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|  | **NEWSLETTER****December 2016** |

Dear All,

I hope you are all having an enjoyable winter break.  As the new term fast approaches, this newsletter contains all the club relevant info, but firstly, a huge thank you to those of you who continue to do so much for the club – be it with clothes orders, sponsorship, armoury, competitions secretarial work and assisting with coaching…. you know who you are and how much you mean to the club – thank you so much – the club wouldn’t run without your help.  A special thanks must go to Julie Couchman for her continued work in running the Club's web site.

As you all know, the new session structure was bedded in last term and appears to be working well.  Many thanks to Paul Beazley for stepping in and running the week day club sessions, and to all of you for adapting to the new timetable.   If any of you have any comments or suggestions regarding it, please do get in touch.

I am sure you would all like to join with me to pass on our thanks from the Club and very best wishes to Prof. in his ongoing battle to stay as well as possible for as long as possible.

**DATES FOR NEXT TERM (8th January - 30th March 2017)**

**Sundays**:                      January 8, 15, 22, 29

                                     February 5, 19, 26  (no 12 as its half term)

                                     March 5, 12, 19, 26

**Mondays**:                     January 9, 16, 23

                                     February 6, 20, 27 (no 13 as its half term)

                                     March 6, 13, 20, 27

**Thursdays**:                    January 12, 19, 26

                                     February 2, 9, 23 (no 16 as its half term)

                                     March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

**Mondays   7.00 - 9.30pm**

**Thursday   7.00 - 9.30pm**

**Sundays    10 - 1pm**

**FEES FOR THE TERM**

**Mondays and / or Thursdays (based on 10.5 weeks)**

**Teens                                                     £94.50**

**Adults                                                    £105.00**

**Adults with private lessons                £157.50**

**Sundays (based on 11 weeks)**

**Juniors                                                   £110**

**Juniors with private lesson                 £165**

**Adults                                                     £165**

**Adults with private lesson                   £220**

We are running two new Beginner courses this term. Mondays for Juniors (6-12 years) and an Adults course on Thursdays.

Junior classes will start on Monday 9th January 2017 and run for 10 weeks (no class on Monday 13th February 2017 as we are closed for half term). The course finishes on the 27th March 2017. The class runs from 7 - 8pm.

Cost: The course fee is £70.00 (£7.00 per session).

Adult classes will start on Thursday 12th January 2017 and run for 11 weeks (no class on Thursday 16th February 2017 as we are closed for half term). The course finishes on the 30th March 2017. The class runs from 7-8pm.

Cost: The course fee is £88.00 (£8.00 per session).

**Evening visitors fee**(no private lesson) = £8.00. To make it fairer to committed club fencers we have now put an upper limit of a maximum of 4 sessions a term as a visitor, thereafter we would expect you to join and pay pro-rata for the rest of the term.

**All Sunday classes run from 10 - 1pm.**

However, we structure the session thus: 10 - 10.30 ( **Whole group**warm-up, games, fitness circuits and footwork), 10.30 - 11.30 (Group is split into Juniors and Adults and we then work on Gradings {Juniors} technique, Fencing scenarios, tactics, Team events plus bouting / fighting) then 11.30 - 1pm for private lessons / free fencing (extra training for competing Fencers) on the electrical apparatus and the ABC (Alcohol Beverage Competition – which will run when we are not having a 'termly competition' or Team event). **Sunday fees cover the whole session from 10 – 1pm... Up to you how much fencing you want to do.**

**PAYMENTS**

Payments may be made before or at the beginning of term by

 · cash (in an envelope please with the pupil’s name on the front) or

 · cheque made payable to RTW F/C or

 · by bank transfer to

**The Royal Tunbridge Wells Fencing Club,**

**Account number 03045237**

**Sort Code 30-98-77.**

**TERMLY CLUB COMPETITIONS**

Due to the ongoing success of the competitions we will be continuing these next term. Therefore each term we will be running 3 competitions (spread out evenly over the term) for the Teen groups on Mondays and Thursdays and for the Junior and Adult groups on Sundays. All fencers will fence electric with scores recorded on the Club's score board. Results will be collected and collated and a running ranking list will be posted on the Club's notice board. The top three ranked fencers at the end of term will receive prizes. This is very good practice for any fencers who are working toward taking part in competitions. Please find below the dates of each Monday, Thursday and Sunday competitions:

Mondays:         23rd Jan, 20th Feb & 20th March.

Thursdays;       26th Jan, 23rd Feb & 23rd March.

Sundays;          22nd Jan, 19th Feb & 19th March **FOR JUNIORS**

29th Jan, 26th Feb & 26 March  **FOR ADULTS**

Not attending all competition days could seriously affect your health (or at least your overall ranking!)

**SUNDAY ABC (ALCOHOL BEVERAGE COMPETITION)**

The competition will continue but only on chosen Sundays when we are not running our 'Termly competitions' or a 'Team event' (internally or against another club). The Club will donate a bottle of wine or spirits and the assembled fencers will fight off for the prize. Referees and stopwatches will be provided and results will be kept on the club's official score board. A non-alcoholic bottle will also be donated for any under 18's that may win the ABC.

**COMPETITIONS**

Julie Couchman (competition Secretary) has compiled a competition calendar (which you can find on the club notice board - with copies available) with all the seasons, Veteran, Senior, Junior, Age group and County Competitions at Epee.

If any fencers need to borrow extra kit to compete in competitions please see Prof. Likewise if you are unsure as to what equipment you need for competitions please see Prof.

Fencers (especially Adults) please send in any competition results (and photos if possible) to either Julie (japhcouchman@aol.com) or Prof. (steve@battling.com) for inclusion on the Clubs web site.

**A word from our Coaches.**

**Professor Steve Paul writes..**

2016 has been an 'interesting' year on and off the piste.

It has been great to see so many familiar faces last term and may I say how encouraging it is to see you all improving and enjoying your fencing.

Coming from a fairly competitive background (Olympic Fencing Father and Olympic Sprinter medal winning Mother) I have grown up competing on many levels and been involved in National and International competitions most of my life and it would be great to see more of you getting involved with this part of the sport (no pressure!). It is not for everyone, but I feel the experience would be beneficial to the majority of you (I'm coming for ya Jacob!). It's not as scary as you think and you will get help all along the way. Do please come and see me if you want more information.

As my Coaching (sword in hand) capabilities diminish over time due to my condition we will be actively sourcing another top level Coach to help on Sundays and during the week. HOWEVER, I will still be available to run warm ups; take  footwork sessions (I'm sure Sebastian is jumping for joy); take technical sessions; run competitions; 'strip' coaching (as the Americans term it) which is basically observing and coaching from the side of the piste and generally screaming and shouting at people!

I am also actively looking to organising inter Club competitions with one or possibly three other clubs. If any RTW Fencer actively fences at other clubs it would be fun to take them on in a match. If anyone thinks another club would be keen please let me know.

Sometime next term we will be running the first RTW F/C Club Championships. This will bring together all Fencers from the club who wish to compete in age groups with a normal competition format (i.e.poules and then DE) to determine a 'CLUB CHAMPION' in each age group. Yippee!

Special congratulations to all our Fencers competing under the Royal Tunbridge Wells banner in National and International competitions. There are just too many wonderful results to mention here but please see the club's web site (top of Google search) for full competition results and many thanks to James, Piero, Guy, Harry, Daniel, Amelia and Roberto for all their hard work / training, dedication and talent. And not forgetting our valiant RTW Team members recently crossing swords with other clubs in the Kent mixed team championships - namely, Guy / Harry / Amelia ; Cameron / Serena / Daniel ; Paul / Charlie / Chris. Congratulations.

Also, and of course not forgetting our equally hard working, competing week day fencers - Simon & Paul.

Lastly a special thank you to my fellow Coaches, Paul Beasley, Chris Higginson and Don Coe who's help and dedication is invaluable.

Really looking forward to another year of Fencing with you, the wonderful members of the RTW Fencing club.

**Coach Paul Beasley writes...**

At RTWFC we're nothing if not bold (some would say bonkers). On Mondays we chanced a social engineering experiment: we combined our existing Monday 'fizzy' teen group with the somewhat more grizzled senior ranks. What could possibly go wrong?! Although brows were occasionally furrowed and expressions were sometimes pained, we all survived - and the plan is to repeat the experiment all over again next term, on Mondays *and also* Thursdays (oh the humanity!). Congratulations to the Monday maniacs - Thea, Kat, Ethan and Liam - and Thursday's rogues - Hannah, Louis, Jacob, James and Owen - for continuing to progress through the grades. All you need to do now is remember that the name of the club does contain the word '*fencing*'...).

The senior sessions continued to spark with the keen rivalry of our seasoned fencers, with Nigel Beadsworth oft to the fore again. Also much in evidence - and almost omnipresent throughout the term - were the strong-arm tactics of our flexible Falun friend Charlie Winter (who deserves a gong for his new-found commitment to competitive fencing). Laura McMaster, Nick Weaver and the snake-hipped Roberto Steiner all skirmished with increasing skill, and Simon Pink and Paul Baillache continued to raid national and international competitions with aplomb, helping the South East bag the veteran's Winton Cup and returning from a club competition in Bruges with many beer-based 'trophies'.

Our stalwarts, though, found defending their home territory much more difficult than ever before due to the fleet-footed and fast-improving Guy Ashcroft-Lury (now Kent Schools champion!) and the rise of 'The Praying Mantis' himself - Daniel Powers (with his peculiarly effective both-feet-facing-forwards,  walk-like-an-Egyptian fencing style).

In turn, our upstarts have had to glance anxiously over their shoulder as upwardly mobile gladiators Piero Steiner and Harry Couchman grow in guile, newcomers Thomas and Ryan shape up into nifty swordsmiths, and our intermediates - Aris, Aine, Eve, Sue, Frankie and Jonathan - develop their own devilish brand of blade-work. We're delighted that you've all chosen to spend your spare time with us at RTWFC!

And last, but by no means least... The Force Awakens! Monday evenings welcomed a new band of young swashbucklers. Matthew, Ewan, Duffy, Charlie, Dylan, Sasha, William and Laurie all made impressive progress on the piste. We hope to see you all in the new year, when the long-delayed shipment of lightsabres finally arrives... Just kidding: we're an epee club. Sorry!

I look forward to working with you all again upon my return in February (my stand-in is a triple Olympic hotshot, *apparently*). In the meantime, may the festive force be with you.

**Coach Don Coe writes...**

"Thanks to Prof. Steve Paul and my appointment as an assistant coach, I have been given the opportunity to pass on to Club members the attitude and feelings I have for the Art of Fencing. I was trained at a time when the history, etiquette and elegance of the sport was of enormous importance and I feel privileged to be allowed to continue to promote those attributes.

I’m also very keen to promote the understanding of the workings and care of the weapon we use at the RTWFC – the epee. It, too, has a history, etiquette and elegance in its own right and as Club armourer and I’m always willing to explain how to make best use of it. Try me!"

**Coach Chris Higginson writes...**

With the Christmas holidays bringing closure to 2016 I’d like to say a big thank you to all you fencers who come and make our club special.
As a coach to you younger swashbucklers and Jedi’s I take great pleasure in seeing you all progress with your training. Even if some of you are tempted by the Dark Side from time to time you all have impressed me with your dedication, persistence and enthusiasm.
On our competition days you all have demonstrated your developing sword skills; Max and Harley scoring more points than ever before. Both Fergus’s using their fencing minds as they battle for top for the spot. Flea and Maddy forever hungry to learn more, as they won’t be letting the boys win……but wait!... This is starting to sound like a school report and we all come to fencing to have fun. So relax, enjoy the Christmas break and just dream of fencing, as I look forward to seeing you all again in the New Year

Unfortunately, the prizes for the ‘termly competition’ winners were delivered too late to hand out at the end of term. These will now be distributed at the beginning of next term. Winners are..

Juniors… Fergus 1, Fergus 2, Xavi, Dalma.

Teens… Daniel, Guy, Jacob, Owen, Serena, Thea, Kat, Hannah, Lottie, Amelia and Piero.

So all it leaves is for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year with lots of fencing!

RTWFC