

GWENT SWORD CLUB

news

April 2008

World Junior Championships

Rhys Melia finished 82nd in the individual foil in the World Junior Championships in Italy, and helped Great Britain to 16th place in the team event. Ranked 128th in the junior world list and in his first season out of cadets, Rhys had a really tough pool, containing three fencers who made the last eight, including the eventual winner.

European Under-23 Championships

Congratulations to Jamie Melia for his selection for the Great Britain team at epee for the new European Under-23 championships in Italy next month.

Five Nations

Olivia Orchard and Abi Difford were half of the Welsh women's foil team in the senior Five Nations Championship in Glasgow, where they defeated Northern Ireland (45-33) and the Republic of Ireland (45-17), losing to England (45-30) and Scotland (45-37).

School Games

Congratulations to Abi Difford and George Orchard for their selection for this summer's School Games in Bristol and Bath. A few places still remain unfilled in the team and will be the subject of late decisions by the selectors.

Public School Championships

George Orchard won the junior boys' Master at Arms title at the Public Schools Championships, representing Monmouth School. He was second in the foil, sixth in the epee and 43rd in the sabre.

La Rochelle

A number of Gwent Sword Club fencers travelled to La Rochelle in France along with Team Melia fencers and a few others and had a tough but enjoyable few days at their impressive new salle. It is hoped to be able to arrange a reciprocal visit later this year, possibly forging stronger links between ourselves and Club Escrime a La Rochelle.

Beginners' classes

For the first time, we have two beginners' courses running - in Newport on Mondays and now in Chepstow on Fridays. Welcome to all newcomers to the club - please feel free to stay for the remainder of the club session after your lessons, practise what you have learned, get more tips and experience from established club members and to get involved in the club generally.

Cadet and Junior fencing

The following is a message from Welsh youth team manager Neale Thomas to any young fencer with ambitions of representing Wales:

“We are very short of registered fencers to select from. In many cases, fencers don’t become a member of British Fencing as they do not intend to enter competitions, but a few good competition results could see you in a selection place!

“Why not have a go at a few competitions?”

“To be considered for Welsh team selection, you must be eligible to compete as Welsh (see the website for details) and be a Musketeer / Junior or Full member of British Fencing (Social membership is not sufficient). You must keep your British Fencing membership up to date (otherwise you will not appear on the database and you cannot be selected for Wales).

“For further information go to the Welsh Fencing website. If you would like to register for consideration for Welsh selection, or would like regular e-mail updates about ranking events etc and other info, please get in touch with Neale Thomas - ntom@dsl.pipex.com ”

Rankings

Gwent Sword Club fencers’ senior GB rankings for April are as follows:

Men’s foil: 6, Rhys Melia; 129, James Wood-Fisher; 132, Andrew McLeod; 164, George Orchard; 187, Ceri Richards; 195, Peter Russell; 348, Adam Hall.

Women’s foil: 29, Olivia Orchard; 47, Abi Difford; 137, Lynne Melia; 214, Roseanne Thomas.

Men’s epee: 90, Jamie Melia; 105, Rhys Melia.

Women’s epee: 74, Olivia Orchard.

Forthcoming competitions

May 4-5: Plymouth cadet/Junior Open - Plymouth - May be worth a trip for younger fencers not yet chasing senior ranking points.

May 10: Wrexham Leon Paul Junior Series - Wrexham - LPJS is a good introduction to competition for younger fencers, and success here may be noticed by Welsh selectors.

May 10-11: Isle of Wight Open - Newport IoW - Small open, foil and epee. Ferry discounts for competitors.

May 11: Welsh Closed Team Epee - Cardiff - We will be entering as many teams as the interest warrants. Anyone wishing to take part, please let a club official know.

May 17-18: Sheffield Open - Sheffield - Another small open - probably only worth the trip if you’re keen.

May 18: Norfolk Cup Welsh (closed) Intermediate Sabre - Cardiff - a good competition for those new to sabre.

June 21-22: Oxfam Open - Cardiff - Six-weapon open competition new to the fencing calendar, a bonus for competitive fencers due to the short distance to travel, PLUS you can enter for free if you get sufficient sponsorship.

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