



# Fencing New Zealand

(Fencing New Zealand Incorporated)

## President's Report 2022

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### **Wow – What an incredible year of fencing 2022 was in New Zealand!**

#### **Commonwealth Fencing Championships**

It seems a long time ago now, but the first three quarters of **2022** was dominated by the selection and preparation of our NZ team to the huge 2022 Senior, Veteran, Junior and Cadet Commonwealth Fencing Championships held in London in August.

Given that so many age groups were competing, and that the date of the competition was in mid-year we needed to run a multitude of selection tournaments and training camps early in the year: the National Camp in January, the Waitangi Weekend Tournament in Wellington, South Island Champs in Christchurch, the final selection event – the Fencing Carnival in Auckland, and the final Training Camp in July in Christchurch. All of this was of course while Covid restrictions were in place, which created significant additional challenges.

While the plethora of events meant an awful lot of intense training for our Fencers and Coaches, I'd particularly like to thank the Tournament Organisers, Referees and Selectors alike, for the hundreds of man-hours they put into making these such a success.

Our team of 48 competitors in London did themselves proud, and thanks go to Vicki Lamb, Kate Brill, Sheldon Ogilvie, Anya Kamynina, and David Cocker for all your work in helping enable this amazing trip. Congrats particularly of course go to all the top 8 finishers across multiple age groups, and of note, the U20 Men's Epee Team who beat their Aussie counterparts and took out the silver medal against the UK! A great result to round out a fantastic event!

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#### **Oceania Fencing Championships**

The other big international commitment was the New Zealand and Oceania Championships in October. With multiple Covid delays this was the first time for a few years that NZ had hosted this, the highest ranked event in the Oceania Zone and was a huge success. Thanks must go as always to the incredible Heather Claydon, ably assisted by Fiona Campbell.

Congrats in this event go to everyone who made the Podium or Final 8 in their events, and importantly our new Oceania Women's and Men's Individual Epee Champions – Jessie Yan and Charlie Bioletti; both the NZ Men's and Women's A Teams for winning their respective Sabre Championships; and the NZ Men's Epee B Team for taking out the Oceania title of the NZ A team.

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## **Other Overseas Events**

New Zealand fencers competed in a total of fifteen International competitions across the course of the year. That's a massive number compared to 2021 where, largely due to Covid, NZ's were only able to attend one.

Once again, congrats to everyone who competed, and thanks to the Coaches and Managers who ran these. Also thanks to Amanda Hopkins who processed all the entries for these, applied for everyone's FIE licenses and helped sort accommodation and all the other background tasks that went with it.

Special mention goes to Cooper Gouge – the 2022 Oceania U17 Mens Epee Champion!

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## **National Events**

Aside from all the International events and the Qualification events listed above, there were also multiple National events to be organized – the Presidents Cup in Dunedin, North Island Champs in Wellington, NZ Secondary School Champs, and the massive NZ Juniors, Cadets and U-15 Championships in Christchurch.

Thanks you to all the Regional Organizers who made this events a success, and of course to Heather Claydon once again for travelling the country to act at DT at the majority.

Thanks also to all the Referees who gave up their time to come along and officiate at these events. Your help at these is truly truly appreciated.

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## **Referees**

On the subject of Referees, congrats to Conner Foley Walker for being selected to referee at the Australian / Oceania U-15/ Cadets Championships; to Nicola Shackleton for refereeing at the Commonwealth Champs, and to Anya Kamynina for refereeing at the World Cadet and Junior Champs.

Congrats also to Michael Claydon for attaining his C License in all three weapons, and to Daniel Ko for his Sabre C License qualification in Kuala Lumpur. I hope we will have many more referees in future sitting both their C and B Grade Exams.



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Thanks also to the chair of the FIE Refereeing Commission Irina Knysch for flying all the way here from Austria to run a week of Referee Development prior to the Oceania Champs.

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## Coaching

The Coaching Commission had a busy year last year too, heavily involved with the running of the OFMA / Global Fencing Masters Online Level 1 Foil Coaching Course in the first half of the year, and then organising the Olympic Solidarity Foil Coach Technical Course in December with Mtr Zoltan Bernat in Christchurch in December.

Thank you to Martin, Judit, Dave and Robert for all the effort you put into running these, and congrats to everyone who qualified at the end of both courses.

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## The Road Forward

Throughout the last half of the year you will all be aware of the extraordinary effort put in by Stephen Peterson travelling around the country to learn what you, the fencers, really want from FeNZ. Stephen's report, released at the end of the year, highlighted a huge number of issues that need attention.

One of the areas identified was of course Fundraising, and we welcome Janis Hill to the new role of Fundraising Officer. Janis has hit the ground running and so far has produced two successful applications for Olympic Solidarity funding totalling US\$37,000 towards Youth Athlete Development and National Activities.

The Hui Stephen organised at the end February was also an incredible eye-opener, and I am extraordinarily grateful to everyone who attended for making the effort to attend and contribute. It was fantastic to have so many people in one room talking about the future and how we can collectively grow our sport.

We all owe Stephen a huge dept of gratitude for the time and effort he has taken to pull of this together.

The last three weeks have been extremely busy working through the output of that amazing meeting, and work is already underway to get positive change underway, with a number of you volunteering to offer your expertise to help us move forward quickly.

The future of our incredible sport is looking stronger by the minute thanks to the team that is coming together to help, and it is massively appreciated!

An Action Plan is under construction and will be published shortly.

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## Closing

Last year was an incredible year for our wonderful sport, thanks of course to all the amazing people involved in running our it:

The Coaching Commission: Martin Brill, Robert Gastaldo Brac, Judit Flizsar and Dave Barson;

The Selectors Commission: Kyle MacDonald, Rachel Rowlands, Steve Martin and Anya Kamynina;

The Officiating Commission: Heather Claydon;

The Athlete's Commission: Anna Chalton, Hanna Choi; Grant Tweddle and Sheldon Ogalvie;

Our Health and Safety Officer: Alice Boyd, and now with assistance from Megan Ball.

And of course the Board of FeNZ - Sam Parish, Rachel Rowlands, Nicole Martin, Pete Butler, Steve Peterson, Steve Martin , Alice Boyd , and Amanda Hopkin, and all the Tournament Organisers and Referees who make tournaments and events happen.

Also I want to make a big shout out to the Coaches who work tirelessly to help our fencers be the best that they can be. Our fencers owe you all a huge debt of gratitude for the countless hours you put in, not only in front of them, but behind the scenes as well.

This coming year is going to be a huge year for our sport in this country, with a lot of exciting plans in the making already. We have a great bunch of clever and intelligent people in our community, and we'll be calling on you all to help.

And finally to all of our fencers – Kia Kaha – you are an amazing group of people, and please know that we are working to grow a platform for growth and success to support you all into the future.

While at times there are bound to be disagreements, if we accept our right to have different opinions but still all work together to pull in the same general direction, we can really grow this sport and help you all fulfill your true potential at all levels.

David

*David Elder*

*President Fencing New Zealand*

