

A.G.M. 2022

A quiet but snowy AGM at the Bentley Brook Inn this year. A nice venue, if a little in the middle of nowhere, and good food. It was really nice to get together with people again and talk shop. A few changes to the committee this year. Stefan has stood down as Membership Rep. At the time of writing we have no replacement. If anyone is interested to taking up this post, please talk to a member of the committee. Bob Merry has retired from the committee... again, and will be replaced by Graham Strettan. Sally Peat stood down as Assistant Secretary, but the post will be filled by Donald Walker who will still retain his responsibility Proficiency Award Scheme.

There were enough people attending the meeting to be quorate, a concern with covid and the snow that fell the previous day being the reasons. There was some discussion about holding a mixed media AGM next year, but it will depend on the legal advice from Companies House.

The committee have spent much of this year sorting out changes to the BAF articles, and organising two SGM's. This was a huge amount of work, and a lot of waiting on other organisations for information, as it proved more difficult to get hold of people while they were working from home.

There were two main issues, one is insurance costs going forward, as we have had a 25-30% increase in costs this year, and expect a further increase in September, the other is membership. The committee will be running the Denstone course this year. The committee agreed to run a number of coaching days in the run up to Denstone to help those who were planning to attend. The committee would also like to encourage members to run their own coaching courses.

Much of the discussion in both meetings centred around what we can do to raise the profile of the British Academy of Fencing, and fencing in general. We as coaches and clubs need to communicate our successes to each other, discussing what works, and certainly not sitting back and doing nothing.

...And I must mention again the excellent meal, and the good company.



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www.baf-fencing.com

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Welcome to the Academy News In This Issue

AGM 2022

Editor

Welcome and Information

The President's Piece

Prof. Peter Northam

Memories Wanted

Editor

It's Your Sport?

Alan Grafton

Mixing Formats

Nick Chapman

Letters

Members

Coaching Techniques

Prof. A. Non

Coach Education Days

British Academy of Fencing

Academy Insurance - A timely Reminder

British Academy of Fencing

Diesel or Electric?

Kevin Nelson

From the Collection of Porthos

Porthos

The Coaching Emperor is Wearing No Clothes

Prof. Phil Carson

Sports Dock - Commonwealth Championships

Nick Chapman

Class Control or Class Engagement?

Kevin Nelson

Coaching Courses and Examinations

British Academy of Fencing

Strawman Response - Fencing Language

Nick Chapman

Stefan Speaks (the final one)

Stefan Leponis

Denstone

British Academy of Fencing

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The President 's Piece.....

Welcome everyone to this issue of Academy News, my first contribution as President for the second term of office and hopefully, a better year regarding Omicron. Thankyou also to the contributors in this issue and to Kevin Nelson, our hard-working editor! For such a small organisation as we are, the quality and content is remarkable.

As I just mentioned, this is my first article as President (my second term of office) and I thank you for the trust you have placed in me, I will try not to let you down. The Team (Committee) I have around me will make sure that I am kept on track and that daft ideas are kept to a minimum. I welcome any contact from you and guarantee that if you email me, you will get a swift response.

Our AGM went well with a member from the Isle of White (Nick Stuart) and a member from Scotland (Prof Phil Carson) attending (both ends of the country). An attractive venue in a beautiful part of the country, covered in a melting blanket of snow, with a small group of members. There was coffee on the off which was available all through our meeting. The Associate and Provosts got there meeting under way, unfortunately, no Members Rep was elected so the position remains vacant. We were quorate in the main meeting, so off we went with the reports from the officers of the Committee. Each report was read, commented on then proposed and seconded and accepted. At the end, committee positions were voted on, the results now posted on the Academy Website and on the inside of this edition of Academy News. There was a long discussion at the end of the meeting covering a range of issues. We did not stop for a break, we were moving quite quickly, but we were now holding up the lunch team so we closed the meeting and stopped for lunch. This was worth stopping for, it was an excellent lunch with the best meat pie I have had in a long time, a beautiful salad and a pud. The Academy had booked for 30 with only 12 to serve! Someone had seconds! During and after the meal it was talk, talk, talk. I left the meeting around 3 o'clock.

As mentioned in my Four-Year Programme, part of it talks about the Academy running Coach Education Courses to train new coaches, Coach Education Courses to upskill present coaches and examinations for both. Any coach can run a coach education course, you just need to arrange an Examining Board; Level 1 at any weapon can be examined by an individual coach who is qualified at Level 4 and above, (weapon specific) no Board necessary. This our bread and butter, what we are good at, producing quality coaches. We have already put together four provisional dates, we are just waiting for confirmation of venues, we will then circulate to all the membership and post on the website. This will also be an excellent opportunity to prepare for our Denstone residential course.

If you need any help or advice on setting up a coach education course, need to know what materials we can provide or need any assistance from a local coach, we will do our best for you. Consider starting with a member of your own club and turning them into a coach, that's what happened to me.

I am very excited at the prospect of these next four years, now that we are getting back to some sort of 'normality', my Level 1 three weapon course is now under way and the Committee are keen to help others at higher levels.

Every coach in the Academy is important, there is a unique bond between us, forged from training together on courses, topped off with the pressure and stress of an exam. This bond creates a feeling of loyalty, love and respect for the Academy, everyone is approachable and you are listened to. We are led by coaches who have been right through the examination system, have many years of coaching experience at all levels and weapons and understand exactly the needs of the modern coach. We do not all 'fit the same mould, are different in many ways, and we encourage this diversity of thinking. We are the best of the best!

Look to the future, plan your training, enjoy the journey.

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PS. Drop me an email, let me know what you're doing, I dare you!

Memories Wanted

Dear Members,

we have had a request for information and or pictures of Prof. Walter Nicklen from his son Rod Till. Rod never knew his father and would like some more information about him. We know that Prof. Walter Nicklen was actively coaching during the 1950's, but gave up at the end of that decade, he taught at Taylors Merchant school, Polytechnic FC, and had his own Salle. If any of you remember him, and can pass on some information on that would be appreciated. Rod can be contacted through Kevin, the Editor.

PS - Any photographs will be copied and returned.

It is essential that all activities that are undertaken by members (coaches) are risk assessed and the risk assessments are written down and dated. In order to comply with our insurers requirements, Academy members must ensure that they follow the NGB's (British Fencing's) guidelines when coaching and specifically those relating to health and safety. All equipment used must conform to the standards and specifications set by British Fencing.

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

During the current crisis, the study guides are being reviewed and re-written, so they will not be available for the next few months.

The Foil Study Guide will be out soon.

It's Your Sport?

By Alan Grafton



There was an election recently for a place on the Board of England Fencing; that might be old news to some of you to others a surprise. I stood in the election and was successful, which might also be a surprise for some, it certainly was for me. Two of us were standing and the result was 189 votes to me, 180 to the other feller so if you voted for me thank you, your vote really made a difference.

Take a look again at those numbers: 189 for me, 180 for the other guy. There were no spoiled papers, no disqualified votes so the total "turnout" was 369 which according to my rough calculations was 13% of the electorate. The recent England Fencing AGM took place in November and was held both in person and via Zoom, yet the turnout was only around 1% (that's ONE percent) of the membership. The Academy's AGM was held in January and attended by about a dozen people of whom 5 were committee members. I might not quite be comparing apples with oranges if I liken Fencing to National Governance, but the turnout in the 2019 General Election was 67.3%¹ and who cares about Politics, anyway, eh?

It is in the nature of fencers to be individuals but you cannot fence as an individual, you need at least an opponent, somewhere to fence and perhaps piste equipment to keep track of your hits (maybe even a Referee) which means that you will probably join a Club. But those of you involved in running clubs or who, as Coach, have seats on your Clubs' Committees will be aware of the difficulty of filling committee roles and aware that when more and more of the running of the club devolves to a hard-working few the club is in troubled waters. I know of one long-established Club that went, within a few months of losing one of its strongest committee members, from running 6 pistes over three weapons with 30-plus fencers a night and a healthy through-put of "beginners", to a "group" of 4 or 5 epeeists. They are slowly recovering but I was seriously wondering if I would be the one to "turn out the lights and lock the door".

The point I am making is that even though we may be Individuals, we need to be involved. If the fencers are not involved with their club then what reason is there for it to continue? If, as members of the Academy, we are not involved how can it continue to deliver the excellent training that it does (and if you do want to be involved contact the Committee, they would welcome you).

I return to the topic of my first paragraph, my election as a Director of England Fencing. I stood because I was frustrated by the way I saw the sport I've been "participating" in for over thirty years was going, or rather where it wasn't going and thought that by standing and getting involved I might be able to make some difference; that remains to be seen, but I will say again, if you voted for me, Thank You. If you voted for the other Guy I also say Thank You, at least you got involved.

1: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1050929/voter-turnout-in-the-uk/>

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Coach Education Class



All levels

Coneythorpe Village Hall, York Sunday Mornings

E-mail maitredcwalker@aol.com

Telephone: 01653 648026

Places are limited so booking is essential.





Mixing formats!

By Nick Chapman

Once again, this article is a bit different as it's not suggesting an alternative format but rather it suggests an alternative way to bring formats together.

As discussed in a previous issue (Academy News 103) when I began this series on the subject of formatting, I am not a fan of the one size fits all approach to competition formatting, one of my issues with the all-pervasive system of one round of pools and direct elimination (or for that matter any format that ends with direct elimination) is that almost no one is present to see the final or for the announcement of the results ("Losing the E" Academy News 105). Yes, I appreciate that there will be those who are competing in the final, those who are supporting them (parents, coach, siblings), those who lost in the semi but want their medal (and their entourage), anyone who is unfortunate

enough to be travelling with one of these medallists, those who are told by their coach (and actually do what their told) to watch the progress of the fencer who knocked them out of the event to see (and therefore hopefully learn from) how and by who they are eventually beaten, there may even be a few dedicated souls who actually want to see who wins. But in the grand scheme of things this is likely to be a small part of those who took part in the event. My problems with this are many fold. It does our sport no favours to present it in such a way that the **results are presented as an irrelevance to most who take part**, especially when working with those new, or comparatively new to the sport. Also, I find it inequitable that everyone pays the same entry fee and a few get much more from the experience, again I find this especially important when we are talking about developing fencers, particularly young developing fencers. We are talking of a group of fencers where the reward of continued participation may have nothing to do with skill or potential but instead is a result of their current stage of physical development (we have all been at events and seen the tallest or strongest child win when we know that there were more skilful fencers in the event). I'm not saying the tall or strong child does not deserve their moment in the spotlight, they were the most effective on the day they have earned the accolade, but not at the expense to the sport of the other fencer receiving the subliminal message that their involvement is worth less piste time, that their result is simply 'did not medal'. Events that are organised in such a way that a larger proportion of the competitors are present at the end are, I believe, preferable.

Some of you may have noticed this as a reoccurring theme in my writing, in my article 'don't forget the minnows' (Academy News 107) I suggested one format that I felt was well suited to novice fencers and provided all the fencers with a near equal amount of fencing, therefore resulting in large numbers being present for the announcement of the results. In my article on 'Doubles' (Academy News 106) I proposed a format that involved most participants fencing for most of the event. In my article 'Losing the E' (Academy News 105) I proposed fencing off all the places therefore providing everyone (given the right numbers) an equal amount of fencing and lots of people present for the results, even the 'Progressive Pools' system (Academy News 110) keeps everyone involved.

This issues idea, to achieve the same goals, required a little 'lateral thinking' (Edward De Bono), that is to say, the willingness to 'recognise and then abandon a principle we generally don't consider but do apply' to the running of events.

I like to teach my fencers a little of all three weapons, my prejudice should not stop them from choosing the weapon they like the best, however I am predominately a pointy weapon man so I start my fencers with foil, before introducing them to real fencing, sorry, I mean Epee. Some years ago, I wanted to set up a inter school event that promoted mass participation, encouraged team spirit, celebrated individual achievement, encouraged my foilists to try their hand at epee and my epeeists to keep their hand in at foil. That's a big ask from one event. I first split the days fencing into age groups. I had my younger fencers doing foil (their main weapon) in the morning and those who wanted (could be persuaded) doing epee in the afternoon. I did the reverse with my older fencers who were by that stage predominantly Epeeists. That dealt with the weapon issue and ensured I had enough foil referees to go round (or at least that was the plan, however I seem to remember finding enough willing foil referees was, and still is, always a problem).

Next, I instigated a set of team trophies. They were based on a simple points system of last place earns the school one point, every place above last earns an additional point (i.e. if there are 10 fencers in the event 10th place earns 1 point, 1st place earns 10 points). This system ensures every fencer who takes part contributes to their school score, and encourages schools to bring all the fencers they can so they push up the number of points available to fight for. That dealt with the team spirit, and gave everyone a reason to be there at the end to see if their school won. This was further enhanced by having trophies for best junior school, best senior school, best overall school, best girls' school, best school with less than 8 entries etc (we would publish the results pretty much every way we could think of counting them).

Finally, there was the issue of celebrating individual achievement. We needed a serious competitive format, but one that made best use of our facilities and maintained large numbers present at the end of the event. The answer was not one format but two. The principle we abandoned was that all separate events within a day of competition have to have the same format. Normally you would take the view that to provide equity you need to provide the same for everyone regardless of which event they fence in, however, remember I suggested my young fencers were primarily foilist being persuaded to do Epee as an add on, well that provided the opening to have a different format for the second weapon, the same being true for the older fencers who were principally Epeeists. Further enhance this by having an entry fee for one weapon and an entry fee that is only slightly higher for competing at two weapons and the result was total acceptance. Once you have made the bold step of mixing formats there remains the question what formats would dove tail together in a sensible way, maximising use of piste space and minimising the length of the competitive day.

The morning event is a no-brainer, one round of pools and direct elimination. Simple, competitive and short compared to most other formats (I see the irony given all that I have said above, but hear me out before you judge). The problem comes with what to do in the afternoon. How do you get around the problem of the majority of participants sitting around in the middle of the day waiting for the start of the afternoon fencing? Regardless of the afternoon format you are waiting for the mornings event to finish before you have the fencers to do the afternoon event. By running two events not only do you have the problem of fencers sat around with nothing to do at the end of the day but you have made things worse by having the same problem repeated in the middle of the day. The obvious answer is to start the afternoon event before the morning event is finished. New question becomes, is there a format that would allow you to do that? Answer... yes, a pool unique.

Now bear with me here. The idea of a pool unique is that everyone fences everyone else, so what's to stop you getting on with the fights between the fencers who get knocked out of the morning event early whilst the morning event continues on other pistes. As the morning event progresses through the direct elimination there are less and less people involved, and consequently less pistes required. As the morning progresses there are more fencers released to fence the second event and more resources freed up on which to run the second event. As one event gets smaller the other gets bigger. I accept that it can be a bit of an administrative nightmare, that the afternoon event can become a bit bittie, that the fencers who are in the final of the morning event often have a lot of fights in quick succession in the afternoon, but given that they were in the final, they are probably the fencers best equipped for that challenge, and that's the spirit in which they almost always approached it, a challenge.

Be bold and give this a try. It takes some organising but the rewards are immense. Everyone who takes part is contributing to the success of their school/club, everyone has some ownership in the successes even if they don't themselves medal. Find every possible way to interpret the final team results so you give the maximum number of fencers some success to celebrate (best foil school, best epee school, school with the highest average point score, school with the highest score if you only count their top five scores etc etc) just be aware that if you want to announce these on the day you need a computer operator working all day to process the results and enter all the data onto a well planned spreadsheet that automates all the calculations and produces the results at the touch of a button, this will require a significant investment of time prior to the event to set up, otherwise you just replace the wait for final with a wait for the calculations to be done. Please test your spreadsheet thoroughly so you give the trophies to the right team (yes, I have made mistakes, enough said!).

This concludes my series of articles on competition formats, the ways in which they can be modified, adapted, combined, and the benefits that can be achieved by so doing. I hope I have inspired you to see that competitive fencing doesn't need to be just one round of pools and direct elimination and that we can provide more for our students if we use a little imagination (and possibly work a bit harder).

Next issue I start on a whole new subject!

The following example is based on numbers from an event I ran (all be it 15 years, or more, ago). 10 fencers in the under 12 Foil, 15 in the under 14 Foil, and 18 of them combining for the Junior Epee (under 12 & Under 14 combined).

Piste 1	Piste 2	Piste 3	Piste 4	Piste 5
U12 Foil Pool	U12 Foil Pool	U14 Foil Pool	U14 Foil Pool	U14 Foil Pool
U12 Foil Last 16	U12 Foil Last 16	U14 Foil Last 16	U14 Foil Last 16	U14 Foil Last 16
U12 Foil Last 8	U12 Foil Last 8	U14 Foil Last 16	U14 Foil Last 16	U14 Foil Last 16
U12 Foil Last 4	3 Junior Epee fights	U14 Foil Last 16	U14 Foil Last 8	U14 Foil Last 8
U12 Foil Last 4	3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	U14 Foil Last 8	U14 Foil Last 8
U12 Foil Final	3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	U14 Foil Last 4
3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	U14 Foil Last 4
3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	3 Junior Epee fights	U14 Foil Final
23 Junior Epee fights	22 Junior Epee fights	22 Junior Epee fights	22 Junior Epee fights	22 Junior Epee fights

As the Foil events use less pistes the Epee event gets started. 42 of the 153 Epee fights (28%) are completed before the Foil has finished. That leaves 22 or 23 fights on each of the pistes to finish the Epee event, whilst this sounds like a lot of fights per piste it is only one or two more than running a pool of 6 on each piste.

Letters

I agree with the main thrust of Nigel Carter's article about the price of fencing equipment. Fencing is not a cheap sport no matter what weapon you do. I'm sure that most of us get the feeling that sometimes that equipment manufacturers are in cahoots with the rule makers and the new rules are because sales are low. I'm not sure I agree with Nigel's idea of having a pool of kit to share. If such a thing did exist, it would have to be regional and I wouldn't want to be the one responsible for keeping track of who had what.

In my limited experience of applying for grants from lottery funding, I've been fairly successful when funding was administered through local councils in Wales, I was advised on the quiet by the person responsible for administering the fund that the applications for fencing clubs usually got rubber stamped though because fencing was not a main stream sport. I didn't make applications every year, but when I did apply it was for reasonable sums. Also if an application was successful, I make sure I kept a copy of it so I could reuse some of the wording next time round. I also asked for feedback whether I was successful or not. As a result, over the years I've been able to get new kit to fill in gaps in sizes and purchase kit such as breeches, which is often one of the last items someone buys and in my opinion is a real bar to people competing.

I'm grateful to Phil Carson for his article 'Skill Acquisition, from theory to practice'. I've been reading his series of article with great interest, but up to this point I was not entirely convinced I understood the theories of learning he was proposing. It demonstrates how a practical demonstration can go a long way to aiding understanding. Picture painting a 1,000 words and all that.

I was also very interested in the Ideas for individual lessons article and would defiantly like to see more in a similar vain. This is precisely what I've been recently asking a local senior coach to demonstrate, as I don't find the descriptions of the key aspects of the individual lesson set out in the key coaching points book particularly illustrative. Especially as I am a coach still working his way through the grades and working full time, so don't have as much time as I would like to think about fencing and coaching. I think that more articles such as this would really help to improve the standard of lessons given in exams and in clubs.

In response to John Worsley article about closing his fencing club. Falling membership seems to be a problem right across the country. Given the breath of experience that exists out there, maybe it would be worth trying to got coaches to share ideas and experience through the Academy News on how to get people into clubs and keep them. Some of us have a life outside of fencing, and family responsibility. So I'm hoping that demonstrating others have similar problems suggesting possible solutions might spark some sort of collective action.

Alistair Brook

Should you require help or information on safeguarding then please contact Jacqueline Redikin

E-mail courseofficer@baf-fencing.com

Should you need to report a Safeguarding issue then use the procedures of the organisation that you are working for. Then contact British Fencing, either through your club welfare officer, regional welfare officer, or directly.....

Equality and Safeguarding Manager, Liz Behnke for advice on 077177 40125

If you have a serious concern and you believe that a child or vulnerable adult is at immediate risk then in the first instance you must contact the Police or Children/Adult Services in your area.

Timing, Rhythm and Cadence

What is the Difference?

By Prof. A. Non

Before I start, I need to point out that there are different definitions and interpretations for these terms between coaches, coaching systems, fencers and countries. The article that follows gives one interpretation and quotes from the British Academy of Fencing's coaching system and documentation. Additionally, this is also probably a subject that is easier to explain with sword in hand and a series of demonstrations, rather than written words. Having said that, here goes...

Let's start with the boring bit - definitions!

The Academy's 'Glossary of Fencing Terminology' contains the following definitions.

Timing

'The execution of a fencing movement at the correct moment.'

It is important to remember that certain movements (fencing actions) depend on those of the opponent. For example:

- a counter-disengage can only be executed on an opponent's change of engagement or circular parry
- a counter-attack can only be executed on an opponent's attack
- a dérobement can only be executed on an opponent's attempt to take the blade (prise-de-fer)

Cadence

'Rhythm in which a sequence of movements is made.'

Cadence may also be thought as the beat, tempo, time, or measure of rhythmical motion or activity.

The ability to change the cadence of an action (i.e. speed up or slow down) in order to facilitate a hit is characteristic of both good and intelligent fencing.

It is useful to separate cadence from speed. Speed should be used to describe the swiftness or rate of an action e.g. how fast or slow is it being executed.

A series of actions could be performed individually quickly but also at a slow cadence.

Examples of use

In thinking about the timing of an action it might be easier to think of it in terms of 'when', i.e. when should it be executed. For a very simple example, if we were to look at the timing of an attack by disengage, then the following possibilities could exist, if we consider a coach attempting to engage a pupil's blade or close a line:

1. The pupil does not react (does not attack), or
2. The pupil attacks by disengage before the coach starts (albeit angulation may be required), or
3. The pupil attacks by disengage during the coach's action, or
4. The pupil allows the engagement to be completed and then attacks.

Of course there are an infinite number of possible timings between the start of, and the completion of, the coach's action.

The ability of the pupil to vary the timing of their action is vitally important so as to ensure they do not become predictable.

Similarly, performing fencing actions repeatedly at the same cadence can set up a dangerous pattern. If you are unaware of the consistency of the cadence at which an action is being performed, an opponent may sense an opportunity to take advantage of the predictability of the situation. For example, consider a step forward with a blade preparation. If this is performed repeatedly in the same way, at the same speed and cadence, then an opponent may see an opportunity to attack on the preparation.

However, if done intentionally, with a deliberate tactical outcome in mind, the repetition and establishment of a set, consistent cadence could lull an opponent into an almost hypnotic trance or false sense of security. A sudden change in the cadence, could then be used to surprise an opponent, throwing them off guard and gaining a tactical advantage, if not a hit.

For example, expanding on the step forward with a blade preparation scenario. If a number of non-threatening examples were to be performed that posed little threat, were executed relatively slowly, followed by an immediate step back, then these may be viewed by the opponent as passive actions of low threat. If then the cadence is changed to that of a faster step forward, with a quicker blade movement, the opponent may be startled/provoked into reacting, due to the change in the conditions. How they might react may have been determined previously by observation, e.g. they react against the engagement and try to close the line or take a very early parry, allowing the option to attack indirect.

The best use of cadence and timing is a combined approach that could also include, speed, footwork, distance, body posture, direction and blade actions. These are all interrelated. An awareness of changes in all of these items during a bout is of vital tactical importance in both reading an opponent's intentions and also persuading/manipulating them into reacting in a desired way.

Some other examples are changes in footwork e.g. large slow steps changing into small fast steps and combinations thereof. A slow step forward and slow false lunge, not intending to hit and then a slow step forward followed by a real fast lunge, with the intention of hitting. Another example could be a slow step forward with a rapid movement of the blade, compared to a fast step forward and slow blade movement.

Think about asking a question. It could be asked calmly, politely, enquiringly or, the same question could be asked aggressively, with force, rudely, without regard to the answer.

It is the variability and unpredictability that should be explored by coaches and their pupils', rather than simply performing actions as fast as possible. It is surprising how many very quick actions are performed at the wrong time, resulting in failure. What is even more surprising, is the analysis by many that the lack of success was a result of a lack of speed. It should be remembered that slow actions are less likely to be perceived as a threat and could be overlooked.

In summary, timing and cadence should not be looked at in isolation, but rather, as a package of measures that are designed to give one fencer an edge over another fencer.

As mentioned at the start of this article, this is one subject that is definitely best seen rather than written about. I am happy to give further examples if members wish to contact the editor with particular requests.

These concepts will be demonstrated and explained further on upcoming Academy courses.

Coach Education Training Days

The BAF has organised 4 coach education days held in the Birmingham area. These days are open to all coaches, non members and members of the BAF, The Coach Education sessions theme are 'Tactical and Competitive Coaching'. There is also the opportunity to work towards BAF qualifications if wanted.



Days are run by Andrew Vincent, Peter Northam and Peter Cormack.

27 March 2022, 10am to 4pm ,
Edgbaston High School for Girls, Westbourne Rd, Birmingham B15 3TS

24 April 2022, 10am to 4pm,
King Edward's Boys School, Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham B15 2UA

15 May 2022, 10am to 4pm ,
Edgbaston High School for Girls, Westbourne Rd, Birmingham B15 3TS

5 June 2022, 10am to 4pm ,
King Edward's Boys School, Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham B15 2UA

The cost of the day is £15 per coach. If you need any further information please contact the course officer email: secretary@baf-fencing.com

Academy Insurance - A Timely Reminder

As things are hopefully returning to normality, albeit a 'new normality' we thought it would be timely to remind all working coaches of the requirements of the Academy's Insurance Provider. It is essential that Risk Assessments are undertaken and documented for all coaching activities. These should be reviewed periodically and updated as and when necessary or circumstances change.

Members should also be adhering to the safety standards and guidance of British Fencing as the national governing body for the sport. Best practice should be followed where possible. When working with children and young adults, it is important that Disclosure and Barring Service checks are completed, Safeguarding and Child Protection training is up to date and minimum levels of supervision are provided. Please stay safe, be prepared and hopefully, you will never have need to call on the services of the insurance provider.

If you have any questions please contact the BAF secretary in the first instance.



Electric or Diesel

By Kevin Nelson

This is another one of my articles on supporting the work of a fencing coach. I recently decided to move from a diesel estate to an all electric one. I had been looking into it for about 2 years, but there was nothing suitable on the market. I took a test drive in a van (Nissan e-NV200) and was impressed, but with a top speed of about 70mph, and a range of 120 miles, it wasn't quite fit for purpose. Then about a year later MG produced an estate that had a 200 mile range, I took a test drive for a bit of fun, then the dealer made me an (government grant + PX + scrapage) offer that was difficult to refuse, so I took it home, loaded it up with fencing kit to check it could do the job, before going back to the dealers and ordering one. It came the next week. Having now driven it for over a year, I still feel that it is capable of doing the job, and I enjoy driving it. So I thought I would list my thoughts as a professional fencing coach working in an electric vehicle, for those of you who might have to change in the next couple of years.

First I looked at my daily journey; as a professional fencing coach I have a regular circuit, and at the time my maximum daily mileage was 134 miles (on a Friday). So a 200 mile range was good - you have to allow for the fact that you use more fuel in winter, especially if you want the heater on & currently it is running at about a 170 mile range in winter, but a 220 mile range in the summer (with 7% to spare).

Electric (MG 5)

Charge at home, usually charge overnight.
About 4 hours charge 3 times a week, sometimes a little more. (£650 cost of 7kWh charger).

Sleep or work while refuelling, using economy overnight rates, or Tesco's free charging, while at club (Tesco's is across the road).

Cost to refuel ~ £0.02/mile

Cost to refuel from public charger ~ ?

(Only used once during a year of ownership, and the Bentley Brook Inn had their own charger)

Overall the estate is smaller, but currently there are no affordable vans with a large enough range on the market.

Running costs ~£1000 including fuel & insurance
(Just one year from new)

High initial expenditure

Roughly 10000 miles /year

Insurance - Cost similar to diesel, except free towing to nearest working charger if you run out of charge.

Diesel (VW Passat)

Fill up at a petrol station

Fill up about once every 10 or 12 days

When fuel is low, have to plan journey to make sure there is enough fuel for the following day.

Living in a rural area - you know fuel anxiety.

Cost to refuel at £1.30/litre ~ £0.13/mile

Cost to refuel at £1.50/litre ~ £0.15/mile

Big enough to fit everything, but then the Passat is huge.

Running costs ~£4000 including fuel & insurance
(average over 3 years 2016-2019)

About half the initial expenditure of an electric car

Roughly 15000 miles/year

Insurance - no higher cost to electric car

For everyday use the electric car is very convenient, but on the downside, no more excuses to visit the petrol stations for those extra sweets. There is still an issue with the public charge network, so longer distance journeys are not without risk - although that is the same for a diesel car when you are looking for an open garage after 10pm, especially when you live rurally. But that has to be balanced with how many longer journeys that you actually do. Its really just a different way of planning your journeys.

Cost wise the electric car is cheaper to run, with fuel costs currently at 15% that of a diesel; if you charge at home, and in theory less bits inside it to go wrong, but that is offset by its initial costs. If you have to use the public charge network then you can pay anywhere between £0.00 to £0.69 per kWh. Depending on which company you charge from, and how fast you wish to charge. There is currently no regulation on these charge points. The general advice is to just put in as much as you need to get home (and have a coffee while you are waiting - which you would be doing anyway with a diesel?). The only time that range anxiety comes to the fore is... when I get to the charge point, will it work? Or will there be someone there in front of me? Both an issue when using the motorway network - unless you have a Tesla.

If you tow a caravan, or a large trailer then at the moment there are no electric cars out there suitable, although a few will do the task, but the power consumption becomes uneconomic and impractical (as a charging station is usually the size of a car parking space - no space for the caravan or trailer).

One other small issue is that you are far more aware of how much energy you are using, and so have a tendency to drive more economically - to get more range. Which has the side effect (for me at least) of arriving more relaxed. Having said that, the electric car will still drive the same way as a diesel, so sometimes it is really fun to put your foot down (drive it as if you've stolen it). The issue here is that the tyres for an electric car are different and designed to give less rolling resistance, and... there is just so much power at your disposal that it is quite hard to put it all down on the road. It has a lighter touch when driving, and doesn't grip the road quite as well as the Passat used to.

It is a different style of driving, as range also depends on regeneration, therefore you use the brakes less, and recharge the battery while slowing down. Which is probably annoying for other drivers, as only on the highest regeneration level do the brake lights come on. So another EV driving game is - how far can I go before I have to use the brake pedal?

The immediately noticeable difference is the lack of engine noise, you can just about hear the electric motor, but you can also clearly hear all the other things, like brakes, and things bouncing around in the back. You still get road noise, but for music fans, the sound quality is so much better.

With the current increase in fuel costs, there is one club that I would have closed, because the cost in diesel plus the hall hire would have meant that I was losing money on that club (and in the meantime the club has grown).

One of the things that encouraged me in lockdown to change to electric, was walking the dogs along country lanes, and being able to smell the fuel for a significant while after an ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) car had driven past us.

Overall conclusions;

The electric car suits me, and it is possible for me to carry all the kit I need to various venues that I visit as a professional coach. Although I do have to think a little more about what I actually need rather than just loading it all. It means I will be able to continue as a fencing coach until our sport picks up again after the covid pandemic.

In another couple of years the electric car technology should have improved to give increased range (distance), lower initial cost, and hopefully an increased range of models (most electric cars at

the moment are either saloons, small cars, or SUV's). Most of the government grants for electric cars have now finished, but there are a number of hire car schemes starting to operate through employers. Bi-directional CCS charging will be a real possibility in the next few years... using the car as a home battery, charging when electricity is cheap, and running the house from the car when its not. This is already possible with CHADEMO connectors, but they are becoming obsolete like betamax. Also remember you can charge at home on a 3 pin plug.

At some point the costs to run an electric vehicle will increase, with electricity costs set to double (Will still only be about £0.04/mile), and probably some form of road tax, but there are some very good deals on cars out there at the moment. If you are thinking of changing your car in the next couple of years it is worth thinking about an electric one, or at least going for a test drive in one.

Note: All calculations quoted in the article are based on my accounts as a self employed fencing coach.

From the Collection of Porthos

This fine rapier dates to around 1660-70. The embellishments on the quillons (cross bar) and knuckle guard are distinctly Spanish, as are the upright bars set into the wire bound grip. The blade, however, is German and stamped SOLINGEN in the fuller (groove). Solingen was a major sword and blade making city in Germany. I've no means of telling if the blade and hilt were assembled in its working life, or whether the blade was a later re-fit. The blade is 38" (97cm) long and it weighs just under 2 pounds - about 980 grams, which makes it rather ponderous as a fighting weapon. However, an opponent would undoubtedly be encumbered by a rapier of similar weight. Film makers would have us believe that rapiers were light and fast to use. Not so! They were normally heavy and slow weapons. My guess is that actors use light weigh copies, so they can leap about and look dashing and athletic!



Note. If ever readers take a holiday in Germany it's worth making a visit to the blade museum (Klingen Museum) near Solingen. They have a fantastic collection of rapiers and other blades. I've only been once and spent many hours there.



The Coaching Emperor is Wearing No Clothes

By Prof. Phil Carson

This is the title of a hard hitting piece by Andy Kirkland, Ph.D. which has raised more than a few eyebrows across UK sport. His basic premise, backed by years of experience and research, is that coaching systems and structures are incoherent, ineffective and not fit for purpose in the UK.

"People who educate coaches usually do so for the right reasons ... However, the reality is that many of the methods used to educate coaches were "made up" guided by flawed assumptions in which culturally normal "ways of doing" are simply reinforced. Thus an "illusion of learning" is presented, in which these norms are often detrimental to the fun, participation, learning and performance of athletes."

Kirkland addresses a number of "elephants in the room" including the following key points.

1. Critical friends are ignored. Coach education systems become institutionalised and self-validating and new evidence or better ways of operating are ignored.
2. High quality coaching is not a priority. We know that poor coach behaviour leads to poor mental health, eating disorders, poor behaviour etc yet we continue to emphasise the technical aspects of the sport only.
3. Too much emphasis on "the magic t-shirt" or authority bias where the course leader or educator assumes a sage-on-the-stage role despite a lack of experience and qualification. "An appointed coach who is unequipped to comprehend or manage the complexity of their role, particularly when they are ego oriented, will often display overtly dominating behaviours to "paper over the cracks".
4. The wider role of the coach. To continue to ignore this is bringing up some serious duty of care issues, both in terms of how educators engage with coaches and how coaches are being equipped to engage with athletes. Sessions need to be well run, safe and fun and each of these involve considerable levels of skill.
5. Slaves to the system. "Many in the coach education workforce lack expertise to understand the error of their ways and this myopia can be damaging. Overly rigid delivery of outdated and flawed curriculums are deployed by well-meaning coach educators with a sense of duty to ensure coaches assimilate with specific institutionalised 'ways of doing'. These ways are often enforced through 'tick box' assessment." There are other ways to educate and many are evaluated, critiqued and validated. In other words, they are based on sound principles that have been shown to work.
6. Qualification pathways hinder performance. In other words, the system is set up as a series of consecutive steps to achieve pieces of paper, rather than meeting the particular needs of the individual coach development.

Kirkland encourages educators to ask themselves a series of questions.

1. What is your aim of using the approach you do?
2. Why that approach? What is your reasoning?
3. What alternatives have you considered?
4. How and when will you know your choices were the right ones?

You will know that a growth mindset and continuous improvement are essential behaviours for any athlete to succeed. These behaviours are encouraged, not to promote change for change's sake, but rather to increase knowledge, capability and capacity and aiming to be even more effective and efficient over time. So too it is for educational institutions. Organisational values such as curiosity and ambition are essential to ensure that we retain a growth mindset, stay in the business of improvement of ourselves and our products, ultimately for the benefit of those who come on our courses.

We already have very good qualified educators, academics and researchers within the BAF and I would like to suggest that in addition to the technical sub-committee, we set up a new thought-leadership group, formed as a research and development arm to maintain the BAF's coaching philosophy, pedagogy, processes and best practice. This would ensure a growth mindset, increased effectiveness and leadership in the field of coaching this amazing sport of ours. **In his new suit of clothes the Emperor can not only be a great leader, but can look good too!**

There are so many similarities that I would suggest that members re-read Craig Jinks Articles on Change management "Ch-ch-ch-changes" in the March 2021 issue of Academy News (108) Now available online as well. Kevin; Editor Academy News.

The 2022 Commonwealth Fencing Championships will be held at 'Sports Dock' at University of East London from the 9th to the 20th August.

It will be the largest Commonwealth Fencing Championships ever as it will be the first time they have combined the, Cadet, Junior, Senior, Veteran and Wheelchair events into one event. Given all the weapon's, age groups and including teams I understand there to be 61 events happening over the 12 days.

If everyone comes there is the potential for there to be 1200 to 1500 fencers taking part. That would make it easily the largest International Fencing Competition ever to happen in this country (and to put it into some perspective there are only 3000 competitors taking part in the 2022 Winter Olympics).

More information can be found at

[Fencing Commonwealth Championships | CFC22 London \(cfc2022.com\)](https://cfc22.london.cffc2022.com)

Spectators will of course be very welcome, but those of you who are old enough (over 50) and fancy a try, the veteran's category allows for direct entry!

I will be at the event for the duration as one of the five strong DT team. Nick Chapman.



Class Control or Class Engagement?

By Kevin Nelson

Teaching groups can be daunting; we are reasonably lucky as fencing coaches, as we are generally teaching those who have chosen our sport, and not had it chosen for them. But sometimes we do teach the unwilling, and this article

hopes to covers some strategies (but by no means all) of what can we do about it.

Having taught in various schools, as a science teacher (although not for very long), I encountered a number of different strategies. From the totally ineffective B4L (Behaviour for Learning), where it seemed the objective was to get the disruptive children out of the classroom as soon as possible (I remember that it took 20s for one pupil), and into the inappropriately named inclusion room. To the tiny head of science who just spoke quieter when the children got louder...

Shouting = Sore Throat

There is little point in shouting at a group of unruly kids. As they will then realise they have the initiative, and this will only make you feel even more out of control. If you have a low pitched voice (like mine) then you will only be adding to the background noise, and the chances are they will not hear you anyway.

When I meet a group for the first time, I wait for silence before I introduce myself; we then discuss fencing & expectations. I discuss with them that I would like to talk to them, and not shout at them, and they usually agree that they don't like being shouted at.

I am grateful to the tiny head of science at Thomas Keeble School, who showed me how to use silence as a classroom tool. I now hold my hand in the air and wait... until through peer pressure, the class starts to wait for me to speak. If they continue to speak I look up at the ceiling denying them eye contact, although still listening, and using my peripheral vision. (To make sure all is OK.) Folding the arms sometimes helps. This then creates a space that I can talk with them.

There are other strategies, and it will depend on your local area what they have been taught at primary school - Clapping a rhythm is another useful technique - as the class are supposed to clap it back to you, and then wait for what is next, either instructions, or another rhythm. Check what happens in your local school.

There are still times when you will need to raise your voice, but learn to project your voice, so that you can still talk, but loudly and clearly. Voice projection is useful when you have large groups, or need to stop the class for a safety reason (Although a whistle could be used instead). I am not a voice coach, and would suggest that you find someone who can teach you this useful technique, where you use your chest as a soundbox, rather than just your throat. The other important point is to remember to speak slower. (like an experienced politician).



Talk to Them, not at Them

As coaches we do a lot of talking, but always allow space for students to ask questions, and always listen to them, give them an answer to their questions.

Set an unspoken limit on how many questions you will accept - otherwise some students will keep you talking the whole lesson. Share the questions amongst the group, if someone is always answering, then say that you will come back to them, because they have already answered one today (This is especially true with some adult groups).

Remember, hands up for a question, don't accept too much calling out, or target questions at specific students, if they can't answer, then ask 'can someone else in the group help them' ("phone a friend").

Do not talk for too long, tell them what they need to do, and then let them have a go. They have come to us to fence, their time is limited, don't waste it with unnecessary talk, or too many demonstrations, otherwise they will become bored and you will lose them. We all know that we have to ability to look politely interested, especially when a tutor is droning on, don't feel that because they seem to be listening, they actually are - the proof is... can they perform the task you have set them. If they can't... then what do you need to do to make it happen?

Treat them as Adults or Treat them as Children?

"Students will live up (or down) to what we expect of them"¹ If you treat kids like adults, and discuss what you are doing with them, they will normally respond and behave in a more mature manner, they then become responsible for their own behaviour, in maintaining a good teacher - student relationship, and the privileges thereby gained. Remember to praise correct behaviours.

"Paradoxically, older students will also respond very well to being given childish tasks from time to time"¹ If they have been serious for a while - enjoy yourselves with a "game", allow them to let off steam, they will come back to focus much better afterwards.

Remember : Please is a request, and Thankyou an expectation.

Entrance & Exit Rituals

Be very clear on what you expect from them when they enter the room. Do you greet them by name? Do you have a sincere expression (smile)? Should they be performing tasks ? Like putting on their fencing kit, or getting themselves warmed up. Do you take a register? Do you wait for everyone to get fully kited before you start?

When it is time to finish, do you finish the session in the same way? Do you make sure that they salute their partner? Do you insist they help put away any kit they might have used? Do you walk with them (or assign someone) to the exit making sure there is always someone there to pick them up (U18's)? Do you say goodbye to them or do you wave them all goodbye?

Appropriate Numbers

In the picture, there are about 30 U14's, there are 4 of us coaching, 2 club coaches, 1 assistant coach, (just about to go to Uni.), and one U18 helper, who will hopefully take his exams when he's old enough.

When you run your session do you have enough people to keep an eye on what is happening?

Do you have an appropriate coach : Fencer ratio for what you are doing? This is a good



group, but with a wide range of ability, so one of us could run the group, but then it would be much more difficult to differentiate the lesson, and so keep the interest of all the fencers (too hard, beginners get lost, too easy, and the advanced fencers get bored), by setting them individual objectives they can work to their own level retaining their interest, and with more of us, we are more likely to see someone doing something good - and so praise it.

Fencing = Fun?

They have come to us to fence, we have a responsibility to make sure they enjoy their session with us. If they enjoy our sessions, then hopefully they will come back. If they are not enjoying our sessions we need to find out why... before they leave and go elsewhere.

Further Reading

1: Getting the Buggers to Behave - Third Edition : Sue Cowley : 2006: ISBN 0-8264-8912-5
Classroom Behaviour : Bill Rogers : 2006 : ISBN 1-14129-2862-1

I had hoped that someone else would write this article, as my knowledge of classroom techniques is getting a little out of date.

But feel free to comment on your own experiences and techniques.

Objective setting will be the theme of another article - any volunteers to write it?

Kevin : Editor Academy News.

Coaching Courses and Examinations



To put some myths to rest.

Coaching courses do not have to be run by full fencing masters. Anyone can organise a coaching course. However, it is important that the person delivering the training, as in any other discipline, has the appropriate knowledge, experience and skills. The level of knowledge, experience and skill required will be dependant upon the type and standard of training being provided.

However, for assessments and examinations there are a number of rules set down by the Academy.

Level 1 assessments may be conducted by either a Level 4 (Advanced) coach, a Provost, Maître d'escrime or a full Master. The qualifications held by the assessor must be in the same weapon that is being assessed. There is no minimum qualification for the coach undertaking the training of an individual for a Level 1 award.

An application to hold Examinations for Level 2 through to Diploma must be made to the Secretary of the Academy. It is then for the committee to consider the application and form the necessary boards. The Secretary of the Academy will also be able to advise on the costs of setting up examinations.

All assessors and examiners must be current members of the Academy.

For further guidance please contact Prof. Andy Vincent.



Strawman - Response

In the last issue (Academy News 110) Kevin dared us to propose a 'Strawman' so here is one to get us started.

Fencing language

We use many different English and foreign terms in the course of teaching, explaining and participating in our sport. Many are used in a way that is specific to our sport and as a result they have nuanced meaning that don't appear in any standard dictionary. Take the word 'line'. We use it to mean various different things in fencing, an extended arm maintaining right of way, an on-guard position, a theoretical line connecting the feet of opposing fencers, none of which relate to the fifteen examples of its use suggested by the online 'Cambridge Dictionary' ([Cambridge.dictionary.org](https://www.cambridge.org/dictionary)).

Some of these words and meanings are very useful, others can be ambiguous, some can be so specific as to have become obsolete (who still uses 'flanconade' in their everyday coaching), others are too general, encompass too much, and can therefore present the opportunity for confusion.

I would suggest that this last case, is especially true in the mind of those learning the sport, those grappling with the concepts for the first time, or those learning to coach for whom it is no longer acceptable to gloss over the uncertainty, or the inconsistency.

Let's consider the word 'timing'. As coaches we are constantly talking about timing, 'its all about the three T's, tactics, timing and technique', 'your timing was a little off' etc etc.

I would like to suggest that the term could be expanded. I would like to suggest that there are two different elements to the timing of a move. For example, we use timing in the correct execution of a move, 'when you lunge begin to extend the arm before you start to move the foot', 'land the hit as or before the foot lands' etc... We also use the term when talking about things such as, 'parry at the last possible moment'.

I suggest that the final example is very different to the two previous. The first two may be considered to relate to timing in relation to the correct execution of technique, the latter is timing as a tactical choice.

I therefore suggest that there are in fact two separate and easy delineated uses of the word which might helpfully be defined thus:

Internal timing. The timing of the execution of an action, or elements of an action, in relation to other elements of that action, or sequence of actions.

External timing. The timing of the execution an action, or elements of an action, in relation to elements of the opponent's action, reaction, or sequence of actions.

In simple terms, internal is when you do things relative to other things you do, as opposed to external, when you do things relative to when you opponent does things.

Language evolves. Sometimes, I fear that some of the terms used in our sport have become antiquated, are used more for traditional reasons than practical ones, in the cases of some of the foreign terms we use they have become mere labels as all comprehension of their original meaning is lost (or possibly just lost to a poorly educated person such as myself who struggles by with just one language).

I believe adopting the above expansion of our fencing lexicon could create clarity of meaning without creating unnecessary complication, it represents a modern relevant and useful evolution of our fencing language.

OK, there is my 'strawman', tell me what you think, go on, I won't be offended (ok, I might be)?

Nick Chapman

Well 'flanconade' goes well with the other ancient term I resurrected the "volte", to try and get my fencers to use the width of the piste. even though the piste not quite as wide as it used to be.

Kevin: Editor

Please note that articles published reflect the viewpoint of the individual authors in our knowledgeable and diverse Academy, and the viewpoints expressed in articles are not necessarily those held by the British Academy of Fencing.

I have a light editorial touch on all articles received. So far all of which have been published. I am aware that sometimes there may be differences of opinion between members. If you have such a difference, you are always welcome to submit your own viewpoint in an article, as long as it contains reasoned arguments in favour of your viewpoint. Learning to coach is a process of evolution for each individual, and exposure to different viewpoints should encourage self reflection. Therefore I will always welcome thought provoking articles with a positive orientation from members.

Kevin: Editor Academy News

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

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.**

It would be very helpful if you could supply with me the artwork that you would like to see published. Simply send me (Kevin Nelson) the details and I'll see you get a mention.

editor@baf-fencing.com



Stefan Speaks

The thought of your Members' Rep.

This is the story of what a woman's patience can endure, and what a man's resolution can achieve. Over the last 4 years whilst I was Members Representative, I had to write an article for each issue of the academy news.

To start each article, I picked a book and used the opening line of that book for my article. - What!? You didn't realise! (Sigh) my genius is wasted.

Here is the complete list:-

February 2018 - "It was a dark and stormy night" - Paul Clifford by Edward Bulwer-Lytton.
 May 2018 - "It was about eleven o'clock in the morning with the sun not shining and a look of hard wet rain in the clearness of the foothills" - The Big Sleep by Raymond Chandler.
 July 2018 - "The idea really came to me the day I got my new false tooth fitted" - Coming Up For Air by George Orwell.
 September 2018 - "This is no chronicle of saints. Nor yet is it a history of devils. It is a record of certain very human, strenuous men and women in a very human strenuous age; a flamboyant age; an age of steel and velvet, of vivid colour, dazzling lights and impenetrable shadow; an age of swift movement, and high endeavour, of sharp antitheses and amazing contrasts; " - The Life of Cesare Borgia by Rafael Sabatini.
 November 2018 - "Snow is falling gently on the streets and people are hurrying home, their arms filled with gaily wrapped boxes and paper parcels from toy stores, sweet shops, and bakeries. For it is Christmas Eve, and everyone is looking forward to the festivities and over indulgence, and a gentle sprinkling of snow makes the evening seem perfect and hushed" - The nutcracker by Eta Hoffman.
 February 2019 - "It was the end of a wet Monday afternoon in autumn." - Out of Town by JB Priestley.
 May 2019 - "Readers, friends, less than friends, enemies, critics" - Guignol's Band by Louis Ferdinand Celine.
 July 2019 - "I looked at my notes and I didn't like them" - I Robot by Isaac Asimov.
 November 2019 - "There is, as every school kid knows in this scientific age, a very close chemical relation between coal and diamonds. " - Victory by Joseph Conrad.
 February 2020 - "Under certain circumstances there are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea " - The Portrait of a Lady by Henry James.
 April 2020 - "Life changes fast. Life changes in the instant. You sit down to dinner and life as you know it ends." - The Year of Mystical Thinking by Jean Didion.
 June 2020 - "When a day that you happen to know is Wednesday starts of by sounding like Sunday, there is something seriously wrong somewhere" - The day of the Triffids by John Wyndham.
 August 2020 - "When you have to kill the same terrorist twice in one week then there's either something wrong with your skills or something wrong with your world." - Patient Zero by Johnathon Mayberry.
 November 2020 - "A Story has no beginning or end; arbitrarily one chooses that moment of experience from which to look back or from which to look ahead" - The End of the Affair by Graham Greene.
 March 2021 - "She sits in the corner; trying to draw air out of a room which seemed to have plenty just a few minutes ago" - Rose Madder by Stephen King.
 September 2021 - "Where now, who now, when now" - The Unnameable by Samuel Beckett.
 November 2021 - "The first part is a summing up of about 4 years" - The diaries of Jane Somers by Doris Lessing.
 February 2022 - "This is the story of what a woman's patience can endure, and what a man's resolution can achieve" - The woman in White by Wilkie Collins.

Stefan Leponis : Your Outgoing Members Rep

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B.A.F. Residential Course 2022

18th July to 23rd July 2022

The next residential course will be held at Denstone College and it would be a pleasure to have you there should you wish to join us. The British Academy of Fencing's residential course is open to all fencing coaches irrespective of whether they are members of the BAF.



The course is designed for fencing coaches who wish to improve or enhance their practical skills, increase their technical/tactical knowledge or to simply meet other coaches and share ideas and experiences. The course is also ideal for those wishing to prepare and take BAF examinations.

Optional examinations are held on the Saturday for those who wish to take BAF coaching awards.

Cost

British Academy of Fencing Members : £470
Non Academy Coach : £550

The fee will include full board (breakfast, lunch and evening meals), tuition and course documentation. Examination fees are extra.

For further details, contact the Course Officer,

Jacqueline Redikin
secretary@baf-fencing.com



If you are thinking about attending the BAF Residential course at Denstone this year. Please talk to us to find out what pre-course material is available, and support for those intending to attend. The course is not just for those who want to take exams, but for those who wish to improve their coaching.

Preparation for the Denstone course starts as soon as you sign up.