



# Fencing New Zealand

(Fencing New Zealand Incorporated)

## President's Report 2021

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I would like to start by acknowledging the work put into Fencing New Zealand over the last five years by past President Mark Rance and thank him for such a great effort. Mark held the position of President of Fencing New Zealand from 2017 until October last year when, as you will all know, he resigned due to ill health. He is still our representative on the Board of Oceania Fencing, and was elected as the Chair of the FIE Veterans Committee.

I wish Mark all the best, and I'm sure the rest of the Board and our Fencing community join me in thanking him for his work over the years.

At this time, I'd also like to pay my respects to the families and friends of Russel Towns (MNZM) and Keith Mann (MNZM) – two fencing stalwarts who gave so much of their lives to our amazing sport, who passed away last year. Both were true gentlemen who had a major impact on so many people in our extended family and will be sadly missed.

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**2021** was supposed to be the Covid Recovery Year as the vaccines kicked in to save the world. Everything was starting to look good there for a while, and things were slowly starting to come right until the Virus re-emerged in its new variety in August.

Thanks to our amazing volunteers though, in the early part of the year we were still however able to hold the NZ U15 and 17 Championships, the North and South Island Championships, and the Presidents Cup. Multiple Regional competitions were also able to be held. It was great to see so many people get back into it with such a passion after such a long break through 2020.

Regrettably however our brief respite didn't last, and in the latter part of the year we once again had to cancel Oceanic Juniors and Seniors, as well as the National Secondary School Champs. Once again my thanks go to all those who had worked so hard on the set up of these events. I share your frustration at the roller coaster ride of the on again/off again schedule changes.

Aside from the tournaments though, there are a few other items from our chaotic year that also should be mentioned:

We now have an official mask design approved by the FIE so we can finally hold our heads high at international events, and we have Fencing NZ socks available through Mainland Fencing.

We have also established a great working relationship with Drug Free Sport and many of our fencers have completed their e-learning courses. This partnership is planned to grow this year.



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We're also in the early stages of discussion with Sport New Zealand about potentially becoming a formal partner with them once again. This will open-up a multitude of opportunities.

2022 has started with a hiss and a roar, with early National events underway in preparation for the Commonwealth Fencing Championships. I'd like to thank Grant Twedde for the amazing job he's done over several months in pulling it all together so far and congrats also go to Vicci Lamb for her selection as Team Manager. Good luck to everyone fighting for selection to be part of for the NZ team in August.

Good luck also to our younger Kiwis who are attending the Cadet and Junior World Championships early in Dubai in April. Kia Kaha – Go hard!

Lastly my thanks go to all the people involved in running our cool sport.

Past Regional Presidents Vanda Symon and Richard Johnstone who put in an amazing effort over many years; the Board of FeNZ (Amanda, Steve, Alice, Peter, Nicole, Rachel and Sam),; all the members of the Commissions; the Regional Boards; the Tournament Organisers and Referees who make tournaments and events happen; and of course, the Coaches who work tirelessly to help our fencers be the best that they can be. Our fencers owe you all a huge debt of gratitude for the countless hours you put in, not only in front of them, but behind the scenes as well.

This coming year is going to be a huge year for our sport in this country, with a lot of exciting plans in the making already. We have a great bunch of clever and intelligent people in our community, and we'll be calling on you all to help.

While at times there are bound to be disagreements, if we accept our right to have different opinions but still all work together to pull in the same general direction, we can really grow this sport and help our future athletes fulfill their true potentials at all levels.

David

*David Elder*

*(Acting) President Fencing New Zealand*

