Susan Wojciechowski, 1954-1996
(photo from Malcolm Fare)

While still being an active fencer she was diagnosed with a brain tumour which ended her life prematurely. Sue was very popular in the British fencing community for her modesty and support to everyone. While being ill she established the local fencing club "Finchley Foil" which has produced outstanding fencers like Ben Montague, Richard Kruse, Laurence Halsted and James Davis. In memory of Sue a group of fencers created a fund in her name to help the most improved cadet female foilist.

Rupert Brings Home the O’Sullivan Cup for Whitchurch By Beatrice Fannon

The 27th year of the O’Sullivan Cup (mixed, one-hit epee) was held on Sunday 7th February at Wales’ new fencing centre, the Cardiff Academy of Fencing, which boasts metallic pistes and overhead FIE scoring equipment. Competitors from clubs across South Wales – Whitchurch, Swansea, Celtic Sword Club, Celtic Mini-Fencing Club, Cardiff and Cardiff Uni – also had the opportunity to buy Leon Paul equipment at the competition’s ‘Leon Paul mini-stand’, which has been a regular feature of the competition for a number of years.

Michael Clemitson, Secretary of Whitchurch Fencing Club, has been the driving force behind the O’Sullivan Cup since it was established back in 1990, along with former clubmate Brian Blakemore. For many years

(c. 2006-2013), he also ran the popular Turner Cup (men’s individual epee) and Kingston Cup (women’s individual epee) on behalf of Welsh Fencing, both of which sadly are no longer on the Welsh Fencing calendar.

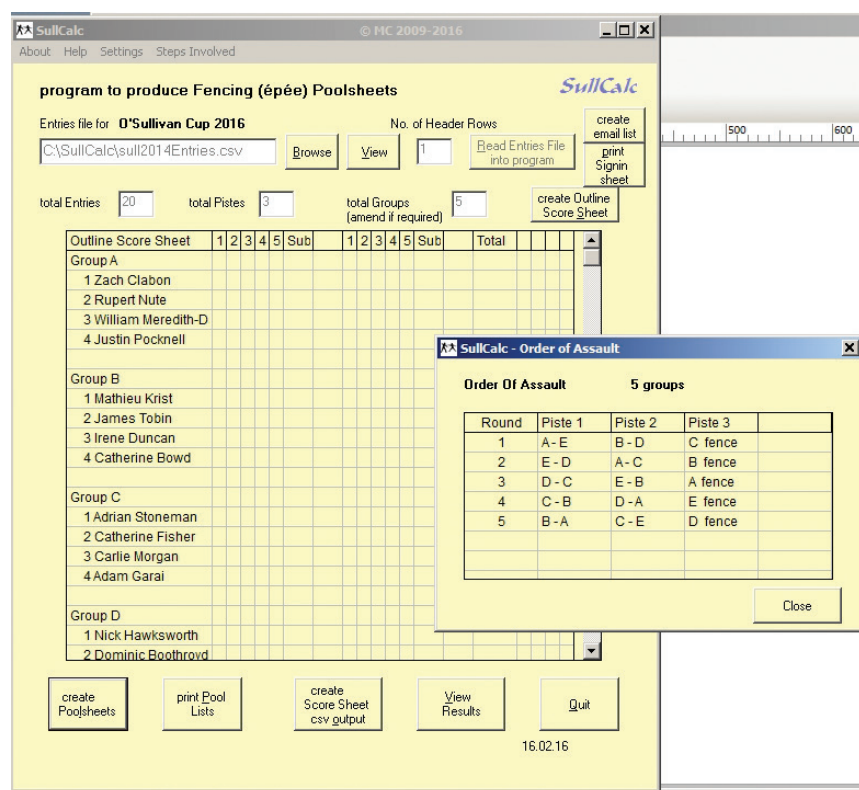
Originally, Brian Blakemore assigned the poules and pistes for the O’Sullivan Cup manually using a pentathlon poule arrangement sheet. In 2009, after Brian had retired from fencing, Michael decided to computerise the competition: ‘Although Brian explained the workings of the manual scoring system to me one evening in the Three Arches pub, and it all made sense, I realised that this was too much to ever hope to ever retain, and I decided to see if I could create a programme that did the job for me.’

Michael, who in 1995 had computerised the then WAFU (Welsh Amateur Fencing Union) membership records, created a bespoke application called ‘SullCalc’, named after ‘SuperCalc’ (one of the predecessors of Excel). It is designed for poules unique of up to 24 fencers, allocating pistes and poules, and interfaces to Microsoft Office for output on Word or Excel. It also produces an html ‘Results’ listing for the web. Michael explained: ‘The initial prototype ran in QB45

(Quick Basic v 4.5), and I then produced the present version in VB6 (Visual Basic v6), although it has been enhanced over the years to show the ongoing results, to print a sign-in sheet, and to produce an html output for the web.’

Lyndon Martin, who became Senior Coach at Whitchurch Fencing Club two years ago, commented on the longevity of the competition and called for greater participation at local-level competitions: ‘The O’Sullivan Cup has been a popular feature of the local calendar for 27 years now. I think that Michael should be congratulated for his commitment to provide annual competitions. I would encourage all fencers to support their local competitions, as it takes a lot of time and effort from dedicated volunteers to organise them.’

As always with the O’Sullivan Cup, it was a tightly fenced first round: Rupert Nute (Whitchurch) and Kristof Gibbon (Cardiff Uni) were tied in pole position, having gained 11 points each, closely followed by Ernest Wong (Celtic Sword), who was only one point behind the leaders. The gaps between the competitors widened in the second round as Rupert ran away with the victory, finishing on 26 points. The difference between second and third place demonstrated the importance of the single hit: Kristof took second place with 23 points, and William Meredith-Davies (Cardiff) finished in third place only a point behind him (22 points).



SullCalc Screenshot



‘The Winners’ Podium’: From left to right: Gareth Law (highest-placed Veteran), William Meredith-Davies (3rd), Rupert Nute (1st), Kristof Gibbon (2nd), Caleb Bowkett and Miles Waddington (highest-placed beginners)

This was Rupert’s fourth O’Sullivan Cup. He expressed his pleasure at finally achieving his dream to win it: ‘I came second in this competition two years ago, and fourth last

Round Up (continued)



Rupert Nute (1st) with his boys

year, so in past years I have been inching nearer to the Cup. It feels good to be able to put my name on the trophy at last. What made it really special was having my family there to support me, and, who knows, perhaps one of my boys will take up fencing one day – their footwork is already better than mine!

Kristof Gibbon and William Meredith-Davies, though happy to be placed in the medals again (last year they came third and second respectively), already have their sights set on next year's gold. Kristof joked: 'I'm going straight home to consult Sun Tzu's *Art of War* in preparation for next year...'

Celtic Sword in Swansea took the rest of the awards. The prize for 'highest-placed Veteran' was awarded to Gareth Law (Celtic Sword), who previously won the cup back in 2009, and 'highest-placed beginner' prizes were awarded to Miles Waddington and Caleb Bowkett, from Celtic Mini-Fencing Club, a specialist children's fencing club and sister club to Celtic Sword. Every competitor was given a Leon Paul 'goody bag' to take away with them.

Steve Poyser, a coach at Whitchurch Fencing Club, and who was one of the referees on the day said: 'It is nice to see a club member win it. It has been over ten years since a Whitchurch fencer has brought home the O'Sullivan Cup, which was Mike Lee back in 2005.'

Whitchurch Fencing Club would like to thank the numerous people who gave their time to ensure that the competition was a success: Andrew and Stephen Clemitson for running the Leon Paul mini-stand, Simon Corcoran for running the armoury, and Steve Poyser for refereeing. Particular thanks are due to Leon Paul for its support and generosity, having once again donated a stylish black laptop bag for first prize.

For full results, see www.whitchurchfencing.co.uk/sullivan/2016_result.htm

Valerie Degorce International Youth Trophy (EFC U14 Tournament – Chichester) by Quentin Russell

The British round of the European Fencing Confederation's new U14 circuit was held on the 20th & 21st February at the University of Chichester. It is part of the EFC's commitment to creating a youth circuit as a launch pad for the tougher Cadet U17 and Junior U20 circuits. All of the British fencing community have helped to make this happen with other competitions even being cancelled or moved to ensure that it could go ahead on the date specified by the EFC.

This is the only European six-weapon event held in Great Britain. As a development opportunity for the sport of fencing in Great Britain it is tremendous, allowing young fencers in our country to experience fighting overseas fencers under full international formats without the need to travel abroad. It is vital that as many British youngsters as possible are given the opportunity to experience fencing with other nations and the easiest way for us to achieve this on a mass basis is to attract the overseas fencers to Great Britain by creating a competition in which they want to participate. A similar tournament that has been developed over many years would be the annual Children's Challenge Wratlavia in Poland that now regularly attracts over 400 fencers from over 20 nations.

We had 144 competitors from 7 countries – Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Great Britain, Hungary, Romania, United States of America and even amongst the GB licenced fencers there were children of different nationalities who live in GB and hold their fencing licence over here. In fact the very first entry to the competition was received from Maia Weintraub, a foilist, who flew over from the USA for the weekend and then went on to become Womens Foil Champion for 2016.

The Tournament Champions were: Mens Foil – Rafael Rhys Pollitt (GBR), Ladies Foil – Maia Weintraub (USA), Mens Epee – Ethan Kew, Ladies Epee – Maria-Cristina Constantinescu, Men's Sabre – Stefan Nankinski, Ladies Sabre – Ellen Robbins Wilkinson (GBR).

The spectators were an enthusiastic bunch of mainly parents, coaches and other children but this is not unusual for a new event and we would hope to develop this side of the tournament with greater local school participation over the coming years. Participation opportunities will be held to give non-fencers a taste of the sport while they watch the young experts.

The Chichester University's new Sports Dome is a wonderful venue and its size makes it perfect for fencing – much larger events could be held here in the future. We were fortunate to have Hilary Philbin (BF President), Georgina Usher (BF CEO) and Clare Halsted (Chair of the BF International Cadet Management



The Valerie Degorce Mask

Group) visit the event over the weekend to see the venue and how the event was working. The University have been incredibly helpful to the organisers of the event, offering us the kind of facilities onsite that would be unavailable elsewhere, and the intention is to continue with this venue for the annual Valerie Degorce Tournament whilst bearing it in mind for other large events. The event

also had the support and encouragement of Chichester District Council, in particular the Community team who offered us assistance with local marketing, hospitality and schools communication. Oakwood School were also very kind and offered to help the event with transport facilities for which we were very grateful.

The Organisers wish to especially thank Patrick Degorce, his sons and Valerie Degorce's family for their invaluable support and their trust in allowing us to hold this tournament in her name. The mask for the trophy was donated by Royal Fencing Gear of Maryland who paid for it to go to Toki. of San Bernadino, California, who runs Custom Fencing Masks Artwork.



Mens Foil: Rafael Rhys Pollitt (GBR)



Mens Epee: Ethan Kew (GBR) (4)



Men's Sabre: Stefan Nankinski (BUL) (6)



Ladies Foil: Maia Weintraub (USA) who flew over for the event and was our first entry.



Ladies Epee: Maria-Cristina Constantinescu (ROU) (5)



Women's Sabre: Ellen Robbins Wilkinson (GBR)

Book Review

THE FENCER AND THE ZEN BODY

By Quincy Day Rabôt
(published by Swordplay Books)
pp129

This book will not teach you how to fence, but some knowledge of fencing is necessary in order to put its concepts into practice. It does however contain a way of practicing fencing movements that it claims can lead to relaxed, efficient speed and power – essentially a fusion of Eastern martial arts insights and Western scientific understanding – contained in eight very readable chapters, accompanied by helpful illustrations: a guidebook about the fencer's mind and body.

Rabôt begins by referring to 'real ability', which he suggests is the ability to produce effortlessly, appropriate skills for all situations that arise (in fencing). The resulting cohesion between how we think, feel, perceive and relate to our bodies (in response to external

stimuli), are, he suggests, something that can be learned: he calls this mind-body state 'Zen Body' – when the mind and body are effectively working as one. To achieve this he reaches out to Asian martial arts traditions. Good postural habits, essential to good performance, need to be learned and subsequently maintained through training, with poor existing habits relearned. To achieve this, the pelvis needs to be retained directly over the ankles with body weight evenly distributed over the feet. In Asia martial arts systems the breath is seen as a bridge between mind and body, with breathing and relaxation intimately linked. Strength, speed and power are trained by working the mind's ability to extend energy; and in this, the bridge between the mind and the body's energy is seen as the breath itself: correct breathing is something to be learned, rather than simply an involuntary action of the body produced through natural means. The on guard position is seen as the position in which body and mind are best prepared to respond and is described at length, as is the processes of motion, when

using this position; maintaining shoulders, hips and pelvis in the correct positions: these principles being seen as important for effective hitting. The lunge experience beginning in the mind, is followed by the physicality of the lunge itself. The *flèche* is simply a different way of moving the centre forcefully forward. Perfection is only possible when body and mind are relaxed completely. Great thought and attention is given to the correct body mechanics of extending the arm and other aspect of reaching the target, as well as the body mechanics involved in holding and manipulating the weapon. Appendixes follow on avoiding physical injuries and physical training.

The Fencer and the Zen Body is more than just a curiosity. It provides beginner, serious students and fencing coaches alike with much to think about. I enjoyed reading it and consider it one of the most refreshingly different fencing books that I have come across in a long time.

Editor







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Archive Corner

Once again our thanks go to Graham Morrison for sending in another interesting archive from the past, this time from *The Sword* 1998.

100 & 50 Years Ago

TOUPIE LOWTHER

Although women foilists did not yet have their own championship 100 years ago, they had a champion in the form of Miss Toupie Lowther. She was described in an interview in the *Daily Mail* of 6 May 1898 as “not only the best lady fencer with the foils in the world, but also better at the pastime than most Englishmen.”

Toupie Lowther had recently taken part in a match before the Duke and Duchess of Connaught at Aldershot in which she had defeated the instructor and all his pupils. Somewhat rashly, she commented, “But no one in England really knows how to fence. Sir Charles Dilke and Mr Egerton Castle use the duelling sword, not the foil; and the use of the *épée de combat* is but the rough outline, as it were, of the art of fencing.”

This drew a letter signed ‘sixte’ claiming that Captain Alfred Hutton, among others, could probably teach her a few points in either the French or Italian styles. Her father, Commander Francis Lowther, RN, promptly issued a challenge on behalf of his daughter to meet Captain Hutton, or any other English gentleman, in a fair contest before competent judges for a bout. And he added a wager of £50 to be paid to the Prince of Wales’s Hospital Fund, if she was defeated.

Alas, Alfred Hutton turned down the offer on the grounds that such a wager would transgress the laws of the Amateur Gymnastic & Fencing Association and cause them both to be disqualified as amateurs.

Later that year, Toupie Lowther was invited to take part in an Assault at Arms in Oxford, where



Toupie Lowther

she demonstrated the Academy Salute with Egerton Castle and had a bout with Professor Walter of the Oxford Fencing Club, which she won 7-5. “Her style,” reported the *Daily Mail*, “is perfect, and she is both agile and active, as well as very powerful.”

THE SWORD’S GOLDEN JUBILEE

In April 1948 the first issue of *The Sword* appeared, in response to the lack of coverage of fencing in the newspapers. The first editor, Roger Tredgold, asked for contributions of all sorts, “articles, match reports, photographs, caricatures (if not actually libellous), and even letters to say how disappointing we are.”

As far as the magazine’s need for material to fill its pages is concerned, not a lot has changed. Neither has the editor’s desire to do no more than edit, leaving the expressing of opinions to others. The magazine remains, as it has always been, the voice of the membership, independent from, although funded by, the Board of British Fencing.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

So what happened in the fencing world 50 years ago? National champions were Mary Glen Haig at ladies’ foil; Arthur Smith at men’s foil after a four-way barrage with René Paul, Luke Wendon and D Hopkin; Ron Parfitt at epee after a four-way barrage with Charles de Beaumont, Luke Wendon and A E Pelling; and Roger Tredgold at sabre after a three-way barrage with Gordon Pilbrow and Robin Brook.

Fencing coaches teaching in London were: professors F Delzi and L Bertrand (LFC and Salle Bertrand), L Paul (Salle Paul), A Parkins and C W Richards (Lansdowne), L Morel and C W Richards (Poly), E Froeschlen (Salle Froeschlen), R Behmber and Mme Perigal (Salle Grave) and A Wallace (City Literary Institute).

The Welsh Section of the AFA was formed, marking the beginning of participation by a Welsh team in the annual England, Scotland and Eire match.

Ron Parfitt wrote a series of technical articles on the electric epee, noting that before electrification the president had to judge which of two hits landed first: no easy task.

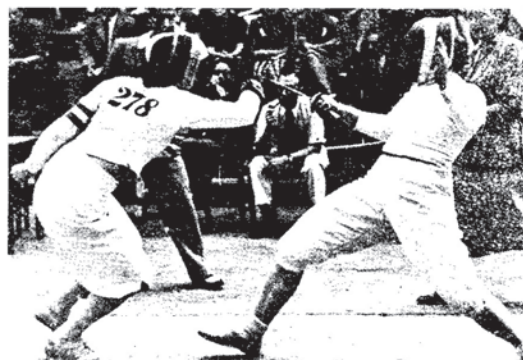
Captain Lambert reported that on Army School of Physical Training fencing courses students were taught how to repair broken blades. One end of a cleaned broken blade would

be placed on a piece of tin (cocoa tins were recommended), which was then hammered round the end of the blade. Solder and flux were applied to the joint and the two ends of the blade pushed together. Melted solder was then poured over the joint and cleaned off with a rag.

OLYMPICS

In the Olympic Games Emrys Lloyd, Mary Glen Haig and Ron Parfitt all reached their final pools, Lloyd coming 4th, Glen Haig 8th and Parfitt 10th. Roger Crosnier made an analysis of scoring hits in the final pools.

In men’s foil, of the 200 hits scored 94 were by attacks, 71 by ripostes, 22 by counter-attacks and 13 by renewed attacks. There were 32 different attacks employed, the majority being preceded by a beat. In defence the line of quarte was most



Mary Glen Haig (right) on her way to victory over Miss Fitz of Austria in the semi-finals of the Olympics.

favoured – 45 ripostes were from this line against 23 from sixte and three from octave; there were only nine counter-ripostes.

Of the 168 hits scored at epee there were 79 attacks, 56 counter-attacks, 20 renewed attacks and 13 parry-ripostes. Double hits accounted for 50 scoring moves, showing that electrification had made speed the dominant tactic. Epeeists realised that to hit before or at the same time as your opponent was more important than hitting without being hit.

Of the 213 scoring hits at sabre, 100 were attacks, 49 ripostes, 43 stop hits, 15 counter-time and six renewed attacks. Of the attacks, 39 were direct and 53 were preceded by a feint or beat. The supremacy of the Hungarians was partly due to their having developed finger play comparable to foil and epee, and partly to their constant mobility.

MF

Archive Corner (continued)

This is an interesting analysis of scoring hits at the 1948 Olympics. The only person I know who has analysed hits at world/Olympic level – and then only at foil – is Ziemek Wojciechowski. I published his findings on the distribution of hits at the 1983 and 1985 world championships in *The Sword* in April 1986, so I asked him for an update. He has given me the following figures:

	Attacks	Ripostes	Counter-attacks
1983 world championships	62%	16%	22%
1985 world championships	52%	21%	27%
2011 Olympic test event – GB team	62%	25%	14%
2015 San Jose world cup – DE	51%	23%	26%
2015 Tokyo world cup	53%	24%	23%

If Roger Crosnier's figures are turned into percentages and attacks and renewed attacks are combined, we find 53.5% of scoring hits coming from attacks, 35.5% from ripostes and 11% from counter-attacks. Interestingly, there is little difference between pre-electric days and today in the percentage of successful attacks, but there were far more ripostes than counter-attacks.

Ziemek points out that in the 80s the difficulty of defending against flick-hit attacks made counter-attacks more popular than ripostes, whereas today it is much easier to parry attacks or counter into them, so that defensive moves are almost as successful as attacking ones.

MF

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- Reporting directly to James Beevers

REQUIREMENTS:

- Full clean drivers licence
- At least 2 years coaching experience with primary school age children
- Recent, clean DBS certificate
- Current First Aid and Child Safeguarding certificates
- A passion for working with young children

If you are interested in this opportunity and would like to discuss the role further please contact James Beevers on 07930 490622 / enquiries@littlemusketeers.com



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Obituaries

SHIRLEY PARKER (1937-2016)

A pupil of Reggie Behmber, Shirley Netherway/Parker represented Great Britain at two Olympics Games (1960 & 1964) and four world championships (1961 & 63 as Netherway and 1965 & 66 as Parker). She first appeared on the fencing scene in 1956, when she came second in the Junior Foil Championship, and for 10 years was in the first rank of women foilists. Runner-up in the 1958 Under-20 Championship, she won the Desprez Cup in 1960, the international De Beaumont Cup in 1961 and the invitation Silver Jubilee Bowl in 1962. She was British champion twice – in 1964 and 1966 – as well as runner-up in 1965. In 1966 she was Commonwealth silver medallist.

After retiring from competitive fencing, Shirley donated the Parker Trophy for unclassified fencers. In later life, she founded the West Dorset Fencing Club for which she received the BFA Award of Merit in 2011.

I first met Shirley Netherway/Parker at the Polytechnic in Upper Regent Street in about 1959, where it seemed everyone who was anyone in the women's game fenced. Winning the Polytechnic Championship was as difficult as winning the British Championship. As a fencer Shirley was graceful and elegant in her movements with a terrific long lunge, and fast one two, always friendly to everyone, and magnanimous in defeat. We became great friends over the years, we were both godmothers to each other's children, and this friendship continued until the day she died. She had two children after she married David Parker, and they settled first in Bookham, where, after she became a qualified Fencing



Master she founded the Ranmore Fencing Club in Leatherhead (now Salle Poisson D'Or), which she ran for some years. They then moved to Dorking, and in retirement settled in Burton Bradstock. Shirley was the most devoted wife, doing everything for her family, was always charming, courteous and gracious to everyone. Around the time she turned 70 she was determined to set up a fencing club locally. She had so many impediments placed in her way, trying to get approval, funding and a place to run the club, and I tried to help her, and keep her spirits up following rejection after rejection. She finally won through, set up her club, and in this she was extremely fortunate to have two Olympians and former World Champions living nearby, Allan Jay, and Bill Hoskyns. Both of them supported the club, and we went down there to witness her success, and fence with the members. Bill became unwell, eventually dying, but until the end he continued to come with his grandchildren, taking the money and being useful in any way he could.

MF

In the early days of our friendship it seemed to us that there was nothing to distinguish the British contingent when competing abroad, so Shirley and I made sure all the ladies selected to represent GB had matching tracksuits with Great Britain stitched on the back in white felt which we did ourselves. There was little or no sponsorship as there is today, though midway through the 60s we did get our airfares and the hotel bill paid which helped, but only if we were among the top five selected to compete. Shirley and I and a number of others went to a great many competitions in Europe over the years trying to qualify for Commonwealth Games, World Championships and Olympic teams, all it seemed, on a sixpence. Looking back now, we saw that we had the best of the Olympic Games. Shirley competed in Rome and Tokyo. In Tokyo she was already pregnant, and the Daily Express published a lovely cartoon of her with a foil in one hand, pulling a pram with the other! In those days, if you were in the top five of your weapon, you would most likely be selected. Then everything was provided, uniforms, underwear, luggage, the lot. So off we went, properly kitted out. We had a team Coach – Bob Anderson who managed all weapons, and a team Doctor, Gordon Signy, and our team Captain Charles de Beaumont, all dead now, but responsible for a group of around twenty fencers. Not so nowadays, when as a rule we are lucky to get one or two fencers to represent us in the Olympics, because the qualification standard has become so much higher and more difficult to achieve.

In old age Shirley had little use for the finer things of this world, loving and supporting her family and cherishing her friends. Her real passion, apart from her sport, to which she gave so much over many years, was her garden, and love of flowers, raising plants from seed, and selling her surplus in the local village shop. Shirley suffered from a brain tumour among other things in old age, but when we stayed with them recently she was perfectly fine, assuring us all it must have disappeared. However a few weeks ago she was diagnosed with a cancerous tumour in the bowel which could not be removed. Her daughter Shelly had just recently returned from Luxembourg to Shirley and David's delight. She was nursed at home for her remaining time and she died peacefully without pain with all her family around her.

Janet Cooksey

I first encountered Shirley on the piste in the under 21champs in 1958. Needless to say she beat me, but we became good friends when I moved to London and the Polytechnic club in 1962. She was a seasoned International and I was the up and coming newcomer. We shared the same coach, dear old Reggie Behmber, and trained together. She was always encouraging as I moved up the rankings.

After she married David and produced two lovely children she retired from competitive fencing. She moved to Surrey, turned professional, qualified as a professor and started teaching at a local girls' school. From there she started the Ranmore fencing club which grew considerably over many years.

When she moved to Dorset I thought that she would hang up her foil, but having been approached by the local Am Dram society to direct fencing scenes on stage she threw herself into the challenge. She thought that she would be working with wooden swords but no, they insisted on really lethal rapiers and of course no masks. All survived and the actors were so keen to pursue their new found sport that she was persuaded in 2009 to start up a fencing club for them, the West Dorset F.C. It is still very successful and has now relocated to Dorchester.

Shirley leaves a huge legacy for giving many people, young and old, great enthusiasm for fencing. She will be sadly missed. For me personally I have lost a great friend with whom I could enjoy many joyful reunions.

Julia Barkley

Obituaries (continued)

ALLEN MORGAN (21 Jan 1938 – 28 Dec 2015)

Allen Morgan, a former Kent Foil Champion, died peacefully after a short illness.



Allen was born in South Wales in 1938 and although his mother moved him to London when he was still young, he always saw himself as Welsh. He spent time in the Royal Air Force as part of his National Service.

A colourful character with strong artistic tendencies and ability he took up fencing. He fenced at Goldsmith's Fencing Club and at Manor Fencing club in Plumstead in South East London for many years, and won several competitions, including the Wickford Open 3 times (1971, '73 and '75). He also won the Brighton & Hove International competition in 1974. He became Kent Foil champion in 1978 and was a member of the Kent foil team for many years.

Allen had a keen sense of humour which was often demonstrated by good natured banter with fellow fencers. He once painted a very off-putting face on his mask. When told it wasn't allowed he painted over it, but the ghostly presence remained. It was all part of

his sense of fun – he once went up to a fencer he'd just beaten and started explaining, "You did that all wrong, what you should have done was..." None one quite knew whether he was joking or being serious.

Though he presented with a casual air he took his fencing seriously, going to fencing competitions, with another fencer and both sets of kit bags on his Vespa scooter! He had a great will to win.

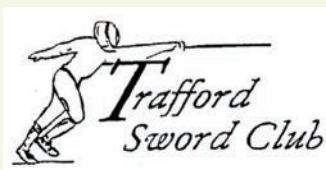
His generosity of spirit was often was often displayed when he would cheerfully help mend opponents' weapons. His fellow fencers held

him in high regard, such that when, going out for a meal in Bath with different teams, the restaurant said they couldn't provide Allen – a lifelong vegetarian – with a meal, everyone stood up to leave. The restaurant obliged.

In his later years, Allen focused more on his artistic side, which included pottery, photography drawing and painting, all of which he did to a very high standard.

He leaves Jessie, his wife of more than 50 years, his son and daughter Eric and Hazel and his grandson.

Silvia Brown



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It is with the greatest sadness that I pass onto you the news that John Whitworth died yesterday, his long battle with cancer finally fought.

His years associated with fencing will be remembered by many either as an Epee fencer or as a Coach. He fought the cancer with the same bloody minded determination that he brought to his fencing, stretching the 18 months he was given into 6 years and never giving in an inch during that time.

Our thoughts are with Ronnette and his family at this time and Trafford Sword Club will be mounting an honour guard at his funeral, If you can. please come and join us. I will pass on the details of the funeral as soon as I have them.

If you would like to send condolences to John's family here is the address;

39 Perry Road
Timperley
Cheshire
WA15 7SX

kind regards

Gill

(Gill Prideaux, Sec. TSC)

Results

The up-to-date 2015–2016 Season Latest Results are now listed on line and can be accessed using the following link:



Photo: Augusto Bizzi

Please forward all your suggestions for additional on-line fencing results to: katie.rhodes@britishfencing.com

THE NORFOLK OPEN – 16th/17th July 2016

Venue: Sportspark, University of East Anglia, Earlham Road, Norwich, NR4 7TJ.

Events

Saturday 16th July

	Latest Report Time
Men's Foil	10:00
Women's Foil	11:00

Sunday 17th July

Men's Epee	10:00
Women's Epee	10:30
Men's Sabre	11:00
Women's Sabre	11:00

Entry Fee: £25 per weapon; £45 for two weapons; late entries additional £5 per weapon. Only entries with fees will be accepted.

To request an entry form please email norfolkopen@hotmail.com

More information can be found on our website – www.norfolkfencingclub.co.uk

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