



Fencing-Escrime NB

2017-2020 Strategic Plan

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1.0 Overview

1.1 Executive Summary

This strategic plan will guide Fencing-Esprime NB (FENB) over the next three years to support the future of the sport of fencing in New Brunswick. From the strategic plan, an operational plan will be created to meet the goals of FENB and scorecards to keep track of progress.

The focus of this strategic plan is on strengthening Fencing-Esprime NB and being more effective in everything that we do. Over the past few years, there has been a lot of change within the organization, making it a challenge to move the sport forward in New Brunswick. To be successful, we need to strengthen our organization, its clubs, and its members.

After conducting the situation analysis, surveying our members, reviewing the strategic plans of organizations that we are affiliated with, and discussing FENB's future at the last club leader and coaches forum, five themes emerged that seem most important for us to focus on.

Effective...	
Communication	Speak often, clearly, and concisely with our internal and external stakeholders. Change perceptions and be an advocate for the sport.
Athletes	Build successful athletes, both recreationally and competitively.
Leadership	Develop strong leaders to support the sport now and in the future.
Membership	Increase awareness of the sport and look for opportunities to grow our membership base. Maintain what we have.
Capacity	Be innovative in gaining and using the necessary resources to support our initiatives and programs.

This plan will launch at the start of the 2017-2018 fencing season and will cover up to the end of the 2019-2020 fencing season.



1.2 Our Mission, Values, and End Statements

1.2.1 Mission

“To encourage people in New Brunswick to participate in and enjoy the sport of fencing, both recreationally and competitively, in a safe environment at a reasonable cost.”

1.2.2 Vision

- ❖ the spirit of **community** that fencing can foster,
- ❖ inclusive **participation**,
- ❖ the tradition of **honour** that respects and fosters the dignity and rights of others through fair play and sportsmanship,
- ❖ **excellence** by inspiring personal achievement,
- ❖ a quality of **experience** through fun, enjoyment, and satisfaction in a safe environment,
- ❖ the growth of **confidence, character**, and increased **self-esteem**.

1.2.3 End Statements

As a result of the presence of Fencing-Escrimé NB (FENB), New Brunswick has:

- ❖ Fencers that possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to participate recreationally and/or compete provincially, nationally or internationally.
- ❖ Opportunities for quality, financially accessible, recreational fencing.
- ❖ Qualified coaches and officials to lead and support athletes throughout their fencing experience.
- ❖ A fencing environment that meets recognized quality, safety, technical, and accountability standards.
- ❖ A sustainable and fair not-for-profit fencing community that recognizes the contribution and value of volunteers.
- ❖ An awareness and positive perspective of the sport of fencing.

1.3 Background

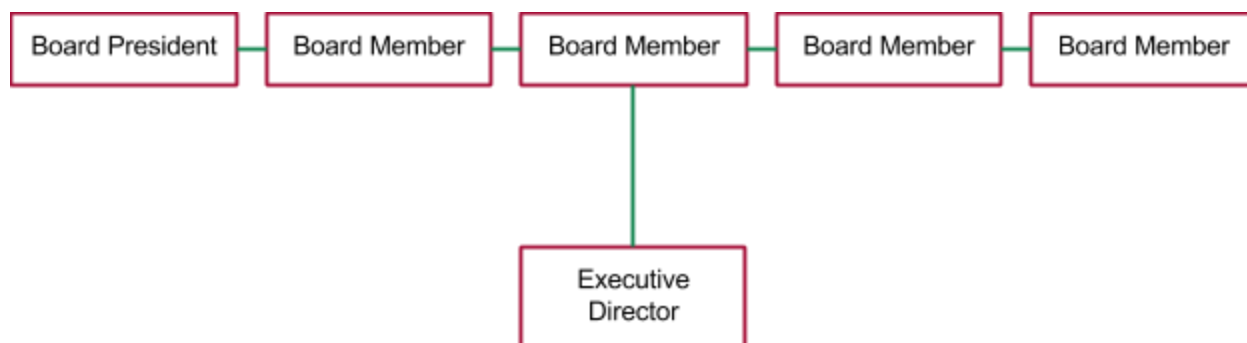
The provincial fencing association was officially established as the New Brunswick Fencing Association in 1969.

The organization is the provincial branch of the [Canadian Fencing Federation](#) with the mandate to govern the sport of fencing in the province of New Brunswick. Our objectives are to promote, develop, regulate, encourage and improve the sport of fencing in New Brunswick as well as to represent and coordinate the interest of New Brunswick fencers.

Attention to the future of the sport has been stepped up in the last decade, with incorporation of Fencing-Esprime NB (FENB) in 2006 as a not-for-profit organization. To better focus Board members, the governance model was changed from a Management Board to a Carver Policy Board and an Executive Director was appointed. Bylaws were revised to reflect this.

A five member Board of Directors, elected by individual members, is accountable for the organization's actions and has the responsibility of establishing policies in the collective best interest of its current and future members. Decisions are made within the confines of the [Bylaws](#) of FENB and [Board policies](#) are developed following a Carver policy governance model, guided by a framework of mission and values.

1.4 Organizational Design



2.0 Situation Analysis

2.1 Clubs

There are currently six registered fencing clubs with FENB. Two in the Saint John area (KV and Fundy), two in the Fredericton area (Damocles and UNB), one in Moncton (Moncton), and one in Northern New Brunswick (Chaleur). Although which clubs are active may vary year-to-year, it typically has held steady at five or six in the past.

[Damocles](#) (DAM) club has the largest membership and is the most well-established with a Board of Directors and a permanent facility; however, they are being relocated. [UNB](#) club operates out of the Currie Center at the University of New Brunswick and is run by an Executive.

[Fundy Fencing](#) club (FFC) had been shut down, but a group of fencers and parents have since re-established it. The Renforth club recently changed location and has been renamed the [Escrime KV Fencing](#) club.

The [Chaleur club](#) (CHA) is active again after disappearing for a couple of years, but could be at risk of becoming inactive again. Activity at the [Moncton](#) club (MFC) has slowed down over the past few years, but has a lot of potential.

2.2 Members

At the end of fiscal year 2015-2016, there were **190 registered members**, which is below the yearly average of 233 total members. There were 99 returning fencing members, 10 associate members, and 81 first time and summer members.

The CFF registration system used in the 2015-2016 season, did not provide a breakdown by club or gender in the downloaded file. During the 2013-2014 season, there was a total of 243 members where Damocles Fencing Club made up 42.0% (102 members) of the total membership, followed by Moncton Fencing Club and Renforth Fencing Club, each with 14.4%



(35 members). Associate members made up 25.5% (28) of the total membership with Fundy Fencing Club having the largest number.

FENB had more first time members (110) sign up during the 2013-2014 season than within the previous four years. This was barely above the yearly average of 109 first time members. Membership renewals were up slightly from the previous four years with 133 returning members. This was also above the yearly average of 124. Damocles Fencing Club had the highest first time members making up 36.4% (40 members) of the total as well as the highest returning members (46.6%; 62 renewals).

Males made up 71.9% of the total membership. Fundy Fencing Club (55.2% male; 44.8% female) and UNB Fencing Club (62.5% male; 37.5% female) had the closest in gender equality within their membership numbers.

2.3 Coaches & Officials

There are currently **15 active fencing coaches** in New Brunswick with various levels of experience and certification - DAM (4), UNB (4), KV (2), FFC (2), CHA (2), and MFC (1). Recent efforts have been made to get coaches certified, particularly at the Community Initiative level.

There are a handful of people who regularly referee at New Brunswick tournaments who have various levels of refereeing experience or who have taken one or more of the FENB-hosted referee clinics. We have made recent efforts to get our referees certified and recruit new referees.

There are not enough available people to referee every event at tournaments, so there have been times where others have been pulled off the floor to referee (only people who can be trusted to referee) or competitors have had to assist with refereeing their own event.

2.4 Volunteers

FENB relies on its members and families of members to carry out various volunteer duties. These are typically needed to organize and run tournaments, but may include other duties for the organization. Roles have included: Board member, armourer, secretariat, registrar, floor manager, committee member (i.e. - Technical Committee), referee (unpaid on occasion), canteen operator, web designer, bookkeeper, and tournament setup and takedown. It isn't



unusual to see some members carrying out more than one role at a time or have the same people volunteer for the same role multiple times.

2.5 Competitor Analysis

New Brunswick is home to many provincial not for profit and provincial sport branches. This makes it challenging when applying for funding and promoting the sport of fencing.

The most popular sports in North America are team sports, such as soccer, basketball, football, baseball, and hockey. The last four listed have national leagues involving teams from Canada and the United States. Watching these national teams has become a regular pastime for many individuals and a multi-million dollar industry. As a result, these sports are usually the most played and receive good funding. Although soccer does not experience the same kind of popularity, it has grown significantly over the past decade as a sport to be played, particularly by youth during the summer months, and receives a good amount of funding. There are numerous other sports available to individuals looking to get in shape, socialize, and have some fun.



2.6 SWOT Analysis

I N T E R N A L	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Past successes to build upon ❖ Stronger leadership development (coaches, referees, etc) ❖ Project-based Committees ❖ Knowledgeable members who are passionate about the sport ❖ Membership fees are relatively low when compared to other sports. ❖ Most clubs provide the equipment, which results in low introductory costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Too reliant on a couple sources of income ❖ Small volunteer base ❖ Lack of people available/interested in joining the Board ❖ Lack of people available/interested in joining Committees ❖ Our only staff is a part-time Executive Director with a large list of responsibilities ❖ Lack of Technical Director ❖ Lack of available coaches (other commitments, jobs, etc) ❖ Poor communication and appear disorganized.
E X T E R N A L	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ An increased focus on New Brunswick's growing overweight problem ❖ Fencing is included in Olympic and national sporting events ❖ Strong female performance at national and international events, including the 2016 Olympics ❖ Not all people enjoy team sports ❖ Fencing athletes cover a wide age range ❖ Fencing offers many areas for people to get involved and become active for life ❖ CFF's new focus on the U23 category (university) and wheelchair fencing ❖ Multi-sport partnership or events ❖ East Coast Games and Acadian Games ❖ Cross-sport training ❖ Sport NB Awards ❖ Sport NB's initiative to support its members in getting included in PE curriculum ❖ CFF High Performance Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Team sports are generally more popular ❖ Perception of fencing as a non-sport ❖ New Brunswick has a small population that continues to decrease, which is divided over several small cities ❖ Fencing is not included in school physical education curriculums ❖ Can no longer advertise in NB schools



3.0 Our Goals

3.1 Effective Communication

Speak often, clearly, and concisely with our internal and external stakeholders. Change perceptions and be an advocate for the sport.

3.1.1 Celebrate our Successes

- ❖ Issue press releases or organize media events whenever our athletes, coaches, referees, and volunteers receive an award, medal, or recognition in fencing.
- ❖ Host a gala event at an FENB tournament.
- ❖ Recognize our volunteers, at minimum, during our events.
- ❖ Nominate our coaches, referees, athletes, and volunteers for awards, where appropriate.

3.1.2 Improve Association-Membership Communication

- ❖ Execute our Marketing Communications Plan.
- ❖ Ensure communication is better targeted to our members and they receive the messages that they want.
- ❖ Follow our policies and communicate information early and often.

3.1.3 Change the Perception of Fencing

- ❖ Execute our Marketing Communications Plan.

3.1.4 Increase Awareness

- ❖ Execute our Marketing Communications Plan.

3.2 Effective Athletes

Build successful athletes, both recreationally and competitively.

3.2.1 Evolve our Athlete Development Opportunities

- ❖ Continue to establish our Athlete Development program.



- ❖ Encourage athletes to participate in provincial, intra-provincial, national, and international events.
- ❖ Support athletes at national and international events.
- ❖ Build a wheelchair athlete program.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for recreational fencers to build their skills, such as the armband program.
- ❖ Host, at minimum, two tournaments and three athlete development training events per year.

3.2.2 Develop a Provincial Identity

- ❖ Provide opportunities for athletes to train together regardless of club.
- ❖ Clearly communicate the purpose of the Athlete Development Program to present and future participants.
- ❖ Have FENB merchandise available to our members.

3.2.3 Get Involved with Other Events

- ❖ Host a national event.
- ❖ Have a fencing event added to the East Coast Games and Acadian Games.

3.2.4 Create Partnerships with Other Sports

- ❖ Provide interesting training and competition opportunities to athletes, such as cross-sport training or multi-sport events.

3.3 Effective Leadership

Develop strong leaders to support the sport now and in the future.

3.3.1 Provide Certification Opportunities

- ❖ Have a recognized learning facilitator in the province to evaluate coaches at the Community Initiation level.
- ❖ Depending on demand, host at least one event per year for coaches to earn certification.
- ❖ Depending on demand, host at least one event per year for referees to be evaluated.



- ❖ Facilitate at least one training opportunity per year for coaches to maintain their current certification.

3.3.2 Establish a Clear Pathway

- ❖ In general, ensure that individuals are aware of and understand the pathway for coaches, referees, and armourers to advance.
- ❖ For those currently on a pathway, know their current level and understand their main goals in that area to best support their needs.

3.3.3 Provide Mentorship and Training Opportunities

- ❖ Coordinate mentors and mentees among the coaches, referees, armourers, secretariat, and any other roles that may benefit from this.
- ❖ Organize at least one event per year for coaches, referees, and armourers to grow their knowledge and skills.

3.4 Effective Membership

Increase awareness of the sport and look for opportunities to grow our membership base. Maintain what we have.

3.4.1 Get Current Members More Involved

- ❖ Provide information, at minimum, once per year on how members can get more involved with fencing.
- ❖ Provide introductory events at least once per year for those interested in coaching, refereeing, or volunteering in other aspects of the sport.
- ❖ Provide interesting training and competition opportunities to athletes, such as cross-sport training or multi-sport events.
- ❖ Offer tournament categories that garner excitement and align with CFF sanctioning opportunities.



3.4.2 Retain and Grow our Membership

- ❖ Arrange at least one FENB-led initiative per year to introduce the sport to a new group of people.
- ❖ Connect organizations, event planners, and other contacts requesting an introduction to the sport with local clubs.
- ❖ Work with clubs and the school boards to add fencing into their PE curriculum or after school programs.
- ❖ Get a new club started while maintaining the clubs that we have.
- ❖ Determine main reasons why members leave fencing and work with clubs to provide solutions.
- ❖ Host annual coaches and club leader forum to discuss challenges, share ideas, and propose solutions.

3.4.3 Change the Perception of Fencing

- ❖ Execute our Marketing Communications Plan.

3.4.4 Increase Awareness

- ❖ Execute our Marketing Communications Plan.

3.5 Effective Capacity

Be innovative in gaining and using the necessary resources to support our initiatives and programs.

3.5.1 Ensure Personnel Meets our Needs

- ❖ Ensure our staff and volunteers are effective in their roles.
- ❖ Determine that we have sufficient staff to support organization initiatives and programs.
- ❖ Identify grant opportunities to grow our staff, where needed.

3.5.2 Secure Funding to Meet our Needs

- ❖ In addition to our primary government fund and membership/event fees, identify alternate sources of funding and secure at least one other mean to obtain funds.
- ❖ Set up an Athlete Development Fund.
- ❖ Identify grant opportunities to grow our staff, where needed.
- ❖ Support our clubs, coaches, referees, and athletes in their grant applications.



3.5.3 Recruit and Train Volunteers

- ❖ Provide information, at minimum, once per year on how members can get more involved with fencing.
- ❖ Provide introductory events at least once per year for those interested in coaching, refereeing, or volunteering in other aspects of the sport.
- ❖ Connect volunteers new to a role with mentors.

3.5.4 Foster a Safe and Quality Environment

- ❖ Conduct inventory at least once per year of all FENB assets.
- ❖ Establish a maintenance process and replacement schedule for FENB equipment.
- ❖ Ensure that FENB-approved events are held to a high standard and are run in a safe manner.