

British Academy of Fencing **ACADEMY NEWS**

February 2019
Issue 99

"Run by coaches for coaches"



AGM 2019

On January 5th 2019, the Academy held its Annual General meeting at the Hilton Hotel near Warwick. The meeting was amiable, open and transparent, with wide ranging discussions being heard from the floor.

President, Vice-Presidents, and Treasurer were not up for re-election this year, and with Bob Merry stepping down this year Jacqueline Redikin was voted in as Secretary, Stefan Leponis (Members rep & Membership sec.), and Kevin Nelson (Academy News) retain their posts on the committee. The post of assistant secretary was left vacant but the meeting gave permission for the committee to find a suitable candidate. At the request of members, a draft copy of the AGM minutes will now be circulated before the meeting to those that attended.



A number of awards were presented at the meeting. David Browning level 4 Foil, Jacqueline Redikin level 5 Épée, Stefan Leponis level 5 Sabre, & Kevin Nelson level 4 Foil, all pictured at the bottom of the page receiving their awards. For her hard work over the years Angela Goodall was given life membership of the Academy.

The unexpected highlight of the meeting was the food, and after a fantastic lunch. with a last minute room change for the evening dinner to the restaurant. It became a much less formal affair, without any speeches, bigger portions, where we were all relaxing amongst friends.



Academy News is edited by Kevin Nelson. Millfields, The Vatch, Slad, Stroud, Glos. GL6 7JZ.

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Articles and other material are welcome and should be sent to the Editor.

A pdf version of the Academy News can be found at www.baf-fencing.com

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Welcome to the Academy News

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NEXT ISSUE: April 2019

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by March 30th, please.

Academy Web Site



For all the latest information go to the Academy web site at www.baf-fencing.com

British Academy of Fencing

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THE PRESIDENT WRITES.....



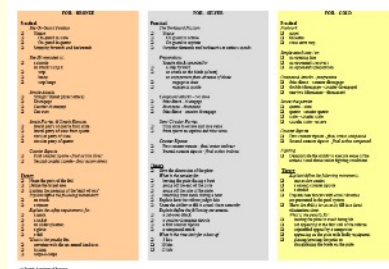
Prof Peter Northam, President, British Academy of Fencing

Well, that was my first time as Chair of the Annual General Meeting. Went well I thought, interesting reports, chatty atmosphere, everyone relaxed and asking questions. Some procedural irregularities occurred but Prof. Graham Stretton was there to put us right. The whole Committee was happy to have its actions interrogated, nothing controversial came up. One of the highlights of the AGM, was lunch! of all the AGM's I've been to, I have never been so well fed and there was plenty left over. I think we had just over half of our members turn up compared to last year, a bit disappointing, lots of apologies for valid reasons, nevertheless, do try to come next year. We didn't have a formal meal this year, at the last minute, the hotel said we had insufficient numbers to warrant a private room so offered a carvery meal instead. What a fortunate move that was! We had a long table, wine supplied by the Academy, and then told we could go up as many times as we liked for food, and the food was excellent. The best bit of the evening was commandeering the bar area and having long chats into the night.

Over the last year, the Committee has concentrated on 'front of house' activities, by that I mean, providing training days in various locations (these were Birmingham, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Rickmansworth, and Manchester) and our flagship residential coaching week at Denstone College. Staffed by Senior Masters who gave generously of their time and expertise, to encourage and bring on our members. No greater demonstration of the success of this strategy is the passing of exams, well done to them. Whilst we obviously concentrate on Academy members, we also welcome our amateur colleagues. This year we will continue this strategy, but it has to be supported by you; a large part of the direction of the Academy depends on what you want, so make your views known!

The SSTT (Standing Sub-Committee for Technique and Terminology), under the direction of Prof Andy Vincent, has refreshed and improved our coaching syllabi. I have looked at the content and can confirm that it refines and clarifies the questions the exam candidates need to consider. It also gives more opportunity to allow a coach to develop their own interpretation and direction of the questions based on their experience and personality. I recommend it to you and encourage you get your copies from Andy.

The future of the Academy, in my view, looks promising and there is much to look forward to. Further training days are planned (Birmingham already), Denstone dates are now confirmed; so, if you are planning to expand your knowledge, take further exams or just get together with like-minded coaches (in a very friendly atmosphere) there is no better time than 2019!



Are You Using the Proficiency Awards ?



Editorial Introduction

By Kevin Nelson.

New Year, New Editor, and the 100th issue due next edition. By way of introduction, for those who don't know me, I have been an Academy member since 2006, I regularly attend courses to improve my coaching, I run Cotswold Fencing Club in Gloucestershire, and since 2014 I have been a professional fencing coach.

After taking over from Bob at the last committee meeting, Peter Northam shoved a box of back issues into my hands, so I thought that I would start by looking back through some previous issues. What struck me most of all was the number of contributors and the breadth of the subject matter which covered kendo, singlestick, competition results, new rule discussions, article changes, reviews, reports, history, etiquette (of a handshake), modern training practices, psychology of competitors, and even the odd cartoon. With your help this is something I would like to build on. Over the past year I have written a number of articles for the Academy News, on a variety of topics. I would like to see the number of topics that we cover in the magazine grow, and the only way we can achieve that is to increase the number of contributors. This is our magazine, so I am asking you all to put pen to paper..... can you write about your experiences, or your speciality, a fencing/coaching book you've just read, a course you've just been on, a new bit of kit you've just used, a software review, coaching theory, or anything else related to fencing..... As coaches I believe we need to share our experiences, so that we can all benefit.

Reading through an edition almost as old as I am (Volume 2, Number 8) I came across a cartoon, reproduced below, that reminded me of a conversation I had with a colleague, Nick Chapman. We had just finished a school team competition, and I was watching him load kit into



his car, we have the same type of car, and he put all his weapons across the back seat, and I asked him why? Nick replied that he used to put them all in through the boot, but he had been in a car accident and had been shunted from behind. After getting out of the car, and checking that he had all his bits still attached, was he was not leaking, and all the other things that you have to do. He then looked in the car, and found several of his foils bent double embedded in the back of his driving seat, he realised what a lucky escape he had. Since then I have done the same, always loading weapons from the side, and encouraging my fencers to do the same where possible.

I would like to thank Bob Merry for passing on his wealth of experience, and being at the end of an e-mail when I need assistance.

I am looking forward to producing a magazine by the membership for the membership.

Please send contributions to kevin.nelson@baf-fencing.com

Norwich Exams

By Luke Herwerdine

Luke Hewerdine passed L3 Sabre. Malcolm Mather passed L2 Foil.



Luke, Peter, Bob, & Malcolm after the exam

'A big thank you to the BAF and in particular Liam Harrington, Peter Northam, and Bob Merry for giving up their time to make it possible. I wanted to organise a course here in Norwich as it has been a couple of years since our last coach education event. The coaches who attended, both for CPD and to take exams, all enjoyed the course and found it extremely beneficial! Whilst the focus of a coach education course is naturally the coaches, the fencers who came along to get some free coaching all said they got a lot out of the course. A real credit to fencing in Norfolk, for both coaches & fencers alike! UEA Fencing, and Norfolk generally, hope to be welcoming the BAF back in the future.'

Members Advertise in the Academy News for Free

Academy News is a service to our members and we offer the chance to advertise on its pages, whether it be for an **event, a course, your club, or indeed anything**. There is **no charge to members** and you don't even have to supply any artwork, although it would be very helpful if you did. Simply send Kevin Nelson the details and he'll see you get a mention.

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

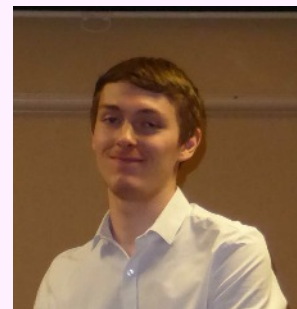
The following documentation is available from the Course Officer Jackie Redikin.

Key Teaching Points (Weapon specific)	£7.35 (£9.4) each
Key Coaching Points (Weapon specific)	£7.35 (£9.4) each
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)
Examples of past written Papers for Advanced and Diploma examinations	FREE -

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

Thoughts From The Back Row

David Browning



I recently took the journey from Brighton to Warwick to attend the BAFs AGM. This was my first AGM in three years of membership and I wanted to see how the organisation, who's patch I wear on my coaching jacket, was run. Fortunately, the only unwelcome part of the whole affair from me was paying £5.50 for a pint of IPA at the Hilton bar. I found the AGM agenda to be interesting and to touch on a range of issues, definitely not as dry as some fencing AGMs I've attended in the past. It was particularly refreshing to witness some of the discussions that took place throughout the meeting. However, undoubtedly the best part of the day was outside the meeting room, talking to fellow coaches both known and unknown to me; inevitably perhaps fencing was the main topic of the day when it came to conversation! It was a highly enjoyable and interesting day from start to finish and I took away several new views and ideas, I will definitely be attending next year and would recommend anyone else with similar interests to do likewise.



BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FENCING TOURNAMENT 2019 Easter 2019

Venue: Sport & Fitness Centre, The University of Birmingham

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

Following last year's successful move to this venue Leon Paul are set to continue their sponsorship of this event.

Events & Latest Report Time

Saturday 20th April		Sunday 21st April Men's	
Foil (128)	09.00	Men's Epee (108)	09.00
Women's Foil (77)	11.30	Women's Epee (91)	11.30
Men's Sabre (70)	13.30	Women's Sabre (58)	13.30

Entry Fee: £33 per weapon via on-line process on www.bift.org.uk

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

Closing date: 14 April 2019

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

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

Notes: BFA licences or equivalent will be checked in advance

Prizes for L8 fencers at each weapon and Best Veteran.

Leon Paul Equipment Co trade stand & sponsorship.

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

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

Veterans (over 40 on 1st January 2019) to be confirmed at check-in

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

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

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

Pontoon

By Nick Chapman

Previously I suggested a training game and encouraged you all to write in with information on games you enjoy using to enhance the training of your fencers. Well in order to keep the ball rolling here is another one from me.

Many epeeists come to the weapon via foil. Unfortunately the result can be fencers doing 'heavy foil' rather than real epee. Much of my work is with school children. When they first make the change from Foil to a real weapon, (sorry, is my prejudice showing) in order to get practice sparing they often find themselves fencing opponents who are older and bigger than they are. If a fencer has predominantly done foil then given a point weapon and a competitive situation, I would suggest most will instinctively hit to body. This places the less experienced fencer at a disadvantage that goes beyond just a lack of experience of the weapon, especially when the opponent has the advantage of reach. I therefore consider it important to encourage my fencers, especially those new to the weapon to experiment with aiming at other parts of the body. Unfortunately the reality is that however much they are told to aim elsewhere, in a sparing situation the imperative of winning quickly supersedes the coaches' instructions. I therefore consider it important to incentivise the choice of target.

I use the imperative of winning to drive target selection by awarding different numbers of points for hits delivered to different parts of the body. These training exercises are presented as games.

The first 'game' we play is to give higher points to the parts of the targets that are more difficult to hit. For instance, one point for body, two for arm or leg, five for glove or shoe.

This rewards them for taking the risk of aiming for something they are not used to hitting but also allows them the fall back of hitting the target they are comfortable with.

Whilst this can be quite effective at encouraging practice of the desired skill the option to also score to body allows some fencers an opt out that negates the exercise, worse even those who take the risk tend to resort to what they are confident at as the score approaches a win. So I have another 'game', often used the following session to build upon the developing skill by further changing the parameters for winning. I flip the scoring system round. On its own this would seem to disincentivise the skill of hitting alternative target, so I also give a specific score that has to be achieved, but not exceeded in order to win. I happen to use 21 and call it pontoon!

Now if the only place that scores a single (or for that matter an odd number) is the foot then the incentive to score to foot increases as the fight goes on. Fencers who aim for wrist, miss and continue on to body quickly find themselves needing the single to foot to win. A good tactical fencer will get the foot shot out of the way early in the fight when it's less obvious to the opponent.....but I like to leave this for the fencers to learn the hard way.

Proficiency Awards

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

A4 Study Guides:

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

Figures in **RED** are for non-BAF members



New Life Member - Angela Goodall

I feel very honoured to receive Life Membership of the Academy and am most grateful to the Committee for this gesture, especially bearing in mind the luminaries who have been honoured thus in the past. For those who may not have been acquainted with me, here is a bit about my association with the BAF.

I Started fencing at school and continuing whilst at university. Soon became interested in coaching and this may have had something to do with a certain Roy Goodall who was coaching me .

From 1967 I began helping with production and distribution of 'The Fencing Master' BAF magazine which became 'Fencing' - continued for 20 years; then with BAF newsletter 'Academy News' when it started.

In 1968 attended a preliminary course for the old-style AFA Leader's Award (now Level 3) and then the course and examination which was run by Bob Anderson aided by one Leon Hill who had just been appointed National Coach as Bob's assistant. The other examiner was Charles de Beaumont. I Joined the Academy in 1969 and began coaching full time. Training with Pat Pearson and at BAF courses I passed Diploma in 1976 - at that time one of the youngest to do so. Being one of the first women to coach all weapons (invited to become coach to the newly created Women's Epee Squad)

I Helped with organising the BAF 25th Anniversary celebrations 'Silver Swords' in 1974 plus a reception at old AFA HQ and a fancy dress Riverboat party. I was elected to Committee as Assistant Secretary in ?1975? (*can't remember*), and participated in Sub-Committee Investigating Areas of Development within BAF (forerunner of Development Officer). This Sub-Committee proposed many of the benefits for members that exist today including drawing up the syllabus for the BAF 5 Star Award Scheme (forerunner of the Proficiency awards), members' insurance, Information Brochure for new members etc. Helped with organising courses/master-classes run by foreign masters Istvan Lukovic, Daniel Revenu & Athos Perone.

As a member of the BAF/AFA Joint Coaching Sub Committee, participated in setting up CCPR Club Leader's Award (now Level 1) and creating its syllabus as well as those for all other Joint Coaching Awards. As an examiner at all weapons and all levels. I Served on BAF Committee for 8 years, then stood down owing to family illnesses. Although I continued on the Joint Coaching Sub Committee until its demise in 1987.

Re-joined Committee as Assistant Secretary resuming this task in January 1996 by request of the President and Secretary but stood down January 2005, this time because of Roy's declining health. I was the Examination Administrator for BAF 2000-2005, assisting with production of 'Golden Swords' 50th Anniversary of BAF re-formation at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in 1999 and then 'Diamond Swords' 60th at Warwick Castle in 2009.

Also taught Stage Combat and directed fights in theatre and opera, both amateur and professional, UK and abroad, having directed fights for a musical version of Cyrano de Bergerac in Greece. Main claim to fame is doubling for Joan Collins, but don't read too much into that as I also doubled for Dinsdale Landen. Was made a Fellow of the British Academy of Dramatic Combat.

Other work has included co-editing a performing arts magazine for 26 years and administrative work on an EU project for enhanced medical diagnostics. Interests include singing semi-professionally and have contributed to raising over £40,000 for charities by fund-raising concerts.



How to Construct a Choice Reaction Lesson

By Lance Larsen

1. Take one stroke in isolation.
2. Add an additional second or third stroke, again worked in isolation.
3. Create an order for the strokes; i.e.. a+b+c.
4. Make the order random; i.e.. a+c+c+b+a.

For example: The coach and pupil are both starting on guard in sixte. Ask the pupil to direct attack and give an opening (lower the blade). The pupil executes the direct attack with a lunge and the coach raises their blade on the pupil's recovery. Continue to practise the stroke but add additional steps beforehand, this forces the pupil to extend their concentration. Repeat several times. We're not looking for perfection but rather a work in progress.

Now ask the pupil to disengage attack. The coach should attempt to engage the pupil's blade in quarte. We can use the same progression as before but only working the disengage attack. The coach should return to sixte when the pupil returns to guard.

Now ask the pupil to counter disengage attack. The coach should attempt to engage in sixte.

Once we have worked each stroke individually we can create an order; direct attack, followed by disengage followed by counter disengage. By this stage we shouldn't need to use any vocal cues, just the blade actions to initiate the strokes. **If a mistake is made, DON'T stop the lesson and focus on the mistake, instead give correction on the fly and move on to the next stroke.**

Finally have the pupil execute the strokes randomly based on the coach's reaction, this will raise the level of difficulty yet again.

FENCING COACHING – A PRACTICAL APPROACH

10th February 2019

British Academy of Fencing Training Day, Sunday, 10th Feb 2019

Venue: King Edward VI High School for Girls, Edgbaston Park Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2UB

Staff: Masters of the Academy

Times: 10am-4pm

Cost: £25

Postcode For Sat Nav: Park Vale Gate entrance, from Bristol Road, B5 7SP

Please bring a packed lunch, tea/coffee will be provided.

Training Day Theme

'The Individual Lesson: from a Technical, Timing, Training and Tactical perspective'
Course attendees will be presented with ideas on the elements above and will have the opportunity to practice on a pupil/coach, questions will be invited at the end of each presentation. An ideal chance to develop the content and structure of your individual lessons, also exam relevant.

This will be a 'no stress' environment so bring a sense of humour!

STEFAN SPEAKS

The thought of your Members' Rep.

It was the end of a wet Monday afternoon in autumn. That as I sat drinking my coffee it dawned on me if I was re-elected members rep I would need an article for the magazine. And it could not be "Hi my name is Stefan I was elected as Members Representative for this year, let me tell you a bit about myself for those who do not know me". Or could it?!

True you all now should know who I am from a year of awesomely brilliant magazine articles complete with a photograph that shows my dashing good looks but did you know these three sword related facts about me:

Epee	:	20+ years ago I used to wield a Walloon in the Sealed Knot
Sabre	:	I started the fencing season ranked 31 st in the British senior sabre ranking
Foil	:	I have never single handedly foiled an alien invasion

Now for those of you that couldn't make it to the Member's Meeting, I am shamelessly going to re-use the notes I made for the meeting.

I'm going to start by taking the time to reflect briefly upon what we as the committee have been doing over the previous year.

- Regained our control of the website and Facebook page. You hopefully have notice that there have been many more notifications and update online.
- Moved internet service provider for the website, and set up proper email for the committee members. Making a considerable cost saving in the process. This has enabled me to email (some may say spam) members with information about up-coming courses and any other Academy notices.
- We've also put into place some basic GDPR processes, which is why all the nagging emails come from myself. So, please make sure that I have an up to date email address for you, otherwise you may miss out on some riveting reads.

What have I been doing this year, apart from sorting out our membership records?

In short: getting out and promoting the Academy.

I am still an actively competitive fencer and get out to a fair number of Open and Veterans competitions. As Members Rep I have made a conscious effort to promote the Academy to as many people as possible. In my travels, I came realise a couple of things, that most people had never heard of us either fencers or novice coaches. And of those that did know of us, a fair few had the opinion that the Academy was dictatorial oppressive and bullying (in the past, I have to admit that they may have been right).

My biggest and most effective counter to these views, is that I can say:

'that the Academy is now Under New Management'

And being approached and talked to about the Academy in an open and friendly manner is hopefully causing people to re-evaluate their opinions and take another look at us with an open mind.

What can I do in the coming year?

More of the same really, keep trying to change ingrained perceptions of the Academy and increase awareness of us in the fencing community.

But as members you can also help. I'm not asking for you to become recruiting sergeants, but simply to increase awareness of the Academy, and what we do, plus to let people know we are under new management and that we have changed.

One of the things discussed in the meeting was if members would be happy to buy a t-shirt with 'British Academy of Fencing' written on it and wear it to fencing events. (Costs look to be around £8 - £10 with Vista Print, so its not going to be all fancy or anything as that increases the cost). When this has been designed look out for an email from me with full details on how to obtain one of these limited-edition marvels of fashion.

Getting to Know your Professors

And today you are such lucky people as we have the answers from ...

Name - Peter Cormack

When and why did you start coaching - I started coaching in the late 90's. Numerous people had suggested I take it up when I was younger but it was only after I had finished competing seriously that I started learning to coach. I suppose I felt that if I wanted to stay involved with fencing and put something back in, coaching was the best option for me.

As a competitive fencer what is/was your preferred weapon - I was a foilist though I think I'd prefer epee now.

Where do you coach or are you retired - I coach around local schools and run Kenilworth Sword FC which is a successful junior club. I have to say retirement is appealing!

When did you become a professor of BAF - 2006 ... over 12 years ago. How time flies when you're having fun.

Which coach inspired you as either a fencer or a coach - I've been lucky enough to be coached/ educated by some very good coaches over the years and I picked stuff up from every single one. I'd have to say as a fencer I learnt a lot from Pat Pearson and Bert Bracewell and I especially admired the way the latter tailored his lessons to the individual ... its sound kind of an obvious thing to do but a lot of coaches don't do it!

The best advice you were given (fencing or coaching) - as a fencer "slow down and don't rush at the start of what you are preparing" and as a coach "Q) Where are the most important 7 inches in a fencers body? A) Between the ears! Funny, potentially rude ... but so true!

What is the one piece of advice you would give a beginner coach - Don't try and shortcut the learning process ... put the time and effort in to learning the skills and material ... apply what you learn to developing 'real' fencing lessons that can be applied by pupils on the piste.

What do you wish you had known when you began your fencing/coaching journey - there's no real money in it!

Favourite move/film/tv show involving sword play - Can't give one answer here, so: when I was a kid I loved a dubbed series on telly called 'The Flashing Blade' that was scored with red blooded music from Berloiz's 'Symphonie Fantastique'. For films it'd have to be 'The Princess Bride' and the Stuart Granger classic 'Scaramouche'.

Note to self, next time do not show professors answers to the wife, for the last week all I have
heard is her singing - As long as we have done our best,
then no-one can do more,
and life and love and happiness
are well worth fighting for.

You've got to fight for what you want,
For all that you believe.....

All I can hope is soon she will get bored of singing The Flashing Blade theme

Courses

BAF Residential Course 2019

12th August to 17th August 2019

The next residential course will be held at Denstone College and bookings are already being taken.



The British Academy of Fencing's residential course is open to all fencing coaches irrespective of whether they are members of the BAF.

British Academy of Fencing Members : £444 Non Academy Coach: £499

This fee includes full board (breakfast, lunch and evening meals), tuition and course documentation. Examination fees are extra.

**For further details, contact the Course Officer,
Jacqueline Redikin at courseofficer@baf-fencing.com**



Safeguarding & First Aid



Safeguarding: Tue 6 Aug 18:00-21:00

(Application through BF Website, Coach Zone - open from later in the year)

First Aid: Sun 11 Aug 09:00-16:30

(Application through David Kirby)

Venue: King Edward VI School, Chapel Lane, Stratford upon Avon, Warks, CV37 6BE

These courses are required for BF coach registration. There will be very limited numbers on both, but they are excellent courses and are delivered for the fencing community, rather than general consumption.

Manchester Coaching Courses

Courses are being held in the Manchester area, on a monthly basis. The course is for all three weapons from levels 1 to 5. For further information, please contact Jacqueline Redikin via courseofficer@baf-fencing.com