

## **GREAT BRITAIN – Report to EVF Congress 2024**

It is only fitting to pay tribute to Henry de Silva, the founder and Life President of BVF (then NVA) and the founder of EVF.

Henry died on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at the age of 90 following a determined battle with cancer.

RIP Henry – Veteran Fencers owe you much and we all salute you.



*Henry de Silva 1933-2024*

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With the pandemic becoming just a memory, BVF continued in full swing with the committee hard at work and our fencers competing internationally and nationally at a plethora of events. It was encouraging to see more of our fencers competing in EVF Circuit competitions.

## International Events

### European Individual Championships, Thionville – May 2023

Our squad of 140 plus fencers found their way by land and sea or air across the Channel to Thionville in the Benelux region of France to take part in the European Veterans Individual Championships. A Championships was a new experience for some and old hat for others, but the excitement and anticipation were tangible.

The venue and set up were excellent, in particular the live stream both showing on big screens at the venue and accessible for those at home, and the slick opening ceremony and medal presentations. The standard and quality of fencing was very high, with fencers obviously having trained hard for this event and the standard of refereeing was very good. There were no easy matches, some with very close DE results, and we returned home with a very respectable total of 11 medals finishing 4th on the medal table out of 33 countries.



*Some GBR medallists*

### The German Match – August 2024

It was good to re-establish this event, which traditionally takes place every two years. This time it was German Veterans' turn to host and Munster was the destination. 20 BVF fencers took part and enjoyed both fencing and the chance to spend time socialising with our German friends. Germany took an overall victory.



*Fencers in Munster*

## **Veterans World Championships, Daytona Beach, Florida – October 2023**

The Veterans Fencing World Championship were much anticipated. Having crossed the pond from our various locations we were all pleased to see an excellent venue. The weather was variable with a tornado warning very early one morning, but that proved to be just heavy rain and from then on, the weather improved and fencers could enjoy time out on the beach.

The event was efficiently run, and the friendliness was excellent. The schedule was different from previous Championships – 2 weapons per day (all categories) with the corresponding team events the following day, and for individual events, two waves of finals and medal presentations. The standard of refereeing was excellent with live stream and video refereeing from the L8 onwards. The squad returned with a total of 9 medals – 1 gold, 2 silver and six bronze, finishing 5<sup>th</sup> on the medal table. A very creditable result.



*World Championships medallists*

## **Guildford International EVF Circuit – January 2024**

2024 events started with the 6-weapon EVF Circuit and GBR selection event at Guildford Spectrum. With 395 weapons entries and 17 countries represented it was both successful and well run. It was also a GBR selection event.



*Guildford medallists*

## **Domestic events**

Our domestic events have been:

- Bard's Bash, Stratford-upon-Avon - a friendly team and individual event with a social barbeque
- The Winton Cup – 10 region team event
- GB Vets v Royal Navy – a 3-way team match with students from Royal Holloway University, London invited
- BVF Championships – a selection event
- Home Nations – team match between England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, hosted by Scotland Veterans in Edinburgh
- BVF Age Groups – a selection event
- In the lead up to Daytona Beach, squad members took part in a series of sports psychology seminars, which were interesting, informative and appreciated.

BVF President, Carl Morris, and the committee members continue to work together to provide the best possible events and choices for our current members and to recruit new members.

GBR fencers and supporters are looking forward to a great European Team Championships in Ciney and to meeting up with old friends and making new ones.

*Gillian Aghajan*

***GBR EVF Representative***