

NVA News



Happy Christmas



from your committee
to over 500 NVA members !!!

!! 500 !!

500 is a [Harshad number](#). [Monkey](#) (UK slang for £500)

a name of two different card games, see [500 \(card game\)](#) for the trick taking game and [500 Rum](#) for the rummy game.

Cardinal	500 five hundred
Ordinal	500th (five hundredth)
Factorization	$2^2 \cdot 5^3$
Roman numeral	D
Binary	111110100(2)
Octal	764(8)
Duodecimal	358(12)
Hexadecimal	1F4 ₁₆

Diary

January 23-24 Age Group Qualifiers

See Entry forms with this newsletter or on the web

March 5-7 National Championships and AGM

Other NVA Events planned for 2010. Put them in your diary now !

Apr 17	Oxford Unisex Foil & Sabre NEW
Apr 24-25	4 Nations Championships. Scotland. Teams selected by Home Country selectors.
May 27-30	European Team Championships, Skopje, Macedonia.
July 3-4	1st Veterans Open - Midlands NEW
Jul 17-18	Celtic Challenge. Hosted by Truro Fencing club in Cornwall.
Sep 11-12	Veterans Winton Cup, Lilleshall National Sports Centre.
Sep ??	World Championships, Porec, Croatia (tbc)
Oct 9-10	Welsh Veterans Championships, Swansea (tbc). Contact Gillian Aghajan for details
Oct 31	Middlesex Epée. (Rules)
Nov 27	Xmas dinner and fencing

Paul Harden of Saxon Fencing Club became

our 500th member in November.

Welcome to the NVA Paul.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION **RULE CHANGES AND ENTRY FEES**

CONDUCTIVE FOIL BIBS for NVA Competitions

Please note that in compliance with FIE requirements, conductive bibs will be required to be used by participants in the foil competitions within the **Age Group Qualifiers** and the **British Veterans Championships 2010**.

For those members needing further information on the types of conductive bibs available, including retro fit conductive bibs for non-Leon Paul masks, visit the Leon Paul website www.leonpaul.com

Dear NVA Members,

In the last edition of the Newsletter, I wrote to inform you of the rising costs of putting on our National Championships and Age Qualifier events and the need to increase the entry fees to meet some of those mounting costs.

At our regular meeting in November, your committee discussed this matter at length, always mindful of the need to try to keep the rise in entry fees at a reasonable level, whilst maintaining the high standards of equipment and organisation these important competitions merit.

In 2010, it is certain that the NVA will be contributing a significant sum towards the cost of running the National Championships in March, which incidentally is being renamed "The British Veterans Championships" to more accurately reflect its status in the fencing calendar, and the entry fees for this **Championships and The Age Group Qualifiers will be set at £20 for one weapon, £35 for two and £45 for three.**

We hope that you will continue to support these events and we look forward to welcoming you to them in 2010.

Sincerely

Frank Mills

Chairman

National Veterans Association Report for British Fencing 2009

National Champions 2009

	Foil	Epee	Sabre
Men	John Troiano	Neal Mallett	Richard Cohen
Women	Gillian Worman	Sara Spence	Jane Hutchison

The NVA has reached a milestone in membership with the 500th member being recruited in November 2009. Our National Championships were again well supported and the Age Group Championships received a record number of entries. This level of support, combined with our consistent record of winning a significant number of medals in the European and World Championships, helps to maintain the NVA's reputation as a leading country on the World Veterans stage.

In the European Veterans Individual Championships held in Balatonfured, Hungary, in May, GB vets won 5 gold, 1 silver and 7 bronze medals and were ranked 2nd in the medal tables.

The 2nd Veterans Winton Cup was held in Lilleshall in September with over 160 participants in 9 teams. We were delighted to have co-hosted a Gala Dinner with British Fencing on the Saturday night, when they presented their 2009 Annual Awards for achievement and where a number of veterans were the recipients.

Our fencing successes continued at the World Veterans Championships held in Moscow in September and where Great Britain fencers achieved 2 gold, 2 silver and 3 bronze medals and ranked 2nd in the medal tables.

The NVA Committee continues to work hard to constantly improve the standards of competitions and activities for the membership who are kept well informed through the monthly issue of our Newsletter and through the NVA website .

www.veterans-fencing.co.uk

Frank Mills

Report - RN Match - Sunday 29 November. NVA report by Cary Zitcer

On a damp, late November, morning eighteen hardy Vets travelled to the Royal Marines barracks in Bermondsey, SE London for a match against the Royal Navy. The Navy had obviously intended taking the match very seriously, going to the lengths of arranging their Inter-Navy Championships for the day before so that they were tuned and focused for the match against us. Unfortunately for them they had not returned from post Championship results until around 4.00am so there were some rather jaded faces confronting us when we arrived at their facility.

We had been asked to bring ID but the on-site guards did not appear to have too much difficulty differentiating fit athletes with honed bodies from the sailors and we gained access without any problems. British Naval hospitality is renowned and we were welcomed if with a little trepidation but certainly with warmth. They laid on a sumptuous post match lunch and we hope that this will become an annual fixture.

The match itself? In the spirit of friendlies it ended up with 3 matches each, but in the spirit of Vets fencing we won comfortably on hits. Highlights of the match? Undoubtedly the victory of our Men's Foil team against an able and very fit Naval team. The spirit of Jon Dawkins, John Fruen and Brian Millo was inspirational. Brian's fencing for someone only recently returned after decades absence was incredible, John's pugnacity and Jon's ariel acrobatics all contributed to an exciting and deserved win.

Many thanks to The Navy for taking the time from their duties to arrange this match. Apparently we won - final score 3-3 on matches. We won on hits.

The View from a new team member !!

Biscuits. The one thing I remember most is biscuits. Not many biscuits, mind, but when crushed and broken, you only need a few to fill every space in every sock, shoe and breeches. I'm a man of habit who likes a clean and tidy fencing bag but the scene that I saw at the Old Jamaica Road building was one of congestion and lots of it. I'd read a bit about the RNAFA and the photos on the Navy website convinced me there was nothing amateur about their standard of fencing. Some weeks earlier I replied somewhat enthusiastically to Peter Baron who (in the finest traditions of the navy) was trying to press-gang some veterans into service to compete against the RNAFA. I answered the call and responded. It was a hard lesson I was to learn. I had no credentials to offer except those I collected from the Middlesex Open. There, I had the dubious distinction of probably being the only person in the history of veterans fencing to have played 21 and lost 21. Not exactly the qualifications needed to the take on the RNAFA on equal terms. Still, what the heck! There's nowhere to go, but up, surely?

I arrived at the venue wet and miserable and cold. It rained and rained. The guard on duty at the reception

desk seemed a little surly and somewhat bothered to have so many people arriving. I could appreciate his angst. The hall was seething with people and fencing bags lay strewn over every square inch of open space. I found a small spot where I lay my bag on the floor and carefully laid out my kit and searched for my fellow team mates. I soon put names to some of the faces I see on the veteran's website and one face I recognised from the Middlesex Open was Roger Nickless who was a fellow competitor on the ME team. I went back to my bag to collect my kit and then I noticed that several heavy feet (Boots, size 12, biscuits, breaking, for the purpose of) had stepped on my bag and that explained my problems with the biscuits. I shook them out of my kit. No problem methinks; the measure of the fencer is not the broken biscuit but the honour of the broken sword. It could have been like that but it was not.

The fencers in the Navy Team were typical of the men I expected. Tall, lean, chiselled and supremely fit. Around the hall were half torsos on stands. They were mannequins of marines that looked like Action Man on steroids each of which had a fierce scowl taken from Captain Hurricane's manual of Nasty Looks. I'd no doubt they were other than ornamental.
continued-



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Our opposition had the athletic build like greyhounds and that suggested they'd move up and down the piste like one. We were not to be disappointed. The Navy had their own internal competitions that weekend. What was new to me was the presence of two laid-down pistes and very fancy electronic scoring boxes. I'd never used such advanced technology malarkey before. It all seemed to offer promise but that was all, a sniff of a promise. The most decent thing I could do was apologise to my fellow team mates. I told them, played 21 lost 21 so don't expect fireworks from me. We were one of the first teams to fight. After nine bouts in the race to 45 hits we had conceded, ahem, 45 hits and we scored a few points. I even achieved something I'd not expect to get and that is a point: a single point. Progress, of sorts. Any elation I hoped to feel was soon forgotten when I studied the three fencers against us. One had national stripes (always a bad omen for me) and the other two were fast and skilled and held an epee (another bad omen for me). No prisoners taken in this match, nosiree. It was my first timed relay competition. Being a generally defensive fencer as I am, I felt I had the option to run the clock down and perhaps lose 1-0 or maybe draw. A nice idea but I forgot that the three I was up against did not need three minutes. It was all over so quickly. Roger Nickless and Brian Cramp fought bravely and tactically but against those three there was perhaps really only one outcome. It took longer getting changed than I spent on the piste.

The Navy team were very polite and treated us with courtesy. We did the same for them and that's 100% correct to do. So often I've seen videos on the internet where opponents barely bother to salute or acknowledge each other but these guys do it the right way. When the dust had settled on our match I watched the Navy sabreurs fight against each other. I could see over 200 years of dedication to the sabre. I'm glad I did not have to fight them. Seldom have I seen such aggression in play. Controlled aggression, but the sabres hit like bolts of lightning. I'd not want to be against them with real steel in a fight to the death. I was amused by one of their referees. A point of law was called into question by one of their sabreurs. He stood quite assertively, standing his ground with one hand on his hip. The referee explained his decision and explained how he read the action. He then quipped "And I have the senior rank!"

One by one we left. Outside, the rain fell like a waterfall. I slung my bag over my shoulder and walked to the tube station. I replayed each of my primary actions on the piste. Brian and Roger gave me sound advice but I felt like a puny boxer in one corner staring across at a leviathan of a bruiser in the other. Did I mind losing? No. Would I come back for another competition? Yes.

At our next club meeting I discussed the competition with one of our coaches and another fencer that has taken me under his bell guard and who mentors me on the piste. I discussed my basic moves with them and how I felt I achieved something positive although my result in each bout would indicate otherwise. Fighting against the navy was an experience for sure. Meeting fellow veterans was a pleasure as well. What did I really learn from this competition? Next time, I will leave the biscuits at home.

Peter Hamilton-Scott

Thank you Peter for such an entertaining and honest piece.

Linda

And a piece from Henry De- Silva

The Stationary Office made an Account of the Battle of Britain 8th August- 31 rd October 1940

Quote

"The Contest may, indeed, be likened to a duel with rapiers fought by masters of the art of fence. On such an encounter the thrusts and parries are so swift as to be often hard to perceive and the reflector only realises the fight is over when the loser drops his feint, or falls to the ground defeated"



The final team against the Royal Navy was as follows:-

MF	ME	MS
Jon Dawkins	Peter Hamilton-Scott	Jim Philbin
John Fruen	Roger Nickless	Cary Zitcer
Tony Bartlett	Brian Cramp	Mike Garrity
WF	WE	WS
Hilary Philbin	Niké Ajibode	Viv Frith
Silvia Earl	Mariette Mason	Gabrielle Trinczek
Caron Hale	Sharon Nickless	Gillian Aghajan

Xmas Fencing report

The competition was run according to the formula used for the Stourbridge Crystal Open and taken up by the Wellesbourne; a round of poules unique at each weapon followed by an incomplete D.E. from 8 by relay matches.

Six teams entered. Two of the teams didn't supply names, a Bath team and Jon Dawkins's team, so I allocated them one arbitrarily and neither objected, so they were stuck with them. The first round produced a couple of surprising results, probably induced by the relaxed attitude of the participants.

At the end of the round after the results of the teams' individual members were totted up, Prevet's Pirates were clear first seeds with 2 first places and a 2nd.

Frank Mills's Earl Greys were 2nd seeds, both teams getting a bye into the semi-final.

Both quarter-final matches produced "upsets", with 5th seeded Dawkins Devils defeating Andy Bornemisza's Bath squad (Born's Bathers), whilst 6th and last seed Baron Nights comprehensively beat 3rd seeded Last Remnants. In the former match, with Epée first fight John Rohde got the Devils off to a good start with a 10-2 victory over Gillian Aghajan. In the foil novice Joanne Rippin managed to cut the deficit by a couple of hits to 6-20 against Astrid Merrick. The task of overhauling Jon Dawkins proved too great for Andy B, despite effectively beating Jon 20-10, it was the Devils who ran out winners 30-26. In the 2nd quarter, with Sabre first fight, I made up for my first round slip ups by mercilessly beating Maggie Mayers 10-0 (Sorry Maggie), Janet then beat Anthony Rossiter, who had won 5-2 in the Epée poule, to take the score to 20-6. Malcolm Fare made a valiant attempt to claw back a mere 24 hit deficit against Fred Sheppard, making good inroads into it, but not enough to snatch victory, final score being 30-19 to the Baron Nights.

In the semis Prevet's Pirates proved too strong and repelled the boarders from Dawkins Devils. With Epée again coming first, Richard Sweatman beat John Rohde 6-1 – the only match all day to go to time. Jon Dawkins beat Chris Prevet 15-14 to bring the score to 20-16 in favour of the Pirate crew. Astrid wasn't strong enough to resist an in-form Caron Hale, who ran out a comfortable winner; final score 30-22 to the Pirates. In the other match, the upstart Baron Nights provided another shock by overturning their seeding once again. This time with Epée first Janet picked up 4 hits off Andrew Brown, before I took on Silvia and, fencing more determinedly than in the poule, turned the score round to 20-13 in our favour. Fred then held off Frank for a 30-22 victory.



The run ended in the final but not without its being a close run thing. In the first fight Chris Prevett beat me rather more easily than in the poule, 10-6. Then Janet took on Richard Sweatman, undefeated in the 1st round, losing 10-9 to leave us only one further hit behind and taking the score to 20-15. Fred clawed back the deficit against Caron to take the lead at 23-22. The lead then alternated and, with Fred leading 27-26 going into the last minute, Caron made a final spurt to win the match for the Pirates at 30-27.

Individual Results:

Foil: Malcolm Fare
 Epée: Richard Sweatman
 Sabre: Chris Prevett

Best Man overall: Malcolm Fare*
 Best Woman overall: Caron Hale

Most important result: everyone seems to have thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

* The decision on best man was on indicators, each having won all their fights. In fact the result was clearer than I announced on the day with Malcolm having an indicator a couple of hits better than his rivals, not just on count back of hits scored as I said it was.

Thanks to all who helped to set up and dismantle the kit and to run the event.

TEAM NAMES	FOIL	SABRE	EPEE
Baron Night	Fred Sheppard	Peter Baron	Janet Baron
Prevett's Pirates	Caron Hale	Chris Prevett	Richard Sweatman
Born's Bathers*	Joanne Rippin	Andy Bornemisza	Gillian Aghajan
The Earl Grays	Frank Mills	Silvia Earl	Andrew Brown
Dawkin's devils*	Astrid Merrick	Jon Dawkins	John Rohde
The Last Remnants	Malcolm Fare	Maggie Myers	Anthony Rossiter

Information from Silvia Earl

I'm sure she won't tell you as she's too modest but Jane Clayton has been awarded Kent Veteran sports person of the year

Well done Jane!!
 Ed

NOTABLES: WELL DONE !!!!! - TOP HALF ONLY

Derry Open - 9/11/2009

WE (10)	1	Fiona HALDANE
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Miller-Hallett - 30/11/2009

ME (138)	32	Howard WEST
	67	Jon STANBURY

Milner-Barry - 30/11/2009

WE (92)	34	Amanda WEBSTER
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Advalus Pro Sabre -21/11/200

MS (71)	35	Rob PENTON
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Welsh Open - 14/11/2009

MF (110)	52	Tim MILES
	55	Austen ROSE
ME (136)	3	John CHALMERS
	65	Andrew RAMSAY
	68	Keith BARNETT
WE (101)	24	Mariette MASON
	47	Joanne REYNOLDS

Silvia Earl and Jane Clayton - looking very serious



HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Age Groups will have on-line entry again this year. See the Latest News page of the website.

Membership cards will have a small change, there will be a membership number printed as well as the name. It will be used in entering and editing entries in the on-line entry.

At some point there will be a small directory section in the newsletter where anyone can post news of forthcoming events such as competitions, training camps, courses and so on. The NVA is offering this as an information service to its members and does not recommend or imply support for the events published. Events must have an interest for veteran fencers.

Also at some point John will start an information service by email. We get a lot of announcements about overseas veterans competitions and we do want to encourage our members to take part. At the same time we don't want the flow of information to become a nuisance. So John will start an email service some time in the New Year and there will be an option on every mailing for you to say "Thanks, but please take me off your mailing list". John will try and maximise the relevance of information so if you are an epeeist he will try to avoid sending you information on Foil/Sabre competitions.

Throughout the year I get a few photos that I have not used here is a selection, make up your own titles ! Have a great Christmas Linda



NVA Membership Survey 2009

Earlier in the year, the NVA website ran a survey inviting a response from members.

The intention was to provide the NVA Committee with information to enable it to develop the organisation and activities, to best suit the needs of the majority of the membership.

The response was most encouraging in that nearly 45% (223) of the membership took part in the survey which covered many facets of the NVA and the answers have provided the committee with some useful pointers in setting an agenda to develop activities, and improve current activities, for the future.

Although comments were very varied, there were some that had a recurring theme i.e. start times, travelling distances and the cost of some events with particular reference to organised dinners.

As a result, we are reviewing event start times, new event locations and a wider choice of competition opportunities for the majority of members, both non-internationals and international fencers alike.

Members of the Committee are currently working on the organisation of a Vets Open competition, located in the Midlands to facilitate travel, and the re-launch of the Unisex Foil and Sabre competition on Oxford. Details of these events will be published as soon as they are to hand.

Of course, comments from members are always welcomed and are essential if we are to continue to provide the right activities for you. We are now in excess of 500 members and aware that what is done will not always meet everyone's requirements, but we will continue to improve our events, where costs and resources allow, and develop the scope of the NVA for the better enjoyment of veteran fencers.

Frank Mills

NVA Chairman



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