



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY FENCING CLUB

[CUFC Old Blues Newsletter 8](#)

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www.cufencing.org.uk

The 100th Varsity Match 2007

This year's Varsity Match will be held in Cambridge on 24th February. The details will be confirmed shortly (it will be posted onto the website once confirmed).

Regarding the match report of last year's Varsity match, please refer to the "Reports" section in the Club website.

Current Blues vs. Old Blues Match Report (18/11/06)

The Old Blues match was once again held in Fenners' Gallery, Kelsey Kerridge this year. Thanks to Edward Ben-Nathan, who kindly agreed to help us to organize the Old Blues teams, this year we were once again able to field a full Old Blues Men's team, despite a shortage of Old Blues Women fencers.

Men's match

The Old Blues match is always a highlight in the team's fencing calendar. The match is an important testing ground for the new members of the squad, for whom it is an opportunity to prove themselves in a team match environment. The more established members can use the event to hone their skills against some high quality opponents in the build up to the Varsity Match. More importantly, it is an excuse to get absolutely trolled at the dinner in the evening.

This year saw an extremely strong performance from both the Current and Old Blues (on and off the piste). The Current Blues fielded one sabre, two epee and two foil teams, which kept the veterans busy. Rob Shaw lead the Second's foil team against the Old Blues Edward Ben-Nathan, Paul Abrahams and Alex Most, winning a 45-42 victory, with Jason Yuen and Zach Eaton-Rosen performing ably against their opponents. The Seconds' epee match was a less close affair: Old Blues Mark Beith, Carl Pereira and Tom Plant took a total of 30 points off the Current Seconds, with Chris Aylett, Jason and Zach pulling out all the stops to make it to 45.

The Current sabre team, denied the skills of International super-stars Alex O'Connell and Anthony Crutchett (both representing the country abroad), were in for a tough match against Old Blues Kiyo Tanaka, Tom Plant, and Stuart Clark. However Danny Ryan, Chris Jones and Spencer Bullent put in an awesome performance, winning 45-34. The epee firsts' match was particularly competitive: some of the finest swordmen Cambridge has seen clashed blades in a match which went to the Current Blues Chris Greensides, Rob Shaw and Any Culling 45-40. The day wound up with the Firsts' foil, which proved to be the closest fight of the day. A series of technical issues and substitutions on behalf of the Current foilists Dom O'Mahony, Dan Summerbell, Chris Greensides and stand-in Danny Ryan slowed the match considerably. The score was

close throughout, and the match went to the Old Blues 45-44 in the final fight between Ben-Nathan and O'Mahony. O'Mahony was seen storming off in a huff over the presiding but recovered in time for the dinner.

Women's match

This year the women's Old blues had a low turn out, only two fencers Georgina Osborne (a foilist) and Laura Davidson (an epeeist) turned up on the day. Despite the low numbers both old blues fencers were keen to fence and so they completed a team by doubling in foil and epee and by filling the third place with current blues fencers. For sabre however neither of the old blues women had fenced the weapon before so it was decided that the Current women's Blues sabre team should fence the Old Blues men's sabre team instead. Once the teams were completed the matches were all fenced with no other problems.

The first weapon fenced was Epee. The women's Old Blues team was made up of Laura Davidson, Georgina Osborne and Anna Robinson (a current blues foilist), and the Current Blues team was formed by Mary Cohen, Ailsa Keating and India Martin. The Current Blues team is a strong team and they showed their strength by staying ahead throughout the match and winning with a score of 45-35.

Next up was foil. Again, Georgina and Laura stood in to represent the Old Blues women and their team was completed by Mary Cohen (a current blues epeeist). In the Current Blues, Vicky Rennie, Anna Robinson (former captain) and Carmen Pinto (present captain) formed the team. This was a thrillingly close match to watch. It was only at the end that the current blues team pushed forward and won the match by a 7 hit advantage. The final score was 45-38.

Finally, there came the sabre matches. In this match Anya Jones and Alina Sartogo both sabreurs, and Carmen Pinto a foilist representing the Current Blues Women sabre team fenced against Kiyu Tanaka, Tom Plant, and Stuart Clark in the Old Blues Men's team. The match started evenly between the two teams but gradually as the match progressed the men took the advantage and in the end won comfortably with a final score of 45-31.

The final total scores were 118 for the Old Blues Women and 121 for the Current Blues Women, a very close result.

Overall it was a very enjoyable encounter. Everyone fenced with enthusiasm on the piste, with both teams eager to win, while off the piste, there was always friendly supporting atmosphere among all the fencers. Here, we very much encourage more Old Blues Women fencers to come back and share the enjoyment with us next year!

An OB's thoughts of the Old Blues Dinner

We are incredibly fortunate to have an old blue to kindly contribute her comments on the dinner after the Old Blues match.

“Fencing? I'd been thinking of the fence needed to prevent the goats from munching all our newly planted trees when an unexpected email about the Old Blues Fencing Match arrived. I had not held a foil for three decades....”

No, this is not about Superwoman musketeer, leaping in and beating all comers and insisting you can do the same. This is a long-ago Old Blue who has just discovered the pleasures and camaraderie of the present-day Cambridge Fencing Club – and is a witness to an emerging tradition, with reunions between past and present Blues, dinners and enthusiastic support – which you can help to shape for the future.

I could only get to the dinner which followed the OB match in November – and it was FUN. The great thing about fencers is that they are individualists, not slaves to fashionable, mollycoddled sports. Certainly facilities could be improved, but the characters involved are the very best! A Japanese investment banker wielding a sabre instead of a sword, an Austro-Ukrainian Turk forsaking the scimitar, and a Columbian ruling the ladies' team with a foil instead of a gun – such fresh, diverse experience of life, quite apart from the fascinating insights into the subject-matter of current degrees such as a geographer considering prostitution in Victorian England or an anthropologist becoming a world expert on diarrhoea... and that is only a sample...

And then the friendliness: instead of feeling like an old fish out of water, I was being made so welcome and pressed to come again to a dinner or a match or both. Why don't you come too? Why not?!

See you there.
Christine Day"

BUSA Individuals

This year's BUSA individuals results were exceptionally brilliant, with two of our fencers, Anthony Cruchet (Gold) and Danny Ryan (Silver) competing against each other in the Men's Sabre final. Also, Daniel Summerbell managed to get into top 16 of Men's Foil.

BUSA League summary

Having been joined by a few national players this year, the **Men's Blues** team have been unbeaten in the season so far. They have beaten Oxford, UCL, Bath and Bristol, all of which are top teams in the country.

The **Men's seconds** only lost one match this season, against Loughborough 1st, who are now at the top of division.

The **Women's Blues** team has also won two matches and lost one.

To keep track with the BUSA results, please visit <http://www.sport.cam.ac.uk>.

CUFC Training Camp

During the Christmas vac, CUFC made its annual training trip abroad. Once again, CUFC returned to Budapest, Hungary, to train at Club Honved. Five days of coaching and free fencing allowed everyone to sharpen up in preparation for this term's BUSA league matches, and, more importantly, the Varsity Match.

The camp kicked off on Sunday 7th January with a trip to watch current CUFC members Anthony Crutchett and Alex O'Connell compete in the Budapest Junior A grade. Our afternoon was rewarded with a fantastic display of fencing by Alex, earning him a well deserved third.

Seven current club members and one Old Blue took part in the camp. Each day consisted of a footwork session in the morning, followed by individual lessons and free

fencing among the group. The early afternoon was spent sight-seeing around the city before returning to the Club for the evening free fencing session. Coaching was provided by *Peter Froilic* and *Csaba Kuhn*, both accomplished fencers and coaches. The quality of the evening free fencing cannot be under estimated. On the Epee floor on the last night there were three world champions, and on other nights, the club regularly held several members of different Hungarian teams, as well as national team fencers from around the world, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Canada and Argentina.

The one disappointment of the trip was that the sabreurs had to go to a different club to fence due to the loss of the sabreurs from Club Honved to a neighbouring club. The result was that this prevented banter during the free fencing in the evening.

The sightseeing time was well used. The group visited the 'House of Terror', a museum dedicated to victims of the secret police, the Szerny Baths, Hero Square and several other destinations. The very low cost of living allowed the team to eat out each evening and this team bonding time helped keep the trip relaxed and allowed everyone to get to know each other.

The trip proved to be a lot of fun and also demonstrated some of the team's wider abilities. Rob Shaw showed that he is actually the sweatiest man in Europe, with an ability to sweat so violently that his sleeves, and eventually even his blade conducted whilst fencing foil. Andy proved himself a very capable chaperone, and Zack proved such a hit (on or off the piste we are not sure?) with the Hungarian women's foil team that they gave him a book of their pictures. No doubt there will be many spurious rumours that come out at various dinners in the months to come. What is certain is that CUFC are now much stronger for a week's intensive training and aim to provide more than a match to the visiting Oxford teams in February.

Best Wishes,

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