

## 1st NSWFA Head Coach's Report - 2010

First of all I'd like to welcome the new NSWFA executive and wish them good luck for the coming year. I'd also like to thank the members of the outgoing executive for doing a great job. We must never forget how important it is to our association to have such dedicated volunteers. Coming from such a different culture, it still surprises me that we have such people willing to do volunteer work.

A year has passed since we began this journey together and many things have happened. I choose to focus on all the positives:

- We have 11 newly accredited level 1 coaches in NSW, which means the possibility for the establishment of new clubs, the ability to satisfy the demands for coaches in more NSW schools, more fencers and with time an improved level of fencing. Some of these new coaches are based in regional areas with great potential for the growth of our sport. Such growth (the establishment of regional clubs and competitions) has the potential to challenge and therefore push towards a technical improvement of all NSW athletes.
- The epee squad has finally found its balance. As new technical director, Jeff Gray is doing a remarkable job of creating a base of young athletes with the potential of long fencing careers ahead of them. A number of new U15, U13, epee competitions appear on the NSWFA calendar encouraging young fencers to try the non-priority weapon which many young beginners may find easier to understand and enjoy. In addition some junior foilists have decided (as was suggested) to choose to focus on epee, giving NSW the opportunity to look towards the future of epee with renovating trust.
- The 'Public School's guidelines' for fencing have been revised for the first time to incorporate updated safety requirements and the inclusion of epee and sabre and are in the process of approval. We hope to add school competitions for these weapons to the 2011 timetable.
- Sabre has become stronger over the course of the year with the two top ranked Australian male sabreurs moving to NSW to train with us and therefore greatly adding to the development potential of our own athletes. A number of new cadet sabreurs have appeared in the squad.
- The foil squad is unfortunately missing some of the higher ranked athletes but we trust and respect the weekly work they do in their clubs with their own coaches. Consequently a number of younger foilists have had the opportunity to join the squad and to fence and improve under the guidance of NSWFA (volunteer) coaching staff. R. Emmerick with the help of A. Santangelo and O. Gentile supports these younger fencers at squads. Such support with the help and cooperation of their respective club coaches will certainly produce results. As a result of this current makeup of foil squads the junior squad has been incorporated into the Tuesday night squad. A selected team will be invited to attend a 'technical' training session which will be held monthly at Masters fencing club under the supervision of A. Szandursky, already doing such a great job with his own club fencers.
- Three refereeing clinics will be run this year by S. Darragh, focusing on the importance of priority (often so mistreated at competitions).
- The main goal of our second season together will be to aid in the establishment of regional centres (at least one per weapon). Such 'out of the city' squads will allow fencers who live outside of Sydney to assemble and train under the guidance of experienced coaches. Calls for nominations of clubs and coaches will be out soon.

Antonio Signorello – March 2010

