



COMMONWEALTH FENCING FEDERATION

JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS 2009

FINAL REPORT

Prepared by the CFF Technical Committee

INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth Fencing Federation (CFF) wishes to thank the Malaysian Fencing Federation (MFF) for having so graciously accepted to host this second edition of the Commonwealth Junior Championships, as well as the Penang Amateur Fencing Association (PAFA) for having offered to organise the event on the MFF's behalf.

The CFF recognises the importance of regularly holding these developmental events and, while participation numbers are still somewhat low, the Federation was rewarded this year with noticeable improvements in the number of participating countries (14), the number of participating athletes (202), the technical quality of the fencing and the competence of the fencers taking part in the Championships. We also applaud the fact that these Championships provided an opportunity for an even greater number of participants from different nations to achieve gold on the victory podium.

DATE AND LOCATION

This edition of the Championships was held from the 17th to the 21st of February, 2009, at the Penang International Sports Arena (PISA) in Penang, Malaysia.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE AND DIRECTOIRE TECHNIQUE

We gratefully acknowledge the invaluable assistance provided by the members of the local Organizing Committee headed by its Chairman, Dato' Dr. Kenny Ong, whose able and competent team made every effort to guarantee these Championships would be a success. Members of the Organizing Committee included:

Dato' Dr. Kenny Ong (Chairman)

Ir Dr. Goh Teik Cheong and Lim Peng Jin (Vice Chaimen)

Quah Wei Loon (Delegated MFF Representative and Secretary)

Wong Goon Fatt and Annie Cheah (Treasurers)

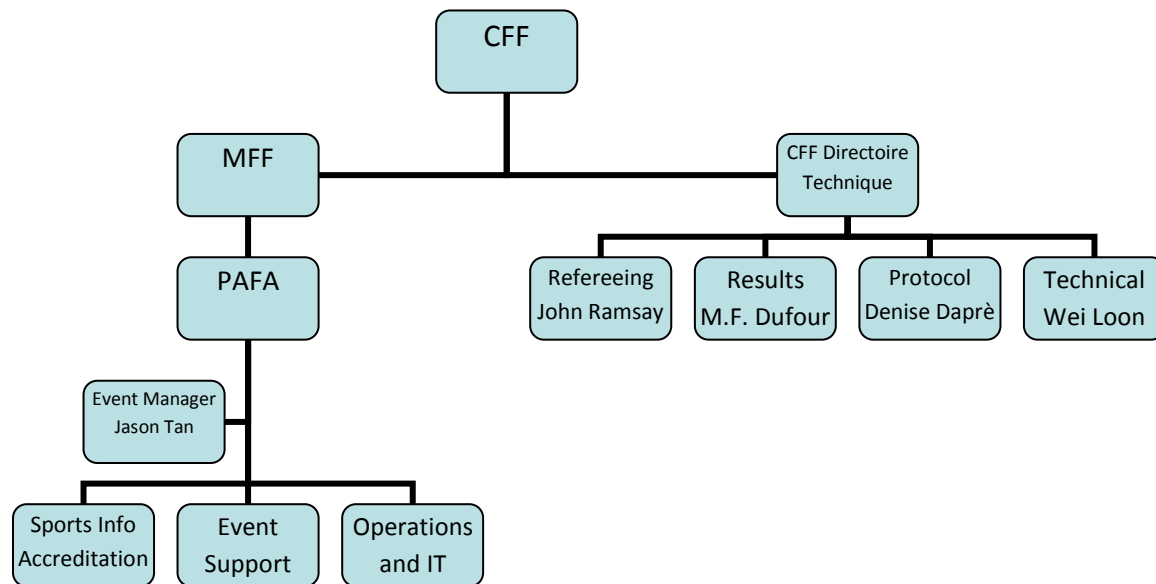
Mohammad Rizal Ashraf (Venue Director)

We are particularly indebted to Dato' Dr. Kenny Ong, not only for his immense personal and financial contribution to this event, but also for providing us with a hand-picked team of eager and reliable staff members from his company to deliver our Secretariat support. Our task was made that much simpler

thanks to the dedicated service provided by these willing volunteers, all under the able direction of their Director, Mr. Jason Tan

The Directoire Technique was headed by CFF Technical Chairman John Ramsay, who was also responsible for referee assignments and management; M.-F. Dufour was in charge of competition management and results; and Denise Daprè managed all marshalling and protocol activities.

Event organizational chart



FINANCING

The downturn in the world economy coincided with the timing of this event and resulted in several sponsors pulling out at the last minute, which put increased pressure on the PAFA. We were fortunate that Dato' Dr. Kenny Ong decided to step in as the event's major sponsor through the auspices of one of his companies, Priority Resources SDN BHD; he constructively used these Championships as a training opportunity for young employees developing their skills in major event management, one of the many services offered by his company.

VENUE AND EVENT

Facilities had been rented in PISA, including the entire main arena, an area that provided sufficient room to accommodate both the fencing and most event support activities.

Lighting was adequate and full air conditioning became available just before fencing start-up time.

Seating capacity would easily have accommodated several thousand spectators; however, there were few other than those usually associated with fencing events (team members, accompagnateurs, delegation members, etc.). On several occasions, school children were bused in to watch the fencing as an extracurricular activity and, at times, take part in small demonstrations on fencing provided by the PAFA.

Training and warm-up halls were not available and these activities would, therefore, take place on a “first-come, first-serve” basis, when and as pistes became freed up. To its credit, one of the event hotels put its ballroom at the disposal of their resident athletes who wished to train there preferably to travelling down to the venue.

Rest rooms were large enough, readily available and, generally kept reasonably clean; there were changing rooms with showers for those who preferred to change on site rather than travel back to the hotel in their fencing clothes.

A **Directoire Technique room** could have been made available to us, but as it was situated at some distance and out of sight of the fencing, we opted to set up the DT next to the area partitioned off for the Secretariat in the main fencing venue (western far end of the arena).

Meeting rooms were also available and we made use of one of these for our morning team managers and referees’ meetings, turning it over to the referees after that for their use as a room where they could rest and recuperate between bouts during the day.

Referees had some concerns at first. It seems that the PAFA was unaware that they would also fall under their responsibility during their shifts at the venue. After the referees made some representations to the DT, we conferred with representatives of the PAFA and it was agreed that they would cover their onsite expenses as well. A Referee List was provided to the onsite caterers and, from that point on, referees received their noon time meal free of charge.

Equipment control was, as always, the major stumbling block, as there was no onsite armourer. A first-day solution was provided with the help of John Ramsay; rudimentary crash-training was given to a volunteer until more experienced armourers were dispatched by the MFF to manage the control room. After the first-day expected delays, all ran much more smoothly in both the equipment control room and marshalling area. The organisers had originally intended to lay down only 6 pistes, but after some discussion and a review of entries, it was decided to alter the original layout design to accommodate 9 pistes as not only was there sufficient space available, but there was also sufficient scoring equipment available to service that many pistes, and still have reserves on hand. The 9th piste proved extremely useful and allowed us to save quite a bit of time as we were thus able to avoid running double flights of first-round poules for all but the two biggest weapons. All pistes were fully equipped with radio-controlled scoring apparatus (FAVERO brand), all of which was fairly new and in good working condition. There were few technical problems throughout the whole competition and, outside some very long delays on the first day due to inexperienced personnel (technicians, scorers, etc.) and incomplete support in equipment control (see above), the whole competition ran smoothly and mainly according to the posted schedule.

Marshalling and protocol went off much more successfully this time than in Chennai. Denise Daprè managed to get her team of assistants up to speed with requirements very quickly. The process was far less arduous this time around, perhaps as there were a greater number of fencers aware of the required procedure and a general heightened compliance on their part. The layout of the entrances to the arena allowed fencers to reach the coloured pistes by parading before the VIP dais. This same entrance was

possible for the final matches as well since the raised finals piste had been set up in the centre of the square formed by the coloured pistes.

Doping Control was not done, though we had been told to expect authorities to proceed with random testing in the course of the event – the expected officials failed to materialize.

Accreditation and Security were handled onsite by the Secretariat and all fencers/officials/team members were issued with zone-controlled access cards. These worked reasonable well, to the extent that most people were prepared to comply with the control requirements. However, after several incidents involving the theft of personal items left in fencing bags in the bleachers, the Secretariat alerted the police and, thereafter, secured the services of a private security firm to control access and provide order throughout the venue. These security officers were more or less effective as they were reluctant to intervene and keep people out of the fencing areas and DT members often had to direct them to deal more sternly with people crowding the pistes.

Information and Publicity were limited in scope and effectiveness. Though no television network covered the event, we did get fairly extensive coverage in the local press. The major publicity efforts made by the organisers included an attractive poster, a pamphlet containing the most important information and a fair amount of advertizing of the Championships through local area businesses.

Catering was provided to all on site, with hot meals being brought in (no kitchen facility was available on site) and made available to fencers at a very reasonable price. The variety of foodstuff was adequate and it was plentifully available throughout the day. The organizers also hosted a splendid closing reception in the ballroom of the Laurel Evergreen Hotel, with sumptuous buffet selections, an interesting cultural display on stage and presentations of awards and certificates to all delegation members.

Transport was reliable and always punctual, with buses shuttling athletes from both event hotels several times a day. Times had been well advertised and were strictly adhered to, though there was flexibility exercised when the fencing went over schedule.

RESULTS

Competition management and results were processed using the EnGarde software which ran fairly smoothly, except where teams were involved as this program does not recognise teams consisting of five (5) members and, therefore, requires extensive operator involvement to manually allow it to run team events. This led to unnecessary delays in the competition as these manual changes take time and create a greater risk of mistakes being introduced. The Technical Committee will be introducing a modification to the Championship technical guidelines, recommending that teams consist of no more than four (4) members in future. M.-F. Dufour would like to commend the efficient work of the IT members of the Secretariat in creating the necessary HTML interface to download results from the EnGarde file to stream on to the Championships web page. There was an unfortunate delay of two days due to: 1) long first-day delays that meant that there was not enough time at the end of the day to both set the interface up and prepare the next day's event in EnGarde on the event laptop and 2) the introduction at the hotel of a virus in the master laptop when the next day's event was being set up in EnGarde – nothing else could proceed until it had been purged from the system the next morning.

Results synopsis:

WEAPON	# FENCERS	DELEGATION	MEDALISTS
MF	40		G Benjamin PEGGS ENG S Daniel ROBINSON ENG B Matthew LAM SNG B Jason SCOURFIELD WAL
WF	36		G Elizabeth NG ENG S Alexandra CRAIG ENG B Joan ANG SNG B Lisa McKENZIE SCO
ME	34		G I-Jie JOSHUA MAS S Miles GANDOLFI ENG B William BISHOP NZL B Matthew EDGAR ENG
WE	35		G Cori LAWRENCE ENG S Emma BYATT SCO B Nur Hikmet AYSE MAP B Amy RADFORD ENG
MS	31		G Alex CRUTCHETT ENG S RATNESWARAN ENG B Sam BRIGHTMAN ENG B Sutherland SCUDDS AUS
WS	26	8	G Kira ROBERTS ENG S Jess DAVIES WAL B Rebecca CARSON SCO

			B Louise CREECHAN SCO
MFTeam	9		G ENG S AUS B SIN and WAL
WFTeam	8		G SCO S WAL B ENG and SIN
METeam	7		G MAS S ENG B AUS and WAL
WETeam	8		G ENG S MAP B AUS and WAL
MSTeam	7		G ENG S MAS B AUS and GUE
WSTeam	7		G ENG S SCO B IND and WAL

In terms of comparison with the first edition of these Championships held in Chennai, India, in 2006, we are pleased to report that we have seen an increase of some 50% in the number of participating nations (10 in Chennai and 14 in Penang) and an extremely impressive increase of approximately 20% in the number of registrations (170 in Chennai , 202 in Penang). These statistics confirm the CFF's encouragement of continued support for this event.

The India Trophy was once again won by ENG, followed by AUS; however, our Malaysian hosts were successful in beating out both SCO and their own "B" team to take third place this year.

CONCLUSION

This second edition of the CFF Junior Championships can be considered a feather in the cap of the Penang Amateur Fencing Association that has demonstrated its ability to run a major event competently and effectively, despite little or no knowledge of fencing on the part of most of the volunteers associated with this event. They are to be commended for this sterling effort and encouraged to pursue future opportunities to host and manage fencing events.

Submitted 15 May 2009 by

John Ramsay (Chairman) and M.-F. Dufour



Local volunteers from Penang Fencing at the closing dinner