





# Welcome to the Sport of Fencing

Épée, Foil & Sabre

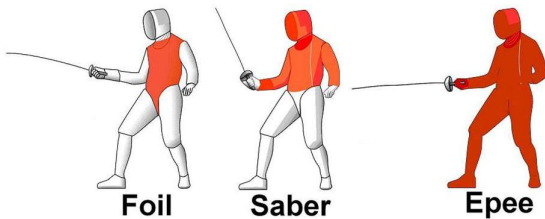
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## Fencing - a Sport for Life

- Fencing is a sport for everybody. It challenges both body and mind through a unique blend of skill, discipline, competitiveness and athleticism. It is a wonderful sport to watch in action, even better to play en piste.
- Fencing is a modern sport and ancient art. It comes to us from across hundreds of years of history, from an era of chivalry. Today we have a fast, dynamic and physically demanding activity. An activity which combines grace and rhythm of movement with strength, power and flexibility. It is an activity for leisure, for fun or sport. It can be for recreation, theatre/artistic performance or competition. In effect fencing offers a range of options, for anyone with a taste for exercise and effort. The aspect of combat solicits the need for thought, reflection, observation and analysis, as in a game of chess.
- Fencing as a sport has three disciplines - **Épée**, **Foil** & **Sabre**. Each fencing discipline has different weapons, target areas (red), rules and equipment:



- Men and Women compete and rank separately for each weapon.
- Each weapon has its own history, rules, and characteristics, which lead to their own techniques and methods. All three have an electrical scoring system for registering the hits and points. All assist the referees in decision making.
- Fencing is an inclusive sport and global participation and achievement is continuously growing.

FIE Sports Explainer – **Épée** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88mBQ2u2Wb0>

FIE Sports Explainer – **Foil** - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-P\\_q5gdvRM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-P_q5gdvRM)

FIE Sports Explainer – **Sabre** - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ipiJFIU\\_Dg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ipiJFIU_Dg)

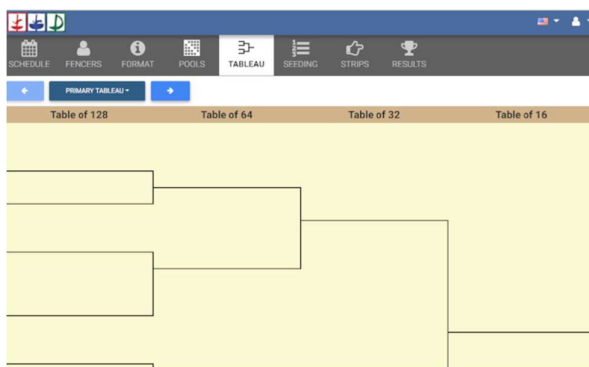




## Fencing - The Game

- The combat between partners is called a bout.
- The main objective is to legally hit without being hit, on the valid target, while staying in a defined area (piste).
- Hit the other fencer on the valid target to score a point.
- Hit the other fencer more often than you have been hit yourself to win.
  
- During a fencing competition the fencers are first ranked and then placed in fencing pools. Each pool consists of approximately 6 or 7 fencers, depending on the number of total fencers in the competition. A fencer will fence every competitor in their pool. Two fencers fencing is called a fencing bout. To win a pool bout the fencer must be the first to score 5 points or the highest points within 3 minutes.
  
- Once all of the pool bouts have finished the fencers are then seeded depending on their resulting indicator calculation (number of victories, hits scored less hits received). Fencers are then placed into a tableau for the direct elimination (DE) round. The size of the tableau depends on the number of fencers in the competition. The tableau can be from 128, 64, 32, 16... fencers. In some international competitions fencers with a low seeding from pools may not make it onto the DE tableau. The tableau represents the direct elimination round of bouts. To win a DE bout the fencer must be the first to score 15 points (10 points for veterans) or has the highest number of points within 3x3 minutes. The winner of the DE bout will continue up the tableau. Once a fencer has lost their DE bout they will be eliminated from the competition unless it is the Olympic semi-final in which there is a final bout for bronze place.
  
- At the end of a fencing competition (other than the Olympics) there are 4 podium placings: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2 x 3<sup>rd</sup> (called 3<sup>rd</sup> equal).

Example tableau:



National and International Fencing Results - [www.fencingtimelive.com](http://www.fencingtimelive.com)





## The Benefits from Fencing

- Fencing is a combat sport, a sport of opposition. The confrontation with a weapon in hand results in having rules, to ensure the fencers are able to fence and practice safely. The weapon creates a relationship between the two fencers, both psychological and the physical psycho-motor responses.
- As with all opposition sports, it is an individual sport played in pairs. Expert manipulation of the weapon relies upon physical strength, dexterity and mental acuity.
- Self-control is needed to master the impulse for excessive force. On the other hand, people who are normally reserved, find freedom for self-expression when wearing the mask. The weapon permits the balance of forces between competitors to be re-established.



## Psychological Benefits from Fencing

- **SELF-CONFIDENCE:** Wearing the mask allows the fencers to express themselves more freely. They learn to simply count on themselves in order to finish as a winner in the confrontation.
- **COURTESY AND LOYALTY:** Ceremony is an external sign of the tacit engagement in respect of the other. The referee establishes a climate of politeness; salute the audience, partner and referee at the beginning and end of the bout. Then at the end of the bout, after the salute, shaking hands brings the display of courtesy towards the partner, no matter whether they are stronger or weaker.
- **ATTENTION:** The main quality developed by fencing. The situation, face to face in a limited space, where the visual field is constrained, favours concentration. It is indispensable for observation of the partner's actions and reactions.
- **SELF-MASTERY:** The constant need to control the fencer's actions and anticipate the partner's reactions requires mastery of the fencer's emotions (impulsiveness, frustration, anger, anxiety, despair, desperation, resignation, excessive enthusiasm).





## Psycho-Motor Benefits from Fencing

- **SENSORY INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION:** The use of a weapon in the 3D space results in improved spatial and body awareness. The nature of the fencing game means that flexion and extension of the arms and legs are used.
- **REINFORCES HANDEDNESS:** The fencing stance helps to reinforce handedness as does the manipulation of the weapon in the hand.
- **BALANCE:** Acquired through the different footwork; steps, jumps, lunges and retreats.
- **SPATIAL AWARENESS:** The management of the distance between the fencers and the actions that occur in the space develops improved spatial awareness.
- **COORDINATION SPECIFIC TO FENCING:** This is demonstrated by the action of the hand and arm preceding the legs.
- **RHYTHM:** All movement requires a rhythm and timing. This need is reinforced as each fencer's movements have to be aligned and coordinated with the partners.
- **INFORMATION PROCESSING:** Each situation, foreseen and unforeseen, brings about an appropriate adapted response.
- **REFLEX:** The combat / oppositional essence of the bout is balanced with the coordination of movements and actions to the partners movements and actions.

The ever changing distance and speed within the bouts reinforces the need for spatial and temporal coordination and adaptive skill. This is reflected in the development of fencer's anticipatory skills when fully engaged in the dynamic and ever changing environment of the fencing bout.

- **PRECISION:** Hand-eye coordination is developed with the point going to the target.





## Athlete Fencer Pathway

- Fencing is a sport for life and our mission is to inspire others to participate and keep going. The age of fencers participating in this sport can range from 8 to 98. Fencers can begin fencing at any age and there is opportunity to join either school based or private fencing clubs.
- A 'balance is better' approach is adopted for young fencers who learn through a fun and supportive environment. Younger children use lightweight plastic equipment and begin fencing around 7 to 8 years old.
- The fencing community is supportive and has clear pathways for athlete development. Fencing supports and encourages athletic development through the participation in other sports. Fencing equipment is available for fencers to borrow until they wish to purchase their own equipment for more competitive environments.
- Club training environments incorporate a combination of physical, technical, psychological development and opportunity for practice bouts. Fencing coaches are available to provide lessons in Épée, Foil and Sabre and some fencers choose more than one discipline.
- Fencers have the opportunity to attend regional, national and international training camps that focus on physical (technical / tactical), psychological (mental / emotional) and nutritional education and development.
- Fencing encourages participation from both men and women. Opportunity is provided for women to train and compete either with or separately to the men.
- Fencing is a sport in which participation and podium achievement outlives the ages of many other sports. Fencing capability is not age dependent and as a sport provides a continuous journey of learning.
- Older fencers compete in age brackets 40+, 50+, 60+ and 70+. Retaining older fencers in the sport, by providing the opportunity to maintain competitive goals, both nationally and internationally, also bolsters our volunteer pool for coaches, referees, officials and general administrators. The nature of fencing as a sport, relying on balance and coordinated movement, supports an active, low impact and healthy lifestyle for older athletes. The oldest New Zealand fencer is well into their 80's.
- Fencing New Zealand is also developing the growing para-fencing sport.





## Competition and Performance Pathway

- Fencing New Zealand has a defined competition pathway for fencer participation depending on skill and comfort level. There is a clear pathway for fencers to move from regional to national and international competitions.
- Fencer athletes compete and rank in age groups (age as of 01 January) for **Men** and **Women** separately, **individual** and **teams**, for all three fencing disciplines - **Épée, Foil & Sabre**.
- Many New Zealand fencers successfully compete above their age group both nationally and internationally.

### National and International Age Group Circuits

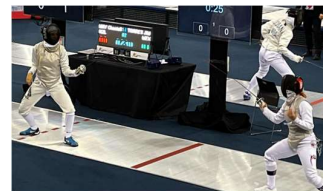
- **Youth U15**
- **Cadet U17**
- **Junior U20**
- **U23**
- **Senior**
- **Veteran (40+)**

### Regional Competitions

- Fencing New Zealand consists of four main regions: North, Central, Mid-South and South.
- Each region holds regular annual age group, open senior and school orientated competitions.
- Regional U11, U13 and Secondary School (College Sport) competitions provide opportunities for younger fencers to experience and be supported in the competitive fencing environment. Junior+ fencers are encouraged and supported to referee at these events to gain experience.

### National Competitions

- Fencers participate in national age groups, U15, U17, U20, U23, Senior, Veteran (40+), competitions. Depending on their national competition achievements, fencers can then progress through to international competition, as detailed in the international competition pathway. There is a selection committee and criteria for high performance fencers participating in international fencing competitions.
- There are four main national senior competitions held annually usually hosted by each region - Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch & Dunedin.
- There are Youth U15, Cadet U17 and Junior U20 national competitions held annually.
- National competitions are important for fencer rankings and selection for international competitions.



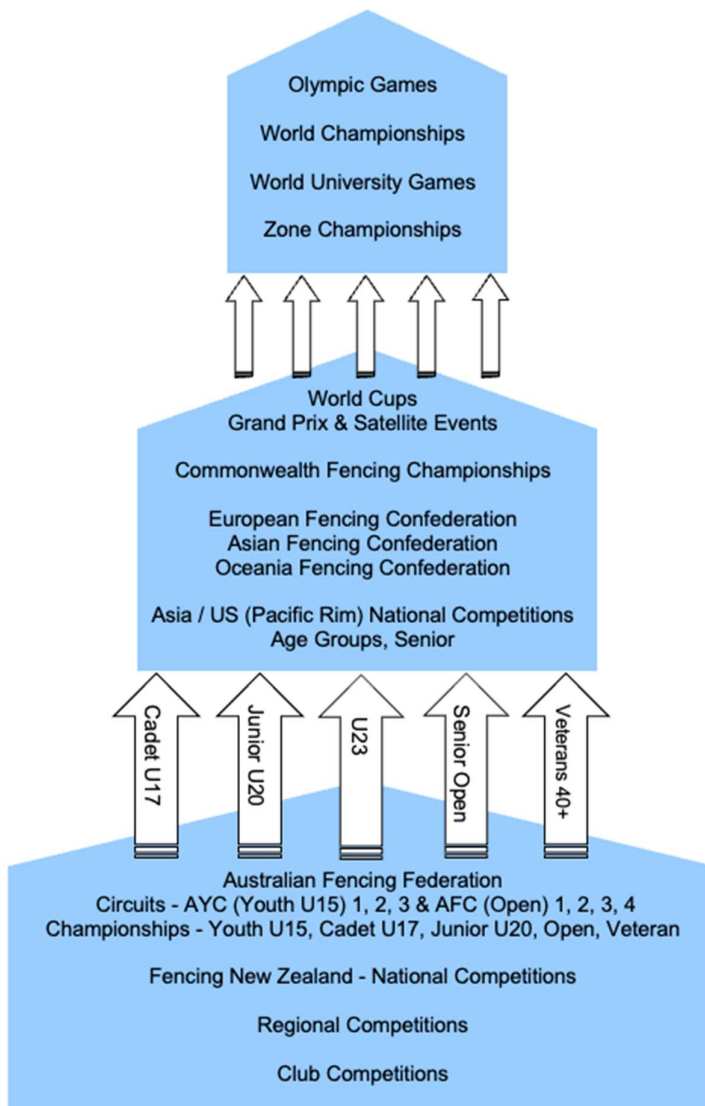


# Competition and Performance Pathway...

## International Competitions & Selection

- The top ranked - Men & Women for Épée, Foil & Sabre - Cadet U17, Junior U20, U23, Senior and Veteran (40+) fencers compete in the international pathway age group circuits (individual and teams) and championships held in **Australia, Oceania, Asia, Europe, North America** and **World** locations.
- The Fencing New Zealand selection committee and process determine fencer participation at world competitions based on their experience and results both nationally and internationally. <https://www.fencing.org.nz>  
**Fencing New Zealand Athlete Rankings** - <https://results.fencing.org.nz>

## Fencing International Competition Pathway





## International Connections

- **FIE - Federation Internationale d'Escrime**

Fencing New Zealand is affiliated to the Federation Internationale d'Escrime (FIE) the international governing body for the Olympic sport of fencing. Founded in 1913, the FIE is composed of 157 affiliated national federations, each of which is recognized by its country's Olympic Committee as the sole representative of Olympic-style fencing in that country. <https://www.fie.org> **Affiliated Member Federations (153)**



- **Oceania**

Fencing New Zealand is part of the Oceania Fencing Confederation (OFC) which also includes: Australia, Fiji, Guam, Samoa, American Samoa, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia and Tahiti.

<http://www.oceaniafencing.org/ABOUT>



- **Asia**

The Fencing Confederation of Asia (FCA) is the FIE Zone Governing Body and includes Oceania and New Zealand.

<http://www.asianfencing.com/fca2013/pages/about-us.asp>



- **Commonwealths**

We are also a member of the Commonwealth Fencing Federation which oversees the organisation of Commonwealth Fencing Championships. As a Commonwealth Games Federation Recognised Sport, Commonwealth Fencing Championships have been held every four years, in the same year as the Commonwealth Games. In addition, Commonwealth Junior and/or Cadet Fencing Championships are held every three or four years, and Commonwealth Veteran Fencing Championships every two years.

<http://www.commonwealthfencing.org/index.php/about-cff>



- **Olympics**

Fencing is a core sport at the Olympics and will continue to be so at both the Paris 2024 and Los Angeles 2028 Summer Olympic Games. Fencing is one of five sports which have been a permanent fixture at the Olympic Games since the first modern Games were held in 1896.





# Coaching Pathway

- New Zealand athlete fencers have the advantage of being coached by high achieving national, international, world and Olympic level experienced coaches. Coaches train fencers in groups in their club environment and also provide private lessons for those wishing to further develop their skills.
- There is continuous development of the next generation of coaches and secondary school students are encouraged and supported to qualify and coach younger fencers. Coaching jackets and training is provided to both new and existing fencing coaches.
- Fencing New Zealand and the Oceania Fencing Confederation regularly fund and run coaching training programmes for existing and new coach development.





## Referees & Officials Pathway

- Each fencing discipline (Épée, Foil & Sabre) has its own competition bouting rules and the training of officials and referees is important to maintaining the professionalism of the sport of fencing.



Officials & Referees - FeNZ Oceania & New Zealand National Open Seniors Veteran Championships – Auckland, October 2022.

- Fencing New Zealand and the Oceania Fencing Confederation regularly fund and run referee and officials training programmes. Referees are also able to attend yearly examinations run by the Asian Fencing Confederation. Tertiary and secondary school level fencers are mentored and encouraged to referee the competitions of younger fencers.



October 2022 - FeNZ & Oceania Refereeing Sabre Seminar



## Fencing New Zealand - Governance

- Fencing New Zealand (FeNZ) is an incorporated society and the national sporting body responsible for promoting and developing recreational, competitive and high-performance fencing, including wheelchair fencing, in New Zealand.
- FeNZ is overseen by a Board consisting of a President, Secretary-General, four regional representatives and two independent members, one of whom is the youth representative. The Board is supported by a number of Commissions and specialist officers.
- Fencing Regions administer fencing on behalf of Fencing New Zealand.
- There are over 35 fencing clubs active in Fencing New Zealand's four regions – North, Central, Mid-South and South.





# FeNZ – Demographics & Membership

- The Fencing New Zealand community is inclusive and diverse and consists of both affiliated competitive fencers and non-affiliated social fencers.
- Fencing New Zealand has developing processes for capturing non-affiliated social fencers and communications to increase awareness and participation of regional and national pathways for training, development and competitions.
- The largest segment of our membership is Youth U15 and Junior U20 fencers.
- Our ‘women in fencing’ community continues to grow through the provision of women focused coaching, training camps and competitions. <https://academyoffencingmasters.com/blog/the-power-of-women-in-fencing>



## Fencing New Zealand Membership Figures (August 26, 2024)

Regions	Total	Percentages
<b>North</b>	260	50.4%
<b>Central</b>	125	24.2%
<b>Midsouth</b>	99	19.2%
<b>South</b>	32	6.2%
	<b>516</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*not taking into account overseas registered members

<b>Male</b>	345	65.1%
<b>Female</b>	185	34.9%
	<b>530</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Age Groups		
<b>U15</b>	176	33.6%
<b>U17</b>	109	20.8%
<b>U20</b>	77	14.7%
<b>Senior</b>	79	15.1%
<b>Vet</b>	83	15.8%
	<b>524</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

1 Jan,2009  
 1 Jan 2007 - 31 Dec 2008  
 1 Jan 2004 - 31 Dec 2006  
 1 Jan 1984 - 31 Dec 2003  
 1 Jan 1950 -31 Dec 1983





# FeNZ - Rules & Regulations

Fencing New Zealand documentation for rules and regulations can be found here - <https://www.fencing.org.nz/resources>

- Board Minutes
- Commonwealth Fencing Championships 2022 - Documents
- Development Programme
- Fencing NZ Reports
- **Health and Safety**
- Our Forms
- Our Values
- Policies
- Running a Fencing Club

International Fencing Federation Rules - <https://fie.org/fie/documents/rules>

Drug Free Sport NZ - <https://drugfreesport.org.nz>

FIE Clean Sport - <https://fie.org/fie/documents/clean-sport>





## FeNZ - Contacts

### Fencing New Zealand Board and Commission Contacts -

<https://www.fencing.org.nz/about-us/our-contacts>

- **President** - David Elder  
president@fencing.org.nz
- **Secretary General** - Amanda Hopkins  
secretary@fencing.org.nz
- **Board Member and Safeguarding** - Alice Corin  
healthandsafety@fencing.org.nz
- **Treasurer** - Stephen Peterson  
treasurer@fencing.org.nz
- **Fencing North President** - Peter Butler  
fenznorth@fencing.org.nz
- **Fencing Central President** – William Bishop  
president@fencingcentral.org.nz
- **Fencing Mid-South President** - Lee-Bin Tee  
president@fencingmidsouth.org.nz
- **Fencing South President** – Alex Dong  
fencingsouth@gmail.com

### Commissions

- **Selectors** - Head of Selectors; Commission - Kyle Macdonald  
kylemacdonaldhome@gmail.com
- **Officiating** - Head of Officiating Commission - Heather Claydon  
fnzocteam@gmail.com
- **Coaching** - Head of Coaching Commission - Martin Brill  
coaching@fencing.org.nz
- **Athletes** - Head of Athletes' Commission  
athletescommission@fencing.org.nz

**Health & Safety Officer** - Alice Boyd - healthandsafety@fencing.org.nz

**National Development Director** - Simone May

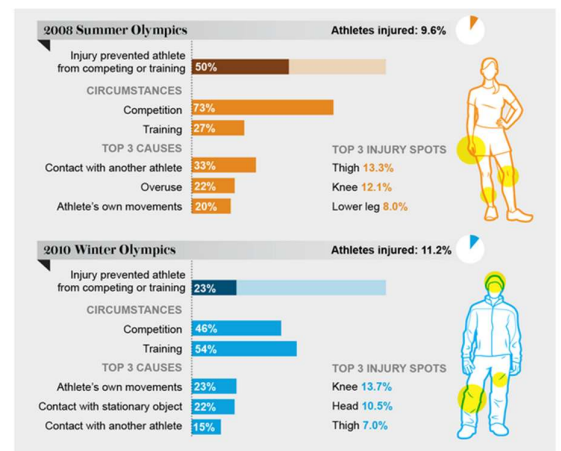
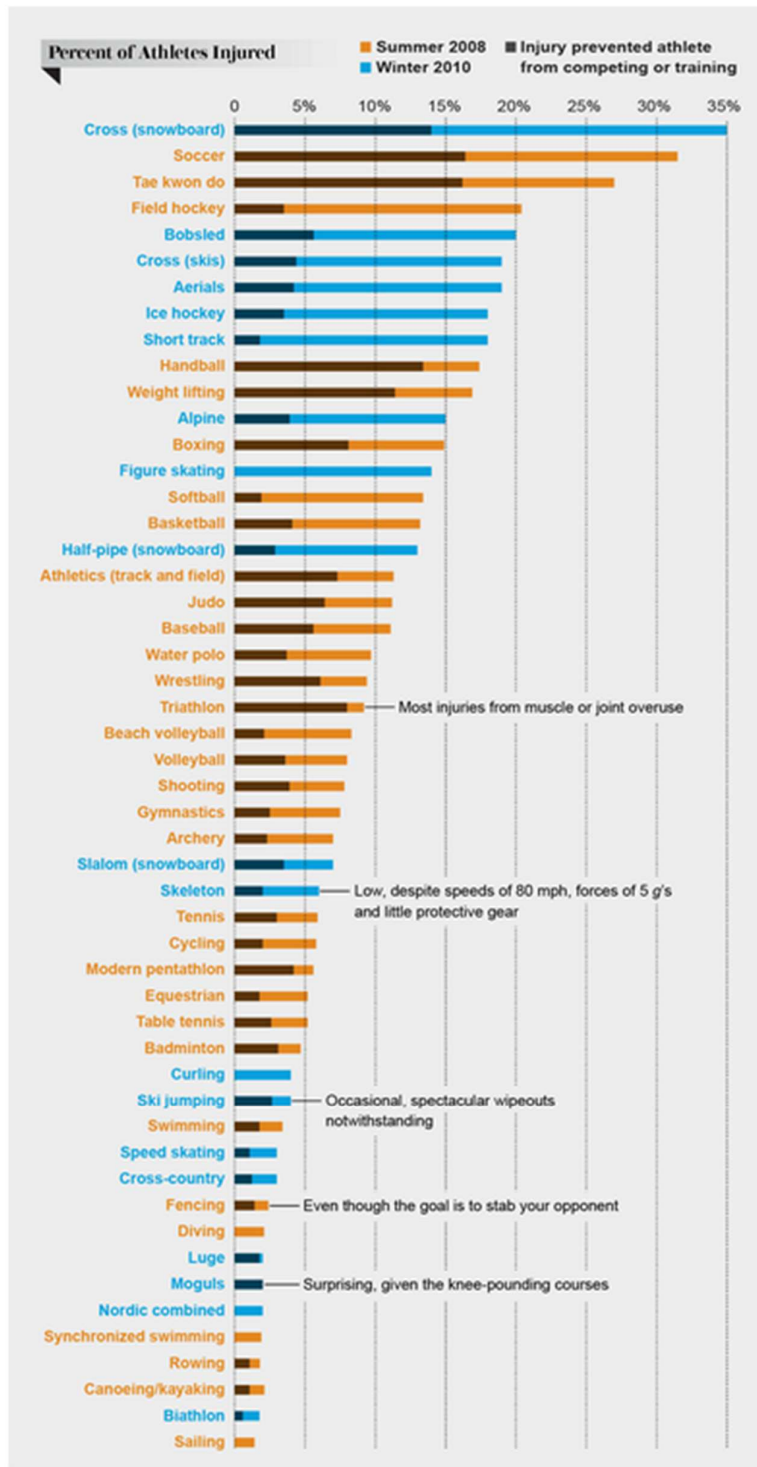
**Triage Sub-Committee:** Graham Conlan - triage@fencing.org.nz





# Is Fencing Safe?

'A study of injuries occurring in Olympic competition ranks fencing as having one of the lowest injury rates, making it one of the safest Olympic sports. Fencing remains one of the safest sports for kids and adults with injury rates far below those of the more popular sports.'



Credit: Graphic by Jen Christiansen, Illustrations by MCKIBILLO; Source: Lars Engebretsen, University of Oslo

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/leg-head-injuries-frequent-at-olympics>

This article was originally published with the title "Olympic Hurtfuls" in Scientific American 307, 2, 92 (August 2012) doi:10.1038/scientificamerican0812-92

<https://academyoffencingmasters.com/blog/is-fencing-safe>

<https://fencing.net/13020/fencing-safer-than-badminton>





## Investing in Fencing is Investing in Sporting Athletes & Officials, Education, Tourism and the New Zealand Economy

- Due to the one-to-one competitive nature of fencing it is critical that our fencers and coaches gain experience fencing competitors from different countries. Globally, by country, there are different schools of fencing and it is important for fencers to experience these different styles, tactics and techniques.
- Experience is gained both by New Zealand fencers traveling to international competitions and by attracting international fencers to New Zealand.
- Fencing is for life. International fencers are increasingly attending New Zealand Colleges and Universities to join education based or club fencing training, bouting and coaching lessons provided by experienced coaches. Cadet U17, Junior U20, Senior and Veteran (40+) age fencers also travel to New Zealand to compete in Oceania and New Zealand national fencing competitions.
- Investing in the sport of fencing and building the reputation of New Zealand fencing, and our internationally qualified and experienced referees and officials, not only has the potential of increasing the ability and global standing of New Zealand fencer athletes but it also supports the development of New Zealand education, tourism and the economy.

The global popularity of fencing is growing and fencing is now a regular feature in mainstream Movies, TV series and Theatre performances: The Mask of Zorro, The Three Musketeers, James Bond - Die Another Day, Star Wars, Princess Bride, Lord of the Rings, Pirates of the Caribbean, Enola Holmes, Benedict Cumberbatch - 2019 National Theatre performance of Hamlet and Netflix Series - Wednesday Addams.

### World Fencing Day

