

GWENT SWORD CLUB

NEWSLETTER: May 2006

Contact Details :

Colin Hyndman : 01633 213938 (Head Coach) **Catherine Fisher** : 01633 263358 (Club Treasurer & Assistant Coach)

Peter Russell : 01633 430183 (Club Secretary & Coach) **Gareth Price** : 01633 790037 (Assistant Coach)

E-mails To:

secretary@gwentswordclub.co.uk

Website : WWW.GWENTSWORDCLUB.CO.UK



Forthcoming Events

6/7th May - Cardiff Coaching Conference
10th May - UWN Session Cancelled
13/14th May - Isle of Wight Open
14th May - Welsh Team Epée
21st May - Norfolk Cup (Intermediate Sabre)
27th May - York Open
10/11th June - Wrexham Open

Welsh Student Championships 2006

On the 25th of April 2006 Gwent Sword Club members Andrew McLeod and Peter Russell (representing Cardiff University), and Dory English (representing University of Wales Newport) competed in the Welsh Student Championship, held at Talybont Sports centre in Cardiff.

Saturday saw the Men's foil competition, with entries from Aberystwyth, Bangor, Swansea, Newport, NEWI and Cardiff. Dory did extremely well considering this was only his second competition but was knocked out in his L16 fight. Andrew and Peter also performed well both winning their way through to the last 4. Unfortunately, both narrowly missed places in the final and were doubly unlucky to have to fight for the 3rd place position. Peter eventually pulled ahead in a close fight, defeating Andrew 15-12. As a result however Andrew and Peter are being considered for selection to represent Wales in the upcoming 'Student 5 Nations'.

Both Andrew and Dory competed the next day in the Sabre and Epée respectively (Peter unfortunately was suffering the consequences of Saturday's celebrations). Both performed well, Andrew achieving a position in the top 8 at Sabre.

The final results were a tie between Cardiff and Aberystwyth, but Cardiff just edged ahead on gold medals to take home the shield. The event was a great success and an excellent opportunity for students from all over Wales to compete in a friendly tournament.



Home Internationals

Three Gwent Sword Club members made their debut for the senior Wales team at the Five Nations competition, this year held in Cardiff.

Rhys Melia fenced at foil, his team defeated Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, lost narrowly to England and more comprehensively to Scotland.

Jamie Melia was in the men's epee quartet who also finished third at their weapon, defeating Scotland and Eire, losing to England and being one point adrift as time ran out against Northern Ireland.

Lynne Melia was in the foil quartet and was reserve for the epee team. She wasn't called on to fence foil, but contributed to the epee effort, where again Wales finished third, with wins over Northern Ireland and the Republic, but defeats at the hands of England and Scotland.

Overall, Wales finished third overall, behind England and Scotland. At the post-tournament dinner at Cardiff's Angel Hotel, the seven new caps were initiated into the Welsh team by the traditional eating of raw leeks. Rhys proved the perfect gentleman, as always by devouring half of sabreur Katherine Kempe's leek as she struggled. Lynne, as the senior stateswoman among the new caps, completed the initiation wearing a pair of ceremonial 'granny' knickers.



Success at the Public Schools Championships

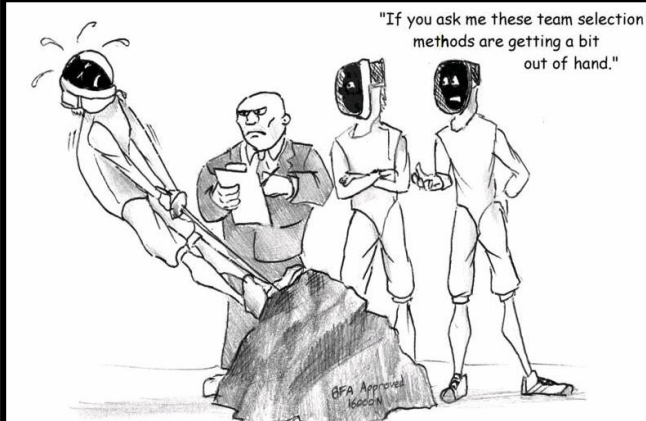
GWENT Sword Club fencers were the cream of the crop at the Public Schools Fencing Championships at Crystal Palace. George Orchart won the Boys' Mount-Haes Epee title, while his sister, Olivia, was second in the Girls' Senior Foil.

George was ranked 13th of the 107 epeeists going into the knock-out stages but had paced himself well throughout the day and saved his best until last, defeating top-ranked Westminster boy Alexander Robinson 12-7 in his semi-final and Glen Ostacchini, of Bishop Challoner School, in the final. The following day, he finished fifth of 116 boys in the Mount-Haes Foil, with Alexander Robinson getting his revenge in the quarter-finals.

Olivia's only defeat in her competition was in the final, where she lost to Bristol Grammar's Celia Shiles, who earlier this year won a medal at the Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships. Olivia also entered the Girls' Senior Epee, finishing 11th.



George Orchart receives his trophy from British Fencing Association chairman Keith Smith



Champions at Leon Paul Junior Series

We now have two gold medallists at Leon Paul Junior Series competitions. Henry Orchard won the U11 Ashton Boys Foil, remaining unbeaten all day, and winning the final 10-3. A few weeks later, Abi Difford won the Eton U15 Girls Foil. Both of these are excellent results and we wish them good luck in future competitions.



UWN Easter Course

Over the Easter holidays Gwent Sword Club coach Peter Russell ran an 'Introduction to Foil' course at the UWN Sports Centre in Caerleon. Sixteen local youngsters, between the ages of 12 and 16, took part in the course, learning the basics of the sport over three days of training. Many of the participants showed interest in continuing the sport and all left with a greater awareness of the sport and it's conventions.

A special thank you to Abi Difford who helped out for the full three days and proved an invaluable assistant and excellent inspiration to the young fencers taking part.

Welsh Team Epée

On the 14th of May Gwent Sword Club will be entering the Welsh Team Epée Championships. The event is held at Saphire Gardens in Cardiff and always proves to be a great days fencing. GSC will be looking to improve upon last years success where the women's team took home silver and the men's team bronze!

GSC plans to enter a number of teams this year and if you wish to be considered for one of them please notify a member of the coaching team ASAP.

GOOD LUCK TO OUR COMPETITORS!



Medals at the North Wales Regional

GWENT Sword Club mounted a successful raid on the Welsh Northern Regional Foil fencing competition. Having dominated the Welsh Western Regional Foil earlier in the season, they came away from Welshpool with two medals from three entries!

The early rounds of the competition saw the men and women's sections grouped together, and Gwent's trio of Peter Russell, Andrew McLeod and Abi Difford ended up respectively ranked fourth, fifth and seventh of the 25 seniors.

Andy came up against Cardiff teenager Philip Horne in his last-16 fight and was disappointed to be edged out by just 2 points in what was an extremely closely fought match.



GSC Competitors Andrew McLeod, Abi Difford and Peter Russell

After an easy first fight, Peter took his revenge on Horne on behalf of the club in the quarter-finals defeating him 15-7 and went on to beat improving Wrexham youngster Ben Roberts in a tight semi-final. In the final, he faced Pembrokeshire's Jason Scourfield, a double Junior Commonwealth Championship medallist, and, despite the fight being neck-and-neck until the final few hits, the West Wales fencer finally won 15-13 in the final seconds of the fight.

Abi was easily the highest-ranked of the women, having beaten most of her male opponents in the pools, and she confirmed this superiority with convincing 15-1 and 15-4 victories to take gold in the women's competition - her first senior title.



Abi Difford and Peter Russell receiving their medals from MP Lembit Opik



Gwent Sword Foil Championships

BOTH Gwent Sword Club's foil champions retained their titles at the weekend at the fencing club's annual championships, held at Chepstow Leisure Centre. John Washbourne again won the adult competition, defeating Peter Russell 15-5 in the final, with a higher senior entry this year than last. The top-placed woman was Olivia Orchard.

In the junior (14 and under) competition, George Orchard kept his hands on the cup. Although he will move up to the seniors next year, younger brother Henry has plans to carry on the family tradition, losing only to George in the competition, 5-3 in their pool match and 15-1 in the final. The competition was very well organised, both starting and finishing to schedule, and it was good to see relatively new fencers, including those from the Wednesday Caerleon sessions, joining in and helping to make the day a success.

Adult competition results: 1, John Washbourne; 2, Peter Russell; 3, Adam Hall; 3, Olivia Orchard; 5, Andrew McLeod; 6, Catherine Fisher; 7, Ceri Richards; 8, Abi Difford; 9, Matt Ashton; 10, Mike Edwards; 11, Richard Thomas; 12, Matt Pope; 13, Ifor Lewis; 14, Josephine Hayes; 15, Seb Ashton; 16, Carl Difford; 17, Helen Morgan; 18, Lucy Stewart; 19, Kelly James.

Junior competition results: 1, George Orchard; 2, Henry Orchard; 3, Dan Miles; 4, James Dowdall; 5, Gareth Knight; 6, Elliot Hurford; 7, Edward Morgan; 8, Jordan Thomas.



Medalists (left to right): George Orchard, Henry Orchard, Adam Hall, Peter Russell, Dan Miles, John Washbourne and GSC Chairman Colin Hyndman

Wednesday Sessions

Following negotiations with the UWN Sports Centre management the Gwent Sword Club UWN division will now run at the consistent time of 19:00 to 21:00 in the Sports Hall.

The UWN session offers experienced fencers the opportunity to practice on the electric fencers the opportunity to practice on the electric fencers experimenting with techniques and tactics without the pressure of scoring. This additional training can be extremely beneficial to those looking to improve their competitive game.

The UWN venue also hosts the GSC Beginner's Program. The next course will begin on the 17th of May and will run until the 5th of July. For further information please contact Peter Russell.