

**BRITISH
FENCING**

CLUBMARK Q&A

MARCH 2018



WHAT IS CLUBMARK?

Clubmark is the universally acknowledged cross sport accreditation scheme for community sports Clubs. It stands for: Higher standards of welfare, equity, coaching and management in community sports Clubs.

Making sure the nation's sports Club infrastructure is safer, stronger and more successful.

Sport England

CLUBMARK & FENCING

Three fencing Clubs completed ClubMark between October 2017 and January 2018.

They have all answered 12 questions to provide an insight into the process and the benefits these have had on the club, their members and development.



PAUL DAVIS
FENCING
ACADEMY

Radcliffe
Sword Club



Q1. Why did the club want to work towards and achieve Clubmark?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

“To push ourselves to be the best we can be, and to make sure that we have everything in place to be as reputable and organised as possible”

Radcliffe Sword
Club

“We felt it would be appropriate to recognise the hard work of the committee. We hope it will also stand us in good stead should we wish to seek grant funding in the future.”

Foiled Again

“As the first fencing club in the country to gain the original Clubmark it was important that we maintain our standard.”

Roselyon

“We recognised that our chances of successfully receiving funding through grant applications would be substantially enhanced by achieving Clubmark.”

Q2. What are the benefits achieving Clubmark?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

“Increased recognition and reputation, showing parents and the industry that we are a trusted club and want to do our best for our fencers, not just our profits.”

Radcliffe Sword
Club

“It provides assurance to prospective members (especially parents of younger fencers) and helps us to demonstrate that the club is well run and can provide a good supportive environment for sport to take place.”

Foiled Again

“The benefit of achieving Clubmark are that prospective & current members can see we are professionally managed fencing club that have rules and policies in place.”

Roselyon

“The process is useful in itself in developing roles within the committee and encouraging a wider participation. The chief benefit for us was a much clearer understanding of our development plan, that and of course the added weight to our grant applications.”

Q3. How many people within the club supported the club to achieve Clubmark?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

"It was mainly myself (Becky) filling in the questions, but Paul initiated the scheme and told me how to start the process. From there on, the coaches and members all helped me to complete particular sections, and were on hand to answer Josef's questions on the night that he came to view a session."

Radcliffe Sword Club

"Six - coaches and committee members."

Foiled Again

"All members of the club supported the club to achieve Clubmark. The main contributors to the achievement members of the committee, the coaching staff and welfare officer."

Roselyon

"It was a group effort. Everyone played a part. Of course the committee, but even the fencers themselves felt recognised."

Q4. Do you think achieving Clubmark helps attract new members and/or demonstrates to existing members the club is well governed?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

"I'm not sure it will attract new members, but when our members heard that we are now accredited it has definitely helped to demonstrate that we are trying to be as reputable as possible. Not many people had heard about clubmark though, so isn't an initial sales point, however once explained they all seemed impressed."

Radcliffe Sword Club

"I certainly hope so!"

Foiled Again

"Yes, I think achieving Clubmark helps attract new members and demonstrates to existing members the club is well governed"

Roselyon

"Yes, I think it will. We are very proud of our accreditation."

Q5. Is there enough support from Sport England's Clubmatters website and/or British Fencing to find resources or additional information?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

"Yes, when faced with any questions or issues with completing a section, our rep Josef was extremely approachable and handy, enabling me to complete each section in the most straight forward way possible."

Radcliffe Sword Club

"Yes, the site is very well laid out, easy to navigate and well-resourced. The additional policy documents on the British Fencing website were also very helpful."

Foiled Again

"Yes, there enough support from Sport England's Clubmatters website and British Fencing to find resources and additional information."

Roselyon

"The ClubMatters website offered many useful resources, though there were a few page design issues that we found a little tricky."

Q6. Are there any parts of the criteria the club found challenging to achieve? If so, what and how did you overcome this challenge?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

“Some of the sections weren’t as straight forward as possible, and sometimes seemed a bit repetitive.”

Radcliffe Sword Club

“The hardest part is demonstrating that we have links in place with the local community, especially schools. This is because all of our coaches work full-time, so running regular events in school hours is unrealistic. We overcame this by offering specific sessions to specific groups (e.g. local scouts) who meet in the evening.”

Foiled Again

“The new rules around welfare officers having to have British fencing / Sport England qualification to be recognised as a welfare officer. Our welfare officer has now complete Sport England qualification and is waiting for a date for the British fencing courses to be confirmed.”

Roselyon

“We worked hardest on the welfare criteria, simply because it required such a massive commitment from our volunteers.”

Q7. A daunting part of Clubmark is the site visit. How did you club prepare for the site visit and how did it go?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

“It was very daunting I wont lie, but Josef made us comfortable from the get go! We just did our usual jobs, but let staff know that Josef was attending, so they wouldn’t be shocked if they noticed someone watching them work or asking random questions! The parents were unaware of the visit.”

Radcliffe Sword Club

“We did not do any special preparation for the site visit. This took place on a regular club night and we have confidence in our junior fencers, who are a credit to club and are able to represent us very effectively.”

Foiled Again

“As this the third time we have been through this process we were well prepared for the site visit. All our policies and procedures were in place. We informed all members that the site visit was going to happen and to answer any questions I asked by the assessor honestly. British fencing at sent a rundown of what assessment would be, so there were no real surprises.”

Roselyon

“We enjoyed it. Our assessor even joined in the session with our fencers. Bravo.”

Q8. If you were to work through the award again, what would you do differently?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

"Nothing really, although perhaps it could be useful to have the site visit earlier, then it would give Josef a better understanding of our club and make it easier to help answer questions throughout the remainder of the process?"

Radcliffe Sword
Club

"Divide the work into areas and give different members of the committee specific responsibility for each section. This might get through the work more quickly."

Foiled Again

"I would have all the documents up-to-date before starting the process."

Roselyon

"I would delegate even more next time."

Q9. What advice would you give to clubs who are planning to start Clubmark?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

"It is a very long process, but just crack on and keep up with answering the sections as often and quickly as possible- I think I tried to do a section at a time/week, but some take a lot longer than others and the sub-questions add a lot of time, so just block out a morning or afternoon each week or day to focus solely on filling out the questions. It is worth it in the end."

Radcliffe Sword
Club

"Firstly make sure you know why you want to achieve the award. It does take a considerable amount of time, so it needs to be worthwhile. Once you have decided that you really do want to proceed, read through all the material on the Sport England website and see what material you already have that will help with the application and identify what needs to be added. Finally, set a firm deadline that you want to work to and hold regular reviews to keep tabs on your progress."

Foiled Again

"Read throw all the information on from Clubmark webpage. Review all club policies and procedures to ensure they are all up-to-date and in line with British Fencing policies and procedures."

Roselyon

"Share the work. Don't quit."

Q10. What steps are the club currently taking for its reaccreditation in less than 12 months time?

Paul Davis Fencing Academy	<i>"Just to continue to keep our procedures and paperwork up to date, and to monitor our proposed improvements in order to make sure that we are ready for the reaccreditation."</i>
Radcliffe Sword Club	<i>"We have added the Clubmark Development Plan to the agenda for our regular committee meetings to ensure we keep focussed on this."</i>
Foiled Again	<i>"We are updating our club webpage. Our Welfare officer is waiting for confirmation of the two British Fencing courses Time to Listen and OnGard that are going to run in Nottingham soon"</i>
Roselyon	<i>"We are working towards the actions points on our development plan. We've really thought carefully about our priorities and what our fencers needs are. This has helped us to focus on doing things that will make a real difference for us."</i>

Q11. Could you give us a summary of what the clubs development plans are for the next 12 to 24 months?

Paul Davis Fencing Academy *“Our overall themes are to Empower, Engage and Educate through the sport of fencing”.*

Radcliffe Sword Club *“We are hoping to start a fund which is separate from the main club account. This will be specifically to help with the development of younger fencers who show particular promise in the sport. We are hoping to get further training for the club CWO and will continue to develop our coaching resources. We also hope to pilot the Leadership through Fencing scheme within the club.”*

Foiled Again *“Club survey to be sent out to all members to check satisfaction. Ensure new treasurer is trained and up-to- date with all club policies and procedure. Look into grants that the club could apply for training of new coaches. Look into grants that the club could apply for new equipment. Develop a more transparent system to report the finances of the club to the committee and the club members.”*

Roselyon *“Chiefly to increase membership, develop better facilities and provide the best possible experience to our fencers.”*

Q12. Finally, could you summarise in 3 words what impact your Clubmark experience has had for the club?

Paul Davis Fencing
Academy

“Improved: Reputation, Confidence, Organisation”

Radcliffe Sword Club

*“**Reassurance** – that most of the requirements were already in place and the club was in a good position*

***Recognition** – of the hard work that is put in by committee members and coaches*

***Prioritisation** – of our future development goals”*

Foiled Again

“Continuous Quality Ensured.”

Roselyon

“More, with less.”



THANK YOU

British Fencing would like to thank all of the clubs for their contributions.

For any questions regarding Clubmark, please contact Josef Thomas;

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