



March 24, 2020

Dear Canadian fencing family,

We are all living in a very different world today than we were even a month ago. The next few months are going to be very challenging for all of our members including those athletes and that have or are trying to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics, coaches, officials, all of our members and their families.

To our national team members whose Olympic/Paralympic dreams have been put on hold, there is great news today from the IOC and IPC that the Tokyo Olympic Games and Paralympic Games have been postponed. While you can no longer continue to train as you have been accustomed to doing, maintain your fitness to the best of your ability, stay in contact with your coaches, support team, and teammates, and stay focused on your goals. Share training tips on social media and keep motivating yourselves and others. Your time to shine on the Olympic/Paralympic stage will come, and I along with the rest of our Canadian fencing family will proudly cheer you on when the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics do eventually take place.

To our larger fencing community, your clubs and coaches rely on membership and lesson fees in order to survive. If you are able to continue to support them during this challenging time, please do so. They need your help now more than ever! Your coaches work hard every day to help you learn and improve your fencing skills. Please don't forget about them now.

To our coaches, athletes, officials and others who have been patiently waiting for the CFF to reimburse expenses owed, pay athlete bonuses, pay for refereeing services at competitions, etc., rest assured that the board of directors is working hard to remedy this situation. The CFF has been experiencing a financial shortfall for the past months and the board understands the hardship that this has caused many of you. You will receive the funds you are owed; it is just taking much longer than expected.

One final note, there are some staff departures to pass on to everyone. Emily Hall our admin intern, has finished her placement with the CFF as of March 20. Sasha Pellerin-Gardner, our membership services coordinator's last official day is March 24. I would like to thank both of them for the work they did for fencing. Sasha in particular has been the face of the CFF for the past few months in the absence of an executive director and put in many hours of work for fencing. As a result, there will only be two staff members working for the CFF for at least the short term. From now on, all issues related to high performance should be directed to Benjamin Manano at hpd@fencing.ca. All other issues should be directed to me at ed@fencing.ca.

Stay healthy, stay connected with our fencing community, and we will all see each other soon on the piste.

David Howes
Interim Executive Director/Technical Director