



## **Fencing-Escrime NB 2019 Annual General Meeting July 2018- June 2019 Board Report**

The past season was marked by some dramatic changes in the Canadian Fencing Federation that have affected FENB: with the election of Jackson Wang as president of the CFF at the start of this past season, the CFF's priorities shifted towards membership growth. In response to that we began developing a six-week school program to help increase the membership as well as exposure for the sport.

Alongside the development of this program, this past season featured considerable focus on coach development: FENB hosted a coach skills clinic in September 2019, an epee / school program clinic in December 2019, and the two modules of the Instructor-Beginner course, as well as Coach Evaluator training and Learning Facilitator co-delivery in order to build our coach development capacity.

Lastly, this season saw the addition of a new competition to the FENB tournament schedule: the East Coast Games. Featuring a mix of individual and team events under the umbrella of a larger multi-sport event, the ECG was a distinctive and successful addition that brought fencers from Maine and Nova Scotia, and promises to be a highlight at the end of the season.

### **Participation**

#### **Membership**

<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
Total: <b>145</b>	Total: <b>182</b>	Total: <b>194</b>
Provincial: <b>88</b>	Provincial: <b>85</b>	Provincial: <b>89</b>
First time: <b>45</b>	First time: <b>85</b>	First time: <b>87</b>
Associate: <b>12</b>	Associate: <b>12</b>	Associate: <b>12</b>
		School: <b>6</b>

Our membership continues to grow, and as clubs continue to grow and the school programs enter a new phase, we expect to see those numbers jump further. Indeed, the school program

numbers do not reflect the total number of participants in the program as several registered directly as “First-Time” fencers, and the registration of 6 more is pending the receipt of funds from the participating school.

## **Tournaments**

The Alfred Knappe Team Tournament was held in February at the Richard J. Currie Centre and was hosted by the UNB club. We ran 3-weapon teams for open and under 15, and single-weapon, 3-fencer foil teams for under 13. The event saw 51 individual registrants across a variety of teams, although the final schedule and numbers varied from that because the events from the Sunday were moved onto the Saturday in order to avoid an impending snowstorm. Despite the weather, overall the tournament 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 2018-2019 season. This season’s calendar is likewise full (there is a NB tournament in every month from October-April except for December).

The NB Provincials were hosted in Bathurst by the Chaleur Fencing Club and were a great success. There were over 60 individual participants with fencers coming from all over NB and Nova Scotia. It was a particularly good opportunity for fencers who do not regularly see each other to get to connect with and compete against each other.

The final event was a new one, the East Coast Games. Featuring unusual things like participant T-shirts, corporate sponsorships, and a new (for NB) mix of individual and team formats. This tournament drew quite a few fencers from Maine as well as NS, and like the Alfred Knappe, provided an excellent opportunity for fencers to demonstrate their team spirit. There were some challenges to the format in terms of balancing the timing of individual and team events, as well as managing the numbers in some of the team events, but overall, the Board is satisfied that participating in such a multi-sport, regional sporting event provides a unique opportunity for our athletes and to promote fencing to the broader sport community.

## **Excellence**

### **Athlete Development**

FENB continued to emphasize athlete development with its Provincial Team in this season. Through the guidance of the Athlete Development Committee, which was variously composed of Marc-Andre LeBlanc, Mathieu Paquet, Jim Stevens, 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 throughout the season.:

- Provincial team training camp on Sept 8-9 (Fredericton)
- Provincial team training camp on Dec. 2 (Fredericton)

- Provincial team training camp on Jan 26 (Fredericton)
- Provincial Team training camp on Apr. 13-14 (Fredericton)

Our fencers also competed extensively outside of the province, with 21 fencers from NB attending the Nationals. NB was represented at a variety of tournaments elsewhere in Canada, in the United States, and even in Australia. Particular highlights were:

- 2018 Commonwealth Games - Wendy Yano: Gold Medal, Veteran Sabre
- 2019 Nationals
  - Jim Stevens: Gold Medal, Veteran Sabre
  - Wendy Yano: Silver Medal, Veteran Sabre
  - Thomas Allen, David Collins, Mathieu Paquet: Bronze Medal, Team Epee

### **Athlete Highlights**

FENB awarded its trophies to the top athletes in the under 17 categories at the 2019 New Brunswick Provincials to the following fencers, who also had their 2019-2020 FENB Membership generously sponsored by River Valley Health Solutions:

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

### **Coach Development**

To develop new coaches and help to build our club capacity FENB ran several events, many of which were generously supported by funding from the province through Go NB. We began the season with a Green Armband Technical Training Session in September, and offered the NCCP courses: Instructor-Beginner I workshop in March and Instructor Beginner II workshop in June. Led by Jim Stevens and Barbara Daniel, in conjunction with David Howes, these courses provided training to 11 individual coaches, including 3 from Nova Scotia.

The co-delivery of these Instructor-Beginner workshops with Stevens and Daniel in conjunction with Howes was also an important step in the process of having Stevens and Daniel certified as Learning Facilitators. This is a part of how FENB's continued development of its coach development capabilities, which, as the example of training coaches from NS demonstrates, will allow our organization to grow as well as to serve as a resource for the other maritime provinces. To this end we also sponsored Barbara Daniel and Jim Stevens' travel to a Coach Evaluator Clinic held in Quebec City just before the Nationals in May.

The CFF is in the process of developing new guidelines in conjunction with other sports for a SafeSport initiative, including mandatory background checks, Respect in Sport modules, and implementing the Rule of Two in coach-athlete interactions. FENB is committed to adhering to these guidelines.

## **Officials Development**

For referee development, our main accomplishment this year was engaging Matt Tucker and Bern Samko to attend the East Coast Games in order to provide mentorship for our current referees. Despite having identified several candidates for referee training, our engagement with new referees was minimal because we still do not have a pathway and process for training new referees. We require volunteer members to form a Referee Committee which would begin to work out a pathway.

## **Capacity**

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising was put on the backburner this season in order to focus on developing the school 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. River Valley Health Solutions Clinic in Fredericton for sponsoring the cadet provincial champions for this season.

### **Equipment**

Between January 2019 and July 2019 FENB acquired 75 full sets of fencing equipment (gloves, masks, jackets, chest protectors, plastrons, epees, epee body cords) in order to use for its school programs. This equipment was generously provided by Jackson Wang through the CFF.

No equipment was purchased this year, although new reels and scoring equipment, as well as timing chips remain an important priority for replacement.

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

At last year's AGM Andre Perillier-Schneider and Marc-André LeBlanc joined the FENB Board of Directors. During the course of the season, due to various responsibilities, David Campbell and Andre Perillier-Schneider were unable to finish their terms on the board. The board nominated Mathieu Paquet to take the place of Campbell, and Daniel Richard to take the place of Perillier-Schneider.

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

FENB would also like to thank Barbara Daniel for her work as the Coach Development Representative; she played an important role in coordinating the coach training that happened this year, as well as actually delivering that training.

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.
- A Sponsorship Committee to work on sponsorship strategies for FENB.
- Jeux d'Acadie Committee to help organize the event - we are the demonstration sport for the 2020 Jeux d'Acadie in Saint John.

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 forum and Club forum were separated this year in order to allow for more focus on the issues specific to each. The Coach Forum was held in July. Five out of seven clubs had a member present, with the other two at least able to provide some form of written report. The forum members discussed the SafeSport / Responsible Coaching Initiatives such as the CFF's Respect-in-sport training and the Rule of Two. The past season's coaching workshops as well as future coach training opportunities, as well as the Provincial Team program, were also discussed.

The Club Forum was held at the end of July via electronic forum. Six out of seven clubs attended and 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.

## Awareness

The FENB Facebook page was used to promote the sport and its events. Especially following the feedback from the previous Coach / Club Leader forum there has been an attempt to post more frequently 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 multiple times in the *Daily Gleaner*.

The school program is to be another way of increasing the profile of fencing. The more people who are exposed to the sport the more we can benefit from both direct contact as well as word-of-mouth. FENB would therefore like to encourage any one with contacts within any of the school systems to talk to any interested parties to see if there is the potential for running a school program.