

# Agenda Special Meeting of the USFA Board of Directors

July 6, 7:30 a.m., 2004

Charlotte, NC

The Board of Directors meeting is divided into three major phases:

**Information:** Minutes of the previous meeting; officer, director and committee reports; and general announcements.

**Budget:** Approval or disapproval of the budget, requests for major changes in it including staff or executive actions that may involve budget changes.

**Decision:** Motions before the Board (excluding those directly related to the budget) are divided into three categories:

**URGENT:** Motions that have not had a First Hearing but must be acted upon by the Board for time or other considerations.

**SECOND HEARING:** Motions that have had First Hearing at the previous Board meeting; Second Hearing motions must be voted upon as presented, with only minor changes permitted (if a motion requires major changes or fails completely, it must be re-presented as a First Hearing Motion at a subsequent Board meeting).

**FIRST HEARING:** Motions that are new to the Board, but for which decisions are not urgent. A First Hearing motion may not be voted upon unless the Board moves it to the Urgent category; instead, it is automatically placed in the Second Hearing category at the next meeting unless the sponsor withdraws it.

Every motion must have an individual sponsor identified in the agenda and in attendance at the meeting. The sponsor presents the motion, answers questions, takes notes on suggested changes, and shepherds the motion if it is referred to committee. Committees that are presenting motions must assign a member to fulfill this duty.

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## **I. Information**

### **A. General Information and Organizational Items:**

General announcements – Introduction of New Administration  
Appointment of Parliamentarian

### **B. Minutes of the February 14, 2004 Meeting of the Board of Directors.**

**Motion (Mr. Anthony):** To approve the minutes of the February 14, 2004 Meeting of the Board of Directors.

### **C. Officer and Director Reports: (Please refer to the Index of Appendices)**

### **D. Committee Reports**

- 1 Committee Reports: (Please refer to the Index of Appendices)
- 2 Executive Committee Reports of Action

#### **April 15, 2004**

- a. Approved motion for \$4,000 variance for sports science budget.
- b. USFA 2004 Service Awards approved for the following:

Jack Baker Award Service to the Organization/USFA  
Carl Borack

Ray Miller Service to the Sport  
Peter Harmer

USFA Service to Division and Sections  
Wendell Kubik

#### **May 27, 2004**

- a.) Approved a motion to amend the Operations Manual to read as follows:

The Jury of Appeal at a national competition shall be composed of two members each from the following groups, if present and not affiliated with the protest:

- \* Tournament Committee
- \* Fencing Officials Commission
- \* Coaches Committee or representative of National Coaching Staff
- \* International Committee
- \* Athlete Advisory Group

At the beginning of each national tournament, the Tournament Committee Representative shall compile a list of prospective Jury of Appeal members, consisting of up to two representatives and two alternates from each of the above groups, chosen from those who will be in attendance at the tournament. This list will be posted near the registration area and at the bout committee table throughout the tournament.

The Jury of Appeal shall elect a chair from among its members.

- b.) Approved the Executive Director to authorize expenditures to adequately fund travel and outfitting the WS and WF World Championship Teams in a consistent manner as teams from previous years.

## II. Budget Phase

- A. **Financial Reports:** The complete financial reports for the Budget Phase will be mailed to the Board under separate cover in advance of the meeting.
1. Budget vs. Actual report for period of  
**Motion (Mr. Sullivan): To approve the Budget Report as submitted to the Board.**

## III. Decision Phase

### A. Urgent- no items

### B. Second Hearing

**1. Motion (Mr. Soter): In any tournament in which the strips are enclosed so that access to the scoring table is denied to non-competitors, either (1) the score shall be clearly posted or clearly announced, in a manner visible or audible to the public, after each touch, or (2) a person of the competitor's choosing who may act as a coach or attendant shall have access to the scoring table or the area facing the referee.**

**Issue:** Tournament set-ups are only in partial conformance with FIE standards.

**Discussion:** The USFA has implemented only half of the FIE's "look and feel" program. Where strip enclosures are used for international competitions, large scoresheets are mounted by each strip so that the progress of the pool may be followed, and either scorekeepers post the score of each bout in progress at the scoring table or the referee is instructed to announce the score loudly. These latter measures are not being used in the U.S., so that coaches, parents, teammates, and spectators often have no idea what the score is, and cannot intervene when a scoring error is made. This is unfair to the fencers. Even where the scoring flip cards are present on the scoring tables, they are often not used.

**2. Motion (Mr. Soter): The entry deadline for each national tournament shall be 45 days before the first day of the tournament. Not later than 60 days before the event, the event schedule, including projected starting times for each event, shall be posted on the USFA's Web site.**

**Issue:** Event schedules are not provided in a timely manner.

**Discussion:** Scheduling information is very late in coming. This pertains to not only the cities where tournaments will be located, but also to venue location and the daily schedule at those tournaments. Fencers, parents and coaches cannot purchase tickets or make hotel reservations without this information. For people who must travel to 6-8 domestic competitions every season, the price differentials between being able to buy tickets early or having to wait until later can be ruinous. Again, this is an issue, not of making fencing inexpensive, but of not needlessly wasting fencers' money. In addition, the late posting of schedules is a direct factor in the avalanche of faxes that overwhelm the National Office immediately before an entry deadline. In an era in which the USFA has had to cut its international performance awards, it needs to be extremely sensitive to domestic competition costs. The debate about this issue has been will publicized, and the Board needs to provide firm guidance to the Tournament Committee on this issue.

**3. Motion (Mr. Soter): Any fencer who qualifies for the Junior Olympics or Summer Nationals in any [under-20 or younger] age group category also thereby qualifies for the same tournament in any younger age group category for which he or she is eligible.**

**Issue:** Qualification for age group tournaments should flow down.

**Discussion:** It happens constantly that a fencer will fail to qualify for the Junior Olympics or Summer Nationals in one age group, but qualify in an older age group. This may be due to variances in performance, different size or strength of tournaments, or mere happenstance. However, the result is that a young fencer must then choose between not fencing the Junior Olympics or Summer Nationals at all, or fencing in the older age group but not his or her most appropriate age group. This is not developmentally optimal. However, but this problem could be addressed by making age group qualification “flow down,” so that an age group fencer qualifies in each younger category by qualifying in an older category.

### **C. First Hearing**

**1. Motion (Mr. Zimmerman):** That the USFA adopt, effective September 1, 2004 the following changes to the rules of fencing: a) in foil, turning of the shoulders is no longer a fault; b) a foil point is required to raise a weight of seven hundred fifty (750) grams; c) the maximum curvature of a foil is one centimeter.

### **III. Good and Welfare**

**1. The next Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held Oct. 2-3 in Colorado Springs**

## Appendix A: President's Report, Stacey Johnson

### My Final Report to the Board as USFA President

We are now poised on the eve of the Olympic Games. This president's report to the Board marks my last. I am truly grateful for the forward progress the organization has made over the last four years. What I believed has moved and sustained us through these often challenging four years was... YOU! Your leadership, contributions and good will, working in partnership with the Executive Committee and USFA staff, has provided great service to all USFA members. Before I wrote this report, I reviewed all of the documentation of these last four years that I could. I reviewed our strategic plans, the many articles I have written for the magazine and the ongoing reports made to the USFA Board of Directors. You will find in this Board packet, the officers' reflections of what 3-5 critical objectives they feel have been the most significant achievement accomplished in their respective areas during their tenure.

Listed below is an overview of our current mission and broad goals and what I believe we have achieved as an organization.

#### *The Mission of the USFA is to:*

- *Direct, administer and promote the sport of fencing in U.S.*
- *Develop programs, services and opportunities that enable members from recreational to Olympian to reach their maximum potential.*
- *Select athletes and cadre for international competition, including the Olympic, Pan American and FIE World Championships.*

I believe we have achieved the above stated mission in these past four years. I think now it is time to rethink the mission statement to include specifically *winning Olympic, World Championship and Pan Am medals*. We must continue to administer the sport and provide quality programs and services to all members; however, our power internationally has doubled in the last four years as is reflected in our international results, our Pan American Games results, and in the doubling of our qualified Olympians (17) to the Games in Athens. We are now the fourth highest country in the world in terms of the number of athletes qualified.

**How did we do in reaching our goals? You and the membership are the true arbiters of the final grade, but I am willing to recommend the following for your consideration:**

#### **1. To Expand Membership – A+**

**Rationale:** Membership has grown from a 1997 number of below 10,000 members to the close of 2004, a projected 20,000 members registered. Club memberships have grown in the last four years from approximately 440 clubs to over 500 clubs, meeting and exceeding our goal to increase by 50 clubs. The more informal groups where recreational fencing occurs is happening also in approximately 500 sites in all 50 states in the U.S.

#### **2. To Increase USFA Revenues – B**

**Rationale:** Our revenues have increased significantly with a budget that is now more than \$2.6 million, but our expenditures are more than keeping pace. We have been successful in getting more USOC grants, more donations, but we are expending just as quickly. We need to improve our overall cost containment, cost-benefit analysis and long-range project expense planning. As our financial pie continues to expand, we have the luxury of creating more programs that will benefit the overall state of the sport. The temptation is to increase funding levels of existing programs, even if the existing programs have not been analyzed or proven to be the most effective for the state of the sport.

### **3. To Increase Public Interest in Fencing – A-**

**Rationale:** No question we have done a good job in moving things forward in increasing public interest in fencing. From television coverage to print in magazines and newspapers, our great athletes have been front and center in the media.

Peter Westbrook's Program also has generated incredible publicity for fencing as well and the USFA can reap benefits of increased exposure of fencing programs that are truly outstanding. In addition, our own internal public relations efforts include the work of our tremendous editor of the American Fencing Magazine, Meg Galipault. Also working full tilt is Cindy Bent doing an incredible job with news/magazine writing, and a new addition helping to leverage even more media coverage for us than ever before is 1996 Olympian Suzie Paxton, who has just been named an official NBC commentator for the Olympic Games, where fencing is promised five hours of TV coverage – a historic first for U.S. Fencing. For the future, however, we must have at least one full-time, highly qualified, paid professional staff who will work with other additional staff that can be hired for future marketing initiatives.

In addition to marketing and public relations activities, an objective was pursued to ensure our national tournaments and key international tournaments had a "look and feel" that was both audience and media friendly. Clearly we have made outstanding strides in this effort; the most recent spectacular event where this was demonstrated was at the New York Grand Prix World Cup that featured four different colored carpeted sections of the floor with matching draped seating areas for the coaches and athletes. Audience members could clearly view all four quarter final strips from every seat at Hunter College. We had beautiful scoreboards showing the names of fencers, scores and the time remaining visible from all directions. In addition, wireless saber with colored lights flashing from the masks made it so much clearer to determine who was being hit. The raised strip was beautiful and audiences really enjoyed the spectacular finals featuring U.S. athletes earning five medals. Finally a special note.

Michael Massik saved the USFA literally thousands of dollars by garnering the Roosevelt Ballroom for the finals of the World Championships. Many kudos for his fast thinking and acting on behalf of the organization in finding a middle ground that enabled the USFA to host a class act and keep a lid on expenses.

### **3. To Enhance the Efficiency and Organizational Effectiveness of the USFA – B**

With the development of the four-year plan (which received high praise as a model strategic plan from the USOC) and the naming of competent individuals to serve on key committees, the USFA has enjoyed a strong four years lead by capable volunteers who served throughout our committee structure. In addition, the Executive Committee and the Board held ongoing planning retreats where we took time to really think and speak to each other about not only what was happening in the present, but how we could keep working successfully towards our goals in the future.

### **4. To Develop a Coherent Coaching Structure – B**

Certainly, this particular goal was a stretch for the organization. It was a goal that evolved from the last quad's goal to include coaches' participation in all levels of the organization. We of course have a strong grass roots training program that is run through our Coaches College certifying coaches very successfully. Further we have named national coaches who have other assistant coaches operating in national programs with elite level fencers. In addition we did hold coaching seminars at national tournaments and we held the very first "Black Star" seminars which were advanced coaching seminars. Also, we saw great leadership installed and leading the USFCA in Wendell Kubik. In addition, we have systematically recognized and rewarded coaches' accomplishments at our annual Hall of Fame Ceremonies and in working with the USOC in their coaches' recognition program. However, we have not been able to pull all the pieces of the coaching puzzle together, or to make a coherent pipeline for them to emerge through a system as of yet. This challenge needs to be revisited in the next four years.

**5. To Establish the USA as a Recognized International Force in the World Fencing Community – A+**  
Clearly in both the competitive arena and in the political arena, the U.S. has become a powerhouse in terms of athletic results and in terms of political influence within the FIE. The board has been provided a running list of the incredible number of medals we are picking up in nearly all weapons on the international scene. We are unhappy as a nation now if we do not hear the U.S. national anthem played at an international event.

Politically, we joined forces with the Pan American Confederation member countries, supported our Pan Am Confederation President Anibal Illueca, and were able to ensure an American presence on every single FIE Commission and the Executive Committee. The U.S. became a pivotal player in terms of influence, and we saw the European Confederation consistently unable to come to consensus on key issues. We helped ensure women's saber onto the Olympic Games program. Now young girls and women can dream of their own personal journey to gold in all three weapons. It has taken us more than 100 years to achieve this and the U.S. was a key reason that it happened. Do women have equity yet in fencing? No. We have come a step closer, however, and now we must continue the fight for equity into the next quad. The individuals who have served on the FIE Commissions have represented us very well and I believe we have a cadre of individuals who can continue to help and serve us well over the next several quadrennials.

I want to thank the Board for their diligent work. I thank you for modeling the value of "cooperation," working together as a team solving policy issues on behalf of the USFA. We did not engage in combat, but rather we reasoned together and moved quickly along our path, enabling more of our energies to be put to use in productive ways. Thank you for allowing me to serve, special thanks to my Executive Committee and special advisors who have worked tirelessly and well all along the way.

In closing, I am very proud of the USFA staff. I compliment Michael Massik for his work as our Executive Director, and in particular for the individuals that he has hired at the National Office. Truly he works around the clock and often seven days a week, keeping us financially strong and helping the USFA to keep pace in an ever changing sports industry world. As the organization has grown, the USFA staff is increasing and their success is so fundamental to our continuing strength and performance. Carla-Mae Richards is retiring and moving to Atlanta in the near future to be close to family. As I complete writing that sentence, I feel the tug of emotions rise as she has been a guide to so many of us over the years. She surely has been one of the wise women in my life and has guided me on my personal journey in fencing. Carla – there is no way to thank you for all that you do for fencing because it has been so immense. Please accept our humble appreciation for all that you have done for so many fencers, families and the USFA as whole. Carla will continue to work with U.S. Fencing on special projects. Thank heaven – I can't imagine the world of U.S. Fencing without her deep wisdom and presence.

**[Housekeeping Note:** The current criteria for NAC Division I competitions is the published criteria in the Athlete Handbook for 2003-2004. It was also published in the USFA Newsletter.]

## Appendix B: Vice President's Report, Barbara Lynch

As I write this report, I can't believe that four years has gone by. I also am amazed at how much we have progressed as an organization and as an international fencing powerhouse. It is truly awesome. We now have over 550 clubs and our membership is over 20,000. Wow! I think that the biggest change that has happened with any of the committees that reports to me, is the job that the Tournament Committee has done. The look and feel of our tournaments is an amazing sight. Before, when a non-fencer walked in, everyone was everywhere and you couldn't walk any place. Now, you walk in and everything looks like a sport should look. We now have outstanding sporting events for the world to see. I would like to thank Kalle Weeks and the entire Tournament Committee for all of their tireless work to make fencing the showcase that it should be. I would also like to thank all committee members. It is most of the time a thankless job, but one that truly makes a difference.

I would like to thank the Executive Committee, the Officers and the National office staff. You all have made the last four years bearable and most of time enjoyable. Lastly, I would like to thank my family and friends. Your support over the last four years has help tremendously.

## Appendix C: Vice President's Report, Sherry Posthumus

First and foremost I would like to thank Stacey Johnson, USFA President, for bringing me into her administration during one of the most successful four years in the history of our sport. Membership is at an all time high, international success is taken for granted, and for once our European competitors are not thrilled to have an American in their first pool! This is just the tip of the iceberg. Nancy Anderson and the incoming executive committee will have many challenges over the next four years but I believe that this outgoing Board and executive committee has laid a strong foundation upon which they can build.

There are two goals I am very proud to have helped to accomplish. The first is regionalization for youth fencing. Youth 10 and 12 fencers now have over 32 competitions across the country dedicated to them. We are building the base of the pyramid by introducing the competitive experience to hundreds of neophyte fencers. At more restrictive and local venues these young fencers can learn, develop, and prepare themselves for national competition. Kudos to Wendell Kubik, chair of the Youth Development Committee, who took an idea presented by Eric Rosenberg many years ago and turned it into a very successful program. The program still has a few stumbling blocks but I am confident that Ro Sobalvarro will move the program forward to even higher levels of excellence. Thank you to Wendell Kubik and his Youth Development Committee for a job well done!

The second goal was to utilize the Sports Science experts in our sport to provide the most innovative ideas in kinesiology, biomechanics, sport psychology, nutrition, and exercise physiology. Psychologist, Dr. John Heil, has opened the door for us in the sports science department of the USOC and he has communicated the latest research findings to our membership through the American Fencing magazine. John has conducted his own research with our national teams, specifically men's epee and women's foil. He has been instrumental in bringing the experts to our sport. We have a long way to go. Over the next four years the new administration needs to better utilize the sports sciences to further the development of our fencers so that we can maintain our place in the international arena. Sports science needs to be integrated into the development plan for our youth fencers. John Heil has volunteered many hours to our sport and I want to thank John and his committee for all of their work over the past four years.

The Board and Executive Committee have worked so well together for the past four years. They have had to make some very tough decisions but always with the knowledge that each member was specifically here because of his/her dedication to the sport of fencing. Thank you for allowing me to serve you.

## Appendix D: Vice President's Report, Ralph Zimmerman

In this, my final report of this administration, I would like to recap the major accomplishments of the past four years in each of the three areas of my responsibility, state the present status of each area, and suggest future considerations.

### **ELITE PROGRAM**

The International Committee (later the High Performance Committee) saw a tremendous advancement in the competitive fortunes of our athletes during this period. This came about as a result of the combined efforts of all aspects of our programs – coaching, referees, administration, publicity, funding, everything. Of course, the primary credit goes to the athletes themselves, who have achieved so many notable results. Our cadet and junior competitors are major players in every FIE competition they enter. I never once heard our national anthem at any single FIE competition during my 13-year career as an international referee, but no host today can be prepared without having our flag and a recording of our anthem on hand.

A large portion of these results have been in the age- group competitions, but there have also been very significant results at the very highest levels. A fencer from the US has achieved the world ranking of #1 on the senior level for the first time – and then it was accomplished by a SECOND fencer in another discipline!

The bottom line is both simple and impressive. In addition to all the medals and championships of these four years, compare the results of this year's qualifications for the Olympic Games with those of just four years ago. In each case we had to compete against the rest of the world for the few entry positions available. **THE RESULTS** – the USFA qualified a **TEAM IN EVERY WEAPON** on the men's side, and **AT LEAST ONE INDIVIDUAL IN EACH WEAPON** on the women's side. Several national programs generally thought of as superior did not do as well.

The impending change in administration brings some uncertainty with it regarding future plans and processes, resulting in unfinished continuing plans. A revised structure of some sort is possible. We will need to strive to maintain the progress underway. Retention of talented athletes as they transition across age-group lines will be important, and improved recognition of coaches at various levels should be a goal.

### **FENCING OFFICIALS COMMISSION**

This group has one of the most challenging tasks in the Association. Our schedule of national competitions, and the size of the entry fields, means that many, many referees are needed throughout the year. In addition to recruiting, assigning, mentoring and evaluating referees, this also requires constant, and consistent, testing and seminars to maintain and enlarge the pool of referees. The active members of this commission receive their full share of criticism, but usually do not hear the plaudits they deserve for the general success they have in keeping up with these demands. Add to this the necessity of providing FIE-rated referees to World Cups required with our entries, and you have a truly daunting task. With a few exceptions, the task has been met.

In addition, this group has managed to change the system of compensation for all officials working at our national tournaments. It is felt by some that this revision will help to stabilize the pool of officials and others needed for our national-level competitions. The early results are promising, but further refinements are probably still needed.

One aspect of our FOC deserves special emphasis. One of our members has been elected to the FIE Commission d' Arbitrage, where he influences the standards of referees in all international competitions. The potential and actual benefits to our competitors are very real. This individual is additionally held in high enough regard that he has been chosen as one of the delegates to supervise referees at the Olympic Games in Athens.

The tasks mentioned above will continue to require the full attention of this Commission. A point of emphasis, in my opinion, will be a need to increase our roster of USFA referees with FIE licenses that are actually available for assignment to World Cups. The reelection of our FIE Commission member should be promoted.

## **VETERANS COMMITTEE**

The USFA veteran competitors have continued to perform well in world competitions, earning more medals in the 2003 World Championships. As you can see in their attached committee report, they have started a website devoted to their interests, and have started a new event as part of their schedule. A difficulty remaining in their program is that we use a start qualifying age of 40, while the FIE program has a minimum age of 50. Efforts to interest the FIE in changing their qualifying age have not been successful to date.

However, the USFA has succeeded in gaining the agreement of the FIE to add Women's Saber to their program. This event will be contested at the World Championships in 2005, which we will be hosting once again in Tampa, Florida.

Future efforts will feature continued plans to maintain and develop our national competitions and international results. Limited available funding will probably continue to present some problems.

## **Appendix E: Treasurer's Report, Michael Sullivan**

To be mailed under separate cover and will accompany the budget report.

## **Appendix F: Secretary's Report, Don Anthony**

As I write my final report as Secretary, I reflect on the activities and accomplishments over the last four years. The most significant of all the accomplishments we have made over the last four years is the way the organization has worked together to meet the objectives of our strategic plan. Our President, Stacey Johnson came into office and introduced a collaborative approach to our strategic planning process and created a spirit of cooperation that has served us well.

Part of the strategic plan was to increase visibility and awareness for our sport. A major step forward was taken when we produced the marketing video for the USFA. The video captured the excitement and energy of our sport and gave us a tool to approach sponsors for partnership and support. The video was produced by Phil Reilly's company, CMD Agency and made available to the Board for marketing and sponsorship development. The follow on component was a sponsorship package with talking points and a presentation. Last year Edgar House led a committee that developed a fund raising strategy for the USFA. The strategy is currently being implemented with a letter appearing in US Fencing Magazine. As of this report \$4,000 in contributions has been generated.

Another component for making our sport more attractive to audiences and sponsors was improving the "look and feel" of our tournaments. The tournament committee has worked on this in a spirit of cooperation to do all that they could do within the constraints of our budgets. Today our major tournaments are moving toward a presentation that will be attractive to potential sponsors and more audience friendly. All of our National events have a very professional look these days and are steadily improving.

The final major significant accomplishment is the media exposure our sport has received over the last four years. The hard work of Cindy Bent and Suzie Paxton has truly paid off. Suzie has consistently provided her production expertise to our events, which has given us great exposure in both the video and print media.

In conclusion, I have been very honored to have the opportunity to serve the USFA in the capacity of Secretary and as part of Stacey Johnson's administration. Her excellent leadership has put the USFA on a very sound footing for the next quadrennial and many years to come. I look forward to supporting our next administration under the leadership of Nancy Anderson and seeing our organization continue to grow in size and professionalism.

## Appendix G. Executive Director’s Report, Michael Massik

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you and farewell to the outgoing administration. The advances that this organization has made during the past four years are truly remarkable and laudatory. We have made quantifiable improvements in nearly every facet of our organizational structure, and we are on track to maintain and expand on those improvements with the incoming administration.

As we change administrations, we will also experience a different sort of change. Carla Mae Richards will be retiring this fall. I believe that those of us that measure our time with this organization by the decade deeply understand and appreciate the impact and contributions that Carla has made to the sport and to the organization. In short, the United States Fencing Association would not be where we are without Carla’s years of guidance, persistence and effort. Although Carla will continue her affiliation with US Fencing, we will all deeply miss her daily contributions.

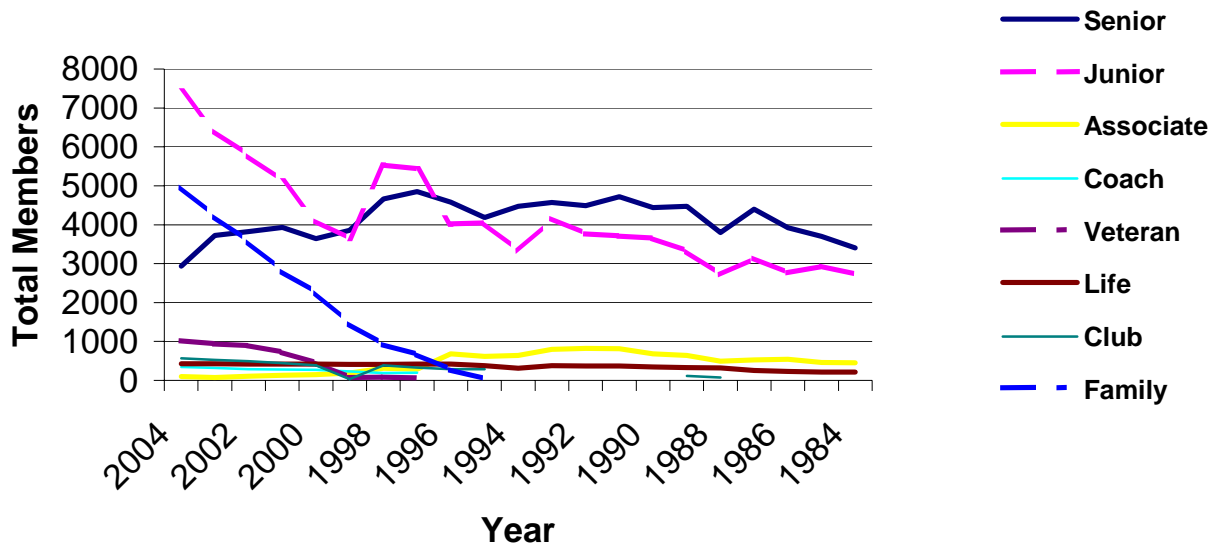
Jeffrey Cohen has been hired to fill Carla’s role. Most recently, Jeff served as the Athletic Director at Brandeis University and has been a member of the NCAA Fencing Committee. Jeff will work with Carla during the upcoming months in order to ensure that the transition is as smooth and seamless as possible.

On a different note, the sport of fencing has received more US media coverage than any time in history. From television to newspapers and even in the pages of People magazine, our athletes and our sport are being noticed as never before. Cindy Bent and Suzie Paxton have spent countless hours managing and growing this incredibly difficult venture.

Based on previous positive response, I have included another graphical depiction of the state of the sport. This graph depicts the growth by membership category during the past twenty years. The data is self-evident, and as you review the chart, I would ask that you reflect upon the enormous growth and positive change that this sport and this organization have experienced during the past decade.

Finally, as you will see in the FOC Report, one of the key aspects of discussion for this Board meeting will be the concept of the “Game Fee”. As was presented last year, the key component for the success of this concept was the hiring pattern at Summer Nationals. I will compile a report, using actual data, once that hiring process is complete. The Board will then be able to have an informed discussion on this topic.

### 20 Year Growth by Membership Type



## Appendix H: Youth Committee Report, Wendell Kubik

This year there were 32 Regional Youth Circuit (RYC) events hosted around the country and three Super RYCs. Please see the following link on the RYC website for detailed information:

<http://home.satx.rr.com/foilcoach/RYC/RYC.htm>

When the RYC program started four years ago, the goal of the Youth Development Committee (YDC) was to advance infrastructure and organization so that these "intermediate step" regional events will grow and flourish all over the United States. See the link: <http://home.satx.rr.com/foilcoach/RYC/RYCinfo.htm>

That was the essence of our mission, and it yielded the following benefits:

- promoted grass roots development throughout the country, increased USFA membership
- created skill-appropriate, affordable competition for large masses of youth fencers in reasonable proximity to where they live and train
- reduced travel and related expenses for youth fencers, administrators and officials
- increased exposure and visibility of our sport
- created decentralized regional organizations which can be more responsive to the particular needs of their youth fencing communities
- generated a consistent source of revenue for building cohesive, decentralized regional organization and infrastructure
- Increased the base of potential elite athletes

Over the past four years we accomplished the following sequenced goals for regionalization according to our plan:

- Identified both the local centers of U.S. fencing and ongoing successful youth competitions
- Established geographic regions that support both these hubs and existing and new competitions
- Designated and empowered experienced, competent organizers within these regions to act as RYC coordinators
- Organized a central committee of these RYC coordinators to establish general rules, evaluate performance and plan integrated national schedules

For the first time this past season, we implemented a qualification path for Y10 and Y12 fencers for participation in the Summer National Championships. They were required to participate in at least one RYC event in order to qualify for Summer National Y10 and Y12 events. This was the first step towards accomplishing the following regionalization goals:

- Participation in regional events as a prerequisite for national events
- Local qualification to regional events; regional qualification to national events

We also awarded national points, for the first time this past season, for results at the three designated Super RYCs to the top 40% of the field. There was mixed reaction to the award of national points at the Super RYCs. This was done to encourage attendance but it may need to be reevaluated.

These two additions to the program this past season were in line with our long-term plan to follow a flexible implementation. Adjustments and revisions should continue to occur based on the success in achieving benchmarks necessary to progress to the next phase.

My assessment of the RYC program is that we are firmly in the middle of phase 2 of our plan. Reference second paragraph above. We are accomplishing the following two goals:

- Developing and integrating regions, identifying and designating competent regional coordinators, and establishing nation-wide competitions which must be done effectively before progressing to subsequent phases
- Collecting sufficient baseline data necessary to evaluate and modify proposed point systems for fairness and balance must be obtained from each region.

I propose that the YDC continue with phase 2 for the next two years. After regional events are up and running with reasonable track records and a point system has been adopted, they can then be used for qualification purposes. We can then advance to phase 3 of the plan for Y10 and Y12 events. We can then slowly expand the regionalization program to include the older age groups and eventually adult and veteran events. I also propose that the new YDC evaluate the continuation of the Super RYCs and the awarding of national points which may be used as direct qualifiers to Summer Nationals. The current YDC will submit a proposed RYC schedule for the 2004-2005 season by August 1, 2004.

### Appendix I: Veterans Committee Report, Paul Levy

In 2003-04, the veterans committee created a new website which provides news, photos, feature stories, competition information, and related links of interest to veterans. It also serves as a clearing house for questions by veterans about concerns of veterans.

At the 2003 World Championships for Veterans in Limoges, France, the committee instigated and supported, successfully, a move to add women's saber to the competitions at the championships. The addition of a team manager, supported by the USFA, to assist the Captain was a great help. We won two golds, one silver and one bronze medal.

The committee instigated a new veterans tournament in Florida during February. Veterans' tournaments around the country, as well as some international events, are publicized on the veterans website in order to increase the number of veteran fencers in the US. While we do not have any solid data on the size of this increase, we are convinced that it is significant. At the World Championships, the number of countries participating and the number of fencers increased dramatically. We will host the Championships next year in Florida, and we expect record numbers, as that will mark the inaugural of women's saber.

### Appendix J: Fencing Officials Commission, Jeffrey Bukantz

Since the February, 2004 report, the FOC has successfully fulfilled its mandate to assign referees to the required domestic and international events.

Congratulations to Derek Cotton, who was selected by the FIE to officiate at his second consecutive Olympic Games.

Congratulations to Jon Moss (2<sup>nd</sup> time) and Sharon Everson (3<sup>rd</sup> time) for being selected by the International Wheelchair Fencing Association to officiate at the Paralympics, and to George Kolombatovich for being assigned as the Head Official.

Congratulations to George for being selected by the FIE to be on Arbitrage and to Sam Chervis for once again being the Head of Protocol at the Olympic Games.

The FOC would like to thank the USFA Board of Directors and its Executive Committee for having had the courage and foresight to pass the new Game Fee Plan.

The FOC also thanks our liaison, Ralph Zimmerman, and wishes him a continued and full recovery.

I would like to thank each member of the FOC for the competence and passion they have exhibited over the last quadrennial. Everyone contributed to a hugely successful program.

I would personally like to thank President Stacey Johnson for her courageous leadership and for fostering such a cooperative relationship with the FOC. The FOC looks forward to having an equally successful relationship with our incoming President, Nancy Anderson, and her administration.

The following represent the main issues regarding the FOC:

### 1) Implementation of the New Game Fee

Although the New Game Fee was implemented after the hiring for the first two NACs was already completed, we still expect to come in at or near the budget line.

As is normal with a brand new system, there will always be bumps in the road. For example, an extremely diligent Head FOC Rep hired his referees very early in order ensure the lowest possible airfare cost to the USFA. The New Game Fee and sliding scale had not yet been passed by the Board, and the Rep unknowingly hired a very high percentage of 1 & 2 rated referees. Subsequently, we were way over budget for that event.

In addition, Irwin, Michael and I did not consider the FIE Task Force's decision to bring in European referees at a substantial cost when crunching our numbers.

I respectfully ask the Board to continue the current Game Fee plan, as it is reasonable to expect most of the kinks to be ironed out after another full season.

### 2) Reaction to the New Game Fee

I am pleased to report that the overwhelming majority of the referees have embraced the New Game Fee Plan.

It was anticipated that there would be a mixed reaction from the referees. While no referee would be getting less than before, it is human nature to be envious, resentful or jealous of others receiving a greater stipend. However, that has not been the pervasive mindset.

The referees have accepted the reasoning for the sliding scale. Those with lower ratings understand that they have the opportunity to increase their ratings, and most are striving to do so.

A significant benefit of the new Game Fee is that the Head FOC Reps are given specific guidelines for each NAC to hire referees from each of the four rating groups. This has increased the amount of the hiring and usage of emerging referees and has enabled them to get substantial experience

### 3) Referee Morale

The referees are extremely upset over the fact that their reimbursements have been coming later than ever due to the organization's cash crunch. The good will from the New Game Fee Plan has been considerably negated by the bad will created by the increasingly late payments.

To quote one respondent who said he might not officiate again under these circumstances, "So, in other words, we are basically financing the USFA's debt."

**(It must be noted that whatever additional costs have been incurred due to the new Game Fee Plan have been mostly or completely offset by the increase in the entry fee, as was the plan. Hence, the implementation of the Game Fee is not the reason for the organization's current cash crunch.)**

In some cases the referees buy their tickets on the internet in order to get the lowest fare and to save the USFA money. In return, they get reimbursed two to three months later. So, the end result is that altruistic volunteers are not only being disincentivized but actually penalized for trying to help, and will let the USFA purchase the tickets in the future.

The reality is that the Tournament Officials are amongst the last people to get paid for their services. That is simply unacceptable, unprofessional, and must change in the upcoming season. The Board needs to be aware of the substantial bad will this has caused.

**The actual payment of the Game Fee should be paid at the event, as we know in advance what each referee is entitled to. If the FIE, sections, divisions, the Canadian Fencing Federation and many others can do so, why can't the USFA?**

The USFA has utilized a credit line in the past in order to overcome cash crises during the lean months. The organization can borrow only when needed at the lowest interest rates in history, and can do so in a collateralized manner, thereby ensuring the least possible cost.

Certainly, the referees are not asking for preferential treatment. They, as well as all Tournament Officials, vendors, and USFA employees, are entitled to be paid in a timely manner.

#### **4) Responsibilities of the FOC**

The FOC is comprised of seventeen USFA volunteers. The job of hiring referees, rating referees and training referees is not rocket science, but still one that requires tremendous expertise. In addition, it requires substantial time commitments. Furthermore, it involves some last-minute changes and issues that are beyond our control.

That doesn't mean we are perfect. However, considering the job at hand and the fact that unpaid volunteers are doing it in a near-professional manner, the USFA should be ecstatic with the performance.

The United States is a highly respected player on the world scene. We have a huge cadre of international referees who are regularly used at the highest levels. We are known for being honest and ethical, and for avoiding conflicts-of-interest at all costs.

The FOC assigns rated officials for some of the largest events in the world and we run them more efficiently than most large fencing nations.

Thanks to the efforts of the Referee Development Subcommittee, the USFA probably has the largest cadre of rated referees in the world.

We had 892 referees at the end of the 2003-2004 season, an 81% increase from the 492 we had at the end of the 2002-2003 season. There are an additional 227 referees in process as of the end of the 2004 season who have attended a seminar but not yet passed the written exam.

#### **5) Budgeting for the International Line Item**

Due to the unprecedented success of our athletes, the attendance at World Cups has continued to grow at the Cadet, Junior, and Senior levels. Subsequently, we are mandated by the FIE to provide referees at more World Cups than ever.

Thanks to the outstanding efforts of the International Assignment Subcommittee we have complied with the mandate in almost every case.

Despite the mandate to send referees to FIE World Cups, and the lengthy track record from which we can determine the budget necessary for that line item, we regularly and knowingly under-budget for this line.

This has the additional and unintended effect of unfairly putting the microscope directly on the FOC International Assignment Subcommittee while having the effect of magnifying the inevitable issues that arise in the hiring process.

Bill Goering, whose job of international assigning transcends the entire season and clearly contains the most difficulty and variables, should be lauded for his outstanding effort in a job that encompasses more time commitment and last-minute changes than any other on the FOC.

#### **6) Communication**

Thanks to Bill Oliver, who has instituted an FOC Newsletter that will be distributed monthly via email to the referees. In addition, Bill has done a tremendous job of keeping the referees' ratings up-to-date, as we allow mid-season increases up to the 4 level. There is room for improvement, however, and the FOC will work diligently with the National Office in order to maintain the most accurate database.

The FOC receives many inquiries from the membership, either directly or passed on from the National Office. These inquiries run the gamut from simple rules question to ambiguous interpretations and each inquiry is responded to in a timely manner.

Lastly, the column in American Fencing has provoked the most response from the membership and is a very useful, popular, and significant tool for the FOC.

#### **FOC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT – JULY 2004**

During the January thru July 2004 period The USFA sent 30 referees to World Cups throughout the world. Fourteen went to epee events, and eight each to foil and sabre events. The total was reduced compared to previous seasons, because our fencers attended many World Cups designated Gran Prix-Arbitrage (GP-A) by the FIE for which the USFA is not required to send referees. During April and May no referees were assigned by the Committee. After Olympic selection and the end of the GP-A events, the Committee assigned referees to New York (8), Havana (4), Puerto Rico (4) and Buenos Aires (1). For the former, which were GP-A events the Committee assigned four referees each in foil and sabre to augment those assigned by the FIE.

The Committee was unable to send the required number of referees to several events, thus subjecting the USFA to fines imposed by the FIE. In London the British used two of our fencers as referees and no fines were imposed. In Bonn one referee had a passport problem and notified the organizers of the fact. Our most serious shortfall was in Vancouver after which fines were negotiated with the Canadian Federation.

In spite of the respite offered by GP-A events, the budget line for Referees to World Cups will again show an overage, a situation that was predicted, and which can only be corrected by more careful budgeting.

The FIE assigned our Olympic candidate referees, Derek Cotton, Francisco Martin, Vitali Nazlymov and Charles Washburn to 3-5 GP-A World Cups, so these referees were not available for USFA assignments. Derek Cotton was selected to referee at the Olympic Games in Athens. Derek also refereed at the Olympic Games in Sydney.

Before the next Board Meeting the Committee will assign two referees to the World Veterans Championship to be held in Krems Austria on September 3-5.

During the coming season, the FIE will examine referees for international licenses. Candidates must have at least a 2 rating in the USFA system to be considered. In addition, the FIE will permit National referees who agree to test for international licenses during the coming season to referee in Junior World Cup events. Interested candidates should apply to the FOC.

## Appendix K: Tournament Committee Report, Kalle Weeks

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>2003-2004 LOCATION</b>	<b>COMPETITIONS</b>	<b>2002-2003 NUMBER OF COMPETITORS</b>	<b>2003-2004 NUMBER OF COMPETITORS</b>
NAC A	OVERLAND PARK, KS	DIV 2/CADET/Y14	1280	1412
NAC B	PALM SPRINGS, CA	DIV 1/VET/WC	916	896
NAC C	SAN JOSE, CA	DIV 1/JUNIOR		613
NAC D	SAN JOSE, CA	DIV1/JUNIOR	1215	654
JO's	CLEVELAND, OH	CADET JUNIOR	1608	1893
NAC E	ARLINGTON, TX	II/III/VETERANS	1137	1277
NAC G	ATLANTA, GA	DIV1/YOUTH	1323	1072/31 teams

### SCHEDULES

As noted in the previous Tournament Committee report, the committee held a series of lively email exchanges concerning the wisdom of publishing the times for each competition prior to the close of registration, as has been suggested by both coaches and competitors. The Committee voted to publish these times on a trial basis, and to carefully monitor the progress of the tournaments to determine whether they would have been better managed by waiting for registration numbers, and whether competitors were leaving before having been eliminated because of their travel arrangements.

We published the times for the Junior Olympic Tournament, the Division II/III/Veterans tournament in Arlington, and the Division I/WC/Youth tournament in Atlanta without benefit of registration numbers. (We deliberately did not publish the Summer Nationals times in advance of registration because of the changes in qualification paths, which we anticipated could have significant implications for the daily schedules.) To date we have not experienced problems in managing the competitions, perhaps because the number of entries in some cases was smaller than predicted, nor have we detected any trends indicating increased numbers of early departures. We plan to revisit this question at the close of the 2003-2004 season.

Concerns have been raised by fencers who wish to compete in multiple events across age, division, and weapon categories. The competition scheduling criteria adopted by the committee last fall has been revised to address these concerns. The revised criteria are attached.

As this report is being written, scheduling has begun for the 2004-2005 season, and draft schedules are in hand for four of the seven tournaments; all should be completed shortly. We will ask coaches and representatives of other constituencies to review these schedules during Summer Nationals, in anticipation of posting them on the USFencing website prior to Labor Day.

### VENUE SELECTION

We anticipate being able to provide information concerning venues for the 2004-2005 season at Summer Nationals.

## **COMPETITION SCHEDULING CRITERIA**

### **Every effort will be made to meet the following criteria:**

- A.1. For any one weapon, the Div I, Junior and Cadet competitions must not be held on the same day.
- A.2. For any one weapon, competitions in immediately adjacent age groups (e.g., Y14 and Y12) must not be held on the same day.
- A.3. If two sabre competitions are held on the same day, the total number of entries for the two competitions should be relatively small. (And even then the starting times should be separated as widely as possible.)
- A.4. Foil competition(s) with a large number of entries must not be scheduled on the same day as sabre competition(s) with a large number of entries.
- A.5. Each day must include a balance of right of way weapon and epee competitions.
- A.6. Congress and Executive Board meeting needs should be considered when developing schedules for Summer Nationals and the Junior Olympic Championships.

### **These conditions are desirable:**

- B.1. The day on which a competition is scheduled should be rotated through the days of the week for any one weapon and age group.
- B.2. The projected lengths of the first and last days of competition should be shorter than those of intervening days.
- B.3. Competitions in the same age group and sex but in different weapons (e.g., Y14ME and Y14MF) should not be held on the same day.
- B.4. (Summer Nationals) For any one weapon, competitions in adjacent age groups should not be widely separated.
- B.5. (Summer Nationals) The number of entries on weekdays should be between 10-20% less than on weekends.
- B.6. (Summer Nationals) Team competitions should not be more than one day after the last individual competition used to seed them.
- B.7. If multiple competitions are used for seeding teams, they should be scheduled as close together as possible.
- B.8. (Junior Olympic Championships) A day of rest should be scheduled between Junior and Cadet competitions in the same weapon.
- B.9. A day of rest should be scheduled between Junior and Division I competitions in the same weapon.
- B.10. Schedules should accommodate those single weapon fencers who wish to fence in multiple weapons for team selection competitions.
- B.11. If there is a shortage of referees in a given weapon, the last day should include only smaller competitions in that weapon.
- B.12. Coaches' timely requests to hold training camps before or after competitions should be honored whenever possible.
- B.13. For any one weapon, same day scheduling of individual and team competitions should be avoided when it is possible that a fencer could fence in both competitions.

## Appendix L: High Performance Committee Report, Sam Chervis

MINUTES: HIGH PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING, MAY 15, 2004

1. Selection of Olympic Team Coaches: The criteria established by the High Performance Committee was:
  - a. Jan. 2004 Teleconference meeting: *The HPC will consider the potential of the individual (s) and/or team qualified for the Olympic Games to win a medal in the selection process of coaches for the official Olympic team positions. If the likelihood for a medal is the same for an individual vs a team, the priority of the considerations will be for the team. Similarly for the FX credentials, given the cost of awarding such credentials, the selection will be based on the expectation of a significant result. The results obtained at World Cup competitions will be a major factor in determining the likelihood of success as well as the probable seeding of the individual (s) or the team (s).*
  - b. Official Olympic Team Coaches: The HPC approved the selection of Arkady Burdan and Yury Gelman as the official Olympic team coaches for the 2004 Olympic Fencing team.
  - c. Extra Credential (FX) Coaches: In accordance with the teleconference meeting in January the HPC approved the following coaches to be given the FX credential: Simon Gershon, Buckie Leach, Paul Soter, Kornel Udvarhelyi.
  - d. Financial Coverage: The members of the HPC expressed the opinion that the coaches have been instrumental in qualification of athletes and teams and their expenses should be covered: airfare, housing, and apparel package. It is anticipated that the cost for each of these coaches will be \$5,000 which will have to be covered by the USFA budget in the coming fiscal year, 2004-2005. It was suggested that we ask the USFCA if that organization would be willing to assist in the funding of the coaches to the Olympics.
2. Olympic Team Problem: Due to anticipated long travel time between the Olympic Village and the competition venue the USFA has reserved cabins on the USOC cruise ship for the night before each competition, individual and team. The cost of a cabin is \$375 per night with two meals a day provided plus entertainment center and area barred to media and non team personnel. Further discussion is needed with the athletes to ensure that they would want to move the night before their competition. In some instances we have been told the athletes would want to move two nights prior if they move at all.
3. World Team Championships: In mid June the USFA will host the World Team Championships in women's foil and women's sabre. No budget line had been provided for these World Championships. The budget line approved for this season covered the World Championships held in Cuba in October. The HPC agreed that the teams should be treated as an official World Championships team and accorded the same degree of attention, funding and staffing.
  - a. Cadre Selections: Ed Korfanty coach for the women's sabre team and Nat Goodhartz coach for the women's foil team. Bob Largman, Manager; Jeff Bukantz, Captain and Ron Herman, Armorer.
  - b. Apparel: This group should be treated the same as any World team for an apparel package. In order to contain costs, the team will get team warm up; fencing shoes; t-shirts.
  - c. Team Members: Women's Foil – Erinn Smart, Hanna Thompson, Felicia Zimmermann, Iris Zimmermann; Men's Sabre – Ivan Lee, Tim Morehouse, Jason Rogers, Keeth Smart; Women's Sabre – Emily and Sada Jacobson, Emma Baratta, Mariel Zagunis.
  - d. Funding: The HPC approved standard funding for the World team – airfare, hotel, apparel package with a team dinner, hopefully sponsored. There is no budget line for this team in this year's budget it will be necessary to seek a budget variance from the Executive Committee.

4. Men's Sabre Team Letter: Men's Olympic sabre team is very concerned about the treatment they appear to be receiving from the European referees. The HPC did agree that it was important for certain persons to accompany the sabre fencers to lessen the risk of bias directing against the US fencers.
5. Discipline Review Panel: The information sent to the HPC regarding the behavior of three athletes on the World Junior/Cadet team near the end of the tournament was discussed and a major concern was voiced that this matter should have been dealt with as soon as the team returned home.

The behavior problems occurred the day prior to the last day of the tournament. Since one of the athletes was departing the following morning there was little that could be done at the time. The disciplinary group of the team made no recommendations so the HPC cannot act until those recommendations are submitted.

The HPC appointed the following persons for a panel to review all the reports and make recommendations about discipline – Sam Cheris, Donna Stone, Sherry Posthumus and Jesse Burke for the Athletes Group.

6. Other areas for decision-making were deferred to the High Performance Committee to be appointed by the incoming administration. The HPC did not believe it was in the best interest of the organization to make decisions for the following season since it is anticipated there would be changes to the current group.