

THE SWORD

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FENCING**



Kruse on top of the World p4

Maxwell's Progress into top ten in the World pp5-6

Cadet & Junior European Championships 2019 Report pp9-12

Exclusive interview with Arianna Errigo pp17-18





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#1 in Tokyo & the World (l to r Imboden, Kruse, Garozzo & Foconi)
Photo: Augusto Bizzi

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RICHARD KRUSE ON TOP OF THE WORLD

Photos: Augusto Bizzi



Kruse defeat Cassara for Bonn Trophy.

in a three-way battle for the top spot, with Foconi and America's Race Imboden. The next stop was Paris and Kruse just lost out to Gerek Meinhardt from the USA 15-14 in the round of 16. Foconi took out Imboden 15-12 in the semi-final before going on to beat Meinhardt in the final. These results meant that Foconi retained the lead in the World rankings and Imboden closed the gap to Kruse in second place.

So on to Tokyo with both Kruse and Imboden now hunting down Foconi but the Italian was on fire. He blasted his way into the semi-finals without any of his opponents getting into double figures. It was not plain sailing for Kruse or Imboden. The American was twice taken to 15-13 by Mertine of France and Hungary's Dosa. Meanwhile, the British fencer only just edged past Imboden's teammate, Miles Chamley-Watson 15-14.

The semi-finals paired Foconi with Imboden leaving Kruse to face Italy's reigning Olympic Champion, Daniele Garozzo. Kruse took the Italian out 15-10 but the margin of victory Imboden had over Foconi was remarkable. He thrashed him 15-6. The good news for Kruse was that encounter was physically draining and when Imboden got to the final, there wasn't enough left in the tank. Kruse eased to a 15-9 victory, taking his second title of the season and the World number one spot. This is a first for a British fencer on the senior stage since the ranking lists began in 2001.



Kruse beams in Tokyo Glory and the moment he became World #1.

Last season Richard Kruse achieved a first for him and a first for Great Britain in 58 years. Then 34 years old, the London based fencer claimed his first World Championship medal - a silver in Wuxi, China. He lost in the final to Italy's Alessio Foconi and the two fencers were a class above the rest of the field.

Kruse started this season in November at the Bonn World Cup and picked up where he left off. He breezed past Belgium's De Greef, Frenchmen Chastenet and Cadot to make the quarterfinals. There he met the giant American Chamley-Watson who took him to double-figures for the first time that day. Kruse prevailed though 15-11 and the speed of France's Enzo Lefort was no match for the guile of the British fencer. A 15-10 victory put him into the final where he met old Italian rival, Andrea Cassara. Despite a close match throughout, Kruse controlled the fight opening his season by taking the title 15-11.

Ranked number two in the World at that stage, he was now



Alessio Foconi Claimed Paris Title.

Speaking shortly after achieving this amazing feat Kruse said, "I'm fully committed to achieving qualification for Tokyo 2020 and everything that I'm doing right now is focussed on that. I am immensely proud to have climbed to the top of the World rankings but Olympic qualification is more important. I would like to thank my coach since I first started fencing, Ziemek Wojciechowski and my sponsors Leon Paul and the International Olympic Committee for the scholarship they've given me. Also thanks to British Fencing for continuing to back me on my journey."

The trio have since moved on, competing at the Turin Grand Prix. Kruse fell in the round of 32 to Hungarian, Dosa. Imboden was the pick of the field, taking out Foconi in the semi-finals 15-13 before dispatching Cheung Ka Long of Hong Kong with ease, 15-6, in the final. Imboden now occupies the number one spot, followed by Foconi and then Kruse. The three are forty points clear of the next best fencer, Alexey Cheremisinov of Russia.

By the time you are reading this, the men's foilists will have competed in the Cairo World Cup and Anaheim Grand Prix. Their attention will then firmly turn to Olympic qualification, the Games themselves and perhaps another first for Richard Kruse?

NEWS (continued)

MAXWELL'S PROGRESS INTO WORLD'S TOP TEN

Photos: Augusto Bizzi

Nineteen year old Athlete Development Programme fencer Caitlin Maxwell's progress this season has seen her rise into the top ten of the World Junior Women's Sabre ranking list.



Caitlin & Jon on the way to a top 8 finish at the Junior Europeans 2018

World-ranked seventh (at the time of writing), Caitlin began fencing aged 9 at Truro Fencing Club under Jon Salfield and whilst having spent 9 months training abroad in Budapest in recent times, she has always remained a one-club fencer.

Speaking about her early days in the salle, Jon said, "We quickly spotted that Caitlin was an exciting prospect. She was always obsessively perfectionist with her technique, and very dedicated. Training with a group of other good young fencers



Caitlin Maxwell with Jon Salfield on the podium in Budapest

around her age gave her a great social environment and although she wasn't a fencer who won competitions early on, it was obvious to any coach that she was developing a huge range of actions and a very sophisticated understanding of the game."

Early results didn't stand out but Caitlin really exploded on to the scene when she competed in her first senior event, the Hamlet Sabre, which she won from nowhere. This was followed by a Junior World Cup top 8 finish in the same season and then a stellar cadet career, where she became the first British fencer ever to win the Godollo Cadet International in Hungary.

At Junior level, this season has seen a true breakthrough for the teenager with Olympic ambitions. She made the quarter-finals at last year's Junior European Championships and made two top 32 finishes at the beginning of this season in Warsaw and Dormagen. In Warsaw she lost 15-11 to Italian fencer Beatrice Dalla Vecchia who went on to win bronze. Whilst in Dormagen she lost 15-9 to Anna Koroleva of Russia who is currently ranked eleventh in the World.

At the turn of the year, Caitlin headed to the Budapest World Cup and immediately had an opportunity to show that she had learned from the loss to the Russian. She faced her again in the round of 32 and edged a tight match 15-14. She went on to beat the current World number ten, Dariya Drozd, also from Russia, launching a fast attack at 14-14, to take the fight and book her place in the semi-finals.

Guaranteed her first medal on the Junior international circuit, Caitlin faced current World number one from Bulgaria, Yoana Ilieva. The Bulgarian was already a multiple medal winner at this level but Caitlin took the fight 15-11. The final was against, Hungary's teenage sensation, Liza Pusztai, who is ranked in the top 16 in the World on the Senior circuit. Despite a great start for Caitlin, Pusztai found her

rhythm and distance and pulled away. A late rally from Caitlin saw her claw back to 14-13 down but Pusztai closed out the match to take the title.

Speaking shortly after her first podium finish as a Junior, Caitlin said, "I'm very happy to have made the podium at such a great event - my first World Cup medal is a big moment for me. I'm looking forward to the rest of the season and hope to bring some more medals home!"

Coach Jon added, "This is a significant step forward for Caiti. The most pleasing thing about the day is that she was under the cosh time after time, but found the mental strength to dig in and find a way to win. Our season goals were a World Cup medal and a Championship final, so we're on track!"



Caitlin prepares

"On track" indeed. Perhaps putting herself under too much pressure to live up to the high standard she set in Budapest, Caitlin went out in the round of 128 at the next event in Segovia. That proved to be a minor blip, however, as she took her second silver medal of the season in Plovdiv in February. Battling her way through the field, having dropped two fights in the first round, Caitlin faced Drozd again. Their last meeting was as close as it can get but Caitlin showed just how far she has progressed, taking the fight comfortably 15-5. Her gold medal match opponent was Ilieva and despite falling behind, Caitlin showed her determination with a brave fight back to 14-13 down. It was not quite enough but Caitlin collected her silver medal in the knowledge that she can mix it with the very best, heading into the end of the season.

NEWS (continued)

Speaking about her immediate ambitions, Caitlin recently said, "I'm so pleased to have reached the goal of winning medals at Junior World Cup level but I'm still really focussed on Championships and my target is a medal at the Europeans or Worlds. My coach and I have been working towards that and I feel like I'm capable of achieving it. There are no guarantees in sport but I'm giving it 100%."

Looking further ahead she added, "Of course, it's impossible to ignore the fact that Olympic qualification is about to kick off and from the end of April I'll be launching straight into my senior career at the Seoul Grand Prix. I'm really focussing on giving Tokyo 2020 a shot

but of course I realise I'm still a young fencer with a lot to learn and hopefully a long career ahead!"

Coach Jon is confident that the future looks promising for Caitlin. "She is one of the strongest British prospects for Senior success in any weapon. She's a very complete fencer, with outstanding technique and tactics. Over this season we've been developing her long attack to a much higher level and she's matured in her mental approach considerably. Whilst there are many challenges ahead to becoming a Senior World Cup medallist, including lack of personal funding and her intensive studies at UCL, Caitlin has risen to challenges of this kind before. It is key that she's been



Caitlin in action



Maxwell at the Orleans Senior World Cup 2018

able to find continuity, despite moving regularly between the Truro program and the ever-improving sabre scene in London."

We'll be keeping a close eye on her as she makes the step up to Senior level.

Caitlin is one of the young athletes on the British Fencing Athlete Development Programme, funded by Sport England: <https://www.sportengland.org/>.

More information about ADP camps, programmes and updates can be found [here](#).

We are always looking for stories from youth internationals.

Submit your stories to the editor:

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NEWS (continued)

QUEEN'S NEW YEARS HONOUR FOR PETER JACOBS



Rare downtime for Peter – relaxing at home

Congratulations to Peter Jacobs for receiving an MBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours list for services to British and International Fencing. A well-deserving recipient, Peter's involvement and passion for the sport began at an early age and he remains actively involved both administratively and athletically. "I still try to fence once a week." Most recently, he was the FIE's supervisor at the Heidenheim Men's Epee World Cup in Germany.

Attending Merchant Taylors' School in Middlesex, he served two years' National Service in the Royal Hampshire Regiment before going on to study classics at Queens' College, Cambridge University.

Peter was not only an active participant in the sport but also a well decorated one. He won the British Epee Championship three times and also captained the Cambridge University team in 1962. Having finished fourth at the 1961 World University Games in Sofia, Peter became the Champion at the next edition in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 1963. A three

times Commonwealth Games attendee, Peter collected three team gold medals and two individual bronze medals. He also attended five World Championships, including as a member of the silver-medal winning GB epee team of 1965. Arguably, the pinnacle of his career though was his selection for the 1964 and 1968 Olympic Games.

Peter combined his love for competing on the international stage with a career in Marketing Research, spending 30 years at Ford Motor Company before moving to a Marketing Research agency.

He stayed heavily involved in the sport after his competitive years were over, captaining the British Epee team from 1971 until 1976 and taking charge of the whole team from 1973 to 1976. His desire to still contribute saw him then move into more administrative roles. In fact his membership of what is now the Board began in 1963 when he was still competing and continued until 1991, becoming a Vice-President in 1985. He also received the British Fencing Gold Medal in 1990. A second



Peter at the Heidenheim World Cup in January 2019

stint on the Board saw him serve from 2001 until 2007 and during his time he has worked on various committees, including Rules, Honours, Safety, International, International Relations and Finance and currently chairs two of them. He was "Fencing Manager" for the Martini Epee Competition for over ten years, Club Captain and then Club President of London Thames Fencing Club over a fifty year period and worked with Steve Higginson translating the



Peter defending himself against Saccaro (ITA) in the 1963 Porto Alegre final

NEWS (continued)

(French) rules into English between 1973 and 2009.

For most people that would have been enough but not for Peter. Internationally, he served as a referee for 30 years until 1998, spent 24 years on the FIE's Executive Committee, including as Secretary-Treasurer from 2000-2012, and is currently a member of its Legal Commission. He was also a member of the DT (organising committee) for eight World Championships - three times holding the role of the President - and two Olympic Games, 1980 and 1996. He was recognised by the FIE in 2000 for his international work, becoming a Member of Honour.

If there's anything that you want to know about fencing in the last six (!!!) decades, Peter is not a bad starting point!

Always humble, speaking about his award, Peter said, "It's been a delightful surprise and honour and given great pleasure to my family. I hope it may encourage the volunteers British Fencing so relies on."



Porto Alegre Medals were settled after two barrages (l to r Gianluigi Saccaro (silver), Peter Jacobs (gold) & Michel Steininger (bronze))

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CADET AND JUNIOR EUROPEANS REPORT

Photos: Augusto Bizzi

FOGGIA BRONZE FIRST MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIP MEDAL FOR MAXWELL

Caitlin Maxwell Comes of Age at Junior European Championships



Caiti with her coach, Jon Salfield.

British Fencing ADP Athlete, Caitlin Maxwell claimed Great Britain's best result and achieved one of her season goals by winning the Women's Sabre individual bronze at the Junior European Championships in Foggia, Italy. The nineteen-year-old Truro Fencing Club member secured Great Britain's first and only medal on the sixth day of the Championships in Italy. This is the best individual result by a British Junior fencer since Philip Marsh won gold at the 2011 Junior World Championships in Jordan.

Maxwell had a tough start to the day, only winning three of her six first round matches, meaning a ranking of 32 for the elimination stage of 64. This meant a potential clash with one of the favourites for a medal in the round of 32.

First, in the round of 64, she faced World number 39, Maria Ventura of Spain who had also taken three poule fights from six. Maxwell returned to the form she'd been showing all season, winning comfortably, 15-6. Next up was Andreea Lupu of Romania, who despite being ranked 31 in the World, won all of her first round fights, finishing as top seed for the direct elimination stages. She proved to be a tougher opponent but after falling behind 13-10, Maxwell strung together an outstanding series of attacks in the middle to completely turn the tables to win 15-13.

In the round of 16 she faced the talented Turkish fifteen-year-old, Nisanaur Erbil, ranked 62 in the World. Erbil had already won the Cadet title a few days earlier but the British fencer dominated from the start. She combined her trademark parry-ripostes in the middle of the piste with consistent long attacks. Maxwell took the fight 15-8, meaning that one more victory guaranteed a medal.



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CADET AND JUNIOR EUROPEANS REPORT (continued)



Semi-final line up for the European Junior Women's Sabre in Foggia

Standing in her way was Italy's seventeen-year-old World number 15, Benedetta Taricco who had claimed bronze medals at the World Cups in Algiers and Segovia earlier in the season. The crowd were right behind the home favourite but Maxwell once again started strongly, breaking up her opponents attacks with perfectly timed late parries. After the Italian tried a comeback in the second half, Maxwell turned up the concentration levels and closed out 15-11.

In her first ever major Championship medal match, Maxwell took on the reigning Champion and World number two from Russia, Alina Mikhailova. This season the Russian had won the Segovia World Cup in January as well as picking up a silver medal at the Dormagen World Cup in December and a bronze at the Tashkent World Cup in November. After struggling in the first half with the Russian's counter attacks, Maxwell went 8-2 down at the break. A rousing comeback by the British fencer saw the scores close to 9-7 down but she couldn't land enough attacks



Team Support

to take the victory, losing 15-9 and having to settle for bronze. Lisa Pusztai of Hungary went on to beat Mikhailova in the final 15-13 to take the title as Italy's Giulia Arpino shared bronze with Maxwell.

Speaking straight after the medal ceremony Caitlin said, "Although I'm disappointed not to have won the competition, a Championship medal was one of my fencing goals, so to achieve that is great. I'm especially pleased with my comeback in the round of 32 and the fact that I kept my concentration in the quarters to close out the match - ignoring the fact that I was about to be in the medals! I'm so grateful to my parents and my coach Jon for their years of belief and support and to have had the chance to have had such a great foundation in the sport at Truro Fencing Club. Thanks also to British Fencing - I'm aiming to go at least one better at the World Championships!"



Caiti on her way to her first major Championship medal

Proud coach, Jon Salfied added, "For the whole season we've been focused on the goal of a Championships medal and after taking two World Cup medals this season, we knew Caiti had a chance. I'm delighted that once again Caiti reacted so well to pressure and was able to achieve her goal. This is the culmination of years of hard training. We started working together 10 years ago and I have no doubt that Caiti will continue on to the Junior Worlds and her Senior career with the same focus and professionalism."

Those World Championships take place 6-14 April in Torun, Poland. Visit the [official website](#) to find out more.

Watch a replay of the semi-finals and finals [here](#).

Caitlin Maxwell is amongst the young athletes on the British Fencing Athlete Development Programme, funded by [Sport England](#). More information about ADP camps, programmes and updates can be found [here](#).

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*vs. ordinary lubrication strip

CADET AND JUNIOR EUROPEANS REPORT (continued)

ROUND UP OF BRITISH RESULTS

Progress made at both Cadet & Junior Championships



Cadet Championships

A full compliment of twenty-four British fencers took part in the cadet events in Foggia. There were top sixteen finishes for Cameron Evans and Harry Gray in the Men's Foil individual plus Rory McCellan in the Men's Sabre individual as well as three other top 32 placings for Jacob Foulsham, James Jeal and William Lonsdale.

The Men's Foil team of Cameron Evans, Harry Gray, William Lonsdale and Rafael Rhys Pollitt, achieved Great Britain's best team result, narrowly missing out on a bronze medal as they lost 45-42 to Hungary in the third place play-off. Then Men's Epee team, Harry Baston-Hall, Jacob Foulsham, James Jeal and Isaac McKeer also showed great progress with a sixth place finish.

Individual Placings

Men's Epee: Foulsham 18th, Jeal 27th, McKerr 48th & Baston-Hall 88th

Women's Epee: Reston 36th, Lever 46th, McCormack 67th & Summers 95th

Men's Foil: Evans 9th, Gray 16th, Lonsdale 30th & Rhys Pollitt 42nd

Women's Foil: Raiyat 37th, Silk 42nd, Williams-Stewart 45th & Beardmore 56th

Men's Sabre: McClellan 15th, Holdsworth 48th, Cromie 51st & Freeman 69th

Women's Sabre: Brierley 39th, Llewellyn 42nd, Robbins Wilkinson 43rd & Corcoran 50th

A more complete report of the British performances can be found [here](#).

Full results [here](#).

Junior Championships

Another twenty-four athletes competed for Great Britain in the Junior Championships in Italy. Caitlin Maxwell's bronze medal winning performance was nearly matched by Laura Sheffield in the Women's Epee event. A narrow 15-13 defeat to Sweden's Martensson in the quarterfinals, saw her finishing eighth. The next best results came from Bronwen Granville, Barnaby Halliwell, Connor Head, William Lonsdale, Sebastian Pallier and Julian Richards II who all made top 32 finishes.

Great Britain's Men's Foil and Men's Sabre teams achieved sixth place finishes each in fields of sixteen. In the Men's Foil event, Dominic De Almeida, Connor Head, William Lonsdale and Sebastian Pallier made the quarterfinals before losing 45-28 to Poland. Whilst in the Men's Sabre competition, Jamie Craze, Barnaby Halliwell, Bertie Holdsworth and Julian Richard II, lost 45-23 to Bulgaria at the same stage.

Individual Placings

Men's Epee: East 35th, Morrison 73rd, Belot 79th & Andrews 82nd

Women's Epee: Sheffield 8th, Powell 21st, Henderson-Roe 63rd & Louis 66th

Men's Foil: Head 18th, Lonsdale 23rd, Pallier 24th & De Almeida 37th

Women's Foil: McLaughlin 21st, Granville 32nd, Babaeva 39th & Hardie 61st

Men's Sabre: Halliwell 23rd, Richards II 27th, Craze 51st & Holdsworth 59th

Women's Sabre: Maxwell 3rd, Potter 33rd, Robbins-Wilkinson 44th & Thomson 54th

A more complete report of the British performances can be found [here](#).

Full results [here](#).

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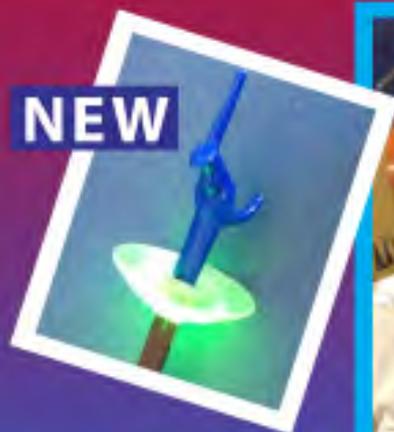
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ASPIRATION FUND AND THE MINISTER FOR SPORT'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE



In December last year, UK Sport announced the launch of the Aspiration Fund, designed to help support athletes and sports qualify and prepare for the Tokyo 2020 Games.

A total of 14 Olympic and Paralympic sports, including the sports appearing on the Olympic programme for the first time, were to share a new funding pot worth £3 million.

The Aspiration Fund, which was announced by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in October last year, aims to support sports who do not currently receive full UK Sport funding to develop plans to help teams and athletes realise ambitions for the Tokyo Games.

Sports eligible to apply for the fund included all the unfunded summer Olympic and Paralympic sports, new sports for Tokyo 2020 and those in receipt of individual athlete medal support plan funding from UK Sport. British Fencing successfully applied and will receive £192,500 during the funding period.

At the time, Liz Nicholl, CEO of UK Sport said, "This new Aspiration Fund is a fantastic opportunity for these athletes and sports to get on track for the Tokyo Games. Many of the sports we are currently unable to support, whilst further away from reaching the podium, have the potential not only to inspire through their performances on the field of play but also to inspire new audiences to engage in sport and activity. We'd like to thank the Government for their continued support for UK Sport's mission to inspire the nation through Olympic and Paralympic success."

Georgina Usher, CEO of British Fencing said, "We are delighted to have received this investment from the new Aspiration Fund. This funding comes at a crucial time for our athletes in their qualification journey. Over the coming weeks we will be working with UK Sport to ensure the funds will maximise our qualification opportunities whilst at the same time supporting UK Sport's mission to "inspire the nation through Olympic and Paralympic success".

Mark Lyttle, Chair of British Fencing added, "We'd like to thank the

Government and UK Sport for the opportunity that this award will give to our sport. Between now and Tokyo 2020, this award will enable us to support our athletes as they continue to inspire through their performances on the field of play and also inspire new audiences to engage in sport and activity. We are actively looking for patrons and sponsors who share our ambitions and I would ask anyone interested to contact me directly at headoffice@britishfencing.com."

Minister for Sport Mims Davies sets out her priorities for increasing access to sport and improving health and wellbeing

In a speech given in February 2019 at UK Sport's Future Funding Strategy Launch, Mims Davies opened with "The capacity for long-term planning has been instrumental in ParalympicsGB and Team GB's continued success, so it is right that UK Sport review how their funding is targeted and resources are deployed, as we move towards Paris for 2024."

In a far-reaching address, the Minister set out her three key priorities for the future of sport:

- Harnessing the power of our sporting excellence to maximise our international impact and inspire a nation
- Fostering a culture of sport based on the very highest levels of integrity and fairness
- And increasing engagement in sport and physical activity for absolutely everyone.

In discussing how she intends to achieve these goals, she began by thanking the players of the National Lottery. Lottery Funding underpins a large percentage of how sport is paid for in the UK.

"As we approach 25 years of the Lottery, we must take the opportunity to connect with players and to remind them what is possible. They should know that our athletes hopes and dreams rest on people continuing to play."

"We currently offer levels of support to our athletes that are the envy of many competitors - I want this to continue."

"UK Sport's future strategy will help our wonderful athletes to deliver further world-class performances beyond Tokyo and to inspire the country once more."

Davies moved on to talk about the Aspiration Fund.

"The Fund will support those sports who do not currently receive full UK Sport funding to help teams and athletes."

"Our athletes are representative of society, coming from all walks of life and backgrounds - disability is no bar to medal success. They are part of the fabric of our national identity - a true British success story."

"As we look to fund a wider range of sports, over a longer period of time it is important that these sports inspire and represent our diverse society. Let's not be afraid to invest in the potential reach and success of currently unfunded sports too."

She went on to discuss the importance of hosting major sporting events in the UK, highlighting just a few in the coming months, before moving on to broadcasting and media coverage. As well as urging broadcasters and the media at large to increase the diversity of the sports that are covered she made particular mention about the need to increase coverage of women's sport.

"It's 2019 and it's time we had more coverage of women's sport on television and in the wider media."

"We all want our children to grow up appreciating great sporting success, regardless of who is playing it and where."

The speech then moved onto the topics of fairness and safety. She praised Britain's anti-doping system and encouraged further work with WADA and other anti-doping agencies. Elite athlete mental health was also covered before Davies moved on to discuss the importance of the young and vulnerable being able to play sport in a safe environment. She made particular mention of work currently being carried out by the Ministry of Justice on the "position of trust" that coaches have and measures to provide additional safety for 16 and 17 year olds. The Minister concluded this section of her speech by discussing the importance of people being able to watch live sport safely.

Davies saved her most ambitious target but arguably her most important, until the end of her speech.

ASPIRATION FUND AND THE MINISTER FOR SPORT'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE (contd.)

"Absolutely everyone should be able to enjoy the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity can bring."

"It should be fun, inclusive and there should be no barriers to taking part."

"We want half a million people to be more regularly active across England by 2020 - yes that's only a year - with at least half of these being women. And we are making good progress."

"I want to help "harder to reach" groups get active:

- *More women.*
- *More people from BAME backgrounds.*
- *More disabled people.*
- *More of the many people who have a hard time finding spare cash for exercise and wellbeing.*
- *More who struggle to find family activity time."*

"Let's make sport something everyone can do and something that brings people together. These are often the people who have the biggest hurdles to overcome to be active, and who need our support the most."

"We know that physical activity has a massively positive impact on our nation's health and well-being."

She acknowledged that this goal was not possible without the support of everyone involved in sport. She discussed the importance of sport being available "before, during and after the school day" and that first contact with sport should be enjoyable and positive. She also reached out further.

"We need all physical activity providers, National Governing Bodies of sport, schools, community clubs, leisure

operators and others to play their part. We need to make sure we are maximising use of facilities, including opening up more facilities owned by schools."

The speech was extremely well received and we believe is a good opportunity for the sport of fencing. If you are involved in delivering the sport in any way, can you do more to open your doors to more people? Perhaps you already are! Can you share your experiences with others in your community? At The Sword, we're keen to hear your stories about how you are addressing the new Minister's vision. You never know, we may even put them in the magazine!

To read a more detailed version of what Mims Davies said (including a full transcript of her speech) visit [this page](#).



Mims Davies (centre) with Chair & CEO of UK Sport, Katherine Grainger (left) & Liz Nicholl (right). (Photo: DCMS)

TOKYO 2020 OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION EXPLAINED



For the first time in the history of the Modern Olympic Games, Tokyo 2020 will see all twelve fencing disciplines in the programme. It took years of lobbying by the international federation (the FIE) and its partners but now fencing fans can enjoy a full itinerary.

The qualification period for the Games runs from 3 April 2019 until 4 April 2020 with confirmation of entries scheduled for 6 July 2020.

Here we take a look at how qualification works and the good news is that it's the same for all weapons. The whole qualification process is dictated by a clear timeline. So that's how we will break it down.

Teams First

On 4 April 2020, the top four teams in the World Rankings will qualify directly

for the Games, irrespective of their zone. Then we need to consider the teams ranked 5 to 16 in the World Rankings. The top team from Africa, the Americas, Asia-Oceania and Europe in that ranking bracket, also qualify. Should one or more of the zones not be represented in that bracket, then the highest ranked team(s) that has not already qualified will fill the missing slot(s), irrespective of zone.

At this point, we will have eight teams qualified in each weapon. Those countries are allocated three places per team and the fencers selected will take part in both the team and individual events in their discipline.

Note: Each team can also select a reserve who can only take part in the team event. A reserve must fence in the team event to be considered an Olympian!

Individual Qualification Next

So with eight teams qualified and three fencers per team, we will have a total of 24 fencers qualified for the individual events, so far. There are two additional ways for fencers who haven't qualified through the team process, to make the individual event.

Adjusted Olympic Ranking

First, what's known as the AOR, Adjusted Olympic Ranking, must be compiled. The AOR is simply the individual World Rankings less every fencer from every qualified team. To be clear, because each country can only have three fencers in the individual events, no athletes from the countries with a qualified team can be included in the AOR.

Now, countries that qualify athletes through the AOR are only allowed one athlete per discipline. So, you have to be the highest ranked fencer from your country to remain in the AOR.

Once the AOR is compiled the top two athletes from Europe and Asia-Oceania plus the top athlete from both Africa and Pan-America qualify for the individual event in their discipline.

At this point, we will have 30 athletes in the individual events in each discipline but that's not where it ends!

Zonal Qualifiers

If a country doesn't qualify a team or a fencer via the AOR in any one or more of the disciplines, then they can send one fencer (for each discipline they don't have qualifiers for) to the *special Zonal Olympic Qualifying Event*. These are due to take place 15-26 April 2020.

Each of the winners of these four events will also qualify for the Olympic Games, which gives us a total of 34 individual entries per discipline.

Host Nation Places

As hosts, the Japanese Fencing Federation, are given eight additional Host Nation Places by the International Olympic Committee. These can be allocated as they see fit, under one condition - they must respect the maximum quota of three fencers per discipline subject to the FIE rules. So, if Japan qualify as a team in any discipline, they cannot add any other fencers from that discipline. If they don't qualify in any discipline they can be selected up to three fencers to compete in the individual event in that discipline. If they select three fencers, they will automatically be entered into the team event as well. In that scenario, there will be nine entries in the team event and 37 in the individual.

In the event that the Japanese Federation do not use any of their Host Nation Places, they can be reallocated by various bodies including the FIE and the IOC.

Let the battle commence!

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Email the editor: karim.bashir@catchsport.com

ARIANNA ERRIGO ATTEMPTS TWO WEAPON OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION



Arianna Errigo (from Facebook)

Anyone that knows anything about fencing will know the thirty-year-old Italian, Arianna Errigo as one of the modern greats in foil fencing. Seven-time Grand Prix winner, nine-time World Cup winner, double-European and World Champion, Errigo has amassed a remarkable 65 major senior medals on the foil circuit and claimed individual silver and team gold medals at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Immediately after the Rio 2016 Games, where she claimed ninth place in the individual foil event, after a surprise loss in the round of 16, Errigo took on a new challenge - to qualify for Tokyo 2020 both in foil and sabre. If she succeeds, we believe she will be the first fencer to compete in two weapons at the Olympic Games since 1980.

Given her busy schedule, we were lucky to grab a quick interview with Arianna recently. Here's what she had to say.

How is this season going?

The season has started quite well. In both Foil and Sabre. I have made some very positive bouts and others not so much! In Sabre, I am very happy that I have improved a lot. In Foil, my focus is more on the European and World Championships than in the World Cups. That said, I never go into a competition thinking about losing.

Our readers will be interested in finding out why you decided to try and qualify with two weapons?

Because I needed new motivation - to try to do something unique - because I love fencing. As a child, I won the Italian Championships in Epee and Foil in the same year. I tried Sabre later and I fell in love with the weapon immediately. It is very close to my fencing attitude, fast and aggressive!

What does your training plan look like? Do you share your time equally between the two weapons?

This year, in the off-season, I split my routine, doing three days working on Foil and two on Sabre. Now that I have more or less a different competition every week, I train in the weapon that I have to compete next.

Are there any elements of each weapon that help the other?

From my point of view, fencing is fencing, whatever weapon you choose. Every weapon helps you in the other because it makes you see things from other perspectives. It helps you to improve aspects you never thought you would face.

How do you manage the travel program? Are you ever at home?

Honestly, I'm not at home that much but this is part of the game. I do not mind



Errigo won bronze at the Cancun Sabre Grand Prix 2017. (Photo: Augusto Bizzi)

travelling, leaving home or even jet lag. The biggest problem for me is being away from my family. That bothers me a lot.

Fortunately, Luca, my boyfriend is also my foil coach and for this reason we spend a lot of time together around the world.

And do you have time to relax? What do you do to distract yourself from fencing?

I like traveling even when I have long periods at home. I enjoy playing other sports too, especially volleyball and surfing. I love spending hours and hours in bed and maybe watching a movie with Luca. I also love to cook!



Every weapon helps the others. (Photo: Augusto Bizzi)



Errigo fencing foil at the Katowice WC 2019. (Photo: Augusto Bizzi)

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us, but we still have a question! If I had to choose only one weapon today, what would it be?

Today, I couldn't choose one or the other. For me this four-year period has no priority. I want the best from both. Certainly the foil is my great love because I grew up with a foil in my hand but from today until Tokyo, I am and I will always be a double weapon fencer!

A true warrior on the piste and during the interview there was no chance of missing how driven she is to achieve her goal. What struck the most though, was how humble Arianna is.

Many hurdles still stand in her way, not least, both how kind the calendar is for the final part of qualification and whether she is selected for the Italian team in both foil and sabre at the forthcoming European & World Championships. She is still currently a "shoe-in" for the Italian foil squad and is the fourth highest Italian in the World Sabre rankings. The end of this story will play out over the coming months.



No Question. Errigo is taking sabre seriously. (Photo: Augusto Bizzi)

Errigo's latest addition to her foil trophy cabinet – Katowice WC 2019 Bronze. (Photo: Augusto Bizzi)





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PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS AND FOIL CODING FOR COACHES

By Steve Kemp

Performance Analysis is the provision of objective feedback to players and coaches to enable a positive impact on performance. Essentially it is about telling the player and coach what actually happened as opposed to what they perceived to be happening.

The human mind can only process so much information. The mind will recall no more than 30% of observation from a 90 minute football match and experienced football coaches have been shown to be able to recall just 59% of the critical events occurring during 45 minutes of football performance (Laird and Waters, 2008).

Observation of Performance can suffer from:

- Memory Overload: Selective memory due to overload of information
- Subjective Bias: Often based on an historical event that has become a personal opinion. The fencer can't do stop hits, after one off-form competition
- Halo Effect: Self-indulgence in group thinking, everything we do is right
- Highlighting: Everything shown is the good stuff. Never showing the poor stuff that needs work.

How can information be gathered and what are the types of coding options? There follows a simple guideline for collecting data.

System to gather information	Coding options
Notation - prepared templates for live observation	Piste positions
iPad - particularly useful during training sessions	Outcome
Video - whole match or specified elements of a match	Action types
Computer Analysis - a combination of video and editing application	

Foil Coding Definitions base on the 3 ways above

Piste Position

Name	Definition
Red Zone	Between the back line and 2 metre line
Defence	Between the rear 2 metre line and the en-Guard Line
Centre	Between the 2 en-guard lines
Attack	Between the opposition en-guard line and their rear 2 metre line
Green Zone	Between the opposition rear 2 metre line and their back line
NC	The footage does not present information to give a definition of the position

Piste position is coded as the area of the piste the fencer that concedes the hit is stood in when the hit is made. It is code from the perspective of each fencer relative to their direction of attack. Piste position for parry's is where the parry occurred not the final hit.

Outcome

Name	Definition
Successful Hit	Point has been awarded to the fencer
Counter Acted Hit	Point has been awarded to the opponent
Off Target or Missed	With priority to score a hit the fencer hits their opponent off target and a white light illuminates
Counter Acted	Off target light for the opponent when they had priority to score
Missed or Parried	The fencer performs a finishing action without a valid connection of the tip of the foil to cause a light to illuminate
Successful Action	The opponent has performed a finishing action in attempt to score a point and no valid connection of the tip of the foil has been made therefore no light has illuminated
Halt	Referee calls halt because the fencing is dangerous, contrary to the rules, a fencer is disarmed or steps off the piste.
Fault	A technical or non-fencing fault has occurred and the fight is halted by the referee
Together	Both fencers attack simultaneously and no point is awarded

Action Type – Offensive

Name	Definition
Attack	Offensive action, direct or indirect executed all at once and coordinated with the feint, fleche or a step forward. Direct Attack - carried out in the same line of attack Indirect Attack - Carried out from the line of attack to another or over and under the opposing blade Additional Info (Target Area)
Attack without Priority	Offensive action initiated by fencer without clearly having the priority.
Attack with Blade	Offensive actions executed on the opposing blade including the beat and prise der fer Additional Info (Target Area)

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS AND FOIL CODING FOR COACHES (contd.)

By Steve Kemp

Action Type – Counter Offensive

Name	Definition
Counter-Attack	Counter-Offensive action on an opponent's attack, whilst stepping forward and/or upper body moving forward Additional Information Blocking Line (Parry Attempt)
Duck Hit	Counter-Attack executed whilst in squatting position
Stop Hit	Counter-Attack whilst retreating (stepping backwards and upper body backwards)
Line	An extended arm and blade that threatens the opponent's target (Once beaten line is over, subsequent action is coded)
Attack on Prep	Fencer completed full lunge to hit opponent on their preparation

Action Type – Defensive

Name	Definition
Counter Parry Riposte	Successful parry after initial action succeeded with riposte
Parry Riposte	Successful parry succeeded by an attempt to hit opposition target whilst stationary or moving backwards
Parry	An attempt to block an attack made with the forte of one's blade, the block could be unsuccessful or successful with no attempted riposte
Defend With Distance	Fencer retreating away from attack with no intention of riposte with or without parry
Attempted Counter-Parry	Parry attempted after initial action
Counter Time Riposte	Successful parry succeeded by an attempt to hit opposition target whilst moving towards the opponent
Counter Time Attempt	An attempt to block an attack made with the forte of one's blade whilst moving towards the opponent with no attempt to riposte
Additional Info	Consider Parry Attempts

Action Type – Misc

Name	Definition
Remise	First attempt fails to make valid contact (lights on), phase is stopped after the second attempt to hit
Close Quarters	First and second attempt to hit fail, any additional attempts after are classified as close quarters fencing
Riposte	Action after a failed parry attempt (Action Type) from the defending fencer

Action Type – Misc

Name	Definition
Over Back Line	Referee signals that fencer's front foot clears the vertical plane of their back line. A point is awarded to the opponent fencer
Yellow Card	Yellow card is awarded by the referee
Red Card	A red card is awarded by the referee. 2 yellow cards make a red card. A point is awarded to the opponent fencer
Black Card	A black card is awarded by the referee, the fencer is dismissed from the tournament
No-Coding	The footage does not present information to give a definition of the action

By collecting and recording this data it allows you to have meaningful conversations with your fencers about their strengths and areas that can be approved. A good place to start this process is in training scenarios.

We are always looking for stories from youth internationals.

Submit your stories to the editor:

karim.bashir@catchsport.com

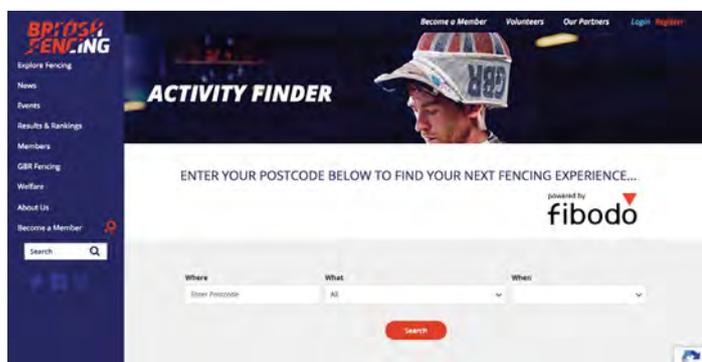
UPDATE OF BRITISH FENCING'S ACTIVITY FINDER

By Josef Thomas

**British Fencing, Development Officer,
Clubs and Regions (England)**

In September 2018, British Fencing launched its new Activity Finder powered by fibodo.

In just five months, over 80 clubs have expressed an interest in using the service, 40 demonstrations of the full functionality have been completed and from those 32 bookable products have been advertised. The service has had 6,000 unique visits and clubs have already started receiving new bookings.



Success so far...

In January 2019, British Fencing met a new member of Northampton Fencing Club, whose mother had booked them a place on a free taster session using the service. Check out [this short video](#) to find out more.



A guide to adding your product...

Your New Year beginner's course is probably well under way or maybe even completed. [Here's another video](#) to explain how to set up your next course.



How to add products to your clubs social media via your fibodo profile...



Using social media to boost your advert...

As well as using your profile to advertise and take bookings on the British Fencing website, you can promote your courses/sessions using your own Facebook and Twitter feeds. These can be shared by your club members and families, then shared by their friends to extend your reach into your local community. New reach equals new bookings from new people and it couldn't be easier.



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ACTIVITY FINDER (continued)

Here are a couple of examples of clubs successfully using this function...

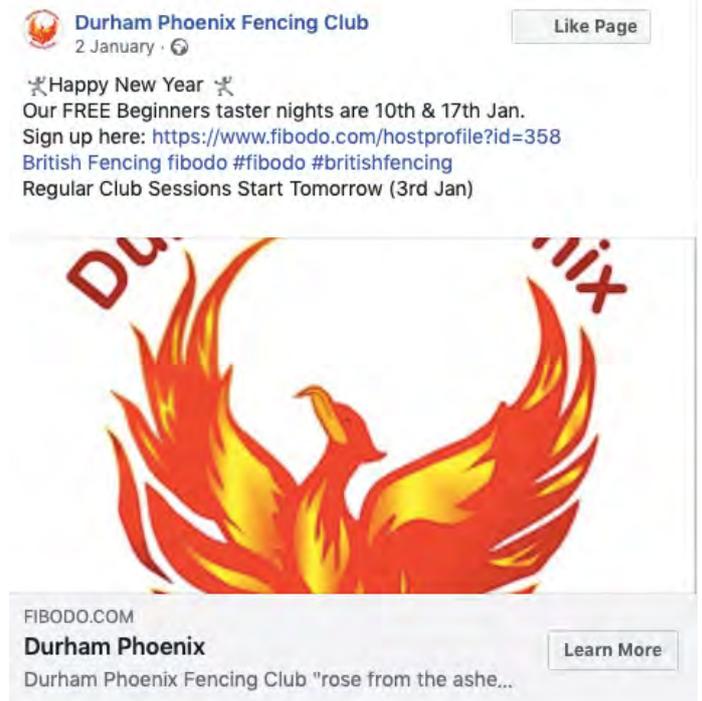
... and every post will be shared by British Fencing to its 10,000+ followers.

Check out [this video](#) to see how you can join in.

Feedback...

Here's what Chris Wood from Radcliffe Sword Club had to say about setting up and using the service.

To find out more about our Activity Finder please click on [this link](#) or contact us directly using [this form](#).



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AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL WEDGE

By Sophie DeVooght – Media and Communications Officer



Paul Wedge. (Photo: Gillian Aghajan)

The Chairman of the British Fencing Charitable Fund, Paul Wedge, joined us for a question and answer session, to provide some background to the Charity and how others may be able to help in the future.

Can you give us an overview of the Trust?

Yes, the British Fencing Charitable Trust was set up back in March 2016. We focus on three areas of talent development, increasing participation and social development.

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission and abides with the rules governing charitable organisations. We have two board members, John Troiano, Tom Cadman and me, who meet regularly to oversee the Trust's working and compliance. We're currently looking for new trustees to join us and help us shape the future of the Trust.

Is the Trust separate to British Fencing?

Yes. It's a separate legal entity from British Fencing with its own board and strategy. However, the Trust aims to always work closely with British Fencing to ensure that where possible, the Trust can help with supporting aspects of BF's work. We have to remember that we have separate policies and guidelines, so it's always good to look at how they work together.

Are you paid?

No. The directors take no money for our roles. In fact, apart from minor admin costs, like internet bills, all donations received go directly to the causes selected by the charity. As it's a voluntary position, the new trustees we're looking for, would really need a passion for fencing and want to help the sport grow.

Who do you support?

Since the trust began, we've received donations of over £60,000. We've supported athletes, male and female, in all weapons. Our main emphasis has been to support team activities. Both the senior UK Foil and Sabre teams are supported to help in their quest for Olympic qualification. Donations have also been made to the women's Sabre team, U23 European Foil team, women's Epee team world cup, plastic Foil development as well as grants made across all weapons to some of our most talented junior fencers. A more detailed list is available on our website along with some video testimonials.

If I'm a fencer, how do I apply for support?

We're happy to provide funds for both individuals and teams. We look to provide a small grant for a 12-month period and then consider additional requests after that. Any grant will be based upon our strict criteria. Ultimately, we want any donation or grant to make a difference and enable talented athletes to focus their efforts on improvement and success in the sport without unnecessary worries. Again, our website sets out the criteria and how you can apply.

What is Gift Aid?

The Trust is recognised by HM Revenue & Customs as a charitable company. So, it's exempt from Corporation Tax, subject to some conditions. Being recognised as a Charitable organisation, the Trust is able to reclaim gift aid from UK tax payers. What this means is that for UK tax payers, a donation made to the charity of say £100 receives a "top up" of £25

making the total donation to the Charity of £125.

Why should we make a donation?

Like any charity, the level of donations determines our ability to provide assistance to worthy causes. We hope to help our athletes work towards the Tokyo Olympics but we realise we can't help them all. The more donations we have, the more we can assist our future fencers. We want to help younger, upcoming athletes, coaches and community groups as well but right now our focus is on the Olympic journey.

With a relatively small fencing population, the challenge for us is to raise sufficient donations to make a worthwhile difference. Fortunately, there have been some generous individuals who have helped kick start the charity but going forward we do need a more active and supportive base. We are exploring with BF the possibility of members voluntarily donating to the Charity when renewing their membership and a possible discretionary levy on competition fees but this is still at an early stage. We'd welcome any ideas and feedback on this.

How do we donate?

We have created a website, www.britishfencingcharity.org.uk which is linked to a donation platform. If you prefer to donate by cheque or other ways, you can contact us via the site.

If we are to make a meaningful difference to fencing in the UK then we do need everyone, both within and connected to fencing to help and support the Charity.

Information on the Charity, how to apply for grants and testimonials on how the charity has helped so far is all contained on our website www.britishfencingcharity.org.uk

How should we get in touch, for more info about the trustee role?

You can go via our website or contact me! Paul Wedge at britishfencingcharity@gmail.com.

THE BE YOU, BE DIFFERENT PODCAST

THERE'S MORE TO TALK ABOUT

This year heralded the launch of the British Fencing 'Be You, Be Different' podcast. Hosted by Sean Walton (coach and Founder of The Fencing Podcast) and Sophie DeVooght (British Fencing's Media and Communications Officer), the podcast explores different aspects of fencing and sport each month. With interviews and exclusive content from our top fencers, members of our fencing community and guests, we dive into British Fencing's world, then go beyond fencing to discuss topics that can impact everyone.

Episode one: Time to Talk, aired on Time to Talk Day, February 7th. We welcomed Jo Kowalski of social movement Time to Change, Paul Davis of the Paul Davis Fencing Academy and Team GB sabreur JJ Webb, for a fascinating insight into mental health in our sport. The episode gathered praise from listeners including the founder of mental health awareness fashion brand, Maison du Choup, George Hodson, who sponsored the first episode.



Sean Walton. (Photo: Gavin McMenemy
www.gavinmcmenemy.co.uk)

Sophie says, "The podcast longform format provides a unique opportunity to explore topics that appeal to listeners, whether they fence or not. I'm a beginner fencer and Sean is our resident expert, helping me and our listeners discover more about sport and the fencing world, so we strike a good balance. With audio

interviews and recorded discussions, we're able to take a deep dive into our work. Unlike written articles and social media short form posts, podcasting gives us the time to really crack open our world and look inside. Through half hour episodes we can open areas of British Fencing's activity to everyone.

"The goal is to reach beyond the fencing sphere and bring listeners into our world. The podcast is not just for fencers. Subjects like mental health awareness, or how to develop as an athlete, are valuable for audiences beyond fencing. The ultimate vision is to create change. British Fencing's call to action is to "Be You. Be Different." It's about bringing your own individuality to a unique sport. We have projects and programmes that reach all ages and abilities, from grassroots to Olympic hopefuls. We want to talk about them and ask, "How are we, and our fencers, improving and becoming better leaders, athletes and individuals? How can we be unique, different and bring out the best in each other?"

Broad subject appeal, coupled with insights about who listens to podcasts, suggests the podcast has the potential to bring young new fencers into sport. Some key facts according to Ofcom:

- Since 2013, the number of weekly podcast listeners in the UK has almost doubled, from 3.2m to 5.9m in 2018. That equates to 11% of adults aged 15+ listening to podcasts on a weekly basis.
- The increase is across all age groups, but the steepest growth is now among young adults aged 15-24 - with around one in five (18.7%) now listening to podcasts every week.
- Half of podcast listeners are under 35. While only 29% of traditional radio listeners are under 35, this rises to 49% for podcasts.

Speaking about the project, Sean said, "I'm really looking forward to providing an in-depth look at all the activity and initiatives in British Fencing. It's an exciting time in the sport and I hope the podcast will reflect that. I'm obviously a big fan of podcasts and I think this will



Sophie DeVooght. (Photo: Annabel Williams)

enable us to inform, engage and entertain in a new way."

The Be You, Be Different podcast is available on iTunes and all podcast listening platforms or you can read more and listen directly from the British Fencing website.

Listen to Episode One [here](#).



Do you have something to offer to the podcast?

Contact:

media@britishfencing.com

to have your say...

BRINGING THE ART OF FENCING TO THE ARTS

Photo credit: London Youth

By Ian Stewart
British Fencing, Programme
Manager, Education

"There was a feeling of the unknown, young people and communities felt it wasn't an accessible sport for them. You just didn't associate fencing with youth organisations." **John Jones - Sports Development Officer - London Youth**

That was January 2015, when British Fencing first teamed up with London Youth to introduce a new fencing initiative to take our sport to youth groups across London. In collaboration with London Youth, we were able to co-create a model that brought fencing to new audiences. It was unknown and untested but the small pilot gave us a starting platform and has continued to grow year on year. Last year the work with London Youth achieved great success:

- ✓ 275 young people take part in weekly fencing sessions
- ✓ 22 youth workers upskilled as fencing coaches
- ✓ 15 community youth organisations delivering
- ✓ Over 40% female
- ✓ 60% from BAME backgrounds
- ✓ 8% who have a disability

However, the real success is always measured in how the young people respond to the activities they engage in and the response from the young people has been fantastic.

"I've grown in confidence and definitely made new friends through this experience. The main thing I've learnt is perseverance. It takes time to learn something new but is a great feeling when you master it." **Young Person – London Youth member**



Fast forward to December 2018 and British Fencing is co-creating a new approach with London Youth, again focusing on other groups of young people that otherwise would not have access to fencing. This time focusing on the Arts!

Using British Fencing's research based on [UK Tribes](#), we identified groups of inactive young people within youth organisations who we could potentially reach. This insight highlighted our target audiences who fell into two main tribes; 'Alternatives' (e.g. gamers, hackers, geeks) and a smaller but still significant, group 'Leading Edge' (e.g. creatives, DIYers, scenester). In particular, the 'creatives' presented an interesting prospect. From making music to publishing magazines, attuned to global trends, they are driving tastes across virtually all segments. Creatives are generators of new content.



Returning to our partnership with London Youth and connecting with their emerging Young Culture Makers programme, this programme is helping young people to express themselves and gain skills and confidence through arts and culture but also shares the same audience that British Fencing's insight identified.

"London Youth has played a vital role in connecting us with young people who we know will love fencing but wouldn't otherwise consider it, with a significant number of young people experiencing fencing and unprecedented retention levels." **Georgina Usher - British Fencing CEO**

Together we launched an Explore event, where we invited cultural youth groups to 'explore' different ways that fencing could be combined with the arts. We looked at various themes to inspire the creativity of the young people, from 'fencing and music' where fencing



moves were choreographed to different soundtracks or 'fencing and physical theatre' where they could explore past and contemporary films. The event invited young people to reimagine fencing.

This creative approach has led to our Art of Fencing initiative. In 2019 we will be working with 60 young people from five cultural organisations. We will be combining fencing with their artistic passions, creating a platform for these non-traditional sport groups to offer regular fencing sessions but without having to change the focus of their organisation. With co-creation at its heart, young people have been involved in designing their experience and we've upskilled artists as confident and capable fencing leaders. This has produced completely new ideas to activate young people and also have fun, bringing communities together and educating peers on vital youth issues. For example, we have combined steel pan drums with fencing to produce a show that will tour residential homes and day care centres in Brent. There is also the anti-knife crime approach in Croydon educating young people through music and fencing.

"Art of Fencing is helping young people with creative attributes who previously hadn't found a sport that suited them, to change their perceptions about being active." **Youth Worker - London Youth member**



WHEELCHAIR FENCING 2018 - A YEAR IN REVIEW

By Jo Gilliver

2018 has come and gone but what a year it was for our GB wheelchair fencers, with no less than 23 Individual World Cup podium finishes - 11 x Gold, 2 x Silver and 10 x Bronze plus a Team Foil Silver!

Our British team may be diminutive in number at present, when compared to some other nations on the World circuit but there is nothing small about our fencers' achievements throughout another brilliant year for Great Britain!

January and after a brief Christmas break, it was back to work for our selected fencers, now intensifying their training in preparation for the World Cup series ahead.

February started with the great news that there had been a funding uplift from UK Sport for our Performance Programme fencers at podium level. They certainly proved their worth at the opening World Cup in Eger, Hungary, with Dimitri Coutya winning Men's Cat B Epee



Pisa World Cup – Dimitri Coutya Cat B Epee Gold

Gold & Foil Bronze, whilst Piers Gilliver took the Men's Cat A Epee Bronze. Gemma Collis-McCann showed a promising start to the season placing 5th in the Women's Cat A Epee & 8th in Foil. Oliver Lam-Watson and Joshua Waddell



Eger World Cup – Piers Gilliver Cat A Epee Bronze

were placed 17th & 29th in the Men's Cat A Foil & 27th & 23rd in Epee, respectively. GB also entered a Men's Foil team, finishing 7th.

March saw a quick turnaround for our fencers with the World Cup in Pisa and again our team did not disappoint, with Dimitri amassing an amazing Men's Cat B triple podium finish with Gold in Epee & Foil plus a Bronze in Sabre. Piers Gilliver took the Men's Cat A Epee Gold and in the Women's Cat A, Gemma Collis-McCann placed 13th, 15th & 17th in Epee, Foil & Sabre.



Pisa World Cup – Piers Gilliver Cat A Epee Gold

April proved to be Gemma's month! Gemma Collis-McCann, Oliver Lam-Watson & Oscar Woolnough were the fencers representing GB at the World Cup in Montreal and they did us proud. Gemma claimed her first World Cup win and double podium, taking Gold in the Women's Cat A Epee & Bronze in Foil! Gemma also placed 14th in the Women's Sabre.



Montreal World Cup – Gemma Collis-McCann Cat A Foil Bronze

Oliver Lam-Watson also had a great result, taking his first podium place and bronze medal in the Men's Cat A Epee. Oscar Woolnough fenced well in the Men's Cat A events, finishing 14th in Foil and 15th in Epee.



Montreal World Cup – Oliver Lam-Watson Epee Bronze

To cap off this great month for Gemma, as she was voted the winner of the IPC/Alliance Athlete of the Month!

In June our fencers competed in their National Championship, which also incorporated a new addition - the 'National Novice Challenge'. Our sport as a whole from grassroots level up, (other than World Class,) has been struggling with a lack of funding and hence we have struggled to provide a national circuit. We wanted to make the event as inclusive as possible, whilst importantly, not detracting from the National Championships. So the National Novice Challenge was introduced. It certainly seemed like a great time was had by all and our titleholders for 2018 were as follows:

- In the National Championships: Piers Gilliver retained his titles & was the winner of all three weapons in Men's Cat A and overall Master at Arms
- Men's Cat B saw some changes with Shah Rashid taking all three titles and in the Women's events, Gemma Collis-McCann took the Women's Cat A Triple and returning fencer from London 2012, Justine Moore took the Women's Cat B triple
- In the National Novice Challenge: Emily Holder took the gold medal and titles in both the Mixed Foil & Epee. The winner of the NNC Mixed Sabre was Jonathan Collins.

Already half way through the year and our selected fencers were now off to Poland for the much-anticipated Warsaw World Cup - a well attended event that always attracts the world's best!

Once more, our fencers did us proud with Dimitri bringing home Men's Cat B Foil & Epee Gold whilst Piers won the Men's

WHEELCHAIR FENCING 2018 - A YEAR IN REVIEW (continued)

By Jo Gilliver



**Warsaw World Cup – Dimitri Coutya
Cat B Foil Gold. (Photo: Yuka Fujita)**



**Warsaw World Cup – Piers Gilliver Cat A
Epee Gold. (Photo: Yuka Fujita)**

Cat A Epee Gold and Sabre Bronze. The Men's Foil team of Piers, Dimitri, Oli & Josh took Silver. Shah Rashid fenced brilliantly at his first international of 2018 to place 5th in Sabre and Gemma had two L16 placings. Josh & Oli each had two L32's & two L64 placings respectively. Josh also went on to compete in the Junior World Championships also being held at Warsaw, which saw him take Epee L8 places in the U17's & U23's Epee & L16s of the same age groups in Foil.



**Warsaw World Cup – Men's Team Foil.
(Photo: Yuka Fujita)**

Our fencers were now ramping up their preparations for the European Championships being held in Terni, Italy. It paid off with a European



**European Champs 2018 Terni – Dimitri Coutya Cat B Epee Gold.
(Photo: Augusto Bizzi)**

title for Dimitri Coutya in the Men's Cat B Epee & Bronze in Foil. Piers Gilliver was forced to settle for a frustrating Silver in a repeat of 2015 where in the Men's Cat A Epee he lost marginally to the Russian Maxim Shaburov. Gemma Collis-McCann finished with two L16's & a L32 place, Oliver Lam-Watson a L16 & a L32, Josh Waddell two L32 placings and Shah Rashid a L16 & a L32. The Men's Foil team of Piers, Dimitri, Josh & Oli took 5th.

Also in September, our fencers and lead coach had the honour of being recognised in the British Fencing Awards 2018, with Peter Rome winning the 'Performance Coach of the Year' and making the list of Finalists were Dimitri Coutya in the 'Athlete of the Year' category and Jonathan Collins in the 'Sports Personality of the Year'. Well done to all!

In October, returning GB fencer Justine Moore and new fencer Megan McEvoy took part in an IWAS Satellite competition in Budapest. Satellite competitions are aimed at Novice/returning fencers, to give them a taste of international events, as an interim between national and World Cup levels. Both fencers did well, with both Justine & Megan bringing home three medals each, nicely done ladies!

Piers Gilliver and Gemma Collis-McCann travelled to Paris to compete in the popular Open International event 'Tournoi De Villemomble' which offers fencers the opportunity to compete against each other in the same event, whether they be able-bodied or have a disability. Piers had a slightly surprising turn of the tables with a Foil silver and an Epee bronze! Whilst Gemma finished with two L8 places.

November was a month of note for our sport. It saw the start of the IPC/IWAS qualifying period for the Tokyo2020 Paralympic Games which will run through until May 2020, where fencers' performances across their best two weapons will be taken into consideration and ranked. There are no direct qualifying competitions in this Paralympic cycle, so all is to play for. Competition kicked off with the World Cup in Tbilisi, Georgia and it proved a great opener for Piers Gilliver who secured the win, claiming Men's Cat A Epee Gold, whilst Dimitri Coutya took the Men's Cat B Epee Silver & Foil Bronze! Gemma Collis-McCann had a Women's Cat A Epee L16 with Foil & Sabre L32's. Josh Waddell & Oliver Lam-Watson finished with two L32's apiece and returning fencer Matthew Campbell-Hill had two L64 finishes. The Men's epee team finished 9th.



**Tbilisi World Cup – Piers Gilliver Mens
Cat A Epee Gold. (Photo: Yuka Fujita)**

From the piste to the awards stage and Piers Gilliver was named 'Disability Sport Performer of the Year 2018' at the Bath Sports Awards, his third time taking this accolade. Well done Piers!

WHEELCHAIR FENCING 2018 - A YEAR IN REVIEW (continued)

By Jo Gilliver

The last event of the year was held in Kyoto, Japan and once more, Piers Gilliver showed his determination & consistency



Kyoto World Cup – Piers Gilliver Epee Gold. (Photo: Manto Artworks)

in a highly contested category by taking his second gold medal of the two qualifying events so far, by winning the Men's Cat A Epee & also making a Sabre L8. He was closely followed by his ultra-consistent teammate, Dimitri Coutya who took bronze medals in both Men's Cat B Foil & Epee. Gemma Collis-McCann had L16 & L32 finishes and Oliver Lam-Watson, Josh Waddell and Matthew Campbell-Hill all had double L32 finishes.

So, what more to say?! In summary, it has been an amazing year and although I ought to apologise for such a long review, it has been my pleasure to have so many excellent results to report!

Fencers Justine Moore and Alan Sherriff have also been busy, working hard to promote wheelchair fencing and showing that Disability Fencing can be enjoyed by all, at all levels! They have been

giving demos and have-a-go sessions at various venues throughout the year.

In December our organisation had a change of name and structure - we are now British Disability Fencing - <https://britishdisabilityfencing.co.uk/>.

The BDF cannot express how proud we are of our fencers who are representing GB in fine style and who could not do it without the support of many behind the scenes that work equally as hard to keep our fencers fencing and performing to such a high standard!

Looking to 2019; it will be a full-on season for our performance fencers with World Cups and a World Championship all carrying qualifying points, starting in February in U.A.E. Then it's onto Italy, Brazil, Warsaw, Korea & Amsterdam. We wish them every success!

Jo Gilliver

OTHER NEWS

BRITISH FENCING HONOURS AND AWARDS 2019

You will have seen from the British Fencing website and on social media that the Honours Committee are once again asking for nominations from the membership for those amongst us whom you feel have really made a difference to the fencing environment, whether at local, regional, national or international level. So, now is the time to get your thinking caps on and nominate a deserving person for an award!

The Honours Committee is responsible for making recommendations for British Fencing awards. (Responsibility for recommendations for Queen's or State Honours remains with British Fencing's Nominations Committee). This system focuses entirely on the membership, with all nominations coming directly from members - the committee, in effect, acts

as selectors. British Fencing members aged 18 and over can make nominations.

Each month in the 'Latest News' section of the British Fencing website, the details of how to nominate someone - and a list of those who have been awarded honours in the past - are posted.

Nominations are a simple process and completed forms can be submitted by email direct to [Head Office](#). They are then passed onto the Honours Committee - chaired by Peter Jacobs - for adjudication in June.

The final date for Nominations this year is **24 May 2019**.

Last year saw the addition of two further awards called "The President's Award" and "The Chairman's Award" for members of the fencing community whom

the Honours Committee deemed as having made a particularly outstanding contribution to the sport.

All awards are announced and presented at the British Fencing AGM in October each year.

These awards are one way in which British Fencing and the Home Nations can recognise and thank those members across the whole spectrum of fencing activity in the UK, many who have worked tirelessly over the years, sometimes unrecognised by the majority of members, for the benefit of our sport.

So, please think about whether you might wish to nominate someone this year. Do not leave it to someone else!

British Fencing Honours Committee

INTERNATIONAL ROUND UP

Photos: Augusto Bizzi

This season the calendar has been compressed with World Cup and Grand Prix events starting on the second weekend of November and concluding on the last weekend of May. The zonal Championships will take place in June with the season concluding at the World Championships in Budapest in July. Here's a summary of what's happened so far. (Written 1 March 2019.)

Men's Epee

The season began without the French World Champion and World number one, Jannick Borel, as he recovers from a wrist injury. Japan's Kazuyasu Minobe won the season opener in Berne beating Dutchman Bas Verwijlen in the final as



Minobe takes the crown in Berne

the bronze medals went to Kazakh fencer Alexanin and Vismara of Italy. France's Alexandre Bardenet had the result of his career, winning the next event in Heidenheim. He beat Italy's new promise Davide Di Veroli in the final as Russia's Bruev and Kano of Japan shared bronze.



Bardenet takes the "big one" in Heidenheim

30 THE SWORD APRIL 2019

Borel returned to competitive action at the first Grand Prix of the season in Doha and stormed to the gold medal with a comfortable win over Spain's Yulen Pereira in the final. American Hoyle celebrated his first senior circuit medal with bronze - a position he shared with Ukrainian Nikishin, who's antics in his semi-final against Pereira must surely be investigated. Vancouver hosted the next event and it was a return to the podium for three of the season's medallists. Kano claimed the title from Italian Enrico Garozzo whilst Bardenet and Hoyle shared bronze.



Borel Returns from injury to win Doha GP



Kano wins Vancouver World Cup

Borel remains at the top of the World rankings, forty plus points ahead of Nikishin who is a further sixty points better off than third place Limardo Gascon in third place. Just under forty points split those ranked 4-10.

Women's Epee

The women's epee fencers have also had four competitions at the time of writing and the stand-out performer so far is Man Wai Vivien Kong of Hong Kong. She took the silver medal at the first event of the season in Tallinn, Estonia, beaten by



Tallinn World Cup Podium (l to r – Kong, Jung, Sun & Santuccio)



Havana World Cup Podium (l to r – Mallo, Kong, Foietta, Kang)

Korea's Jung Hyojung in the final. Alberta Santuccio of Italy and Sun Yiwen of China collected the bronze medals. Kong then won in Havana, beating French fencer Auriane Mallo in the gold medal match. Nicol Foietta of Italy claimed her first senior major medal with bronze in Cuba and shared the position with Korea's Kand Young Mi. The 2013 World Champion from Estonia, Juila Beljajeva took the next title at the Doha Grand Prix taking out Kseniya Pantelyeyeva of Ukraine in the final as Jung collected her second medal of the season with bronze a position she shared with Violetta Kolobova. Kong then

made it two gold medals from four events in Barcelona, beating Lee Hyein of Korea in the final. Estonia's Kristina Kuusk and Polish fencer Aleksandra Zamachowska collected the bronze medals.



Doha GP Women's Podium (l to r – Pantelyeyeva, Beljajeva, Jung & Kolobova)

Kong's performances along with the two Koreans, Jung and Kang have given this weapon a bit more of a global flavour. Italy's reigning World Champion Mara Navarria remains top of the rankings but Kong is closing the gap in second place. Kang is a further thirty points behind with Popescu of Romania and Kolobova within ten of her. Just twelve points separates positions 5-10.



Barcelona World Cup Podium (l to r – Lee, Kong, Zamachowska & Kuusk)

Men's Foil

Richard Kruse began the men's foil season as he did the last, by winning the first event of the season in Bonn. He beat old Italian rival Andrea Cassara in the final as American Nick Itkin's stock continued to rise in the bronze medal position. French fencer Enzo Lefort showed signs of his stunning form a few seasons ago by also claiming bronze. Italian World Champion Alessio Foconi was on top of the podium at the Paris



Bonn World Cup Podium (l to r – Cassara, Kruse, Lefort, Itkin)



Paris World Cup Podium (l to r – Meinhardt, Foconi, Avola, Imboden)



Kruse becomes first British fencer to reach World #1 with win in Tokyo

World Cup, taking out America's Gerek Meinhardt in the final. Italy and America also shared the bronze medal position with Giorgio Avola and Race Imboden completing the French podium. Kruse was at it again in Tokyo taking the title by beating Imboden in the final with Foconi and Garozzo settling for the bronze medals. The win made Kruse the first British fencer to top the World rankings. However it was temporary as Imboden took the next title. He won the Turin Grand Prix in fine style, dominating the final against Cheung Ka Long of Hong Kong. Foconi made it three podiums in a row by claiming the bronze medal - a position he shared with Meinhardt.

The three form fencers of the moment, Imboden, Foconi and Kruse sit at the top



Imboden Climbs to World #1 with Turin GP win

of the World rankings in that order, with Russia's Alexey Cheremisinov forty points behind. A further forty points separates the next six fencers on the ranking list.



Deriglazova take Katowice World Cup Title

Women's Foil

Elisa Di Francisca of Italy returned to the competitive field at the first event in Algiers and went and won it. She beat Japan's Sera Azuma in the final as Italian Martina Batini - also returning to the circuit - and Russia's Inna Deriglazova shared bronze. The Russian went on to assert her dominance on the women's foil scene by winning the next two events. In Katowice, she beat Germany's Leonie Ebert in the final with Italy's Arianna Errigo and American Lee Kiefer collecting the bronze medal. Deriglazova also took the title St Maur a couple of weeks later, beating Italian World Champion Alice Volpi in the gold medal match. The bronze medals went to another Italian, Francesca Palumbo and Ysaora Thibus of France. Volpi then took the Turin Grand Prix title by beating teammate Di Francisca in the final. It was



St Maur Podium (l to r – Volpi, Deriglazova, Thibus & Palumbo)

back-to-back bronze medals for Palumbo as Anastasiia Ivanova of Russia also collected the bronze medal.

Deriglazova sits at the top of the World rankings but Volpi is closing the gap on her. There is then an eighty point drop to third placed Kiefer who is ten points ahead of Ines Boubakri of Tunisia. Sixty points split the next six fencers on the World ranking list.



Volpi celebrates Turin GP win

Men's Sabre

Ha Hansol of Korea started the season by winning the opener in Algiers. He beat Italian Luigi Samele in the final with Enrico Berre, also from Italy sharing bronze with Oh Sanguk. American Eli Dershwitz took the gold medal at the next event in Warsaw. He beat Italian Luca Curatoli in the finals. Oh claimed his second consecutive bronze medal - a position he shared with Max Hartung of Germany. Oh made it three podiums from three events by winning the next event - the Cairo Grand Prix. He beat Hungary's double Olympic Champion, Aron Szilagyi in the final as Sandro Bazadze of Georgia and Korean Kim Junho shared the bronze medal position.



Algiers World Cup Podium
(l to r – Samele, Ha, Berre & Oh)

Dershwitz holds a commanding 60-point lead at the top of the World ranking ahead of Szilagyi. Then come three Koreans, Gu Bongil, Oh and Kim Junghwan - the latter having already retired. Kim Junho has climbed to ninth with Russia's Kamil Ibragimov, Curatoli



Dershwitz win Warsaw World Cup

and Hartung above him. Berre rounds out the top ten.

Women's Sabre

Anna Marton of Hungary took gold at the beginning of the season in Orleans, beating Araceli Navarro of Spain in the final. Ukraine's Alina Komashchuk finished with the bronze medal along with French fencer Caroline Queroli. A free-moving Cecilia Berder stormed through the field to win the next event



Marton wonders how she going to get the Orleans World Cup home

in Salt Lake City. She beat Marton in the final comfortably as Italy's Irene Vecchi and Sofya Velikaya of Russia claimed bronze. The Russian got back to winning ways taking the Cairo Grand Prix title. She beat Choi Sooyeon of Korea in the final as Berder claimed back-to-back podium finishes with bronze along with Olga Kharlan of Ukraine.

Velikaya leads the World rankings comfortably from Bereder with Marton just one point behind the French fencer. Reigning World Champion, Pozdniakova of Russia is 36 points behind the leading three but then only 33 points splits the remaining fencers in the top ten.



Berder Win Salt Lake City World Cup

In the next issue we will turn our attention to results in the team events as Olympic qualification will be under way.



Sofya Velikaya

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karim.bashir@catchsport.com

OBITUARIES

KEN KINGHAM – 30th September 1928 – 2nd March 2019

Ken Kingham passed away peacefully, in his sleep, on the 22nd March 2019, aged ninety.

Ken was well known and popular within the fencing community. In his younger years, he was a keen fencer himself and although he fenced all three weapons, sabre was always his firm favourite.

He began coaching part-time in Cambridgeshire in the late 1960's but by the 1980's Ken had decided to dedicate himself to coaching full time, teaching in comprehensive and public schools, as well coaching the

Cambridge University pentathlon squad.

In 1989, he formed the Cambridge Cadets Escrime so that children, who had been introduced to the sport through local authority organised courses, could continue to fence. He was conscious that fencing was often seen as an elite sport - affordable by few - and he wished to break down those barriers so that it was indeed a "Sport for All".

Ken was rewarded for his efforts in 1998, when he was named as the coach making the most significant contribution to coaching young people in the Eastern

Counties in the Council's 25th "Service to Sports Awards".

Although Ken had to cut down on his fencing due to heart problems, he continued to coach the Cambridge Cadets until he was in his mid-eighties.

Over the years, several of Ken's cadets went on to fence in the GB squad, including his daughter Lara and he had been a source of inspiration to many, with some of his former pupils going on to become professional coaches themselves, which without doubt, delighted him.

JOHN MILNER



It is with deepest sadness that I write this obituary for Jon Milner. Jon passed away surrounded by his family on Sunday 24th

February. His passing will come as a great shock to all who knew him and on behalf of us all I extend our condolences to Janet, Tom and Sarah.

Jon typified all that was good in the legion of volunteers that have helped British Fencing and fencing in general over many years. Although Jon was a non-fencer, he became synonymous with competition organiser and excellent organisation. Jon was involved in running the Surrey County Youth Championships each year, giving many young fencers their first taste of a fencing competition. This was no mean feat as he ran 24 competitions in one day. South East Region events and the Leon Paul Team Epee competition held at KCS Wimbledon were also within his remit.

Jon also ran a Saturday morning fencing club at KCS Wimbledon where many future Great Britain internationals started their fencing careers. This was always a source of pleasure and pride for Jon.

As President of British Fencing I got to know Jon really well, working with him

on the Great Britain Cadet and Junior Championships, the Senior British Championships and the FIE World Cups and satellite events hosted in Great Britain. Jon would happily give up hours before, during and after each event to make sure they were a success. Annually we hosted the FIE Eden Cup, Leon Paul Foil Satellite and the FIE Women's Sabre World Cup at Whitgift School and Jon liaised with the school, helped set the venue up, acted as the compere for the finals and generally did anything that was needed to be done. Jon also revolutionised the organisation of the Public Schools' Fencing Championships. This competition, that regularly attracts over 1300 entries had a total overhaul from Jon. It now has a website, automated competition entry, a large team of volunteers to help run the event and results published and sent out to every school. Jon was instrumental here and in addition he liaised with the venue, did the accounts, organised the volunteers, armourers and medical cover. When Crystal Palace National Sports Centre was closed for two years, Jon rallied round and helped us to move the event to Nottingham University and planned how we could use the new venue, accommodation and all the necessary logistics.

In 2009 British Fencing hosted the Cadet and Junior World Championships in Belfast. It is without doubt true, that

without Jon this event would never have taken place. He simply worked like a Trojan, ensured the venue was set up, managed the volunteers and was also brilliant at keeping people calm, when it all looked rather dicey. He simply knew that the show had to go on and that we were hosting the Fencing World.

My abiding memories of Jon are of someone who simply wanted to help fencing and liked fencers. Nothing was too large or too menial for Jon if it meant that the sport flourished. He encouraged Tom and Sarah in their fencing but was never a pushy fencing parent and even involved Janet in fencing too and was the epitome of the selfless volunteer who never sought the limelight, but who could always be counted on to give of his very best. I also valued the candid advice he would give in a polite, but direct manner.

Fencing is much the poorer for Jon's passing. Jon was only 64 years old and everyone who encountered him will have their own memories, but we must all be united in the knowledge that we have lost a loyal servant of fencing and a good friend, but that Jon was also a proud father and a loving husband.

May Jon Rest In Peace.

Keith Smith
Vice President
British Fencing.

OBITUARIES

PROFESSOR ZBIGNIEW CZAJKOWSKI

5th February 1921 – 8th February 2019



With his pupil Egon Franke, foil gold medalist at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964

Zbigniew Czajkowski, who has died at the

age of 98, was one of the greatest fencing masters of all time, a World Championship bronze medalist at sabre and the coach of the first Pole to win an Olympic gold medal at fencing. His pupils won World Championship medals in all three weapons, women as well as men, while he taught hundreds of other coaches. He was also the author of 30 books and three times as many articles on fencing. From 1980 on he was director of fencing at the Academy of Physical Education in Katowice, a large industrial city in the south of Poland. Along with his medical degree, he had a PhD in Physical Education as well as many honorary degrees. He loved history, literature and travel—rare for a coach. He was also one of the nicest people imaginable, kind, thoughtful, loyal, and mischievous.

He was born in a village near Warsaw and began to fence at fourteen. After graduating from high school in 1939, that September he enlisted in the navy to fight against both the Soviet army and the Belorussian communist partisans in the eastern part of Poland, only to be immediately captured. He was lucky to avoid being hanged—his captors had even prepared the rope—but possibly because of his age he was reprieved by the local commissar and sent back home.

The following April, while on his way to join the Polish forces in France, he was again captured and this time spent over a year in various Soviet prisons, being interrogated and tortured before his release in September 1941. During his time in prison he would vigorously practice his fencing, his “sabre” a wooden spoon. Free again, he trekked on foot, donkey, camel, and barge to reach

Uzbekistan in Central Asia (possibly it seemed well out of harm’s way), where he worked on cotton and rice plantations. He then made his way via Persia, India and South Africa to Britain, when in February 1942 he rejoined his country’s navy, stationed in Plymouth. He was posted to a Polish Hunt-class destroyer, the *Ślązak*, taking part in several convoys and battles, including the famous raid on Dieppe, the invasion of Sicily, and the battle of Salerno. In 1942, his ship held the record of all the Allied navies for the greatest number of German planes shot down, rescued sailors and airmen and German prisoners of war taken aboard.

After D-Day, he moved to Edinburgh to study medicine, where he fenced for the university and continued to work as a coach. He also married a Scot, Wendy Cochrane, and in 1949 they and their young son moved to Cracow, where he completed his medical training. Less than a year into his career as a doctor, he decided to give it up because “being a doctor is very depressing. You’re always surrounded by sick people,” a typical Czajkowski joke. He decided instead to become a full-time coach.

Not that his own competitive career was over. In 1950, he became the first post-war Polish national champion in foil. He represented his country many times, his best result coming at the 1953 World Championships in Brussels, winning a bronze medal in team sabre, the first Polish medal at a world championships after the Second World War. But it was as a coach that he was to achieve his greatest successes, earning the sobriquet “Father of Polish Fencing”. He was national coach at several Olympics and world championships, while his notable students include Bogdan Gonsior, epee bronze medalist at the 1963 World Championships; Wlzbietta Cymerman, nine times national foil champion; Jacek Bierkowski, a frequent World Championship finalist and silver medalist in 1975; and Magdalena Jezsiorowska, epee European gold medalist in 1996, when Czajkowski was 75. He was ever a great spokesman for women’s epee,

but then he was still giving lessons up to three years before his death.

Despite his calm presence as a coach, he could be fiery on the piste. Witold Woyda, a double foil gold medalist in 1972, recalls fencing him at sabre and Czajkowski storming down, regularly exposing his sword arm to stop-hits in his exuberance. As a coach, he was as likely to be puffing at his pipe as holding a weapon.

He had many friends in England and Scotland, and in the summer of 1970 came over to train the British team during a four-week stay. For the last of his books to be published in English, *Understanding Fencing*, he asked me to contribute a foreword, in which I recalled, when I was editor of *The Sword*, asking him to contribute an article on our fencing scene. He handed it over with the words, “Please put what I have said in such a tactful way that what might be taken as criticism will be read as the highest compliment.” It was politely devastating of a system that he regarded as years behind the times for international success.

Introducing the same book, his friend Maciej Łuczak wrote that Czajkowski’s chief interests have been “technique, tactics...and modern methods of teaching; the psychology of sport; a coach’s work, abilities, personality and leadership style; sensory motor skills and abilities; various kinds of motor reactions in fencing; traits of personality and temperament, and their influence on fencing style; individualization of a fencer’s training; psychological and tactical types of fencers; the principal of specificity of a fencer’s training; and—with a deep interest—the history of fencing.” One wonders if there is anything left uncovered!

Czajkowski was at his best face-to-face, on the piste and off. As much as his great learning, one remembers his great warmth. Over the years he kept up his British connections, and welcomed many fencers and coaches to his club. Anyone who knew him will be sad at his passing.

Richard Cohen

RESULTS

The up-to-date 2017–2018 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:
chloe.hobden@britishfencing.com

THE NORFOLK OPEN – 27th/28th July 2019

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

Events

Saturday 27th July

	Check In Closes
Men's Foil	10:00
Women's Foil	11:00
Men's Sabre	11:00
Women's Sabre	11:00

Sunday 28th July

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

Entry Fee – £25 per weapon or £45 for two. Late entries £5 extra per weapon.

Early bird fee – £20 per weapon or £40 for two. (For entries received before 31st May)
 Only entries with fees will be accepted.

Entry form can be found on club website – www.norfolkfencingclub.co.uk

Entry can be paid by cheque (payable to Norfolk Fencing Club) or by bank transfer.

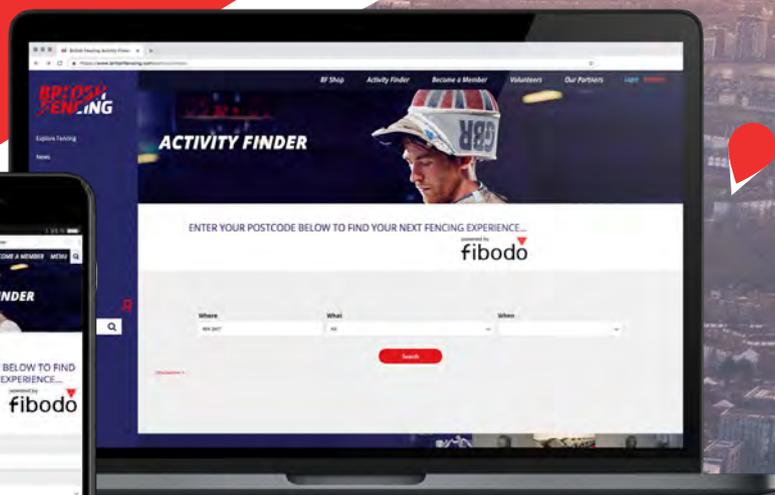
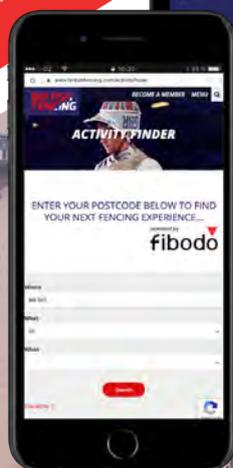
Any questions feel free to email open@norfolkfencingclub.co.uk

Closing date: – Friday 19th July 2019

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