

# British Academy of Fencing **ACADEMY NEWS**



**November 2015**  
**Issue 83**

***"Run by coaches for coaches"***

## **DOUBLE DOUBLE SUCCESS**

At the end of the recent Denstone course, the Academy had two new Full Diploma Masters. The newly elevated Professors, Scott McMenemy and Andrew Norris, achieved this status after a period of intense preparation and effort, for they had to complete not one, but two Diploma examinations each, at Foil and Sabre, to add to the Epée Diplomas they gained eighteen months ago.

When asked about their reactions to their success immediately after the results were announced, Scott said, "It hasn't really sunk in... it's a really odd sensation - it's been an odd feeling all week", whilst Andrew said, "I'm just so pleased, - very, very chuffed".



*Professors Scott McMenemy and Andrew Norris, justifiably pleased with their success*

Their success came as a result of a lot of hard work and preparation. Both had travelled on numerous occasions to work under the supervision of Professors Philip Bruce and Isobel Bruce Combes. Scott commented on how they had practised on average three days a week for the past six months, the equivalent of four Denstone courses, whilst Andrew, who lives in the south, mentioned the many miles of driving involved, saying, "...it's been worth it, definitely been worth it, and I'm looking forward to the next step after this".

Both Scott and Andrew are to be congratulated on their success and Academy News wishes them both success in their future coaching careers.

The Autumn Course produced more successes at all levels. Lewis McIntyre achieved an excellent result in his Advanced Foil examination, with a Credit for his Class lesson and a Distinction in the Individual section. There were excellent results at the lower levels too. Fran Whalley gained an overall Distinction pass at Level 2 Sabre and Zach Clabon achieved a Credit pass at the same weapon and level. Another Credit pass was gained by Bhupesh Patel in completing his Level 3 Foil award. The international flavour of BAF courses continued, with Rene Kopicic visiting us again from Australia to add a Level 3 Foil pass to his portfolio.

A full list of passes is given on page 11. If you aim to be joining those who have succeeded in their exams, or simply wish to improve your coaching, the next residential course will be held at Denstone between the 28th March and the 2nd April next year (see back page).

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <i>Useful Info .....</i>                      | <i>p 3</i>  |
| <i>President Writes .....</i>                 | <i>p 4</i>  |
| <i>IFCA is Born .....</i>                     | <i>p 5</i>  |
| <i>Den of Vice .....</i>                      | <i>p 6</i>  |
| <i>Letters .....</i>                          | <i>p 7</i>  |
| <i>AGM Info .....</i>                         | <i>p 8</i>  |
| <i>Worsley's Words .....</i>                  | <i>p 9</i>  |
| <i>Christmas DVDs .....</i>                   | <i>p 10</i> |
| <i>Exam Results .....</i>                     | <i>p 11</i> |
| <i>More Useful Bits.....</i>                  | <i>p 12</i> |
| <i>NEXT ISSUE: Feb 2016</i>                   |             |
| <i>Contributions by January 10th, please.</i> |             |



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**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

**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

**DOCUMENTATION**

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

|                           |   |                                 |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Key Teaching Points Foil  | } | ..... <b>£7.35 (£9.45) each</b> |
| Key Teaching Points Epée  |   |                                 |
| Key Teaching Points Sabre |   |                                 |
| Key Coaching Points Foil  |   |                                 |
| Key Coaching Points Epée  |   |                                 |

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 6 – 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](mailto:iacombes@btinternet.com))

**British Academy of Fencing**

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## THE PRESIDENT WRITES.....



### *Denstone October 2015*

Another course comes and goes so quickly. For me it seems that no sooner does the course begin than I'm giving out the results. For this series of examinations, the results were extraordinarily high, with more than one candidate receiving distinctions, and the overall pass rate on the course being 96%. The success of the course was, I believe, a tribute to the hard work of each and every candidate, and the work and effort of Liam Harrington (course director) and Isobel Bruce-Combes both of whom had clearly done a considerable amount of preparation. The climax of the course and examinations, for me, was Scott McMenemy and Andrew Norris who both passed both Diploma Sabre and Diploma Foil – the first time a candidate has passed two Diplomas on one day since 1994. Scott and Andrew are therefore the Academy's newest masters. I congratulate them both and look forward to seeing the Academy reap the benefits of having two such dedicated and talented young masters in its ranks.

Readers may remember that, a few months ago, the Kings Leadership Academy in Warrington received a prestigious award from the Department of Education for its work in developing character and resilience in its pupils. This award was widely publicised in the media and followed up with a visit from the Prime Minister to the School. And the tagline that the government itself used for this publicity? Award for Fencing for All School. One of the key points in the achievement of this award was the fencing programme, headed up by a BAF Fencing Master, that all the school's children participate in during their first two years.

How ironic it is therefore, that the Department of Education has now announced that Fencing is now one of the sports that will NOT be recognised for GCSE and A Level PE qualifications. I for one am stunned at this decision. Leaving all politics out of it, this seems to be a remarkable example of non-joined up thinking!

This, of course, will have a devastating impact of professional coaching in this country. The vast majority of professional coaches make their living out of school fencing, be it in after school clubs or within the curriculum itself. Anyone who makes a living out of this knows that there are only a limited number of after school hours in a day, so any chance of teaching within curriculum time can be a godsend. The possibility of that will probably be almost nil from now on.

I was recently sent a survey by Leon Paul where one of the questions concerned people's reasons for giving up fencing. It saddens me to see that, at least in our club, this is overwhelmingly down to the colonisation of children's lives by school and academic subjects. We have talented young fencers, who have barely got into their teens, and already live lives dominated by weekly tests and assessments, not to mention 'booster classes' and extra academic evening activities. It seems another great irony to me that one of the biggest health threats to young people is obesity and their increasingly sedentary lives and yet those in charge of their education are allowed to take no thought for the time needed to participate in sport.

Removing fencing from the PE options will not only prevent children using their fencing as part of their GCSE and A levels, but it is bound to lead to schools and parents giving less support to the clubs in general which can only lead to a decline in interest and participation.

It is interesting and saddening to see that among the other sports that are still acceptable are  
*Equestrianism*  
*Skiing (Outdoor/indoor on snow. Must not be dry slopes)*  
*Platform diving*

So there cannot possibly be any excuse that fencing is too elitist or niche to be included in schools? How many ordinary comprehensive schools have the facilities for any of the above? I fail to see how the exclusion of fencing can be in any way fair or appropriate.

I sincerely hope that British Fencing will be making appropriate representations on behalf of our sport and meanwhile, I would urge all our members to write to their MPs, objecting to this short sighted move. In addition to writing to your MP you might also wish to electronically sign a petition to reinstate GCSE Fencing, please sign and pass the link on . . . <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/110802> (see also back page)

*Philip Bruce, President*

# IFCA IS BORN



*Front row (L to R): Karsten Hoffman, Tim Stang, Philip Bruce, Mike Bunke, Andrew Wong and Fionbarr Farrell*

The inaugural meeting of the International Fencing Coaches Association was held on the 12<sup>th</sup> September at the Clayton Hotel, Manchester Airport. The meeting was smaller than originally planned, after some inappropriate comments on social media and elsewhere had caused some confusion for a number of overseas colleagues, who decided not to make the journey to Manchester. However, there was a reasonable turnout for this inaugural meeting and it was possible to get things off the ground.

From overseas, the meeting was attended by Mike Bunke and Karsten Hoffman from Germany, Andrew Wong from Hong Kong, Tim Stang from Canada, Fionbarr Farrell from Ireland, whilst Norway's Kristoffer Jorgensen took part in the meeting by Skype. The BAF was represented by committee members Philip Bruce, Peter Northam, Louisa Miller, Bob Merry, Dave Jerry and Donald Walker, with Isobel Bruce Combes assisting by taking the minutes of the meeting.

After introductory comments by Philip Bruce and Mike Bunke, a former President of the AAI, the meeting quickly agreed on the name of the Association and adopted the proposed statutes in principle, subject to an amendment to clarify the status and standards to be set relative to stage and historical fencing.

Then the meeting moved on to the election of officers. Philip Bruce was elected as President and the officers were four Vice-Presidents: Mike Bunke, with responsibility for historical fencing, Tim Stang, who will act as General Secretary, Andrew Wong, who agreed to be Treasurer and Kristoffer Jorgensen. Exact details of the various responsibilities and commissions will be decided at some time in the future.

The meeting also adopted a straightforward system of subscriptions. The IFCA would be open to all coaches with a minimum qualification of Moniteur, equivalent to the BAF's Level 3. The normal individual subscription would be equivalent to £7, but those joining via an Academy would have a reduced rate of £5. As far as the BAF are concerned, we are continuing with exactly the same system as we had under the AAI; holders of a Diploma will automatically become members of IFCA and the Academy pays the fee. This was the arrangement that existed for decades with the AAI and, until a few years ago, only Diploma holders were admitted to the AAI. When the AAI recognised our Level 3 and 4 awards as being equivalent to Moniteur and Prévôt respectively, it was possible to offer our Level 3 and 4 holders the option of joining the AAI by paying the subscription. This, therefore, will be the same arrangement adopted by IFCA and the BAF.

After the meeting, there was time for the delegates to socialise and have informal discussions. This was followed, in the evening, with a meal.

Academy News also took the opportunity to get some comments from our overseas colleagues. Mike Bunke said that he hoped to bring fencing masters from all over the world closer together. When asked for his reaction to the inaugural meeting, he replied, "I was positively surprised". Next, we asked the new General Secretary, Tim Stang, how he saw the future with IFCA – "I see a more progressive organisation ... something that will unify more academies. I think we have a very talented group of individuals, focused on an achievable goal". Andrew Wong also gave his reaction – "I see a very healthy start right now. We have representatives from nearly all the continents ..... (I hope) that it will inspire people who do not have coach education at the moment to be aware that coach education is very important for developing fencing". Finally, we spoke to Karsten Hoffman and asked him what he hoped to gain personally from being a member of IFCA. He placed great emphasis on the exchange of information and ideas between fencing masters, both in sport fencing and also in the fields of stage and historical fencing; "I think it is very important to be able to compare myself with others, to see if I am right with my ideas and teaching, or if there is something else I can learn". During the meeting, the importance of an exchange of ideas was discussed and it is hoped that this will be followed through.

Overall, the meeting was very successful and we now have to wait to see whether this early promise is fulfilled.

# DEN OF VICE

## *Contributions from the Academy's two Vice-Presidents*



All coaches, amateur or professional, are important! Not that they crave that status or coach for the accolade. Most coaches I have spoken to have said that they became a coach because the previous one left, retired or passed away, and no-one else would take on the role. Increasingly, some coaches have turned full-time because of redundancy or business gone into liquidation. I can think of several coaches who have done that and made a great success of coaching. But you can imagine the start-up costs and searching for work. OK if you have a working partner but if you haven't, life is pretty difficult.

However, coaching full-time can still be done.

Hard work, long hours, help from colleagues, a working plan, an optimistic outlook, a huge dose of sense of humour. I've met many coaches from all sorts of sports, and when they get together, the jokes are flying all over.

We all face very similar problems. How to motivate our athletes, get the best out of them, recognize what is going wrong, how to put it right. To know when to be sympathetic, when to be firm; judge effort or lack of it.

In my view a good coach has invisible antennae on his/her head and is always sensing feed-back. Talking to the pupil and watching for reaction of understanding or not understanding; listening to what the pupil is saying but also hearing what they are not saying. Looking for words to say that will encourage, build up and re-invigorate.

Knowing when a pupil is too tired and has done enough or isn't working hard enough.

Using the voice and it's inflections to get the best from the fencer.

Too much negativity and you lose a customer!

Mistakes will happen, that's where experience comes from, mistakes, talking to and watching other coaches can avoid the obvious ones.

But it is still possible to become a full-time coach. And the rewards, whilst maybe not extremely high financially, are personal development and growth, a sense of responsibility and self-worth. In other words, job satisfaction.

To stay in this job, I would happily take a pay cut, luckily I've not been asked to.

All coaches, amateur or professional, are important!

*Prof Peter Northam, Vice President.*



Where and when do fencing coaches find the time to exchange ideas? Down the pub over a pint or during the annual awards dinner at the AGM? (I hope you have the date in your diary.) This form of social networking, if I can call it that, is important, but I am not sure it is time dedicated specifically to the exchange of practical sword in hand coaching ideas.

The most obvious opportunity to engage in the exchange of ideas between coaches should be at the Academy's residential course at Denstone. However, I am not sure that Denstone serves this purpose. Denstone is a unique situation where the vast majority of candidates attending are working towards an examination at the end of the week and therefore the stakes are high, as well as the pressure to perform. The relationship between coach educator and candidate is fundamentally a mentor/mentee relationship and is mainly based on the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding from master to pupil.

Then there are the one-day weekend coach education courses, which, depending on the focus of the course, may better serve as a channel for the exchange of ideas between coaches. I know the sessions that Professor Peter Cormack and I run in Kenilworth can take on a more flexible approach according to the needs of the coaches attending or the time of year. For example, the session ran earlier in October focused heavily on examination technique with the aim of supporting those candidates attending the Denstone October course. However, other sessions have been more open to exploring topics in greater depth such as being able to analyse fights with the intention of delivering a lesson based on a particular opponent or style of fencer.

So, I open it up to you the membership to find the time to exchange practical sword in hand coaching ideas. Yes, Twitter and Facebook are all very well, but are all too frequently open to misinterpretation and disgruntled ramblings...sorry it's the Luddite in me.

*Prof Louisa Miller, Vice President*

## Letters

*From Austen Rose*

To support or not to support that is the question

The recent articles by John W, Philip B and Kevin N have touched a nerve and I think it is time for me to comment. The general thrust argued is that there are two types of member in the BAF, one being a sub-set of the other. In reality there are a vast number of types of member all interlinked in some kind of monstrous Venn Diagram: There are members, supporters, critical supporters, unquestioning supporters, divisive supporters, supporters who DO, and supporters who DON'T. There are professors who can, non-professors who cannot, there are professionals who earn and there are amateurs that don't.

I am a supporter who does not. I mean that I am a member, I believe in the objectives of our academy, I promote in where I can usefully do so. However, I "DON'T", because beyond the bare minimum I do not contribute much to the Academy. I put my self in the subset of TAKERS. Philip might describe me as a consumer of the product of the BAF?

There are supporters who do. They are the same as me, but they DO contribute to the Academy. They are GIVERS.

There are members who are not professors, and if I understand Philip correctly, do not have the right to comment on the TECHNICAL CONTENT of the organisation. However, they can be GIVERS and donate time and effort, contributing to the life and future direction and prosperity of the organisation.

Where does this get us? Well being a TAKER, and takers should not criticise doers unless they are willing to give a bit too, perhaps I should not comment, but what the hell. The movement from members from a less productive sub-set to a more productive sub-set I would think as being a worthy goal to discuss and pursue. I think there are two ways of asking people to help:

1 - The first is to just say that not enough people are contributing enough to the Academy; this scares people off.

2 - The second is much more pushy: We have this thing, problem, or task that we'd like to make progress on. We are looking for members to help achieve this. Is there anyone out there who would like to get involved?

Thanks,

Austen Rose ([arose85618@aol.com](mailto:arose85618@aol.com))

*An interesting letter, Austen. Thank you. This topic has had quite a bit of coverage in recent issues and it is good to see that members are prepared to contribute to the dialogue. It may well be the subject of further discussion, either formally or informally, at the AGM. Editor.*

## GOOD NEWS!

Those of you that have renewed your subscriptions for the current year (and if you haven't done so yet, why not?) will have noticed that there has been a significant reduction in the amount the Academy is asking. You may wonder why this has come about. Members who attend the AGM will know that each year the meeting passes the responsibility of setting the subscription rate to the committee, following the formula "*cost of running the Academy + inflation + cost of insurance*". Of these factors, it is the last one that is the most significant and this year our insurance brokers, Endsleigh, made great efforts to find a good deal in a competitive market. As a result, we moved to a new insurer, Catlin XL, who were able to supply better terms (public liability cover has been doubled to £10 million, for example) at a much reduced premium, almost half of our insurance in previous years. In addition, we have a three year deal, whereby the premium will not increase unless we make a claim, so please be careful!

The certificate showing details of the insurance can be found at <http://www.baf-fencing.com/insurance-documentation.html>. For all queries regarding the insurance, or to make a claim, contact Bob Merry (see page 3 for contact details).

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the British Academy of Fencing will take place on Saturday 9th January 2016 at 11.00 am at the:

**Holiday Inn  
M6 - Junction 7  
Chapel Lane  
Great Barr  
Birmingham B43 7BG**

*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 (Cost £26 per head - see below). Those attending are asked to assemble for pre-dinner drinks at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm sit-down. BAF Awards, Diplomas and Certificates will be presented during the evening.

**The Directors of the Academy (President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer) will be serving the second year of their current term of office and these positions are not up for election.** Other positions on the committee will be elected at the AGM. Proposals for alteration or addition to the articles are required, in writing to the Secretary, at least 21 days before the meeting (by 19<sup>th</sup> December). Other proposals to be tabled at the AGM should be submitted to the Secretary 10 days before the AGM (by 30<sup>th</sup> December).

Apologies for absence may be forwarded via any Committee Member.

*Professor Bob Merry, Secretary*

## BAF DINNER - MENU

**Cost: £26.00 per person**

Please select one dish from each course and send choices and payment to Prof. Louisa Miller by **Monday 14th December** at the very latest.

Please state clearly the guest name and their choices for starter, main and dessert.

Please make your payment in advance either by BACS or cheque as detailed below.

The default choice if you do not send information will be seasonal vegetable soup, lemon and herb marinated chicken and lemon tart.

Cheques payable to *The British Academy of Fencing*. BACS payment details – Account name: The British Academy of Fencing. Account number: 41501089. Sort code: 40-43-37.

For international payments – IBAN: GB16MIDL40433741501089 SWIFT/BIC: MIDLGB22

BACS payment reference should be your membership number, name and AGM, e.g. 409/S Clough/AGM

Email: [louisajmiller@hotmail.com](mailto:louisajmiller@hotmail.com) Phone: 07849 774531 Post: Howard Cottage, Kenilworth Road, Hampton-In-Arden, Solihull B92 0LW

### **Starter**

Seasonal Vegetable soup (v)  
Farmhouse Pate, onion relish & toasted ciabatta  
Goats cheese tart with cherry tomatoes (v)

### **Main**

Lemon and herb marinated chicken with garden pea risotto and herb butter sauce  
Roast salmon fillet with white wine and dill sauce, new potatoes and creamed spinach  
Vegetable Wellington served with roast potatoes and tomato jus (v)

### **Dessert**

Lemon tart with Chantilly cream  
Classic baked vanilla cheesecake with caramel sauce  
Chocolate fudge cake with pouring cream



## WORSLEY'S WORDS

Musings from your Members' Rep.



Well the best part of the year has passed and we're on the home straight to Christmas and the New Year. This will be my last article for this year and what a year it's been, one of the busiest I've known since joining the Committee of the BAF.

I'd like to start this edition's article by responding to a letter from Kevin Nelson in the September edition of the Academy News, which in turn was a response to my article in the July edition of the Academy News about what I believe is the difference between supporters and members of the BAF.

If people felt that my views seemed negatively skewed, they would be correct, and I make no apologies for that, given the events that have taken place during the year. My article was not intended to suggest that supporters were in any way better than members; that's not how I see things. I have no problems with members that have only joined the BAF for the insurance or the coaching courses, as this is the main reason the Academy exists. I have already said this before. My problem, is with those individuals that believe, because they are a member of an organisation they somehow have a right to openly criticise either individuals within the Academy or the Academy's procedures or the Academy's activities or lack of. Now please don't get me wrong, I am not saying that members of the Academy are not allowed to or cannot disagree with the actions or decisions of the committee, I'm not saying that. What I am saying is there are members that seem to believe that just being a member of the Academy gives them the right to, or have the expectation of (an unrealistic one in my opinion), influencing the decisions taken by the Committee, or the procedures or activities of the Academy. And to make matters worse they get upset or outraged when their advice is not taken, or their influence is not as strong as they thought.

Now while I totally agree with Kevin's sentiment that, in a democracy, healthy debate and differences of opinion are allowed. In fact they can be very important in the development and evolution of an organisation; it's how things improve and how we move on. It must be remembered that the Academy is not a true democracy but a hierarchy, the democratic process ends with the membership's election of the Academy's Officers and the Committee. The running of the Academy is responsibility of the Committee and, although members can express their views at any time, or even suggest courses of action, the Committee reserves the right to make its own decisions. After all, that is why committee members were voted into the positions they hold, to run the Academy on behalf of the membership. If members want to have more of a say in the running of the Academy then they need to step up to the mark, get on the Committee and then they can start to see how the Academy works and only then can they start to have a say.

This brings me round nicely to the AGM on the second Saturday of January 2016. If you disagree with me or have further points you would like to raise, then please attend the AGM and the meeting of the Maître d'Escrime, Provosts and Members held prior to the main AGM. This is your main chance to ask questions or express your opinions on the running of the Academy. It also your chance to get involved with the running of the Academy, this is the one point of the year where the members get to vote in new committee members. For example, my position comes up for renewal each year. If you think it's time for a change, then turn up to the AGM and vote; if you don't attend then you can't vote, it's that simple. In addition to this, the AGM is the main social event of the year for the Academy, so it would be nice to see a good turnout at both the AGM and the Dinner in the evening.

On the same subject, if anyone has any questions that you would like me to put to the Committee before the AGM, can you get them to me before the end of November, so that I can have an answer for you at the Maître d'Escrime, Provosts and Members meeting. Remember, questions I present from the members are done anonymously unless you specifically ask for your name to be included.

Also, a quick reminder that there is still time to get in nominations for the Brian Pitman Memorial Award. Nominations can be sent to any member of the committee for consideration and all nominations need to be in before the end of November. Remember to include some details about your candidate, e.g. names of schools or organisations they have worked with, the duration and a rough idea of dates. These sorts of details always help the committee to make a decision. Take a look at the September edition of the Academy News for more details on the qualifying criteria for the award.

That's it for this year, hopefully I'll see many of you at the AGM in January.

*John Worsley, Members' Representative.*



# SWORDSMEN OF THE SILVER SCREEN

By Andy Wilkinson



Dear Friends,

Sorry I have been away for so long, it has been all high adventure and daring-do - obviously.

I also felt, our esteemed editor, Bob, has had it far too easy recently, not having to edit my endless drivel that is, so like the Crocodile in "Peter Pan", I have returned!

TICK-TOCK TICK- TOCK

Hollywood has had a number of alternative names strung around its neck over the years, some of them we can actually print. However, the most appropriate for the forthcoming festivities would be **Tinseltown**, coined by the Hollywood press to celebrate the glitz and glamour of the fledgling film industry and the life styles of the stars of the screen.

With Christmas in mind, I thought it would be a bit of fun if I listed my top ten favourite sword fight films, to buy the Swashbuckler in your life for their Christmas stocking.

If YOU are the swashbuckler in your life, then perhaps leave this page open on the kitchen table as hint for others.

In no particular order, here are my top 10 – please note the year, as that is the version I think really hits the mark!

"Le Bossu" 1997

"The Three Musketeers" 1948

"Scaramouche" 1952

"The Duellists" 1977

"The Prisoner of Zenda" 1952

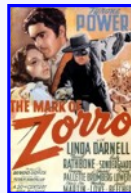
"The Mark of Zorro" 1940

"Rob Roy" 1995

"Excalibur" 1981

"The Adventures of Robin Hood" 1938

"The Great Race" 1965



Perhaps the Blake Edwards' film, "The Great Race" may seem an odd choice. However, I added it because the Tony Curtis, Ross Martin foil and then sabre fight, a parody of "The Prisoner of Zenda" and, for the eagle eyed of you, "The Adventures of Robin Hood", is just great fun and very well executed!

You can find all of these films on Amazon and at other well-known DVD sellers.

I do hope you get a chance to relax and to watch one of these classics over the Holiday. There is nothing quite like a bit of Swash & Buckle with that last mince pie and a glass of your favourite falling down water.

As Darth Vader said to Luke Skywalker –

Vader – "Luke, I know what you got for Christmas"

Skywalker – "No! That's impossible!"

Vader – "Luke, it is true. I know what you got for Christmas"

Skywalker – "It's impossible! How could you know what I got for Christmas?"

Vader – "I felt your presents"

Have fun be safe!

Happy Christmas!!!

## EXAMINATION SUCCESS

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

### ***Diploma Foil***

Scott McMenemy  
Andrew Norris

### ***Diploma Sabre***

Scott McMenemy  
Andrew Norris

### ***Advanced Foil***

Lewis McIntyre

### ***Level 3 Foil***

Bhupesh Patel  
Rene Kopiec  
Kenan Ali (part pass - Class)

### ***Level 3 Epée***

Carina Vicente (part pass -  
Class)

### ***Level 2 Sabre***

Fran Whalley  
Zach Clabon

### ***Level 2 Theory***

Robin Stevens

### ***Level 1 Foil***

Rene Kopiec

### ***Level 1 Sabre***

Robin Stevens  
Gerad Harmer

Other recent examination successes include:

### ***Advanced Foil***

Andrew Wong

### ***Level 3 Foil***

Sam Smith  
William Gallimore-Tallen

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



The BAF has its fair share of old Masters, but we also have the capability of creating young Masters too. The photo shows Matthew Hall, from Four of Clubs, with his Silver Master-at-Arms certificate.

Any pupil who gains awards in all three weapons at any level, Gold, Silver, or Bronze, is entitled to a Master-at-Arms certificate, which is awarded without additional cost to the pupil. Coaches who wish to encourage their pupils to become all round fencers can contact Donald Walker for more details.



During his recent flying visit to attend the inaugural IFCA meeting, Andrew Wong, from Hong Kong, took the opportunity to take his Advanced Foil examination, with an examination board being convened at Leek, with the help of Four of Clubs. He is pictured above, after the successful conclusion of the exam, with his pupil, Tom Smith.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION FOR THE AGM

Premier Inn, Birmingham Great Barr  
Junction 7, M6  
222 Birmingham Road  
Great Barr  
Birmingham  
B43 7AG

<http://www.premierinn.com/en/hotel/BIRCOL/birmingham-great-barr/m6-j7?cmp=GLBC>

**MORE USEFUL BITS.....****BAF RESIDENTIAL COURSE****Easter Course****28th March to 2nd April 2016****Course to be held at Denstone College, Staffordshire.****Fees: To be confirmed*****Please contact our Course Officer, Dave Jerry, for more information*****Contact details on page 3****Allow all Olympic sports to be part of curriculum at GCSE and A Level Sport.**

*“The Department For Education is drastically cutting back the sports which can be assessed as part of GCSE and A Level practicals. They have removed a number of Olympic sports such as Fencing, Judo and Taekwondo.*

*This is a massive backward step and contrary to our aim to achieve Olympic success.”*

The above is the essence of a Petition currently on the Government’s Petition web site. If you agree that it would be a mistake to drop certain Olympic sports, including Fencing, from school examination syllabuses, then you can add your name to the petition by going to

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/110802>

The process takes only a few minutes and simply requires you to provide an email address to confirm your electronic “signature”. The petition remains open until **21st April 2016**.

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