

## **BVF Chairman's Report to AGM**

In terms of international success in 2011 Great Britain Veterans came out top in Europe at the individual championships in Henin-Beaumont, France, with 6 gold, 3 silver and 7 bronze medals.

That success was repeated in the World Championships in Porec, Croatia when, again, Great Britain Veterans topped the country league table by achieving 4 gold, 4 silver and 5 bronze medals.

Such success will be hard to sustain which is why the committee put in a lot of thought and work into devising a new system of selection which was placed before the membership late last year.

It was not well received by some whilst others thought it to be a good scheme and so with divided opinions, the committee took the decision to undertake a survey to allow all members to have a say on how we want to move forward.

We decided to continue with the 2010 selection process for the 2012 season using the Age Group Qualifiers and the BVF Championships as the two competitions used for selection and to review the process for future years in the light of the response from the survey.

A presentation of the results of the survey will be made by John Crouch who was appointed to act as an independent arbiter.

Our membership continues to grow and it is encouraging to see that the growth was reflected in a record number of 164 entries to the Age Group Qualifiers held in Bletchley on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

Many veterans have been active in the run up to the 2012 London Olympics, giving their time and expertise during 2011. A very successful test event in November at the Excel Centre in Docklands augers well for the Games this summer and I know that you join me in wishing Hilary Philbin and her team every success.

Our Newsletter continues to be well received and is very capably produced by editor Gillian Aghajan and our website, devised and maintained by John Mason, is one of the best to be seen in the world of fencing.

Our domestic fencing programme suffered a setback in 2011 when the availability of committee members' time meant that the Unisex Foil & Sabre and the Unisex Epee events could not be run, but the introduction of further Veteran Open events in Leeds and Hampshire have provided additional fencing opportunities for members and we hope to increase the number of these.

The West Midlands Open competition, ably run by Domestic Fencing Officer Peter Baron, who also organises teams for matches and competitions around the UK, grew in numbers in 2011 and it is hoped that this excellent competition will continue to grow this year.

International Fencing Officer David Sweeney is, as you know, currently undergoing a period of treatment and, pending his return to BVF duties, the committee has taken on his workload.

I would like to thank the members of the committee, Marcia Stretch, John Mason, Peter Baron, David Sweeney, Gillian Aghajan, Lawrence Burr, Jonathan Stanbury and Malcolm Fare for the hard work, time and commitment they have given to the BVF this past year and which is reflected in the success of the organisation.

Frank Mills, Chairman