

THE SWORD

BRITISH FENCING MAGAZINE
JANUARY 2020



NEW GBR WORLD CHAMPIONS PP4-9
OLYMPIC TEAM MANAGER INTERVIEW PP11-12
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Gilliver Claims First Title as Coutya Defends at the 2019 Wheelchair Fencing World Championships

By Jo Gilliver

When I last wrote in 2018, reviewing what was a fantastic year for wheelchair fencing in Great Britain, I had to admit to wondering what 2019 would bring for our fencers, especially given the added pressure of this year being in the middle of the qualifying period for the Tokyo2020 Games, where every point really does count!

2019 was always going to be highly pressured. Along with the Paralympic qualifiers, this year was a World Championship year, a biennial event in the wheelchair fencing calendar. Yet again our athletes did not disappoint!

This year the World Championships were held in Cheongju, Korea and after weapons & chair check etc, the competition started on 17 September with multi-World Cup medallists Dimitri Coutya and Piers Gilliver being the ones to watch on the GBR squad and they managed, yet again to excel!

Piers was first to get underway in the Men's Cat A Epee and was keen to try to better his previous World Championship performances where he took silver in both 2015 & 2017.



Piers Gilliver in Epee Action © Federazione Italiana Scherma

His last poule match was one that caused a little tension for followers at home. Having won all of his matches bar one, dropping the last hit to Al-Ogali (IRQ) in such tight competition was then enough

to drop his seeding to seventh but that did affect him and he stormed through the elimination stages! A bye through the round of 64 was followed by a 15-4 victory over Souza (BRA). Next he took out Betti (ITA) 15 - 8 and then notably, despatched nemesis Maxim Shaburov (RUS) 15 - 10 to make the semi-finals. During that match it became clear that Piers had no intention of allowing a repeat of 2017! Despite the tough draw of Zhong (CHN) a determined performance took him to a 15-12 win and a place in the gold medal match. Two years on and another RUS v GBR final. This time Piers faced Artur Yusupov and it was much to the delight of the supporting team and Performance Programme coach Peter Rome, that Piers took the win 15 - 9 and his first and much worked for, World Championship title!



Piers Tops the Podium © Yuka Fujita

Piers is the first British Category A fencer to take a World Championship title and he went on to produce an excellent result the next day too in the Men's Cat A Sabre, taking bronze and bringing home another individual World Championship medal to add to his and the team's tally.

The first day also saw Britain's reigning Category B World Champion Dimitri Coutya take to the piste for the Category B Foil. Dimitri made British history back in 2017 by becoming the first Brit to become World Champion and a double at that. So

the pressure was on for him to defend his titles!

He started the day with a solid poule, winning all of his matches gaining a seeding of four. This was enough to give him a bye to the round of 16, where he destroyed Castro (POL) 15-0! In the next round Dimitri beat Naumenko (UKR) 15-7 and went on to clinch his semi-final 15 - 10 against Hu (CHN). The British fencer had to beat Feng (CHN) to defend his title but after a hard fought match he was beaten 15-12 so had to settle for the Cat B Foil Silver this year.

The next day however, Dimitri returned to the piste, this time for the Category B Epee. Although his poule results of four victories from six fights (seeded 9) gave everyone supporting him a few nerves, he made certain that they had nothing to be concerned about. Dimitri progressed through his early fights with a 15 - 8 win over Pluta (POL) and a clear victory over Zhang (CHN) who he beat 15-6 to make the quarterfinals. A convincing 15 - 10 bout against Datsko (UKR) put him into the semi-finals where he beat Pranevich (BLR) 15-11. With the title firmly in his sights, it was celebrations all around in the British camp when a determined Dimitri took the win 15 - 7 over Hu (CHN) to retain his Cat B Epee World Championship title!



Dimitri On Top of the Podium © Yuka Fujita

It is hard to imagine how these two young fencers continue to bring home such brilliant results every time they compete and under such pressure. It is reassuring to know that their efforts, along with those of the coach & support system around them, creates a future for wheelchair fencing. This has only been made possible thanks to the return of UK Sport funding for these individual athletes. Also, whilst self-funding, it was great to see the younger and returning fencers of the future come through and compete alongside Piers & Dimitri at these World Championships.

The Men's Cat A Epee also saw Joshua Waddell, Oliver Lam-Watson & Matthew Campbell Hill compete. Mixed poule results saw Campbell-Hill make the 64 and Waddell and Lam-Watson finishing in the top 32. There was great insight and experience to be gained from competing in a competition of this calibre.

Gemma Collis-McCann & 2012 Paralympian Justine Moore who has returned to competitive fencing this season, both also making their Tokyo 2020 bid had mixed results but each gained valuable qualifying points!

Gemma took to the piste in the Category A Ladies Foil and after a mixed poule was ranked 20 going into the direct elimination. Unfortunately she was just edged out, losing 13 - 15 to Maya (RUS), finishing 21st. Justine competed in the Ladies Category B Epee and won three of her five poule fights to be ranked 14. She went on to beat Dani (HUN) 15-9 in the round of 32 but fell 15-1 to Jana (THA) in the next round to finish an encouraging 14th.

Gemma also fenced in the Ladies Cat A Epee and despite a difficult start, beat Kim (KOR) 15-11 to make the round of 16 before losing to the experienced Krajnyak (HUN). Matthew took part in the Men's Cat A Epee and a tricky poule was followed by a 15-8 loss to Cheong (HKG) in the round of 32.

Oliver and Joshua returned to the piste for the Men's Cat A Foil and these relatively inexperienced fencers were well tested. Lam-Watson had a lot of ground to make

up after dropping two fights in his poule but managed a win of 15 - 8 over Hebert (CAN) in the round of 64 but then lost to the strong Russian, Fedyayev to finish 31st. Waddell also found the competition testing and unable to win a poule match, finished the competition 44th.

It was also not to be for Justine in the Cat B Ladies Foil finishing 20th after a difficult day and Gemma Collis-McCann also suffered the same fate in the Cat A Ladies Sabre finishing 27th.

With the Individual events over, we turn briefly to the team events and for the first time in a long time, GB were able to present a Men's team. Being a World Championship, all three weapons were contested and we are pleased to report that GBR finished 5th in the foil, 10th in sabre and a fantastic bronze medal performance in the Men's Epee Team! What a way to finish what was an absolutely brilliant World Championships for our GB wheelchair fencers - Two World Champions! Four individual and one team medal!



Men's Team Epee Bronze for Piers, Oliver & Dimitri © Augusto Bizzi

I was going to update you with a little bit more from the 2019 season which closes at the next event in November in Amsterdam but to gloss over this World Championships would not have done our fencers justice. So I hope that you have taken just a little pride from hearing just how well our GBR fencers are doing! If I wasn't directly involved, I think I'd find it hard to believe. It really is a rags (no funding) to riches tale (funding helps=medals) but one worthy of telling!

I'd like to close with a brief summary. In 2019, Piers & Dimitri between them have won a staggering 19 individual medals - 8 of them Gold plus two Men's Team medals - and there's still one event to go! I think

that this shows that our sport is working hard and reaping the results. At the end of the day, it is not just the medals but the road to getting them and how we develop our next generation of fencers. One thing is for sure, we have some incredible talent, some exciting fencers next in line, friends, supportive volunteers and most importantly a 'Great British Team'!

With the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics just months away GBR Wheelchair Fencing looks strong!

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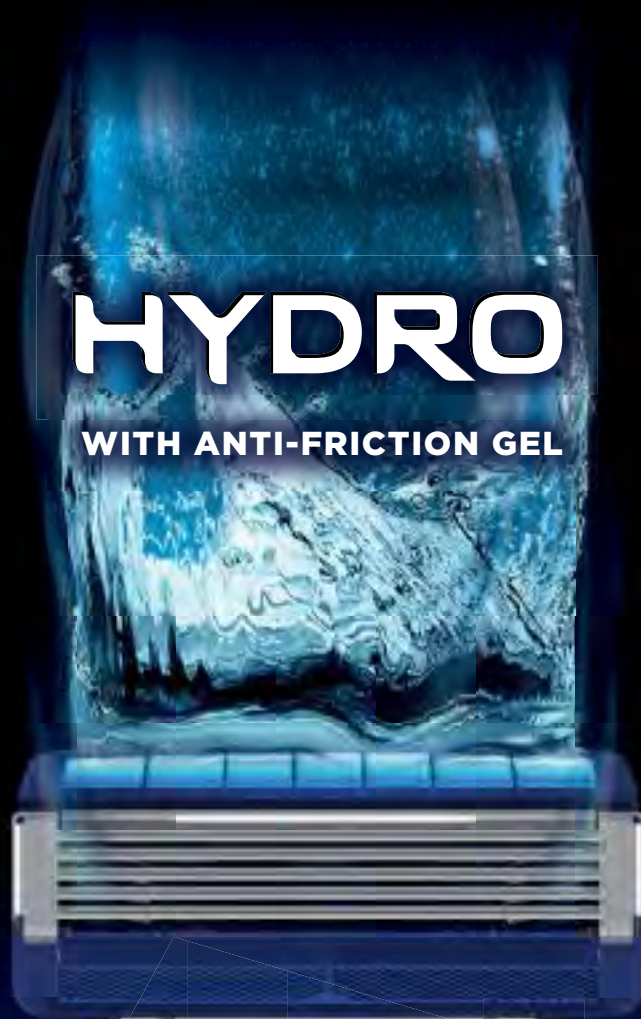


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GREAT BRITAIN RETURNS FROM WORLD VETERANS CHAMPIONSHIPS WITH FOUR TITLES

Photographs by Gillian Aghajan

The 2019 Veterans World Championships took place in Cairo, Egypt 5-11 October and Great Britain impressed by bringing home four gold medals and finishing second in the medal table.

The hosts Egypt perhaps laid on the most impressive World Championships at this level to date with six individual disciplines in three age categories plus six team events. There were three main halls including the finals hall which would not have looked out of place at a Grand Prix event. A live results service was complimented with live streaming for the very first time, courtesy of the FIE.

Category A

This category included athletes aged between 50 and 59 years old including twenty-two British athletes.



Beth and Jacqueline Met in the Semis

Great Britain's best event for this age-group was women's sabre. Beth Davidson and Jacqueline Esimaje-Heath came through the poules ranked sixth and seventh respectively. They eased through the elimination stages before facing each other in the semi-finals where Beth beat Jacqueline 10-6, meaning she faced Dorothea Tanzmeister (AUT) in the final.

The Austrian started the final well and went on to win 10-6.

GBR results:

Men's Epee: Jeremy Baker 27th, Tom Chrisp 28th & Simon Pink 32nd.

Women's Epee: Ingrid Heskett 13th, Margarette Oniye 20th, Sarah Budden 21st & Jacqueline Hibbert 27th.

Men's Foil: Mike McKay 11th, Adrian Griffin 31st, Jeff Kiy 34th & Paul Baillache 39th.

Women's Foil: Amanda Baxendale 11th, Marion Thomas 14th, Kate O'Connell 15th & Kati Archer 32nd.

Men's Sabre: Duncan Rowlands 11th, Ceri Thomas 23rd, Peter Howes 26th & Neil Bowd 39th.

Women's Sabre: Beth Davidson 2nd, Jacqueline Esimaje-Heath 3rd, Michele Narey 6th & Caroline Clancy 21st.



Beth Selfie with Jacqueline on the Podium

Category B

Athletes aged between 60 and 69 years old were eligible for this category in which twenty-three British athletes took part.

This time it was the turn of the men's foilists to impress. Paul Wedge and John Troiano emerged from the poule stages as fourth and seventeenth seeds and



Paul and John Clash in the Semis

both stormed through to the semi-finals where they met each other. Paul prevailed 10-6 and faced Robert Blaschka (AUT) in the final. A tight match followed but Paul became World Champion with a 10-8 victory.



Paul Wedge (gold) & John Troiano (bronze)

Speaking on his return, Paul said, "Whilst I had trained hard, winning for the third time in five years was a big surprise. My desire to win was fuelled by my friend Jim who had sadly been given three months to live. I returned from Cairo on Thursday and saw Jim on Friday where we discussed the

competition and my win. Sadly, Jim died the following day. Winning is great but living a good and longer life is better.”

GBR Results:

Men's Epee: Hugh Kernohan 5th, John Hyde 16th, Neal Mallett 19th & Jonathan Stanbury 41st.

Women's Epee: Valerie Young 8th, Jennifer Morris 26th, Margaret Tait 30th & Janet Baron 35th.

Men's Foil: Paul Wedge 1st, John Troiano 3rd, Michael Medhurst 24th & Richard Sage 25th.

Women's Foil: Caron Hale 8th, Sheila Anderson 11th, Jennifer Morris 21st & Marilyn Wheelband 25th.

Men's Sabre: Barry Coulter 18th, Carl Morris 19th, Chris Prevett 20th & Stephen Fox 30th.

Women's Sabre: Jennifer Morris 17th, Yvonne Walls 19th & Lyn Robinson 25th.

Category C

In this category the competitors were over the age of 70 and included twenty-one British fencers. At the end of the tournament Great Britain had two new World Champions crowned.



Viv and Silvia Take to the Finals Piste

In the women's sabre event, Silvia Brown and Vivien Frith came through the poules ranked third and first respectively. Their incredible form continued through the elimination stages where they dropped just nine points between them on route to an all-British final. Silvia and Vivien both fenced so well in the final - the toughest match either of them had been involved in all day. Silvia came through to take the title 10-8.

In the men's foil event, Brian Causton came through the poules ranked fourth and



Gold for Silvia, Silver for Viv

professionally executed his route to the final with Jan Patterson (USA). Another solid performance from Brian saw him crowned World Champion with a 10-7 victory.



Brian in Action

Brian later said, "Having been runner-up twice, I was both elated and relieved that at last I had won!"



Champion du Monde - Brian Causton

Men's Epee: Andrew Brown 6th, Brian Causton 19th, Ralph Johnson 22nd & William Osbaldeston 35th.

Women's Epee: Carole Seheult 19th & Margaret Myers 21st.

Men's Foil: Brian Causton 1st, Graham Paul 10th, Paul Harden 19th & Michael Bradbury 23rd.

Women's Foil: Kristin Payne 7th, Clare Halsted 9th, Susan Uff 12th & Margaret Myers 13th.

Men's Sabre: Richard Cohen 5th, Michael Compton 6th, William Osbaldeston 7th & Peter Baron 15th.

Women's Sabre: Silvia Brown 1st, Vivien Frith 2nd & Patricia Shepherd-Foster 14th.



Susan Uff Receiving Her Silver Medal

Teams

The team set up at Veterans World Championships includes one fencer from each category plus up to three reserves - again one from each category. However, each team is only allowed to use one substitute in each match.



Women's Foil Team on Route to Silver

Great Britain picked up two medals in the team events. The women's foil team - Anderson, Baxendale, Hale, Halsted (capt.), Payne & Thomas - made it through to the final, losing 30-16 to Russia. The women's sabre team - Brown, Davidson, Frith, Morris, Narey & Walls plus Jane Hutchison

(non-fencing capt.) went one better to claim the World title. They beat Japan 30-20 and the USA 30-27 on their way to the final where they faced Germany. A dominant performance saw Great Britain on top of the podium with a 30-15 victory.

Silvia Brown, a delighted double gold medalist said after the event, "This event in Cairo was very special to me as it was the first time both Andrew (my husband) and I were representing Great Britain at a World Championship at the same time. It was a special honour for me to follow former Olympians and other athletes down a red carpet with a guard of honour to receive my certificate of participation. And winning double gold medals at my 17th World Championships - for the individual event and in the team championships - was just fantastic. To wake up thinking 'I'm a World Champion' is just brilliant and quite extraordinary."



Women's Sabre Team Celebrate World Title

Other GBR Team Results:

Men's Epee: 7th - Johnson, Kernohan, Mallett, Osbaldeston, Pink & Prime plus Graham Paul (non-fencing capt.)

Women's Epee: 8th - Baron, Heskett, Myers, Oniye (capt.), Uff & Young

Men's Foil: 6th - Causton, Griffin, Harden, McKay, Troiano (capt.) & Wedge

Men's Sabre: 7th - Baron, Cohen (capt.), Coulter, Prevett, Rowlands & Thomas

Speaking after the event, Great Britain's Team Manager, Gillian Aghajan said, "What a fantastic Championships in so many ways! Brilliantly run by our Egyptian hosts, the Egyptian Fencing Federation and the FIE, with excellent livestream coverage. We have been made very welcome by all and the young volunteers have been super. I am incredibly proud of all the squad and



Gillian's Lift Home

chuffed to bits that we finished second on the medal table with four World titles, four silver medals and three bronze medals! Not only that, nine fencers had near misses reaching the last eight and to finish it all with something totally unexpected I was delighted and honoured to be presented with a commemorative plaque from the Egyptian Fencing Federation on behalf of the Great Britain squad for the second highest number of weapon entries. This will be a very memorable Championships!"



Great Britain Finished Second Overall

The recent growth in Veterans fencing has been phenomenal! Great Britain taking second place on the medal table serves as inspiration to many.

Congratulations to Brian Causton, Paul Wedge, Silvia Brown and the Women's Sabre Team!

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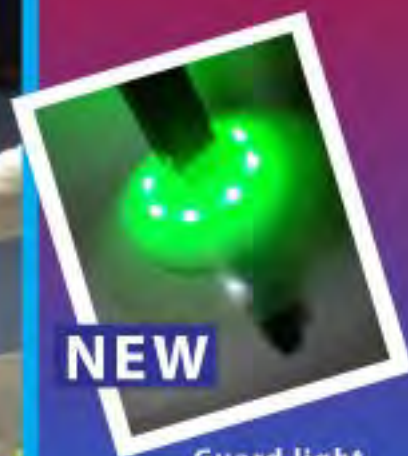
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An interview with

BRITISH FENCING'S OLYMPIC TEAM MANAGER

Following an end of season review for 2018/2019, British Fencing expanded the roles and responsibilities of the BF Olympic Team Manager to provide leadership and support across all weapons as they prepare athletes for the Tokyo and Paris Games.

Johnny Davis has agreed to take on these new responsibilities and we were lucky enough to grab some time with him. Johnny Davis is himself a two-time Olympian and coach and has for the last two seasons been GBR Team Manager for the Senior European and World Championships, Foil Weapon Manager and nominated BOA Team Leader for fencing. Here's what he had to say.



Johnny Davis

Congratulations on your new role. What does it entail?

The immediate focus is to work with those fencers and their coaches who are trying to secure selection for Tokyo 2020. In the longer term for the Paris 2024 Olympics we will be looking to develop and implement a winning culture that will reach across all weapons and all age groups.

You've been working with the team for some time now so what extra are you now able to do?

I have been working primarily with the foilists over the last couple of seasons but will now also be working with the epeeists and sabreurs and their coaches. I have built a relationship with a number of them and having been involved with them as Team Manager at the European and World Championships. I am looking to build on those relationships. I will also be able to increase the amount of contact time I have with others within British Fencing in order to align our cultural aspirations (e.g. the ADP Programme) as well as having more in-depth communications with UK Sport and the British Olympic Association.

You wanted to ensure that the athletes weren't financially hit. So how is your role funded?

I wanted to ensure that any funding for my role wasn't drawn from monies which were potentially going to support the fencers.

With the generous support of the BF Charity we have been able to achieve that objective.

The season has begun so what are your priorities in the short-term?

My short-term priority is simply to assist all fencers and coaches who are pushing for selection for Tokyo 2020, whether through the automatic selection or zonal qualification route. We don't have a lot of money to offer to the fencers but we are looking to identify where we can offer practical and emotional support to help them with their aspirations.

And what are the key messages that you are pushing out to our international fencers?

The short-term messages are about keeping focused on the task of qualifying for Tokyo 2020, identifying obstacles that we can collectively remove and where we can make gains to help them. The longer term messages for the fencers who aspire to international success are about personal responsibility, focus, process, honesty, application of best practice, who is in their team and self-reflection and self-compassion.

“

Johnny Davis competed in the foil events at both the Seoul '88 and Barcelona '92 Olympic Games.

Everyone working in a performance environment is focused on the here-and-now but the qualification period will be over in April/May 2020. How much time are you spending on preparing for the Olympic Games?

I'm in regular contact with the BOA and have attended a number of their residential planning sessions. I have to prepare and collate all the personal information for all those fencers on the Tokyo 2020 longlist - logistical information regarding kit sizing, personal information etc - as well as proposed itineraries around training camps, travel in and out of Tokyo at Games time, potential training partners, freighting of training pistes etc. While we are still in the qualifying period, we are preparing all the information for all those fencers we have identified on our Tokyo 2020 longlist. I have also been working with BF Head Office and UK Sport and to identify any potential financial support we can get for our fencers.

Finally, a question for those aspiring to make it onto a British senior team. What advice do you have for them?

I would say that evidence shows that we have athletes with the talent to win medals at the highest International level - look at the last two World Championships - but we collectively need to understand what does world class look like? What do our top fencers do that the others don't do? What do our top coaches do that others don't do? What do other nations do better than us? I accept that funding is a problem but as a number of our fencers have shown we can't let it be the reason we self-handicap. I would also like to highlight the great work of the ADP as an illustration of how BF is looking forward and supporting our young fencers and coaches. My long-term role will be to support and dovetail with this activity and to offer support and guidance for those who want to dream big and go on the amazing journey that is the Olympic Games.

Davis on mission to remove obstacles blocking the path to Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 Olympic success on the piste for Great Britain.



BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FENCING TOURNAMENT 2020 Easter 2020

Venue: Sport & Fitness Centre, The University of Birmingham

Access: Edgbaston Park Road of A38 South, Birmingham B15 2TT www.sportandfitness.bham.ac.uk/join/visit-us

Leon Paul are set to continue their sponsorship of this event.

Events & Latest Report Time

Saturday 11th April		Sunday 12th April	
Men's Foil (128)	09.00	Men's Epee (108)	09.00
Women's Foil (77)	11.30	Women's Epee (91)	11.30
Men's Sabre (70)	13.30	Women's Sabre (58)	13.30

Entry Fee: £35 per weapon via on-line process on www.bift.org.uk

Enquiries: Mike Whitehouse, 208 Wheelers Lane, Birmingham B13 0SR; tel./fax +44 0121 443 3136 contact@bift.org.uk

Closing date: 5 April 2020

Fencer numbers will again be capped to assist smooth running of this event. Cap numbers shown in brackets beside each weapon

Late entries, if agreed, will be charged at £50 per weapon.

Notes: BFA licences or equivalent will be checked in advance

Prizes for L8 fencers at each weapon and Best Veteran.

Leon Paul Equipment Co trade stand & sponsorship.

All clothing and equipment must meet BFA standards for use in competition. This includes working weapons ready for piste use.

Younger fencers: must be aged 13 or over on the day of the event.

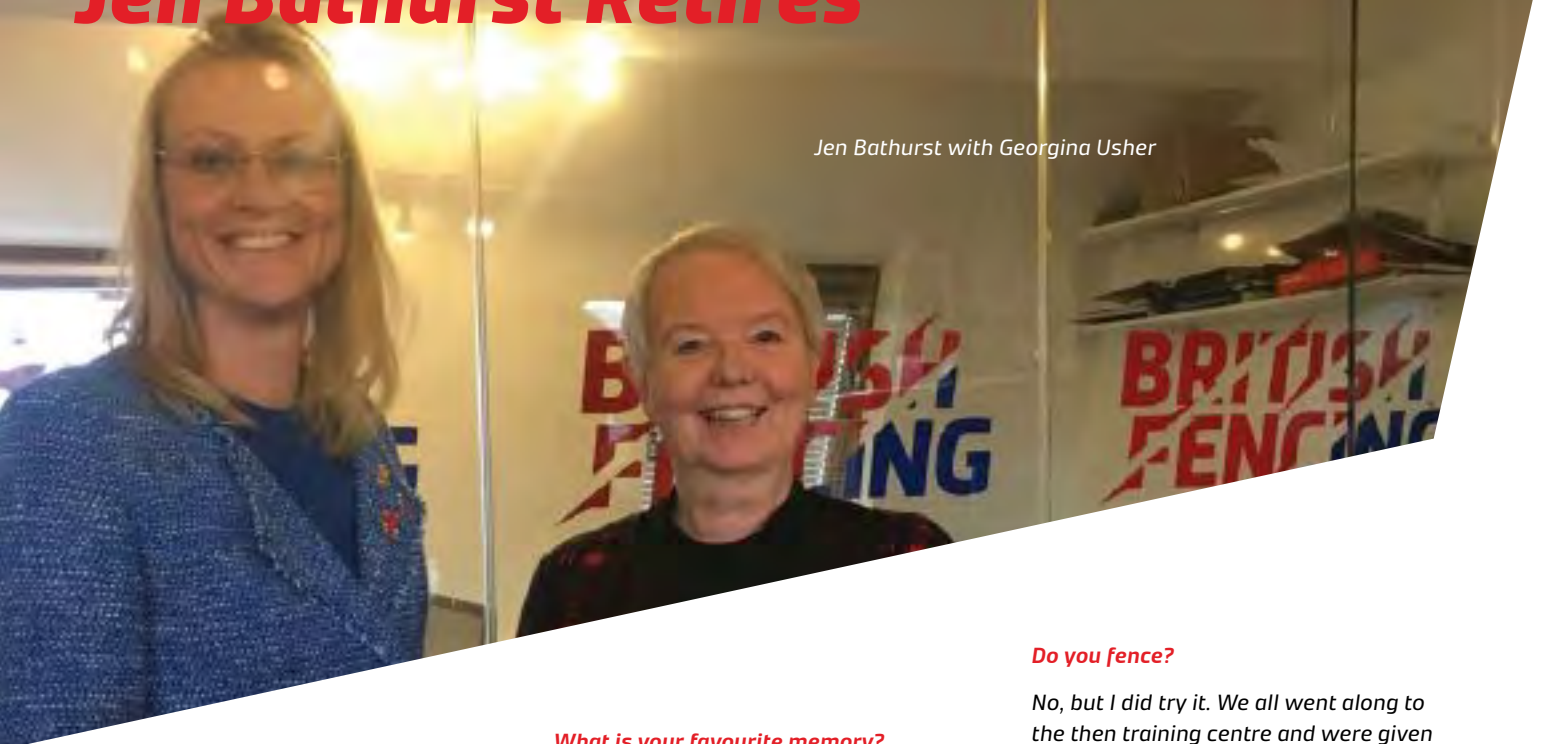
Veterans (over 40 on 1st January 2020) to be confirmed at check-in

Venue www.sportandfitness.bham.ac.uk/join/visit-us give map and directions.

All information about this event, the use of your personal data for entry purposes etc is all contained within the event's designated website www.bift.org.uk

The event itself is delivered as part the West Midlands Fencing Region Programme.

Jen Bathurst Retires



Jen Bathurst with Georgina Usher

Jen Bathurst has recently retired after 14 years of service to British Fencing. Over the years she has seen how the federation has changed and grown. So we asked Head Office Manager Kim Robinson to interview her for this issue of the magazine.

What was your role - and how has it changed?

I was the Admin Assistant and the biggest change I would say is our move to an online membership system. Switching to online made a huge difference in my working pattern. Previously, when the system was manual, my day was filled with taking membership renewals over the telephone along with payment details, processing cheques and then printing, folding and posting the membership cards. It was a good move!

What was it like when you started?

Besides the manual membership process, when I arrived we had one part-time General Secretary, one part-time Accounts Manager and one full-time office manager. I came in as a part-time worker. It meant that the four of us had to do everything. All jobs were shared between us. We would all help in sending out membership cards - even taking them home to pack them up when it was really manic - sending out achievement awards and answering the telephones.

What is your favourite memory?

2012, the year of the home Olympics. The whole office got behind it and everyone volunteered to be a Games Maker. The joy of everyone pulling together and supporting one another was something I will never forget. I always think what a wonderful experience it was and what a wonderful bunch of people I had the pleasure to work with.

I always enjoyed working with Keith Smith as I thought he was always fair to the staff. Georgina Usher, our current CEO, is the best CEO I have had the pleasure to work with. She looks after her staff and her passion for fencing and British Fencing is remarkable.

What will you miss the most?

Being part of the team - the fun, the camaraderie. Also the adrenaline that you get for the work.

What one thing do you wish that the members knew about the work that we do in Head Office?

That we are indeed a small team and cannot do it all but try our very hardest to do the best we can for the members. The passion that the CEO and staff put into trying to make the experience of a member a good one.

Do you fence?

No, but I did try it. We all went along to the then training centre and were given a lesson by the Performance Coach Andrey Klyushin. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Unfortunately I was not world class material!

Which is the best weapon - foil, sabre or epee?

For me foil. I understand it more than epee and sabre and find it easier to fence. That is just my opinion on it, as a non-fencer.

I hear you are a hula-hoop champion - what made you start that?

My cousin had a family party, produced this hula-hoop and told us all how good she was and how much weight she had lost. I was not going to let her beat me! So I bought one, practised and practised and along with dropping two dress sizes, the rest is history!

Thank you Jen for all your hard work and loyalty. You will be sadly missed but we all wish you well on your retirement.

GB Youth International Development

Rob Cawdron - Project Officer (Pathways Development)



The Cadet international season is now underway across all three weapons. Foil began on the 28-29 September with the Manchester Cadet International, sabre in Godollo, Hungary, on the 5-6 October and epee in Budapest, Hungary, also on the 5-6 October. We caught up with epee fencers and coaches involved in the competition to share their experiences.

Budapest was an enormous competition. There were 290 competitors in the girls individual event and over 320 in the boys individual event. In the team events, there were 45 girls teams and 53 boys. Great Britain sent two large (16 girls and 20 boys) squads to this competition and 10 teams (5 girls and 5 boys).

Going into the competition, ADP Epee Lead Coach John Rees said, "The first competition of the season is always important. For me, this is about taking the culture that we've been trying to embed at ADP camps through good values and behaviours, putting it into practice at competition. That culture has to be there at all levels, not just the athletes but the coaches and the families as well."

In the girls individual event, 13 of 16 made their way through the poules, of which 7 fought through to the last 128. 6 made their way into the last 64 and Abagael Black fought her way into the last 32, defeating team mate Julia Caron in the last 64 on her way to a 23rd place finish.

In the girls team event, 3 teams fought their way through the last 64, 2 made it through to the last 32 and Great Britain 1, featuring Abagael Black, Keira Papadopoulos and Isabella Summers made the quarter-finals, finishing 8th.

In the boys individual competition, 19 of 20 competitors made it through the poule round, 11 of whom made it into the last 128, four got through to the last 64 before the last two, Piero Steiner and Alec Brooke (having fought his way up from 237th seed), faced each other. Alec came out on top, defeating Steiner 15-11, to finish 16th.

In the boys team event, 3 of the 5 teams fought through to the last 32, with Great Britain 1, made up of Alec Brooke, Edward Scott-Payne, Louis Taiwo-Williams and Joseph Walmsley, making it into the last 16, finishing 12th.

After the event, we caught up with Abagael Black and Alec Brooke:

Abagael, you've had a strong start to 2019/20. How long have you been fencing for and what drew you to it in the first place?

I started fencing when I was 8 as my coach Peter Barrett ran term-time epee sessions at my school. I asked my mum if I could try fencing for a term as my friends were joining. However they decided to leave half way through. My mum persuaded me to commit to the term and I'm glad I did because here I am loving it, 8 years later! Over the years Plymouth Fencing Club has become an extension of my family.

Budapest was among the largest and strongest European Cadet events out there. How did you find the experience as part of the GB Squad?

It's a huge honour to be selected for the GB squad as it gives us the opportunity to

challenge ourselves as fencers but more importantly to motivate each other, build connections and grow as a team.



Abagael Black

You've been competing on the European Cadet Circuit for two years now. What have been the most important lessons that you've learned from competing at this level? What are your ambitions for the rest of the season, building on your result in Budapest?

I was fortunate in my first season as a cadet to have great role models that inspired me throughout. Personally, I feel that in fencing I can never really lose. There is always something to reflect and improve on with the support of my coach. I'm naturally aiming for European and World selection 2020 but I'm going to take it one competition at a time.

What other things really interest you as well as fencing? Do you do any other sports?

My passion is fencing but I also compete regularly in hockey, netball and was fortunate to tour South Africa in the summer. I am also a part of the Army section of the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) which involves outdoor exercises, shooting, survival and leadership. I also enjoy my academic studies and aspire to a career in engineering.



Alec Brook and Coach, Tamas Kovacs

Alec, you look like you're really enjoying your fencing at the moment. How long have you been doing the sport for and what drew you to it in the first place?

I have been fencing since I was six, so for eight years. My mum put me in a school fencing club and luckily it was run by Julianna and Tamás who showed me what an exciting sport fencing is and inspired me to pursue it. I would never have done it without them.

You've had a great start to the season, being in the final of every domestic event and making the top 16 in Budapest. What is it about competing that you enjoy and how have you found taking the first steps into cadet competition?

Budapest was the biggest competition I have done and an amazing experience. Most of all I enjoyed being part of the British team and having the opportunity to travel all over Europe and compete against top fencers from around the world is incredible. A major highlight in Budapest was the team event on the second day which was actually my first ever team competition. Beating Germany in a nail-biter was just about the most excited I have ever been on a fencing piste.

What other things really interest you as well as fencing? Do you do any other sports?

I love all sports and play a lot of cricket, tennis and football and also enjoy playing the drums.

Tamas Kovacs of Knightsbridge Fencing Club, Alec's coach since the age of 6, shared his own insights, in particular on the importance of getting the right team in place and establishing a safe and open culture.

How would you describe your approach to developing young athletes? What's important to allow them to grow?

At Knightsbridge Fencing Club we believe that there is no single method when training children, as the psychological part of it is just as important as the physical. We can't just have one programme and force that onto every child. When training a competitor like Alec, we get to know him and recommend specific games, drills, and exercises to help make it enjoyable. The training sessions are challenging but we make sure there is laughter too. It is so important to have a good dynamic between coach and athlete.

You've talked about how the club and the coaches grow together with fencers like Alec. What did you mean by that?

With Alec, at the beginning, we had to work a lot on handling emotions. He was and is, always so competitive when training.

There is a big human element to fencing. Each child has a different personality, handles pressure and reacts to certain situations differently and so it's important for us to recognise this and guide them with the right advice that works for them during training and competitions. You can't help but grow and learn yourself along the way.

Furthermore, we have the challenge that as kids grow up, they change and so does their personality. Alec started out with us when he was 6 years old. Now he's a teenager. It is natural that children grow and their thoughts and attitudes change.

How important is it to work with the parents and family of an athlete, how do you do this?

It is extremely important to have a clear vision and that everyone is on the same page.

Every parent wants the best for their child, so there is constant communication with them. We are giving feedback, listening to what they say so we always like to come up with a plan together. It is extremely important to have a clear vision and that everyone is on the same page.

It is just as important to listen to what the child wants. Some children don't enjoy competing and they are there for the social aspect, for fun. Some children are competitive. So we offer classes to everyone at any level and we focus on providing a safe, friendly environment for everyone to practice our exciting sport of fencing.

We spoke again with John Rees once he'd returned from Budapest, to get his view on the competition. Here's what he had to say.

"This was a particularly satisfying competition. It became clear to me that we are going in the right direction and developing a culture that will allow us to have international success. We saw athletes supporting each other piste-side before they went on or after they'd been knocked out. We had the coaches collaborating to ensure that athletes were supported and we saw the parents and families buying into and being integral to driving that culture. These are the factors that make good performances possible and as a direct result of that, we expanded the squad size for the next event in Grenoble, so that we can keep this momentum going. Thank you to everyone for being part of this journey."

We want to wish everyone the best of luck as the Cadets continue with the rest of their international season and the Juniors begin their seasons with the first events kicking off on the 2-3 November. Foil will be in London for the Eden Cup, men's epee will be in Riga, Latvia and sabre will journey to Sochi, Russia.

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The Value of Athlete Profiling

By Steve Kemp - GBR Programmes & Coaching
Development Manager

Athlete Profiles: Why bother? It's a waste of time. I'm the coach so I know what's best.

Ability - Interference = Performance

Your performance is equal to what you are capable of when interference is removed or reduced.

Interference can come in all shapes and forms including, the current level of ability, (tactical, technical, physical and mental,) the contextual situation and the level of preparation for an event.

British Fencing's Athlete Profiles are a Performance Profiling tool. Profiling is a valuable technique used to identify and organise training, preparation and the development of an individual. (Richards, 2008)

The BF Athlete Profile covers a number of areas:

1. Training weeks to review training loads
2. Competition calendar to support the selection of meaningful and purposeful competition and the use periodisation of training
3. Improvement goals by selecting a number of personal performance factors for which to base the performance profile around. These factors can be broken down into four performance components namely, the TTPM model:
 - a. Tactical
 - b. Technical
 - c. Physical
 - d. Mental
4. Strength and conditioning training programmes

The benefits to performance profiling are:

- To provide important information on fencers, which can be used to implement realistic goal setting strategies and training intervention. These training interventions can help

focus the individual on the key aspects of their performance and help direct their training to the areas of perceived/agreed need;

- The fact that the fencer and the personal coach can clearly identify the strengths and weakness of the fencers' performance, affords the fencer to work individually or with their personal coach and with the Athlete Development Programme Coaches. This training improves the weaknesses as well as building on the strengths;
- It provides tangible evidence of the fencers' development and improvements over a period of time - a season or longer, such as a four-year Olympic cycle;
- It helps to motivate fencers to improve areas of their performance, therefore enhancing their overall ability. If the fencers' development is part of their vision, they will be motivated to improve;
- The targets set by the fencers will provide an on-going motivation to improve in the direction that they have agreed with their personal coach;
- The performance profiling process can highlight any differences between the coach and the fencers' perception of the fencers' performance, if both the fencer and the personal coach do come up with some differences. This is a benefit as these differences will increase communication between the coach and the athletes;
- It helps maximise their intrinsic motivation. Profiling does this, as the fencer can clearly identify their development areas. This means that they can easily work toward improving;

- Coaches who are not aware of their fencers' perceptions of their own game/ fight risk losing the interest, focus and motivation of the fencers to their own development;
- Performance profiling has been demonstrated to be a useful tool for any athlete in order to analyse their own performance effectively.

In summary, by breaking down how they fight, fencers gain a clearer picture of their fencing, their abilities and how to work towards improving them. The targets set by the fencer will provide an on-going motivation to improve in the direction that they have agreed with their coach.

Involving the athlete in the creation of the performance profile increases intrinsic motivation and the athlete-coach relationship can be enhanced, leading to more effective training and development.

Whilst spending time on profiling and planning may not feel as important as spending time in the session or an individual lesson, the fencer may gain more confidence by improving a different attribute that holds more concern for them during performance. This added confidence could have a positive impact on their whole fight game. By discussing each other's perceptions of the fencer's ability, the coach can seek to question and remove negative, 'irrational' thinking the fencer has about their ability.

Competition Fencing: What are we trying to achieve here?

By Rob Cawdron - Project Officer
(Pathway Development)



How well do you prepare for competition? A closer look at your preparation could make all the difference to your performance.

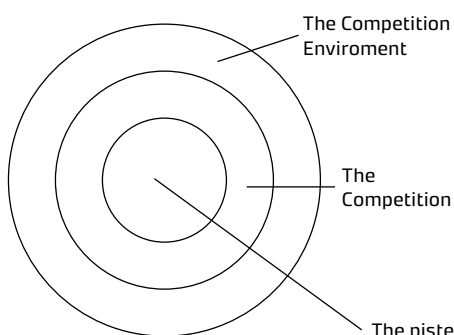
When preparing for a fencing competition, how many of us take the time to stop and think “What am I trying to achieve at this competition?” or “What does a successful performance look like to me?”. I imagine plenty of us would say, yes, 100%, I know what I’m going to this competition to do, and I know what a good performance would be. How many of us then take the time to look at that performance, look at the competition itself and look at all the other factors around the competition that might impact on performance, and prepare for them. The purpose of this article is to start to get us thinking about those details that might affect performance, and how we can prepare for them.

In a TEDx talk in 2014 (link at the end of the article), Michael Aufrichtig, the Head Coach of Colombia Fencing talked about how he revolutionised the fencing programme at

Colombia Fencing, making it a back to back title winning force in NCAA competition. He discusses two key principles that allowed him to be successful -

1. Knowing exactly what was required for top performance
2. Meticulous attention to detail on factors affecting performance

Coach Aufrichtig shared two key areas that Colombia directed their attention towards; recruiting athletes who had a track record of winning 5 hit poule fights and being able to convert 4-4 pressure fights. By addressing both of these, Aufrichtig demonstrated his understanding of what is required to perform in his specific environment, and attention to the specific details of how to achieve that. What lessons can we learn from this in how we prepare to perform at competitions. Let’s look a bit closer by breaking a competition down into three concentric circles.



The Competition Environment

We will start with the part of the competition the furthest removed from the piste. The competition environment. This could encapsulate all manner of different elements, from pre/post competition nutrition, to travel and sleep. The pro-cycling team, Team Sky (now INEOS), were made famous through their obsession to

details in the competition environment, so much so that for the first few years of their existence, they were a figure of fun for other teams in the peloton. Their attention to detail on things like nutrition and sleep included bringing the athletes’ personal bedding from home with them to hotel rooms, having a personal chef who would take over hotel kitchens to prepare all food personally and flying athletes from hotel to race start point by helicopter. While many of these are a world away from what we can practically do, the principles underpinning them are sound. Being sure of a good night’s sleep is vital. If looking at a domestic competition, this might mean assessing the start time of the competition and travel time, then making a decision on a hotel. Nutrition, particularly pre-competition is also vital, many athletes talk about feeling too nervous to eat before competition but how often do athletes take the time to experiment with different breakfasts to find something that does work for them, and that they can manage despite nerves.

What are those little details that if they go wrong could de-rail your day before you even step into the venue? What plans do you lay for them?

The Competition

Next, let’s step into the venue and look at the competition as a whole. Many fencing competitions take a day to complete, certainly several hours, the vast majority of that time is not spent on piste, fencing. If we take just the poules, a poule of seven for Epee takes about 2 hours, for Foil about an hour and a half and for Sabre it’s about an hour. How much of that time is spent actually on piste, fencing opponents? 5 minutes? 10? Maybe 15 minutes at a stretch? So what are we doing for the rest of the time? How frequently do we practice those moments between fights? Outside of this, we have the time before competition

begins, many athletes will have a warm-up routine that they trust before competitions, but what if you arrive late to the competition, or there is limited space to warm-up? Once we go to international competition, there are a whole host of other factors - the experience of weapons control may be a new one to athletes, that can pile stress onto the event, particularly if kit fails. Do you know what to expect from weapons control and have you practiced it before going to the competition?

Larger events and international championships may also have call rooms before rounds of direct elimination competition, where kit is checked again, and athletes must wait before going out to their piste. If we are not used to this experience, the pressure of needing to be in the call room, with the correct equipment, on-time, can be an added stress. What do we need to know about this in advance, and what is our strategy for managing it?

How often have we been affected by what's happening in the venue or in the way a competition is run? What are the predictable elements of a competition that we can identify and plan for?

The Piste

Our final domain is the piste itself. This circle refers to everything that happens during a match. Generally speaking, fencing competitions tend to look pretty much the same, poule fights to 5, followed by direct eliminations to 10 or 15. There may be some quirks to that format with multiple rounds of poules or repechage in the direct elimination, but fundamentally, this format holds true. Dr Jonathan Katz, consultant psychologist and coach supporting elite performance, suggests that it helps some people to think of a fencing competition as two entirely separate competitions; a poule competition and a direct elimination competition. Each one places different demands on the competitors and demands a different mindset and strategic approach.

Taking it back to Michael Aufrichtig's first principle, know exactly what a successful performance looks like. This will likely be a very personal thing, and will depend on the athlete and the competition. For a top competitor at a National Championships, a

successful performance might be winning the gold medal. This means that winning the direct elimination competition is a must, as well as coming close to winning the poule competition. For an athlete at their first Junior World Cup, a successful performance might be making the cut. This might mean their entire focus would be on the poule competition rather than the direct elimination competition.

Once we have a clear idea in mind of what our successful performance looks like, we can dive into the details of what happens on the piste, and how we prepare for them.

The Poule Competition

Here, we are looking at five or six fights to five points, a maximum of three minutes, and no mid-fight breaks. So what are the key details, and more importantly, how can we practice them? These could be score related, 4-4, 0-4, 4-0 - What different strategies might you employ in these moments, and how can you simulate the stress and the pressure. What difference does time make? How is 0-4 different from 0-4 with only a minute on the clock and does this change your strategies? What about the priority minute, how do you fence if you have priority, how do you fence if you don't? That's not all though. There are a number of things that could happen in a match that might influence our ability to perform; how would you practice having an injury that meant you were unable to lunge for the rest of the poule? How about if you received a yellow or red card? Every Foil and Sabre fencer can summon up a time where they felt on the wrong side of a refereeing decision, but how often do you practice having a referee that isn't seeing your actions as you'd expect? All of these things can have small or large impacts on performance in the poule competition, you have limited ability to affect them, but you can prepare for the effect upon you, through identifying them and preparing for them.

The Direct Elimination Competition

Some of the factors affecting direct elimination performance are the same as those affecting poule performance, 4-4 and 9-9 or 14-14 is still sudden death, but the stakes are raised because you have more

information about your opponent, and the loss means end of the competition. How do you prepare for this? Penalty cards, broken weapons and injuries will also happen. However, there are also events that are specific to direct elimination matches, the minute breaks can have huge impacts, allowing a trailing athlete to compose themselves and begin a come-back. The length of the fights and the addition of these breaks also increases the likelihood that an opponent will change tactics or strategy, which means we need to be ready for this, and have plans B, C and D ready to go for when this happens. It also means we need to practice recognising that moment we need to change, and putting the plan into action as soon as possible. Overturning or defending a lead is also likely to happen, as in poule fights, the difference being that this momentum may change two or three times in a match, rather than simply once in a poule fight. What other moments would you identify in direct eliminations that should be prepared for?

What else happens on a piste that might impact your performance? What would you do to prepare for them?

Hopefully this article will spur you on to think of competition a bit differently. Start with what you are trying to achieve and what a good performance would be, for you. Then, take the time to identify the details that might impact on your performance. Start furthest from the piste, working steadily inwards, for each of the things you identify, decide if you need a plan to deal with them and if you need to practice them in training in the lead up to the competition itself. Once you've made this plan, and followed it through to a competition, reflect on it, make changes as necessary, and try again for the next competition. Over time, see how much knowing what you're trying to achieve, and taking care of the little things impacts on getting the big things done.

Good luck!

Watch Aufrichtig's Ted Talk "One Touch to Glory" [here](#)

REVISITING - what makes youth sport fun?

The Fun Factors and now including the Not Fun factors

Analysis by Steve Kemp - GBR Programmes & Coaching Development Manager

Why do children choose to play sport?because it is fun! This has consistently been the number one response to surveys on why children participate in junior and youth sport.

It is important to note that children see fun very differently to how adults do. Dr Amanda Visek, et al. in a 2014 study, 'The Fun Integration Theory: Towards Sustaining Children and Adolescents Sport Participation' asked children to define fun in youth sports.

The research established "81 characteristics of fun and they were then classified into 11 Fun Factors" and ranked on what children outlined as fun.

The three highest rated factors of fun for children were:

1. Trying Hard
2. Positive Team Dynamics
3. Positive Coaching

This includes aspects such as:

- Trying your best
- Working hard
- Competing
- Playing well together as a team
- Supporting my teammates
- Good sportsmanship
- When the coach treats players with respect
- Having a coach who is a positive role model
- Getting clear consistent communication from the coach

Also highlighted that within their research there was in fact very little difference on the views of fun between; males and females, high socio-economic and low socio-economic backgrounds and talent/

elite pathway players and 'recreational' players. Fun is the critical factor.

Full list of the 11 Fun Factors and the 81 Fun Determinants are listed in order of importance from highest to lowest. For further detail please visit the full article on [this page](#).

Children ranked winning at number 48 in Amanda Visek's list of 81 fun determinants.

A win-at-all-costs mentality introduced by adults extracts fun from sport quicker than any other factor. It can be open or subtly hidden in the conversations of "the importance to have a winner and loser - just like we have in life or business". They will raise the question of a child's development if they don't learn how to win or lose. Children know whether they win or lose a game, bout or competition. Quite often poor reactions to a loss are a learnt behaviour and in fencing competitions overall you lose more often than you win and there is nothing wrong with having a winner or losers.

There is an importance to understanding how a child understands Fun. This is to ensure an athlete-centered or fencer-first approach and the impact of Fun from a psychological perspective in developing intrinsic motivation which will be critical to sustaining fencers in the sport.

Coaches and parents that have a win-at-all-costs mentality may get the short-term wins but ultimately the club, the competition or the sport will lose, as we have children dropping out due to them not

having fun anymore. This impacts on the adult playing base and their competitions, without enough of the next generation coming through.

Non-Fun Factors

Whilst it is a positive step to understand the "Fun Side" there is also the counter point - the Not-Fun Factors and Not-Fun Determinants. What do children see as not so fun in a sports environment. The initial feedback is of no surprise.

- Unwanted parent behavior
- Ineffective coaching
- Poor officiating
- Bad team chemistry

The challenges for coaches, parents and sports organisations will be to recognise and take steps in addressing these issues.

Unwanted Parent Behaviour - Children often find the behaviour of their parents at sport embarrassing including the way they react, yell, scream and 'cheer':

- putting too much pressure on players to perform or win
- parents yelling from the sidelines
- parent contradicts the coach behind their back
- parents abusing officials or yelling at opponents
- parents giving too many instructions

Ineffective Coaching - The coach is critical to whether a child has fun or not in youth sport. The children have identified the following coach behaviours that are not fun:

- coach puts down the team
- coach doesn't listen to players
- coach is unfriendly
- coach gets angry easily
- coach favours some players
- coach puts too much importance on winning
- coach takes too long to explain things
- coach argues with the referee/umpire

Some of these factors concur with feedback from fencers as part of the ADP programme.

The question was "What actions, behaviours do you want from your coach at training?"

The other Not-Fun Factors identified include:

- player sacrifices
- family challenges
- opponent misconduct
- frustrating teammate behaviour
- scheduling and equipment issues
- discouraging game time events
- uncontrollable, and other responsibilities

British Fencing is taking positive action in order to make the fencing experience more appealing and more FUN:

a fun, positive experience through their behaviours

- Discuss with their fencers 'what makes it fun for you?'
- Assess a club's/team's strength in fostering fun. We now have an idea of what fun looks like for junior and youth fencers
- Those in charge of a team of coaches can educate, support and review their coaching preparation and planning for practices and competition days using the sub-groups
- Those in charge of a team of coaches can use this information as a basis for the development of their club's overall



Correlations to the research:

- Being calm
- Not being possessive
- Treat each fencer fairly

Poor Officiating - Children highlighted the following factors that lead to umpires or referees making the game not fun:

- referee making biased/unfair calls
- referee not paying attention to the game
- referee is rude
- referee making a bad decision

Bad Team Chemistry - included aspects like: player gets picked on by teammates, team doesn't work together:

- player is blamed by teammates for a mistake
- teammates yell at each other
- player is left out by teammates
- player 'hogs' the ball

- Field of play restriction - to reduce the impact of the non-fun behaviours of parents and coaches
- Re-development of the referee pathway to increase the quality of refereeing
- BF Coaching Framework based on how to coach, putting the learner at the centre of the development process
- Parent membership - this means that parents, by being a member agree to the BF Codes of Conduct and can be held accountable for any breaches
- Creation of a parents' zone and social media content to support the positive fencing experience narrative.

There are a number of practical implications for coaches, clubs and parents to consider from the research:

- Clubs can use this research to reassess their mission statement and vision
- Educate parents on the value of fencing and how they play a key part in creating

coaching philosophy - clear statements with actionable behaviours

- Coaches can discuss the element of fun with their fencers - the first step in fostering positive and collaborative dynamics among teammates

Whilst most fencers want to be like an Olympic Fencer, they don't all want to be one. They do all want to have Fun!

Research:

Visek, A. J., Achrati, S., M. Mannix, H. M., McDonnell, K., & Harris, B. S., & DiPietro, L. (2015). The fun integration theory: Toward sustaining children and adolescents sport participation. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 12, 424-433.

Spotlight on Virginia Bailey, Projects and Programmes Manager

Back in 2015 Virginia Bailey joined BF as part of the then newly formed Development team. Four years on we talked to Virginia to find out why she enjoys working at the federation.



Virginia at a taster session

Tell us what made you want to join the team?

I've worked in the sports industry for 15 years now and enjoyed every job I have been lucky enough to do. From my first job as a Duty Manager at a Leisure Centre in the New Forest to my current job at BF, I've always had a role that I enjoy, felt rewarded by and feel like I'm making a difference in. Before I joined BF I was managing a Department of Health funded project at Women in Sport, 'Changing the Game for Girls', which looked at ways to better engage teenage girls in sport and physical activity by giving them the opportunity to influence peers and teachers in providing an exciting and engaging offer, designed by girls, for girls. When the role at BF was advertised I was instantly intrigued and excited by a sport I knew little about. What I did know was that as an NGB, BF wanted to understand about the type of people that fence, why they chose to fence and what potential there was to grow the sport. Investing in insight and research to inform decisions is something I believe is really important if we are to put funding in the right places to grow the sport and get more people that haven't had the opportunity to fence involved and it was apparent BF were prepared to do this.

The uniqueness of fencing was very appealing to me and a sport I wanted to understand more about. As someone that has always taken part in more traditional sports and had a lifetime of playing football, I was very intrigued by fencing and what it had to offer. One particular quote that captured my imagination and enthusiasm was "It's like a sports version of chess: challenges you intellectually as well as physically, making it more than just your average sport". I believe in going with your gut feeling and your heart when it comes to career decisions because you spend most of your waking day at work, in fact most of your life at work. So it's so important to wake up in the morning and want to go to a job you enjoy and work with people you like!

What's been the highlight of your career?

I have a number of career 'highlights' that will forever stay with me and remind me why I do what I do. As a rookie Sports Development Officer, I worked with the local police in Poole to set up and run a football project that would use football to build relationships with young people who were offending or at risk of offending and therefore help tackle crime and antisocial behaviour in local neighbourhoods. This was my first real introduction to the power that sport can play on positively changing people's lives and the power it has to bring people and communities together. Working on the ground with young people and their families, youth workers, police officers and people with a real passion to do something to give young people an opportunity to thrive was incredible to be part of.

In 2005 when it was announced that the 2012 Olympic Games would be hosted in London, my first thought was 'I have to be part of it!' So in 2009 I took on the role of Project Manager for the Olympic Legacy Project, RELAYS, in the South West. Over a number of years I worked with 100's of university volunteers and 1000's of young people across Dorset to get them inspired and engaged by the home Games. In 2012 I was successful in receiving a secondment to work as the Field of Play Manager for LOCOG at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff, an opportunity that I will always look back on and remember as one of the best times of my career.

But it's not just my 'day job' that has made my career to date so fulfilling; playing recreational sport all my life has only been possible because of the volunteers that have committed so much. 100s of hours of peoples time given up to coach, manage and beaver away behind the scenes to enable me to kick a bag of air around a pitch for the last 30 years has always been something I have been grateful for. The convenience of working shift work as a Duty Officer gave me time in the day to offer free coaching to primary schools and

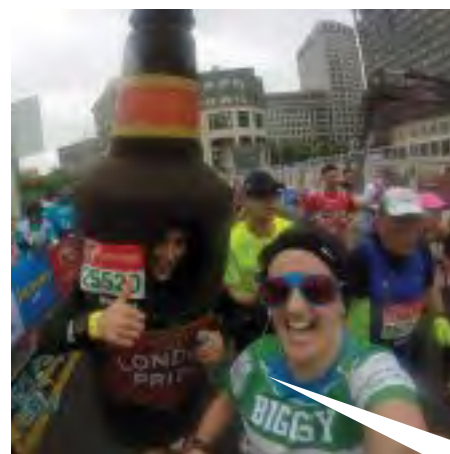
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Helped by volunteers as a player, Virginia now gives more to sport than most.

led me to establishing a girls youth section at my football club, which I ran for 9 years before moving to London. Since 2012, I have held the voluntary position of Competition of Manager for Netball Europe and I am also a keen fundraiser for several dementia charities, raising nearly £25k from charity events over the years, all through volunteering my time to do my bit to help sport tick over.

What's the best bit of about working at BF?

All of it! The team I work with are brilliant. I have learnt a huge amount from working with Georgina and the rest of the crew who all feel equally passionate about making a positive impact on the sport. There are never two days which are the same and we get to work with lots of brilliant people from all over the country who want to showcase this brilliant sport and encourage people to give it a go!



Virginia running the London Marathon in 2015 for charity

The Sword Refresh

By Sophie DeVooght - Media and Communications Officer



Front Cover Jan 2010



Front Cover Oct 2015

Welcome to the 'new look' Sword magazine. Since 1948, The Sword has highlighted the best of British Fencing with reports and results, interviews and news. Now, 72 years since the first edition, we're looking ahead to a future of new technologies, online interaction and a host of innovative ways to share fencing with the world. We've brought The Sword up to date with a new front cover title design and a sleek look to the pages and reports. The changes bring The Sword into line with the British Fencing current brand and logo, first launched in 2016. As we head into another Olympic year, we're looking forward to a bright future for fencing and hope you enjoy the new design.

Maximising opportunities for Scouts and Leaders

By Virginia Bailey - Projects & Programmes Manager



Each week over 400,000 young people and 100,000 adult volunteers take part in Scouting projects and activities at the heart of the UK's communities. If we were to put a price on that, it would cost approximately £821,000 a week. That's £42,692,000 a year JUST to put the people in place to run the sessions. The reach of the Scout Association is huge. They continue to grow their membership year-on-year and have a waiting list of 60,000 young people. Last year they hit an all-time high of 112,000 female youth members as well as 222 new sections opening in the UK's top 10% most deprived areas in the UK. So why is all this important and what does it mean for fencing clubs?

Making a connection with your local Scout group is a great way to introduce fencing to young people who quite probably won't have tried it before. From Cubs to Explorers, the Scout Association caters for young people of all ages. As many of you will know and probably have experienced, in just 20-30 minutes you can get someone fencing, having fun and keen to come back for more! Foam or plastic equipment is great for tasters. It's quick and easy to get children kitted up and ready for action and you can get through multiple groups in an evening without losing too much time.

Upskilling Scout Leaders to deliver fencing sessions themselves has proved very popular with leaders all over the country. We have adapted the two-day Core Coach Course to be able to deliver it over one, providing Scout leaders with the skills and knowledge to deliver a brilliant introduction to the sport. We have aligned the BF Bronze Award with the Master at Arms badge, incentivising and encouraging leaders to deliver fencing with their groups.

Back in September we attended Gilwell Reunion, an annual jamboree targeting Scout leaders from all over the UK. The event is designed to provide them with the opportunity to try a range of activities from mental health awareness training to

fundraising workshops to canoeing and rock climbing, to of course fencing! Over the weekend we trained 12 leaders from across the UK who are already delivering fencing to their young Scouts and we also spoke to a number of leaders who showed a genuine interest in bringing fencing to their Scouts.

Below is a list of the regions who are keen to give their Scouts an opportunity to have a go at fencing:

- East Midlands - 5 groups
- East of England - 2 groups
- Greater London - 6 groups
- North East - 3 groups
- North West - 1 group
- South East - 6 groups
- South west - 2 groups
- West Midlands - 2 groups

Out of those listed above, nine of them are particularly interested in connecting with their local fencing club and 24 of the groups are interested in setting up and running a Core Coach course. What do these numbers mean for clubs? If all those interested in running courses train up 12 Scout leaders and deliver tasters back to their groups, that's nearly 300 Scout leaders delivering fencing with a possible reach of over 3000 Scouts and that's just as a starting point! We want to work with clubs and regions to support those that catch the fencing bug, get excited by the sport and ultimately want to fence more!

Top Tips:

1. Offer FREE taster sessions to your local Scout group. The free part is crucial. An organisation that only exists because of its incredible volunteer workforce will be grateful of the support you can offer;
2. Keep it simple and fun - use plastic kit if you can to maximise the time you have with the Scouts. That will also help you get as many engaged as you can. Make the sessions fun and simple and let them fence!
3. Make the most of the highly skilled Scout leaders. Do they want to do a course themselves to be able to deliver taster sessions and get them hooked before you get involved?

“

Making a connection with your local Scout group is a great way to introduce fencing to young people who quite probably won't have tried it before.

Referee Development - Bridging the Gap between the Home Nations and British Fencing

By Nickie Bailey Volunteer Workforce Coordinator

As has been mentioned in a previous article, the Home Nations are responsible for the training and development of referees at grassroots levels, while British Fencing has taken over the examination process for referees seeking to officiate at an international level. This, however, has highlighted the lack of infrastructure and support for referees that want to bridge the gap between a Level 2 qualification which falls under the Home Nations' remit and Level 3 which falls under British Fencing's umbrella. It has also highlighted the need for any training and development to be tailored towards each individual's needs and goals. In conjunction with British Fencing's Talent Team, some of BF's leading international referees have been working to develop just such support and recently delivered a bridging seminar and mentoring session at the GB Cup in Nottingham on 21st and 22nd June.



Hand Signals by Luke Deamer

The traditional approach to referee education in fencing across the world is to deliver a series of seminars and conduct written and oral theoretical exams along with practical assessments via silent observation. This has proven to be a successful approach for picking out referees with international potential and allowing them to realise the extent of their abilities. However, the focus of this method is quite narrow, setting the goal exclusively as obtaining an FIE licence, leaving little room for accommodating the varied ambitions of different individuals. In contrast, an alternative approach for training being pioneered by British Fencing and the Home Nations places the learner (or candidate in the context of exams) and their goals and ambitions as the

central focus of their development. This approach has already seen great success in reforming and enhancing the training and qualification framework for British Fencing coaches.

While emphasising the importance of tailoring each learner's development to their personal goals and abilities, it has also been recognised that there are particular areas of the sport (e.g. applying the rules of *corps a corps*) which almost all Level 2 British referees need further support in. For this reason, the approach being taken in refereeing development is a hybrid of the "classical" - with the use of seminars - and the "novel" - with individualised feedback sessions between mentors and learners.

At the GB Cup, three of British Fencing's internationally active referees delivered a seminar to a group of 20 candidates across all three weapons. Luke Deamer, Patrick Jennings and Alex Savin covered topics that had been highlighted by the community of British international referees as areas that domestic British referees need support in to improve and attain Level 3 qualifications and beyond. The seminar was observed by experienced referee educator and examiner Mike Ellis who reported that the seminar was "very interesting, informative, and extremely well presented" and that there is a need for bridging seminars such as the one delivered at the GB Cup to be more widely disseminated amongst the regions.

The practical observations and feedback sessions took place alongside the competition and involved a lead mentor assigned to each learner. At the start of the day, each learner was taken aside for a brief one-on-one meeting to establish their short-term aims for what they wanted to get out of the day of mentoring and their mid- to long-term goals - specifically what their views of the purpose of their refereeing was (ranging from ambitions of attaining qualifications to altruistic desires to support their region and the wider domestic fencing community) and what support they needed to be able to realise these goals.

Throughout the day, each learner then had a series of 15-to-20-minute feedback sessions where they were guided through a self-evaluation that allowed them to identify areas for improvement for which the mentors were able to provide support. This took the form of concise tips, reminders, and a variety of game-based scenario role plays to illustrate ideas and reinforce concepts. The sessions appeared to lead to immediate and significant shifts in the learners' understanding of nuanced concepts and induced drastic improvements in their refereeing standard.

Towards the end of the day, every learner had a final two-way feedback session where the mentors and learners exchanged their views of the day and outlined the ways in which the mentors could support the learners in the long-term to realise their refereeing goals and ambitions whatever they may be.

Overall, the successful implementation of the bridging seminar and the mentoring session, combined with the innovative examination approach used at the recent refereeing exams conducted in Scotland (cf. recent *Sword* (October 2019) article titled *Refereeing Exam Success in Scotland!*), paves the way for an exciting development in constructing a framework for referee training, mentoring, and examination focussed on the needs of each individual learner with the aim and means to foster a cohesive and collaborative refereeing cadre that can support the fencing community in Britain.



Attack Touche

Battersea Foil

Join the Fun & Sparring

Summer Camp: 30th August - 1st September

Autumn Camp: 24th October – 27th October

Inviting Fencers to get together for warm up, technical footwork, sparring, some scenario fencing and lots of fun!

The Fencing School invites U14/Cadet and UNI Fencers (must be competing) for sparring and conditioning camp (see overleaf for our Kids Camp). As at Italian Camps there are no individual lessons as these are best left to personal coaches.

£ 60 per day (10am – 5pm)

Sponsored rate £30 possible for siblings and if top 20

Coaches welcome too.

PLEASE TEXT MARK: 07768 69 81 89

E: contact@thefencingschool.com

For more information visit:
www.thefencingschool.com

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With at least 2 ex
GB/International coaches will
spar and assist

12 piste fully equipped
modern sports hall

3 breakout areas including
canteen, outdoor pitch,
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15 Free Parking places

SUMMER & AUTUMN 'Mini Cavaliers' FENCING CAMP

30th August - 1st September

24th October – 27th October

All equipment included

The Fencing School - Improving Co-ordination, Self-respect, Self-motivation and Fitness

Lots of Games and fun fencing activities for younger ages - special tactical/technical programme for competitors.

Minimum Age: 9 years old. **Minimum Experience:** 1 year of Foil Fencing.



Round Up

Evie Millar Joins BF Team

Hello everyone. I'm Evie and have just started in October in my role as Head Office and Events Administrator at British Fencing. For my first article in *The Sword* I thought I would introduce myself and let you all know a bit about my role.

I have always been involved in sport from a young age and have been fortunate to have the opportunity to try and play many different sports. Growing up I had a very busy sporting timetable including sports such as hockey, tennis, cricket and swimming. There was never a day where I wasn't at a training session or match. Like most young athletes my biggest support came from my parents who were always my main cheerleaders and taxi service, taking me often to different evening training sessions and all over the country for matches and events at the weekend. Since then I have realised how much time and effort they put in to making sure I could make all the training and competitions. They are now getting their own back by me now becoming their taxi service!

My love of sport led me to study Sport Business Management at Leeds Beckett



Evie Miller

University. Whilst at university I continued to play hockey for the university and was elected onto the committee. During my time on the committee we organised a Leeds to London Cycle over 5 days for Hockey for Heroes. This was both a great experience organising the event and a challenge as after a long day of cycling we then played hockey games at each stop on the way!

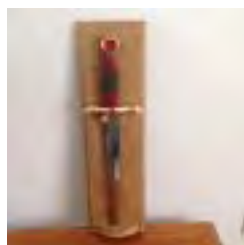
I loved both my course and the city of Leeds so much that I decided to stay at Leeds Beckett for an extra year to complete my Masters degree in Sport Business. During

my four years at Leeds Beckett I was given some amazing opportunities to learn from some of the industry's leading academics and work with some of Yorkshire's high-profile sports teams and organisations. This furthered my desire to work within the sport business industry and in particular within a national governing body.

Before joining British Fencing, I worked for Swim Safety who are the UK's leading event water safety specialists, providing water safety for triathlons and open water swimming events. Within my role I saw events through from start to finish, organising and being part of the water safety cover. Within this role I was lucky enough to attend and be part of many big events, including the World Triathlon Series in Leeds and Nottingham.

I am very excited to be joining British Fencing and cannot wait to get stuck into the role. My first few weeks have been great, visiting a couple of venues and preparing for the Eden and London Cup weekend. I really enjoy events and am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible!

STUNNING DAGGER - A FITTING DIRECTORS AWARD



The British Fencing Annual General Meeting provides an opportunity not only for the British Fencing Board to provide its annual reports to the membership but also to recognise the contribution that fencers, coaches and volunteers at every level have made to their sport.

That latter part of the AGM is the responsibility of the British Fencing Honours Committee whose job it is "to manage the nomination and recommendation process for all BF awards.

The BFHC will also make recommendations for other fencing awards within the fencing community, such as the FIE Hall of Fame, and any other appropriate national or international fencing award scheme."

In recent years, the Honours Committee has received a number of nominations from members and clubs that have not fitted into the normal template of medals, tankards



Lawrence with his local Men's Shed group who provided the polished mounting for the dagger.

and meritorious certificates. Therefore, the committee agreed that two further awards should be created - a President's Award and a Directors' Award. These were to be markedly different from the other presentations and the task was therefore given to the Secretary of the Honours Committee, Lawrence Burr to come up with some ideas! After some searching, it was agreed that The President's award should be in the form of an illuminated manuscript whilst the Directors' award should be a mounted dagger.

The Board of British Fencing wishes to express its thanks to Lawrence who sourced this fabulous dagger.

The recipients of the Directors' award since its inception are:

2017 Brian Speight
2018 Joe Gibbons
2019 Rob Bruniges

Nominations for BF Honours and Awards 2020

The British Fencing Honours Committee is now inviting British Fencing members to nominate individuals for British Fencing Honours. The process for so doing is now open and will close on 29 May 2020.

The Honours Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the British Fencing Board 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 direct from members. The committee acts as selectors with the object of recommending awards in a wide range of categories, whilst ensuring that there is consistency of award levels and criteria. Nominations are considered in committee in June and announced at the British Fencing AGM in October.

British Fencing members aged 18 and over can make nominations to the Honours Committee. The composition of the Committee is published annually on the British Fencing website along with a list of previous successful nominees.

To make a nomination please click on [this link](#) to download the application form. When you have completed your nomination please email the form to **Head Office** with 'BF Honours' as the subject.

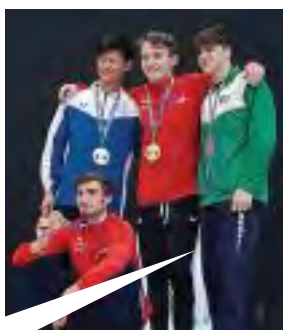
For the 2020 awards, please note that your emailed form must arrive at Head Office no later than 29th May, 2020.

To see who has been awarded Honours on previous occasions please click [here](#).

Lawrence Burr OBE
Secretary
British Fencing Honours Committee

Every adult member is eligible to make a nomination. So if there someone in your club, region or Home Nation who you think should be recognised, nominate them today!

GBR Begin Youth International Season on Form



Evans and Abrahams on the podium

British Cadet and Junior fencers began their new international season in September 2019 and what a start it has been! The medal run began with Cameron Evans claiming gold at the Junior Men's Foil



Sheffield's San Salvador Silver

World Cup in Guatemala whilst teammate Matthew Abrahams finished with bronze. On the same weekend just over the border in El Salvador, Laura Sheffield also made the podium, claiming silver at the San Salvador Women's Epee World Cup.....only just missing out on gold.

GBR's cadet fencers have also begun the season well and had a particularly good weekend at the EFC Epee Circuit event in Copenhagen at the beginning of December.



Scott Payne
Bronze in
Copenhagen

Edward Scott Payne took bronze in the men's individual as Isabella Summers went one better in the women's event claiming silver. Success continued in the team events as GBR 2 won bronze in both the men's (Goh, Jones, Richards & Walmsley) and women's (Bulman, Krzyzaniak, Lebor and Wilson) event. It got better though as GBR 1 (Black, Caron and Papdopoulos) fenced their way to the women's team title in Copenhagen.



Bronze for Summers also in Denmark

International Report & Provisional Olympic Qualification Standings

Graphics courtesy of @FencingTokyo on Facebook

In this issue of the magazine we will focus on team competition results as this is the first route to qualification for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. On 4 April this year the top four teams in the Olympic rankings will qualify three fencers to compete in both the team and individual events in Tokyo, irrespective of their zone. They will also be able to select a reserve for the team event. The next best teams from each zone will also qualify the same quota of athletes, as long as they are in the top 16 in the Olympic rankings. For disciplines where one or more zones don't feature in the top 16, the next best team(s) not already qualified will go to Tokyo.

There are additional individual places available to athletes from countries that have not qualified by the team route through the Adjusted Olympic Rankings. The illustrations in this article indicate the provisional qualification situation for both teams and individuals. They have been provided by David Baker who posts updates after each competition weekend on his Facebook page @FencingTokyo - a must for all fencing fans. Dave also issues the "Tokyo 2020 Fencing Podcast" after each event with our Editor, Karim Bashir, where the two discuss Olympic qualification in more detail. It's worth adding to your subscriptions along with our very own podcast, "British Fencing - Be You. Be Different."

So to the results so far this season.

Women's Epee

Just one event to update you on in this discipline - the Tallinn World Cup which took place 1-3 November last year. Poland continued their impressive Olympic qualification run by winning the event taking out strong teams from Italy, China and Russia on the way. They also jump to number one in the World. Russia's second place keeps them in the top four automatic qualification places. The USA beat China in the bronze medal match. So China, Poland,

Russia and the USA remain in the top four provisional in that order. Canada made the top 16 beating rivals Brazil on route and hold the additional PanAm place. Korea lost to Ukraine in the 16 but with China in the top four and no zonal rival team doing better, the Koreans held on to the additional Asian place. Egypt went into the event holding the additional African place but didn't make the 16 and thus drop out of Olympic contention, freeing up a place. The race for the additional European spot was the one to watch in Tallinn. Italy, Ukraine and Estonia lead the race but all got knocked out in the quarterfinals. Italy faced Ukraine in the 5-8 play-off matches and beat them before facing Estonia in the play-off for 5th place. Estonia edged that match but Italy held on to the additional European place. Ukraine pick up the place vacated by Egypt so are provisionally qualified but Estonia's result means they close the gap on Ukraine. Still all to play for.

Rank	Team	Points	Zone
1	USA	100	AM
2	RUS	85	EU
3	ITA	75	EU
4	EST	65	EU
5	UKR	55	EU
6	CHN	45	AS
7	KOR	35	AS
8	CAN	25	AM
9	BRA	15	AM
10	EGY	5	AF

And this is how the additional individual places stand at the moment.

Rank	Name	Points	Zone
1	USA	100	AM
2	RUS	85	EU
3	ITA	75	EU
4	EST	65	EU
5	UKR	55	EU
6	CHN	45	AS
7	KOR	35	AS
8	CAN	25	AM
9	BRA	15	AM
10	EGY	5	AF

Men's Epee

Again, just a single event to cover here - the Berne World Cup also in November. France were dominant as we've come to expect and beat Italy in the final with the bronze medal going to Ukraine who beat Japan in the bronze medal match. France remain at the top of Olympic qualification by 65 points from Switzerland who were knocked out by Japan and only finished 7th. Italy's result means they jump into the top four automatic spots at the expense of Russia and Ukraine also remain in the top four with their result. Morocco went into the event holding the African place but were knocked out in the 32. Meanwhile Egypt were on fire, beating Germany and Estonia on their way to 14th place. That result means they move into the additional African place but will need to continue their form to stay in the top 16. The USA made the top 16 and with no zonal challenger remain as in the PanAm spot. The battle for the Asian place remains intriguing. China held on to the place finishing 6th but lost to Korea in the 5th place play-off. To rub salt into the Chinese wound, Japan made the top four. So, whilst China are the provisional Asian qualifier, Japan and Korea are still in the chase. With the top four all from Europe, Russia going out in the round of 16 was not as big a disaster as it could have been. Russia now hold the additional European place but will be looking over their shoulder at Hungary who are closing the gap.

Rank	Team	Points	Zone
1	FRA	100	EU
2	ITA	85	EU
3	UKR	75	EU
4	JPN	65	AS
5	KOR	55	AS
6	CHN	45	AS
7	SWE	35	EU
8	RUS	25	EU
9	USA	15	AM
10	EGY	5	AF

The additional individual places look like this.

Women's Foil

There have been two events since the start of the new season - the Cairo and St Maur World Cups held in November and December. Going into Cairo, Russia, Italy, the USA and France occupied the four automatic places and they finished in the top for at the event, further cementing their Olympic qualification status. A fifth-place finish not only confirmed Canada as the next best team in the PanAm zone but illustrated that they could be contenders come Tokyo 2020. Japan lost to zonal rivals China in the 16 but retain the additional Asian team place. Korea also went out in the 16 but they beat Japan in the 9-12 play-off meaning that both China and Korea closed the gap on Japan. Germany beat Poland in the 16 and Hungary also made it through to the quarterfinals. However, Poland recovered to finish 9th and retain the European team place despite their rivals closing the gap.

At the next event in St Maur, Russia beat Italy in the final. So those two teams pull away from the chasing pack. Japan and Hungary took great quarterfinal victories against the USA and France, respectively. The USA team were weakened by at least one injury but recovered to finish sixth. A full-strength France will be hoping that St Maur was a blip in form but they finished fifth. So, the top four remain as they were. Japan ended up beating Hungary for bronze extending their lead for the additional Asian place and now look like they could challenge the top four. Should they do so, Korea and China are separated by just 13 points. Hungary's fourth place finish was enough to see them overtake Poland for the extra European quota place. Canada

remain firmly in the additional PanAm spot but need the USA to stay in the top four to confirm their attendance in Tokyo. For some time now, Egypt have looked like they were going to drop out of the top sixteen, thus opening up a bonus place for the next best team not already qualified. However, they impressively beat Brazil in the round of 32 before losing to Russia. A vital 45-44 victory over Sweden in the placings matches led to a fourteenth-place finish and what could be two additional points. The women's team foil fight is far from over but here's how it looks going into 2020:

And Hungary's rise to the European team place is great news for Diaz of Spain.

Men's Foil

This discipline has also seen two events at the start of the season. Bonn hosted the first World Cup of the season with the USA, France, Hong Kong and Italy holding the automatic places. The USA won the team event in Bonn making them mathematically out of reach in the PanAm zone - the USA will be going to Tokyo 2020 in men's foil. Canada continued to hold the PanAm place despite a shock loss to Belgium in the round of 32. Egypt went out in the 16 but with no real zonal rivals remained in the additional African place. Korea's silver medal winning performance means they leap-frogged Hong Kong into the top four but Hong Kong adopted the additional Asian place. Russia beat Italy in the bronze medal play-off and whilst they closed the gap on their closest zonal rivals remained in the additional European place.

The last event of the year for the men's foilists saw them compete in the Olympic test event at the Tokyo World Cup. France beat the USA in the team final with Italy taking bronze from Russia. So, the USA and France are both starting to look out of reach from the rest. Korea lost to Russia in the quarterfinals but remain in the top four with a fifth-place finish. Italy's bronze keeps them in the top four but they overtook Korea with their performance. The Russian team is starting to settle and despite losing in the semi-finals and the bronze place play-off are beginning to hit form and can still challenge the top four. They remain in the European quota place. Hong Kong retain the Asian place, 29 points ahead of Japan, so should hold on. Egypt got knocked out in the round of 16 but are not being challenged in the African zone. Canada did not have a good day in Japan but hold on to the PanAm spot. The question is can Brazil, just fifteen points behind them, do enough to overtake them? The top four places are far from settled for men's team foil and the knock-on effects of which team finishes where will have ramifications on the teams below. This is how it stands now:

A top 32 finish in Tokyo keeps Marcus in pole position for the additional individual places.

Women's Sabre

The women's sabre season began with the Orleans World Cup in November. Russia, France, Italy and Korea held the automatic spots with the zonal places provisionally with the USA, China, Ukraine and Tunisia. Russia won the event beating Korea in the final and remain as automatic qualifiers. Despite going out in the quarterfinals, France and Italy finished 5th and 6th, respectively and thus also stay in the top four. Ukraine and Hungary both lost in the semi-finals and faced each other in not only the bronze medal match but also a head-to-head play-off for the additional European spot. Ukraine prevailed but Hungary finished the event just 7 points behind them in the race for Olympic qualification. Deprived of Wozniak (injury) the USA went out to Spain in the round of 16 but with no zonal rival doing better, they remain as the top PanAm team. China went out in the quarterfinals but their rival for the Asian place, Japan, fell one stage earlier. So, China remain in a good place for Tokyo. Tunisia finished the event in 19th place and remain holding on to the additional African place but need to improve if they are to stay in the top 16.

The last event of the year for the men's foilists saw them compete in the Olympic test event at the Tokyo World Cup. France beat the USA in the team final with Italy taking bronze from Russia. So, the USA and France are both starting to look out of reach from the rest. Korea lost to Russia in the quarterfinals but remain in the top four with a fifth-place finish. Italy's bronze keeps them in the top four but they overtook Korea with their performance. The Russian team is starting to settle and despite losing in the semi-finals and the bronze place play-off are beginning

to hit form and can still challenge the top four. They remain in the European quota place. Hong Kong retain the Asian place, 29 points ahead of Japan, so should hold on. Egypt got knocked out in the round of 16 but are not being challenged in the African zone. Canada did not have a good day in Japan but hold on to the PanAm spot. The question is can Brazil, just fifteen points behind them, do enough to overtake them? The top four places are far from settled for men's team foil and the knock-on effects of which team finishes where will have ramifications on the teams below. This is how it stands now:

Rank	Country	Points	Qualification
1	RUS	100	Automatic
2	ITA	85	Automatic
3	FRA	75	Automatic
4	KOR	65	Automatic
5	USA	55	Automatic
6	CHN	45	Automatic
7	UKR	35	Automatic
8	HUN	25	Automatic
9	JPN	15	Automatic
10	ESP	10	Automatic
11	GER	5	Automatic
12	CAN	5	Automatic
13	BRA	5	Automatic
14	EGY	5	Automatic
15	TUN	5	Automatic
16	ARG	5	Automatic
17	GBR	5	Automatic
18	IND	5	Automatic
19	IRN	5	Automatic
20	ISR	5	Automatic
21	ITA	5	Automatic
22	ITA	5	Automatic
23	ITA	5	Automatic
24	ITA	5	Automatic
25	ITA	5	Automatic
26	ITA	5	Automatic
27	ITA	5	Automatic
28	ITA	5	Automatic
29	ITA	5	Automatic
30	ITA	5	Automatic
31	ITA	5	Automatic
32	ITA	5	Automatic

A top 32 finish in Tokyo keeps Marcus in pole position for the additional individual places.

Rank	Country	Points	Qualification
1	RUS	100	Automatic
2	ITA	85	Automatic
3	FRA	75	Automatic
4	KOR	65	Automatic
5	USA	55	Automatic
6	CHN	45	Automatic
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8	HUN	25	Automatic
9	JPN	15	Automatic
10	ESP	10	Automatic
11	GER	5	Automatic
12	CAN	5	Automatic
13	BRA	5	Automatic
14	EGY	5	Automatic
15	TUN	5	Automatic
16	ARG	5	Automatic
17	GBR	5	Automatic
18	IND	5	Automatic
19	IRN	5	Automatic
20	ISR	5	Automatic
21	ITA	5	Automatic
22	ITA	5	Automatic
23	ITA	5	Automatic
24	ITA	5	Automatic
25	ITA	5	Automatic
26	ITA	5	Automatic
27	ITA	5	Automatic
28	ITA	5	Automatic
29	ITA	5	Automatic
30	ITA	5	Automatic
31	ITA	5	Automatic
32	ITA	5	Automatic

Men's Sabre

Just one event in this discipline to update you on and that is the World Cup in Cairo in November. Korea, Hungary, Italy and Germany went to Egypt holding the provisional automatic places with the zonal spots held by Russia, Iran, the USA and the hosts. Korea won the event beating Hungary in the final whilst Italy took the bronze medal with victory over Russia. Germany lost to Russia in the quarterfinal but battled their way to 5th place. So, the top four remains unchanged and Russia retain the European spot. Russia also closed the gap to Germany to just 14 points. Iran went out in the quarterfinals but finished a place above their zonal rivals, China and thus retain the additional Asian spot. The USA will be disappointed have gone out in the 16 but finished 9th and seven places above their zonal rivals, Canada. Egypt also finished in the top 16 but with no African rivals, all they have to do is stay in the top 16 to go to Tokyo 2020 in men's sabre.

Rank	Country	Points	Qualification
1	RUS	100	Automatic
2	ITA	85	Automatic
3	FRA	75	Automatic
4	KOR	65	Automatic
5	USA	55	Automatic
6	CHN	45	Automatic
7	UKR	35	Automatic
8	HUN	25	Automatic
9	JPN	15	Automatic
10	ESP	10	Automatic
11	GER	5	Automatic
12	CAN	5	Automatic
13	BRA	5	Automatic
14	EGY	5	Automatic
15	TUN	5	Automatic
16	ARG	5	Automatic
17	GBR	5	Automatic
18	IND	5	Automatic
19	IRN	5	Automatic
20	ISR	5	Automatic
21	ITA	5	Automatic
22	ITA	5	Automatic
23	ITA	5	Automatic
24	ITA	5	Automatic
25	ITA	5	Automatic
26	ITA	5	Automatic
27	ITA	5	Automatic
28	ITA	5	Automatic
29	ITA	5	Automatic
30	ITA	5	Automatic
31	ITA	5	Automatic
32	ITA	5	Automatic

The provisional individual places look like this.

Rank	Country	Points	Qualification
1	RUS	100	Automatic
2	ITA	85	Automatic
3	FRA	75	Automatic
4	KOR	65	Automatic
5	USA	55	Automatic
6	CHN	45	Automatic
7	UKR	35	Automatic
8	HUN	25	Automatic
9	JPN	15	Automatic
10	ESP	10	Automatic
11	GER	5	Automatic
12	CAN	5	Automatic
13	BRA	5	Automatic
14	EGY	5	Automatic
15	TUN	5	Automatic
16	ARG	5	Automatic
17	GBR	5	Automatic
18	IND	5	Automatic
19	IRN	5	Automatic
20	ISR	5	Automatic
21	ITA	5	Automatic
22	ITA	5	Automatic
23	ITA	5	Automatic
24	ITA	5	Automatic
25	ITA	5	Automatic
26	ITA	5	Automatic
27	ITA	5	Automatic
28	ITA	5	Automatic
29	ITA	5	Automatic
30	ITA	5	Automatic
31	ITA	5	Automatic
32	ITA	5	Automatic

For more detailed information about how fencing qualification for Tokyo 2020 works please refer to the article in the April 2019 issue of this magazine, <https://www.britishfencing.com/the-sword-april-2019/>.



Tokyo Test Event Venue December 2019 (c) Augusto Bizzi

“This is Fencing” by Ziemowit “Ziemek” Wojciechowski

If you had happened into the Lansdowne Club one evening at the end of October last year you would have been surprised by the clamour of a book launch - not altogether surprising maybe but this launch was like no other; for the author was a fencing coach and the book was a coaching manual and yet people from all walks of life were queuing to purchase a copy and have the author inscribe it for them, their clubs, their sons and their daughters. Unbelievable but true! So what brought about this phenomenon and why the interest?

The author of course was “Ziemek”, arguably Great Britain’s most successful and renowned foil coach who after defecting from Poland in 1978 took up the mantle of National foil coach for the GB men’s and ladies foil squad between 1979 and 1993 and from 2006 until 2013. He was chosen to coach the GB Olympic Team (Kruse, Davis, Halstead and Mepstead) for the 2012 London Olympics - definitely his career highlight. Since then, he has continued to coach individual members of that team - most notably Richard Kruse. In his spare time he also runs ZFW Fencing Club developing the next generation of GB and international foilists! An impressive CV by any standards.

So where does this book fit in? The title gives a clue - “This Is Fencing” remains Ziemek’s “battle cry” in the midst of competitions and has really become his trade mark. His pupils understand that with this phrase, the hard work, the sweat and the creativity that he has engendered within his relationship with each and every one of them finally comes together and provides the confidence for each one to stretch out and snatch that winning hit. It is this compendium of instruction that provides that knowledge to bring this about.

Outwardly it is written as a coaching manual but it is far more than that. It is a collection of fencing principles and methodology honed over 50 years at international level at foil. It introduces the reader to a new world of ideas and approaches to training concepts whilst putting greater emphasis on preparation for competitions, obtaining the best performance out of a fencer and equipping him/her with all the necessary tools from goal setting to performance analysis.

To my mind there are a number of aspects within this book that I really like. In the first instance is the positive reinforcement of the importance of the relationship between the coach and his pupil and how vital it is that they both share a common achievable goal. Unremarkable you might think but here you see the chapters reinforcing and overlapping the core theories and principles of coaching, using real life examples and case studies attributed to contemporary fencers from across the world.

Secondly is the fact that the reader is introduced to a new language - a veritable lexicography of terms that must surely become the lingua franca of fencing salles across the country. Who would have known what moves and attacks were behind the Champley, the Garbushka, the Ironing Board, the Meinhardt and Mashing grapes? Coaches beware - you need to know these terms now as foilists will be taking their lead from this book! A handy glossary for the uninitiated is added to the back of the book for reference.

Lastly, it is Ziemek’s insistence that fencers and their coaches really need to plan their year to achieve success on the piste. There is an almost indelible blueprint here taking both fencers and coaches from the individual lesson plan through to regular attendance at international training camps in preparation for major competitions. This is a subject dear to my own heart, advocated over many years that in order to win at overseas competitions you need

to train with overseas competitors and compete with them as often as possible. One hopes that a future Brexit will not impede this! This book contains so many facets of information that even if you just copy the performance guide on page 157 and the psychological influence chart on page 148 you will be well on your way to emulate the best of our British foilists.

I also thoroughly endorse Ziemek’s continuing efforts through this edition to raise the bar of excellence that he has managed to create in this country. What we now need is for those same ideas and principles to be adopted across to sabre and epee. This should not be just a pipe dream for us all. This handbook of our art should be beside every fencer as he or she progresses forward in their desire for competitive success. Dip into it and learn from the Master.

As a final aside, I love the fact that Ziemek has also been a member of The Epee Club since 2003.

Lawrence Burr

“This Is Fencing” is published by Crowood Press at £24.00 (www.crowood.com). It is also available on Amazon.



16th Century Rapier Treatise Published

An important Italian manuscript on the rapier has been published for the first time in a collaboration between the Royal Armouries and the Wallace Collection. Discourse on The Art of Fencing edited and translated by Piermarco Terminelli and Joshua Pendragon was written around 1600 by the Bolognese fencing master Camillo Palladini. It incorporates 46 beautiful red-chalk drawings that appear with the original text and an English translation in a stunning book that takes its place alongside the great rapier treatises of Fabris, Giganti, Capoferro and Alfieri.

The manuscript appears to be complete so quite why it was not published at the time remains a mystery. Palladini instructs his students not only in the discipline of the fencing school but also gives practical advice on coping with violence in the street or tavern. If involved in a fight while seated between others on a bench without room to fully draw a sword he says pull the sword out of its scabbard as far as possible and break off the empty end, then thrust with the point sticking through the remains of the scabbard. But he concludes that it is better to avoid rather than seek confrontation.

Little is known about the history of the manuscript before 1878 when it was found in London and acquired by the leading French fencing master of the late 19th century, Arsene Vigeant who was to collect the first great library of rare fencing books. Although his prints, weapons and other rare fencing items were dispersed at auction after he died in 1916, Vigeant's unique fencing library was not in the sale, having been sold en bloc three years earlier to the 8th Baron Howard de Walden, later to become President of the Amateur Fencing Association. It then disappeared from view, known only to the Howard de Walden family, until I re-discovered it in 1989. Ten years later, after the 9th Baron died, the library passed to the Wallace



Collection on long-term loan in lieu of death duties. Now, some 400 years after it was written the magnificent Palladini manuscript is finally accessible to a wider public.

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**National
Fencing
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Established by Malcolm Fare in 2002. Visits by appointment.

Would you like us to review a fencing related book, film or game? Please email the Editor, karim.bashir@catchsport.com with the details

Obituary - Harry Jones 1931-2019

By Rochelle Dazely



Harry was still coaching and doing his armoury until the week of his death. Looking back at Harry, he was always a sportsman. He enjoyed many sports including time as a competitive and successful cyclist before joining Ruislip FC in the 1950s. As a competitive fencer he was successful enough to be on an Olympic Training Squad, narrowly missing out on competing.

Harry met Jean when they were fencing at the Excalibur getting married in 1963. Sadly, Jean died in 1981. Harry brought up their children with help from family and friends. Kirsten Payne said, "He coped with the challenges so well". Moving to Salle Eton both of his children Ian and Karen enjoyed success as junior fencers and Harry began coaching in the late 80s.

There have been so many amazing comments about this man. Words coming in include; supportive, generous - especially of his time, non-conformist, mischievous, kind, inquisitive, a great listener, inspiring, enthusiastic, great friend, dedicated, selfless, friendly and practical.

Most of us knew him as a coach and an armourer. He was always happy to help and get involved with events across the county (BB&O) and region (Southern). The BB&O committee said 'he was always doing something most of us didn't really realise needed doing until we needed it doing'. He was also known and loved by the broader fencing community. Dave Lichfield noted that Harry was 'very great loss - a great friend'.

Becoming a fulltime coach in the early 1990's Harry worked at various schools including High Wycombe Royal Grammar School, Dr Challoners, Wycombe Abbey, Eton College and Headington School and Wellsbourne FC as well as Salle Eton. Harry had a good eye for who had potential, encouraging some English and British Champions and BF/EF internationals. Just from RGS he worked with Alistair Gerrard, Ed Rysdale, Adrian Griffin ("omnipresent during my fencing career and an excellent ambassador"), Tom Bennett ("Harry was instrumental in shaping my fencing career and I am so grateful for everything that he



did for me") and Paul Dazeley ("an absolute privilege to have such an inspiring person - a great many of us are indebted to him and will never forget him"). At competitions he would always encourage fencers and was always ready to chat.

Harry's background was as an engineer. In his spare time, he loved driving and working on sports cars, a favourite being his MX5. Often driving fencers to a competition, memories of very long journeys were recalled by Nick Payne and Sharon Chan.

Harry became an armourer, often creating bits of equipment to use to assist with tasks. He was regularly seen in this role at Eton LPJS, Slough Open and many county/region competitions, only requesting a decent cuppa and a treat (or 2!).

Harry was so proud of his family. Whenever you got to chat about them his face would light up, especially when talking about his grandchildren. Harry is a great loss to family, friends and fencing.

More memories will be going up on the new Southern Fencing website when it is launched.

Results



The up-to-date 2018-2019 season latest results are now listed on line and can be [accessed here](#)

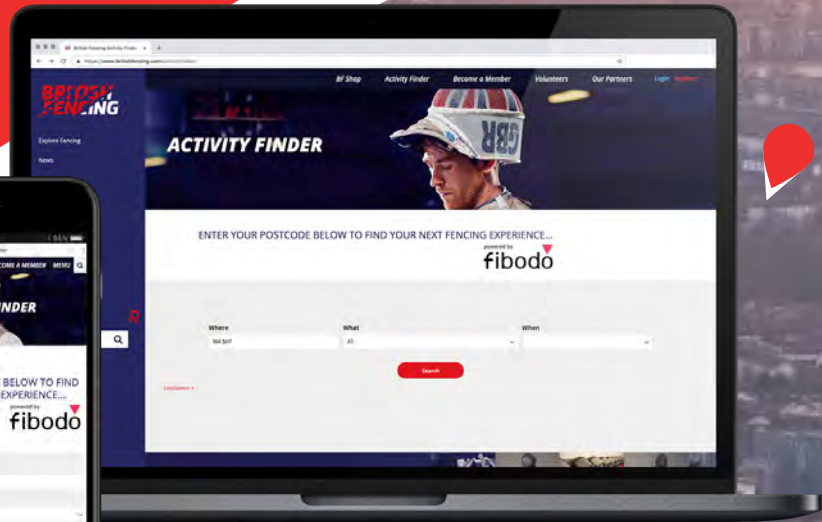
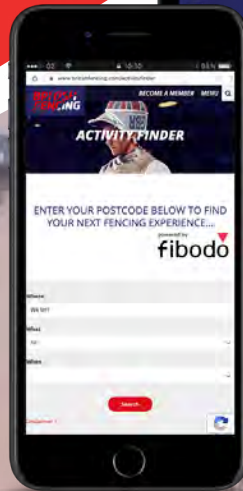
Please forward all your suggestions for additional on-line fencing results to: events@britishfencing.com



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