



## Coach Education

Commencing in September 2022 the British Academy of Fencing will be running a 3 weapon coaching course at Edgbaston High School for Girls, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

The courses are open to all fencing coaches irrespective of whether they are members of the BAF. The upcoming courses will provide training for all levels and abilities of coaches, including those who may be considering undertaking a coaching role in their club. 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.

Optional examinations will be held on the culmination of the course in March 2023.



**Venue:** Edgbaston High School for Girls, B15 3TS

### Remaining Dates:

Sunday	13 November	2022
Sunday	22 January	2023
Sunday	12 February	2023
Saturday	18 March	2023
Sunday	19 March	2023

If you are interested in attending, please contact the Academy's Course Officer, Prof. Jackie Redikin at [courseofficer@baf-fencing.com](mailto:courseofficer@baf-fencing.com) for further details including dates and costs.



Academy News is edited by Kevin Nelson. 14 Duncroft Road, Hucclecote, Gloucester. GL3 3AS..

Email: [editor@baf-fencing.com](mailto:editor@baf-fencing.com)

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

A pdf version of the Academy News can be found at [www.baf-fencing.com](http://www.baf-fencing.com) two weeks after publication

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

## Your Committee

### President:

Prof. Peter Northam  
28 Dorset Road, Birmingham. B17 8EN  
Tel: 0121 429 9717  
Email: [president@baf-fencing.com](mailto:president@baf-fencing.com)

### Vice-President:

Prof. Andrew Vincent  
7 Kenyon Avenue, Dukinfield,  
Cheshire. SK16 5AR.  
Tel: 0161 338 4607  
Email: [vicepresident1@baf-fencing.com](mailto:vicepresident1@baf-fencing.com)

### Vice-President:

Prof. Graham Strettan  
64 The Ridgeway, Market Harborough. LE16  
7HQ  
Tel: 01858 462 507  
Email: [vicepresident2@baf-fencing.com](mailto:vicepresident2@baf-fencing.com)

### Secretary:

Prof. Jackie Redikin  
10 Beverley Avenue, Davyhulme  
Urmston. M41 0RY.  
Tel: 0161 747 2679  
Email: [secretary@baf-fencing.com](mailto:secretary@baf-fencing.com)

### Treasurer:

Maître John Worsley  
8 Mosedale Close, Astley,  
Tyldesley, Manchester. M29 7JW  
Tel: 07857 625 958  
Email: [treasurer@baf-fencing.com](mailto:treasurer@baf-fencing.com)

### Members' Representative:

Post vacant  
Email: [membersrep@baf-fencing.com](mailto:membersrep@baf-fencing.com)

### Assistant Secretary:

Maître Donald Walker  
4 The Aviaries, Castle Howard,  
York. YO60 7BU.  
Email: [assistant.secretary@baf-fencing.com](mailto:assistant.secretary@baf-fencing.com)

### Committee Member: Editor Academy News:

Kevin Nelson  
14 Duncroft Road, Hucclecote,  
Gloucester. GL3 3AS  
Tel: 07845 764 532  
Email: [editor@baf-fencing.com](mailto:editor@baf-fencing.com)

### Additional Positions:

#### British Fencing Liaison:

Prof. . Graham Strettan  
Email: [vicepresident2@baf-fencing.com](mailto:vicepresident2@baf-fencing.com)

#### Designated Safeguarding Officer

Prof. Jackie Redikin  
Email: [courseofficer@baf-fencing.com](mailto:courseofficer@baf-fencing.com)

#### Proficiency Awards Administrator:

Maître Donald Walker  
4 The Aviaries, Castle Howard,  
York. YO60 7BU.  
Email: [proficiencyawards@baf-fencing.com](mailto:proficiencyawards@baf-fencing.com)

#### Film & Theatre Representative:

Andy Wilkinson  
The Cottage, The Common, Kinsbourne Green,  
Harpenden, Herts. AL5 3NT  
Tel: 01582 713052  
Email: [andyawilkinson@hotmail.com](mailto:andyawilkinson@hotmail.com)

#### Chairman, SSTT, Examinations Administrator :

Prof. Andrew Vincent  
Email: [vicepresident1@baf-fencing.com](mailto:vicepresident1@baf-fencing.com)

#### International Secretary: H&S Officer

Prof. Graham Strettan  
Email: [vicepresident2@baf-fencing.com](mailto:vicepresident2@baf-fencing.com)

#### Course Officer:

Prof. Jackie Redikin  
Email: [courseofficer@baf-fencing.com](mailto:courseofficer@baf-fencing.com)

#### Membership Secretary. Marketing:

Maître Stefan Leponis  
Email: [memberssecretary@baf-fencing.com](mailto:memberssecretary@baf-fencing.com)

# Welcome to the Academy News In This Issue

<b>Academy Coaching Courses</b>	<b>1</b>
Course Officer	
<b>Welcome and Information</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The President's Piece</b>	<b>3-4</b>
Prof. Peter Northam	
<b>Letters</b>	<b>4</b>
Clive Madgin	
<b>BAF AGM Saturday 14th January 2023</b>	<b>5</b>
Prof. Jackie Redikin	
<b>Mistakes: Part 2</b>	<b>6-8</b>
Nick Chapman	
<b>Review: Foil Fencing Skills, Strategies And Training Methods</b>	<b>9</b>
Prof. Peter Northam	
<b>Insurance and Membership Fees.</b>	<b>10</b>
Maître John Worsley	
<b>From the Collection of Porthos</b>	<b>11</b>
Porthos	
<b>Commonwealth Fencing Championships 2022 - A Coach's View</b>	<b>12-14</b>
Prof. Phil Carson	
<b>Coaching Courses and Exams</b>	<b>15</b>
SSTT	
<b>To Get Out of Football...</b>	<b>16-17</b>
Alan Grafton	
<b>Multiple Intelligence's</b>	<b>18-19</b>
Kevin Nelson	
<b>Commonwealth Fencing Championships 2022 - DT's View</b>	<b>20-22</b>
Nick Chapman	
<b>Foil Study Guide</b>	<b>22</b>
Editor	
<b>Review: "Hollywood's Pioneering Daredevils!"</b>	<b>23</b>
Prof. Peter Northam	
<b>British Academy of Fencing Historical Notes</b>	<b>24</b>
British Academy of Fencing	

## Contributions to Kevin Nelson by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023

[editor@baf-fencing.com](mailto:editor@baf-fencing.com)

or by snail mail

14 Duncroft Road, Hucclecote, Gloucester. GL3 3AS.

## British Academy of Fencing

The British Academy of Fencing Ltd

Company No. 8540066

A Company registered in England and Wales

Registered Office: Talpa Hall, Station Road, Old Newton, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 4HQ



## The President 's Piece.....

Welcome to this issue of Academy News. We are so reliant on our contributors to make each issue an interesting read, thank you very much to them! If you feel that you have something to say, reach out to Kevin (our Editor) and he will help and guide you through the process. If you have any questions, again, Kevin is happy to publish and if possible, to provide an answer in the same issue.

This issue has interesting comments, from behind the scenes at the Commonwealth Games from Prof. Phil Carson and Nick Chapman, fascinating! Also, two book reviews; one relating to Foil Fencing (Skills, Strategies and Training Methods) by John Routledge and another book by Andy Wilkinson, Hollywood's Pioneering Daredevils! (As a fencing coach, I have been asked to help out with some stage fencing, the Birmingham Royal Ballet for Romeo and Juliet is one example). Our Editor has come up with a look at intelligence's and Treasurer Maitre John Worsley explains the reasons for the increase in our subscriptions. I will let you discover and enjoy the rest of this issue.

As I sit here in half-term, I look back at what has been going on. Steve Morley has now completed a Level 1 Course in Norwich and has qualified 3 new Level 1 coaches, well done to him and them. Prof. Tony Middleton in St Albans has run a coach seminar with 13 people attending and 10 of them have passed their Level 1 award, a significant achievement, well done Tony and his group. The new coaches should now have the Level 2 Syllabus and a plan of action for further training. The training sessions in Birmingham continue to run, the next session will be on 13th November, the last one before Christmas; around Easter there will be a 3 weapon, all levels examination.

If you are considering taking an exam, prior preparation will make a significant contribution to your result, so, come on the courses. Try to find someone in your club to work with between the courses. If you need help with the any of the questions, let us know, I am working with one member via email and it seems to be working. How about sending us a video for comments!

We have been working on the Foil, Sabre and Epee Study Guides. The Foil Study Guide is now at the printers and will be available shortly. The Sabre Study Guide is now complete except for pictures, we will get it to the printers as soon as possible and the Epee Study Guide, we hope to make available before Easter 2023. As these Study Guides come out, we expect and welcome comments regarding the content. Please use them, they are a quality product.

The AGM is on Saturday 14th January, I look forward to seeing you there.

I know its early but I wish you all a happy Christmas and a successful New Year.

To start is Good, to continue is Better, to Finish is Best.

Prof. Peter Northam,  
President: British Academy of Fencing  
Tel: 0121 429 9717  
Email: [president@baf-fencing.com](mailto:president@baf-fencing.com)



# Letters

After 64 years of fencing, I've retired. These are some incidents in my career, teaching fencing and as a social fencer. My chosen weapon is foil.

- At a local club, fencing a girl of about 15, she used a novel 'parry' I'd never seen before. When I attacked, she grabbed my blade with her left hand and hit me with her right! One way to get hits I suppose!
- At another local club, I had a group of about 10 boys, 11 to 14, and I noticed one of them had a soaking wet bib and jacket. Apparently he'd gone over to the drinking fountain and tried to get a drink without taking his mask off. I shook my head in disbelief. As jellyfish have survived for 60 million years without a brain, I suppose there may still be some hope for him!
- Meeting a fellow student from my college days and we were fencing, I said to him, 'Fred, your blade looks rather short'. His reply was, 'Yes, the blade snapped, and I pulled the red button off the end and put it on the broken end'. He must have had a grip like a vice to do that! Fortunately, I was the better fencer and survived the encounter!
- Next, at an after school class on a hot summer's day, I took my class outside and we fenced on the grass under the shade of some trees. I suddenly said, 'Where's Simon?' A voice from up above called out, 'Here I am!' He'd climbed up a tree. Green smears all over his jacket. I was not amused!
- At the same school, in the gym, I had in my class a persistently badly behaved boy. I spotted him 'fencing' with his back to his opponent, jabbing his foil over his shoulder. I told him to write a letter of apology to me, stating what he'd done, have it signed by his parents, then returned to me. I duly got the letter, but his parents removed him, thank goodness.

I was always strict with my classes, with great stress on discipline and safety, but fencing seems to have a stalwart group of young, male blockheads!

**Clive Madgin**

*BAF ret.*

*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 Committee.*

*I have a light editorial touch on all articles received. 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. There have been occasions when I have suggested changes to articles, and when such changes are taken on board, the returned article is so much better for having been re-written.*

*Therefore I will always welcome thought provoking articles with a positive orientation from members (or non-members).*

*Kevin: Editor Academy News*

# *BAF AGM Saturday 14th January 2023*

*This year AGM will be held at Novotel Manchester West, Worsley Brow, Worsley, Worsley, M28 2YA, United Kingdom*

Annual General Meeting Notice: To assist with the ongoing and proper governance of the BAF, the Annual General Meeting for 2022 will be held in accordance with government guidance and The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 on Saturday 14 January 2023.



The members' meeting will start at 9.30am Note this meeting will be to elect a members rep as none was elected last year. No formal report will be given.

The main meeting will start 10.15am

The notice of the AGM will be advertised on the BAF webpage, email and Facebook. A copy of the minutes for 2021 AGM and an agenda will be given to those who attend.

Apologies for non-attendance can be sent to any committee member which will then be recorded.

## **Posts for election are:**

Secretary

Assistant Secretary

Committee Member Members' Representative - (elected at the Members' meeting and currently vacant)

Committee Member (Academy News).

## **Changes to the Articles:-**

A written copy of any proposed alteration or addition to the Articles, shall be sent **at least 21 days before the Meeting, to the Secretary**, who shall send a notice of any proposed alteration or addition to each person holding Membership of The Academy at least seven days before the Meeting.

All members and their families are welcome to attend an informal meal later in the evening if they wish.



# Mistakes: Part 2

By Nick Chapman

In part one of this five part series I explored the idea of mistakes being the route to learning, the concept that only by making mistakes can we really learn, or as William Ellery Channing put it 'error is the discipline through which we advance'. That article was based on quotations and anecdotes, personal observations, and assertions that whilst they made sense provided very little in the way of empirical evidence. In this article I seek to address that by presenting selective quotes and findings from some of the research behind the conclusion that errorful learning can be beneficial.

## Part 2 Science

Sometimes you win, sometimes you learn.

The author, James Joyce, called mistakes 'portals of discovery' and the billionaire, George Soros, said that 'Once we realize that imperfect understanding is the human condition there is no shame in being wrong, only in failing to correct our mistakes'.

### Positive error framing

Research by Debra Steele-Johnson & Zachary T Kaliosky (Error framing effects on performance: cognitive, motivational, and affective pathways. 2014) looked at 'positive error framing, that is, making errors salient and cuing individuals to see errors as useful' (kind of what I am trying to do with this series of articles). They argue that the results of their research show that error framing influenced cognitive, motivational, and affective factors which in turn differentially affected performance quantity and quality'. 'Results suggest that positive error framing can have beneficial effects' and 'can facilitate learning from errors in real-time performance of tasks'.

### Value of low stakes error

Drawing on research into different teaching styles in a number of different countries psychologist Janet MetCalfe (Learning from Errors. 2017) concluded that whilst error avoidance appears to be standard in American schools it might be a counterproductive strategy for neurologically typical students. Suggesting instead that 'experimental investigations indicate that errorful learning followed by corrective feedback is beneficial to learning'. She goes on to argue that 'If the goal is optimal performance in high-stakes situations, it may be worthwhile to allow and even encourage students to commit and correct errors while they are in low-stakes learning situations rather than to assiduously avoid errors at all costs'. We all want optimal performance from our fencers when they are in the high stake's environment of a final so perhaps, we need to adapt our approach to mistakes in training.

### Challenges

Referencing the work of Steele-Johnson and Kaliosky, Eva L Amy PhD (Why we should embrace mistakes in school. 2017) cautions us that 'Real learning isn't usually easy. Teaching methods that centre on errors may make learning more challenging but can also be more motivating—potentially enhancing metacognition (the ability to think about your thinking) and self-efficacy (a belief in your capability to accomplish a task)'.

**Errorful learning vs error avoidance**

Amy goes on to describe a system used in Japan where teachers 'rarely praised their students and asked them to solve problems on their own. Then, they led discussions of common errors as students explored a variety of pathways to both correct and incorrect solutions' suggesting that this system seems to be embracing the learning struggle by acknowledging mistakes rather than ignoring them' which is in sharp contrast to the American system which 'focused on the correct procedures for solving problems - primarily ignoring errors and praising students for correct answers only'. Given that the Japanese students went on to outperform the American students their focus on errors appears to be a more effective approach.

**What's really being learned**

The research of Manu Kapur & Katerine Bialaczyc (Designs for Productive Failure. 2011) comparing 'Productive Failure' (where pupils 'solve complex problems without instructional support or scaffolding up until a teacher-led consolidation') with 'Direct Instruction' appears to show that despite apparent failure to solve the subject problem, those who had experienced productive failure performed better in later (and unrelated) problem solving tests. It appears that whilst they may not have learned to solve the problem in front of them, they had instead learned about how to approach solving problems more generally. Amy hypothesises this shows that 'In addition to understanding the different ways you might err, it seems helpful to actually make errors in the first place'.

**Be confident and be wrong**

When considering how we might adapt to benefit from the observations of this research it is worth knowing that Metcalfe's research also showed that 'the beneficial effects [of errorful learning] are particularly salient when individuals strongly believe that their error is correct: Errors committed with high confidence are corrected more readily than low-confidence errors'. Amy summarises thus 'Researchers speculate that students focus more attention on corrective feedback when they are both confident and wrong (and perhaps surprised by their error)'.

**Fostering emotional resilience**

Amy cautions that errorful learning 'only works if students have the emotional resilience to respond to mistakes adaptively and flexibly' as a result this is a teaching style that need to be introduced gradually and sympathetically, self-efficacy is after all a mental skill and as such needs to be nurtured and developed over time. Johnson et al caution that 'Perceptions of failure have been implicated in a range of psychological disorders, and even a single experience of failure can heighten anxiety and depression' (no pressure there then), but goes on to add 'not all individuals experience significant emotional distress following failure', thus demonstrating resilience or error tolerance, defining resilience factors as 'those which buffer the impact of risk factors'. 'Fortunately, the research of McCaslin, Vriesema and Burggraf (Making Mistakes: Emotional Adaptation and Classroom Learning 2016) shows the 'students' emotional adaptations are malleable and open to intervention' suggesting those who appear to initially struggle with the emotions related to making mistakes can be bought round with sympathetic interventions, good behaviour modelling and the use of good communication skills. Their research identified five 'unique emotional adaptation subscales' ('Distance and Displace, Regret and Repair, Inadequate and Exposed, Proud and Modest, and, Minimise and Move On') and using this research Amy suggests that 'students who had the "regret and repair" style (featuring some guilt, normalising of the situation, and self-care) engaged in less self-blame, participated more actively in problem solving with their peers, and earned greater respect from teachers' suggesting that this is preferable she goes on to propose the following five interventions to encourage this approach and thereby improve outcomes.

- Adjust the learning context, "Let's try this another way."
- Encourage persistence, "Keep trying. Don't give up!"
- Model self-compassion, "Be kind to yourself when you're confused; it's okay."



- Build positive relationships with students, "I see your strengths, and I believe in you."
- Focus on resilience, "Even though this is tough, you will find your way."

### Scaffolding learning

Dennett makes the point that the 'more complex a problem you're facing' 'the more difficult the analysis' and tells us that 'this is known to researchers in artificial intelligence (AI) as the problem of "credit assignment"' but could just as easily be considered as blame assignment. The more complex an event is the more variables are involved, the harder it is to know what change is responsible for what and therefore which adjustment might help elicit the desired result. This is where, I believe, our efforts as coaches might be most useful. Let fencers make the mistakes, let them try and work out the right answer, then use the experience of our own mistakes and subsequent learning to guide them. Help them first to understand the extent of the variables that might affect the outcome, then to see through the myriad of variables to more quickly identify the salient facts, to make appropriate credit (or blame) assignment. In turn, if they can be helped to find positive outcomes sooner, they might also experience fewer negative emotions relating to mistakes, become less mistake averse, less risk averse. Perhaps we should think of teaching as being less about providing the answer and more about facilitating the search for that answer, what Lev Vygotsky (developmental Psychologist) might refer to as scaffolding the learning experience. This ability to 'share the benefits that our individual brains have won by their individual histories of trial and error' is, according to Dennett, one of the reasons humans are smarter than other species.

### Conclusion

For errorful learning to be effective Metcalfe suggests it requires more than just the opportunity to make errors, and the emotional support to not see errors as problems (error tolerance) but as it requires 'Corrective feedback, including analysis of the reasoning leading up to the mistake'. If we as coaches are going to derive more value from mistakes, to embrace errorful learning, engage with productive failure, it would appear we will need to be at the top of our game.

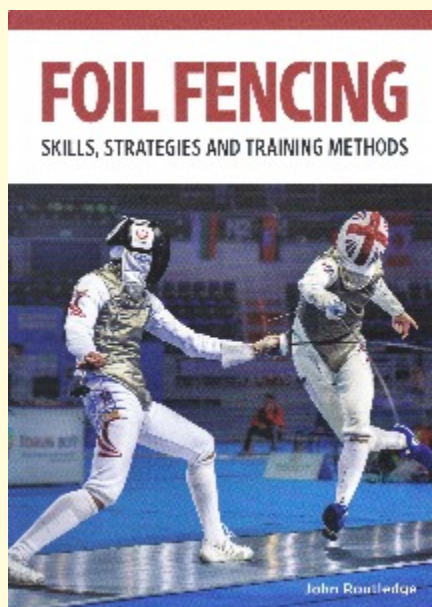
In our role as expert, relative to pupil, not only must we understand our subject, be able to recognise and correct a mistake, but it also appears that we would benefit from understanding why that mistake happened. Fortunately, in the true sense of coaching we only need to be able to provide the scaffolding to facilitate our student to developing an understanding of why the mistake happened, the ability to ask the questions that lead to the train of thought that creates the self-reflection which in turn promotes better understanding and therefore learning. However, in order to do this effectively we also need to be receptive to the individuals psychological state, have an idea of their error tolerance and modal appropriate behaviour to encourage the most effective reaction to mistakes (as if coaching our sport wasn't complicated enough already!).

If I had to live my life again, I'd make the same mistakes, only sooner. Tallulah Bankhead (Actress).

### References

- Eva L. Amy, Ph.D. Why we should embrace mistakes in school  
[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why\\_we\\_should\\_embrace\\_mistakes\\_in\\_school](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why_we_should_embrace_mistakes_in_school) accessed 15/3/21
- Daniel C Dennett, Intuition Pumps and other thinking tools, 2013
- Judith Johnson, Maria Panagioti, Jennifer Bass, Lauren Ramsey, Reema Harrison, Resilience to emotional distress in response to failure, error or mistakes: A systematic review <http://europepmc.org/article/med/27918887> accessed 22/3/21
- Manu Kapur & Katerine Bielaczyc, Designing for Productive Failure  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10508406.2011.591717> accessed 17/3/21
- Mary McCaslin, Christine C. Vriesema, Susan Burggraf, Making Mistakes: Emotional Adaptation and Classroom Learning,  
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1087005> accessed 17/3/21
- Janet MetCalfe Learning from errors (2017) Learning from Errors <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev-psych-010416-044022> accessed 15/3/21
- Debra Steele-Johnson, Zachary T Kalinoski, Error framing effects on performance: cognitive, motivational, and affective pathways,  
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24617273/> accessed 16/3/21
- Other quotes from [www.brainyquote.com](http://www.brainyquote.com)





# Review: Foil Fencing Skills, Strategies And Training Methods

John Routledge, The Crowood Press. 2022

Any new book on Fencing is very welcome, especially one written by a British Coach. John Routledge has succeeded in bringing a fresh look and feel to what can be a dry, complicated explanation of how to Fence.

Traditionally, a book on Fencing starts with how to stand en garde, how to step forwards and backwards, how to lunge etc. John has left that to the end of his book, under Common Technical Mistakes. He starts with Distance and Timing with 'box-outs' to explain his concepts, this I found helpful and interesting. As you go through the various chapters, these 'box-outs' are filled with examples of international fencers using fencing strokes and footwork as part of their successful strategies, nothing I had seen before and I found very interesting and informative.

The figures/pictures demonstrating actions I found unusual at first but soon came to look forward to seeing them, for me, they worked well.

There is nothing new (except 'passive attacks?') regarding all the fencing actions in this book, but the approach, easy readability and clear explanations is what this book excels at. I would recommend this book to beginner fencers and beginner coaches as an excellent starting point; and to advanced fencers and coaches that are looking for a refresher to better prepare for competitions.

From Distance and Timing to Simple and Compound Actions to Footwork to Performance on the day of Competition to Reconnaissance to Defence to Drills with a Partner to finally, Common Technical Mistakes (all his chapters), a book with much common sense and sound advice.

A couple of 'niggles'; a 'Feint Disengage' to me, means feint of a disengage, where the author means a Feint Direct and Disengage. Also, a Doubleé does not deceive two circular parries and a riposte from Octave to the highline of the opponent is indirect, not direct.

This book is an enjoyable and instructive addition to the fencing catalogue and earns a place in my fencing library. I have no hesitation in recommending 'Foil Fencing. Skills, Strategies and Training Methods' to all who love fencing.

**Prof Peter Northam.**  
President: British Academy of Fencing

## Documentation

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

Key Teaching Points (Weapon specific)	<b>£7.35 (£9.4) each</b>
Key Coaching Points (Weapon specific)	<b>£7.35 (£9.4) each</b>
Glossary of Terms (including Translation of Fencing Terms)	<b>£7.35 (£9.45)</b>
Employment Guidelines	<b>£7.35 (£9.45)</b>
Teaching/ Coaching Tactics (2nd Edition)	<b>£16.80 (£21)</b>
Examples of past written Papers for Advanced and Diploma examinations - <b>FREE</b>	
All prices include p & p. Figures in <b>RED</b> are for non-BAF members	

## Examination Fees

Level 1 Assessment	£11.00
Level 2 to Diploma	£21.00 ( <b>£26.00</b> )

These are for "normal" exams - for Special exams, consult the Course Officer. Figures in **RED** are for non-BAF members



# Insurance and Membership Fees.

By now many or all of you reading this, will have received your membership renewal forms and paid your subscriptions. You will have noticed that there has been a sharp increase in the price of full membership this year and may be wondering why. This article is an attempt to highlight some of the factors behind the price increase.

The reason for the increase is down to several factors over which the Academy has very little control. Most of them are related to trading conditions in the insurance market, currently the market is described by insurance companies as a "hard market". This is characterised by fewer insurers, insurers being more risk averse and a general increase in the cost of insurance across all sectors of insurance market not just sports insurance.

Regulatory changes introduced in 2016 required insurance companies to double their capital reserves causing many insurance companies to either drop out of the market or significantly reduce their activities. This reduced capacity drives up prices as fewer insurance providers means the remaining providers can pick and choose who and what they insure, what premiums to charge and what conditions and limitations they can place on the cover they provide. In addition the cost of reinsurance (insurance for insurance companies) has significantly increased, which is being passed on to consumers. Not only that many reinsurers are putting restrictions on what insurance companies can insure resulting in those sectors that are seen as "high risk" facing very steep price increases or even the possibility of being unable to obtain insurance cover.

Other factors that are having an impact on the cost of insurance include the increased frequency and severity of natural disaster claims. Whether or not they are due to climate change, the number of and the size of claims for flood and storm damage have increased over recent years. The result is many insurance companies are paying out more claims than previously, resulting in higher premiums to recover the lost money. Insurance companies also made extra money from investing premiums in the stock market. The poor performance of investments over recent years, means that this is no longer a highly profitable income stream for insurers, hence increased premiums to cover losses.

Perhaps one of the biggest influences on the cost of membership is the number of full members the Academy has. Put simply, the more full members we have the lower the individual cost per member, the fewer full members we have the higher the cost for each individual member. The numbers of Academy members has been slowly declining for the past few years, but only recently has this started to become a problem. Until now the number of full members paying subscriptions has always covered the insurance premium. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, not only have our numbers fallen but insurance premiums have risen and we have reached a crossover point where the Academy's previous membership fee no longer covers the insurance premium.

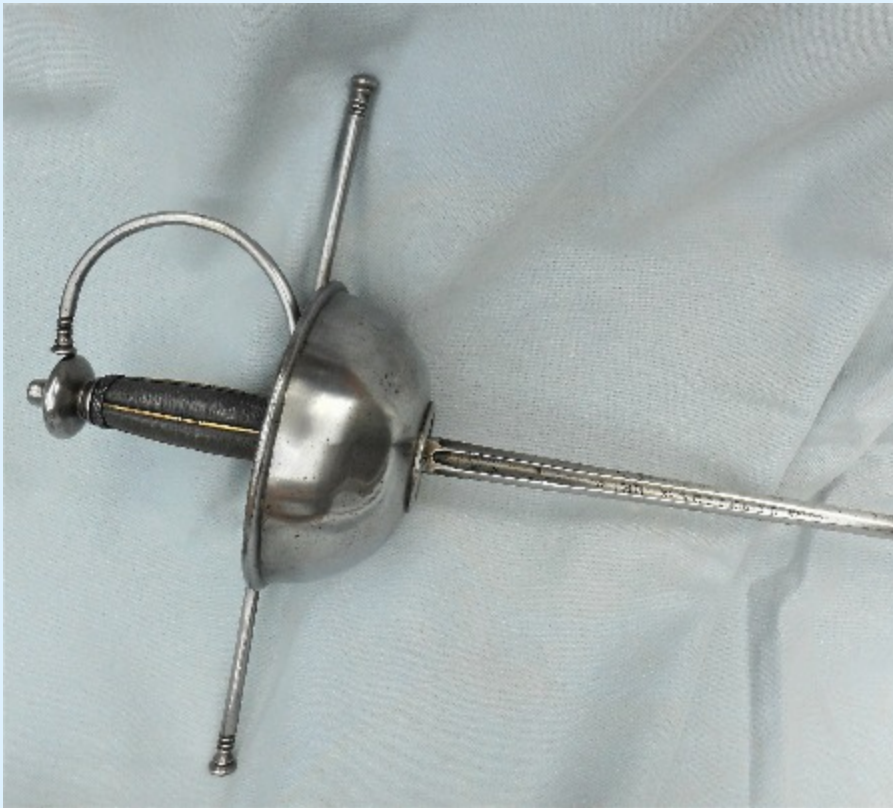
At the moment we have no choice to put the fee up and this will have to continue until we reach parity with the insurance premium. One way we can try to help ourselves is to attract more members into the Academy, thus lowering the price per member. The other thing we can do, is to not have any accidents, the fewer reasons we can give insurance companies for increasing our premium, the more likely our future premiums will not rise so much. But by far the best option is to increase our membership, which in these uncertain times will be no easy task.

John Worsley, Treasurer.



## From the Collection of Porthos

Another Spanish cup hilt rapier, ca.1680, albeit with a German blade. More about that in a



moment. This one looks much the same as the one in last months issue, but they couldn't be more different. The grip has been re-wired by an expert restorer, who also replaced the four steel strips on it. They're a typically Spanish design. Like the former cup hilt it has a garda polvo inside the cup (see photo). These 'dust guards' never cease to amaze me. How did they manage to make such intricate items at that time? Even with our modern technology producing these by hand would be extremely difficult.

The overall condition of this rapier is excellent:

wonderfully preserved, with a few slight marks on the cup, commensurate with its age. The re-wired grip is so well done it'll enhance, rather than detract from its value.

Now the blade: it's vastly superior to the first one. Both have 39 inch blades (1 m approx). This one, however, is very slender, with a flattened diamond section, and it has a deep fuller (grove) crisply stamped IHN SOLINGEN on both sides. Solingen was a major sword producing area in Germany. The combination of the slim blade and the deep fuller make it far better to use. It handles well and the balance is good, though it still weighs 2 lb 3 oz (about 1 kg). If I had to fight with a rapier this would be my choice.



# Commonwealth Fencing Championships 2022 - A Coach's View

By Prof. Phil Carson

The 2021 Cadet and Junior Fencing Championships were due to be held in Delhi, but owing to the global pandemic, were re-scheduled alongside the Senior, Veterans and Para Fencing Championships in London in August 2022. This combined championships meant that over 1,000 athletes attended from around the Commonwealth to compete in 30 events over 12 days.



I'm not sure if it is record, but it must be close, with 21 of my fencers qualifying for these championships and someone from my club competing every day of the event. I have been to many world and European championships with one or two fencers at any time, but nothing at this scale in terms of demands on the coach. I caught the 0830 train from Waverley Station in Edinburgh on Monday 8th August and started giving

lessons at 2pm that same afternoon at the University of East London in Beckton. I stopped coaching on Saturday 20th August at around 2pm. That was some gig!

From a personal coaching perspective I had to prepare myself as well as the fencers for such a protracted event. In early 2022 I suffered a series of heart attacks and later a detached retina also requiring emergency surgery, not to mention some personal losses to our family. Coaches are not immune to the effects of physical and personal trauma, so I took time to plan my physical and emotional wellbeing and to pace myself through the pre-event training and the event itself. I ran three two-day national training camps and four four-day training camps in July to prepare the squad, but then took 10 days completely away from fencing to ensure I was totally rested before the competition. Most of the fencers were able to attend training camps in Manchester, London, Truro and Siena whilst I was on holiday, so this outsourcing was very good planning indeed and helped me balance the needs of the fencers and my own needs.



The event management suffered quite a few early teething problems with logistics, not least metal pistes not turning up on time, the online scoring system going down and temperatures hitting 30 degrees celsius in sports halls with no air conditioning! The first day I was in the sport hall doing warm up lessons at 0730hrs and didn't leave until after the medal ceremony at 2130hrs. But after a few days the event management became quite slick and the latter stages were a breeze. However, it was as well that we were aware of the hot weather and took steps to ensure the coach and fencers understood how to hydrate and stay hydrated in these conditions and also to take a sympathetic view of how difficult the logistics were going to be, taking an adaptive rather critical approach in order to maintain my focus and emotional energy.



We had a very young squad of fencers with us, three of the women and four of the men will still be cadets at the next Commonwealth Championships in 2024! So from the start we had to set goals with the fencers that were realistic and appropriate to their age and stage of development and to ensure that they were process rather than outcome focused. By setting process goals, fencers were able to track their achievement other than in terms of wins and losses. I met several of them at the end of their individual and team events and they were delighted, knowing they had performed at their absolute personal best. They also know from me that that is all we expect from them at this kind of event, especially as they are representing their country first and foremost. Yes, we brought home some bling - 9 medals - to the club, but more importantly, we brought home some priceless experiences and clear steps up in development for all of the fencers.

For example, young Caitlin is currently awaiting her 9th open heart surgery. She came to us a small shy girl who had been excluded from school team sport because of her condition and bullied by her classmates until she found fencing. At our club, we believe all kids are talented and that by wrapping a supportive environment around them, they can achieve their goals. Simply being on the team and making it to Commonwealth selection was a huge win for Caitlin. But the way she fenced, leaving everything she had on the piste, was remarkable when you think about her unique journey. I can give you another half a dozen stories of personal triumph, sacrifice and endeavour and stories that are worth much more than pieces of tin. The joy of coaching is in the joy of these stories.

What was my learning from the championships? This is still a relevant Championships and a good stepping stone between national and international events. Across the events, fitness was a clear indicator of performance outcomes, as was those who took a tactical gaming approach. It was also interesting to see how often the "favourites" fell to lower seeds early in the competition, demonstrating how important mental preparation is and how much of an effect the size and staging of an event and expectations can affect some fencers more than others. But most of all, I was reminded about the joy of our sport and the positive impact we as coaches have on our fencers.

"To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; To appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. That is to have succeeded." **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

The next senior Commonwealth Championships is penciled in for Melbourne in 2026 and the Cadet and Junior Championships are set for Delhi in 2024. Our training and preparation starts now!



# 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.

## Proficiency Awards

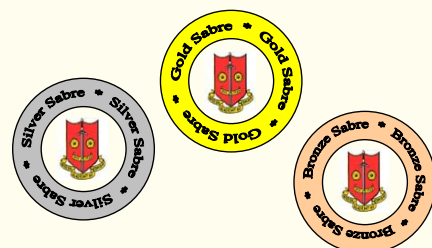
### BAF Members:

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

The study guides are being reviewed and re-written,



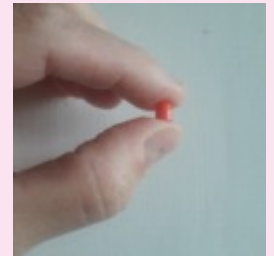




# To Get Out of Football...

By Alan Grafton

Can anyone recognise this or hazard a guess as to what it's for? It's about a quarter of an inch long, 3/16ths of an inch wide and hollow. I found it in a tin at the back of a drawer in my mother's Sideboard along with odd buttons, safety pins, PG tips cards, some marbles and an old Co-op "Divvy" stamp book. It's close on for 55 years old and it's probably the reason I'm a fencing coach.



Let me explain; I started fencing, when I was 14 or 15, at the "Valley Comprehensive School" in Worksop, a mining town (an ex-mining town) in North Nottinghamshire. During the winter we played rugby and football on alternate weeks and while I quite liked rugby (I was rubbish), I HATED football and so when the local Coach came to school and offered to teach a term of fencing, I leapt at it.

I liked it and presumably showed an aptitude as the Coach invited me to join his club at "The Tech", the local name for Worksop Technical College (now North Notts College) a sort of Adult Education Institute. I fenced there for a while (a term? 2 terms? I can't remember) until it closed. I think at the end there was me, a young woman (foilist, obviously, back then) in her late teens or early twenties, a solitary epeeist(!) and a chap who fenced foil from a wheelchair.

With the collapse of this club, my opportunities to fence were over; next closest clubs were, if I recall, in Sheffield (20 miles away) and Nottingham (35 miles away) and we didn't have a car. I moved to Leicester for College but studies and then work prevented me from picking up a blade again and it wasn't until I was nearly 30 that I established a base in South London and was able to join the local club. The rest, as they say, is history.

So what has all this to do with the mysterious little red pellet? Well, in the past when people asked "So what made you start fencing?" I've always replied "I would have done anything to get out of football" BUT finding that item hidden away in a tin at the back of a drawer for half a century brought back a flood of memories.

Between June 1966 and March 1967 the BBC screened an Adventure series starring Gerald Harper called "Adam Adamant Lives!", with the fanciful idea that an Edwardian gentleman-adventurer had been frozen in ice in 1902 and revived in "swinging" London in 1966. Despite living in a swish contemporary apartment and driving a "modern" Mini Cooper, Adamant still dressed in cape and cravat and carried and used a...



## SWORD-STICK!!

As part of the marketing spin-off, the BBC licenced the production of an Adamant sword-stick toy and I had one!



It would have been bought from the park shop at The Golden Sands Caravan Park in Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast where we went for our Summer Holidays. It was a brilliant toy; not only was it a sword-stick, but also a water pistol and a popgun; it had an Adam Adamant signet ring (that you could really wear) and had a secret compartment in the handle for hiding the RED PELLETS that you fired from the popgun. I had it for ages, until I was about 11 I think, when I tried to use the handle of the stick to replace my bedroom door handle but it wasn't strong enough and it broke. I was crest-fallen, really disappointed but my mother said it was my own fault for "messing about". I think I tried to fix it but it was no use and eventually it would have been thrown away, leaving that one solitary pellet to remain, disregarded and moved from a "box of bits that might come in handy", to a "tin of random stuff" in a drawer that "we'll sort out sometime" until it surfaced and brought back the flood of memories that gave me goose-pimples.

So, while it's true that I started to fence when I was 14 or 15 to get out of playing football, it seems fencing has been with me longer than that; the little 6 year old Alan had great fun playing at swords and the older 60 (plus) year old Alan still is!

### Coda.

I recently made some enquiries as to who the Coach might have been that came to my school and gave me the opportunity to ~~get out of football~~ try fencing. I think his name was Bill Tomlinson and I was disappointed to learn that he had died only a few years previously as I would have loved to have visited him to shake his hand and to thank him for being the first of many generous coaches I have worked with in my career. If anyone has a photo of Bill, preferably from the mid 70's when I would have known him, I would be very pleased to have a copy.

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.

# Multiple Intelligence's

By Kevin Nelson

This month's teaching model is multiple intelligence's, and its basic assumption is that we are all intelligent but in different ways. And it is that twist to the definition of intelligence that makes this theory so powerful. Those who have been reading the Academy News for a number of years may remember that Chris Beadling wrote a piece on Multiple Intelligence's in the September 2007 edition, Part 1 detailing the intelligence's, and Part 2 a quiz, so that members could work out their own major intelligence. These tests are still in use today within some schools, and other educational situations. (Also online, so if you want to have a go yourself just google one online and find out what your intelligence's are).



The theory was first put forward by Howard Gardner of Harvard in 1983 in his book “Frames of Mind” where he proposed that everyone has 7 types of intelligence (later upgraded to 8), each of these he claimed as being traceable to a separate area of the human brain.<sup>2</sup> The book was instigated as an academic exercise, and was aimed at psychometricians. But it came a surprise to the author when the theory started to be used in education. Multiple intelligence's has a very positive message for learners... That they are all intelligent, whereas previously only those who

“I was putting forth a rather bold new theory—namely, that intellect was distinctly pluralistic—and arguing that the singular word ‘intelligence’ and the term ‘IQ’ were fundamentally limited and misleading.” Howard Gardner<sup>3</sup>

could pass the traditional (IQ) tests were considered intelligent. The caveat is that multiple intelligence's only show the potential of what could be there, these talents, or intelligence's have to be developed.

As coaches I believe that it is our responsibility to develop the person that we are working with through the medium of fencing. The theory of Multiple Intelligence's implies that everyone is unique, that we all learn best in different ways, and that we can teach ourselves to improve our own intelligence. Do we as coaches change the emphasis on the way we are teaching, to try and reach as many of our fencers as possible? Are we looking to make our fencers self aware, able to learn independently, thereby bolstering their self confidence?

“A common misconception about the theory of multiple intelligence's is that it is synonymous with learning styles. Gardner states that learning styles refer to the way an individual is most comfortable approaching a range of tasks and materials.

Multiple intelligence's theory states that everyone has all eight intelligence's at varying degrees of proficiency and an individual's learning style is unrelated to the areas in which they are the most intelligent”.<sup>1</sup>

Looking at the different intelligence's, how could we use these in a fencing context?

**Musical:** Ritual before a bout... having a playlist to warm up to: Or how many of you do footwork to music?: Or blindfold fencing, where sound and touch play a prominent part.

**Spatial:** Do you work slowly, can you imagine different ways of riposting, thinking about those that work, those that won't, and those that might be a one hit wonder: What about learning from You-Tube?

**Linguistic:** Can you teach a small group and get them each to teach another fencer using voice only: Do you encourage refereeing?

**Intra-Personal:** Set your fencer a problem, can they solve it for themselves: In an individual lesson, do you encourage your fencers to define what they wish to learn or refine?: How many of you practice/suggest Visualisation with your fencers.<sup>4</sup>

**Inter-Personal:** Do you encourage your fencers support each other positively during a competition:

**Logical-Mathematical:** Are you teaching your fencers to watch their opponents, can they identify what their opponent is doing, and therefore logically come up with potential counters: Can your fencers follow the rights of way within a bout while they are refereeing?

**Kinesthetic:** Some people need the old fashioned way, of putting them in the "correct" position so their body can understand what is wanted: Do you allow your fencers enough time to practice a move before moving onto the next idea?

These are only a few suggestions of how to develop your fencers through your coaching, and I am sure that there are many others out there. Many of the ideas work across more than one of these intelligence's, and could be attributed to general intelligence. There is a huge amount of further reading available on this subject, some in support of, and some against.

## Bibliography

1. Marenus, M. (2020, June 09). Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. Simply Psychology. [www.simplypsychology.org/multiple-intelligences.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/multiple-intelligences.html)
2. P Ginnis: The Teachers Toolkit: ISBN 1899836764
3. Gardner, H. (2011b). The theory of multiple intelligences: As psychology, as education, as social science. Transcript of address delivered at José Cela University on October, 29, 2011.
4. Craig Jinks (July 2019): Going Mental... Part 2 Visulisation: Academy News.

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

E-mail [courseofficer@baf-fencing.com](mailto: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.

# Commonwealth Fencing Championships 2022 - DT's View



For those who were not involved, did not have fencers involved and chose not to follow what was going on, this summer saw England play host to the 2022 Commonwealth Fencing Championships.

The event held at 'Sports Dock', University of East London, started immediately after the 2022 Commonwealth Games finished in Birmingham (Games finished 8th Fencing started 9th August).

The event was exceptional in many ways.

It was the first time, and given the complexity that this created, quite possibly the last time, that the Commonwealth Cadet, Junior, Senior, Veteran events have been brought together in one massive festival of fencing. This came about as a result of the cancellation of scheduled Commonwealth events over the previous couple of years due to the Pandemic. On top of all these events, which would normally be run in three separate championships, there were, for the first time, Commonwealth Para fencing events.

These para (or wheelchair) events presented their own challenges for the organisers, as, having no precedent, there were no rules or guidelines about the integration of these events. This resulted in a significant amount of negotiation in order to ensure all the parties involved understood what was needed and was possible, to make sure everyone was getting what they wanted out of the events.

The championships ran for 12 days, which in itself is worthy of note, no one I spoke to at the event could remember a major fencing championships that had been run for 12 days without there being one or more rest days in the timetable. It's also worth noting that that this makes it one day longer than the main Commonwealth Games.



Within that 12 days there were 66 separate events. Resulting in (by my count) 78 gold medals being awarded (Team challenge events don't have medals, veteran individual events have 5 gold medals each, overall plus top in 40+, 50+, 60+, and 70+). There were in the region of 1200 individuals fencing, representing 29 countries. To put that into perspective that's 20% of the size of the whole 2022 Commonwealth Games on a budget of less than 0.035%. Many of these competitors fenced in more than one event, the New Zealand team being a prime example, to get maximum opportunity and value from travelling they brought a mainly Cadet team and entered them for Senior, Junior and Cadet events, including teams, giving each fencer six opportunities to fence their weapon of choice.

Talking of teams, there were some 180 who took part. As well as the main team events at each category, Cadet, Junior, Senior, Veteran and Para, there were also 'Challenge events' these were team events set up ostensibly to allow fencers from countries who could not raise a full team to still have an opportunity to experience Commonwealth team fencing. In 'the spirit of the Commonwealth', they were encouraged to band together to create multi national teams, fencing for the joy of competing (and a certificate).

In another first, there were mixed able bodied, para, team relay events. This is the first time this form of mixed relay event has featured at an FIE certified event. Again, this led to much 'on the fly' adaptation, as this was a learning process for everyone involved.

The events took place in two halls. One set up as a final's hall with four coloured pistes and a raised finals piste (and periodically a short Para piste). The other hall was set up with a further 16 pistes, a total of 21 modular metal pistes across the two halls. All pistes had remote control boxes and the five in the finals hall also had cameras for video refereeing and live streaming. Events (excluding team challenge event) were streamed from the last 8 resulting in over 300 hours of footage, much of which also had commentary.

There was a team of armourers who ran weapon control, they checked, tested, marked and reported on the contents of over 800 bags (some of which only contains a single fencer's equipment, some were team submissions with up to 15 weapons in a bag). This team also manned the call room, manned the finals piste, maintain the field of play (this required a lot of work, relaying pistes, lifting pistes between rounds to re rivet panels that suffered under the extreme heat, and relay for the next round).

It took four computer operators, and a head of secretariat, a commentator, an audio video technician, photographers, a volunteer manager, a team of volunteer marshals, a team of doctors, medics, physio-therapists (we were all very thankful for the expert emergency work of the medical team on one of the days), a team of camera boom operators, a call room manager, a head of protocol (running the medal ceremonies and presentations), welcome desk staff, welfare officers, 31 referees, a referee delegate, a DT of 5 from England, Scotland, Canada, Australia and South Africa, an accommodations coordinator, a social events organiser (yes there were VIP dinners/trip to be arranged, as well as social events for the competitors), there was even a man to start and stop the national anthems (he did so much more besides), not to mention people preparing food and refreshments to keep the whole team working. In total there was a team of over 100 people involved in delivering this event.

Whilst I along with those 100 plus staff played my part in making the event happen, making it as successful as I believe it was, there is one man without whose vision, drive, dedication and endless work it would never have come to be. The man who had the vision, drew together the team, executed the plan was Alex Savin, and he deserves a medal for all that he did, because without him there simply wouldn't have been an event, certainly not an event on anything like this kind of scale (and all delivered on budget).

VIP visitors included Emmanuel Katsidakis the interim president of the FIE, who flew in for the first two days of the event, and a King and Queen (if only Pearly one's). And if all of this isn't sounding complicated enough to organise on top of this massive program of fencing there was also a program of educational and informative lectures/seminars/meetings delivered during the afternoons. These included a 'meet the board event', women in fencing, refereeing, safeguarding, refereeing para fencing, and a coaching symposium (more about that in later issues).

I worked 12+ hour days for 13 days in a row, I have rarely been so tired, but I wouldn't have missed it for the world. There were many friendships made and renewed, many challenges to overcome (9 pistes to be laid on the morning of the first day because the lorry bringing them from south Wales had broken down, and the replacement had driven into the back of someone, and the two replacement vans didn't arrive at the venue till gone 23.00 on the night before the event, the results site that didn't work until half way through the first day because of a technical glitch at the hosting site, the power that cut out a number of times because of the heat, likewise the speaker system), but there was so much passion for the sport, so much dedication to the game. I have so many positive memories but my personal highlight, as a member of DT, hanging the medal for top 70+ fencer around the neck of one of my own fencers whilst she whispered in my ear 'thanks boss'.

The 2022 Commonwealth Fencing Championships was the largest international fencing championships ever to have been held in Britain.

## 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](mailto:editor@baf-fencing.com)**

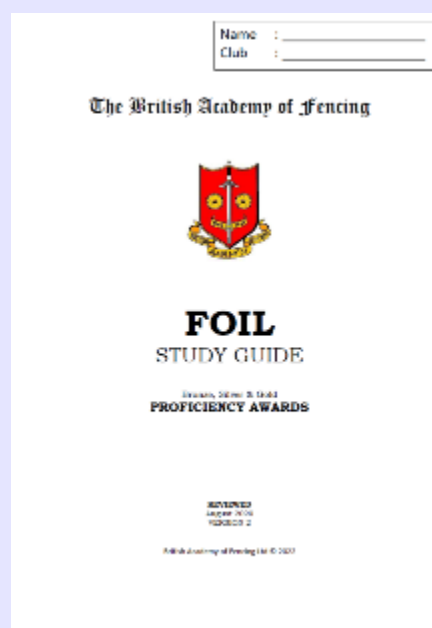
## Foil Study Guide

***The Foil Study Guide Version 2 is now available.*** It has been completely rewritten, which is why it has taken so long, and there have been some minor changes made to the syllabus. Changes reflect the character of the weapon, rules update, introduction to refereeing, a more pupil centred approach, as well as including some new photo's. The cost has increased to £7.50 which includes postage.

Order your copies now....

From Maitre Donald Walker

**[proficiencyawards@baf-fencing.com](mailto:proficiencyawards@baf-fencing.com)**



# "Hollywood's Pioneering Daredevils!"

## By Andy Wilkinson

Having read and enjoyed Andy's first auto-biographical book, TAKE ONE, ACTION, (The Book Guild), I eagerly anticipated his second book, Hollywood's Pioneering Daredevils, Film Action Before CGI.

To me, this is an aficionado's book, meant for someone who goes much further into stunts and stuntmen: an acting school student, a drama degree student, and those well into the history of action films, a book that covers most genres of the entertainment world. His enthusiasm jumps out of every page and his knowledge is prodigious. He moves very quickly through the names of stuntmen and stuntwomen, which left me wanting to know more about each. There is a useful filmography guide at the back of the book to see the stunts performed.



For someone like myself, who only watches films at 'face value', this book is an eye-opener. Not only were the stunts dangerous, but had to be extremely well planned and meticulously rehearsed before performed, sometimes up to months ahead! Even after that, there were casualties and fatalities, though rare.

After reading the book, I had to sit back and take a deep breath, there was too much! To get the best from it, you must look at the Filmography, Cast List and Index, then choose which action film to watch more closely. This is a reference book which would be particularly useful to those training to be a stunt performer.

I enjoyed reading Hollywood's Pioneering Daredevil's and recommend it to lovers of action films.

**Prof Peter Northam**  
President British Academy of Fencing.

<https://www.troubador.co.uk/bookshop/media-the-arts/hollywoods-pioneering-daredevils/>

*But I will leave you with another quote from Percy Nobbs book...*

*"As a great majority of fencing masters are content to reduce themselves to machines, and their instruction to the mere matter of habituating their pupils to appropriate automatic reactions, a short treatise on the headwork of fencing, with some emphasis on its footwork, may possibly fill a want. For those who frequent fencing rooms solely because they are more interesting places than Turkish baths in which to perspire, the perusal of such a volume as this is a waste of time."*

'Fencing Tactics': Percy E. Nobbs : 1936



# British Academy of Fencing

## Historical Notes



The British Academy of Fencing is an organisation for fencing coaches in Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Its origins go back to 1540, when King Henry VIII issued a signed Bill (or Warrant signed by the Sovereign and directed to the Lord Chancellor for passing Letters Patent under the Great Seal) under the title "Masters of ye Noble Science of Defence". This still exists at the Public Records Office (C.82/770)

This Bill gave Masters a monopoly of teaching fencing in England and empowered them to commit to goal any offender who taught without being a member of the Guild.

When Henry VIII died in 1547 his monopoly lapsed and it was not renewed so far as research can prove. However, the Ancient Masters seem to have recovered their lawful privileges from a sympathetic James I. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1605, he granted them a Warrant (Rymer's Feodera Vol. XVI. This Warrant was abolished when James I was forced to pass the Monopolies Act 21 Cap III in 1623/24.

During the Restoration the body fell into ill-repute because of the so-called "Masters" who did not ply their prizes (a traditional examination which required the fighting and defeating of their betters). These swordsmen merely gave themselves the title "Master" or "Professor" and were, in fact, nothing more than paid prize fighters with swords and were the forerunners of pugilists. From then on decline was rapid and to all intents and purposes the Body ceased to exist, even though some Fencing Masters managed to earn a living in the country.

In 1903 the Guild was reformed under the title "The London Academie d'Armes and again in 1931, under the title The British Federation of Fencing Masters".

During the last war it hibernated, but in 1949 the Ancient Guild of Fencing Masters was refounded as "The British Academy of Fencing". The inspiration for this venture came from the late Charles de Beaumont and it was implemented by Professor Roger Crosnier, Professor Leon Paul and Mr J D Aylward. The Academy's first President was Professor Leon Bertrand.

The Academy of today is a progressive organisation and changes are constantly taking place. By the maintenance of a carefully structured system of courses and examinations, the Academy provides teachers and/or coaches of fencing with the opportunities to qualify through Level 1 to Level 5 (Initial, Basic, Intermediate, Advanced and Diploma) Awards with Foil, Epee and Sabre. Members may choose to study and be examined at one/two weapons up to Level 5 (Diploma) and use the title Maître, or complete all three weapons at Level 5 and use the title Professor.