



2018

YEAR IN REVIEW

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In addition to the 2018 Annual Report, the Australian Fencing Federation is pleased to provide Member States with this Year in Review to celebrate and reflect on 2018.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The Australian Fencing Federation enjoyed another year under the stewardship of two-time Olympian Ms Evelyn Halls. I am pleased to provide an overview of the 2018 year following Evelyn's resignation from the Board and my election to the Presidency in early 2019.

In determining the allocation of its limited resources, including the time of largely volunteer human capital, the AFF considered the five guiding imperatives outlined in the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan: participation, elite performance, profile, professionalism and positivity.

The AFF continued to strive for cost-neutral operations, seeking to improve the standard of competitions without increasing entry fees for fencers or capitation costs for Member States. The international referee program was extended to the Under 15 and Cadet National Championships in 2018, providing Australian referees training and development on home soil. Athletes also benefitted with exposure to the current rules' application and the phrasing of fencing actions supporting their performance overseas.

The AFF also subsidised four Australian referees to travel for their FCA C licence in 2018 and appointed additional Senior Referees, who are paid an extra allowance, to help run national tournaments. These initiatives are part of a broader plan to develop a pool of highly-qualified local officials, supporting international standard tournaments for all Australians to enjoy. Notably, these initiatives have been implemented at no extra cost to athletes.

While looking for creative ways to improve competition standards and member services without increasing costs, the AFF continued to look for external funding to support grass root and elite athlete development. In addition to funding support allocated for participation growth by Sport Australia (formerly the Australian Sports Commission) for 2018-2019, the AFF negotiated additional funding for four fencers and a coach to attend a World Cup, Grand Prix and Asian Zone Championships in the lead up to the 2018 World Championships.

Australian fencers enjoyed even more opportunities to compete in an international tournament on home soil with the 2018 Commonwealth Senior and Veteran Fencing Championships hosted by the ACT Fencing Association at the Australian Institute of Sport, Canberra in November. Many Australians medalled at the tournament, including gold won by the senior men's foil team and veteran women's teams in all three weapons. Visiting Commonwealth nation fencers also swelled the ranks at the 2018 National Championships, held one week prior, in Melbourne.

The expanded national circuit continued to be well supported by athletes, with entry numbers slightly higher across the board in 2018. After operating for many years in Queensland, the Australian Schools Championships (individual and team) were hosted by the New South Wales Fencing Association in Sydney this year. The format has been revised slightly and entry numbers for 2018 are encouraging of further growth. New South Wales has agreed to host these tournaments again in 2019.

Looking forward, coach development will be a focus for the AFF, with plans to develop an engaging online learning platform to expand the pool of level 0 and level 1 coaches accredited across the country. It's only by supporting our existing coaches and introducing other teaching professionals to fencing that we can hope to promote participation growth.

As 2019 marks the commencement of the 2020 Olympic Summer Games qualifying period, the AFF will continue to support its elite athletes through the High Performance Program and its associated national training camps and international competition tours in the coming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'FW Walsh', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dr Frank Walsh

President

Australian Fencing Federation Ltd

GOVERNANCE

Governance Overview

The AFF operates a company limited by guarantee. This structure reflects the best practice recommendations for national sporting organisations (NSOs) contained in Sport Australia's Mandatory Sports Governance Principles.

As a company limited by guarantee, the AFF is governed by the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) and is required to comply with all applicable legal and reporting obligations.

The Board is conscious of the strict governance regime and reporting obligations to which the AFF is subject. The Board continues to put in place measures to enhance the AFF's ability to comply with its governance obligations going forward.

For further information on governance, please refer to the 2018 Annual Report.



Financial Management

The AFF's financial reports for the 2018 financial year can be found in the 2018 Annual Report.

POLICY UPDATES

Drug & Alcohol Policy

In 2018, the AFF Board has approved the introduction of a new Drug & Alcohol Policy. The policy is aimed at minimising the risk of injury or harm to fencers, officials and others from the use of alcohol or drugs. The policy governs the use of alcohol and other drugs, generally for recreational and social purposes. It does not cover the use of performance enhancing drugs, which are covered by the AFF Anti-Doping Policy.

The AFF Drug & Alcohol Policy came into effect on 1 December 2018.

AFF Competition-Specific Rules

AFF competition-specific rules were amended to address changes made by the FIE at the 2018 congress. These changes relate to new penalties for unwillingness to fight. The AFF competition-specific rules have been amended with insertion of the following additional provision:

“at.4. For the purposes of rule t.124 (unwillingness to fight), references to ‘the higher FIE ranking’:

- (a) subject to paragraph (b), in Part 1 (Individual events – Direct Elimination), will be taken to mean ‘the higher AFF ranking in the relevant age category’ or in the case where there is equality of ranking, will be taken to mean ‘the higher seeding after poules at the event’;*
- (b) for all individual veteran events, in Part 1 (Individual events – Direct Elimination), will be taken to mean ‘the higher seeding after poules at the event’; and*
- (c) in Part 2 (Team events), will be taken to mean ‘the higher seeding at the start of the event’.”*

Selection Policy

A number of amendments were made to the AFF Selection Policy in 2018. A scaling factor was introduced for FIE Junior World Cup events. These events are now subject to the same scaling factor as applies to Senior World Cup events (i.e. based on the number of fencers earning FIE points). The following additional provision regarding fitness was also added at 2.10:

“If the Board has reason to believe that a fencer who has been selected to compete in an event is injured or ill, then the Board may require the fencer to undergo an examination by a Board-approved health practitioner to confirm whether the fencer is fit to compete in the event. If the fencer is not deemed fit to compete, then they will be withdrawn from the event. For the purpose of this clause, the term ‘health practitioner’ means a medical practitioner, dentist, clinical psychologist, physiotherapist or other specialist that the Board approves.”

COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

The AFF has a number of commissions reporting to the AFF Board. This section provides a brief overview of the activities of some of the AFF's commissions.

The AFF thanks the members of its commissions for their efforts during 2018.

Selection Commission

The Selection Commission (SC) is responsible for applying the rules set out in the Selection Policy and exercising the discretions conferred on the Commission under the policy.

The composition of the SC remained unchanged during 2018, being:

- Duncan Fairweather (Chair)
- Gus Cladera (Deputy Chair)
- Sam Blackman
- Mike Dunham
- Victoria Fitzgerald
- Paul Crook (HPM, ex officio)

In 2018, the SC conducted 53 Category E assessments, about the same as in 2017 (56). There were no appeals against SC selection decisions in 2018.



Tournament Management Commission

The Tournament Management Commission (TMC) is responsible for managing AFF sanctioned events, working in close co-operation with the host States.

The composition of the SC remained unchanged during 2018, being:

- Gordon Christie
- Denise Dapre; and
- Alex Donaldson



In addition to its competition management role, the TMC has continued to provide valuable recommendations to the Board, particularly in relation to the adoption of rule changes introduced at the international level. The AFF is also appreciative of the continued work undertaken by members of the TMC in maintaining the national rankings lists.

In recognition skills and experience, Gordon Christie was invited by the Fencing Confederation of Asia to be a member of the Directoire Technique at the 2018 Asian Fencing Championships in Bangkok.

Athlete's Commission



The mission of the Athlete's Commission (AC) is represent the views and interests of athletes and to empower athletes through information and the facilitation of communication.

The current members of the AC are Dianna Gu and Davide Wheeler. Jeremy Shelley resigned from the AC in April 2018. The AC is represented on the AFF Board by one member, the Athletes' Director. Dianna Gu was appointed Athletes Director in May 2018 following the resignation of Jeremy Shelley.

The AC regularly receives communications from athletes and their families on a range of issues, which it takes to the Board for consideration. The AC also facilitates communication of information about the AFF's strategic objectives to the athlete community.

During the year, the Commission consulted with athletes regarding the Board's proposal to cease to award medals for finishing 5th- 8th place at national competitions. The AC provided feedback to the Board, which was taken into consideration in the Board's decision.

The Commission will continue to represent the views and interests of athletes to the AFF Board.

Veteran's Commission



During 2018, the AFF formed a Veterans Commission (VC) to represent and further the interest of veteran fencers in Australia.

The following fencers expressed interest and were appointed by the AFF to the VC:

- Norbert Riedl (Chair)
- Steven Howlett
- Darren Ferguson
- Jutta Schortmann

In addition, Chris Nonis, an AFF Director, was appointed by the AFF to be the conduit between the VC and the AFF Board.

An inaugural meeting was held at AFC#2 in Adelaide in June 2018 amongst board members who were present at the event. The VC discussed a number of possible activities of the Commission and the best way to proceed in an inclusive manner. One short term priority was to establish an easy and effective way to communicate with veteran fencers.

A specific VC mailing list was compiled and the Commission has published newsletters specifically targeted at veteran fencers. The VC's inaugural email newsletter was sent to over 800 recipients. The VC has sent two further newsletters and one news-flash informing the veteran fencing community about items that may be of specific interest to veteran fencers. Feedback about the newsletters has been very positive, with a number of persons responding with ideas and expressing appreciation that they now feel they have a specific point to contact for queries about veteran events and issues.

Since the Commission was formed, the VC has been looking at:

- ideas for increasing participation by local members in local and national competitions. One event was proposed by Fencing Victoria, who have organised a Veterans weekend on 12 to 15 April 12-15 2019 in Melbourne. Under the auspices of the AFF this event will also qualify for accreditation with the Fencing Confederation of Asia;
- ideas to get more direct interaction amongst veterans during or after AFC competitions;
- availability of grants that the Commission can apply for (e.g. AFF Participation Grants); and
- ways of getting feedback from veterans and being the main body communicating the views of veterans to the AFF. Issues of importance include having more say in making decisions that affect veteran fencers directly, such as the appointment (or not) of suitable managers and coaches on international competitions.

COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING & PROMOTION

Recognising the AFF website as the cornerstone of its communications and marketing strategy, the Board undertook a comprehensive review of the website in 2018, identifying duplicate or obsolete content and identifying opportunities to improve its design without incurring significant costs. The website review was motivated by the AFF's commitment to good governance and transparency, as well as recognising the website's pivotal role in marketing the sport.

The AFF audience on social media continued to grow, particularly on Facebook, with a 23 per cent increase in followers recorded on that platform during the reporting year. This was achieved by posting frequent, consistent, quality content, including timely reporting on Australians competing in overseas events.



An AFF presence was added to LinkedIn, a social media platform with potential to generate increased exposure to the business sector, with relevant content created and published there throughout the year.

There has been a greater emphasis on photography at major national fencing championships in 2018, with more images published and shared across social media and photographs of medallists added to results published on the AFF website. The AFF provided free portrait photography sessions to all Australian fencers at the 2018 National Fencing Championships to improve the quality and consistency of images attached to fencer biographies on the AFF website.

The AFF continued to engage with external media, including local and regional print and radio and the Australian Olympic Committee media staff, writing and distributing media releases about Australian fencing.



These initiatives underpin the AFF's strategic objective of increasing the sport's profile across the broader community, promoting the achievements of elite athletes while also depicting the sport as fun, professionally-run and accessible for potential newcomers.

FUNDING AND ASSISTANCE



The AFF is extraordinarily thankful to the various bodies that have provided it with funding support across several channels during the course of the period. Outside of the AFF's receipt of its investment funding from Sport Australia, the AFF has been very fortunate to receive funding from the Australian Olympic Committee, Australian Paralympic Committee and furthered High Performance Funding from Sport Australia. This is in addition to in kind support the AFF has received from the FIE.

Australian Paralympic Committee

The Australian Paralympic Committee has provided the AFF with a grant to \$6,000 which has been received for the purchase of new wheelchair frames. Whilst the money was not expended to the period ended 31 December 2018, the AFF has retained the amount for expenditure during the 2019 period to coincide with a target wheelchair development effort.

Australian Olympic Committee

The Australian Olympic Committee provided an amount of \$25,000 during the period to the AFF as an amount to be utilised for targeted Olympic preparation funding. The amount was allocated towards certain tours for the Men's Foil team.

Sport Australia

Sport Australia has very generously provided two tranches of funding to the AFF during the period.

Participation Investment Funding

The AFF received contributions from Sport Australia as part of its Participation Investment Funding in the order of \$40,000. The AFF utilised the grant to subsidise its officiating and development programs.

Tokyo 2020

Sport Australia provided target assistance to the amount of \$40,000 for the senior Men's Foil team. This amount was spent on a number of tours including competitions and training in Shanghai and in St Petersburg as well as providing subsidy to those members attending the Asian Senior Championships.

International Olympic Committee

The International Olympic Committee provided solidarity funding of \$15,000. The funding was utilised to subsidise the cost of the Winter Camp for Australia Fencing Team members, across all disciplines, travelling to the Asian Senior Championships.



Federation Internationale d'Escrime

The FIE provided in kind assistance to the AFF with the provision of five complete plastic swords kits valued at approximately \$5,000. The kits have been earmarked for the use within the AFF's grassroots development program, Project5000.

ELITE PERFORMANCE



Strategic Priorities

The AFF's key strategic objectives in the elite performance area are to:

- produce fencers who are capable of winning medals at the highest international level;
- strengthen the development pathways for future generations of Australian fencers; and
- build on our existing capabilities in the area of coaching and high performance support services.

The key initiatives which the AFF will implement to deliver its strategic objective include:

- continuing to enhance the quality of our existing HPP - with a short-term focus on maximising the opportunities for HPP athletes to train together in a structured, team-based environment (both in Australia and overseas) and increasing exposure to appropriate international events;
- increasing access to external expertise by the introduction of dedicated, fencing specific support services for HPP athletes;
- increasing high performance funding from external sources including Sport Australia, the AOC, the Australian Sports Foundation, corporate sponsorship and private donors; and
- strengthening development pathways by providing junior athletes with clear development opportunities, maximising the quality and quantity of Australian circuit events and pursuing opportunities to host appropriate international events in Australia.

Overview of HPP

The High Performance Program (HPP) aims to develop and retain young and emerging talent and maximise the performance of Australia's elite athletes. The HPP is designed to inspire, earn confidence and commitment, and provide for the best possible opportunities for athletes to achieve their dreams and aspirations.

The AFF's High Performance Program incorporates:

- one on one lessons delivered by each fencer's personal coach
- regular club-based training
- attendance at State squad sessions
- attendance at multiple national training camps held at the AIS in Canberra
- AFC domestic circuit events
- a tailored program of international training and competition

The HPP includes the Australian Fencing Team (AFT), the Australian Fencing Squad (AFS) and the Talented Fencer Program (TFP).

The AFT program incorporates a demanding training and competition program which supports athletes aiming to compete at the highest international levels. The AFT brings elite Fencers together to work as a team, supporting and pushing one another, competing as a team, learning together, and enjoying and celebrating team success.

The AFS provides a second tier of elite athlete representation. It is an opportunity for athletes across all age groups to implement similar (but less intensive) training models as members of the AFT. Athletes may participate in the AFS as a preparatory step towards the AFT or during periods when other commitments mean they are unable to maintain a full international training and competition load.



Key HPP Personnel

The AFF would like to thank the National Weapons Coaches (Maître Antonio Signorello and Maître Vladimir Sher) and the High Performance Manager (Paul Crook).



Maître Antonio Signorello



Maître Vladimir Sher



Paul Crook

Participation in HPP

The total number of participants in the HPP for the 2018/19 cycle commencing on 1 July 2018 for the Cadet and Junior age categories and on 1 October 2018 for the U/23 and Open age categories is 76, which is a slight decrease from the 82 for the 2017/18.

The fencers participating in the HPP represent all States, with participant numbers broadly reflecting relative population size.

Participation in International Events

During 2018, Australian representative teams participated in a number of international championship events, as set out in the following table:

Event	Cadet	Junior	Under-23	Open	Veteran
Commonwealth Championships	UK	UK	N/A	Australia	Australia
Asian Championships	UAE	UAE	Philippines	Thailand	Japan
World Championships	Italy	Italy	N/A	China	Italy



In addition to major championships events, Australian athletes have also competed in a number of international events including as part of Coach Designated Tours. The AFF would like to thank all of the team managers and coaches who volunteered their time and effort to assist Australian teams competing in international events.

The annual coach designated tours (CDTs) provide an excellent opportunity for fencers to gain high level training and competition experience, in a supportive environment with their coaches and team mates. Some of the CDTs that were held in 2018 are listed below:

- Cadet Men's and Women's Epee – Bratislava, Slovakia
- Cadet Men's Foil – Bratislava, Slovakia
- Cadet Women's Foil – Poznan, Poland
- Cadet Men's and Women's Epee – Copenhagen, Denmark
- Junior Men's Epee – Sabac, Serbia
- U23 Men's Sabre – Budapest, Hungary
- Open Women's Foil – Katowice, Poland
- Open Women's Epee – Dubai, UAE
- Open Men's Foil – Paris, France
- Open Men's Epee – Heidenheim, Germany

In 2018, two Australian fencers qualified for the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires. Giorgia Salmas and Robert Ciccarelli travelled to Buenos Aires to compete in the event accompanied by the National Foil and Saber Coach, Antonio Signorello. AFF President at the time, Evelyn Halls, lead the way for #TeamAUS as the Chef de Mission for the Australian team of 88 athletes.



Key International Performances

The Australian men's senior foil squad performed strongly in 2018, confirming their ability to compete on the world stage. Some highlights include:

- 15th at the Challenge Internationale de Paris (FIE World Cup) in Paris, France
- 14th at the FIE World Cup in St-Petersbourg, Russia
- Bronze medal at the Asian Zone Championships 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand
- 12th at the World Championships in WuXi, China
- Gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Fencing Championships in Canberra, Australia

The 12th place finish at the World Championships equals their historic result in at the 2017 World Championships in Leipzig, Germany.

The men's foil squad has continued to follow a dedicated training and competition program. Our men's foil squad demonstrates an impressive work ethic and have developed a collegiate (and yet highly competitive) team environment which enables them to push each other to new heights.

As a result of additional funding becoming available, the squad has been able to attend additional international events.



Individually, Sholto Douglas has also had a strong performance in 2018 with top 64 finishes at the Grand Prixes in Turin, Italy and Anaheim, California. He finished in the top 64 at the World Cup in Tokyo, Japan and took out the silver in the Commonwealth Fencing Championships.

Junior epeeist, Alex English, has also had a stellar year. He finished in the top 64 in Blue Cross Open Junior World Cup in Hong Kong, 7th place (in a field of 203 fencers) at the FIE Junior World Cup in Heraklion, Greece and recently topped it off with a bronze win medal at the Junior Men's Epee World Cup in Tokyo in January 2019.

A screenshot of the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) website. The header features the AOC logo and navigation links: OLYMPIANS, NEWS, GAMES, SPORTS, OLYMPICS UNLEASHED, EDUCATION, ATHLETE HUB, and THE AOC. A search bar is also present. The main content area displays a news article titled "Australian Fencing celebrates Junior World Cup medal success" dated 8 January 2019. The article includes a photo of a young fencer in a yellow jacket and a "Listen" button. The text of the article states: "FENCING: Victorian teenager Alex English relied on phone advice from his coach at home to snatch a bronze medal at a Junior World Cup fencing tournament in Tokyo on the weekend."

Other key international open results achieved during 2018 also include:

- Kristian Radford – Silver medal, individual Men's Epee, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Sam Auty – Bronze medal, individual Women's Sabre, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Caitlin Fox-Harding – 7th place, individual Women's Sabre, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Violet Hull – Bronze medal, individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Emily Marotta – 6th place, individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Claire Daniel – 8th place, individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Men's Epee Team – Silver medal, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Senior Women's Sabre team – Bronze medal, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Senior Women's Foil Team – Bronze medal, Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Senior Men's Sabre Team – Bronze medal, Commonwealth Fencing Championships



Other key international junior and cadet results achieved during 2018 also include:

- Alexandra Hely - Bronzed medal, individual Women's Sabre, Cadet Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Cadet Women's Epee Team - 5th place, Commonwealth Cadet Fencing Championships
- Cadet Men's Sabre Team - 6th place, Commonwealth Cadet Fencing Championships
- Cadet Men's Epee Team - 6th place, Commonwealth Cadet Fencing Championships
- Tianji Lukins - Gold medal, Individual Women's Foil, Cadet Commonwealth Fencing Championships
- Giorgia Salmas - Bronze medal, Individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Cadet Fencing Championships
- Krystal Jessup - Bronze medal, Individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Cadet Fencing Championships
- Cadet Women's Foil Team - Gold medal, Commonwealth Cadet Fencing Championships
- Junior Men's Foil Team - 7th place, Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships
- Junior Women's Epee Team - 6th place, Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships
- Junior Women's Foil Team - Silver medal, Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships
- Tianji Lukins - Bronze medal, Individuals Women's Foil, Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships
- Giorgia Salmas - 8th place, Individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships
- Junior Men's Sabre Team - 6th place, Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships
- Junior Men's Epee Team - Bronze medal, Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships
- Alexander Sells - Bronze Medal, Individual Men's Epee, Commonwealth Junior Fencing Championships



Special mention must also be made of the strong performances by our veteran fencers at the Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships, Asian Veterans Championships in Japan and the World Fencing Championships in Italy.



The outstanding achievements of our veterans were headlined by the medal winning performance of:

- Veteran Men's Sabre Team – Gold medal, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Veteran Women's Epee Team – Gold medal, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Veteran Women's Sabre Team – Gold medal, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Veteran Women's Foil Team – Gold medal, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Veteran Men's Foil – Bronze medal, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Veteran Men's Epee Team – Bronze medal, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Min Yi Du – Silver medal, individual Women's Sabre, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Sarah Osvath – Gold medal, individual Women's Epee, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Davide Wheeler – Gold medal, individual Men's Sabre, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Radu Vintila – Silver medal, individual Men's Sabre, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Attila Brungs – Bronze medal, individual Men's Sabre, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Abby Nutt – Gold medal, individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Julia Lyaschenko – Silver medal, individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Annabelle Ballard – Bronze medal, individual Women's Foil, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships

- Jenny Bonney-Millett – Gold medal, individual Women’s Foil (50+ age category), Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Andrey Tyshchenko – Bronze medal, individual Men’s Foil, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- David Cook – Silver medal, individual Men’s Epee, Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Nortbert Riedl – Gold medal, individual Men’s Epee (50+ age category), Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships
- Jenny Bonney-Millett - Gold Medal, Individual Women’s Foil, Asian Veteran Championships
- Abigail Nutt - Bronze Medal, individual Women’s Foil, Asian Veteran Championships
- Sandra Schwarz -Bronze Medal, Individual Women’s Foil, Asian Veteran Championships
- Sandra Schwarz - Silver Medal, Individual Women’s Sabre, Asian Veteran Championships
- Radu Vintila - Silver Medal, Individual Men’s Sabre, Asian Veteran Championships
- Gary Sudran - Bronze Medal, Individual Men’s Sabre, Asian Veteran Championships
- Gary Sudran - Silver Medal, Individual Men’s Epee, Asian Veteran Championships
- Catherine Syme - Gold Medal, Individual Women’s Epee, Asian Veteran Championships
- Sandra Schwarz - Bronze Medal, Individual Women’s Epee, Asian Veteran Championships
- Veteran Women’s Foil Team - Bronze medal, Asian Veteran Championships
- Veteran Men’s Sabre Team - Gold medal, Asian Veteran Championships
- Veteran Women’s Epee Team - Silver medal, Asian Veteran Championships
- Veteran Women’s Foil Team - 4th Place, Veteran World Championships



National HPP Camps

The HPP has continued to benefit from regular training camps held at the Australian Institute of Sport facilities in Canberra. In 2018, the following 4 HPP camps were held:

- Autumn Camp (11 - 12 February 2018)
- Winter Camp (6 – 9 July 2018)
- Spring Camp (27 – 30 September 2018)
- Summer Camp (20 – 23 December 2018)

In 2018, the number of fencers attending camps continued to grow. The high numbers of participants at the HPP camps has continued to support the attendance of additional coaches from around Australia, who are invited to attend on a rotating basis.

The attendance of additional coaches at these events assists in the co-ordination of the high performance program around the country. The AFF is keen to encourage coaches to work effectively together so as to maximise the opportunities for success.



Athlete Support Services

The regular HPP camps provide a valuable opportunity to deliver ancillary education programs to our athletes on topics such as sports psychology, nutrition, biomechanics and anti-doping obligations.

During our high performance camps in 2018, HPP members had to complete or refresh their certificate for the ASADA anti-doping online course, which provides a detailed outline of athletes' obligations in this area. Our athletes have also continued to benefit from the contribution of Gareth Mclean in 2018, a qualified Level 2 strength and conditioning coach, who became involved with the national program after previously contributing at club and State level.



With the support of the AIS Combat Centre, members of the Australian Men's Foil Team have also been working with Dr Stuart Cormack on a fencing-specific Strength & Conditioning program. Stuart is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Exercise Science at Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. He has over 20 years' experience in elite sport, including 8 years with the West Coast Eagles and 4 years at the AIS.

COACHING

Coaching Development

The AFF continued to place an emphasis on coach education and development in 2018.

Paul Crook, the National Coaching Director, has concentrated his efforts this past year in the areas of the management of our coach re-accreditation system, and the development of our coach education pathways.

Moving into 2019, the focus will be on the redevelopment of our coach education program.

Management of the Coach Re-Accreditation System

Due to the reintroduction of our coach re accreditation system, 2018 was largely focused on the implementation of the current pathway and assisting coaches to understand and reintegrate into the system. 2018 was an opportunity to make re-accreditation open and inclusive and to get as many coaches as possible back into the AFF registered coach list.

A number of communications were sent to the coaching community regarding the AFF's accreditation system. The benefits of coach accreditation include the following:

- professional indemnity insurance provided p by the AFF for as long as the coach remains accredited;
- recognition by the AFF, which is beneficial for coaches who need to provide evidence of their qualifications to third parties;
- yhe opportunity to be considered for AFF coaching rolls in squads, camps, tours or ANC/NWC positions; and
- continued coaching education opportunities.

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment process has been better defined to identify if a coach either from another education system or from Australia who has a significant amount of practical experience but no formal accreditation can more clearly identify if their skills translate to one of Australia's coaching levels.

The online portal integrates the tools for coaching assessment and RPL. From an administrative point of view, the evidence based portal system has a number of benefits including:

- Working with Children Checks for all registered coaches are on record;
- coaches are required to have first aid certification so that they are trained to be first respondents if necessary;
- digital evidence of further education is more easily stored and accessed;
- coaches are required to register with the AFF every year, which ensures that their professional indemnity insurance is maintained.

There have been 6 RPL assessments of coaches from overseas who have been working in Australia and took the opportunity to be assessed and integrate into the Australian Accreditation system.



Development of Coach Education Pathways

Following the revision of the accreditation levels, the National Coaching Director has been working on developing materials for courses in the different accreditation levels in 2018.

Level 0 – The Level 0 course syllabus has been completed and the AFF is investigating translating the content into an e learning online education syllabus in conjunction with EtrainU, an online learning portal company.

Level 1 - Level 1 has been considered further and has been divided into the following more specific competencies:

- **Level 1 Learn to Fence** – This replaces the previous Level 0. It is a generic accreditation level that can be taught in either foil, epee or sabre but is not weapon specific. It covers the fundamentals of how to teach groups in a class environment and it tailored to school sport or club-based programs. The course focuses on how to teach the fundamentals of play and someone who has completed this course will be able to teach an 8 to 10 session learn to fence program of sessions of up to 90 minutes a session.
- **Level 1 Group** – This level now encompasses the development of group work beyond that of a learn to fence program. It will address the footwork and more complex tactical drills that are oriented toward intermediate club fencers and the development of squad drills. This can be taught as weapon specific but the principals of building squad or intermediate club programs can be applied to all weapons.
- **Level 1 Individual** – The syllabus has been addressed but the assessment tools are now being rewritten. This course is now weapon specific as it teaches the more precise skills of individual instruction. At this point the education of coaches starts to diversify more clearly into weapon specific content. While still focused on quality basic instruction that meets the need of recreational participants, it is also aimed at producing coaches who can coach an athlete to State level competition. A coach who has completed this course is at least a basically proficient club coach.

The broadening of Level 1 competencies mean that squad coaching can be taught before someone progresses to Level 2 coaching and there are more fencing specific learning opportunities that have value and coaches can use for continued education.

Level 2 – Level 2 will be delivered in a camp environment by the AFF and will be delivered in 2 parts at 2 of the three HPP camp per year.

OFFICIATING

Overview

The AFF's overarching goal is to promote officiating throughout Australia, with more accredited referees, and to elevate the level of officiating among the cadre through international FIE invited referees.

There are current 30 nationally accredited referees across all 3 weapons. Accreditation seminars and practical exams were held at selected AFC events during 2018. Ongoing development and mentoring of referees has also occurred at AFC events, with input from experienced national and international referees. We are delighted to see so many of our younger referees continuing to improve their refereeing abilities.

Revision of Refereeing System



After AFC#1 2018, the AFF announced a new approach to the referee system. The AFF has appointed Mr Emanuele Bucca from the Italian Fencing Federation as the Referee Director. Emanuele is an FIE 'B' accredited (foil and sabre) referee.

The appointment of our Referee Director has proven to be invaluable. He has recommended FIE referees from Asia and Europe to oversee and develop our local referees at national events. Emanuele has provided mentoring and feedback to Australian referees, including immediate video analysis of their performance.

Every AFC competition now includes opportunities for new referees to be observed for their practical assessment and join our growing pool of nationally accredited referees.

In 2018, the AFF also appointed three of Australia's most talented and experienced referees – Samantha Auty, Lucas Webber and Michael Nelson – as AFF Senior Referees. Sam, Lucas and Michael will share responsibility for the bout by bout allocation of referees during each AFC event. The appointment of Sam, Lucas and Michael recognises the commitment and dedication they have shown to developing their own refereeing skills and mentoring others.



The AFF Operations Manager Caitlin Fox-Harding will support Emanuele and our refereeing team, by managing referee nominations and scheduling prior to each event.

The AFF's new approach to referee management was adopted following the resignation of National Officiating Manager Peter Creese for personal reasons. Peter has fulfilled this role for a number of years and the AFF thanks him for his contribution.

International Refereeing Pathway

Referees are alerted to opportunities to pursue international accreditation by the Operations Manager via information from the AFF and through communication from our Referee Director. Interested referees submit EOIs and are considered for attendance by the AFF board (according to domestic experience and recommendation).

The AFF congratulates Frances Chow, Rob Di Pasquale, Boston Fawkes, and Victoria Mentor who successfully obtained their FCA (C) referee licence in 2018. The FCA licence is a preliminary requisite to obtain an FIE licence. Their attendance at the accreditation seminar was subsidised by the AFF and took place alongside the U23 Asian Championships in Manila, Philippines. Robert di Pasquale, went on to obtain his FIE B Licence for refereeing. The FIE refereeing seminars and exams were held in conjunction with the 2018 Asian Cadet & Junior Championships in Dubai.



PARTICIPATION AND SPORT DEVELOPMENT

Delivery of Participation Programs

The AFF recognises the need to develop effective initiatives to increase participation, enhance development and improve the broader awareness of fencing in the Australian community. We aim to increase the number of people participating in a 'fencing experience', as well as the conversion of fencing participants to active members.

The AFF launched the Project 5000 Participation Grants Program. This program provides funding for targeted initiatives aimed at increasing participation in fencing. It is being implemented as part of the AFF's strategic aim of achieving 5,000 registered 'active members' (fencers affiliated at State level).

The program offers financial funding and equipment to clubs, State Associations and other eligible organisations to support activities which attract new participants to fencing. It is aimed at activities which result in an increase in the number of active members (fencers affiliated at club or State level). Accordingly, funding will not be provided for one-off 'come and try' events.

In the first, round 7 applications were received, with two successful applicants receiving funding and in-kind support from the Project 500 Participation Grants Program.

Melbourne's Ruyton Girls School received a \$5000 contribution to establish a school fencing program and club. Ruyton will use the funding to purchase 10 sets of uniforms and equipment, with additional funding from the school and parents for electrical scoring equipment.



The project is the brainchild of Victorian cadet fencer Lily Whitehead, a student at Ruyton, who is a passionate advocate for women's fencing. Lily prepared a compelling presentation to earn the support of her school principal and community, leading to a grant bid based on a co-investment model.

The Ruyton submission detailed how many new fencers would be targeted in the current and future years, with clear pathways for students introduced to fencing at school to becoming affiliated at the state level.

With the assistance of the Project 5000 grant, Ruyton now plans to introduce fencing as a co-curricular sport in term three 2018 under the guidance of coach Pieter Leeuwenburgh.

The Adelaide Swords club also benefitted in round one of the Project 5000 grant program, securing 10 sets of plastic learn-to-fence equipment. The club will use the equipment to start a program for younger children in the eight to 10-year-old age group, a demographic not traditionally catered to by the club.

The Project 500 Participation Grants Program is a multi-year offering which will continue into 2019 and beyond. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the program will be carried out towards its conclusion.

Fencing in Schools

This year, for the first time, the Australian Individual and Teams School Championships were held in Sydney. A number of changes to eligibility, qualification, rules and format were made to the competition to encourage school participation from all Member States. AFF also lowered the cost of participation by allowing 'participative' fencers to attend along with 'competitive' fencers.

The AFC Schools (Individuals) Championships and AFC (Teams) Championships for Senior fencers took place on the weekend of 28 and 29 July 2018, in Sydney at the NSW Fencing Centre.

The AFC Schools (Individuals) Championships and AFC (Teams) Championships for Intermediate fencers took place on the weekend of 25 and 26 August 2018, in Sydney at the NSW Fencing Centre.



In a change from previous years, there was no State team competition held in conjunction with the Individual Championships. The team competition was solely among school teams, consistent with the principle that individuals and teams competing in the Australian School Championships are representing their schools rather than their States.

Australian Minime Circuit

The Australian Minime Circuit is a competition tour for U/13 or U/14 as well as lower aged fencers. These competitions have been linked to help with the growth and development of young Australian fencers. Each event is in a different city and will offer different formats and experiences, all aimed to strengthening and educating young fencers. In 2018, the Australian Minime Circuit was held one the following dates and locations:

- 24 – 25 March 2018, FutureChampions Cup (Adelaide, South Australia)
- 18 – 19 August 2018, Joseph D'Onofrio - Victoria Challenge (Melbourne, Victoria)
- 5 – 9 December 2018, NSW Koala Mini Challenge (Sydney, NSW)



State Venue Facilities

State Associations continue to make good use their existing venues and facilities. There have been no changes to these facilities in 2018. Most States report that these facilities are well utilised and in some cases, space and utilisation demand has outstripped availability, options for expansion are being considered.

The AFF continued to use the AIS in Canberra, for national training camps, equipment storage, and tournaments.

National Competition Circuit

The AFF's national competition circuit has continued to operate successfully throughout 2018, providing a range of opportunities for fencers of all age groups to compete against their peers.

The following key events were held during 2018:

Event	Age Group	Month	Location
Junior National Championships	Under 20	February	Melbourne
AFC #1 (DH McKenzie)	Open & Veteran Under 23 Epee	April	Brisbane
AFC #2 (Robyn Chaplin)	Open & Veteran Under 23 Foil	June	Adelaide
U/15 & Cadet National Championships	Under 15 & Under 17	July	Sydney
AFC Schools Championships	Senior School fencers	July	Sydney
AFC #3	Open & Veteran Under 23 Sabre	August	Perth
AFC Schools Championships	Intermediate School fencers	August	Sydney
AFC #4	Open & Veteran	September	Sydney
Australian National Championships	Open & Veteran	November	Melbourne

There was an extra open AFC circuit event in 2018. This gave more fencers the opportunity to compete in a national event in their own State, and allows athletes to design a more flexible individual competition schedule taking into account their other commitments. The AFF will continue with the extra event and review on an annual basis.

The AFF has allocated national competition circuit events to the same host State over the next five years, providing greater certainty for participants and allowing States to negotiate arrangements with host venues (and potential sponsors) based on consistent requirements from year to year.

The National Junior (Under 20) Championships was scheduled in February 2018 (previously it was in September), in order to minimise conflicts with exam periods and provide a better structured program for our elite fencers. This means that it is held shortly after the return of fencers from the annual HPP tours to Europe and in the lead-up to the Asian Cadet & Junior Championships (in late February/early March) and the World Cadet & Junior Championships (in late March/early April).

The AFF's national competition circuit would be unable to operate without the efforts of the legions of volunteers around the country who assist with essential tasks such as venue set-up, weapons check and canteen operation. We are grateful to you for your continued support during 2018.

2018 Commonwealth Senior and Veteran Fencing Championships

In 2018, the AFF, in conjunction with the ACT Fencing Association, hosted the 2018 Commonwealth Senior and Veteran Fencing Championships (individual and team) in Canberra, Australia. The Championships were held from the 23 to 28 November 2018, at the Australian Institute of Sport, in Canberra.

Key facts:

- 432 entries across 14 Commonwealth nations at the event;
- 64 teams competed in the team events, split between 43 Senior and 21 Veteran teams
- 90 gold medals were awarded, 66 silver and 78 bronze
- 52 volunteers over 10 days assisting with set-up, training, competition and bump-out, contributing a combined 1,300 hours of work.

The 17 strong referee corps consisted of 2 FIE grade non-Commonwealth referees, 11 FIE grade Commonwealth referees, and 4 Australian developmental-level referees who all gained valuable international-level refereeing experience.

We hosted a number of representatives from Sport Australia and a number of consular mission representatives of New Zealand, Canada, and Singapore.



There was also a well-attended wheelchair fencing demonstration commentated by Vivian Mills (Secretary British Disability Fencing) and involving Australian wheelchair fencers Rodney Woolley and Tom Edwards, with their coach Andrew Kalinowski. The CFF is hoping to introduce Wheelchair Fencing events into future Championships.

The event was well received by the international fencers, their supporters, team managers and Officials. In her final report on the tournament, Ms M-F Dufour (CFF Technical Commission Chair) said: 'Once again, the CFF and its collaborators have delivered a world-class international event.' These sentiments were echoes by Helen Smith AM, (President, Commonwealth Fencing Federation) who said: 'Once again, on behalf of the CFF, I'd like to thank all of you & your respective organisations for the amazing amount of work you put in to making the Championships such a success.'

The Australian Fencing Federation thanks the following for their support during 2018



