

## Quarterly Report from NSWFA Head Coach, Antonio Signorello:

Following is the first quarterly progress report from the NSWFA training and development project.

At the moment we are running a full weapon squad, (6 weapons – 3 men's squads and 3 women's squads) which may already be considered a success as few countries do this, and we are only a small state. Foil consists of 24 fencers, Sabre 12, and Epee 10. The level is of course different between the three weapons, but we are working on this in many ways.

Currently there are two assistant coaches giving lessons based on my instruction (they are both having coaching lessons from me). I soon hope to have a third assistant coach for Epee.

We are also working at a base level. I am personally training some younger Sabreurs and will be teaching Sabre at the schools where I am working. I am also coaching young Foilists, as are my own students based upon my instruction, and would be happy to find coaches willing to focus on young Epeeists, having already found one.

I am selecting some U15 and U13 Foilists to involve in the squad. By bouting against the best in our state, my assistants and I believe they will improve quicker and are still young enough to get enormous benefit from the updated fencing taught and fenced at the squads. Obviously if we want to create better U20s fencers for the future, we need to begin building them now. Slowly we can hope to do the same with Sabre and Epee. Of course it is a part of my job to manage the practical involvement of younger fencers in the squad in such a way as to take into account their age and experience levels.

Squad training is usually based on team work which also leads to individual fencing development. We are giving one on one lessons trying to both respect every fencer's coaching technique, while focusing on improving tactics and timing.

We will also start an U17 Sabre squad (Marrickville on Friday) and Foil (Swords club on Saturday afternoon) in June. An U17 Epee squad will commence in July. Older fencers are also welcome, though the focus will remain on the cadets (we will particularly be targeting kids U15).

As it is difficult to give individual instruction across three weapons on the one night a week, I am now holding an additional senior Sabre session on Friday at Marrickville where I give lessons to squad members in my capacity as Head Coach. As a result, I am able to give more attention to Foil and Epee on Tuesday nights.

It also looks as though a few Sabreurs from other states, attracted by the coaching and structure of our NSWFA program, may soon come to join NSWFA.

For July we hope to organise the first “Super 4” camp for Cadets (it will be open to older fencers but the focus again is on Cadets). The objective of this camp is to get U17 fencers from both schools and clubs, more interested in the sport and to offer them more insight into competition procedure and the professional side of the sport. Free entry to this camp will be offered to the top ranked school children who are not already members of a club. Fencers will participate in a competition held at each of the four camps throughout the year with the goal of achieving the top four of the overall ranking. These top four will then be invited to the first four months of the NSWFA senior squad for the next season.

As you can see, Seniors, U20 (another project is in the works), U17, U15 across 6 weapons are being involved in our overall project to improve and develop NSW fencing to reach an international level.

There are also upcoming referee and coaching clinics which will be announced shortly. These clinics will be short and start with just a few key things, from which following clinics will progress. We need to change a few rusty things and give clean, updated methods of teaching to young coaches.

Roles I have assigned (these people have showed a significant amount of interest in learning coaching technique and are receiving coaching lessons in return for their services):

### **Assistant Coaches**

#### *Senior & Junior*

Foil Richard Emmerick; Epee Joe Salemi; Sabre David Hoffman

#### *Under 17*

Foil Arash Kapour; Epee Joe Salemi; Sabre Michael Howard

#### *AFF Competitions*

Juniors Richard Emmerick; U15/Cadets Arash Kapour; Open Richard Emmerick

**Fitness** Mike Alchin

**Schools Liaison** Hugh Cotman

#### **Squad Captains**

Xavier Hicks, Hilary Byrne, Sean Anderson, Frank Bartolillo, Alex Andre.

#### **Antonio Signorello**

Head Coach, NSW Fencing