

British Academy of Fencing **ACADEMY NEWS**

**July 2013
Issue 71**

"Run by coaches for coaches"



STILL BRITISH!

The process of registering the British Academy of Fencing as a Limited Company is now complete.

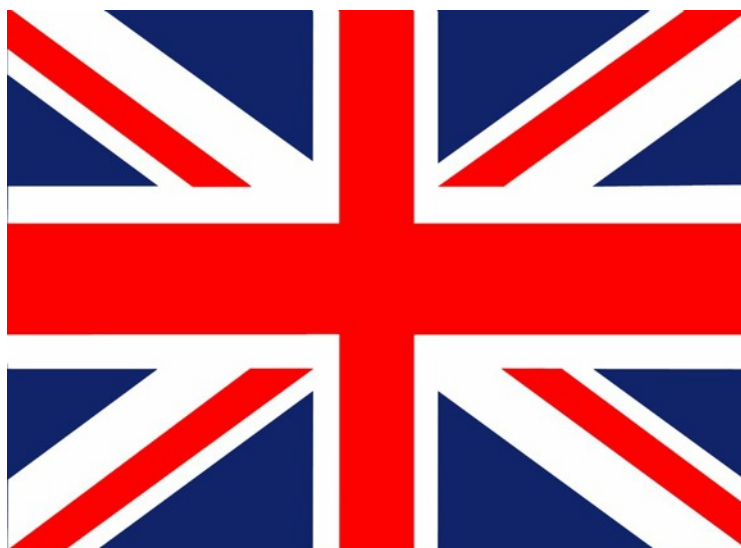
As those of you who attended this year's AGM will remember, one potential stumbling block was the retention of the word "British" in our title. We needed to provide evidence to Companies House that we were a national body, pre-eminent in our field. To do this we had to show support from other recognised bodies.

In our initial application, we included letters of support from the Académie d'Armes International, Welsh Fencing and Suffolk County Fencing Union. However, Companies House rejected this application, asking for further support from a national body. An approach was made to *sports coach UK* for their support, but they declined, on the grounds that "...we feel our direct working relationship is not mature enough for us to make such a comment."

This left us in a bit of a quandary, as there was a strong desire to retain the historical title of the Academy, but we needed the right support to do so. We had engaged the services of Ros Miller, a solicitor at Keystone Law, to assist us in the process of becoming a Limited Company. It was she, in coordination with our Honorary Legal Advisor, Katy Wilkinson, who managed to solve the problem. Another approach to Companies House was made, explaining our role in the field of coach education and stressing both the professional (rather than amateur) nature of the Academy and, in placing it in its international context, the place of the AAI as the "governing" body.

This did the trick, as, when the Team Leader responsible for "Sensitive Words" replied, his letter contained the words we wanted to see, *"I have taken the opportunity to once again look into the application and all the supporting information provided. Along with this I have done some further research and I am happy to say that I am prepared to approve the use of the word "British" in the proposed name "The British Academy of Fencing"."*

After all the hard work put in by our President, Philip Bruce, Katy Wilkinson and Ros Miller, the process approved at the AGM had reached a successful conclusion and we continue proudly to use the word "British" in our official company name, The British Academy of Fencing Limited.



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Printed by BM Colour, Unit 20, Hillgate Business Centre, Swallow St., Stockport, Cheshire, SK1 3AU



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** Please note that Andy Wilkinson has set up a separate email address for BAF business - please use this one for a speedy reply.

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 Bruce Combes (iacombes@btinternet.com)

THE PRESIDENT WRITES.....



A Company Limited by Guarantee

After what seem like years of work, I can reports that our Academy is now a company limited by guarantee, the legal managers of which are our directors, Bob Merry, Louisa Miller, Peter Northam, Stuart Clough and myself. In addition to this the overall management of the our Academy remains unchanged and is the responsibility of the Committee, the members of which are the directors plus Dave Jerry, Donald Walker and John Worsley with Andy Wilkinson being a co-opted member of the Committee. On behalf of the committee and the membership I would like to thanks Ros Miller of Keystone Law and our Hon Legal adviser Katie Wilkinson for their hard work in bringing about the most historic change for our Academy since its beginnings in 1949.

A Course with a Difference

After so many years of running Denstone and related courses, I have long wanted to run a course that put the exams to one side and focused on 'sharp end' coaching. This, to me, has always been the fun part of coaching ; taking a pupil who has already been through the developmental stages of learning to fence and getting them to succeed on the piste. On the other hand, I have also been a little reluctant to do so, because, unlike exam questions, it is such a nebulous and subjective thing and too open to argument. However, after a recent conversation with some of our up and coming coaches and, it has to be said, perhaps one or two sips of whisky too many, I came round to the idea. So on June 15th/16th, I led a course for the Four of Clubs fencing club on doing just this. I thought it was going to be a small course, mainly for the club and for the coaches who come on our monthly coach education sessions. I hadn't realised how many of her friends Isobel was inviting and was a little surprised when I found that attendance was pushing 50 and she had closed the list to any further non coaches (i.e. pupils and her own club members) attending!

I have to say I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend. It was fun to push the boundaries of what people could do and good to see people giving it their best without the stress of wondering if they would be able to do it in an exam. I know I grumble a lot about Fencing's love affair with 'foreign coaches' in this country – I was gratified to see that a course led by a non-foreign fencing master attracted participants from Aberdeen to Southampton and even one from Germany. Not to mention the fact that I had a number of requests from abroad for copies of the booklet I wrote to accompany the course.

I think this shows that, whatever the so called "experts" in the fencing world think, there is a great hunger for coach education opportunities in this country and that our developing coaches are more interested in getting the help, than in whether a coach comes from abroad. We need affordable and accessible courses that provide coaches with the help they need, not only in getting qualifications but in putting their skills to work and I wish more clubs would put such things on. I for one would be keen to support anyone who did so.

Competitions

During my career, I have had very little to do with children's competitions apart from the oldest BYC age groups and the Cadet World Championships. However, being married to a full time professional coach who coaches a number of children has opened my eyes to what is going on in the world of kids' competitions and I have to say I am deeply shocked by what I have seen. Not only is the number of available competitions plummeting (and sadly, this year it seems that it is the better competitions which have vanished), but the numbers and standards of young fencers are appalling. It is shocking to me that so many very young fencers are being encouraged to start competing before they have even been taught how to stand on guard correctly or even hold a weapon. At a recent competition, what was happening on the pistes bore no resemblance in any way to what I would call fencing and boiled down to the bigger kids charging down on smaller ones and jabbing and poking until a light came on somewhere. This is a dangerous and disgraceful reflection on the coaches there, many of which seemed more interested in pontificating to the parents who crowd around and sometimes on the pistes, than in looking after their fencers.

These children are the future of fencing and it is horrifying to see this going on. You only have to look at gymnastics or ballet to see that it is quite possible to teach young children to quite a high level of technical mastery of basic moves. I don't expect elite fencing ability in under 10s, but they should at least be taught to stand on guard and move like fencers most of the time and to be able to engage, at least some of the time, in a generally recognisable conversation of the blades! The Italians and the Germans can do it so why can't we?

I began the course at the weekend saying that technical training has to be the foundation of competitive success; if coaches cannot be bothered to lay those foundations then we cannot be surprised if competitive success continues to elude us!

Philip Bruce

DEN OF VICE

Contributions from the Academy's two Vice-Presidents

Fantastic! I really enjoyed fencing in my "learning to fence" days. Ex-Para, fit as a fiddle, elbows developing piles because of inactivity, discovered fencing. Couldn't get enough! After my first session, went to Leisure Centre Office to ask if there was another night to fence; there was, so I signed up there and then. Fencing became my number one reason for living. The only time I felt fully alive and firing on all four cylinders, was when I was fencing. Oh the joy. The sound of clashing blades, the sweat of effort, the mistakes, the successes, and the friends I made.

I could not have continued had I not enjoyed fencing.

Same with coaching, plus the bonus of getting paid for what I enjoyed doing! Didn't seem right really, but I got used to it. I enjoy coaching very much. Not for me the meticulous repetition of one or two strokes for twenty minutes. I get bored very easily. I want my fencer to fly! To move slow, fast, change direction, use simple and compound actions, react or not react, make planned decisions as well as spontaneous reactions to unknown conditions, to use as many variety of strokes under as many variety of conditions as possible. To do it with a left-hander, as well as doing it left-handed, and to do it at all three weapons! I cannot continue coaching unless I enjoy it.

It is inevitable that you pass on that enjoyment to your pupils.

Isn't that the reason why we coach?

And eventually, you get to train coaches to coach. Big responsibility. But if you go in with the same enthusiasm and enjoyment, your coaches will be infected by it and will pass it on to their pupils.

And so the circle continues.

Prof. Peter Northam

Diploma in the bag, what next?

This may seem a straightforward question to answer. Surely it's get all three diplomas, become a fencing master and then reap the rewards of examination success. Simple? Far from it! To become complacent about the role of a fencing coach, whatever the level, will ultimately be to the detriment of the fencer. Coaches have a duty to continue to develop their skills and abilities, not only as a means of self-improvement, but more importantly to produce better fencers.

As a fencing master I relish the opportunity to develop my skills, to refresh and renew my coaching. However, this doesn't just happen on its own. I need to take the time to seek out opportunities and make the most of the options available.

Attending coach education courses is one such option. This may include residential, weekend courses, one day courses, weapon specific courses or those run by foreign coaches at home or abroad. How about observing other coaches giving lessons at competitions? Watch them giving lessons to your fencer's opponents. Learn how they respond and react under a variety of conditions. Go to competitions and watch your fencers. Observe them in competitive fight situations. Let's make no apologies for stating there are coaches up and down the country who are supposedly training fencers to win, having never seen them fence in a competitive situation.

Can't get to a competition or afford the time? Then get on YouTube where you'll find a treasure trove of video clips showing lessons, fights and training drills. You'll also gain an invaluable insight into fencing at the highest level. Watch the world's best performing at European, World and Olympic level all from the comfort of your front room. Better still; actually go to one of these events. In the past three years we have seen the Olympic Games come to London, Senior European Championships at the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield and for those who fancy a trip across the channel, Senior World Championships in Paris.

Examinations are not the be all and end all of coaching. They are the first steps on a long and committed journey to becoming a better more efficient fencing coach. Do not deny your fencers the opportunity to fulfil their potential by limiting your own.

Louisa Miller

If you have any views or comments on this, or any other, feature of Academy News, why not share them? Whether you agree or disagree with our contributors, Academy News always welcomes your views, whether in a letter or a full-blown article. *Bob Merry, Editor.*

WHAT HAS THE BAF EVER DONE FOR US?

Fans of Monty Python will recall the scene in the film *Life of Brian* where Reg and his activists from the People's Front of Judea (PFJ) are plotting the overthrow of the Roman occupiers. After all, "What have the Romans ever done for us?". A number of things are then mentioned – aqueduct, sanitation and, of course, the roads, etc., etc. – and they have to admit, grudgingly, that the Romans have given them a lot. Perhaps similar conversations occur when members wonder what are the benefits of belonging to the BAF. In a recent report to the Committee, our President, Philip Bruce, offered a list of such benefits and suggested that the membership should be reminded of these through the columns of Academy News. You may well be aware of many of these, but are you taking advantage of everything the Academy has to offer and getting full value for your membership?

Insurance. The main part of your subscription (unless you are an Overseas or Retired member) goes to obtain insurance. Because the Academy has a proven track record, going back many years, of low claims, we are able to obtain insurance at a very competitive rate. An individual trying to obtain insurance on the same terms would be unlikely to get insurance at anywhere near the same rate. Every member is covered for £5 million for Public Liability and £1 million for Professional Indemnity. In recent years, we have sought clarification on a number of issues, after queries raised by members, and can confirm that this insurance extends to temporary fencing activities abroad (except USA and Canada), such as when you are accompanying your pupils and giving lessons. You are also covered for fight arranging for amateur groups and schools, subject to reasonable safety precautions.



Courses. The Academy's main courses are the two residential courses, currently held at Denstone at Easter and in the Autumn. These provide an opportunity to spend a week giving and taking lessons in a purely coaching situation, under the guidance of experienced coach educators. Whilst the emphasis is on preparation for examinations, this is not a prerequisite for coming on the course. Quite a few of our members have attended the courses purely to improve or update their coaching skills, without the pressure of an exam. It is also not unknown for Masters of the Academy to attend as participants, in order to keep their skills in line with current trends.

These courses have developed alongside the updating of our examination system and the Academy now has a system that is recognised across the world as being of the highest level. It may not be perfect – other coach education systems may offer more in depth study of such topics as Sports Medicine and Sports Psychology – but the Academy's emphasis on sword-in-hand skills is probably better suited to the majority of coaches, who might prefer to leave such matters to experts in the field. Every course seems to attract foreign students and we have had students willing to travel from as far as Japan or New Zealand to attend.

As with many of the Academy's services, members get a discount on the cost of the course.

Documentation. Over the past dozen years or so, under the guidance of Professor Leon Hill MBE, the SSTT has produced a vast amount of material to help you, whether as a coach studying for higher awards, a coach educator, an examiner, or simply a coach looking for ideas to help you in your work. Every aspect of the BAF Education system is covered. This material can be obtained piecemeal, or in the form of a Compendium, and members get the material at a better price than non-members. If you are not familiar with the documentation, it would be a good idea to obtain at least one item and judge for yourself. Most of it is listed on page 3 of every edition of Academy News.

Education System. The Academy now has in place a structured career pathway, fully backed up by documentation and qualifications, to help the aspiring coach to go as far as they are able. Some of our members offer courses in addition to the Academy run courses. The BAF will always welcome such courses and can offer guidance and help to the organisers.

Proficiency Award Scheme. When coaching classes or individuals, particularly with children, it is important to keep them motivated and interested. Our Award scheme is a great help for this. It is designed to be completed over a school year, with one award per term. It gives the pupil a target towards which to aim and rewards them at the end with something tangible to show proud parents, friends and relatives.

As an example of their use, Liz Williams recently contacted Academy News about one of her school groups, Sherston Primary School in Wiltshire (see photo, right). Liz uses the Award scheme and all her class have Bronze Awards in Foil and Sabre, whilst a few have



gone on to obtain Silver Awards. Academy News always likes to hear of members' achievements, or those of their pupils, and it doesn't always have to be about outstanding international success. Young fencers taking their first steps on their long climb to the top are just as important to our sport; many would say even more so.

Those who use the Proficiency Award Scheme have found it to be popular with fencer and parent alike. And do not imagine that its use is confined to children. Adults who may have no ambition to become competitors also like the feeling of having achieved something and ask for the awards. It should also be popular with you, the coach. The awards are supplied at a reasonable price and coaches can add their own mark-up, thus adding another income stream.

Discounts. As well as reduced prices to members for courses, documentation and other services, being an Academy member will help you to get discounts elsewhere. Open an account with Leon Paul, for example, and say you are a BAF member, and you will be offered a discount on all orders. Acquiring equipment for pupils is another easy income source

Qualifications. Having a recognised BAF qualification enhances your chances of being employed as a coach. Our qualifications are recognised by Education Authorities, British Fencing and the Home Countries, *sports coach UK*, fencing clubs everywhere, and the Académie d'Armes Internationale (AAI). Those passing examinations at Level 3 and above will also receive an AAI certificate (Moniteur, Prévost, or Diplôme). Masters and Maîtres d'Esgrime also receive an International Licence from the AAI and are eligible for selection to represent Great Britain at the Fencing Masters' World Championship.

Academy News. This is published five times a year (February, May, July, September and November) and is a useful channel for the interchange of ideas. Contributions are always welcome, whether letters, articles, photographs or cartoons. Members can also ask for their events or courses to be advertised free of charge; this will happen if at all possible.

Academy Web Site. Contains more immediate information, including possible employment opportunities, and also has links to a Facebook page.

Annual General Meeting and Dinner. Members are able (indeed, encouraged) to attend the AGM, held in January each year, and partake in the business of the Academy. The social side is not bad, either!

Volunteers. Most of the work of the Academy is carried out by unpaid volunteers, who give freely of their time for the benefit of the membership.

In *Life of Brian*, Reg and the PFJ found that the Romans had, in fact, contributed quite a lot to the life of the people of Judea. When you next feel the need to ask "What has the BAF ever done for us?", re-read this article and perhaps you will realise that, by taking advantage of all the benefits on offer, you are getting very good value for your annual subscription.

BAF COURSES OLD AND NEW - A COMPARISON

by Donald Walker

Although there have been numerous articles on the Denstone course, I thought I would give my, possibly unique, experience of it. I was in the Academy's exam system from 1990 till 1998 when a bicycle accident made it impossible to wear a mask for any length of time. In that time I achieved my Diploma Foil and level 4 Epée. In 2010 I decided to get the rest of my qualifications, so booked onto the Denstone course to do Sabre. So I am a product of the old and new. The first thing that struck me as I perused the BAF web site was the wealth of material available to the trainee coach, so I promptly bought a set of both the Teaching and the Coaching points for all weapons. I found them to be excellent, especially since I had never been a sabreur and hadn't had a lesson since 1981. This was followed by 'Teaching and Coaching Tactics', 'The Standard' and a copy of the Compendium. I have now done six Denstone courses back to back. How do they compare, the old and the new?

The new is a comprehensively documented and rigorously run system that enables the candidates, course tutors and examiners to be, as it were, singing from the same song sheet. It removes most of the uncertainties that were present under the old system and, more importantly, makes it harder to abuse. The examiners, as well as the candidates, are held to account through the current system; such was not always the case. To illustrate this point, two little anecdotes from my time in the old system. On passing my Diploma Foil, one of the candidates, who failed, said "Huh, you must have done what is popular this week!" and on failing my Diploma Epée I was told "You missed it by a hair, you failed to see your pupil was not keeping his thumb flat on the handle." (I had got flick hits as a special lesson.). What percentage a hair?

Since coming back into the system, I have heard no carping about failing the exams due to awkward questions, obscure references, examiners' personal idiosyncrasies or bias. This is, in itself, remarkable.

I believe that what the Academy has achieved with the coaching system is probably one of the best in the world and certainly one of the best documented. The six courses I have been on have been tremendous and all the Masters have been excellent. In particular I would single out Professor Philip Bruce, who has been at all six courses and whose knowledge, enthusiasm, discipline and practicality is an example to any candidate.

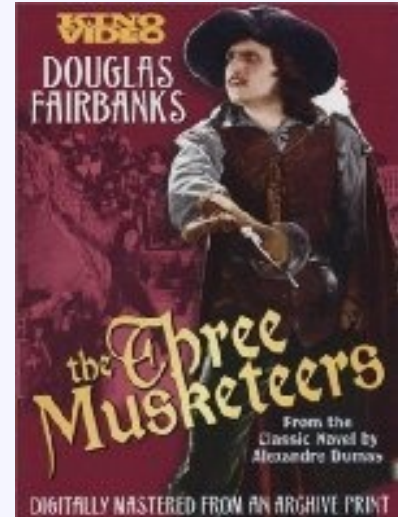
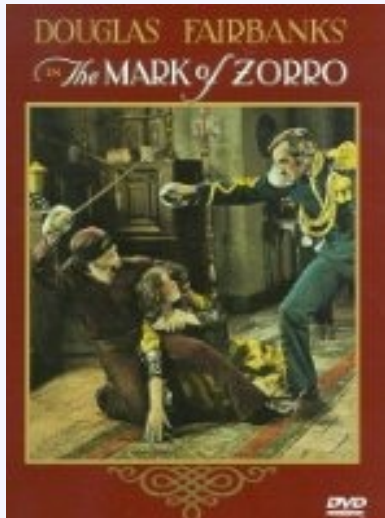
In case anyone thinks I'm being overly fulsome in my praise, there are still things which could be improved in the system. It's not perfect yet. Neither am I. I failed the exam, but because the system is justifiable, equitable and transparent, I know the failure was mine alone.

SWORDSMEN OF THE SILVER SCREEN - PT 4

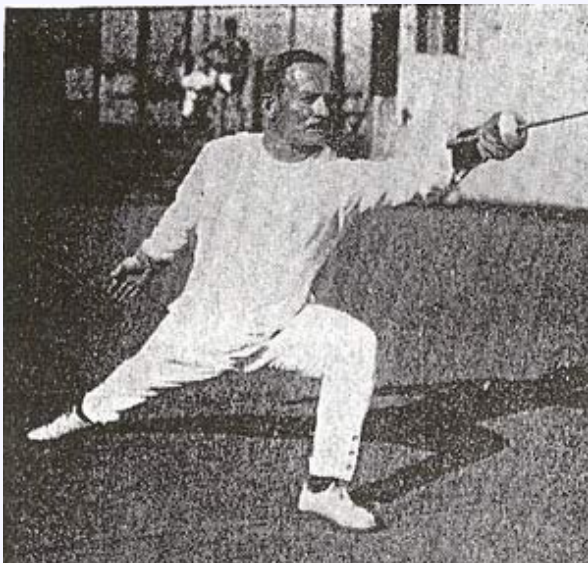
By Andy Wilkinson

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS
23rd May 1883 – 12th December 1939

“The First Celebrity”



In my last few articles, I have tried to redress the balance a little by taking just a few beams of star light from the movie icons we've all admired from our seats in the cinema on a Saturday morning matinee and to shine the light instead on the unsung, uncredited, unheard of sword masters, the fencing coaches who taught the actors how to fence, move gracefully, even walk so that *they*, the actors, became the hero that saved the day. Of course without the star, the fencing masters would be redundant, as a blacksmith needs metal to forge, so does a fencing master need a student to train.



In this transition article, moving from sword masters to swashbuckling actors, I will talk about two of the pioneering, swordsmen of those halcyon days of Hollywood, the Sword Master, **Henri J Uyttenhove** and the first celebrity of Hollywood, **Douglas Fairbanks**. Uyttenhove, pictured left in 1950, was born in August 1878 in Herch-La-Ville, Belgium. Although he only worked as a fencing advisor on 10 films from 1917 to 1923, his collaboration with Douglas Fairbanks on three films, “The Mark of Zorro” 1920, “The Three Musketeers” 1921 and “Robin Hood” 1922, all Douglas Fairbanks Picture productions, established Uyttenhove as the pre-eminent silent film sword master.

Uyttenhove led the way where other fencing masters would follow. With the evolution of camera design and techniques, sound and film stock quality and the dynamic storylines, the action sequence as we know it today was born. Uyttenhove gave grace and skill to such silent film stars as Fairbanks, Alan Hale, Robert McKim and Bert Lytell, underpinning their legendary swashbuckling credentials that survive to the present day.

Douglas Elton Thomas Ullman, (Fairbanks) was born on May 23rd 1883 in Denver, Colorado, USA (pictured right in “The Iron Mask” 1929 United Artists – Part Talkie). It is perhaps the only undeniable fact in the history of Hollywood cinema that Fairbanks was the first real celebrity. It wasn't by accident he became the King of Hollywood, it was by design. Fairbanks was a genius showman who knew his sense of perpetual innocence, freshness, adolescent narcissism and an ability to show-off would be deliciously palatable because he was the first grand communicator in this new media called film. Fairbanks had a true connection with his audience and, besides all of that; Fairbanks could do everything you saw him do on screen, from leaping off balconies to gliding down staircases. Women wanted to be with him and men wanted to be him! Fairbanks was the pioneer of using the scientific discipline of Ergonomics, taking into account the human factors of set design and stunting. If the script called for Fairbanks to enter a room via a staircase, Fairbanks ensured that the staircase was built to his specific measurements, his reach, his height (which was only 5' 6") - everything was taken into the calculation before building.



The reason Fairbanks looked graceful on screen was simply because it was designed that way. No effort should be seen on screen. Everything was within his reach. It didn't mean it was easy or the danger was eliminated completely, far from it, as can be seen from the image to the left, where Fairbanks ‘steals’ a kiss from Marguerite de la Motte in the film “The Iron Mask”. Fairbanks is dangling 20 feet above the sound stage floor. Fairbanks admitted that he only ever used a stuntman once to double for him, in the 1927 film “The Gaucho” where you can see, in the out-takes, the stuntman doubling for Fairbanks taking a rather high and painful fall, when the ‘leaping’ stunt went wrong. When films glorify heroes, the actors need to look like heroes. They need to be able to wear period costume with ease and handle not just swords, but other weapons too. Fairbanks learnt how to use a Bullwhip for “Don Q. Son of Zorro”, Elton Corporation, in 1925, long before Harrison Ford did as Indian Jones!

Fairbanks' career lasted an all too short 21 years, with 50 films to his credit, from his first film in 1915 “The Lamb” and ending with his last major role in 1934 “The Adventures of Don Juan”, (there was a further uncredited role in 1937). Douglas Fairbanks died of a heart attack in 1936 aged just 56, in Santa Monica, California. His legacy as a movie icon and the first celebrity stills lives on in the guise of his production company, United Artists, which Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, his second wife, Charlie Chaplin and D. W. Griffith established in 1919. Now part of the MGM Company, it has produced eight Best Picture Oscar winners, including films such as “Rain Man” 1988, “Rocky” 1976, “Annie Hall” 1977, “Midnight Cowboy” 1969 to name just a few. I notice none of the eight are Swashbucklers however. Perhaps one day a writer director will come along that will pen that swashbuckler that will win the Best Picture Oscar; no swashbuckler has yet done it. A script with characters that will steal the hearts of an audience with a dashing hero or heroine, amazing us with real feats of acrobatics, skill with sword and bullwhip. Go blast computer imagery! Let us all feel excited, thrilled, fearful and scared as we follow our intrepid cast from adventure to adventure!!

I'd pay to see a film like that!!

Perhaps one day.....One day soon, hopefully....

Now where did I put that nice pencil?

WORSLEY'S WORDS

Musings from your Members' Rep.



Back in May I had the opportunity to attend one of *sports coach UK's* Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) workshops, organised by Merseyside Sports Partnership; surprisingly it was only £15. As it turned out, the reason for the heavily discounted price was to get bums on seats if possible, as this was to be the last LTAD workshop being held this year due to lack of numbers. Which I found surprising, as there are only a handful of these workshops held up and down the country each year. Just take a look on the *sports coach UK* website. Anyway my reason for attending the workshop was to find out about LTAD. It's a term that I've heard mentioned on several occasions but have no real insight into what it actually means or what is involved.

The workshop itself was not sports specific but really an introduction to the LTAD model that is currently being applied to many sports, the idea being that each of the attendees on the workshop could take away this information and reflect on how it affects their coaching activities. The workshop opens with a brief introduction to the purpose behind LTAD, which is to produce a greater number of top-level performers, by encouraging and developing a greater participation in sport at grassroots level. It outlined the six key stages of the LTAD model: 1- Fundamental, 2- Learning to Train, 3- Training to Train, 4- Training to Compete, 5- Training to Win, 6- Retaining. It then went through the key points of each stage. The system is generally based around taking children from the around the ages of 6 to 8 and nurturing their athletic development through to adulthood and then trying to retain their interest in sport when they have retired from competition.

One of the interesting aspects that came out of the workshop for me was, when you look at the structure of the LTAD system, it can be applied to any level of participant in a sport, not just elite level performers. In fact the central message of the workshop was the emphasis on good coaching practice at the early stages of the development process to give young athletes a better chance of succeeding at higher levels. But if you ignore the guideline age ranges associated with six stages mentioned above, then what you have is a basic training plan from complete beginner to competent performer. In fact one of the discussions held in the workshop was "what is excellence?"; if you look at it in terms of developing and improving an individual's skill to the point that they are the best that they can be (that does not mean winning Olympic medals or World Championships, it just means that they have reached their peak in that skill or sport). Then, in the LTAD model, there is very little difference between developing people at basic participation level and developing an elite level performer. In fact the only difference is at what point does the individual reach his or her performance peak and where does it take them, to the final of a local open competition or the final of an Olympic Games?

One of the main points that seemed to be mentioned repeatedly was the need for quality coaching at the first three stages of the program, as these were seen as the bedrock or the foundation stones on which all the other skills that performers will eventually develop are built. The more mistakes made at these stages the harder it will be for the performer to reach their full potential (so no pressure in those beginners classes then). In addition there seems to be a greater emphasis on "fun" during the first two stages of the program as you are generally dealing with children and need to keep them engaged with the sport long enough to appreciate that hard work and practice are what is required if they wish to perform at a higher level.

If anyone has the chance to attend one of these UK's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) workshops, then I would definitely recommend it. It has certainly made me think about how I teach children, I'm sure that I don't make their lesson anywhere near as much fun as they could be. Details of this and other courses run by *sports coach UK* can be found at www.sportcoachuk.org.

If you have any comments on the above or would like any more information then please get in touch.

John Worsley

Member's Representative. Email: worsleyja@aol.com or mobile: 07857 625 958

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE COURSE OFFICER

I will be out of the country prior to the October Course. By the time I leave, all final invoices will have been sent. Please make payments direct to the Treasurer; details will be on the invoice. I will still be in touch via my Hotmail address davejerry@hotmail.co.uk. I will have access to most things but Key Teaching Points and other similar documents will be in limited supply. Prof Peter Northam will be backing me up while away; his details are on the contact page of the web site and on page 3 of Academy News. If you need to talk, please contact me initially by e-mail and I will then attempt to phone you on a landline via SKYPE. Please be aware that I will be 7 hours ahead of UK, so a daytime number will be the best option.

Thank you

Dave Jerry, Course Officer

JUST FOR FUN

No Prizes (sorry!), but enjoy solving the puzzle. Find the answers to the following clues and then re-arrange their initial letters to find something that is close to you (7,4). If you are stuck, email Editor for the answers.

1. Not a composer, but famous Polish coach in the BAF (10)
2. Two metres from the end of the piste (7,4)
3. German for épée (5)
4. Philip Marsh won Junior World Championship at this weapon (4)
5. Command to start fencing (French) (5)
6. Commonly used words in place of "counter-attack" (4,3)
7. Last British Olympic Gold won in this city (9)
8. British _____ Championships held in early May at Sheffield (5)
9. First name of 1959 World Foil Champion (5)
10. Surname of 2004 Women's Epée Olympic Champion (4)
11. Bring blades into contact (6)

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.

Calum Maynard

Surrey

Iain Lawrence

Essex

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



COCKS MOORS WOODS ÉPÉE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Saturday 16th November 2013

Two competitions in one day...

Morning: Juniors (age groups)

Afternoon: Seniors Open

Entry Fees

AM or PM £16.00

AM & PM £24.00

U15s may enter Junior and Senior events. Late entry plus £5.

Venue:

Cocks Moors Woods
Leisure Centre
Alcester Road South
Kings Heath
Birmingham B14 6ER

Closing date for entries: 12th Nov 2013

Format: One round of poules. Everyone promoted to direct elimination.

Visit website for full details, to enter online or download an entry form.

Contact: Richard Burn - m: 07967 267663 e: epée@cmwfc.org.uk

www.cmwfc.org.uk/epée

**Leisure Centre
Facilities:
Cafe and Bar
Swimming Pool
Fitness Centre
Large Free Car Park**

MORE USEFUL BITS.....**BAF RESIDENTIAL COURSE****Autumn Course - 28th October to 2nd November 2013****Course to be held at Denstone College, Staffordshire.****Fees (to be confirmed): £463 (members) £499 (non-members)****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.***Don't delay - Apply Now!****NB - Read the message from Dave Jerry on page 11.****ADVERTISE HERE FOR FREE!**

This page is devoted to items letting our members know of courses and other events. If you have a course, event, or even a club you want to advertise here, contact the Editor, Bob Merry, to discuss this. There is no charge to members and you don't even have to supply any artwork. Simply give Bob Merry the details and he'll see you get a mention on this page.

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.

British Academy of Fencing

The British Academy of Fencing Ltd

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