

British Academy of Fencing **ACADEMY NEWS**

November 2012
Issue 68

"Run by coaches for coaches"



AN IMPORTANT DECISION

The AGM in January will be asked to consider an important change to the legal status of the Academy, namely the incorporation of the Academy as a Limited Company. The essence of this move is outlined below by our President in a presentation that has been prepared with the assistance of our Honorary Legal advisor, Katy Wilkinson. Members are urged to read this carefully and asked to make every effort to attend the AGM.

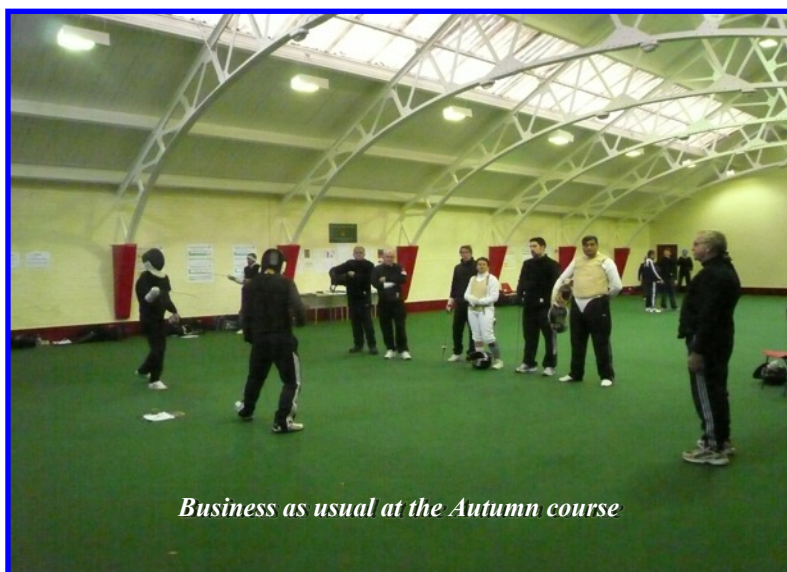
Background

The BAF has a long history reaching back to a Royal Charter in 1540. The BAF has not stood still

though, frequently examining its role in the fencing world and evolving to respond to changing climates. The BAF's purpose is currently to "provide a system of training for coaches of all levels from beginner to full fencing master and can provide all the help that is needed in becoming a fencing coach."

Less attention has been paid to the BAF's legal structure, which has not changed, we believe, since its reinvention in 1949. It is an unincorporated association – a group of people who have agreed together to pursue common interests without any separate legal identity. This, in fact, means that the individual members have personal liability for any debts of the association. This structure has served well to date, as there are few liabilities that the BAF incurs – it does not employ staff, nor does it own any land or offices. However, it does organise regular courses, provides a structure for coaching examinations and standards of professional conduct, organises professional insurance, and, of course, admits to membership those it considers appropriate. These activities raise the possibility of court actions in an increasingly litigious world. Although some of the worst case scenarios of injury during fencing are likely to be covered by the individual insurance of the coaches, it is not difficult to envisage other scenarios where this would not apply. Irrespective of the merits of such a case, the costs of defending such litigation might be substantial and would have to be funded in advance of the case by individual members. Costs are not always recoverable even if you are on the winning side.

...continued on page 5



Business as usual at the Autumn course

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NEXT ISSUE: February 2013

Contributions by January 10th, please

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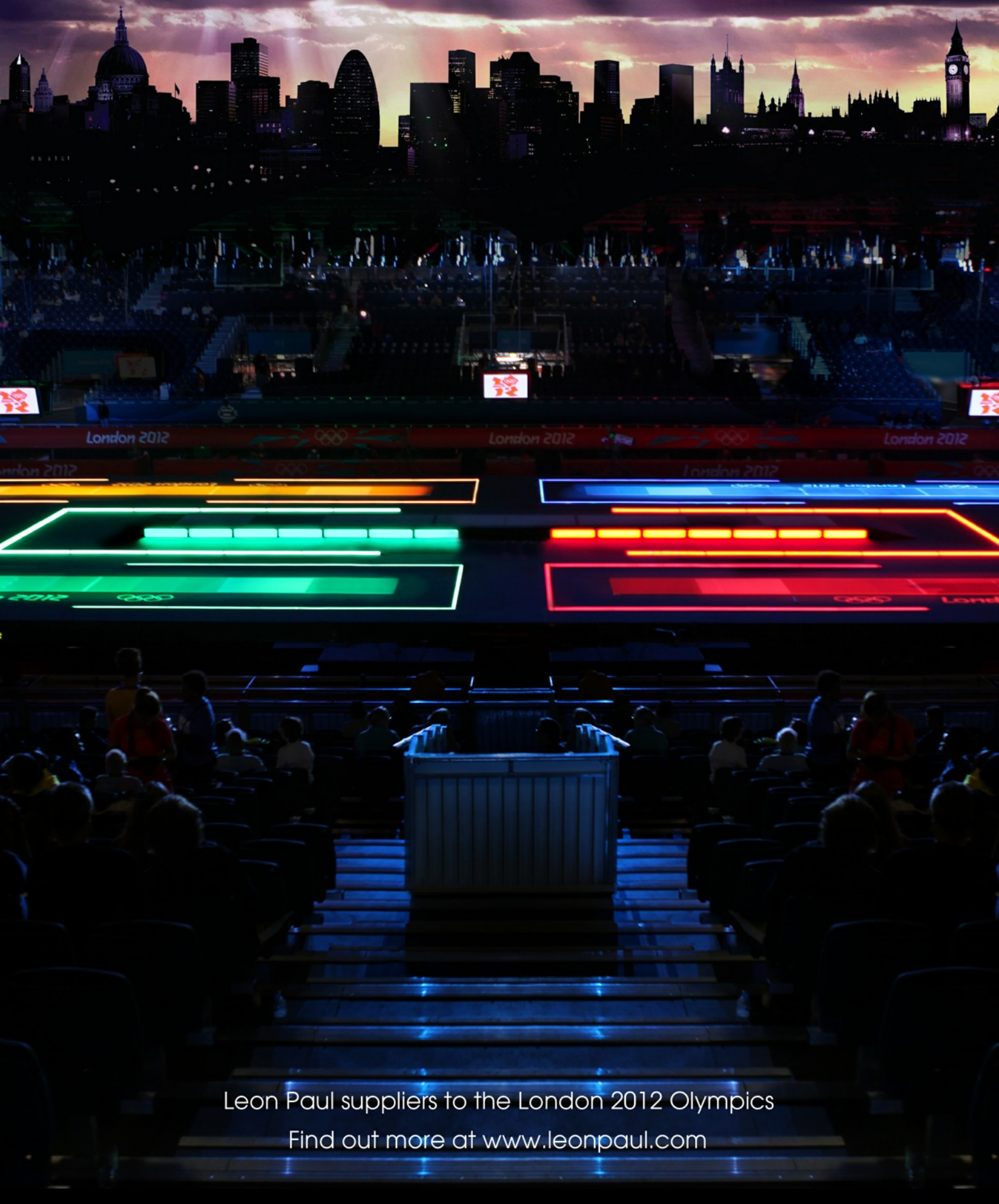
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USEFUL INFORMATION**ACADEMY WEB SITE**

FOR ALL THE LATEST INFORMATION AND MERCHANDISING GO TO THE ACADEMY WEB SITE AT

WWW.BAF-FENCING.ORG

**RECOMMENDED RATES OF PAY**

| <u>Level</u> | <u>Rate</u> |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Diploma | 37.75 |
| Maitre d'Escrime and Provost | 30.35 |
| Member | 25.00 |
| Associate | 22.35 |

Please Note: These rates are given for guidance only. Coaches are free to negotiate their own rates, according to local conditions. The Academy recommends that travel, up to 20 miles from home, should be included in the basic fee.

PROFICIENCY AWARDS

The current rates for awards are:

BAF Members:

1 - 4 Awards £3.70 each
5 - 9 Awards £3.60 each
10+ Awards £3.40 each

Approved non-Academy Coaches:

1 - 4 Awards **£4.70** each
5 - 9 Awards **£4.10** each
10+ Awards **£3.90** each

A5 Study Guides:

1 - 4 £2.65 (**£2.90**) each (incl. p&p)
5+ £2.30 (**£2.65**) each

A4 Syllabus leaflets:

Free with Study Guide, otherwise 60p (**70p**) each.

A3 Sized Wallcharts:

65p (**75p**) each
Figures in **RED** are for non-BAF members

EXAMINATION FEES

Level 1 Assessment £11.00

Level 2 to Diploma £21.00 (**£26.00**)

These are for "normal" exams - for Special exams, consult the Course Officer. Figures in **RED** are for non-BAF members

DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation is available from the Course Officer, Dave Jerry

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Key Teaching Points Foil | } |£7.35 (£9.45) each |
| Key Teaching Points Epee | | |
| Key Teaching Points Sabre | | |
| Key Coaching Points Foil | | |
| Key Coaching Points Epee | | |
| Key Coaching Points Sabre | | |
| Glossary of Terms (including Translation of Fencing Terms)..... | | £7.35 (£9.45) |
| Employment Guidelines..... | | £7.35 (£9.45) |
| Teaching/ Coaching Tactics (2nd Edition)..... | | £16.80 (£21) |
| CD-Rom Issue 5 – this contains all the syllabuses and current questions for BAF examinations, as well as other examination material..... | | £10.00 ** |
| Examples of past written Papers – for the Advanced and Diploma examinations - FREE - apply to Course Officer | | |

All prices include p & p. Figures in **RED** are for non-BAF members

** Price of CD-ROM includes lifetime replacement guarantee - only buy once!

A Compendium containing all major Documentation, including the ones above, plus more relating to examinations, is now available. For full details see Issue 64 of Academy News or contact Professor Isobel Combes (iacombes@btinternet.com)

THE PRESIDENT WRITES.....



Ideas – or is it all just talk, talk, talk...

One of the frustrating things about living with a writer is that every time I come up with a great new idea for a best-selling novel, or a screenplay that will make us millions and let us move to that luxury home in the Bahamas, I get 'That Look' and she tells me "having ideas is the easy part". The hard part is doing anything with them and turning them into cash.

This year there seems to have been a lot of ideas floating around the fencing community. Because the life span of the average recreational/mildly competitive fencer is about 5 years, there is a constant influx of people who think that they are the first person to see 'The Solution' to everything that is going wrong with fencing. If there is one thing fencers like to do more than anything else, it's talk and boy do they talk at every opportunity about how simple it would be to put things right, be it coming up with a whole new kind of competition circuit, getting new coaches in from abroad, or getting 'mystery shoppers' into fencing clubs to see if they are doing their job right!

People who know me also know I'm not a great fan of the online Fencing Forum, mainly because it allows a great deal of damaging and malicious abuse to be propagated mostly by those who wish to remain anonymous. It's a shame they haven't got the strength of character to write in their own name, though I guess they have to have somewhere to vent their frustrations and have a moan. However, you only need to scroll back a few years and sometimes only a few months to find a real graveyard of 'Great Ideas' ... a training weekend that was going to bring in foreign fencing coaches and include courses on everything under the sun, new national and regional academies (formerly known as centres of excellences – names change but the ideas are basically the same) that were going to revolutionise the training of competitive fencers and provide all the bells and whistles, new programmes in schools were going to radically improve the intake for fencing clubs. The list goes on and on.

The ideas may all have had merit – the sad thing is not enough people were willing to stand up and do the work and those that do are criticised to death.

It is the same in coaching. It seems to have become almost a rite of passage for a prospective fencing master in the latter stages of passing his/her diploma to give me a long lecture about what changes he or she is going to impose on the fencing world. Nor is it uncommon to listen to conversations among upper level candidates along the lines of "when WE are in charge" I've given up getting excited – it is too disappointing, knowing all the talk and ideas never comes to anything.

Ideas are great and I have heard quite a few and quite a few good ones concerning change and how the Academy could be improved. But they are no good to me without action. If you can bring me an idea AND the energy and enthusiasm to make it happen, then I am far more interested. We all know that with the best will, and hard work, a great idea can still fail. It can even lose the Academy money. I'm not opposed to ideas and I'm not opposed to talking about them, though it would be refreshing to listen to someone with the courage, energy and enthusiasm to try. If you're that person then the committee and I will support you and try to provide you with the help you might need

So, in the words of Elvis - 'A little less conversation (and) a little more action please' and we might succeed in actually making a difference to our sport!

Denstone October Course

The course was staffed by Peter Northam, Isobel Bruce Combes, Dave Jerry and me.

Isobel and Dave were put in charge of the Level 2 & 3 candidates, while Peter did the lion's share of the work with the Advanced and Diploma Group and I filled in as and where necessary. At levels 2 and 3, the week was structured to provide plenty of revision of basic coaching techniques with a series of lecture/demonstrations (staff instructed to demonstrate more than lecture!). In addition to this candidates at Level 3 were introduced to the concept of simple choice reaction exercises and how to use them as a basis for coaching.

At the Advanced and Diploma levels, the course was structured around coaching techniques and the integration of coaching tactics, using the flowcharts developed in our *Teaching and Coaching Tactics* book. One large section of the wall was covered with A2 posters of simplified versions of our basic flow charts and Advanced and Diploma candidates learned how to make use of these to develop their lessons. The underlying theme of the Advanced and Diploma group was that of competitive lessons

On behalf of the staff and the committee of the Academy I would like to thank and congratulate everyone concerned for what proved to be a hardworking and harmonious course

I would also like to thank the following who gave up their time to examine: Leon Hill, Tom Etchells, Peter Stewart, Louisa Miller, Bob Merry and Liam Harrington

The SSTT

In mid-October the SSTT completed a booklet entitled 'The Standard'. The booklet is intended to provide candidates, examiners and course tutors with guidance as to the standard at each level for both class and individual lessons. Whilst it would be impossible to cover every possible scenario, the booklet addresses all the marking categories and provides examples of class lessons at Levels 2, 3 and 4.

In the last twelve years the SSTT with Leon as its chairman have produced the most comprehensive list of documents specifically written to help candidates, examiners and course tutors. In that time the SSTT have met on average 40 times per year. Earlier this year Leon said that once this latest document was completed he would step down from the SSTT. Those of us who have served on the SSTT during the last 12 years know that this is the end of an era which will be sadly missed and I will miss meeting with Leon on such a regular basis. I and every member of the Academy owe Leon a debt of gratitude, for his dedication, commitment, professionalism and attention to detail, not to mention hosting every meeting. Other members of the SSTT who deserve our thanks and appreciation have been Tom Etchells, Andrew Vincent and Isobel Bruce Combes.

Philip Bruce

AN IMPORTANT DECISION *(from front page)*

So the BAF committee considers that it is now a sensible time to move towards a separate legal identity and limited liability structure to protect you, the BAF's members, from calls on your personal funds. In the changing landscape of sport, the additional benefit is that this may enable the BAF to take advantage of other opportunities such as funding applications.

Options

The legal options are many and varied and although each achieves the aim of limited liability, they do have their own advantages and disadvantages in terms of the additional requirements for filing documents with Companies House, the treatment of any profits and how the members interact with the company. The Committee has obtained initial advice from an external solicitor in this field that a company limited by guarantee would be the most suitable option at this stage.

Here the company is guaranteed by its members - they guarantee the payment of a sum of money (which can be a nominal amount such as £1) in the event of difficulties arising. The company is able to retain any profit rather than distributing it to members or shareholders. There are no restrictions on what the company can do, unlike a Community Interest Company (CIC) or Charity where there are "qualifying" activities. The senior officer holders of the BAF would become the officers of the company and would have additional defined duties towards the company and its members (such as ensuring the filing of documents at specific times) but otherwise the structure of the current system of committee meetings and AGM would remain as it is now, as would the members' voting rights set down in the Articles.

Pros and cons

There are of course some disadvantages to incorporation. The first is the costs of the incorporation itself which is estimated at about £1,000 (plus disbursements and VAT) and secondly there will be some annual costs which are not currently incurred, specifically the need to file an Annual Return and accounts, although these costs can be kept to a minimum by the wonders of online filing.

However, the Committee has considered these costs and feel that they are proportionate to the need to protect the BAF's members from personal liability.

Next Steps for AGM

The Committee will put forward a motion at the next AGM that the BAF resolve to incorporate itself. The current Articles have been reviewed and, not surprisingly, they do not envisage this scenario. The rules for passing this motion will therefore be the same as any other – namely that 10% of the full membership of the Academy attends at the AGM and that the motion is passed by a simple majority of the number of votes cast.

The Committee does not want to pre-empt the decision at the AGM but there may be some alterations to our Articles required so, in order to save the costs of an additional meeting, we will instruct our solicitor to identify any amendments to our Articles which would need to take place prior to incorporation and circulate them as an item for the agenda at the AGM - to be approved in accordance with Article 29 & 30 if, and only if, the motion to move to this structure is approved.

After the AGM

If the AGM confirms that the BAF should incorporate, then the Committee will instruct the solicitor to form "British Academy of Fencing Ltd" (special permission will be required for the use of the word "British") and to prepare the necessary Articles of Association and transfer of assets agreement, with a view to completing the transition as soon as possible.

This is a momentous decision for the BAF but one which the Committee is sure is the right way forward. There will be little outward evidence of this change when it happens – committee meetings will go on as before and the day to day life of the BAF will continue as it does now. However, we are sure that all our members will sleep that little bit easier at night knowing that their personal assets are no longer at risk in the event of some fanciful court action.

We do hope that you will give us your support and of course are all happy to discuss any concerns that you may have.

AGM ACCOMMODATION

No special rates have been negotiated with the Hilton Hotel this year, as it has been found that it is usually possible to beat these rates by booking through any number of online companies.

See the details of the Hilton on page 7, if you wish to book direct.

Local alternatives to the Hilton include:

Holiday Inn Express (directly opposite Hilton Warwick)
Junction 15, M40
Stratford Road
Warwick
CV34 6TW
www.hiexpress.com and search for Warwick

Warwick Arms Hotel
High Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4AT
<http://warwickarmshotel.com/contact.htm>

The Lord Leycester Hotel
Jury Street
Warwick
CV34 4EJ
<http://www.lord-leicester.co.uk/>

Please note that car parking at the Hilton costs £3.

I SAY, I SAY, I SAY.....

As coaches, we spend much time teaching pupils to react rapidly to stimuli and also to hit the target accurately. With many, this is a thankless task.

So how is it that they can, in under a second, in the dark and with their eyes shut, always hit the "Snooze" button?



THE OLYMPIC LEGACY IN ACTION

by Kevin Nelson

In the last edition of Academy News, John Worsley, in his Members' Rep column, discussed the promotion of fencing,, using the Olympics as inspiration, and asked if clubs had been promoting our sport in this way. Here, Kevin Nelson describes some of his experiences with Cotswold Fencing Club.

It started with us thinking "what can we do?", and then, "whom do we need to contact?". Luckily for us, a grapevine contact from Shaun Garley (Gloucester Coach) inviting us to talk to Tom from Cheltenham Sports Development, provided the answer. Tom was looking for a local fencing club, to run several fencing taster sessions over the summer. We found out halfway through the negotiations that another club had been contacted via British Fencing head office. After sorting that out, we ran the first two taster sessions during the Easter holidays. Both were well received and we had our photo in the South West Region Inspire Newsletter (Spring 2012).

Thinking carefully about club promotion, we made some small badges with the club logo and web address on to give away at events, and we also acquired a roll-up banner advertising the club, to take with us.



Next, through a parent of one of our members, we helped the British Disabled Fencing Association with a demonstration at a local large government establishment (not allowed to tell you where, or who), but the building is known locally as the doughnut. There we put on a demonstration of wheelchair fencing in their reception area. The audience was huge, numbering hundreds, watching us from both ground level and the galleries above. Everyone was very interested in discussing and watching fencing. But the best thing to come out of the demonstration was the feedback from those watching - "By the end of the bout, I had forgotten that they were in wheelchairs, and was watching it as a sport". That day I nearly lost my voice trying to make myself heard, as I introduced fencing and its rules to them - over several hours! We organised a special taster session for those who were interested later in the year. Having a wheelchair fencer has been a real bonus, especially after his bronze medal at the World Wheelchair Fencing championships in Warsaw, and he has been in the local newspaper twice.

Towards the end of the summer term we had several contacts from schools wanting a day's fencing at the end of term as part of their Olympic week. Some of these we were able to do, whilst for those that we were unable to do, we passed details on to other local coaches and clubs. Throughout the summer holidays we ran five more taster sessions and we had a further two small articles in the local newspapers, who then asked us to train a reporter (Nadia Stone, shown right with Kevin). From that we had a full page article in the Gloucestershire Echo. Although for me the most terrifying experience was going into the BBC Radio Gloucestershire Studio for a live interview with David Smith just before the Olympics and a recorded interview after the Olympics with Claire Carter. The final request for the summer was to train several footballers from Cheltenham Town Football Club, who are raising money for the Star College Charity through the Gold Challenge program. This was all about the footballers, so no interviews this time, but the star college were tweeting everything as it happened, all of the pictures in the paper were showing the lads fencing, and we even had about thirty seconds of fencing on ITV West. It was hard work, but worth it!

While this was going on one of my coaches was at the Olympics/Paralympics as an armourer and another club member had volunteered, ending up ferrying VIP's around.

Trying to capitalise on the summer has been time-consuming, but we now have three very full beginners' courses running (48 beginners in total), one of which had to be specially organised on a different night due to the number of adult enquiries. We have also had half a dozen returning fencers adding to club numbers. This means that we will have at least doubled our club membership this year.

So to sum up – in answer to John Worsley's question – what can we do? We have to take whatever opportunities arise to advertise fencing, and if we can't do it then we need to be able to pass the work on to someone who can, or work together with other clubs and organisations. It also helps if you have a good website with clear information and nice pictures. Then, of course, it is a key factor to have active committee, coaches and fencers, whom you can rely on for support and help when you need it. We have started to train two more fencers as coaches and are bringing them on by having them shadow experienced coaches. We have tried to cultivate a friendly and competitive atmosphere in the club, where people new to the club feel welcome and able to participate in the sport, whatever their ability.

(This is exactly the kind of article Academy News needs. Members sharing their experiences in this way can help inspire others to find ways of publicising our sport. You don't need to be on the committee or a Master of the Academy to contribute. Let's have more, please. Bob Merry, Editor)



Photos on this page supplied by Kevin Nelson - top photo from Cheltenham Sports Development

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the British Academy of Fencing will take place on Saturday 5th January 2013 at 11.00 am at the:

**Hilton Hotel, Warwick
Junction 15, M40 , A429
Stratford Road Warwick
CV34 6RE
Telephone: 01926 499555**

All members of the Academy are urged to attend.

The meeting of Maîtres d'Escrime, Provosts and Members to commence at 9.30 am.

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Annual Dinner of the Academy will be held. Those attending are asked to assemble at 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm. BAF Awards, Diplomas and Certificates will be presented during the evening.

Nominations for election to the Committee, not including that of the post of President, may be submitted to the Secretary.

Proposals for alteration or addition to the articles are required, in writing to the Secretary, at least 21 days before the meeting (by 15th December). Other proposals to be tabled at the AGM should be submitted to the Secretary 10 days before the AGM (by 26th December).

Apologies for absence may be forwarded via any Committee Member.

Professor Bob Merry, Secretary



BAF DINNER - MENU

£31 per person, payable on the day

Please select one dish from each course and send choices to Prof. Louisa Miller by Monday 17th December at the very latest. Contact details for Louisa are on page 3.

Please state clearly the guest name and their choices for starter, main and dessert. If you do not send information, the default choice will be vegetable broth, supreme of chicken and apple and rhubarb crumble.

Starter:

Vegetable broth, served with herb croutons and chopped chives (v)

Beef tomato and mozzarella salad finished with fresh basil leaves and olive oil (v)

Duck and peppercorn terrine served on a bed of mixed leaves and accompanied by herb crostini and red onion chutney

Main:

Supreme of chicken stuffed with wild mushrooms and tarragon served with honey roasted shallots, potatoes rosti and red wine jus

Lime roasted supreme of salmon, served with thyme roasted potatoes and a finished with a warm hollandaise sauce

Asparagus risotto served in a filo basket and drizzled with red pepper coulee (v)

Bronze Selection served with either Panache of turned Seasonal Vegetables, or Honey Roasted Vegetables.

Dessert:

Steamed toffee pudding served with vanilla ice cream

Apple and rhubarb crumble with vanilla pod custard

Fresh cream filled profiteroles topped with warm chocolate sauce

BEYOND PLASTIC

by Dave Jerry

I am no great fan of GoFence, as introduced by British Fencing, I feel that, to increase interest in fencing, more support should be given to coaches to increase our interest base. In many cases, I believe that the GoFence stops at the first hurdle. Recently, I have been involved with Bassetlaw District Council in Nottinghamshire in an scheme to progress beyond the plastic.

GoFence had been introduced into a number of primary schools, but the Council Sports Development department had strong feelings that there should be a follow on to GoFence. At a meeting, we established that there was the will to go further. The first suggestion was for me to coach at a club to be established to develop fencing, but this proved not to be viable, as I do not have any free time and I am to be out of action until early 2013. We then considered a plan that I put together some years ago to train "Sports Workers", firstly to fence and then to coach to BAF Level 1. This was planned to be achieved over a period of 36 hours. We found that time was available for both sides on a couple of mornings each week and also a couple of full day Saturday sessions.

Learning to fence.

The first four sessions, twelve hours in total, were devoted to learning to fence. My aim was to take the students up to BAF Bronze Proficiency Award standard. That went well and the group were examined at the end of the last session. All passed with a high degree of skill. During these sessions there had been an element of free play and an introduction to refereeing and judging. Just like the olden days.



Learning to Coach.

The first 3 hour session began with an introduction to our methodology of coaching, Introduction Demonstration Explanation Activity. Essentially this was much the same as with other coaching awards that they had done earlier in other sports. We now embarked properly on the level one syllabus, plus additions. The additions included all simple attacks and all types of parry; lateral, circular and semi circular.

As coaches, we all draw on whatever competitive experience we have, maybe only at club level, or possibly at the highest international level. Nevertheless, we have seen competition in action. This group did not have that experience. During one full day session, education was interrupted for a team competition using the electric scoring apparatus. This was closely fought and I have to say that I was pleasantly surprised how well they all fenced. Probably better than some of my other adult beginner groups. The outcome of this "Competition" was that they all knew how to kit up for electric and how to use the kit. The education process continued.

Typically, by a point about eight hours from the end, nothing seemed to be going as well as it had been earlier - visions of the residential course "Black Wednesday"! With a bit of encouragement (I put my Mister Nasty hat on), it all started to come

right for the last day, a full Saturday.

I duly assessed the candidates and found that, without exception, all were up to the standard of a Level 1 Coach. As an after sales service, I will be acting as their mentor and, hopefully, will get to see them coaching in the future, as well as being at the end of the phone.

The Bassetlaw Group had funding via The Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) project, which has paid for the work done by me to qualify the six coaches (including the two CRT funded apprentices) and a Starter pack of 10 sets of beginner kit as well as 2 sets of kit for the coaches which will be shared between the six of them (friendly, or what?).

So far I believe that the project has been successful. Time will tell, but as I write the kit is on order and they have laid some foundation via the GoFence scheme. I wish them every success; they deserve it after the work put in by the team.

Photos supplied by Bassetlaw Council PR (top) and Dave Jerry

AUTUMN COURSE

The Academy's Autumn residential course at Denstone College finished recently. For whatever reason, numbers were quite low, with only sixteen on the course and this was also reflected in the number of examinations attempted. None of those preparing for Advanced and Diploma examinations felt that they were ready at this time, so all the examinations on the Saturday were at the lower levels. The results are shown on the right of the page. Six out of the seven candidates achieved either a full pass, or, in the case of two candidates, a part pass, meaning that they will not need to take that part of the examination again.



Emil receives news of his success

BAF courses have proved popular in the past with prospective coaches from overseas and this course was no exception. The Academy "collected" two more countries to add to the list, with coaches from Turkey and Singapore, as well as a returning colleague, Sweden's Bjarne Höglund, now living in Germany.

Emil Özkurt came from Istanbul to the course. A competent fencer in Turkey, he started coaching a couple of years ago and had decided to attend this course after research on the internet. He commented favourably on the course and also remarked on the pace, "...it's hard and intense and every second I learn something". Would he recommend it to other coaches from Turkey? He certainly would – he particularly commented on the well-developed structure of the course and the support paperwork available. This would be the first address he would pass on to his friends. "In April I will bring my mum to get Level 1!" We think he was joking.

Our other foreign visitor was Liu Ge Tian from Singapore. We spoke to her at the end of the course and she said that she had enjoyed the course and had learnt a lot, although she admitted that her main problem had been the language barrier. She hoped to return, but would like to improve her English first.



Advice from Philip Bruce



A good demonstration is vital



The long and the short of it!



The right result at the end!

Photos on this page and the front page by Bob Merry

EXAMINATION SUCCESS

The following candidates achieved passes in their exams at the end of the Autumn Course.

Level 3 Foil

Emir Ozkurt

Level 3 Sabre

Jon Daley

Level 2 Foil

Bhupesh Patel

Terry Reavill * Class

Bernard Diaz * Class

Level 2 Sabre

Brian Greaves

Level 1 Foil

Liu Ge Tian

Elaine Gale

Bernard Diaz

Level 1 Sabre

Glenn Cooper

** denotes part pass, in either the Class or Individual section of the examination.*

We send our congratulations to all these successful candidates and wish them well in their future coaching.

WORSLEY'S WORDS

Musings from your Members' Rep.



This will be my last article for this year. By the time you read these words another Denstone course will have been completed and the year is drawing to a close. It is at this time of year that I would urge all members of the Academy to consider attending the AGM on 5th January 2013. This is your chance to express your opinions on the performance of the Academy over the past year, to ask questions directly of the members of the committee and to make suggestions that could influence the future direction of the Academy. I especially urge some of our newer members, to not only attend the AGM, but to stay for the dinner in the evening, which for most of the "old hands" is the highlight of the AGM. This is a chance to catch up with old friends or, if you have never been to an AGM dinner before, make new ones. You won't feel out of place, everyone there will be a coach, so you will have something in common with them. It's a good opportunity to get to know other coaches that are part of the Academy, many of whom may actually be familiar faces from the competition circuit or coaching courses and workshops. The

AGM evening dinner is also the traditional time for the Academy's coaching and other awards to be presented to its members. All those hours of blood, sweat and tears on residential courses do get recognised for what they are and when you collect your certificate from the president of the Academy in front of the other members, everyone knows what you've been through to earn it, because we've all been through it.

On the subject of awards I would like to say a few words about the Brian Pitman Memorial Award. This is awarded at the discretion of the committee to a member of the Academy who has shown particular skill or dedication to the promotion or development of fencing for young people under the age of 18, with a particular emphasis on non-performance fencing (i.e. not competitive fencing, although this is not excluded as a qualifier). Candidates who coach young people in the following areas would be strong contenders for the award.

- Young people with learning difficulties.
- Physically handicapped young people.
- Young people from deprived areas.
- Work in state schools.
- Work with voluntary organisations.

It has been a few years since the trophy has been awarded and it's about time that one of our members was recognised for their contribution to our sport. I would encourage all members of the Academy to take a few moments to think of a coach they know, who matches some of the criteria above. As can be seen the candidate does not have to be some kind of fencing "hero", just a regular coach that maybe goes that little bit further than expected to ensure their fencers enjoy the sport. If anyone has any suggestions for a nominee, could you please email me their name and a very brief outline of why they qualify for the award before the end of November. I would be grateful. My contact details are at the bottom of this article

Well that's it for this year, if anyone cannot make it to the AGM but has a question that they would like me to present to the committee, then please feel free to email it to me and I'll do my best to get an answer. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the AGM.

John Worsley, Members' Representative.
worsleyja@aol.com
07857 625 958

IT'S A SCAM!!

The Academy would like to warn coaches about a clever and convincing scam that has been circulating for a while now, targeting self employed coaches and music teachers.

Essentially, you receive out of the blue, an email purporting to concern a group of friends, or the writer's child or similar, who will be visiting the country and want to make use of your services. You are asked to quote for a block of lessons for this individual or group and to send your name and address, as they need to pay in advance via cashier's cheque. The terms always seem generous and it comes across as a gig too good to miss!

The scam is that you will then be sent a cheque which is 'accidentally' made out for substantially more than you have quoted for. The sender then requests that you refund the difference from your bank account . . . only for you to find that your bank has refused to honour the cheque. Even worse, the bank may initially clear the funds only to discover later that the cheque is a fraud or has been stolen in which case you will be held responsible and have to refund the whole sum.

More information about cashier cheque scams can be found here

<http://www.hoax-slayer.com/overpayment-scam.html>

SWORDSMEN OF THE SILVER SCREEN - PT 2

By Andy Wilkinson

BELGIAN FENCING MASTER & FILM SWORD MASTER

FRED CAVENS

1882 – 1962



Fred Cavens as fencing master with Robert Donat in
"The Count of Monte Cristo" 1934
Photo Credit: Edward Small Productions (Reliance Pictures)

As a child growing up, watching swashbucklers on the television with my Dad, probably on a lazy Sunday afternoon, I didn't realise that Robin Hood or the Sheriff of Nottingham had to train to be swordsmen; fencing - what's that? In fact I didn't think about their swordsmanship at all. I just loved watching them fight exciting duels, often to the death, in castles magically lit by half a dozen candles!

It was only as time passed and my interest in film grew to a level where I knew I wanted to work in the business, that I discovered that a man called Fred Cavens actually trained most of the Hollywood 'A' list of stars in Hollywood at that time. In fact Cavens was responsible for all the sword fights in the films I fell in love with as a kid, films such as **"The Count Of Monte Cristo"** (1934), **"The Three Musketeers"** (1935), **"Captain Blood"** (1935), **"The Adventures of Robin Hood"** (1938), **"Man in the Iron Mask"** (1939), **"The Sea Hawk"** (1940), **"The Mark of Zorro"** (1940), and **"The Black Swan"** (1942) to name just a few. Who was this man? How did he end up in Hollywood movies?

Frederic Adolphe Cavens was born to French parents in Lacken, Belgium in 1882. Aged 7, he was enrolled into the prestigious Belgium Military Institute of Physical Education, where he was first introduced to the art of fencing. Fencing struck a chord with the young cadet and by the time he was 15, Cavens knew he wanted to be a fencing master and by the age of just 21 he had achieved his ambition.

Around this time, Cavens met and fell in love with a ballet dancer from the Belgium Opera Company. After marrying her, he decided to immigrate to the United States, where he set up a fencing school in Hollywood to train fencers as well as budding actors.

The first actor to reach superstar status in the halcyon days of the silent film era was the self-proclaimed King of Hollywood, Douglas Fairbanks. Fairbanks was a shrewd director and producer as well as superstar actor and, on hearing that there was a new fencing master in town, Fairbanks sort to engage Cavens to stage the duels in the Max Linder's Production spoof entitled **"The Three Must-Get-Theres"** (Max Linder Productions 1922).

Fairbanks was so impressed with Cavens' work on **"The Three Must-Get-Theres"** he engaged Cavens as fencing master (the term sword master was yet to be coined) on his subsequent films **"Don Q, the Son of Zorro"** (Elton Corporation 1925), **"The Black Pirate"** (Elton Corporation 1926) and **"The Iron Mask"** (Elton Corporation 1929).

Fred Cavens can be credited with defining the work of the film Sword Master as surely as Yakima Canutt can be credited with defining the work of the Stunt Co-ordinator.

Cavens laid down the essential characteristics of the screen duel, perhaps for the first time:

'All movements – instead of being as small as possible, as in competitive fencing – must be large, but nevertheless correct. Magnified is the word. The routine should contain the most spectacular attacks and parries it is possible to execute while remaining logical to the situation. In other words, the duel should be a fight and not a fencing exhibition, and should disregard at times classically correct guards and lunges. The attitudes arising naturally out of fighting instinct should predominate. When this occurs the whole performance will leave an impression of strength, skill and manly grace'

In Hollywood at the time Cavens' was working, experienced film swordsmen were as rare as hens' teeth, the work being divided between just four fencing masters, of whom more in later articles.

Cavens tutored many stars in their swashbuckling films; Douglas Fairbanks Snr and Junior, Errol Flynn, Louis Hayward, Cornel Wilde, Basil Rathbone and Tyrone Power spring to mind

Cavens' son, Albert, born in 1906, followed in his father's footsteps and doubled for Power extensively in **"The Mark of Zorro"** (1940 20th Century Fox Film Corporation).

It would be churlish of me to say who the better sword master was; they all brought something unique to the screen, and each worked on films that are now considered classics, but what I can say is this - Fred Cavens died a year before I was born; he left an indelible legacy of sheer magic on the films he worked on, he inspired me to take up the sword, under my fencing master Professor Roy Goodall, and, as I continue my endeavour to emulate Cavens' magical duels on screen, this remains my raison d'être.

MORE USEFUL BITS.....

BAF RESIDENTIAL COURSE

Easter Course - 1st April to 6th April 2013

Course to be held at Denstone College, Staffordshire.

Contact Dave Jerry, the Course Officer for full details.

Contact details are on page 3 and further details can be found on our web site.

COACH EDUCATION WORKSHOPS - KENILWORTH

Sunday 18th November & Sunday 16th December 2012

10am – 4pm

St. John's Primary School, Mortimer Road, Kenilworth, CV8 1FS (side entrance to school hall).

£30 per session per coach payable on the day. No charge for pupils but please advise in advance if you are bringing one with you.

Staffed by Prof. Peter Cormack & Prof. Louisa Miller

The workshop will cater for levels 1-5 in all three weapons and is suitable for those who are working towards coaching examinations or simply wish to improve their existing coaching skills. The emphasis in these workshops will be on the acquisition and application of practical 'sword in hand' teaching/ coaching skills within individual and class lessons.

Anyone wishing to attend a Workshop should contact Peter Cormack (see page 3 for details), by the Wednesday prior to the event at the latest. Peter can also answer any other questions you may have.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The under mentioned names are published as having applied for membership of the British Academy of Fencing. If anyone wishes to raise objections or has information which he or she feels is relevant, please contact the Secretary of the BAF.

All objections will be required to be made in writing and will be treated in the strictest confidence.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Kate Manson | Shetland | Mark Buckley | Newark |
| Ryan Dukes | Worksop | Robert Page | Norwich |
| Christopher Dukes | Worksop | Peter Steele | St Albans |
| Christopher Pepper | Retford | Elaine Gale | Upminster |
| Emma Pike | Retford | Emir Özkurt | Turkey |
| Lauren Cundy | Worksop | | |

See the Academy web site at www.baf-fencing.org for details of the latest applications.

IMPORTANT

All Course organisers and potential attendees should be aware of the following condition, which applies to all BAF Courses, including "non-official" courses run by Academy members.

Please note the Course Officer and the Course Director reserve the right to refuse an application to attend the course.