

British Academy of Fencing **ACADEMY NEWS**

November 2009
Issue 53

"Run by coaches for coaches"



HAIL, PROFESSOR LOUISA

The Academy now has a new Full Diploma Master, in the person of Louisa Miller, and she may soon be joined by another one, Philip Carson.

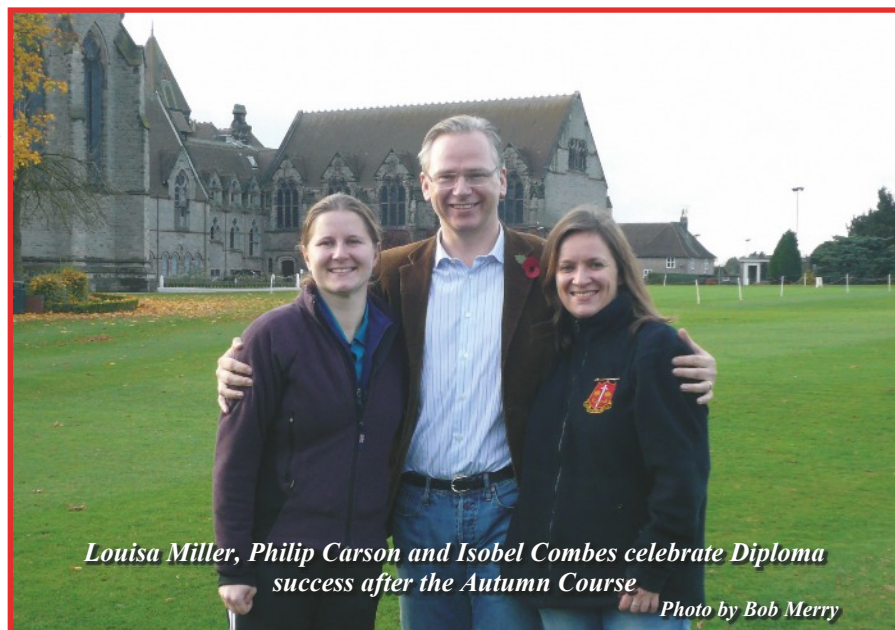
Three Diploma passes were recorded at the conclusion of the Denstone course, all at *épée*. The most significant of these was that of Louisa Miller, who has completed all the Academy's requirements for the Full Diploma Master award and is now only the second three weapon female Professor in the Academy's history.

Close behind Louisa is Philip Carson, who is the thickness of a few sheets of paper away from becoming Professor. He has now passed all three weapons at Diploma level, but still has to take the written examinations.

The third successful candidate was Isobel Combes, who recorded her first success at this level.

Academy News spoke to the three of them just after the results had been announced. Asked for her initial response, Louisa, obviously elated, replied, "Fantastic, absolutely fantastic. Six years of hard work, grit and determination have paid off. I'm pleased and want to thank all the members of the Academy that have helped me on the way." Asked about how she'd found this course, Louisa said, "Hard, strenuous, tiring - you know, the normal course requirements. Because I knew that Saturday would be so significant, it had that added pressure and added angst. But that is what I came here to do."

Reminded that he still had the written papers to complete, Philip promised to



Louisa Miller, Philip Carson and Isobel Combes celebrate Diploma success after the Autumn Course

Photo by Bob Merry

"sort them out very soon" to become the next Full Diploma Master. Philip has been working towards this goal for around fifteen years and has seen many changes in the courses. "It has got very tight, very slick - the whole structure has developed into a solid product. I cannot think of a better foundation for my coaching. *Épée* is not my favourite weapon and this exam was always going to be the hard one for me."

Isobel had partnered Louisa throughout the week and paid tribute to her help and inspiration in getting her own result. "She sets a very high standard to live up to. She's been fantastic to work with - a real slave driver! It is wonderful, as a female coach, to have someone else who has done it who is also a woman. I'll be back on future courses - again and again!"

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NEXT ISSUE: February Contributions by January 15th, please

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



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USEFUL INFORMATION**ACADEMY
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STORE VIA THE LINK
FROM THE BAF WEB SITE**

**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

Travel - included for first 20 miles,
thereafter 16.1p/mile

**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)
Key Teaching Points Epee		
Key Teaching Points Sabre		
Key Coaching Points Foil		
Key Coaching Points Epee		
Key Coaching Points Sabre	}£7.35 (£9.45)
Glossary of Terms.....		
Translation of Fencing Terms in Four Languages.....		
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.....		£6.30 (£7.35)
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		

THE PRESIDENT WRITES.....



New Master

I am pleased and honoured to announce the Academy has a new fencing master, namely Louisa Miller. Louisa completed the final part of the Diploma on this year's Autumn course and can feel justifiably proud to be only the second woman to achieve the full three weapon diploma, the first being Sue Benney in 1993. On behalf of the committee and the membership I would like to congratulate Louisa for her dedication, hard work, and success in our examination.

I trust I can call upon her services on future courses. Well done Louisa

Examinations and Questions

The SSTT have conducted a complete review of the processes, procedures and questions associated with our examination systems. As such there are some changes you should be aware of, the most significant of which are as follows:

- o•••New membership application form
- o•••New examination application form
- o•••New syllabus for all levels
- o• Significant changes to the questions for foil, sabre and épée from Level 2 to Diploma (note: Level 1 questions remain unaltered)
- o•••The oral theory test for Levels 2 and 3 has been replaced with a written test (predominately multiple choice).

A new disk containing all the paperwork and questions etc., will be available from the 1st of November 2009 - please contact Dave Jerry for further details

Denstone – Autumn 2009

First of all I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to all those who made the course the success that it undoubtedly was - Leon Hill, Peter Cormack and Liam Harrington. The course was well attended with approximately 50% of candidates being both new to the Academy system and non-members. I would also like to congratulate all who took and passed examinations and thank all the examiners who gave up a day to examine. In addition to Louisa, I would like to congratulate two other significant passes both at Diploma épée, namely Philip Carson and Isobel Combes.

Philip Bruce

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Make cheque/postal order payable to Diamond Swords Production and post to above address. Quote your full address inc. post code, phone and/or email contact details.

For queries email austinbaf@hotmail.com or call 01895 825747 - office hours.

All items will be despatched within 48 hours of receipt of order- dependent on availability. Every effort will be made to ensure prompt delivery. Please allow for current possible postal delays.

Order early to avoid disappointment !!! Sales office will close between November 18th and December 11th.

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REVIEWS

DIAMOND SWORDS AT WARWICK CASTLE - DVD

DVD - PAL - 16:9 screen format - 1hr 50mins - £12.50 (+£2.00 p&p)

Those of us who were fortunate enough to see the Diamond Swords show at Warwick Castle witnessed a truly professional spectacular, combining many talents, as the history of swordplay from 1540 to the present day was presented in a witty and entertaining manner. Now there is the opportunity to relive the experience by means of a DVD of the show.



The DVD has been produced by a professional company, November Whisky Productions, and contains a **complete** record of the show and also interviews with Bob Anderson and Andy Wilkinson. It has been shot in widescreen format and lasts around one hour and fifty minutes.

Using three camera angles, the show is presented in its entirety and is, therefore, an excellent record of the evening. If you were there at the time, you will enjoy seeing it again, whilst if you could not make it to the show, this is a great opportunity to see what you missed. At a bargain price of just £12.50 (obtainable from David Austin, **not the**

Academy – see page 4 for this and other merchandise) this should be in every Academy member's collection.

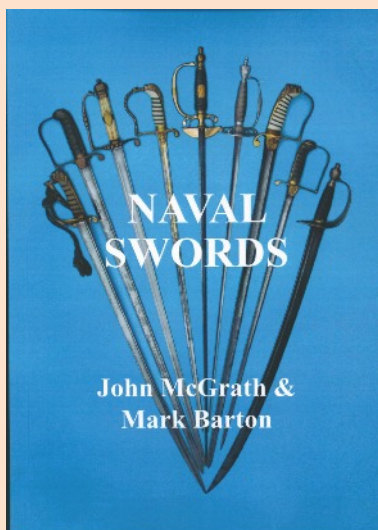
Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Bob Merry

Still shots taken from the actual DVD

NAVAL SWORDS

By John McGrath and Mark Barton - 89pp - £11



Swords worn by officers in the Royal Navy were not standardised patterns, as in the Army. In this monograph the authors have researched the confusion thoroughly and brought order out of disorder. Various different types of blades are discussed and the different sword handles with their furniture. Scabbards, Sword Belts and Sword Knots are tabulated under Accoutrements. The various swords in use in the Royal Navy, Dockyards, Artillery, Volunteers, Reserve, Volunteer Reserve, Air Service, etc., are all reviewed. Also mentioned are swords of the Naval Service in India, our Customs and Coastguard Service, the Merchant Navy, Trinity House and Presentation Swords. Naval Dirks are often ascribed wrongly to midshipmen only, by nautical novelists, but they were often worn by very senior officers. Finally, there are sections on Repaired Weapons, Dating Weapons, Conservation and Care, and the Sword in today's Royal Navy.

This well-researched text is surely the definitive update of the standard sources listed in the Bibliography, as many of them are out of print. The account is illustrated superbly by over 70 plates, most of them in colour. Highly recommended. A 'snip' at £11 (including postage) from the Royal Navy Amateur Fencing Association (to whom cheques should be made payable), RNS05, HMS Temeraire, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO1 2HB. All profits go to this Association.

Reviewed by Derek Evered

For more about fencing in the Royal Navy, and more books, go to <http://www.navyfencing.co.uk/>

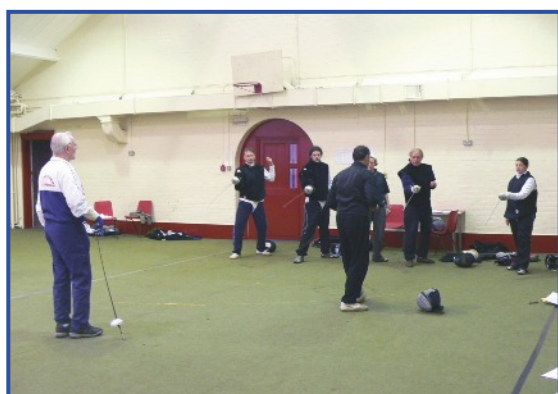
AUTUMN COURSE

In a change to previous years, the second residential course of the year was held during the Autumn half term period, rather than during the summer. Philip Bruce said that there may have been a slight reduction in numbers, but he had had, as yet, no adverse reaction to the change of time. There were two late cancellations, due to reasons beyond the control of the people concerned, but there were still twenty-three members of the course, including two pupils.

The course was directed by Prof. Philip Bruce, who mainly looked after a highly self-motivated group of Advanced and Diploma candidates, whilst also keeping a careful eye on the progress of all the course. Professors Peter Cormack and Liam Harrington were responsible for those candidates training for Levels 1 to 3, whilst Professor Leon Hill gave specialist tuition in giving Class Lessons.

Once more the course attracted candidates from overseas.. Conrad Makoski lives in the Netherlands, whilst Adar Klein travelled from Israel to become the first BAF-qualified coach from the Middle East. Philip commented on her multi-lingual note-taking, using Russian, French and Hebrew, in addition to English.

Examiners were found to run three boards for the nineteen examinations at all levels. Success in these examinations is shown in the panel on the right. As ever, the members of the course showed their appreciation at the conclusion of the examinations for their tutors and all the senior members of the Academy who gave freely of their time to act as examiners.



MASTER CLASS

Leon Hill's vast experience was really welcome when practising the class lessons.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Candidates hard at work, honing their skills.



NEARLY THERE!

Louisa Miller gives Isobel Combes a lesson, during her successful Diploma examination.

Photos by Bob Merry

EXAMINATION SUCCESS

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

Diploma Epée

Philip Carson
Isobel Combes
Louisa Miller

Advanced Foil

John Worsley (part pass)

Level 3 Foil

Andrew Sercombe
Conrad Makoski (part pass)
Elaine Sayer (part pass)

Level 3 Epée

Conrad Makoski
Adar Klein

Level 3 Sabre

Austen Rose
Peter Russell

Level 2 Foil

Natalie Gower
Nick Stuart (part pass)

Level 2 Epée

Meg Shepherd-Foster
Adam Hughes
Stephen Teggin (part pass)

Level 1 passes were also gained by:

Adar Klein
Natalie Gower
Adam Hughes
Stephen Teggin

We send our congratulations to all these successful candidates.

COMMENT

ARE YOU INSURED?

In the last edition of Academy News, we reminded members that their annual subscriptions were due by the 1st October. At the time of writing this column, we hear that there are still a number of you who have not yet got round to sending the money.

If you are coaching without having renewed, you are **NOT** covered by the Academy's insurance policy, which could prove very costly in the event of an accident.

Should you choose not to renew by January 1st 2010, your membership will automatically lapse.

It is now possible to pay your subscriptions by direct bank transfer and details were sent out with the reminders this year. If you want to confirm these details, or have any other queries about your subscription, please contact the Treasurer, Prof. Liam Harrington (details on page 3).

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.

Frances Campbell Linlithgow

Anthony Rose Norwich

Robert Parsons Lewes

M Wilson Shillingstone

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

Letters

From Derek Evered

With my more advanced pupils, I sometimes set them a project in their lessons. For example, I might ask them what they should do against a fully-extended blade. Then we go through the various possibilities, sword-in-hand: beats, engagements or takings of the blade, etc.

With very advanced fencers I fence a short bout with them without telling them my strategy for the subsequent lesson, in order to see if they can recognise the opponent's style, such as attacking constantly, relying too much on defence, or stop-hitting, etc.

Obviously there are many more styles which can be simulated and this is applicable to all three weapons, of course. Projects can be set for group tuition as well as individual coaching.

As far as I am aware "project lessons" do not feature in the syllabuses of the BAF coaching examinations. Perhaps they should be included.

Derek Evered

Editor's Comment: Derek makes an interesting suggestion here. Coaches use different methods to get the best from their pupils. Perhaps others might like to share their ideas and experiences here.

With regard to Derek's final point, our examination syllabuses and questions do not dictate to candidates how they should present their lessons. However, candidates have to bear in mind that examinations have to test the coach's knowledge and ability in a short period of time and are, therefore, a little artificial - we use other coaches as pupils, for example. Presenting a lesson to a board where the pupil shows their knowledge and ability to think may not be the best way of convincing the board of the candidate's abilities.

From Dave Jerry

As many of you will know, we held Fencing Have A Go sessions at the Diamond Swords Celebration at Warwick Castle at the beginning of September. We had a team of twelve - seven Coaches and five Helpers. What impressed me was the way that the "Gang" integrated. Most people had not worked together before and it was as if the whole show was a well orchestrated plan. The sessions were for one hour, five sessions per day.

Until the start time, or very close to it, we never really knew how many participants were going to be there. For each session the plan was a lead coach and a second coach assisting. In the early part of the day this was an adequate plan. In the afternoons, the numbers increased considerably, usually in excess of thirty participants (is kitting up thirty non-fencers in eight and a half minutes a record?). When this happened the coaches who were "Resting" just eased onto the arena, there were no formal changes of plan - the need was seen and filled. There was no competition for the lead position and it all looked like a well planned exercise.

What was the most impressive to me was that all the coaches were keen to help and there was no personal motive. The goal was to show the Academy off at its best and we achieved that. I believe that this happened because we have a sound Coach Education system which has given us all faith in our organisation and a sense of BELONGING.

Dave Jerry



HARRINGTON'S HARANGUE

Musings from your Members' Rep.

This is my last column as Members' Representative. Next year you'll be reading articles by whomever you choose to elect as my replacement at the AGM in January.

I've been on the committee for two years now, but I've only just begun to appreciate exactly how much work goes on behind the scenes to keep the Academy running. To be honest, Members' Rep is probably the easiest job on the committee, and whenever I learn of the hours that the other committee members contribute, I do tend to feel somewhat guilty.

The Academy's primary purpose is to educate fencing coaches, and, since I've spent the past five years being trained, I've probably benefited more than most from the hard work that the people running the Academy have done. So, with the formal part of my training behind me, I thought I'd used this column to publicly thank everybody, including committee members, SSTT members, volunteers, examiners, and course staff, who have given their time and effort to make the BAF a success.

At the time of writing this, I'm about to attend the Academy's autumn residential course as staff, so, by way of preparation, I've been reviewing the material that is going to be used on the course. There's a lot of it. The SSTT have not been idle. As well as forty exam questions per weapon per level, there's the Key Teaching Points manual for every weapon, the Key Coaching Points for every weapon, the Terminology guide, and also the 2nd edition Tactics of the Teaching and Coaching Tactics manual.

I was asked to write a review for Academy News on the Tactics manual, when it was first produced in 2008. However looking at it again for the first time in a little while I'm struck again by how good it is, and what a useful aid it is for coaches who are training for their higher level exams. So forgive me if I write about it again. The contents are clearly influenced by the work of Dr Zbigniew Czajkowski, and I mean that as a compliment.

The manual contains over forty exercises that a coach can use to improve their pupils tactical capabilities. So it gives examples of how to train your pupil to assess the situation, how to use a sense of surprise to get the better of the opponent, and how a coach can mimic the styles and tactics of different types of fencers. If you don't have a copy, I recommend getting one. If you do have a copy that's been gathering dust for a while, like mine, give it another read.

Liam Harrington, Members' Representative.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE

At the AGM Dinner in January, the Academy will be making awards recognising the achievements of its members, both in examinations and in other fields. As a result, the British Academy of Fencing is seeking nominations for the Brian Pitman Memorial Award.

Full details are on the BAF web site at <http://www.baf-fencing.org/brianpitman.htm>, but basically the award is for a fencing coach from the Academy who has shown particular skill in the promotion and/or development of the sport of fencing for groups of young people under the age of 18.

In the past, it has sometimes been difficult to get suitable nominations for this award, so if you know of somebody you think is worthy please don't be shy in putting their name forward.

Nominations can be sent to the Secretary of the BAF (see page 3 for contact details). The Nominations should include a summary of the work of the nominee that would qualify the member for the Award. It is not too late to make your nomination. The Committee will consider whether any nomination reaches the standard required at their December meeting.

Coaches who have shown innovation in the teaching/coaching of young people from one or more of the following categories would be strong contenders for the Award:

Young people with learning difficulties

Physically handicapped young people

Young people from deprived areas

Work in state schools

Work with Voluntary Organisations

If you want an example of the sort of thing that we are looking for then you can read the nomination for last year's winner, Iain Aberdeen, on the web site at <http://www.baf-fencing.org/brianpitman2.htm>.

AGM



Enclosed with this edition of Academy News, you will find the Notice for the Annual General Meeting of the Academy. We are holding this at the same hotel as last year, as the feedback we received indicated that most people felt that this was a good venue and an improvement on previous years.

The hotel is offering a rate of £65 per night for a single room and £69 for a double. You may well see better rates offered as part of Holiday Inn's current advertising campaign. When we checked a few days ago, a single room for the Saturday could be obtained for £61. However, it should be pointed out that this is for a non-refundable booking, whilst "our" rate is flexible and can be cancelled at short notice.

The Dinner will be held in a private room and the cost is £25. During the course of the evening, various awards and certificates will be presented.

For those of you who have not attended an A.G.M. before, this is your chance to have a say in the way the Academy is run, to hear reports from the various officers of the Academy and to socialise with fellow members (without having to pick up a sword!). You can find out more about the Academy and perhaps make some useful contacts for your future career. So why not give it a go this year and make sure that the meeting is fully representative of all the membership of the Academy.

Holiday Inn, Birmingham M6 J7, Chapel Lane, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 7BG

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COURSES

BAF RESIDENTIAL COURSES 2010

Easter Course: 5th - 10th April 2010

Fees for the Course (provisional)

Residential (Single room): £367 (BAF Member) £424 (Non-member)

Non-residential or shared accommodation: Contact Course Officer

Course to be held at Denstone College, Staffordshire.

Places on this course are already being booked, so don't delay!

Contact Dave Jerry, the Course Officer, to ensure your place.

Contact details are on page 3

Various Coach Education courses are held on a regular basis. The following contacts may be useful. Otherwise, contact Dave Jerry, the Course Officer, for the latest information.

Yorkshire Coaches' Club: monthly 10 am to 4 pm at Ackworth School, Pontefract. Levels 1 – 4 catered for; Level 5 by arrangement. Coach Educators of the Academy will cover the Theory and Practice of Coaching. All coaches and their pupils are welcome to attend. Please contact Provost Dave Jerry (see page 3).

Sunday Coaches' Club, Birmingham: normally the first Sunday in each month, from 10 pm to 4 pm at St. John's Primary School, Mortimer Road, Kenilworth, Warks. CV8 1FS. Coach educators are Prof. Peter Northam and Prof. Pete Cormack. For full details, contact Pete Cormack at cormack@ntlworld.com or on 01926 859881.

Saturday Coaches' Club, Norwich: Monthly at the University Sports Park, Norwich. Advanced Coach Andrew Sowerby invites all coaches in the Norfolk and Suffolk area wishing to prepare for Foil, Épée and Sabre (levels 1 to 4) to come along. •E-mail Andrew via www.sowerbyfencing.com

Hemel Hempstead: Due to problems with the venue, the courses run by Prof. Chris Norder are suspended for the time being. If you are interested in coach education in this area, please contact Prof. Liam Harrington for the latest situation.

If you are organising a Coach Education course, please contact the Editor if you wish to have it publicised. You should also inform the Course Officer.

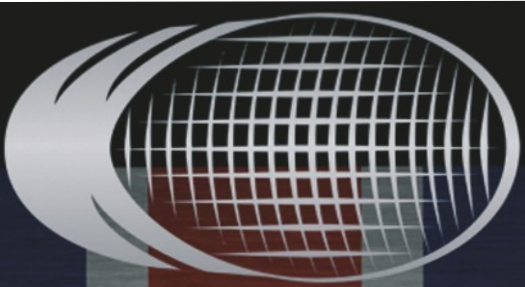
See also the Academy web site for the latest news on courses. Contact the webmaster, Isobel Combes, if you wish to publicise any events there.

www.baf-fencing.org

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.



Duelist

London



www.duelist.com