



**2026
ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**



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AGENDA

- a. Call to order
- b. Establishment of quorum
- c. Appointment of scrutineers
- d. Approval of the agenda
- e. Adoption of Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting
- f. Presentation and approval of reports
- g. Report of Auditors
- h. Appointment of Auditors
- j. Election of new Directors
- k. Termination of Meeting

2025 AGM MINUTES

Manitoba Fencing Association
Annual General Meeting –
Minutes

6:30 PM on Wednesday June 18, 2025
Sport Manitoba - 145 Pacific Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2Z6

1. Registration

2. Call to Order

3. Adoption of the Agenda

- THAT the agenda be approved
- Motion: Andy Beardsall
- Second: Macela Cabezas

4. Appointment of Scrutineers

- Amanda Wilks
- Elizabeth Derrough
- Maire P

5. Reading and Adoption of 2024 AGM Minutes

- THAT the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of June 2024 be approved
- Motion: Andy Beardsall
- Second: Daria J-P

6. Reports of Officers and Staff

- 6.1 President - Maire - read in meeting
- 6.2 Provincial Coach - included in the meeting package
- 6.3 Volunteer Chair - included in the meeting package
- 6.4 Armoury Chair - included in the meeting package

7. Audited Financial Report and Forecast

- Will be provided at a Special Meeting of the members

8. Election of Officers and naming of Members-at-Large

- THAT the membership ratifies the business of the MFA Board fencing year 2024-25

2025 AGM MINUTES

President 2025-27

Nominations:

Joanne Struch

Elected

- VP Technical 2025-2027
 - Noah M-L: Nominated by Daria; seconded by Matias
 - Elected
- Corporate Secretary 2025-2027
 - No nominations

VP Athlete Development

Vacant - no nominations

- Director at Large term 2025-2027
 - Paula Chisco: nominated by Daria; seconded by Matias
 - Elected

Motion: Macela Cabezas

Second: Camilla Tang

Carried unanimously

- Election of Athlete Member-at-Large (Athlete Representative)
- To be done at a meeting of Provincial Team athletes.
- New Business (if any)
- Charitable status question
 - Can we look into this? What are the options?
 - Can we work on a capital campaign? What are the options for this?
- Space planning - will there be a business plan?
- Add item to the fall agenda (Kurt raised this):
 - Capital campaign; equipment campaign?
- Question about the bylaws and governance -
 - Will they be reviewed
- Adjournment

Motion: Karine Duhamel

Second: Neil Smith

Carried unanimously

Minutes recorded by: Joanne Struch

A Message from the President



Joanne Struch

It has been a busy year for the MFA! 'Transition' seems to be the theme of the year, as we had a change in both our board leadership and in the operations of the organization, as we engaged WilDer Sport Management to take on the day-to-day administration, with Elizabeth W. Derraugh as Executive Director.

'Transition' also characterizes much of the work that the MFA undertook this year, as we strove to align our governance and operational processes with best practices and in ways that would best serve the organization and its membership. Within that context, we worked to ensure that the board was maintaining its fiduciary responsibility and set in motion a strategic planning process that involved significant consultation and will set the MFA on a path for growth.

The information in this report cannot fully capture the robustness of the activities of the organization over this year. It is a snapshot of a busy year for an active organization.

If you would like to hear more detail about any of the items mentioned here, please don't hesitate to reach out to mfa.president@sportmanitoba.ca and we can arrange a time to chat.

Highlights and Achievements

Some of the highlights of the work of the organization this year include:

- Implementing the SafeSport initiative with resources and support from Sport Manitoba
- Reviewing and revising the MFA bylaws to align with best practices in governance and to provide clarity for the organization
- Developing a strategic planning committee and consulting about the strategic plan (more about this in the strategic planning committee report)
- Implementing new contracts for Provincial Team Assistant Coaches
- Formalizing a number of constituent committees through the development of Terms of Reference as an essential part of keeping the work of the organization moving forward
- Hosting provincial championships (the Golden Boy) with the participation of the largest number of fencers in recent years.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Through this transitional year, there were a few challenges that have also provided us with the opportunity to review and improve our practices and processes:

Provincial team growth as an opportunity to define space needs:

- Space for the provincial team program training has been a challenge, as the team has grown in numbers and has started to outgrow the space available at Sport Manitoba. We took this opportunity to identify the space requirements for this training and to investigate other training venues. As a result, we have been able to book some training time at RRC Polytechnic. We will be looking into other possibilities for the future as the space at RRCP is less available with the reinstatement of varsity athletics.

An opportunity to clarify policies and processes:

- This year, the MFA received some formal challenges through various complaints processes stemming from issues in previous year's operations. These complaints processes have engaged bodies such as the Employment Standards Board and the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. Understanding and responding to these situations has provided us with the opportunity to look at our policies and processes in detail and continue to work to align them with best and required practices. We continue to learn from these situations for the better of the organization and our members to improve the organization's operations for this and future years.

A Message from the President



Joanne Struch

Looking Ahead

As we look ahead to the upcoming season, my hope is that the words of the year will be 'continued improvement' and 'growth'. The processes that we have put in place, that were 'new' will become the 'usual' and we will continue to look for ways to provide clarity, consistency, and transparency around the activities of the MFA.

Some significant activities for the year ahead include:

- Sharing and beginning to implement the new strategic plan to grow and nurture the fencing community.
- Enacting the bylaw revisions, starting with the elections at the AGM and continuing through the work of implementing critical committees that are an integral part of the new governance structure.
- As part of the above committee work, looking for ways to involve more of the fencing community in the broader work of the organization and encouraging community members to be as involved as they can with this work.
- Establishing more regular communications with clubs and seeking new opportunities to support them.
- Exploring new approaches to ensure the sustainability of the association and its programs through sponsorship, fundraising, and outreach.

Recognition and Additional Comments

Thank you to all of the Coaches, Board Members, Committee Chairs and Members, and Volunteers who were involved in the work of the MFA this year!

A Message from the Executive Director



Elizabeth Derraugh

The 2025–26 season was one of transition, growth, and opportunity for the Manitoba Fencing Association. As I stepped into the role of Executive Director, much of the year was dedicated to learning the operations of the Association, building relationships with our clubs and members, and identifying opportunities to strengthen the organization for the future.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors, committee members, club leaders, coaches, officials, volunteers, and athletes for their patience and support throughout this transition. Their knowledge, commitment, and passion for the sport have made this first year both rewarding and productive.

One of the highlights of the season was the outstanding participation at provincial competitions. The strong attendance at events demonstrates the continued growth of fencing in Manitoba and reflects the dedication of our association in providing quality programming and competitive opportunities for athletes across the province.

This year also marked significant progress in strengthening the governance of the Association. Working collaboratively with the Board, we completed a comprehensive review and approval of new By-laws and introduced a wide range of new policies that provide greater clarity, accountability, and consistency in our operations. These improvements position the Manitoba Fencing Association to better meet the expectations of Sport Manitoba and other funding partners while providing a stronger governance framework for our members.

To further support the Association's long-term success, we introduced several new committees and working groups to increase member engagement and distribute responsibilities across a broader group of volunteers. These groups will play an important role in supporting strategic initiatives and ensuring the continued growth of our organization.

Looking ahead to the 2026–27 season, our focus will be on strengthening support for our clubs, streamlining operational and administrative processes, and improving the services we provide to our members. We will also prioritize the long-term financial sustainability of the Association by establishing a Sponsorship Committee to begin developing partnerships and diversifying our revenue streams. These efforts will help create additional opportunities to invest in athlete development, club programming, and the continued growth of fencing throughout Manitoba.

While this season was one of learning and transition, it also established a strong foundation for the future. I am excited about the direction of the Association and look forward to working alongside our Board, volunteers, clubs, and members as we continue to build a stronger, more sustainable Manitoba Fencing Association.

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, expertise, and enthusiasm this season. Together, we are creating a bright future for fencing in Manitoba.

A Message from the Provincial Coach



Ayach Bounachada

Provincial Team Members

This season, the Provincial Team consisted of 51 athletes (excluding Sparring Partners).

The largest group was the Squad category, with more than 30 athletes aged 15 and under. This is a very encouraging achievement and reflects the excellent work of our club coaches and assistant coaches, Daria, Noah, and Xavier.

Our goal is to maintain similar numbers next season. Expanding beyond this level is not currently feasible, as we would require a larger training facility throughout the week, as well as additional full-time coaching staff.

The Provincial Team is a key driver of our sport's development. Many athletes transition into coaching and refereeing roles, where they continue to make valuable contributions to their clubs and the fencing community.

Special thanks to Daria for her outstanding commitment to promoting the provincial team at every level. She not only encourages athletes to join the provincial team but also inspires our more experienced fencers to pursue coaching and refereeing certification. Your dedication is making a lasting impact on our fencing community. Please keep up the great work, Daria! Fencing Manitoba will always need people like you.

Provincial Team Training

This season, the Provincial Team trained in significantly better conditions. We held two training sessions each week at Red River College on Tuesdays and Fridays from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., while the remaining sessions took place at Sport Manitoba. Big thanks to Joanne for making it happen.

The training schedule was as follows:

Mondays: From 5:00 to 8:00 pm at Sport Manitoba.

Tuesdays: From 7:00 am to 9:00 am at Sport Manitoba. From 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at RRC.

Wednesday: From 7:00 am to 8:30 am at Sport Manitoba. From 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Sport Manitoba.

Thursday: From 7:00 am to 8:00 am at Sport Manitoba.

Friday: From 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at RRC.

With this schedule, the training volume was excellent. Our HP/Intermediate athletes averaged 14–16 hours of training per week, excluding their club practices and individual training sessions. We hope to maintain this level of training volume in the coming season.

A Message from the Provincial Coach



Ayach Bounachada

Coaching Staff

Our coaching staff was as follows:

Provincial Coach: Ayach Bounachada.

Epee: Daria JP. Squad/YHP Epee.

Foil: Noah M. Squad/Youth HP.

Sabre: Ravil F. Squad/YHP/Inter.

Xavier S. Squad Beginner.

It was unfortunate to lose Ravil Faziliev, a highly experienced sabre coach. Next season, I will reorganize the sabre groups to ensure that our Squad and Intermediate athletes continue to receive the appropriate level of coaching and support. Unfortunately, this change will have an impact on our High-Performance athletes, as it will be difficult to replace Ravil's expertise. I hope that, in the future, we will be able to recruit another coach with a similar level of experience and expertise.

Performances

It was an exceptional season, with our athletes competing at all levels and across multiple age categories. They participated in 23 competitions held in Canada, the United States, and Europe, demonstrating the strength and depth of our program. (The Magic of the Canada Games).

Our athletes participated in the following competitions:

- Regionals (Alberta Cup 1, Ontario Regional 1, Oshawa Regional, Ontario Provincials, Quebec Regional, Quebec Provincials, and BC Regional).
- At the National level, we participated in Canada Cup 1, 2, 3 and Canadian Nationals.
- At the International level in the US, there were 2 North American Circuits and 8 US regionals.
- In Europe, the Leon Paul International Challenge and the Esslingen Circuit.

The results were excellent across all categories, but we believe there is still room for improvement. To continue raising our performance, we must work both harder and smarter. This requires an ongoing commitment to enhancing our training environment, refining our program requirements, and continuously improving the quality of our athlete development system.

Regional Tournament Performances

The following athletes achieved outstanding results this season: Agnes B., Andy S., Andre A, Anna H, Felix B., Jacob K, Mylene L, Simon E., Rosa M., and William B.

Together, they earned an impressive 40 medals (27 golds, 4 silvers, and 9 bronzes).

Strategic Planning Committee Report



Karine Duhamel

Over the past year, my work as Vice-President focused primarily on organizational stability, governance renewal and strategic planning.

Key accomplishments included:

- Supporting the resolution of a range of outstanding administrative, operational and human resources matters to address key challenges.
- Creating and co-leading the MFA Strategic Planning Committee.
- Supporting the process to review, finalize and bring forward the MFA's new bylaws.
- Assisting the President and Board with human resources matters, governance issues and other organizational files as assigned.
- Participating regularly in Board meetings and contributing to broader association projects and decision-making.

The principal initiative I led was the MFA strategic planning process. This included developing and overseeing opportunities for engagement with athletes, coaches, officials, parents, clubs and other members of Manitoba's fencing community. The process included a community survey, focus groups, interviews and committee discussions. Participation brought forward perspectives from people with different roles and experiences across the fencing community. The feedback helped the committee identify shared priorities, ongoing challenges and potential strategic directions for the association.

Following the engagement process, the committee reviewed the findings and developed a preliminary set of strategic pillars and actions. The Strategic Planning Committee continues to meet over the summer to prepare a complete draft of the new strategic plan.

One of the largest challenges was addressing outstanding matters associated with the transition following the former Executive Director's departure. This work required considerable time and highlighted the importance of clear documentation, defined responsibilities, sound human resources practices and effective organizational processes. The strategic planning process also demonstrated the challenges of undertaking substantial organizational work within a small, largely volunteer-run association. Committee and Board members have limited time, and Manitoba's fencing community includes a range of perspectives, experiences and priorities. A key lesson was the importance of providing multiple ways for members to participate and ensuring that decisions are informed by broad community input. The past year also reinforced the need for clear governance structures, realistic priorities and defined accountability for implementing future initiatives.

Strategic Planning Committee Report



Karine Duhamel

My primary priorities for the coming year are to support the implementation of the MFA's new bylaws and to complete and begin delivering the association's new strategic plan.

This work will include:

- Supporting the Board in aligning its governance practices, committee structures, policies and procedures with the new bylaws.
- Completing the draft strategic plan and bringing it forward for review and approval.
- Developing practical implementation priorities, timelines and measures of progress.
- Helping to ensure that the strategic plan reflects the MFA's available resources and the realities of a volunteer-led provincial sport organization.
- Continuing to support the President, Board and association on governance, human resources and other priority files as required.

The goal will be to move from planning and governance renewal toward clear, coordinated and achievable implementation.

I would like to extend a special thank you to the members of the Strategic Planning Committee: Camilla Tang, Alison Maxwell-Diacos, Daria Jorquera Palmer, Paula Chisco and Robert Hornford, as well as my co-chair, Neil Smith. Their time, thoughtful contributions and continued commitment have been essential to the progress made over the past year.

I would also like to recognize the athletes, coaches, officials, parents, club representatives and other community members who participated in the strategic planning engagement process. Their perspectives have helped shape the preliminary strategic directions and will continue to inform the completed plan. Finally, I would like to thank the President, fellow Board members, and Technical Director/Provincial Coach, for their collaboration and support throughout a demanding year of organizational transition and renewal, as well as Elizabeth Derragh/Wilder Sports Management, for their dedicated support and expertise in all projects over the past year.

Armoury Committee Report



Prepared by Neil Smith

The Armoury Committee was able to set up equipment for 8 training pistes at Sport Manitoba and 12 training pistes at Red River Polytechnic. The storage locker on Alexander Avenue was emptied and the remaining useful equipment and shelving was transferred to the L2 cage and offices. This move eliminates the locker rental fee for the MFA.

The Armoury Committee has grown to 4 members. The committee coordinated venue setup, armoury check and venue teardown for the 5 MFA tournaments over the season. We also repaired and maintained all of the training equipment at Sport Manitoba and Red River over the season.

Adding Red River Polytechnic as a training venue required a significant effort at the beginning of last season to repair old equipment and build and purchase new equipment. The Committee will be drafting a plan to schedule equipment maintenance and replacement for future seasons.

The committee is planning to run an armoury training course and an equipment repair course over the coming season.

The committee will be asking for volunteers to assist in venue setup and teardown at MFA tournaments. We will also be looking for volunteers to train at the armoury table during the tournaments.

Space Planning Committee Report



Prepared by Joanne Struch

The Space Planning Committee is a standing committee of the Manitoba Fencing Association (MFA) Board of Directors. Its purpose is to:

- outline the needs and parameters for the training space for the provincial team
- research possibilities based on these parameters
- provide recommendations to the Board regarding the training space
- monitor the ongoing space needs for the team over time.
-

The space planning committee was formed in early 2026, with the MFA Board approving the Terms of Reference for the committee.

Looking ahead: In this next year, the committee will be looking to liaise with the strategic planning committee about the strategic priorities that inform the space plan, continue to identify space options, and develop a plan for training space.

Thanks to the members of the committee:

Jill Isbister
Olga Litovtchenko
Ainsley MacDougall
Renee Phipps
Peter Tonge
Xavier Slocombe

Volunteer Committee Report



Prepared by Karen Smith

- Season debrief and planning meeting scheduled for the 3rd week in August.
- New online merchandise platform used, resulting in less administration.
- Sold all 12 sample hoodies and t-shirts at the tournaments. This doesn't include the online orders.
- New, easier online volunteer sign-up platform introduced.
- Templates and checklists have been created to organize events and ease administrative responsibilities.
- Canteen sales supplies, including pizza, were positively received. Cash and e-transfer payment options were offered. Revenue earned was approximately \$400.
- Completed a supply inventory of items stored in the office to use for next year.
- Contracted with a vendor to sell logo-designed merchandise for the season.
- Manned a volunteer booth to sell merchandise and canteen/food supplies at all tournaments.
- Developed and delivered giveaway prizes for youth tournament participants.
- Recruited an average of 20–25 volunteers to fill 30 available slots for each tournament.
- Used fencing equipment sale table did not see many members sell or buy equipment.
- Pre-purchased logoed drawstring bags and water bottles have not been strong sellers. We will explore other options to sell/gift leftover items.
- Cars parking and blocking the school and gym doors have made it very difficult and unsafe for volunteers to park and carry large supplies to the venue throughout the day.
- Over 90% of volunteers come from either board or committee members.
- An average of 6 tournament volunteers are from the general parent membership.
- An average of 2 tournament volunteers are athletes.
- Increase tournament new volunteer representation from the athletes and their parents.
- Request that the Volunteer Committee Chair attend the parent/athlete pre-season meeting to sell and recruit new members to sign up for volunteer slots during tournaments. Encourage Ayach to support and champion this ask.
- We will explore a regular online 50/50 fundraising draw open to membership.
- We will consider designing and selling new clothing merchandise for the new season. The success of the fencing program in part relies on the volunteer support provided by athletes and their parents who support them. We need to encourage new members to take a minimum of 1.5 hours to assist the Volunteer Committee during one tournament scheduled throughout the year.

Club Report: Rapier



Prepared by Andrew Beardsall

Over the past year, the club also saw tremendous growth in athlete development and participation with a total club membership reaching 39 individuals. Many of our members competed in their first fencing tournament, and they did so with remarkable success, gaining valuable experience and confidence on the piste. Rapier Fencing Club athletes also continue to achieve strong results at the regional and national tournaments across Canada. These achievements demonstrate the club's commitment to fostering both high-performance athletes and new competitors, creating a supportive environment where fencers at all levels can thrive.

We are especially proud of Jasper Fosty, who earned the title of National Cadet Men's Sabre Champion, an outstanding achievement that reflects his dedication, hard work, and commitment to excellence both at Rapier Fencing Club and as a member of the provincial team.

A particular highlight was our Fencing Basics for Parents event, which gave parents the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of the sport, and better understand competition rules and tactics. The event was well attended and received, helping strengthen the connection between athletes, families, and the club community.

Training location costs have been the biggest challenge for the club, we are continuing to look at other options.

To introduce programming that meets the needs of our new athletes both young and older while keeping our provincial-level athletes engaged with the club ecosystem.

Our head coach, Xavier, plans to implement a clearer coaching pathway at RFC. With a schedule that supports it.

Additionally, Xavier's goal is to maintain a consistent weekly schedule to make planning easier for families. While moving our training block from Sunday to Saturday will be a positive change for many, we recognize it may require an adjustment for others.

RFC would like to recognize Xavier Slocombe for his incredible energy, tireless efforts, and exceptional coaching throughout the year. His passion for the sport, commitment to athlete development, and ability to inspire fencers of all ages and skill levels have had a tremendous impact on the club. Xavier has helped athletes achieve success both on and off the piste while fostering a positive, supportive, and high-performing club environment.

Club Report: Lightning



Prepared by Anita Wilson

The club maintained strong enrolment this year. A strong group of coaches and continued development of junior and volunteer coaches. Bylaw amendments were made at the 2026 AGM. Coaching and complaints policies developed. Board portfolios developed and implemented. Facility improvements included replaced lighting in gym and heat system. Implemented a new registration system - TeamLinkt which improved the process for parent and individuals to register as well as a tool to provide timely communications. Communications could be to all or tailored to specific classes or groups.

LFC has classes for adults, teens and two children (beginner and intermediate) athletes. LFC had athletes compete in each of the MFA tournament and significant number are on the provincial team and compete in Canada Cup, other provincial and international tournaments. We hosted two open houses and a successful fundraising activities.

LFC athletes provided demos at the Medieval festival in Cooks Creek MB this July. Area for opportunity is to have an armour available to fix equipment.

Looking to expand classes. Moved to new registration option of fall, winter or full season. Open house is planned for Aug 20th and another will be scheduled for winter session.

Continued work on policy development with the new board in place.

Continued coaching development.

The board of directors thanks Daria and all senior, junior and volunteer coaches for providing a fun, safe and engaging environment for athletes to develop their skills!

Thank you to the all the athletes for their hard work and dedication to the sport!

Thank you to the Board of Directors for their time and commitment to the club. Your efforts are greatly appreciated!

LFC is looking forward to the new season.

Club Report: Cavalier



Prepared by Neil Smith

The Cavalier 2025-26 season ran from September 8th to May 28th.

Our group of 6 coaches, led by Robert Hornford, did a great job of leading and instructing our epee and foil fencers. We had more fencers participating in tournaments this season than in recent memory, resulting in great experiences and many podium visits.

This season Cavalier had just over 40 registered athletes, split evenly between epee and foil. We averaged between 20 and 25 fencers per night over the season, ranging from recreational and beginner to high performance fencers.

This season, Ecole Bannatyne blocked a significant number of our training nights due to school activities. We were able to book Deer Lodge Community Centre to fill in most of the cancelled days.

This coming season, Cavalier is permanently moving to Deer Lodge Community Centre to provide more training nights over the season. Graham Sweet retired from the Cavalier Board of Directors at the end of this season after almost 20 years of service. We are thankful for all of the contributions that Graham has made to Cavalier. Cavalier would also like to gratefully acknowledge the monetary and equipment donations that we received Phoenix Fencing this past season.

Financial Report



Our accountants at Scarrow & Donald have put together a comprehensive financial report.

[View Report](#)

Nominees:



The nominees have been reviewed by the Nominations Committee and are being recommended for consideration.

- Director at Large: 2 positions up for election
Nominees: Peter Tonge and Albert Kirby
- Vice President:
Nominee: Karine Duhamel

To view a nominee's bio, please click [HERE](#).

Bylaws



View the approved bylaws below.

[View ByLaws](#)