

# THE SWORD

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British Fencing Magazine

JANUARY 2017



PIERS WINS PARALYMPIC SILVER PP7-8  
HILARY GETS AN MBE P4



KARIM'S INTERNATIONAL REPORT PP9-12  
VETS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS PP13-16

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**Front cover image**


Piers Gilliver (GBR) left v Matteo Betti (ITA)  
Photo: Augusto Bizzi

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# Welcome to THE SWORD



Photo: Augusto Bizzi

- 4 **NEWS**
- 7 **REPORTS**  
Piers Gilliver – Paralympic Silver Medallist  
International Report  
Vets World Championships 2016  
Bedford Open Epee 2016  
The Epee Club – A Call To Arms
- 21 **DEVELOPMENT**  
The Reflective Practitioner?
- 23 **TECHNICAL**  
Looking After Your Fencing Equipment
- 24 **COACH'S CORNER**  
New Sabre
- 26 **INTERVIEW**  
Will Miller's Clement Schrepfer Interview
- 28 **ROUND UP**  
Cocks Moors Woods Epee Championships 2016  
Nottingham University Fencing Centre  
Photograph from the President  
British Veterans Fencing
- 31 **REVIEWS**  
The Fencer  
The Dutch Maiden
- 32 **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**  
Bridlington Blades Fencing Club  
Gear For Nepal
- 33 **OBITUARY**  
Cary Zitcer
- 34 **RESULTS**

# News

## HILARY GETS AN MBE



Congratulations to our President, Hilary Philbin, who is to receive an MBE for her services to British Fencing and sports administration in the Queen's New Year's Honours. Well deserved! 🇬🇧

## Amy Grant, Events Manager

Amy joins us with over 13 years experience working in events and venues and has been involved with a range of sporting, entertainment and cultural events. These include Rugby World Cup 2015, The London Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Edinburgh Fringe and iTunes Festivals and Southbank Centre's Festival programme. Amy's introduction to fencing was during the London Olympics where she worked as an Arena Manager and is looking forward to increasing her involvement and knowledge of the sport and joining the team.



## Josef Thomas, Regional Liaison Officer

Josef joins us after holding the post at Swindon College, where he was responsible for increasing sport participation for 16-25 year olds, as part of Sport England's Active Colleges Project. Prior to this he worked at a School Sports Partnership running events for primary school children as part of the Sainsbury's School Games in Kent. He is a graduate from Bournemouth University and has volunteered over 50 hours coaching local primary children in a variety of sports, which earned him the reward of being a medal bearer at the London 2012 Olympic Games. He was first introduced to the sport of fencing at London 2012 and where he ran an 8-week Modern Pentathlon programme for twenty students with special educational needs as part of the Sport England programme 'Active Colleges'.



## NEW APPOINTMENTS

### Mark Lyttle, Chair of British Fencing

Mark is delighted to have joined the Board of British Fencing as Chairman. He brings a passion for sports at all levels combined with extensive business experience. He loves the magic of the Olympics Games, having competed in the 1996 Olympics in sailing (IRL) and more recently finished an MSc in Sports Performance Analysis. He was Chairman of the largest youth sailing boat association in the UK and understands both grassroots involvement of young people in sports and the pathway to an elite level. Mark hopes that British Fencing can continue to build on its reputation as a professional and well run National Governing Body, attracting new participants to fencing while providing opportunities at all levels.



# News (continued)

## Cyril Tahon, National Sabre Coach



Cyril Tahon, 41, from Fontainebleu, has recently joined British Fencing's World Class Programme set-up as a National Sabre Coach. He competed in many domestic and international competitions as both a Junior and Senior and was a member of the Talent Centre in Paris.

He began coaching at the famous Paris University Club during which time he teamed up with Pierre Guichot (now British Fencing's WCP Head Coach) as the assistant for the French Women's Sabre team. During a five-year period, 2003-2008, Cyril was part of the coaching team responsible for the French women's team winning two European titles and twice becoming World Champions.

In 2009, Cyril took over responsibilities as Head Coach for the French Women's sabre programme and oversaw the team winning a silver medal at the 2009 World Championships and a bronze medal at the 2010 World Championships. In 2012 he also returned to work with Pierre as Assistant Coach for the French Men's Sabre team.

Cyril gained a great deal of his experience in his roles for the French National Team but has also benefitted from working at the world

famous, INSEP in Paris. During his time there he learnt how to manage a squad, build a season-long training plan, work with other coaches and how to assist fencers in high-pressure situations.

His first aim is to identify talent and create a squad of young male sabreurs for the Performance Foundation tier of the Pathway. He will assess fencers at domestic competitions and at designated camps to evaluate who has the talent and motivation to join the Programme with the aim of developing them to the point of progressing to Podium Potential level. He will attend Junior World Cups as the National Sabre Coach, where his influence has already produced international medals.

Cyril has come to Great Britain in a joint role and partnership between British Fencing and the Esclime Academy.

Speaking about the appointment, Pierre said; "It is great to be working with Cyril again. His philosophy is to produce fighters who are technically consistent, honest with themselves and respect what they are being taught."

KB

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### IWAS ANNOUNCEMENT



I am delighted to be able to inform you that at the IWAS Wheelchair Fencing Sport Assembly that was held in Pisa on Saturday last, I was elected onto the Executive Committee of that association. The committee has a total of eight elected members including the President, General Secretary and Treasurer together with a further two co-opted members. My role on the committee will be to look after/administer the technical side of the sport i.e. the sports equipment and clothing used by the athletes together with the wheelchairs and field of play apparatus. As I am currently the head of the sport's SEMI Commission (the commission that deals with all things technical) this means that as well as continuing with those duties, I have moved up into a "board" position.

Peter Huggins

### PAUL DAVIS FENCING ACADEMY

Congratulations to Paul Davis Fencing Academy for being named as Community Club of the Year at the Hertfordshire Service to Sport Awards 2016. Paul also came third in Community Coach of the year.

## BF HONOURS 2016 PRESENTED AT AGM



Left to right (back): Lawrence Burr, Paul Wedge, Gillian Aghajan.  
Left to right (front): Janet Huggins, Hilary Philbin, Marilyn Wheelband.

At the recent Annual General Meeting, President Hilary Philbin and Chair of the Honours Committee, Peter Jacobs presented this year's honours awards to their deserving recipients. Whilst some were unable to attend in person each award was announced individually and greeted with applause. A full report on the proceedings can be read using the following link: [\[Link\]](#)

The Honours Committee were also delighted to present outgoing Chair, David Teasdale with a gold medal for his services to the sport.

18th October 2016

(Top left, top right, far right, bottom left):

Laurence Halsted's mother, Clare, receives his tankard on his behalf from President Philbin, for his efforts in qualifying for and competing at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games; James-Andrew Davis's mother, Yolanda, receives his tankard on his behalf from President Philbin, for his efforts in qualifying for and competing at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games; Pam Price receives her Bronze medal from Head of the Honours Committee, Peter Jacobs, for services to fencing; Alex Lloyd, Jai Birch & Rajan Rai celebrate receiving their tankards with President Philbin, for their medal winning performance at the 2016 Junior World Championships.



The result at Bonn World Cup confirmed Olympic qualification (photo: Augusto Bizzi).

## ANDREY KLYUSHIN

Following three successful years as Head Coach of the Senior Men's Foil programme, Andrey Klyushin has decided to leave this position within British Fencing. During his time, Andrey was responsible for putting together one of the strongest men's foil teams we have seen in British Fencing and their qualification for the Olympic Games in Rio was testament to his hard work. Andrey oversaw the first European Games Team Gold Medal in Baku 2015 as well as a team Bronze medal at the European Championships in June 2016. These medals go alongside the two individual podium finishes for James and Richard at the World Cup in Bonn 2016 and the Grand Prix in Havana 2016.

We wish to take this opportunity of wishing Andrey good luck for the future, from all of his many friends at BF.

AN – 12 October 2016

# Piers Gilliver – Paralympic Silver Medallist

## PIERS GILLIVER TAKES SILVER IN RIO AS TEAMMATES MAKE QUARTERS



Piers Gilliver (GBR) left v Matteo Betti (ITA) (Photo: Augusto Bizzi)

Piers Gilliver took the silver medal in Rio at the Paralympic Games. Competing in the Cat A Men's Individual Epee, Gilliver stormed through the poules stages, winning all five of his fights.

Only eight fencers qualified for the knockout stages and Gilliver was ranked second to China's Sun Gang. The Brit went on to beat Matteo Betti (ITA) 15-11 and Zainulabdeen Al-Madhkhoori of Iraq, 15-10 to take his place in the gold medal match.

Sun progressed to the final in similar fashion to face Gilliver and the Chinese fencer got the better start. Gilliver's tactic of luring his opponent in to the attack had worked well all day but Sun was ready and took an early lead. Gilliver fought back hard and with both fencers working so hard, the officials had to step in a couple of times to readjust the

wheelchair frame – adding to the excitement. Despite Gilliver's determined approach, the World Champion and World number one, Sun took the gold medal 15-13. Tian Jianquan (CHN) took the bronze medal 15-11 from Al-Madhkhoori.

Gemma Collis and Dimitri Coutya were also competing for Great Britain and made the quarterfinals of their events.

Gilliver was unavailable for comment as he was fencing again today in the Cat A Men's Foil Individual event. But following his return we managed to track him down for a short interview.

We were unable to speak to Piers immediately following his success, but managed to track him down on his return.

I'll let Ed take up the story from here.

It was with great pleasure that I managed to catch up with Piers Gilliver, following his spectacular silver medal win at the Rio Paralympics.

*Tell me Piers, how did you get started in wheelchair fencing?*

'I first tried the sport of wheelchair fencing in 2010 at my local fencing club (Cotswold



Piers Gilliver

Fencing Club: [www.cotswoldfencingclub.co.uk/](http://www.cotswoldfencingclub.co.uk/) ) near Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, with their Chairman and Head Coach Kevin Nelson. I could only have been about 15-16 years old at the time. Kevin was relatively new to the sport of wheelchair fencing at that time and subsequently went on to do the British Disabled Fencing Associations "Coaching Disabled Fencers" course, in order to coach me. I joined the ranks of the British Disabled Fencing Association (BDFA) <http://bdfa.org.uk/> in 2011.

'I started training with him and absolutely fell in love with the sport; then progressed to doing BDFA training weekends. Things started to snowball and I found myself doing more and more training. I began fencing in National disabled fencing competitions and eventually joined the GB squad.

'I did my first World Cup in 2012. I'm amazed at how fast it took off. I never thought I would get to this level, let alone so quickly. It just seemed to be something that I was good at. My full-time coach for the last year was Peter Rome. We did a lot of training together before the Paralympics and that made a big difference to my performance.'

*So what was it like in Rio?*

'The experience of going to Rio was absolutely incredible. Every part of the Games was just mind blowing. Even small things, like just eating in the Village with thousands of other athletes, from lots of different countries and different sports. The food hall was just absolutely enormous and that's just one small part of the complex. There was such a buzz there. We're all there just to do our best, everyone has trained for so many years and you have this real feeling of this is the best.



The Medallists

KB

## WHEELCHAIR FENCING

Originally devised at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, U.K., competitive wheelchair fencing was first introduced in 1953 and has been a Paralympic sport since. Wheelchair Fencing was an inaugural sport at the first Paralympic Games, 1960 in Rome, mainly because Ludwig Guttmann, who founded the Paralympic Games was a fencer himself and immensely proud of a duelling scar which he received at University. Although popular in Europe since its inception, Far Eastern countries such as China, Malaysia and Hong Kong are now regularly topping the medal table at major competitions – alongside Great Britain!

Unlike able-bodied fencing, wheelchair fencing is static: the fencers are clamped to the piste, in a metal frame. Beyond this, the sport is largely similar to its able-bodied counterpart.

Fencers are classified according to their level of ability. Class A fencers have full sitting balance, and many can still stand or even walk. Those in the B Class don't have full sitting balance but do have full use of their arms and hands, whilst C Class fencers do not have full arm and/or hand activity. Historically Wheelchair Fencers were expected to compete in 2 weapons – to justify the running of a competition. However now that the sport has grown significantly, only one weapon is required, although many choose to fence two.

Fencing is one of the few personal combat sports that can be successfully practised from a wheelchair. The rules are exactly the same as in the able-bodied sport with a few minor additions to cover the complications of fighting from a chair. In team events at least one of the fencers needs to be a Class B.

The wheelchair fencer is clamped down at the appropriate distance and angle from the opponent which means that neither can get out of range during the bout. This makes for exciting, intense and tough competition demanding high levels of concentration with the slightest error resulting in defeat.

Fencing has developed widely around the World and the Association provides fencers to represent Great Britain at International, World and Paralympic Competitions. There are also events for the novice and junior fencer, with U17 and U23 International competition and National Championships There are over 50 Wheelchair Fencing nations registered.

Shuna Body

'The competition itself was a lot smaller than most World Cups. There were 12 in my event, but they were all best of the best, so it was a tough one to qualify for. So there is a completely different feel, because it's a killer competition from the start. The whole experience is really fantastic, the people you're competing against are the same, but everything else is different.



The Packed Stadium

'There's nothing quite like it when waiting to go on the piste and you come out and its absolutely packed stadium, so many people, there's a lot of pressure, a really incredible event all around.'

### *Time for a rest now?*

'I'm definitely having a break now. I've done every World Cup for the last four years so it's definitely been quite tough. We don't have seasons so training's just nonstop. It's been a lot of hard work and now I'm just enjoying some time to myself.

### *What's next?*

'I'm definitely going for Tokyo. I'm determined to get that gold medal this time. The next four years is going to be tough, but I'm looking forward to it. I've got a lot of improvement to make and I'm looking forward to showing the world how good I can be.'

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# International Report

## FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT, with photos by Augusto Bizzi

So the season has begun again and post-Olympic year is always a peculiar one – at least the start anyway. There's the uncertainty over who has retired and who has taken a break, which may well continue for some fencers into next season – think Laurence Halsted! News suggests that Richard Kruse has decided to carry on and only time will tell how long for. This writer hopes he carries on to give himself a shot at Tokyo 2020. The "retirement" question still lingers on over some of the World's other top fencers though. So, let's take a look at the season so far, weapon-by-weapon.

### Men's Epee

The season opener for the men's epeeists was the Berne World Cup in Switzerland and Russia's Nikita Glazkov – having never progressed through the 64 in the past – stunned everyone by winning the title. He beat Satoru Uyama of Japan in the final. The bronze medals went to Ukraine's Bogdan Nikishin and Andrea Santerelli of Italy.

A trip to South America followed and Argentina's Buenos Aires World Cup. Korea's Olympic Champion, Park Sangyoung climbed to the top of the World rankings by beating Italian Marco Fichera in the final. Serial medallists, Yannick Borel and Jean-Michel Lucenay confirmed France's continued strength in this weapon by claiming the bronze medals.

The men's epeeists ended 2016 at the Doha Grand Prix and it was a thriller. As we all know, the round of 64 is a potential banana skin for the top seeded fencers and this event was no different. The field opened right up after the 64, a story that continued through the round of 32. No one told Korea's Olympic Champion Park Sangyoung though as he progressed to the quarterfinals – not without a wobble or two though. He ran out of luck though as he fell to his teammate Kweon Youngjun at that stage. His semi-final opponent was another "big name" who refused to be beaten by lower seeds, Nikolai Novosjolov. Thirty-eight year old Frenchman, Jean-Michel Lucenay, proved that his age is still not a factor to success as he followed up his Buenos Aires World Cup bronze with another medal shot in Doha. He beat



**Bardenet (FRA) tried everything against Kweon (KOR) in DohaGP final in vain**

Venezuela's London 2012 Olympic Champion, Ruben Limardo Gascon, to make the second semi-final. His semi-final opponent was Alexandre Bardenet of France who has made only one major quarterfinal since 2010. You would be excused for expecting a Novosjolov-Lucenay final but that was not to be. Both Kweon and Bardenet edged tight semi-finals 15-13 to set up an intriguing final. The Frenchman did the early running but Kweon kept himself in the match until he had to call for an injury time-out with suspected cramp. He didn't look at all mobile on his return to the piste and Bardenet ruthlessly, but understandably, increased the pace and movement of the fight. Somehow the Korean clung on, using impressive hand-speed to cancel out his lack of movement. At 9-8 down going into the final period, the Korean came storming out of the blocks. He drew level and then landed three devastating single light hits. Bardenet could not recover and Kweon picked up his debut Grand Prix win.

With a large number of the top seeded fencers still missing in action, the start of the men's epee season has given both the "second string" athletes and some youngsters a chance to impress. That said, the gap to those at the top of the World rankings at the end of last season was so big, the top five are all familiar names. Park Sangyoung has a healthy lead at the top of the pile, due to his Olympic and Buenos Aires World Cup gold medals.

Gauthier Grumier of France lies in second place and is followed by in-form Ukrainian, Bogdan Nikishin. I suspect Nikishin would have over-taken Grumier if he'd managed to get a visa for Doha! Yannick Borel and Hungary's Geza Imre are fourth and fifth. So who should we look out for at the start of this Olympic cycle? For me, it's not one fencer. It's one team – Korea. They appear to have another strong group of fencers, led by their Olympic Champion, but I think even he is looking over his shoulder!

### Women's Epee

The women's epeeists began their season in Tallinn, Estonia and Tatiana Logunova beat her Russian teammate Violetta Kolobova to the gold medal, jumping to the top of the World ranking in doing so. Estonia and Poland shared the bronze medals with Irina Embrich and Renata Knapik-Miazga.

They moved on to China for their second World Cup of the season in Suzhou where Anna Van Brummen of America seemingly came from nowhere to win the title. The Ukrainian silver medallist Dzhoan Bezhura is also one to watch out for having made the quarterfinal in Tallinn. It was consecutive podiums for Logunova who shared the bronze medal position with Korea's Song Sera.

Olympic Champion, Emese Szasz was absent from both World Cups along with highly

ranked, Xu Anqi of China and Romania's Ana Maria Popescu. Of the three only Popescu attended the closing women's epee event of 2016 – the Doha Grand Prix. The Romanian is still a class act and managed a top eight finish on her first competitive outing since the Olympic Games. She was beaten in the quarterfinals by Poland's, Ewa Nelip who had already impressively handled Italian fencer, Rosella Fiamingo. Nelip's semi-final opponent was Sarra Besbes of Tunisia who had battled her way through. The Tunisian was too strong and won but it should be noted that this was Nelip's first major medal since the Barcelona World Cup in 2010 – where she was also third. The Chinese eighteen year old, Xu Nuo was the surprise package in the other half of the draw. She followed up an impressive top sixteen finish at the Suzhou World Cup in November by making it to the semi-finals. She had a close quarterfinal against Auriane Mallo but guaranteed her first major medal by winning 15-14. Her semi-final opponent was Violetta Kolobova of Russia who took out her teammate, Tatiana Logunova in their quarterfinal. Logunova is having a great season though and probably won't be too disappointed with a top eight finish. Kolobova's experience showed against Xu in the second semi-final as the Russian won comfortably meaning that the top two seeds were to fight it out for the title. A scintillating final it was too. As expected, Besbes pressured the Russian from the off but only led 7-6 at the first break. Kolobova's counter-attack was keeping her in the fight and when she came out for the second period she opened the distance to increase the danger of her height advantage. She scored the first hit of the period, proving that the change was a good one. However, Besbes is a quick learner



Besbes (TUN) jumps for joy having won the DohaGP 2016

and adjusted her attack accordingly. The Tunisian's fencing was sublime and she went on to easily win 15-8, thus clinching her first ever Grand Prix win.

So, at the end of 2016, Sarra Besbes sits at the top of the World rankings, twenty-one points ahead of Tatiana Logunova. Despite her absence so far this season, Hungary's Olympic Champion, Emese Szasz still lies in third place. China's Xu Anqi is nearly thirty points behind in fourth with Italian, Rosella Fiamingo just behind that in fifth. It's early days but Xu Nuo has to be one to watch out for in this Olympic cycle.

## Men's Foil

Fencers in this discipline began their season in Egypt with the Cairo World Cup and Race Imboden of the USA stormed through the field to win over an Italian, but perhaps not the one you'd expect – Alessio Foconi. It's worth noting that Imboden could easily have not bounced back from the disappointment of exclusion from the USA's individual pick for Rio 2016 but this guy is made of tough stuff. Foconi's silver medal is further evidence of the continued strength of the Italian foil programme, backed up by the bronze medal finishes for Andrea Cassara and youngster, Lorenzo Nista.

Miles Chamley-Watson made it back-to-back gold medals for the Americans at the second World Cup in Tokyo, beating Giorgio Avola in the final. Erwan Le Pechoux of France shared the bronze medal position with yet another young Italian star, Alessandro Paroli.

The men's foilists concluded 2016 in Italy at the Turin Grand Prix. Having heard the American national anthem at the first two World Cups of the season, there was a good chance that we would hear it again. The American World number one Alexander Massialas was not at his best but still made it through to the quarterfinals where he beat Alexander Choupenitch of the Czech Republic. His semi-final opponent was Korean speed-demon, Kim Hyogon. The Korean beat Italy's Andrea Cassara to confirm his shot at gold. In the other half of the draw, another Italian, Alessio Foconi was in great form as he steamrolled his way to a quarterfinal against Timur Safin of Russia. The Russian was no match for Foconi on the day as the Italian progressed. Enzo Lefort also looked to have regained the great form he showed a couple of seasons ago. He faced Valerio Aspromonte in the quarterfinals as the Italian returned to the piste after a long-standing injury. Aspromonte had to be satisfied with a top eight finish though as Lefort eased to a comfortable win. Both semi-finals were one-sided as Massialas matched Kim's speed with a superior tactical game and Foconi out-thought and out-fought Lefort. With Massialas not quite match-ready and Foconi with the bit between his teeth, the final was not the spectacle we were hoping for. Foconi cruised to his first Grand Prix win 15-7.



Foconi (ITA) and Massialas (USA) were regularly in close quarters in the TurinGP 2016 final - Foconi won the gold medal

So Massialas finishes 2016 at the top of the World rankings and is a long way ahead of Italy's Olympic Champion, Danielle Garazzo, in second. The rest of the top five are known to us all, Timur Safin of Russia, Italy's Giorgio Avola and Massialas's teammate, Race Imboden.



TurinGP 2016 Men's Podium

Whilst the Chinese and Russians may not be at full strength at the moment, neither are the Italians. Somehow though I think we may already have seen a glimpse into the future of Italian men's foil and when the more senior members of that squad have to look over their shoulders, so does the rest of the World's elite. As we've now come to expect, the Americans are also an incredibly strong unit and they've got some youngsters breaking through too.

## Women's Foil

The season opener for this discipline was the season opener for international fencing. Cancun, Mexico, was the host city for this World Cup which was won by World Number 1, Arianna Errigo from Italy. No big surprise there, despite her disappointing outing in Rio, as Russia, Korea and a number of other highly ranked fencers from around the World did not enter. It was also no surprise to see another two Italians on the podium. Martina Batini has been showing some great form over the past 18 months so her presence in bronze wasn't a big shock either but I'm not sure many would have bet on Elisa Vardaro ending up in the runners up spot. Nicole Ross of the

USA, continued her fine form of last season to prevent an all-Italian podium.

The women's foilists moved on to St Maur in France for their second World Cup and reigning Olympic Champion, Inna Deriglazova from Russia, returned to the piste in winning form. She outclassed Nicole Ross (USA) in the final but the American will be pleased with her back-to-back podium start to the season. Errigo also claimed her second podium in a row with a bronze medal in France and shared the place with Russian outsider, Anastasia Ivanova.



#### CancunGP 2016 Women's Podium

So the story heading into their first Grand Prix of the season in Turin was much the same as before Rio 2016 – a big tussle between Russian and Italian fencers with the USA leading the charge from behind. Italy's Alice Volpi continued to impress and battled her way through to a quarterfinal against Korea's Kim Hyunjin. The Italian was just too strong for Kim and progressed to the semi-finals where she faced in-form American, Nicole Ross. Ross had to fight hard to get to the quarterfinals and facing athletic French fencer, Ysaora Thibus was a challenge which she only just managed. In the other half of the draw, the other well-known American women's foilist, Lee Kiefer danced her way to the quarterfinals. She took on Martina Batini of Italy for a guaranteed medal and had to dig deep to beat her – but she did just that. Her semi-final opponent was Italian World number one, Arianna Errigo. The Italian faced Eleanor Harvey of Canada in the quarterfinals which presented her with a chance for revenge. Harvey had knocked Errigo out of the Olympic Games earlier than expected and despite a great battle from the Canadian, Errigo closed the match out in the final period. The first semi-final between Volpi and Ross was a topsy-turvy affair which the American won 15-11. The second between Kiefer and Errigo was a battle of Italian attacking prowess over American stern defence. Kiefer's defence proved too strong so an all-American final was the order of the day. Sometimes, fights between compatriots is messy but not this one. Kiefer looked the stronger from the start and when Ross pulled up with cramp the writing was on the wall. Kiefer picked up her first ever Grand Prix win comfortably.



#### Kiefer (USA) dominated the TurinGP 2016 final against cramp-laiden teammate Ross

Arianna Errigo ends 2016 at the top of the World rankings, thirty points ahead of Lee Kiefer of the USA. Russian, Inna Deriglazova is in third place followed by Italian, Elisa Di Francisca, who we haven't seen this season. Nicole Ross has climbed to fifth place.

Errigo's strong hold on the number one spot is looking less sturdy than it once was. The Americans are looking strong with Ross now backing up Kiefer in terms of medal-winning performances. It's also going to be interesting to see which of the young Italians emerges from the shadows.



#### Selfie bug on the podium at the TurinGP2016

### Men's Sabre

The men's sabre season began in Dakar, Senegal and it was a winning start for Vincent Anstett of France who beat Italy's Enrico Berre in the final. The bronze medallists were Italian, Luca Curatoli and America's Rio 2016 silver medal winner, Daryl Homer.

The destination for the second World Cup was Gyor in Hungary and the young Korean, Oh Sanguk continued his rise in the World ranking by taking the gold medal. He beat his teammate Gu Bongil in a great final. France's Bolade Apithy shared the bronze medal position with Andras Szatmari of Hungary.

Neither of the top Russians, Alexey Yakimenko nor Nikolay Kovalev attended these two World Cups and they weren't present in Cancun at the first sabre Grand Prix of the season. Some big names were there though and it was a surprise to see some of them fall at the first hurdle. The notable casualties were, Daryl Homer of the USA, Kim Junho of Korea and perhaps the biggest shock of all was seeing double Olympic Champion from Hungary, Aron Szilagyi exit in the round of 64. In fact, all four quarters opened up allowing for an unusual semi-final line up. Luigi Samele, blasted his way through the top quarter, taking out American, Eli Dershwitz and his own teammate, Enrico Berre, along the way. His opponent, Csanaad Gemesi of Hungary had an equally good day as he took out two highly ranked Koreans, Oh Sanguk and Gu Bongil. In the bottom half of the draw, all eyes were on another Korean, Lee Jonghyun. A potential future World champion for sure, Lee was like a whirlwind all day, astonishing his opponents with his raw speed. His most notable victory on route to the semi-finals was against World number six, Mojtaba Abedini of Iran. His semi-final opponent was Russia's Ilya Motorin. He was a thorn in the side of the Italian team as he eliminated both Diego Occhiuzzi and Aldo Montano along the way. The semi-finals were relatively one-sided as Samele blew through Gemesi 15-9 and Lee was in charge throughout against Motorin, winning 15-10. So, with the Italian in determined form and



#### Samele (ITA) goes 14-11 up against Lee (KOR) in CancunGP 2016 Final

Lee fighting like a man possessed with getting things done in a hurry, the gold medal match between Samele and Lee promised to be a good one – and it was. It was no surprise to see Lee start the fight quickly and he led early on but Samele quickly adapted and slowed down his first step to give him time to react to the Korean. Perhaps a lack of experience or even fitness led to Lee slowing down which gave Samele a chance to stay in touch. At 10-10, the Italian put in a devastating three hit unanswered run. That was enough to break the Korean and Samele went on to pick up his first Grand Prix title.



**CancunGP 2016 Men's Podium**

gold medal. She beat Kim Jiyeon of Korea in the final as two Japanese fencers, Chika Aoki and Norika Tamura, shared the bronze medals.

So on to Mexico and the Cancun Grand Prix. It was not a great day for World number seven, Ibtihaj Muhammed who went out in the round of 64 to American teammate, Sage Palmedo. The Koreans had a tough time too as Seo Jiyeon, Seo Hwang and Yoon Jisu all went out early. Yana Egorian, the Rio 2016 Olympic Champion returned to form though and made steady progress to the semi-finals, beating Mexican, Julieta Toledo 15-0 along the way. Her opponent in the top four was Cecilia Berder of France. She was in solid form and beat Italy's Rossella Gregorio on her way to the quarterfinal where she demolished her teammate Saoussen Boudiaf. In the bottom half of the draw, Anna Marton of Hungary made light work of her opponents on the way to the semi-finals. Kim Jiyeon, flying the Korean flag all by herself, also made her way to the top four in relative ease. The first semi-final was a clear demonstration of how strong Egorian is. She took Berder apart to win 15-8. The second semi-final was much more evenly contested though. Kim took an early lead against Marton and looked like she was going to run away with it. The Hungarian took an early knock in a clash of guards and that seemed to be hampering her progress and concentration. That said she only trailed 8-6 at the break. Kim started the second period fast and at 11-8 up looked in control once more. However Marton showed how she has improved her tactical game by changing her approach. She allowed Kim to close the distance and started to pull off traps and parry ripostes to go 14-11 up. Kim pulled off a remarkable comeback to draw level before

Marton bravely opted for a second intention parry riposte. In the final, Egorian was utterly sublime. Marton took an early lead but Egorian was moving on the piste serenely and led 8-5 at the break. The Russian came out for the second period in almost total control and ran away to victory 15-11.

2016 ends with the Russia at the top of the World rankings, forty points ahead of Ukrainian, Olga Kharlan with Sofya Velikaya of Russia five points further back. Mariel Zagunis of the USA and Korea's Kim Jiyeon complete the top five.

We haven't see Kharlan, Velikaya or Zagunis yet this season but the Ukrainian was present in Cancun and will return to training in the New Year. Who knows when we'll see Velikaya or Zagunis. Both Berder and Brunet are taking advantage of their absence though and continue to look strong. Anna Marton is also coming into some great form so the Hungarian is one to look out for. The other story of the season so far in this discipline is Italian foilist, Arianna Errigo. She has decided to double-up and compete on the sabre circuit this season to see if she has a shot at qualifying in both weapons for the Tokyo Olympic Games. Now that would be something special!



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Kim Junghwan of Korea leads the World rankings at the end of 2016, ahead of double Olympic Champion from Hungary, Aron Szilagyi. Vincent Anstett of France is not far behind though and Korea's Gu Bongil and Daryl Homer from the USA round out the top five.

The season so far has been a real continuation of last season in the main, save the absence of the top Russians. However, one thing is clear – the Korean team is getting much stronger. We're used to seeing Gu Bongil and Kim Junghwan at the business end of events but they now have Oh Sanguk and Lee Jonghyun looking equally impressive.

## Women's Sabre

Unlike the other disciplines, there was only one World Cup for the women's sabre fencers ahead of the Cancun Grand Prix in Orleans, France. Manon Brunet's career continued to blossom on home turf, as she picked up the



**Marton (HUN) scores against Egorian (RUS) but the Russian goes on to win CancunGP 2016**

# Vets World Championship 2016

## BRITISH TEAM ACHIEVE SEVEN-MEDAL HAUL IN GERMANY

Sixty-one British fencers have just returned home from the Veterans World Championships in Stralsund, Germany. The buoyant team achieved a seven-medal haul at the event and a day-by-day report follows.



From left to right: Jane Hutchison – Bronze medal WS (Cat A) with Head of Delegation Gillian Aghajan; Malcolm Cawton – World Champion MS (Cat C); Jenny Morris – Bronze medal WS (Cat B); Tony (or Anthony) Bartlett – Silver medal MF (Cat B)

### Day 1

#### Men's Foil Individual – Cat B

Four British fencers lined up in a field of thirty-four for this event. Tony Bartlett (V2D4), Stephen Fox (V4D2), Graham Paul (V3D3) and Paul Wedge (V2D3) all did enough in the first round to earn byes through the round of 64. Bartlett then beat Le Monnier (FRA) 10-4 as Paul took out Ferrario (ITA) and Wedge knocked out teammate Fox 10-3 in the next round. Only Bartlett was able to go further into the event, beating Wedge 10-3. Paul fell to Hirukawa (JPN) 10-8 in the round of sixteen. Bartlett went on to beat two Italians, Tiberi 10-5 and Galvan 10-5 to make the gold medal match. A close gold medal match followed but Takumi Oba (JPN) took the title 10-7 from Bartlett as Maurizio Galvan and Joseph Streb (USA) shared the bronze medal position.

**GB placings:** Bartlett 2, Paul 12, Wedge 14 & Fox 20.

#### Men's Foil Individual – Cat C

Another four GB fencers took part in this event in a field of thirty-nine. Brian Causton (V4D2) and Michael Compton (V5D1) did enough in the first round to earn byes through the round of 64 whilst Michael Bradbury and Andras Bornemisza (VoD6) progressed to the elimination stages. Bradbury and Mornemisza were eliminated in the 64 by Boisco (SUI) 10-8 and Pock (DEN) 10-6, respectively. Causton made it through the 32 by beating Sessions (USA) 10-4 but Bricker (USA) took out Compton 10-6. Bricker went on to lose Causton 10-1 in the next round before the Brit was beaten 10-2 by Filippi (ITA) in the quarterfinals.

Gari Aftandilov (RUS) won the World title beating Fabrizio Filippi (ITA) in the final as Daizo Kawaguchi (JPN) and his teammate Masashi Narita picked up the bronze medals.

**GB placings:** Causton 8, Compton 17, Bradbury 35 & Bornemisza 38.

#### Women's Epee Individual – Cat A

A field of forty-seven lined up for this event including another four fencers from Great Britain. Margarette Oniye (V2D4), Denise Silk (V2D4), Margaret Tait (V1D4) and Valerie Young (VoD6) qualified for the round of 64 elimination where Oniye beat Schortmann (AUS) 10-8 and Silk beat Andersen (SWE) 10-6 but Chernova (RUS) knocked out Tait 10-4 and Poncelet (FRA) saw off Young 10-4. British interest in the event ended in the round of 32 as Fichtel (GER) beat Oniye 10-6 and Borowa (ITA) defeated Silk 10-2.

Hildegard Strohmeier (AUT) took the World title by beating Judit Gyiurkan (HUN) in the final. The bronze medals went to Luisa Milanoli (ITA) and Christine Tran (FRA).

**GB placings:** Oniye 28, Silk 30, Tait 41 & Young 45.

### Day 2

#### Men's Foil Individual – Cat A

John Troiano (V5Do), Kola Abidogun (V6Do), Nick Fihosy (V2D3) and Jeffrey Kiy (V2D3) progressed through the first round of this event amongst a field of fifty-seven. Troiano and Abidogun both received byes through the round of 64 but Fihosy fell 10-7 to Cassoret (FRA) whilst Umezawa (JPN) beat Kiy 10-3. In the round of 32 Troiano beat Jacoby (GER) 10-6 but Cassoret defeated Abidogun by the

same score. Troiano fought hard in the next round but Blaschka (AUT) knocked him out 10-6.

Roman Christen (GER) took the World title, beating Laurent Bel (FRA) in the gold medal match as Attila Csak (HUN) and teammate Gabor Riesz had to settle for the bronze medals.

**GB placings:** Troiano 9, Abidogun 18, Fihosy 37 & Kiy 41.

#### Women's Epee Individual – Cat B

A field of thirty-five in this event included four from Great Britain. Jane Clayton (V5D1), Jennifer Morris (V4D2), Caryl Oliver (V4D2) and Lynne Bornemisza (V1D5) all progressed through the first round with the first three earning byes through the round of 64. Bornemisza joined them in the 32 by beating Schwarz (AUS) 10-7. None of them made it any further as Gardini (ITA) beat Clayton 5-4, Sopru (RUS) took out Morris 8-7, Kircheis (GER) defeated Oliver 10-6 and Lehtonen (FIN) ended Bornemisza's day with a 10-4 victory.

The World title went to Elizabeth Kocab (USA) who beat Rasa Rimgailiene (LTU) in the final as Corinne Aubailly (FRA) and Astrid Kircheis (GER) picked up the bronze medals.

**GB placings:** Clayton 17, Morris 18, Oliver 19 & Bornemisza 31.

#### Women's Epee Individual – Cat C

A small field of twenty-one took part in this event including four from Britain. Carole Seheult (V3D3) and Sylvia Brown (V3D3) did enough to earn byes through the first elimination round. Connie Adam (V2D4) and Patricia Shepherd-Foster (V1D5) made the round of 32 which Adam progressed through with a 10-8 victory over Kitami (JPN). Shepherd-Foster was unable to progress as she was beaten 10-9 by Hendricks (AUT). In the round of 16 Seheult beat Lindeman (FIN) 10-9 but Brown and Adam went out 10-7 to Stelzer (AUT) and 9-4 to Demaille (FRA), respectively. Someroja (FIN) ended Seheult's day beating her 10-1 in the quarterfinal.

Marja-Liisa Someroja went on to win the World title beating Marie Damaille (FRA) in the final. Brigitte Martin (FRA) and Ute Schiffmann (GER) took the bronze medals.

**GB placings:** Seheult 8, Brown 10, Adam 15 & Shepherd-Foster 20.

### Men's Sabre Individual – Cat C

Thirty-two fencers lined up for this event including four from Great Britain. Malcolm Cawton (V5D1), William Osbaldeston (V4D1), Andras Bornemisza (V4D1) and Peter Baron (V3D2) progressed to the elimination round of 32. However, only Cawton was able to progress any further as he beat Kitano (JPN) 10-3. Chren Ing (CZE) beat Osbaldeston 10-4, Endt (GER) defeated Bornemisza 10-7 and Nettingsmeyer (GER) saw off Baron 10-6. Cawton went on to beat Dobrzanski (USA) 10-3, Filippi (ITA) 10-5 and Anastasov (RUS) 10-3 as he eased to the gold medal match. There he comfortably beat Wolfgang Nettingsmeyer (GER) 10-6 as Francesco Negro (ITA) joined Aleksandar Anastasov (RUS) on the bronze medal step of the podium.

**GB placings:** Cawton 1, Osbaldeston 11, Bornemisza 18 & Baron 19.

### Day 3

#### Women's Foil Individual – Cat A

Thirty-two fencers were involved in this event including four from Great Britain. Gillian Worman (V3D2), Caron Hale (V3D2), Kati Archer (V2D3) and Jacqueline Hibbert (V1D4) progressed to the elimination stages. In the 32 Worman beat Szereday (ROU) 6-5 and Hale beat teammate Archer 10-5 but Reese (GER) saw off Hibbert 10-1. British interest in this event ended in the next round as Bonney-Millett (AUS) defeated Worman 10-6 and Zoppke-Donaldson (GER) beat Hale 10-9.

The German went on to win a bronze medal along with Lynn Botelho (USA) but the title went to Ludmila Chernova (RUS) who beat Stefanie Reese (GER) in the final.

**GB placings:** Worman 13, Hale 14, Archer 20 & Hibbert 26.

#### Men's Sabre Individual – Cat A

Four British fencers joined a field of fifty-seven in this event. Duncan Rowlands (V4D1), Barry Coulter (V4D1), Peter Howes (V3D3) and Evert Van Gemeren (V0D5) progressed to the round of 64 where Rowlands beat Chudycki (POL) 10-4 but Coulter lost 10-5 to Foster (AUS), Howes was beaten 10-5 by Busi (ITA) and Gasztonyi (HUN) defeated Van Gemeren 10-4. Rowlands went on to beat Horotan (HUN) 10-5 before losing to Becker (USA) 10-1.

Becker went on to make the gold medal match but lost to Vittorio Carrare (ITA) as



**Duncan Rowlands gives Malcolm Cawton (MS Cat C) good advice in the match break v Dobrzanski (USA)**

Farhad Kassimov (AZE) and Oleg Stetsiv (USA) picked up the bronze medals.

**GB placings:** Rowlands 13, Coulter 33, Howes 39 & Van Gemeren 55.

#### Men's Sabre Individual – Cat B

There were four British fencers in this event who lined up in a field of thirty-five. Chris Prevett (V5D1), Richard Cohen (V3D3), Carl Morris (V3D3) and Martin Toms (V1D5) made the elimination stages. Prevett, Cohen and Morris did enough in the first round to earn byes through the round of 64 and were joined in the 32 by Toms who beat Konwinski (POL) 10-9. Prevett then beat Bellet (FRA) 10-4, Cohen beat Ramier (FRA) 10-7 but Morris lost 10-2 to Loiseau (FRA) and Seuss (USA) defeated Toms 10-3. In the next round Cohen fell 10-5 to Paroli (ITA) but Prevett beat Carmina (ITA) 10-7. Prevett was then eliminated from the competition in the quarterfinals 10-5 by Seuss.

The American went on to win the silver medal as Enrico Antinoro (ITA) took the World title. Giulio Paroli (ITA) claimed the bronze medal along with Paul Preis (GER).

**GB placings:** Prevett 6, Cohen 14, Morris 24 & Toms 32.

#### Men's Team Foil

Tony Bartlett, Michael Bradbury, Brian Causton, Jeffrey Kiy, John Troiano and Paul Wedge lined up for Great Britain in this event and they beat Hungary 30-19 and France 30-13 in the first round. Ranked second for the elimination stages meant they had a bye through the round of 16, before going on to beat Australia 30-12, Germany 30-18 and Japan 30-24 to become the World Champions. Germany secured the bronze by beating Italy 27-23 in the third-place play-off.

#### Women's Team Epee

Connie Adam, Jane Clayton, Caryl Oliver, Margarette Oniye, Carole Seheult and Denise Silk formed the British team in this event. They lost 30-18 to Germany and 30-22 to the USA in the first round, meaning they faced France in the elimination stages. France were too strong and beat them 30-15 in the quarterfinal stages, leaving Great Britain in sixth place. The French team went on to win the title, beating Germany 30-26 in the final. Finland won the bronze medal by beating Hungary 30-15.

### Day 4

#### Women's Foil Individual – Cat B

Another four British fencers were involved in this event, joining a field of thirty-two. Jane Clayton (V1D4), Clare Halsted (V3D3), Jennifer Morris (V3D3) and Sheila Anderson (V2D3) made it through the first round. In the round of 32, Clayton beat Gutkovskaya (RUS) 7-5, Halsted defeated Zhdanova (RUS) 10-1 and Morris overcame Delacour (FRA) 10-7 but Anderson fell 10-6 to Ballard (AUS). Only Clayton made it through to the quarterfinals, beating Cirillo (ITA) 10-2 as Kircheis (GER) took out Halsted 10-6 and Walters (USA) beat Morris 7-6. The same American ended

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Clayton's day with a 10-7 victory in the next round.

Jenette Straks-Faulkner (USA) became the World Champion beating Annabelle Ballard (AUS) in the final. Kaoru Amari (JPN) and Anne-Marie Walters (USA) settled for the bronze medals.

**GB placings:** Clayton 7, Halsted 14, Morris 16 & Anderson 21.

#### Women's Foil Individual – Cat C

Kristin Payne was Great Britain's sole representative in a field of twenty in this event. She started the day well, winning four of her six first round matches, earning a bye through the round of 32. She then lost 9-6 to Gorius (GER) in the next round.

Nadejda Arskaya (RUS) won the World title beating Marie Chantal Demaille (FRA) in the gold medal match as Brigitte Greunke (GER) and Kerstin Palm (SWE) picked up the bronze medals.

**GB placing:** Payne 10.

#### Men's Epee Individual – Cat B

The field of sixty-four in this event included four from Great Britain. Ralph Johnson (V5D1), William Pollard (V4D2), Jonathan Stanbury (V4D1) and Alasdair Urquhart (V2D4) progressed to the elimination stages. In the round of 64, Johnson beat Lupiz (ARG) 10-5 and Pollard defeated Henzler (USA) 10-9 but Stanbury lost out 10-7 to Pap (HUN) and Pianca (ITA) beat Urquhart 10-5. Johnson then beat Damas (ESP) but Pollard lost 10-6 to Pianca (ITA). In the round of 16 Johnson progressed by beating Horvath (HUN) 10-7 but then lost 10-8 to Pianca, who had single-handedly ended the hopes of three of the GB contingent.

Giuliano Pianca went on to win the World title, beating Francois Gaudry (FRA) in the final. Daryl Taylor (USA) and Jean Stock (BEL) were the bronze medallists.

**GB placings:** Johnson 5, Pollard 22, Stanbury 34 & Urquhart 52.

#### Men's Epee Individual – Cat C

The field of forty-seven in this event included four more British fencers and Robin Davenport (V4D1), William Osbaldeston (V4D2), Robert Phelps (V3D3) and Chris Green (V1D4) all made the elimination stages. The first two earned byes through the round of 64 and were joined in the 32 by Phelps who beat Pock (DEN) 10-7. Green did not make it through the 64, losing 10-4 to Valaer (SUI). Both Davenport and Osbaldeston made it through the next round beating Phelps 10-4 and Fairweather (AUS) 10-5, respectively. They went on to make the quarterfinals by beating Bucher (SUI) 9-8 and Jefferies (USA) 9-3, respectively. Their continuation in the event was then ended as Vehrs (GER) beat Davenport 3-2 and Hewitt (USA) defeated Osbaldeston 6-0.

Arnold Messing (USA) became the World Champion beating Wolfgang Vehrs (GER) in the gold medal match as Reinhard Muenster

(DEN) and Frank Hewitt (USA) shared the bronze medal spot.

**GB placings:** Davenport 7, Osbaldeston 8, Phelps 24 & Green 39.

#### Men's Team Sabre

Andras Bornemisza, Malcolm Cawton, Richard Cohen, Peter Howes, Chris Prevett and Duncan Rowlands lined up for Great Britain in this event as part of the ten-strong field. In the first round they beat Poland 30-15, Japan 30-11 and Germany 30-24, leaving them ranked first for the round of 16. A bye followed by victories over Spain (30-23) and Russia (30-25) saw them make the gold medal match. There, they were outfought by Italy who became the World Champions with a 30-21 victory. The USA secured the bronze medal, beating Russia 30-19 in the play-off.

#### Day 5

#### Men's Epee Individual – Cat A

The field of eighty-four in the event was the biggest of the competition and included four British fencers. Jon Nottingham (V4D2), Keith Barnett (V2D4), Hugh Kernohan (V4D2) and Nigel Fancourt (V2D4) all progressed through the first round. Nottingham and Kernohan had done enough to earn byes through the round of 128. They were joined in the next round by Barnett who beat Guri Polez (ESP) 10-5 but Maichrzyk (POL) took out Fancourt 10-4. Nottingham then beat Tivenius (SWE) 10-7 and Barnett defeated Bilani (BEL) 10-8 but Stoutland (NOR) saw off Kernohan 7-7. Nottingham and Barnett were unable to progress further as they lost 10-8 to Stepien (USA) and 5-1 to Abduragimov (RUS) in the 32.

Sergey Simovskikh (RUS) beat Luca Magni (ITA) in the gold medal match to secure the World title as Marco Longo (ITA) and Marek Stepien (USA) won the bronze medals.

**GB placings:** Nottingham 28, Barnett 31, Kernohan 37 & Fancourt 66.

#### Women's Sabre Individual – Cat A

A field of twenty-nine in this event included four fencers from Great Britain. Jane Hutchison (V5D0), Michelle Narey (V3D2), Grace Coulter (V3D2) and Caroline Clancy (V1D4) all made the round of 32 with Hutchison earning a bye. She was joined in the next round by Narey who beat Raskop (GER) 10-1 but Zoppke-Donaldson (GER) defeated Coulter and Padura (ESP) beat Clancy. In the 16, Pepe (USA) knocked out Narey 10-6 but Hutchison progressed with a 10-7 victory over Lo Muzio (ITA). She went on to beat Pepe (USA) 10-2 before losing 10-7 to Hanshen (GER) to secure a bronze medal.

Friederike Janshen (GER) won the event beating M. Jose Padura (ESP) in the final as Hutchison was joined in the bronze medal position by Anne Cerboni Bousquet (FRA).

**GB placings:** Hutchison 3, Narey 12, Coulter 17 & Clancy 24.

#### Women's Sabre Individual – Cat B

The field of twenty-four in this event included another four GB fencers. Jennifer

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### Mens Sabre Team – Silver

From left to right – Andy Bornemisza, Malcolm Cawton, Richard Cohen, Chris Prevett, Peter Howes and Duncan Rowlands

### Womens Sabre Team – Bronze

From left to right – Jenny Morris, Sylvia Brown, Patricia Shepherd-Foster, Jane Hutchison, Michele Narey, Silvia Brown and Coach Jonathan Katz

Morris (V4D1), Sylvia Brown (V4D1), Lynne Bornemisza (V2D3) and Yvonne Walls (V3D2) all made the elimination stages – the first two earning byes through the round of 32. Bornemisza and Walls were unable to join them in the round of 16 as they were defeated by Richter (GER) 10-4 and Goryunova (RUS) 10-8, respectively. Morris went on to beat Rousset (FRA) 10-3 and Brown defeated Budde (GER) by the same score but then faced each other in the quarterfinals. Morris

prevailed 10-6 before losing 10-1 to Eyre (USA) in the semi-final.

Jane Eyre (USA) went on to win the World title, beating teammate Delia Turner in the final. Another American, Jenette Starks-Faulkner shared the bronze medal position with Morris.

**GB placings:** Morris 3, Brown 5, Bornemisza 13 & Walls 17.

### Women's Sabre Individual – Cat C

A field of sixteen fenced off for this title including three from Great Britain. Patricia Shepherd-Foster (V1D4), Connie Adam (V1D3) and Sylvia Brown (VoD4) made the round of 16. Shepherd-Foster was the only one to progress as she beat Tachibana (JPN) 10-8. Adam was knocked out 10-3 by Martin (FRA) and Demaille (FRA) beat Brown 10-3. In the quarterfinal Hiatt (USA) overcame Shepherd-Foster 10-6.

Brigitte Greunke (GER) took the title beating Susan Hurst (USA) in the final as Brigitte Martin (FRA) and Diane Hiatt (USA) shared the bronze medals.

**GB placings:** Shepherd-Foster 7, Adam 13 & Brown 16.



**Tony Bartlett, MF (Cat B) waiting to fence in the final match against Takumi Oba (JPN)**  
**Connie Adam – BVF's oldest and much loved fencer (WS and WE Cat C)**

### Women's Team Foil

Sheila Anderson, Kati Archer, Clare Halsted, Kristin Payne and Gillian Worman formed the British team for this event and they lined up in a field of nine. In the first round they beat Japan 30-13 but lost 29-15 to Germany leaving them ranked fourth for the elimination stages. A bye through the round of 16 was followed by defeat 25-17 to Russia and sixth place. France beat the USA 30-27 to win the World title as Russia secured the bronze medal with a 24-21 victory over Italy.

### Day 6

### Men's Team Epee

The British Team (Keith Barnett, Robin Davenport, Ralph Johnson, Hugh Kernohan, William Osbaldeston and Alasdair Urquhart) were part of the field of seventeen in this event. They beat the Netherlands 30-25, Canada 30-20 and France 30-21 in the first round to earn top seed for the elimination stages. They went on to beat Austria 30-13 before losing 24-18 to Germany.

The Germans went on to win the World title by beating Italy 26-23 in the gold medal match as Russia just beat Sweden 18-17 to steal the bronze medal.

### Women's Team Sabre

Silvia Brown, Sylvia Brown, Jane Hutchison, Jennifer Morris, Michele Narey and Patricia Shepherd-Foster lined up for Great Britain in the final event of the competition in a small field of five. In the seeding poule unique, they beat the USA 30-28 and Japan 30-26 but lost 30-16 to Germany and 30-24 to France, leaving them ranked third. In the semi-finals they lost to the USA but went on to beat Japan 30-19 to secure the bronze medal. Germany beat the USA 30-27 to secure the last World title of the event.

Full results for all events are available [here](#).


WEB RELEASE: 18<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2016 – KB

It was a privilege for me to be Head of Delegation for the GBR squad at the Veterans World Championships in Stralsund, Germany. The standard of veterans fencing gets higher each year and is always extremely competitive on the piste, but there is a tangible feeling of camaraderie and mutual respect off piste. This event was no exception. I am delighted that the squad returned home with a good haul of medals:

Malcolm Cawton	Gold	Mens sabre (Cat C)
Tony Bartlett	Silver	Mens foil (Cat C)
Jane Hutchison	Bronze	Womens sabre (Cat A)
Jenny Morris	Bronze	Womens sabre (Cat B)

and in the team competition

Mens Foil	Gold	Jeff Kiy, John Troiano, Tony Bartlett, Paul Wedge, Brian Causton and Mike Bradbury
Mens Sabre	Silver	Duncan Rowlands, Peter Howes, Chris Prevett, Richard Cohen, Malcolm Cawton and Andy Bornemisza
Womens Sabre	Bronze	Jane Hutchison, Michele Narey, Silvia Brown, Jenny Morris, Patricia Shepherd-Foster and Sylvia Brown

Congratulations and very well done, not just to the medallists, but to all of the squad members for their determination, sportsmanship and continuous support of each other. Full results can be found .

Our German hosts put on an excellent event. It takes a huge amount of planning and work by a good team to produce an event, that when it happens, appears effortless. They certainly achieved this and also what is very important to veteran fencers; an efficiently run competition that maintains a sense of excitement, fun and camaraderie throughout. Livestream results and videoing were very much appreciated and, for the first time at an international veterans event, video refereeing was used.

Next year's World Championships will be in Maribor, Slovenia. Something to look forward to with much anticipation.

**Gillian Aghajan**  
**GBR Head of Delegation**

# The Bedford Open Epee 2016

By Andrew Brown



**Another successful Bedford Open Epee competition! And a good day out for Leon Paul Epee Club with both men's and women's champions.**

With a large (for these days) entry of 75 men and 33 women competing, this year's Bedford Open saw a good number of young fencers. (17% under 18 and a further 18 university students). New trophies were awarded this year as the old ones were showing their age and free BFC pens were given to all competitors. Ian Briggs of PBT once again provided scoring equipment and a trade stand and electric pistes were hired from England Fencing.



In the men's event the poules saw 6 fencers undefeated (Thomas van der Staaij, Anton Pollard, Michael Geary, David Roig Carles, Paul Fitzpatrick and Wayne Bryan) with a further 5 winning 5 out of 6 fights. Most of these fencers won their early DE fights without trouble but top seed Wayne Bryan fell to 16<sup>th</sup> seed Enrico Balducci 15/11 and 3<sup>rd</sup> seed Thomas Van der Staaij to 46<sup>th</sup> Lewis McIntyre in the last 16.

In the quarter finals McIntyre then defeated 6<sup>th</sup> seed Fitzpatrick 15/13 to gain a place in the semis. Pollard narrowly lost to Geary 15/14 and Balducci lost to 9<sup>th</sup> seed Stephen Northam in a close fight at 15/14. Steve Domec who had taken out 7<sup>th</sup> seed Will Gallimore-Tallen 15/6 lost to Roig Carlos 15/11. Lewis McIntyre lost his semi final fight 15/9 to the eventual winner and Stephen Northam beat Michael Geary 15/12.

The close final (15/12) saw Stephen Northam running out of time trying to catch up

David Roig Carlos. A smiling Stephen said his legs gave out. David, a former Bedford Fencing Club member, now fences at Leon Paul Epee club and used to fence at A grade competitions for Spain.

The women's event also had an upset from first round seeding with first seed and last year's quarter finalist Hungarian Vera Juhasz losing to 32<sup>nd</sup> seed Emma Duxon in the first round of the DE. Emma went on to reach the quarter final, where she lost 15/14 to Christine Steiner in a close fight.

2<sup>nd</sup> seed Megan Redding (University of Essex) was defeated in the quarter finals by 10<sup>th</sup> seed Abigail Watkins of RGS Worcester and Helen Thouless, 4<sup>th</sup> seed, went out to the 13<sup>th</sup> seed, Sophie Saudo.

## The men's

1	ROIG CARLES	David	GBR	LEON PAUL EPEE
2	NORTHAM	Stephen	GBR	BIRMINGHAM FENCING CLUB
3	GEARY	Michael	GBR	ROYAL BLADES
3	MCINTYRE	Lewis	GBR	FOUR OF CLUBS



**Winner David Roig Carles, Silver Stephen Northam and Bronze medallists Michael Geary and Lewis McIntyre.**

## Women's

1	SAUDO	Sophie	FRA	LEON PAUL EPEE
2	WATKINS	Abigail	GBR	RGS WORCESTER
3	RODRIGUEZ CARO	Helena	ESP	OXFORD UNIVERSITY FENCING CLUB
3	STEINER	Christine	GBR	LONDON FENCING CLUB



**Winner Sophie Saudo, Silver Abigail Watkins and Bronze medallists Helena Rodriguez Caro and Christine Steiner (and children)**

# The Epee Club

## A Call to Arms



The recent statement from British Fencing on 6 October concerning the future of funding for epee, has inevitably caused ripples of unrest throughout the UK. How come that a weapon that is fenced by over 60% of British Fencing members is now unable to produce a squad of athletes delivering the results necessary to qualify for public funded programmes?

This has, quite naturally, started a flurry of outrage on The Fencing Forum which I have been reading with interest. But there was one post that had me thinking. The writer asked "Who or what is The Epee Club?" Surely all epeeists know that, I thought! But no. A quick survey around some of the clubs in the South West showed that most young epeeists had no idea of the Epee Club and the part that it has played in developing the very weapon that they were fencing with and what part the Epee Club has played over the years in keeping the GBR epee in the forefront of world fencing. A bit of promotion is therefore necessary and where better than *The Sword*.

### Firstly, a history lesson.

Epee fencing in this country was the result of one man – Charles Newton-Robinson (1853- 1913). Charles had studied epee fencing in Paris in the closing years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the celebrated French Professor, Anthime Spinnewyn. Charles had a poor opinion of foil. He held the view that "no foilists could unlearn enough ever to become a good epeeist whereas an epeeist who had never touched a foil was a better fencer on that account"!

He saw the possibilities of fencing as a sport rather than practicing foil as a leisure activity for the gentry. He knew that the French were looking to expand their range of matches outside of France, Belgium and Italy and so he invited Spinnewyn from Paris to pay a visit to London and show British fencers what epee fencing really was. On 4 May 1900, the first epee pool ever publicly held in England took place in the Portman Rooms, London with 4 Frenchmen and three Englishmen. The following day, a pool of 13 epeeists was held

in the Drill Hall of the Inns of Court School of Arms. Charles Newton-Robinson was runner up to Monsieur Sulzbacher and was duly presented with a medal offered by the Academie d'Epee de Paris for the first placed English swordsman. Our first International medal!

That night, at a dinner held at the Golden Cross Hotel "the forming of the Epee Club was then first spoken of." (The Epee Club Minute Book). On Tuesday 12 June a meeting styled "the first general meeting constituting the Epee Club was held in the Savile Club, Piccadilly with 29 founder members. The Epee Club has been in existence ever since, interrupted only by the occasional away match with Germany. It therefore predates the Amateur Fencing Association (now British Fencing) by some eight years. The Epee Club's announced purpose at that first meeting was "the encouragement of the use of the epee de combat", an aim that holds true today as much as it did in 1912. If you want any more history then check out the Epee Club website at [www.epeeclub.org](http://www.epeeclub.org).

Over the years, the Epee Club has continued to grow in numbers. Its members are by invitation only and has a cap of 100 fencers drawn from the ranks of successful National, International and Olympic ranked epeeists who are considered to have the same ethos as its founder in developing epee within the UK. The Club has no fixed abode, but holds matches at the Hurlingham Club four times a year and the Lansdowne Club twice a year. It's Officers consist of a President – currently David Partridge – three Vice Presidents, a Secretary and a Treasurer and a Committee of nine members who hold post for three year periods. It also holds charitable status.

### So what has it done for epee as we know it today?

In effect, the Club has been at the forefront of promoting new ideas and embracing new technology in the fencing world. In the early years, the Club experimented with various blades and pointe d'arret which eventually led to a national agreement in 1911 that a triple point should be used for all competitions – a system that was still in use up until the introduction of the electrical scoring boxes in the 1960s. The Club imported the first ever electrical scoring apparatus in 1932 from the Continent where it had been used for the first time. Two club members created a new British model in 1935 which could distinguish between hits arriving within one tenth of a second – a great advance! At the same time, various systems of scoring and classification were being tried out eg best of five, five hits effective, three hits effective counting aggregates of hits given or received rather than victories or defeats. They even created a competition format that in 1932 that was the forerunner of Direct Elimination that we use today.

Thus The Epee Club was and has always been seen as an organisation that is in the forefront of innovation and the promotion of new ideas and technology within British Fencing. Both Foil and Sabre started up similar organisations in the following years but these fell away as the system of Weapon Committees was established, therefore only epee remained as a discipline that had a voice and champion within the fencing community.

Its current role, other than bringing together its members in a social environment to fence for various silver Club Cups – always in the



The Lefroy Cup – The Epee Club

open air during the summer in the tradition founded by its original founders! – is to act as a “shadow” organisation to help mentor and fund young epeeists. It uses its business contacts and ability to network and lobby for the promotion of epee in appropriate quarters. It gives an annual award to coaches that have provided an outstanding contribution to British epee fencing. It provides a range of trophies to the National Championships eg The “Les Armes de France” Shield for the Men’s Epee Championships, the Savage Shield for Men’s Epee Team Championships and the Miller Hallett Trophy.

It runs an annual competition – the Epee Club Cup – for invited top fencers from across the epee spectrum and celebrates the achievements of epeeists on the International scene by the award of its fabulous Art Deco medal. It also provides trophies and medals for the Elite Epee Competitions and the British Veterans Association National Championships. All of this is alongside providing funds from its own membership to promote fencing and the use of the “epee de combat” in line with its founder’s aims.

## So what is going on today in the world of epee?

Epee remains an incredibly popular discipline throughout the UK. However, If British Fencing choose to apply for grants available from UK Sport to deliver a World Class Programme with a goal of Olympic medals, it is clear that it must adopt within these Programmes a performance-based culture where inevitably the athletes, programmes

and British Fencing are to be measured on results. So, despite the fact that GBR epeeists have over the past 10 years taken podium medals at Cadet/Junior/Senior levels, the reality is that when it counts (European & World Championships) our epeeists are rarely delivering consistently improving performances, and are often failing to meet the minimum performance standards needed to qualify at this level, relying instead on discretionary selection. Our Veterans too have had their fair share of podium success, although this is, of course, outside of the Olympic pathway but proves that epee fencing still has the power to engage fencers internationally in their later years!

The promotion of the “Professional Fencer” backed by National Lottery finances has meant that there are now limited options for National Sporting Bodies to support disciplines that don’t meet the performance criteria. This is especially true when small NGBs like British Fencing do not have alternative forms of income (e.g. from Sponsors). So inevitably the Board has had to take some tough decisions. David Teasdale spoke of this in his closing interview in the last edition of *The Sword* when he talked about his use of financial “leverage” as an ultimatum to change the Board and the way it had operated in the past. Governance was the key issue which brought with it a raft of outside staff and a new methodology that had to be agreed by agencies that had no requirement to see development across all the disciplines, but only in those identified as having medal potential. Unfortunately, because of the underfunding of the epee in the past and the fact that epeeists across the world had raised the standard of the weapon

to levels to which we could not reach, epee in the UK has now a task ahead to transform itself into a discipline that can demonstrate it has the talent and capability to deliver results and attract public funding in the future.

If our young epeeists are to deliver results at European and World Championship level, there is no doubt they must find the time and money to allow them to train significantly harder and gain more international experience. The challenge is therefore how we set about bridging (and essentially funding) this gap between athletes wanting to be a top International epeeist and actually reaching the standards required to attract public funding. Understandably the membership income of BF cannot be used to fund this gap, barely able as it is to service the basic membership needs. This means that the burden of the costs currently fall on the parents or athletes themselves who are frequently making difficult choices about funding training vs. competition with limited funds. So, to create a successful future for our weapon we **have to** investigate alternative means to support these epeeists.

One way is to look to our epee community, as the foil and sabre community has done in the past, to help kick-start and support this next generation of young epeeists.

## So how is the Epee Club to respond ?

The committee of the Epee Club saw British Fencing’s position as outlined in their statement as requiring a positive response. It has therefore resolved to come together

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# The Epee Club

## A Call to Arms (*continued*)

with the nominated Epee Squad Manager (Jon Willis) and the Weapons Manager (Dr Lindsay Bottoms) to draw up a plan whereby it could use Epee Club funds (it is a registered CIO) to finance the further development of epee and to support the selection and training of potential epeeists outside of the WCP. I stood up at the recent BF AGM in October to announce this fact.

Since then, we have agreed to plan further funding initiatives using the Club's business contacts to increase the funding "pot". It is realised that the BF CIO is still seriously underfunded as yet so, in effect, the Epee Club will become the major sponsor for epee in this country. Our plan will be to set aims and priorities for selected epeeists in order that we can put them forward to international competitions to gain the necessary experience and allow them to graduate towards World Cup entry. Jon Willis already has a plan for this over the next 5 years. It would be naive to think that this could all be achieved overnight and certainly not by Tokyo in 2020. However, the 2024 Olympics could be a goal. A team of epeeists, male or female, qualifying in their own right for the Olympics and genuinely capable of bringing home a medal for Great Britain – now that is a dream worth fighting for!


### So how can you help?

The Epee Club CIO has been established with only one aim in mind – the development of epee. This Fund is totally separate from the Club's own finances and is overseen by three Trustees – all of whom are impartial and yet dedicated to the placing of epee back on the world stage again. However, we will still need more funding. This is where YOU come in! If you feel that your Club or Region can contribute anything towards achieving this goal, then please go to the Epee Club website

where you can donate through its CIO page. If you are a parent or guardian of a Cadet or Junior epeeist and wish to see him/her being given the chance to succeed at the weapon they love rather than turning to foil or sabre, then this is the site for you.

So if you have a heart to help epee in any way, then please let us know. In so doing we can turn the tide and ensure that there is a future for the "epee de combat" way into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Whatever happens, The Epee Club will continue to promote epee at every step of the way.

**Lawrence Burr OBE**  
Vice President  
The Epee Club

If anyone wishes to donate to BF's charity, you can do so using the following link: 

This is probably an opportune moment to mention *The Sword's* editorial policy, which has been explained previously as follows (Editor):

*"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 expression 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."*

*Malcolm Fare, writing in *The Sword* in 1998 on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary.*

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# Coach Development

## COACH DEVELOPMENT – THE REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

By Norman Randall

*The development of the British Fencing Coaching Framework places a stronger focus on the “How to Coach” skills which link to the underpinning principles of the Framework. Two of these principles are a “Culture of Learning” and “Continuous Improvement” and they rely on reflecting on (ie thinking about) your experiences as a coach. My thanks to Norman Randall (BF Coach Developer) who has created the document below: this uses reflection to introduce some themes of the emerging coaching development programme, namely Coaching Style, Components of How to Coach and PRICELESS principles. – Steve Kemp, Coaching Development Manager at British Fencing.*

**‘When I was doing post-graduate research in Learning and Development it became very clear to me that critical self-reflection on my actions and behaviours as a teacher and coach was a fundamental of continuous improvement. I can honestly say that my approach and attitude to fencing coaching now is most definitely NOT the same as I was when I first qualified in 1978! This is largely down to three things; learning to be self-critical, learning not to be afraid of asking fellow coaches and learners for feedback and from seeking opportunities to watch and learn from some outstanding fencers, coaches (at ALL levels) and coach educators throughout my coaching career. My thanks go to all of them.’ – Norman Randall**

**Introduction.** The most effective coaches are those who continually seek to improve what they do and, more importantly, *how* they coach. They reflect on their coaching practice, seek feedback and self-review their effectiveness. This document covers styles of coaching, key components of coaching practice and offers a simple check-list to enable you to assess the effectiveness of your sessions

**Your Coaching Style.** The way in which you coach is a crucial component of how effective your coaching will be. That seems an obvious statement to make but it is worth pausing for a moment to consider exactly what that means. In any class of fencers there will be

a variety of age, physical abilities (in agility, balance and co-ordination as well as strength and speed), intellectual capacity, personality and character. So it stands to reason that one style of coaching might not fit or suit all. Also the stage of learning the individual or group might be at will have a bearing on how the learner-athletes can process what is being coached.

For the coach this means being able to deploy a range of styles. Let’s consider four: **Tell, Sell, Ask, Delegate.**

**TELL.** Your group might be at foundation level at the very start of their exploration of the sport so that **telling** them directly what to do, giving precise instructions and rules (eg safety in the salle) to follow because they have little or no prior knowledge or context might be the right style to adopt – as in teaching a new move. **Coach says, ‘Do this!’**

**SELL.** Fencers you coach may be intermediate participants who have been through their beginners’ programme and are now training regularly at the club. They have a limited repertoire of basic techniques and so your coaching will involve assisting them to hone those basic skills – coaching for improvement, **selling** them the idea that improvements can lead to greater success. **Coach says, ‘Wouldn’t it be great if by doing this you’d be more effective?’**

**ASK.** Coaching through questioning where you are **asking** the fencer what the challenges are and what might be needed to find solutions to the ‘problem’ sharpens the focus on an athlete-centred style. Note that this style of coaching does not necessarily have to be restricted to intermediate or advanced fencers. It is perfectly possible to adopt

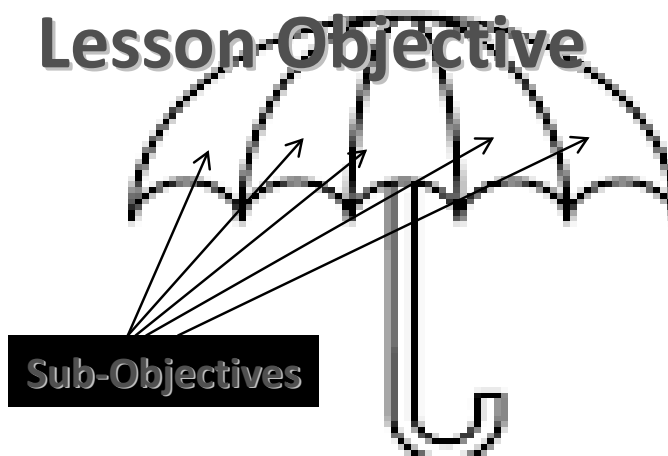
this approach with beginners at appropriate stages in their learning. **Coach says, ‘In this situation what might you need to do?’**

**DELEGATE.** A style that encourages the athlete to discover and experiment with possible solutions of their own devising to challenges is one where the coach is **delegating** responsibility for development and performance improvement to the individual or group. The learners may be advanced in their skills and knowledge so that they can take far more personal responsibility for their own development and the coach’s role is to facilitate and support that development. **Coach says, ‘What do you want to work on today?’**

Do you have a ‘default’ mode of coaching? What might you do differently to develop a wider range of coaching styles?

**Components of ‘how to coach’.** Giving some thought to the separate components of how to coach (rather than **what** to coach) will help you to reflect on the way in which you coach and how you might develop for greater effectiveness as a coach.

- **Identify the Problem to be Solved.** Focussing on the ‘problem’ for which a solution is required by asking yourself, ‘what’s the issue here?’ or ‘what challenge are we facing?’ to identify a clear definition of the challenge will in itself assist in seeking out a solution. If you are unsure what the challenge is then your response will be unsure. A wise person once said, ‘If you don’t know where you are going any road will take you there.’
- **Define the Learning Outcome.** The learning outcome in this case is not yours



**Practice here: Take a topic, write a lesson objective and record the sub-objectives:**

**Objective:**

Sub-Objective 1  
Sub-Objective 2  
Sub-objective 3  
Sub-objective 4  
etc

but the fencers'. A clear statement of what the learner must be able to *do* by the end of the lesson will inform the way in which you deliver the lesson.

- **Identify the constituent components of the learning outcome.** In other words what are the sub-objectives that together meet the lesson objectives? Imagine an umbrella – the whole canopy is the ultimate learning outcome, and the panels that go to make up the umbrella are the sub-objectives. Those sub-objectives MUST contribute to the overarching learning objective – if they don't then why are they there? Sub-objectives are closely related to 'teaching points' and may form a mini-lesson within the main lesson.
- **Keep it concise.** Less you more them!
- **Keep it simple.** You know too much – no-one needs impressing with the depth of your knowledge so focus on the topic in hand and make it as simple as you can for the learner.
- **Keep terminology appropriate.** This means keeping terminology to a minimum as well as avoiding unnecessary jargon or technical information. As in the previous bullet, there's no need to dazzle with your expertise...
- **Put things in context.** Identify a 'need' and a 'want' – what will motivate and enthuse the learner/s?

**Making your sessions PRICELESS!** Whilst it is always good practice to ask a fellow coach to observe your lessons/sessions to give feedback, that situation isn't always an option or a practical reality. This means that check-lists that help you to do this for yourself in a systematic way are useful. A helpful 'test' of the effectiveness of your session or lesson plan is to use the **PRICELESS** system.

**Plenty of practice.**

- How quickly does the group become active?
- How much time as a proportion of the whole session is given to practical activity? (aim for 80%)

**Relevant.**

- What does the session and/or lesson contribute to athlete development?
- Is the topic/content/subject matter appropriate to the fencers' stage of development?

**Involve learners in their learning.**

- In what ways does your plan involve the learners in their own learning?

**Create a supportive environment.**

- How does your plan make it easiest for the learners to learn? (think physical as well as mental environment)
- What opportunities are there for the learners to learn with and from each other?

**Experience.**

- In what ways does your session/lesson build on the existing skills, knowledge and behaviours of the group or individual?

**Learner-Centred.**

- More them, less you
- Placing the fencer at the centre of all you do (see / above)
- Asking great questions for teaching, checking understanding, getting feedback, opening minds

**Self-Respect.**


How much does your plan maintain or enhance the self-esteem of the learner/s?

What/where does your feedback on their performance add to their self-respect?

**Success.**

If we define 'success' as 'the progressive realisation of a worthwhile goal', how does your plan enhance participants' sense of achievement (taking into account that the worthwhile goals might be defined differently for each individual)?

**PRICELESS!**

Information about Norman Randall's coaching activities can be found using the following link: 



Tenterden Swords Fencing Club would like to welcome you to the 37<sup>th</sup>

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Saturday Check-in	Opens	Closes
Men's Epee	08:30	09:30
Women's Epee	10:30	11:30
Men's Sabre	10:00	11:00
Women's Sabre	11:00	12:00
Sunday Check-in	Opens	Closes
Men's Foil	08:30	09:30
Women's Foil	10:30	11:30

**Please enter online at <https://bf.sport80.com/events>. (Sport80 offer email and telephone assistance with any issues and will take telephone entries if necessary - call them on 0203 005 2526 between 09:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday.)**

The entry fee is £25.00 for one Weapon or £45.00 for two. Late Entries are £5.00 Extra. Entries for fencers travelling from overseas are free. The closing date is Monday 13th March 2017.

We will be running two rounds of pools and there will be a plate competition for fencers eliminated in the first stage. Minimum age for entrants is 13 at 1st January 2017. Medals will be awarded to the top eight in each event, prizes to the top four. Additional trophies will be awarded to the top veteran (40 and over) and medals to the top under-20 in all events.

For further details see [www.tenterden-swords.co.uk](http://www.tenterden-swords.co.uk), e-mail [invicta@johnhyde.plus.com](mailto:invicta@johnhyde.plus.com) or phone John Hyde on +44 7714 439385.

# A Beginner's Guide to Looking After Your Fencing Equipment

By Janet Huggins



Hilary Philbin and Janet Huggins (right)

## DO'S

- When going to a competition check your kit at the club before you go, don't leave it until you get the competition
- Make sure that the blades and guards are free from rust
- Check that the barrels are not loose, if they are tighten with an appropriate spanner
- Check handle is not loose, tighten with an allen key, taking care not to trap the insulated wire under the handle
- Check wires are attached to the inside guard socket

- Check that the point will lift the appropriate weight. 500g – foil, 750g – epee (if not stretch or replace spring)
- Check travel on epee less than 0.5mm adjust if required
- Check bodywires working and still work if gently pulled
- If using bodywire with spring covered pins check that the pins have not been flattened (skinny pins). gently tease out the springs with a screwdriver
- Carry a pack of dental floss and a needle (Ideal sewing kit for emergency repairs)
- If using kit from other than one of the major suppliers carry some spare points and grub screws that will fit
- Carry suitable tape for foil blades and replace frequently

## Do ask for help from the armourers

## DON'TS

- Don't leave wet clothing in with your swords
- When tying up your bodywires don't clip the crocodile clip onto the wires
- Don't put broken kit into your bag and forget it. It will not mend itself

Apart from repairing all items of fencing equipment we sometimes get requests for help for everyday problems and occasionally there are more unusual requests.

Some of these items are obvious and others not

- Safety pins
- Superglue to mend broken nails
- Shoes
- Fencing bags
- Phone chargers
- Electrical Adapters for Continental plugs
- Suitcase Wheels
- Referee's split trousers
- Designer Handbags
- Glasses
- Wheelchairs
- Prosthetics
- Competition Trophies re-fixing broken handles and bases
- Breaking into a fencer's car as they had locked their keys inside
- Sewing a fencer into their jacket as the zip had broken
- Extricating fencers from jackets when the zip had jammed whilst wearing it.

In short anything and everything and in most cases we try our best to help

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# New Sabre

By John Salfeld



Jon Salfeld and pupils

For some time now, an influential group within the FIE has espoused the view that the extraordinary increase in athleticism of sabre fencers, particularly pioneered by the Koreans, has tipped the balance of sabre fencing away from skill-based and technical actions and too far towards explosive power and speed.

For around two years, this group, led by some of the biggest names in Russian sabre fencing, has been proposing various rule changes for discussion, with counter-proposals from groups in the USA and elsewhere. Following experiments with various alterations to timing and distance, the FIE implemented two major changes to sabre fencing immediately after the Rio Olympic Games. One of these changes is permanent (expected to stay for at least the entire Olympic cycle without review), and the other is experimental, and will be reviewed in late December 2016.

The changes are supposed to be designed to adjust elements of the discipline which some felt were not in the spirit of the weapon and were having a negative effect on the presentation and excitement of the sport. We will look at the two changes separately, and examine observations of their effects thus far.

The first rule change – the permanent one – is the extension of the block-out time of the lights on the scoring apparatus. After Athens 2004, sabre block-out time was hugely reduced from 300-350 milliseconds to 120 milliseconds, giving rise to significant changes in sabre fencing. These were, most notably, more attacks into preparation and stop-cuts against the long attack bringing up a single light on the scoring apparatus (leading, therefore, to more cautious attacking), more remise and reprise actions scoring a single light, and less (arguably no!) discretion for the referee in judging timing actions outside the middle. This block-out time has now been increased from 120 to 170 milliseconds – nowhere near the pre-2004 time, but noticeably different.

Following one men's and one women's Senior World Cup so far, as well as about half of the season's Junior World Cups, the effects of this change have started to come into focus: Firstly, referees at the top level are still NOT giving any attack on preparation against the long attack when two lights are showing on the box – one can debate the rights and wrongs of this with reference to 'fencing time', correct technique, what an 'attack' is, but the fact remains that this is the way it is being refereed at Junior and Senior World Cup level. Because of this, a much higher percentage of attacks are now successful, as the longer block-out time allows the advancing fencer more time to finish their attack against the retreating fencer, and therefore counter-attacking actions are now a lower percentage choice.

As the defender is left with fewer effective options, it is now necessary when retreating to work much harder, using every inch of the piste and various preparations to try to create the environment for parry-ripostes, beats, fall short, and actions from the point-in-line. Consequently, long defence has become a low percentage choice, especially in men's sabre where the long attack was already successful more often than not. We are therefore seeing less fencing outside the middle 4 or 5 metres of the piste, especially in pressure situations when most athletes narrow down their choices to (at least seemingly) higher-percentage choices.

Secondly, we are seeing less counter-attacks, ducks, and counter/block-outs on or around the on-guard line, which had been a particular feature of women's sabre, but we are seeing slightly more parry-ripostes replacing the counter-attack as the defensive action of choice in this area.

The choice of parry-riposte as a good option in this area is further augmented by the fact that we are, of course, seeing less remises against the parry-riposte, as the parrying fencer has a little more time to finish their riposte action. Over time, this should theoretically see the return of counter-parries instead of remises, and therefore logically of compound ripostes. Higher levels of technique and motor-response training will become important, with fewer short-cuts to scoring in defence. It is still early days for athletes to have adjusted their technique and training to this brave new (old?) world.

My personal view is that the overall impact of the timing change is positive, in that it has

eliminated many out-of-time counter-attacks (especially in women's sabre), but negative in that it has reduced the amount of action taking place outside the middle, due to the security afforded to the attacker, and hence the risk in choosing to defend. Many fights between evenly matched fencers seem much more one-dimensional and uninteresting, as both fencers become trapped in the middle few metres of the piste, not wanting to risk the difficult task of defending down the piste. The chance of scoring a parry-riposte in long defence is even more difficult with longer timing as the attacking fencer doesn't feel under pressure to finish, and can wait for the defender's action. The only answer to this problem would be to allow referees discretion to award attack on preparation into the long attack when two lights are showing on the scoring apparatus. This in turn raises its own serious problems: more sabre referees will need to be better trained to understand and see this fencing time; the enormous increase in discretion will inevitably lead to more inconsistency; and it would increase the grey areas of the sport, putting referees under more unwanted pressure from external influences.

Now we turn to the second, currently temporary, rule change – a shorter starting distance between the two fencers when on guard. We are, in fact, already into the third evolution of this experimental rule: The initial proposal was that fencers start with the REAR foot on the 4 meter on guard line. It quickly became apparent that this change created a number of unforeseen problems, ranging from simple pragmatic ones (EG. fencers having to keep checking out of their eye-line to see if they were in the right place), to more complex tactical ones, such as fencers being able to adjust the starting distance between them by narrowing or widening their on guard stance. Additionally, taller fencers could be seen to gain a clear advantage, by having a wider range of distances to choose from depending on their leg/foot position, and often with very tall fencers being close enough to reach their opponent with a single action. The third problem, and ultimately the one that enforced the rapid second and third evolutions of the rule, was that two tall (or simply long armed!) fencers when placed on guard with the rear foot on the 4-meter line, were often in breach of the pre-existing rule t.17.4 "When placed on guard during the bout, the distance between the two competitors must be such that, in the position "point in line", the points of the two blades cannot make contact"

To overcome the potential breaches of rule t.17.4, a new 3 metre on guard line was introduced just days before October's Plovdiv Junior World Cup. Initially, in the Plovdiv competition, fencers were placed on guard with the back foot on the 4m line, and, if they were seen to be in breach of rule t.17.4, they were then brought on guard behind the new 3 metre line. Two hours or so into the competition it was apparent that this over-complication was being ignored by the leading referees, and that they had quietly adopted the 3-metre line as the new on guard line, and were completely disregarding the rear foot rule! We were all assured at the event that this had been the intention all along, and that we had misunderstood the initial instructions...

Just as with the longer timing, this 3-metre distance, which was used in the Senior Men's Sabre competition in Dakar and the Senior Women's Sabre event in Orleans, has had some clear effects on the nature sabre fencing:

Firstly, as athletes are obviously closer together, decision-making time is reduced even further. This has had a positive effect on women's sabre in the middle 3 metres. Counter-intuitively it is noticeable that female sabreurs are doing more open-eyes

preparation, as 'running' in the middle is often punished by a tempo or parry-riposte from the defender. This is accentuated by guidance from the FIE to the top referees that they should be looking to separate quite small amounts of time in the middle, favouring the tempo with a correct hand over the fast footwork – a positive step in refereeing the middle of the piste. This increases the risk of choosing to perform a fast attack in the middle 3 metres, and thus pushes the balance to more cautious preparations. In contrast, it seems to have had the opposite effect so far in men's sabre, with pressure situations creating even more of a simultaneous attack deadlock in the middle of the piste. The male sabreurs, being more explosive and faster than their female counterparts, and therefore closing distance faster in the middle, don't even have time to choose a tempo action into very fast attacks. The male sabreurs have quickly realised that long defence is becoming a high-risk option for all but the most highly-skilled and brilliant athletes, due to the increased ease of finishing an attack, and therefore many close matches and pressure situations have descended into a step-lunge or in-out-step lunge/flunge war of attrition. It may well be that these early days of the new rules are simply a transition while the better fencers adapt and find new methods

which we have yet to see the best of, but the initial impression is that the shorter distance in men's sabre has not added to 'watchability' and has not increased the range of actions.

In conclusion, dominance in the middle of the piste has become even more critical with the new, longer block-out time making long defence a much riskier option. Whilst the shorter distance has had little, or perhaps positive, effect in women's sabre, the physicality of men's sabre does not enable fencers to decide quickly enough what defensive action to take, so guess-work, prediction and attrition will govern the majority of tactical choices for all but the very top few fencers.

The word on the street is that most FIE observers and analysts who have been collecting extensive data at international events will NOT be recommending the distance remains. If this is the case, and the FIE goes along with the return to the 4-metre lines, we will have yet another new environment to adapt to in 2017: namely old distance with new timing!

Footnote: Foilists and epeeists beware – the rumour is that if the 3-metre line is adopted permanently, the FIE will seek to apply it across all weapons in order that we don't confuse spectators by having different lines for different weapons...

<b>BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FENCING TOURNAMENT Easter 2017</b>			
<b>Venue:</b> 360 Sport & Fitness Centre, The University of Birmingham			
<b>Access:</b> Edgbaston Park Road off A38 South, Birmingham B15 2TT			
<b>Events</b>	<b>Latest report time</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Latest report time</b>
<b>Sat. 15 April</b>			
Men's Foil	09.00	<b>Sun. 16 April (British Summer Time begins)</b>	
Women's Foil	11.00	Men's Epee	09.00
		Women's Epee	11.30
Men's Sabre	13.30	Women's Sabre	13.30
<b>Entry Fee:</b> £26 per weapon via on-line process; free entry to non-UK fencers visiting specifically for this event (not free to UK-based students).			
<b>Pay cheques to:</b> "BIFTOC"			
<b>Post entries to:</b> Mike Whitehouse, 208 Wheelers Lane, Birmingham B13 0SR; tel./fax +44 0121 443 3136			
<b>Closing date:</b> 09 April 2017. Any late entries, if agreed, charged at £36 per weapon.			
<b>Notes:</b> BFA licences will be checked; NGB equivalent must be shown at check-in. Fencers must be aged 13 or over before 01.01.2017. Prizes for L8 fencers at each weapon and best Veteran. Leon Paul Equipment Co trade stand & sponsorship.			
On-line entry & payment process, hotel forms, directions on <a href="http://www.birminghaminternationalfencing.org.uk">www.birminghaminternationalfencing.org.uk</a>			
Queries to email: <a href="mailto:contact@birminghaminternationalfencing.org.uk">contact@birminghaminternationalfencing.org.uk</a>			
<b>ENTRY FORM BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL: 15-16/04/17</b>			
Event: .....			
Entry fee: .....			
Name: .....			
Address: .....			
Post code: .....		email: .....	
Tel: .....			
Country/Club: .....			
Vet: (over 40 on 01.01.17 & NVA) ..... and declared at check-in			
BFA or NGB licence No: .....			
I accept that the organisers cannot be held responsible for any accident, loss or damage sustained at the Tournament.			
Signed: .....			
(Parent/guardian if under 18)			
Date: .....			

# Interview

## Interview with Clément Schrepfer, author of *How to Fence Epee: The Fantastic 4 Method*, the best selling fencing book in France in 2015.



Clément Schrepfer

Readers will no doubt recall that Will was the winner of the 'Fencing Travel Story Competition' (*The Sword*, January 2016, p29) and his 'Medal Kiss of Death...' piece (which appeared in *The Sword*, July 2016, pp21-25) – Editor

**WM:** Congratulations on writing such an accessible fencing book. It's like a summary of best practice in epee, with the four-part structure making it easy to keep the key points in mind when on the piste. I've already found it useful: I didn't win my last competition with The Fantastic 4, but I understand why I was knocked out, and what I have to work on. (My hand!) Is that how the four-part structure evolved? You keeping in mind the main priorities for your own fencing? Is there a particular example of how it helped you?

**CS:** First of all, thank you for your feedback. I really appreciate that even advanced fencers can still learn and improve themselves through the eye of *The Fantastic 4 Method*. You got it: as I wrote in my book, this "Fantastic 4 vision" is a summary of my own understanding of epee fencing, after more than twenty years of practice. This vision started when, following the advice of an older fencer, I tried to analyse my instincts during the days I had good results

on the piste. I wrote a list of details that made me feel better on the piste and after years of gathering my analyses and improvements, my list reduced from dozen to four: The Fantastic 4!

These four points summarise the most effective way of fencing epee, from beginner to a high-level practice. At every level of understanding, they allow you to focus on good points and help to analyse your mistakes or those of the opponent. And by understanding mistakes, little by little, you can reduce them and even eliminate them in a methodical way.

I still use the Fantastic 4 during my practice and almost every day rediscover how effective they are! During a bout I can start on a wrong tactic, and then calmly change my approach to take advantage of my opponent. It is not always easy, of course, but it is enjoyable, and I finish almost every match, no matter the final score, with a clear vision of the solution that needed to be applied.

**WM:** One of the key thrusts of the book is conserving energy while letting your opponent use his, and thereby making it harder for your opponent to focus and react. On the other hand, I saw that one of the reminders you had for yourself when fencing was to "keep moving". Excellent advice, yet it is a balance: you have to keep moving, but at the same time, performing unnecessary feints or high-energy actions will wear you out faster than your opponent. Where do you stand on footwork: pure bouncing, half-bounce-half classical or, proper classical footwork? And how intense?

**CS:** The key is to know yourself. Knowing your physical limits and being conscious of your focus level will allow you to put rhythm variation into practice and keep it under control. Variations are about "actions in the distance of warning zone" and "relaxing out of this distance", that's how you maintain a decent level of energy and focus.

"Keep moving" is mostly during phases of actions within the warning zone, to be ready to move in or out of distance at any time, and to surprise the opponent with the explosiveness of your attack. If you are not moving, every step forward or backward will be more easily noticed by your opponent and you will be less able to surprise him or her.

For my own practice on the piste, I don't take into account whether I am bouncing or half-bouncing or anything else; rather, it is more

about the principles of being dynamic and to not get stuck on your legs by surprise.

**WM:** Patience, one of the Fantastic Four in your book, was always a virtue in epee. In the old days an epeeist might wait half an hour to make a hit. Things have changed and with the passivity rules, if a fencer is behind on points, the patience game can be turned on its head, where you have little time left – literally seconds. Usually, too, the harder you try to catch up, the weaker your game. You do talk about being more daring when behind, but should there be a different Fantastic 4 for the last 15 seconds? One perhaps suited better to the attacking game of foilists?

**CS:** It's true that the passivity rule has changed the game. We see nowadays, shorter and shorter bouts and tactical moves turning into more physical struggles. But there still is enough time for being "Patient".

Patience in the Fantastic 4 does not mean "waiting a minute for something to happen"; it is more like managing to catch the right moment, even provoking it, by "doing everything with a conscious intention". Patience is also about providing the space for the opponent to make a mistake so as to benefit from it. And finally, it is about managing a positive tension between seeing, anticipating and taking opportunities, and not always falling for the first "ouverture" which could be a well-laid trap.

When you have a little time to act, strengthen your provocations and use other types "pressure", like pressure of the end of the piste, or becoming more menacing with your point, or being less risk averse when seizing on an opponent's mistakes.

**WM:** Discussing distance, Harmenberg, in *Epee 2.0*, wrote that the fencer who prefers the shortest distance dictates the distance. As you say in your book, distance is of course a tactical decision. For some opponents a shorter distance will make them feint to keep you back, which can give you the blade. Other opponents will simply make an effective direct hit if you push too close. Then we have close quarters, where one fencer might provoke close quarters simply because he or she has the better game at that distance. I thought an important message in the book was that it is important to continually vary the distance: is this to hinder an opponent planning a response, or more to disguise the distance you eventually plan to use?

# Interview (continued)

**CS:** To my mind, both of these are valid.

It is important to vary distance and to know how to fence in different distances. While distance varies according to the size of your (and your opponent's) attack, it cannot be fixed and always the same.

For sure, controlling the distance variations between you and your opponent will disrupt his perception of the game. And by moving in and out of the direct touch distance, you are trying to hide your intentions and complicate the execution of your opponent's tactics. Varying the distance will hinder the opponent's ability to plan his actions and make him fence in a more "reactive mode". The more dynamic you are in managing the distance, the less time you give him to think about planning. He will probably try to get into his preferred distance for launching his actions but if you are controlling the distance, you can plan further than just "being at the best distance" and choose a solution to counter his intention.

The point is again to know yourself first, the size of your attacks, your ability to move out, or react to opponent's attacks ... and then adapt, as always.

**WM:** The section where you cover Intentions in the *Fantastic 4* is filled with gems, and so many in fact that I thought there was a fair bit of crossover between the sub-section "Make Act" and "Make React". If the first is preparation and the second is reconnoitre – I imagine that can change very rapidly if an opening presents itself. Say if, under Make Act, the opponent does something unexpected and you simply step back and think "what was *that*?" In both scenarios, "open eyed" fencing comes into play: the ability to instantaneously assess and respond to a situation. In the acknowledgement section, I noted the long list of excellent coaches you have had: has "open eyed" training been an integral part of your own training? How integral do you see this ability? (For example, Harmenberg admitted he wasn't so good at it and simply used disruptive parries for anything that didn't fit into his tactical framework.)

**CS:** Indeed, some of my fencing masters were "open-eyed" training oriented. This meant that individual lessons seemed almost like real matches, and focused on progressive variations in actions and reactions with the coach, beginning say from a single half lunge preparation.

You are right that "Make act" and "Make react" are close concepts, as I say in the book, but the difference is in the mental attitude you have in your preparation. When trying to Make Act, you are focusing on making the opponent launch his attack, and so more aware of the "tactical distance" of the game. When trying to Make React, the focus is to analyse his reactions to your threats (does he try to parry, to go backwards or forward...) and so use these reactions in your next decisive attack.

In any case, the Rule #1 of this "fantastic" is to keep this open-eyed attitude by always remembering to do **no forward action without intention**. You cannot "move forward" for the sake of moving, it is too risky to enter the danger zone without having a plan in your mind.

**WM:** There is quite a bit of psychological training referred to in the book: visualisation, recreating your state of mind when you have been most successful, and controlling emotions after a hit is made or lost, for example. Where you discuss the explicit need to win, I thought it might only apply to certain sort of fencers. There is a fair bit of research suggesting that pressure to win can be counter productive – even when put on oneself. In fact, athletes who go out the night before and, on the day, think, "I've got no chance, I'll just compete for fun", often suffer no loss in performance, due to the lower level of stress. On the other hand, Czajkowski (in *Understanding Fencing*) notes that champion fencers can deal with a lot more pressure to win than lower level competitors, and a few even perform better with pressure; beginners, however, function best when quite calm. Of course, we are there to win, but is the need to win you describe in the book, different to the correct level of arousal for different fencers?

**CS:** Of course, each fencer will have a different sensibility for the pressure of a competition. Some will be excited, others maybe be paralyzed, mentally exhausted, or calm. Some fencers (including me) have tendencies to search for perfection and some kind of "beauty" in their actions, which can make them lose focus on the ultimate goal during the competition: to win.

For everybody the point is to be able to give their best on D-Day. But giving your best does not always mean putting yourself under pressure to "win". Instead, give conscientiously your best and put yourself in the "possible mindset for winning", touch

by touch collecting "mini-wins". Build your match and competition step-by-step; but there is no need for a "heavy winning pressure" at every moment of the event.

For sure, during a bout, when the opponent changes the fight into an "aggressive" one, you may need a "winning" mindset to not be overwhelmed. It is also important to stay focussed on your winning motivations during "decisive phases", when there are only 2 points left to score (e.g. at 3 or 13 points) for you and/or your opponent. It is often the key difference at 14-14; the winner is the one who was more determined to win.

**WM:** Since writing the book, I imagine you've been thinking about the *Fantastic 4* paradigm and had feedback from many fencers. If you were to write a second edition of the book would you make any further adjustments? Would there be, for example, a *Fantastic 5*?

**CS:** Indeed, many readers asked me about a second book. This has made me think about another passionate topic in fencing that I may put into words in 2017.

About a other *Fantastic 4* second edition, if I was to introduce new material, I would try to highlight the things I consider really important by adding more examples, and probably some testimonials. I would also try to explain further some notions, and maybe create a new tool for keeping in mind the *Fantastic 4* on the piste.

I would not change the paradigm into 5 elements because it took me 10 years to reduce and condense my list from 20 to 4, but I am still open for new ideas and other fencers point of view.

**WM:** Thank you Clément, it was a great pleasure to hear more about your approach.

**CS:** It is always a pleasure to exchange views about ways of epee fencing and I had great time answering your questions. May this interview spike the curiosity of fencers from all levels!

To learn more about the *Fantastic 4* Method see [www.howtofenceepee.com](http://www.howtofenceepee.com) and watch the Hugues Obry interview. An English version of the book is available from the above link and online retailers.

Will Miller is a co-author of *Epee Fencing: A Step-By-Step Guide to Achieving Olympic Gold with No Guarantee You'll Get Anywhere Near it*, and a fencing researcher.

# Round Up

## COCKS MOORS WOODS EPEE CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

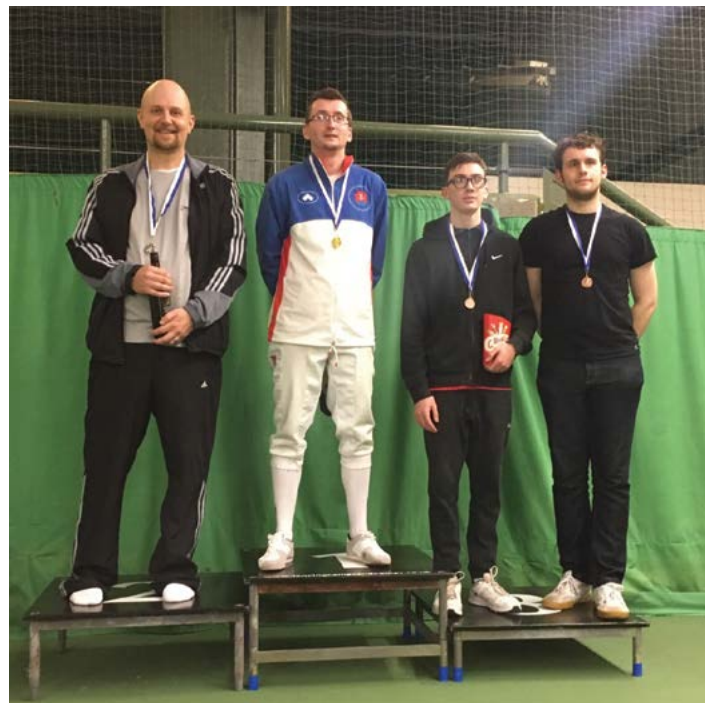
**Richard Burn**

**Cocks Moors Woods Fencing Club**

The Cocks Moors Woods Epee Championships in November 2016, was the fifth year this event has been held. In total we saw 161 fencers take part and everyone appeared to enjoy their day. We had some wonderful feedback regarding the friendliness and efficiency of the day.

For a second year running, we were also delighted to have been included in the England Youth U13 and U15 selection rankings. The morning had 84 Juniors with 77 Seniors competing in the afternoon.

Our aim as ever is to encourage inexperienced and beginner competition fencers to take part. To that end, we have seen fencers travel a long way to enter our event, simply for this reason. We know we have succeeded when they tell us they will be back next year! The day is very much geared towards helping fencers understand how it all works. We encourage feedback about our event and the one clear message we get is that parents and their children who also fence, have the ability to compete on the same day. The U15s also get the chance to fence in the seniors open event in the afternoon.



**Senior Men's Epee Podium**



**Senior Women's Epee Podium**

Tomas Kazik (Sutton Coldfield) was back this year, following a year out from our competition, to get his championship status back, which he did beating Jeff Conover (Mold Fencing Club) 15-9 in the final. Lily Martin (Four of Clubs) took the women's title beating Julia Duxon (Chilwell Blades), again 15-9.

We are once again very grateful for the help and support from Ashleigh Carter and staff at the Billesley Indoor Tennis Centre, where we will be returning to at our next event on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

We get amazing support from fencers, parents, other club coaches and friends, which allows us to ensure the day runs as well as it does. We really can't thank them enough! I'd also like to thank Leon Paul for kindly supplying the medals and t-shirts for the winners.

Plans are under way for next year, when we look forward to another great day for all.

A full list of results can be viewed using the following Link:

<http://www.cocksmoorswoods fencingclub.org.uk/epee2016/>

# DEVELOPING FENCING AT A UNIVERSITY

By Paul Sibert

Lead Performance Fencing Coach,  
The University of Nottingham



**University of  
Nottingham Sport  
Fencing**

Over the past three years fencing at The University of Nottingham has become a focus area for growth and reclassified from participation to a performance sport. This has allowed more resources to be directed into the coaching and the club itself. It allowed me to finish full-time teaching and become a semi-professional coach. The result of this was immediate. In 2014/15 the Women's Firsts went undefeated all season, winning the BUCS trophy and gaining promotion to the Premier League: whilst the Men's Firsts challenged for promotion. Just as importantly, membership of the fencing club rose from around 40 to close to 90 students and the social side of the club improved.

Next came the announcement of a £40 million investment in a new sports centre – The David Ross Sport Village (DRSV). This was to include a 39 x 18 metres Salle, dedicated



## Entrance to the David Ross Sports Village

to just fencing, table tennis and archery.

The fencing club was involved in the design of this facility from the beginning, including discussions from the floor markings to the piste layout and the piste end lights.

Spurred on by this the Women retained their Premier League status in 2015/16, whilst the Men finished runners up in the BUCS trophy.

2016/17 has started very hectically! As well as introducing a Men's 3<sup>rd</sup> team to add to the four existing teams, we have moved into the new Salle. We now fence Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, with matches on Wednesdays and at the weekends, alongside strength and conditioning sessions on a Tuesday: making great use of the new space.

The Salle itself is fantastic. In competition mode it has ten marked pistes; each of these can either use the piste end lights or use a central box. Ground leads are underfloor and the spools are in sunken wells. In between there are 4 narrow pistes for training, making 14 pistes in all.

Of course time and a quality training facility are only two of the elements needed to develop a fencing club. The final one is coaching. Three years ago it consisted of 1½ hours of beginner's coaching and 2 hours per week for the teams. The university has recognised, from their success in table tennis, badminton and squash, that coaching is a vital element. For 2016/17, I deliver roughly 11 hours a week at all 3 weapons, with a focus on foil. We have also engaged Anthony Klenczar as specialist epee coach and David Dobel-Ober to deliver sabre. That is a 300% increase in 2 years.

So what for the future? We are still bedding in to our new home. Extra time is fantastic, but you can't just do more of the same.

We need to make sure it is used most productively. With the attraction of a great university (university of the year for graduate employment 2017), the fantastic facilities, expanded coaching and an improved sports scholarship offer, we are looking to attract an increasing number of talented fencers from the UK and abroad to study at The University of Nottingham. The medium term aim is to break in to the top 4 fencing universities in the UK.

I was lucky to link up with The University of Nottingham at just the right time and, alongside this heavy investment of time and money, there is a lot of hard work ahead for me and the team!



The Fencing Facility at the University of Nottingham



Dan Flunging

## PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE PRESIDENT

Readers will no doubt, have enjoyed reading Hilary Philbin's very enjoyable 'Report from the President' in the previous issue of the magazine (*The Sword*, October 2016, p7). Unfortunately there was insufficient space at that time to include the photograph which was meant to accompany it, and we would like to take the opportunity of including it here:



Rio Women (Photo: Augusto Bizzi)

## BRITISH VETERANS FENCING

By Henry de Silva

Veteran sports have sprung up since the 1980's as a healthy form of exercise; also, one can socialise more freely without the intensive training required for the senior game. The idea for British Veterans Fencing evolved through me attending a competition in Italy. I was coaching and competing, but found myself being beaten by youngsters (I did win Tyneside aged 40 in 1983).

I held the first national event in epee, but it was not until 1987 that a full veterans' event was held in foil, sabre and epee at Beaumanor Hall; a **stately home** with a park in the small village of Woodhouse on the edge of Charnwood Forest, near the town of Loughborough in Leicestershire. The National Veterans Fencing Association of Great Britain was subsequently formed in 1989 and in its first year there were 6 members.

In 1990 the veterans ventured further afield by asking Germany if they would like to make up the first international veterans match. They did and they won. A return visit was organised and they still won, but by a much narrower margin. Then Denmark got together a team for a match in Copenhagen – a very close match which GB won. At home, in Scotland, the Scots got out their claymores to defeat us; but when they travelled south the English rapiers prevailed.

The popularity of veterans fencing in Britain came about through the creation of 'Henry's Army'. People going to competitions looking for likely recruits (grey haired, or no hair – difficult with ladies).



### The First European Veterans Fencing Championships, 1991

In 1991 the first European Veterans Fencing Championships were held at Beaumanor Hall – 81 competitors from 11 countries entered. Visits to Russia, Luxembourg, Spain, Lithuania, Poland, Finland, and even further afield to America, Mexico, Japan, New Zealand and Australia; have all taken place.

The first Veteran Commonwealth Championships were held in 1995. Five countries competed: Canada, England, Isle of Man, Northern Ireland and Wales. By the time the tenth championships were held in **Singapore**, there were 157 individual entries and 25 team entries from eleven countries: Australia, Canada, England, Guernsey, Isle of


Man, Jersey, Malaysia, New Zealand, Scotland, Singapore and Wales.


The success of the Veteran Competitions has resulted in the F.I.E. organising World Championships. Also, there is now a Veteran Winton Cup, a Celtic challenge and many other Veteran Competitions.


By far the greatest success has been the sociability, whether at home or abroad. One member has won over 100 medals through veterans fencing and the current President of British Fencing is a distinguished veteran fencer.


All of this from the legacy I started in 1983. I feel very proud.

*Thanks to Henry for finding time to write a few words for us before his trip to New Zealand – Editor.*

British Veterans Fencing current calendar can be accessed using the following link: 

For those interested in British Veterans Fencing why not look at Beth Davidson's excellent video, which feature the Veteran's Commonwealth Fencing Championships in Singapore (2012), using the following link: 

A full list of the entire Veteran's Commonwealth Fencing Championship is available on: 

A short history of European Veterans Fencing may be accessed using the following link: 

# Reviews

## FILM REVIEW –The Fencer



## THE FENCER


Klaus Härö's *THE FENCER* is a touching drama about love and a man who finds meaning in his life through children who need him.

A young man, Endel Nelis, arrives in Haapsalu, Estonia, in the early 1950s. Having left Leningrad to escape the secret police, he finds work as a teacher and founds a sports club for his students. Endel becomes a father figure to his students and starts teaching them his great passion – fencing, which causes a conflict with the school's principal. Envious, the principal starts investigating Endel's background...

Endel learns to love the children and looks after them; most are orphans as a result of the Russian occupation. Fencing becomes a form of self-expression for the children and Endel becomes a role model. The children want to participate in a national fencing tournament in Leningrad, and Endel must make a choice: risk everything to take the children to Leningrad or put his safety first and disappoint them.



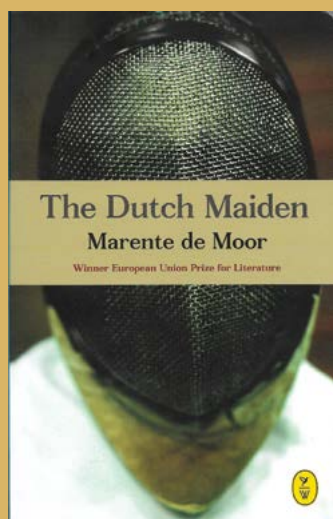
I actually don't want to tell you much about the detail of the story line to this film because I would rather you watch it for yourself. Instead, I'll just let you read some of the publicity material from its release, which is illustrated above. Anna Heinämaa's script is well crafted, the period detail excellent and the photography exquisite. Don't be put off by the fact that it's in Estonian with English subtitles. Fencing does feature prominently in the storyline but it's a love story as well. I enjoyed every minute. Viewing is highly recommended.

To book tickets or watch the trailer visit 

Editor

## BOOK REVIEW

*The Dutch Maiden* by Marente de Moor – translated from the Dutch by David Doherty (pp315)



This is an English translation of the novel originally written in Dutch and which won the European Union Prize for Literature (2014). The translator, David Doherty, approached me for some help on the fencing terminology, and to that end sent me his first attempts at the English translations of the fencing scenes only, in isolation; but I never got a chance to read the finished book until now...

The story takes place in the summer of 1936. Janna, the eighteen-year-old daughter of a Dutch doctor, is sent to stay with an older man (Egon von Böttcher): a German he befriended during World War I. Egon is a fencing master and coaches Janna at his country estate, where he organises the forbidden Mensur for students. The relationship between Egon and Janna becomes sexually charged as the story develops during a period in history when Europe is heading

towards World War II. The relationship between Egon and her father is an intrinsic part of the tale, which unfolds as the story develops and reaches its final conclusion.

The fencing scenes are nicely handled. The author expresses her debt of gratitude to her own coach Maître Bert van den Berg for teaching her to fence and to Maître Ruud van Oeveren for sharing his fencing expertise.

The result is an enjoyable tale which will be appreciated by fencers and non fencers alike. There are a few scenes of uninhibited sexuality with a good use of appropriate metaphor: parental guidance is recommended for under 16's. Marente de Moor is a fencer who writes well. She is an excellent story teller who captures the mood of these changing times superbly. An excellent page-turner. Must read!

Editor

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

## Bridlington Blades Fencing Club

I enclose cuttings from our local newspaper (the *Bridlington Echo*) about the Bridlington Blades Fencing Club, which has been going for some 30 years. We really are doing well at the moment. We give demos to schools, guides and scouts, as well as outdoor activities such as galas. Our membership has expanded to thirty, with ages between 8 to 83 years. We would be honoured if you could feature us in *The Sword* as a special thank you to all our members, who have worked so hard to make our club such a great success.

By the way, I am 83 and still a fencer to reckon with! Hope this is an inspiration to all.


Best wishes from all at Bridlington Blades.

Joy Fleetham – a very proud President



Joyce Fleetham on her 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday (photo: Pete Spence)

The club trains every Thursday from 7-9pm at East Riding Leisure, Bridlington. Call 0262 675542.

Thanks very much for getting in touch Joy. Our readers can get a taste for what's been going on by accessing the digital edition of the 'Bridlington Echo' – October 2016, using the following link: 

Editor

**Members will no doubt recall Jim Pilkington's letter 'An Appeal on Behalf of the Grace Orphanage in Kathmandu' in the last issue (The Sword, October 2016, p31). Jim has sent us this update.** (Editor)

## GEAR FOR NEPAL



Well firstly a big thanks for the excellent response to this appeal. It will certainly be of tremendous help. When I was out there in October, and met a group of their fencers, I was surprised at their smart jackets and breeches, but these were the young 'elite' who have managed to kit themselves out. Most fencers do not have the gear, and even the young elite have to keep on sharing weapons. As for the children at The Orphanage, they just have the four jackets, a couple of gloves and the 2 steam foils I have taken out.

The next hurdle is to get the gear into Nepal without a huge duty bill. It may sound rather extraordinary, that although this gear has been gifted and much by European standards, may be obsolete, the Nepalese Customs and Excise could view it differently! To get around this possibility of a gifted jacket being given a value from the latest Leon Paul catalogue, we are seeking the help of the UK based Nepal Army or a special dispensation through the British Embassy. Failing that we can take it all out over a period of time in the luggage of those going for a trek. This brings us to the next topic.



In 2016, Nepal had their first National Championships and in late March/early April 2017, they are staging their first International Competition and to which fencers from GB are especially invited. Foil and Epee – Men's and Ladies with a limited entry to each event of 24 and with no more than 10 entrants from GB. This will not just be a competition though. A package is being put together of a 5-6 day trek in the Annapurna region of the Himalayas, or a 3 days Safari in Chitwan National Park in South Nepal, or if you wish even both, or perhaps neither and just a few days in Kathmandu.

An interesting facet of the competition as far as the foil is concerned, is we could be going back 50 years! Nepal has only 2 boxes! So like in the old days, the seeding round may be steam foil with 4 judges and just the DE on boxes! An extra challenge to not only hit, but to make sure your hit is seen! For the Epee, we may have to resort to supplementing their boxes with Hitmates. So do not go out to Nepal expecting an A grade set up. You will not get it! But what you will get, is a good day's fencing and a long to be remembered holiday in this amazing country. Nepal fencing is in the making. Come and help make it. For further info please email [jim@salago.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:jim@salago.wanadoo.co.uk). Details will also be put on the Salago website.

The Photos; Top – with the young 'elite'; Middle – their collection of weapons!; handing over some gear I took out in October to Sunil Shrestha, the President of the Nepal FIE.

# Obituary

## CARY ZITCER 1956 – 2016

Picture an athlete with the ideal physique of a successful fencer and I doubt the name Cary Zitcer would spring to mind. With a solid muscular torso and legs to match, Cary's build appeared more suited to weightlifting than fencing, and yet he became one of the leading sabreurs of his generation.

Cary started fencing at Mill Hill School and joined Kings Cross Fencing Club where he began to make his mark on the U/20 sabre scene. As he progressed he became aware that he needed more advanced training partners and this prompted his move to London Fencing Club where Bulgarian coach George Ganchev had established a squad of promising young fencers. Cary thrived in the LFC environment and continued to develop his skills in competition, leading to a silver medal at the British U/20 Sabre Championships in 1976 and thereby securing his place in the World Junior Championships that year.

Appearances in the final of the British Junior Sabre Championships followed in 1979, and again in 1980 when he finished as runner up. At senior level Cary made the final of the Corble Cup in 1981, finishing 6th. During this period Cary proved to be an invaluable team fencer, having twice been on the winning Salle Boston sabre team at the British Team Championships. Cary also represented Great Britain at the Maccabiah Games. It was at these Games that he met swimmer and future wife, Diane Morris, with whom he had two daughters – Natasha and Emily.

After a long break from competitive fencing Cary returned as a veteran, winning the National Sabre Age Group Championships and representing Great Britain at the World Veterans Championships in 2007.

What Cary lacked in physical attributes he made up for with excellent technique. In the days when strong, solid parries were an essential requirement for any sabreur Cary ranked among the best. Once described as "a solid fencer with a solid physique" Cary had a quarte parry riposte that was as impressive as one could wish to see. But perhaps Cary will best be remembered for the infamous 'Zitcer Blitzter' – a quinte parry

riposte to head that was delivered with such speed and ferocity it was like being hit by a thunderbolt. Those who knew Cary well steered clear of this formidable action, but many is the time an unsuspecting victim was left reeling from the strike – much to the amusement of the seasoned onlookers.

At an early stage in his fencing career Cary took an active interest in the administration and management of fencing, where his many skills and attributes were welcomed and applied with great effect. Cary served British Fencing in a wide range of voluntary roles spanning more than 40 years – including as a selector for British teams at junior, senior and veterans level and as the Men's Team Manager at the World Junior Championships. He was also the British Team Manager at the Maccabiah Games.

One of the highlights of Cary's years in fencing came in 2012 when he took on a full-time role with London 2012 in the months running up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. His unstinting efforts and his permanently upbeat approach made a huge impact within the team, and his diplomatic skills were put to great use in order to avert a number of crises. He was certainly one of fencing's unsung heroes who played their part in the successful outcome of the Games.

Cary's significant contribution to British Fencing spanned more than 40 years, and it is a sad irony that he was on his way home from the British Fencing AGM when he suffered a fatal heart attack on the London underground at the age of 60. At the time of his death he was a member of British Fencing's Honours Committee, and was the long-standing Chairman of St Paul's Fencing Club in London.

Cary's calm temperament, tolerance, generous nature and warm personality made him a most popular friend and companion within the fencing world. His ever present sense of humour – including a mischievous streak and a love of practical jokes – ensured that it was always a joy to be in his company. He will be sadly missed by his partner Annabel, his family and his many friends.

Jim Philbin




# Results

The up-to-date 2016–2017 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: [amy.grant@britishfencing.com](mailto:amy.grant@britishfencing.com)

\*(Note: by clicking on the above graphic the following link can be accessed  )



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