

Welsh Fencing

ADP Report 2020-2021

Compiled by Fran Whalley, Director Welsh Fencing

I have been asked to report on the newly created Athlete Development Programme for Welsh fencers, known as the ADP Cymru.

There have been various occasions in the past where we have tried to set up a training programme where fencers from across Wales are able to get together and fence. These have been unsuccessful for a few reasons, but mostly due to the lack of volunteers wanting to run it.

Michael Evans-Jones approached the board in February 2021 with a proposal to create a development programme for fencers in Wales, that brought back passion and pride to the team and looked ahead to long term development. It also included the 'Dragon Values': You are Dedicated, Resilient, Ambitious, Innovative and Genuine, or 'Y Ddraig' for short.

The board recognised this as an incredible opportunity to offer something really special for the members and Mike, John Rees and myself were tasked with putting together a plan of action.

After several discussions, plenty of planning, huge ideas and ambitions, and two training sessions in I am very pleased and proud of what has become of this programme.

The first session was attended by over 60 fencers all hoping to be selected for the commonwealth team across the age categories. After the session, the feedback received from the survey was overwhelmingly positive, and as a team we were pleased that everyone enjoyed it so much.

The second session, aimed at our younger fencers saw 33 of our up-and-coming fencers join together, with more experienced athletes taking on leadership roles and everyone getting in plenty of fencing.

Looking ahead we have the next session for commonwealth hopefuls in February, with 6 training days and a 3-4day camp planned for 2022 (although no dates set in stone yet as the calendar is ever changing). We are also looking to include referee and coach development opportunities alongside these sessions, as well as looking at getting in specialist S&C coaches as well as sports psychologists.

But the main focus for us is to get Welsh fencers, in Welsh venues (north and south!) training together and creating a Welsh squad that fencers are proud to be a part of.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mike for this brilliant proposal and getting the ball rolling for this programme, as well as John Rees for his invaluable input, drawing from many years of experience within the BF ADP.

I am excited to see how the ADP Cymru develops, and how much it will play a role in the future for Welsh Fencers.