



## **Fencing-Esgrime NB 2017 Annual General Meeting July 2017- June 2018 Board Report**

This past season was primarily directed towards the growth of the sport, which is in keeping with the mandate of our strategic plan. The short-term membership numbers reflect this fact: we bounced back from practically an all-time low in 2016-2017 to a much healthier number of members this year and we expect that trend to continue. The primary development focus for this season was definitely on the athletes, with the introduction of a new model for the Provincial Team and the development of a Concussion Policy, but there was also focus on growing our coaching capacity as well, with two Learning Facilitators getting training .

### **Participation**

#### **Membership**

##### **Individual Membership 2016-2017**

Total: **145**  
Provincial: **88**  
First time: **45**  
Associate: **12**

##### **Individual Membership- 2017-2018**

Total: **182**                   **(+ 26%)**  
Provincial: **85**                   **(- 3%)**  
First time: **85**                   **(+ 89%)**  
Associate: **12**                   **(+ 0%)**

Our largest membership gains, both in terms of absolute numbers and relative to the previous years, came from “First Time” memberships. This growth came from the new Capital Y Fencing Club, as well as from recruitment efforts from Damocles, Esgrime KV, and the Moncton Fencing Clubs in particular. Our member retention is holding steady, but it will be particularly important to monitor retention in the following years to see what kind of long term growth we are seeing with all of these new members.

#### **Tournaments**

The Alfred Knappe Team Tournament was held in February at the Richard J. Currie Centre and was hosted by the UNB and Damocles clubs. We ran a mixture of formats, with single-weapon pairs for open and junior events, 3-weapon teams for under 15, and single-weapon, 3-fencer teams for under 13. The event saw 57 individual registrants across a variety of teams, and was

a great success in getting fencers from different clubs to interact with each other and instill a sense of team spirit.

With the tournament calendar being full the board decided that the NB Open would not run in the 2017-2018 season. This season's calendar is likewise full (there is a NB tournament in every month from Oct-Apr except for Dec.).

The NB Provincials were hosted in Saint John by the Fundy Fencing Club and were a great success. There were over 70 individual participants with fencers coming from all over NB, as well as Quebec, PEI., and Nova Scotia.

## Excellence

### **Athlete Development**

FENB focused heavily on athlete development in this season. Through the guidance of the Athlete Development Committee, which was variously composed of Barbara Daniel, Mathieu Paquet, Jim Stevens, David Themens, and Wendy Yano, this was a very successful and busy season for our fencers in terms of training and competition. FENB hosted a variety of athlete training camps held throughout the season.:

- Provincial team training camp on Sept. 30 / Oct. 1 (Saint John)
- Foil / epee training camp on Oct. 22 (Fredericton)
- Yellow / orange armband training camp/mini-tournament on Dec. 2 (Fredericton)
- High performance epee training camp on Dec. 28 (Fredericton)
- Provincial Team training camp on Jan 5-7 (Fredericton)
- March Break training camp on March 10 (Saint John)

Our fencers also competed extensively outside of the province. NB was represented at, among others: a North American Cup (1 fencer); Canada Cup East in Markham (4 fencers); Canada Cup in Quebec City (8 fencers); Canadian National Championships (7 fencers); Quebec Youth Tournament in Longueuil (4 fencers); Quebec Youth Provincials (8 fencers); Boston ROC (5 fencers).

### **Provincial Team Program**

This year marked the beginning of our new Provincial Team Program, which was oriented towards development rather than results. Its main goal was to encourage our fencers to compete in events outside of the province in order to be exposed to a variety of challenges and opponents. While not all of the above listed tournaments were designated as Provincial Team "Projects," and not all of the fencers competing in them were on the Provincial Team, the level of participation in competitions outside of NB is impressive and is a very encouraging sign.

The members of the 2017-2018 Provincial Team were:

Thomas Allen	Pierre Arseneau	Ailidh Barry
Nicole Beuk	Buster Biggs	Raphael Bradley
Leo Cui	Declan Hartery	Calum MacDonald
Rowan McInnis	Amelia Guitard	Sophie Poitras
Bentley Sheils	Joy Shin	Calum Skidmore
Yiming Xu	Wendy Yano	

### **Athlete Highlights**

- Sophie Poitras: Silver - U15 Epee (Quebec Circuit Longueuil)
- Joy Shin: 7th - U15 Women's Foil (Quebec Circuit Longueuil)
- Raphael Bradley: Bronze - U23 Men's Sabre (Canada Cup Quebec City)
- Calum Skidmore, Calum MacDonald & Nigel Sood - Bronze, Junior Men's Team Epee (Canada Cup Quebec City)
- Sophie Poitras: Gold - U15 Women's Epee (Quebec Youth Provincials)
- Sophie Poitras: Bronze - U17 Women's Epee (Quebec Youth Provincials)
- Kaitlin Gorman: Silver - U15 Women's Foil (Quebec Youth Provincials)
- Kaitlin Gorman: Bronze - U17 Women's Foil (Quebec Youth Provincials)
- Rowan McInnis: Silver - U13 Men's Foil (Quebec Youth Provincials)
- Calum Skidmore: 7th - Junior Men's Epee (Nationals)
- Raphael Bradley: Bronze - U23 Men's Sabre (Nationals)
- Wendy Yano: Gold - Veteran Women's Sabre (Nationals)
- Wendy Yano: Bronze - Veteran's Women's Sabre (Can/Ams)

FENB awarded its trophies to the top athletes in the under 17 categories at the 2018 New Brunswick Provincials to the following fencers:

- Sean Brilliant Trophy (Sabre) - Arno Blancheton
- Barb Daniel Trophy (Foil) - Leo Cui
- Rock Gosselin Trophy - Sophie Poitras

### **Armbands**

Yellow (Foil): Logan Nugent; Robert Cadmore; Alexis Lague; William Turcotte; Sebastian McInnis; Greg Lapoint; Xavier Adey

Orange (Foil): Nick Wilkins; Ben White; Bentley Sheils; Caden Robertson

Green (Foil): Thomas Allen; Connor Campbell; Leo Cui; Jackson Dennis; Yiming Xu

Green (Epee): Sophie Poitras

Blue (Foil): Pierre Arseneau; Buster Biggs

## **Coach and Referee Development**

The biggest part of the past season's coach development was aimed at developing our coach creation capabilities. To this end we sent Barbara Daniel and Jim Stevens to a Learning Facilitator Clinic held in St. Catharines after the Nationals in May in order to have them be trained to deliver the new Instructor-Beginner program. This training was facilitated by a grant from GoNB. The next step will be to have both Daniel and Stevens co-facilitate an Instructor-Beginner course once the materials from the CFF are ready.

Jim Stevens was also invited to attend a five-day High Performance Sabre Coaching Development Course led by fencing master Rene Geuna. The program was hosted by the Federation d'Esclime de Quebec and Stevens' participation was supported by the Alfred Knappe Trust Fund Grant for Coach and Referee Development. In January Jim Stevens also led a Strip-side Coaching Clinic and acted as a coaching mentor for David Collins at the Quebec City Canada Cup.

In May and June, Barbara Daniel also ran a Community-Initiation Coaching Clinic in Hartland, which resulted in the training of four coaches at that level.

For referees Jim Stevens offered an Introduction to Refereeing Clinic to parents and fencers in December. David Collins offered referee mentorship to Jones Cardoso and Aiden Reynolds at the Alfred Knappe Team Tournament. Our need for additional referees is significant, so more referee development in the coming season is a definite priority.

### **Coach Development Representative**

This season the FENB Board of Directors chose Barb Daniel to serve in the newly created position of Coach Development Representative. Serving as a liaison between FENB and the CFF, Daniel has been working with Ildemaro Sanchez, the Coach Development Coordinator to develop our coaching capacity and work out pathways for the certification of new coaches.

## **Capacity**

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising was put on the backburner this season in order to focus on launching the new Provincial Team Program, but it continues to be important for FENB to pursue alternate revenue streams in order to be able to better pursue its priorities. FENB is looking to form a Sponsorship Committee in order to develop the appropriate tools to be able to do this and would welcome the assistance of any individuals who have the interest and ability in this area.

FENB does have one notable sponsor to thank from this past season. The River Valley Therapeutic Treatment Clinic in Fredericton for sponsored the provincial team tracksuits, covering the cost of the pants.

## **Equipment**

FENB's equipment has been stored at and maintained by the Damocles Fencing Club, but the Board has decided to change this and put it in the care of the Executive Director instead. The Executive Director will serve as equipment manager.

The new cloth piste that FENB purchased at the end of the previous season was put to good use this year, but because of its expense FENB made few equipment purchases this year, opting only for some necessary piste tape, floor cords, and power supplies to maintain our current equipment. New reels and scoring equipment remain an important priority for replacement however.

## **Board, Staff, and Volunteer Recruitment**

At last year's AGM Wendy Yano joined the FENB Board as President, and Jane Allen, Thierry Arseneau, David Themens, and Debi Skidmore formed the rest of the Board of Directors. Due to changing responsibilities, David Themens and Debi Skidmore were unable to finish their terms on the Board. David Campbell was selected to fill one of these vacancies. There will be two vacancies to be filled at the AGM because Jane Allen will not be reoffering after her term has finished. FENB would like to thank Jane Allen, David Themens, and Debi Skidmore for the time and effort that they have put into the FENB Board this past season as well as previous years.

FENB would also like to thank the people who served on the Athlete Development Committee this past year: Barbara Daniel, Mathieu Paquet, David Themens, Jim Stevens, and Wendy Yano for the work they have done in reigniting the Provincial Team Program.

FENB is also looking for more people to serve on several different committees

- The Referee Committee to help develop pathways and programming for referees in NB. David Campbell and Wendy Yano are currently part of the committee.
- A Sponsorship Committee to work on sponsorship strategies for FENB. Thierry Arseneau is currently involved in this.

David Collins served his first year as Executive Director and his contract will be renewed for an additional year.

As always, we are grateful for the many people, coaches, parents, community members, and many more, who give their time and expertise to support FENB's events and activities. We could not operate without these individuals, much less thrive, without all of this generous support.

## Interaction

The annual Coach/Club Leader forum was held in June once again. Six out of seven clubs had member present, with the seventh able to briefly participate by conference call. The successes and challenges of the season, as well as priorities for the next, were discussed and much of the calendar of events for the next season was determined

The Executive Director conducted a survey of the Provincial Team at the end of the season in order to gauge its success and to solicit feedback about the strengths and limitations of the program. The survey had an approximately 50% response rate and its results were shared with the Athlete Development Committee in order to adjust the Provincial Team program accordingly.

## Awareness

The FENB Facebook page was used to promote the sport and its events. Especially following the feedback from the latest Coach / Club Leader forum there has been an attempt to post more frequency to keep engagement and interest high.

Between the work of Barbara Daniel and the Executive Director, press releases were distributed for most NB and out-of-province tournaments. We received coverage in the Acadien Nouvelle and multiple times in the Daily Gleaner.

Of particular note this year was the coverage provided by Radio-Canada, who interviewed and ran television segments on Pierre Arseneau, Buster Biggs, Raphael Bradley, and Sophie Poitras. Their coverage, well-timed to coincide with the successes of these athletes at various important tournaments, served as exceptional exposure for the support.