



Fencing New Zealand

(Fencing New Zealand Incorporated)



Thursday, 22 December 2022

El Presidente's Newsletter # 001 – December 2022

Time for a Chat

Hiya everyone.

As I hope most of you know, our newly appointed Treasurer, Stephen Peterson, has been doing the rounds, touring the country to find out what our beautiful Fencing community actually want from FeNZ in the future.

His report (Fencing in NZ 2022 - State of the nation and an action plan for positive growth) is on our website. Please – take a look and give Stephen any feedback you can.

One thing that has become VERY apparent in this process though is that we at FeNZ don't communicate as well as we need to. This isn't for want of trying, it's just we're a small team and everyone is generally flat-out getting stuff done, and important things like keeping you all informed just get lost in the process.

So, here's part of the solution – a quarterly email just to keep everyone in the loop with what's going on.).

It has been a really big year, and there's a lot more happening in 2023.

Commonwealth Champs

August saw the biggest contingent of NZ fencers in a very long time travelling to the Commonwealth Fencing Championships in London.

Results were mixed across the board, but everyone reportedly had a great time, and lots of friendships made or re-established.

Special mention of course must go to Liana Semel for taking 7th in the Senior Women's Foil, Charlie Bioletti for 7th in the U20 Junior Men's Epee Champs, Jessie Yan for 7th in the Junior Women's Epee, Cooper Gouge for taking out 3rd in the Cadet Men's Epee Championship, and to the NZ Junior Men's Epee Team for taking the Silver medal.



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Fencing NZ / Oceania Senior Champs 2022

Wow – what a great event this proved to be in the end!

Huge thanks to Pete Butler, Heather Claydon, Fiona Campbell and the rest of the team for running the tournament at short notice. With 135 individual entries, this is the biggest tournament held in NZ since before Covid, and it was a huge success.

Thanks also go to Netball Waitakere for providing such a great venue, and to everyone who showed up to help – especially the refs and the weapons control team.

Congrats to everyone who competed and in particular to everyone who made the Finals

Refereeing

The feedback from the FeNZ/Oceania Referee Development course held just prior to the FeNZ / Oceania Senior Champs was outstanding.

Irina Kynisch – the Head of the FIE Referee's Commission took the time (36 hours each way) to fly in from her base in Austria to run a 3 ½ day seminar and then assist with the Oceania Champs.

Irina is constantly travelling to assist with the running of tournaments all over the globe, and has personally been in charge of the officiating at the last two Olympics. She turned out to be a super nice lady who not only is a great teacher, but is also incredibly influential in the sport world-wide, and who now has a soft spot for New Zealand.

We hope this is the start of a lot of long term development for our referees, as well as the beginning of more of our senior referees being seen on the world stage.

Speaking of which - congrats also to both Michael Claydon and Daniel Ko, both of whom travelled to Malaysia and now qualified as C Grade Referees.

Also congrats to Conner Foley Walker for being invited to referee at the Oceania Cadet Championship earlier in the year.

Oceania Foil Coaching Course

Earlier in the year the Oceania Fencing Confederation (OFC) partnered with Global Fencing Masters (GFM) to trial an online coach training course in Level 1 Foil as an Oceania Fencing Masters' Academy (OFMA) activity. Congrats to everyone from NZ who took part in this wonderful initiative, driven by the OFC Coaching committee, including our own Martin Brill and Dave Barson.



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Trophies

Some of you may have noticed that many of our National Trophies had fallen into disrepair over the years.

While one of them is still away for some special repair work, a number have been beautifully repaired as seen here. Thanks in particular to Vlad Kamynina for fixing the gorgeous (and extremely heavy) Master of Arms Trophy.



Olympic Solidarity Grants

Thanks to Amanda Hopkins for securing an Olympic Solidarity Grant to run an international Foil Coaching Course this month. The Coaching Commission have done an exceptional job of setting this course up, inviting Hungarian Master Zoltan Bernat to coach the coaches on this nine day Level 2 Foil Course currently in progress in Christchurch. Awesome job team. I know that we will reap the benefits of this initiative across the country for many many years to come!

Keep an eye out in the New Year to check the progress of two further initiatives that have received positive feedback from the NZOC.

National Development Program

For many years now we've talked about a National Development Program – designed to raise the level of fencing across the board, with a particular focus on growing our NZ representative teams.

As you will see in Stephen's report and on the FeNZ website, we're now moving forward with this, and are in the process of seeking a National Development Director.

This is another huge initiative that we see propelling our beautiful sport in NZ into the future.

Fencing Hui

We are planning a fencing Hui for February to bring together key stakeholders for a face-to-face session to focus on Culture and Growth. Stephen will have more details out soon.



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FIE Congress

As many of you will have seen, in November I travelled to Switzerland to the annual FIE Congress to meet with the FIE Executive and the Heads of all the other International Fencing Federations from around the world. This was an absolutely awesome opportunity to meet and greet the people who run our sport internationally.

While developing these relationships will take time, this is the start of developing some long term ideas that will no doubt grow over the coming years – watch this space in future newsletters to see how things develop.

Of particular interest was a good discussion with the delegates from Ukraine, and the opening of a discussion about how we may be able to help them in the not too distant future.

FIE Equipment Grant

I'm pleased to advise that Fencing New Zealand has received an equipment grant from the FIE and used it to purchase four Favero 7 scoring boxes and associated spools and wires.

These are identical to the boxes we received last year, and are Bluetooth enabled so they can work with the Video Refereeing systems that are in already in use.

These have just been sent to each of the Regions, and have arrived just in time to go under the Christmas Tree.



International Junior Events

The start of the year is extraordinarily busy for our Under 20 competitors.

Massive congrats go to everyone who's been selected this week to attend Australian Junior Champs in Melbourne in February; the Asian Junior Champs in India in March; and the World Junior Champs in April!

I'm looking forward to seeing some great results!



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Seasons Greetings

And on that note – on behalf of the rest of small team on the FeNZ Board and Commissions, I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and happy holiday season. I hope you all get a good Kiwi Summer break and come back refreshed and raring to go for an exciting New Year of fencing.

I'll get back to you all with an update before the end of March (yup – 2023)!

Merry Christmas

David