



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY FENCING CLUB

[CUFC Old Blues Newsletter 5](#)

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Varsity Match 2005 Details

This year **Varsity Match** will be held at the Cambridge Union on **Saturday 12th February 2005**. The match will start at 11am in the Main Chamber and the Union have agreed to open their bar all day for spectators. The Men's Blues will be looking for their 7th consecutive win and the Women's Blues will be looking for their 3rd victory in a row. All support will be most welcome.

Old Blues Varsity Match(18/9/04)

by Edward Ben-Nathan

After several months of planning by myself and my Oxford counterpart, Jon Rose, the two sides assembled at Fenners' Gallery last Saturday (18th September 2004) for what is the first match of its kind (barring the one off match that took place in 1995 at the Centenary Varsity Match). Both our sides were depleted, especially on the women's side, due to the conflict in date with the Bristol Open. We tried to avoid this but the latter's date was not published until late and after we had selected 18th September. The main consequence was that neither side had a women's team and thus the two Cambridge women and the one Oxford woman were integrated into a combined team. At this point the atmosphere changed from totally relaxed to mildly competitive, where it remained for the duration of the match.

Foil

Our side comprised myself, Philip Wilson, Kiyo Tanaka, Ruth Bamforth, and Alex Most. The opposition also comprised four men and one woman. The net result of this match was a very close victory by 13:12 to Oxford. The real challenge for the men was not to lose to Melissa Whitfield, Oxford's woman foilist. Not all of us managed it!

Epee

Our epee team comprised Carl Pereira, Mark Giles, Kiyo Tanaka, and Andy Culling (a cheat really, as he's a current CUFC member who was needed to make up the numbers). Cambridge won convincingly 10:6, with Andy's four (easy) wins making a crucial difference. Well done to the epee team!

Sabre

Our sabre team comprised of Kiyo Tanaka (as you can see, fencing all three weapons), Mark Giles, Paul Kiang and Annalouise McQuilkin, against a three-man Oxford side. This asymmetric match was lost 4:8. Thanks to difficulties with CUFC scoring kit, this match was fought with steam sabre - i.e. judged, "just like the good old days". Overall, if we count Andy Culling's contribution, the match was won by Oxford by the close margin of 27:26. A disappointment in one sense, but overall, everyone enjoyed themselves and were committed to making next year's match (in Oxford) more successful still. We will not repeat the conflict with the Bristol (or any other) Open next year.

Dinner

The evening meal was held in my old college, Gonville and Caius, and 21 of us sat down to a rather splendid meal (Caius food is very good) in the grand senior parlour,

augmented by port funded by one of our opponents. Afterwards many of us retired to the Hawks Club to top up the alcohol level.

Current Blues vs. Old Blues Match Report (13/11/04)

Mens Match

The Old Blues Match was back and bigger than ever. With so many fencers and teams turning up, it was a miracle we finished in the allotted five hours. The venue for this year's match was once again Fenner's Gallery in Kelsey Kerridge and once again many freshers got mixed up about the venue and were waiting in Fenners' Gym on Gresham Road for at least 15 minutes.

The Male Old Blues put out two foil teams, two epee teams and one sabre team. It was agreed at the start of the match to mix up the teams into a random selection of those who were still competitive fencers and those who hadn't picked up a sword in a 'few years'. The Current Blues similarly agreed to mix up the Blues and Cuthroats. First up was Mens Foil 1. The Current Blues team of Ted, Dominic and Gregoire narrowly defeated the Old Blues team (Edward Ben-Nathan, David Yates and Alex D'Olier) 45-42.

As Kiyō Tanaka was experiencing "hold-ups" on the motorway, we decided to go ahead without him for Men's Sabre. Nick Rumney kindly stepped into Kiyō's shoes and was therefore able to show off his unique style of Sabre. Matt decided to referee today rather than fence, so Pip joined the regular Sabre clique of Danny and Robin. They defeated the Old Blues of Tom Plant, Paul Kiang and Nick Rumney 45-29.

The first of the Mens Epee matches began straight after the foil on piste 3. The Current Blues team consisted completely of first years; Chris, Eamonn (PhD first year!) and making his debut for Cambridge, Jesus choral scholar Tim Willott. Carl Pereira, Peter Jacobs and Dave Yates (who had had just finished fencing foil and was knackered) started off brightly but eventually were overcome by their youthful opponents 45-27.

Men's Foil 2 was close all the way through. The Current Blues team of Rob, Carl and Nick Rumney (who changed sides more times than John Kerry) faced off against last year's Captain Alex Most, Kiyō Tanaka (who had just arrived) and Paul Abrahams (who had flown in from San Francisco). The match see-sawed throughout and going into the last fight Rob faced Alex in a Star Wars-esque battle between veteran and young pretender. Rob made up a few points but could not quite force home the winning hits. The first victory of the day for the Old Blues; 45-42.

Mens Epee 2 was the last match of the day. The Current Blues had a bit of experience on show with Mark, Andy and Felix in their team. The Old Blues team consisted of Padraig Byrne (whose greatest battle was getting people to pronounce his name correctly), Royal Marine Al Baker and.....the ubiquitous Kiyō Tanaka. This match was a lot closer than the final score would imply - 45-29 to the Current Blues.

Overall the Current Blues were victorious 222-172. It was pleasing that the match was fenced in such a friendly and pleasant atmosphere. As with all these inter-Cambridge matches, however, it is not the winning that counts but how good the social is afterwards!!!!

Overall Scores; Current Blues vs. Old Blues

Men's Foil: 87-87, Men's Epee: 90-56, Men's Sabre: 45-29

Current Blues 222 – 172 Old Blues

Women's Match

This year's Old Blues Match would be the Women's first match of the season. With a long stretch of training behind them, the Current Blues were eager for some competition and of course victory.

Jenn was first up in Epee and was keen to make an impact for the Current Blues. However, recently graduated Helen Wood made things tricky and set the pace for the Old Blues, establishing an early lead. With Andrea Wraith, last years captain Lisa Hoole and Hilary Byrne up next for the OBs, we had our work cut out. Delphine was quick to rise to the challenge brought the score back to evens with some intimidating fast attacks. Yet despite some well timed stop-hits from Emma, a solid performance from Jo and two brilliant comebacks from Jenn (using some ingenious arm hits), the strength of opposition was too great, especially for a team one 'Mika' down. Epee score: 62-80 to OB

With Epee being the Old Blues' strongest weapon, the overall tie could still go either way. Anna R was fencing Sabre, due to weapon captain Kyle's absence and perhaps stirring up opponent Lisa Hoole at the Welsh, last weekend with taunts about sabreurs actually being unable to fence, wasn't the best strategy! The Current Blues Sabre team fenced brilliantly, with Anna S dominating one of the Old Blues and debutant Jenn "strictly an epeeist" Semon striking some clear hits. Even Anna R's blatant foil defence was effective. Unfortunately, the experience of the Old Blue's once again impossible to overcome. Lisa and Annalousie McQuilken never lost the lead for the OBs and Leonie Hicks delivering the final nail in the coffin with a quick last leg victory. Sabre score: 39-45 to OB

So, with a little bit of catching up to do, the foil team stepped up. Being unbeaten all last season was a record they were keen to continue. With the best of the Old Blues' weapons been and gone, it was time for a fight-back. A measurable lead was soon established with quick attacks from Georgie and solid blade-work from Carmen. OB Hilary Byrne did pose a few problems to the team with her rapid advances and speedy remises, but it was soon clear that she was the only specialist foilist in the opposition. Chie deftly defended the advances of Helen and Annalousie, leaving Anna R to seal the victory for the Current Blues. Despite some last-minute-last-leg points ably taken by Hilary on Anna's preparation, the extent of defeat over the OBs was undeniable. Foil score: 80-34 to Current Blues.

Not only a good start to the season and a fantastic warm up opportunity for the BUSA competition at the end of the month, the competition was very evenly matched (as indicated by the close final score). An enjoyable day's fencing was had by all as well as it being great to see the familiar faces of both CUFC past and present.

Old Blues Match Dinner

Everyone met in the Hawks Club (in Black Tie of course) at 6pm for pre-dinner drinks before moving onto St Catharine's College for a Sherry Reception. Many of the fencers had told me that they didn't like Sherry but one could not have guessed this from the many empty Sherry bottles that were littered around the OCR. A sumptuous three course meal was served and washed down with the finest St. Catz Housewine and Port. As

Andy Culling so elegantly put it last year, “from what I can remember a good time was had by all”. After the meal some of us retired to the sophisticated surroundings of Selwyn late night bar. The more adventurous braved a ‘bop’ in Harvey Court, which I’m told went on until the wee small hours.

I would like to thank all the Old Blues and Current Blues who turned out to fence and dine. My special thanks goes to Edward Ben-Nathan who helped me so much in the organisation and made sure the day went off smoothly. It was very pleasing to see so many people still wanting to maintain ties with the club, and I hope to see you all at the Cambridge Union for the 2005 Varsity Match (Saturday 12th Feb 2005).

BUSA Individuals 2004

There were some excellent results at the BUSA Individual Championships held on 3rd/4th/5th December 2004. For the second year in a row Cambridge won a Gold Medal - Anna Robinson in Women's Foil.

Cambridge Finalists:

1st Anna Robinson (Women's Foil)

3rd Carmen Pinto-Ward (Women's Foil)

5th Anna Scaife (Women's Sabre)

7th Georgie Osborne (Women's Foil)

BUSA League

Both the Men’s and Women’s Blues are in first place in their respective Premier Leagues going into the second half of the season. Neither team has suffered a defeat in the league so far this year and both should comfortably qualify for the BUSA Knockouts which begin on the 23rd February.

CUFC History

Apart from looking at the Varsity Shield results and the fact that we used to be part of the CU Boxing club, we know very little about the history of CUFC. Some of our members are interested in building up a full history of the club, so if anyone knows of any major events in the clubs past, or can suggest useful sources, then they can email oldbluesofficer@cufencing.org.uk or get in contact at the postal address below. We would also be grateful if any Old Blues could help us fill in the gaps of the **Past Committees' Archive** on our website.

Photos from years gone by are also most welcome and can be emailed to me at the address above.

Best wishes for the New Year,

Mark Adair

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