Safety Policy

The Committee of the Orkney Fencing Club wish to promote safety in the Club and seeks co-operation of all club members for that purpose. The Club will provide conditions for fencing which comply with good standards of health and safety.

The Club shall:

- Provide information, instruction and supervision to enable all new members to fence safely.
- Provide protective clothing for beginners to ensure that they are properly equipped.
- Maintain clothing and weapons at regular intervals and remove any that are unsafe.
- Encourage members to purchase their own equipment.
- Members of the Club shall join the Scottish Fencing Association so that they have the benefit of insurance cover.
- Bar any person behaving in such a manner to cause injury.

Although the sport of fencing is low risk, accidents can happen in any environment. It is our objective to reduce the incidence of accidents and subsequent injury to an absolute minimum.

In order to provide a safe environment in which members and visitors to the Club can pursue the sport of fencing we ask you observe the following ***personal responsibilities***.

- Safety is the individual responsibility of every member of the Club. Members are responsible for the equipment they use and must ensure it is in good order.
- Members should also be vigilant about their opponents' attitude to safety. A member must refuse to fence anyone who appears to have defective equipment.

The Armourer is a member of the Club Committee and takes responsibility for the maintenance of clothing, weapons and electric equipment owned by the Club.

The Armourer, coaching staff, and club committee have the authority to:

- stop a person fencing until such time as they have equipment that gives adequate protection,
- stop a person fencing who is fencing in a dangerous manner.

Beginners

The club provides plastrons, masks, jackets, gloves, foils (Electric and non-electric "steam"), and chest protectors for ladies. The club has limited equipment stocks, so we ask that if you continue to fence you begin to purchase your own equipment so that we have sufficient equipment for new beginners.

Experienced Fencers

A fencer is expected to provide his/her own protective clothing and weapons.

The following equipment is required:

Mask, Jacket, Breeches, Long socks, Glove, Plastron, Weapons, Bodywires (headwire for foil), Lame (for foil fencers). The plastron should be 800N if you are fencing competitions.

The Armourer has the authority to inspect personal equipment and to require you to repair or replace items considered defective or unsafe. Check your equipment every time you use it. If in doubt, ASK the Armourer or coaching staff.

Mask

The mask is unsafe if it exhibits signs of rusting, deformation, weakness of the mesh, loose or decayed fabric, weakness in the bib or its attachment to the mask, excessive wear or damage to the lining (interior padding) of the mask that could result in facial injury.

Jackets and Breeches
Check these for split seams or decaying stitching, holes, damaged zipps, and worn out velcro closures. If it cannot be satisfactorily repaired it must be replaced.

Chest Protectors
Check for split pockets and lack of ability to maintain insert position. In the case of the newer plastic chest protectors, check for split or damaged plastic, excessively worn suspension straps or fabric.

Gloves
The glove must not exhibit any holes or split stitching. An unsafe glove can trap the blade of a weapon and potentially cause blade failure. A glove that cannot be satisfactorily repaired should be replaced.

Plastron
Check for holes and splits or decaying stitching. A damaged plastron must be replaced.

Weapons
Check electric weapons for proper operation.

Steam weapons should be checked for the condition and attachment of the protective tip.

Check for split, cracked, broken, deformed blades, and for excessive softness. Deformation of blades suggests a weakness. Softening of a blade indicates imminent failure. **DO NOT fence with a blade that you know to be defective.**

DO NOT tamper or modify blades. Anyone found tampering with a weapon will be immediately banned.

Electric Recording Equipment (Boxes)
Report any damage, malfunctions, loose connections, damaged connectors, damaged cables or reels to the Armourer.

Dangerous Behaviour
The Armourer, coaching staff, and committee have the authority to warn any fencer whose behaviour could cause injury to an opponent or himself/herself. Dangerous behaviours include hard or dangerous hitting, jostling or violent physical contact, using unsafe protective clothing, using unsafe weapons, and ignoring the warnings of the armourer, coaching staff, senior fencers, or committee members.

First Aid
The club maintains a First Aid Kit and qualified First Aiders.

If in the Pickaquoy Leisure Centre, immediately notify the reception desk. A telephone will be available for emergency services notification.

In the case of a minor accident, go to Reception and request assistance,

In the case of a major accident, see the Coach or a Committee Member.

Any accident shall be recorded on our Accident report form

Further Information
The BFA maintains very comprehensive safety guidance (http://britishfencing.com/uploads/files/july_17_approved_safety_guidelines.pdf). It is well worth your time to review and understand their guidance.