

GWENT SWORD CLUB

news

February 2008

Welsh Youth selection

Congratulations to Roseanne Thomas, George Orchard, Rhys Melia and Abi Difford for being selected for this season's Junior Quad competition in Stoke later this month. This is a first Wales call-up for Rose and we wish all three of them well against England, Scotland and the GB Barbarians.

Welsh senior selection

Further congratulations to Abi Difford, Olivia Orchard and Rhys Melia for their selection for the senior Wales team for this season's Five Nations competition in Glasgow in March, against England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Earlier next month, Olivia will also represent the Wales region in the Winton Cup in Stoke.

Welsh champion

Yet more congratulations, this time to James Wood-Fisher, who is the new Welsh under-18 boys' foil champion, winning the title in Cardiff earlier this month. Jamal Nawaz-Khan won silver in the under-12 boys' competition.

Team foil success

Gwent Sword Club's women's team of Catherine Fisher, Helen Morgan and Sian Pryse won silver medals in the Welsh Team Foil competition in Cardiff. The Gwent men's A team of James Wood-Fisher, Richard Thomas, Peter Russell and sub Huw Richards won bronze, with the men's B team of Ron Bowden, Carl Difford and Huw Richards in fifth place.

Star Sword Club v Gwent Sword Club

Gwent Sword Club defeated Star Sword club by the narrowest of margins at the Star Leisure Centre in Splott, with Gareth Price, Ceri Richards and Andrew McLeod winning 43-42. In the B match, Catherine Fisher, Ron Boden and Shane Powell were defeated 45-32..

Opens

Several GSC members have been fighting in opens, with Ceri Richards making the final eight in Plymouth and Rhys Melia winning bronze in Slough.

Plymouth Open: Women's foil: 9, Abi Difford. Men's foil: 8, Ceri Richards; 11, George Orchard; 24, Peter Russell; 27, Adam Hall; 30, James Wood-Fisher; 31, Andrew McLeod.

Slough Open: Women's foil: 31, Abi Difford. Men's foil: 3, Rhys Melia; 39, Andrew McLeod; 80, James Wood-Fisher.

Merseyside Open results were not posted at the time of writing.

Overseas competitions

In a very busy month for competitions, Rhys Melia and Abi Difford have been in action abroad, Rhys with the GB junior men's foil team in Modling, Austria, and Abi with the GB cadet women's foil team in Jena, Germany.

Rankings

Gwent fencers are featuring more prominently in the senior national rankings as a result of open competition successes. The latest rankings (not including Merseyside) are:

Women's foil: 32, Olivia Orchard; 48, Abi Difford; 206, Roseanne Thomas.

Men's foil: 7, Rhys Melia; 129; James Wood-Fisher; 162, Andrew McLeod; 182, Ceri Richards; 184, George Orchard; 185, Peter Russell; 344, Adam Hall.

Women's epee: 66, Olivia Orchard.

Men's epee: 90, Jamie Melia; 166, George Orchard.

Bursary

Olivia Orchard has been awarded a sporting bursary by her university, Bangor. The Maes Glas Bursary allows her to have free use of sporting facilities and coaching advice at Bangor's Maes Glas Sports Centre.

Beginners

The students on our current beginners' course at Caerleon are progressing well and are due to graduate to the club's intermediate section at the end of this month, when they will be welcome to join in all club sessions, at Newport, Caerleon and Chepstow.

A new beginners' course will start at the Beaufort Centre, Newport, on Monday, March 3 (7.30pm).

We have limited to course to ten places and those at the top of the waiting list have been contacted and have until February 18 to confirm their places before we offer any remaining places.

Visitors

We have regularly had visits from fencers from the Star and Cardiff University clubs recently. Feel free on club nights to ask these visitors to fence you - both you and they will benefit. Should you wish to pay a reciprocal visit to another club, please remember you need full membership to fence outside GSC.

Coming up...

Forthcoming competitions include:

February 23: **Junior Quad** (U16 and U18 home internationals - hosted by England this year).

February 24: **Turner Cup Intermediate Epee**, Cardiff (top epeeists excluded).

March 1: **Nottingham Open** (lower-quality open, suitable for keen intermediate competitive fencers).

March 2: **Welsh Foil**, Cardiff (suitable for all competitive fencers aged over 13, but a must for anyone seeking international honours at foil).

March 15: **Winton Cup**, Stoke (regional competition, by selection).

March 16: **O'Sullivan Cup one-hit epee**, Pentwyn Leisure Centre, Cardiff (try a different format - it's just like modern pentathlon, but without the swimming, running, showjumping and shooting!)

March 15/16: **Invicta** (open competition in Kent. It's a long way to go...)

March 15/16: **Leon Paul Junior Series Eton Foil** (U11 & U15 Saturday; U9 & U13 Sunday - a good introduction to competition for young fencers)

March 22/23: **Birmingham International Open** (high quality open, carrying premium ranking points for serious competitive fencers).

March 29: **Five Nations, Glasgow** (home internationals, by selection).

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