

In the 2019-2020 season, the Vet Committee held events and clinics to engage with and support veteran fencing in Ontario, with a view to providing increased opportunities for our members to prepare for the season's competitions. This included the North American Cup circuit, Canada Cup circuit, and the Can-Am, which are the usual Veteran tournaments, with the additional opportunity of participating in the Commonwealth Veteran Competition, which was to have been held in Markham Ontario in July 2020. So all our events were therefore geared towards giving our members the greatest number of training opportunities prior to the Commonwealth Games.

We held six events across the GTA at three locations with two coaches over six and a half months, from September – March 2020, which represented the COVID-shortened season. Attendance was good, with each event attracting 20-30 fencers. Two of the events were scheduled on consecutive days, with a social component after the evening clinic (snacks etc) and followed by a full day's training the next day. One of our events attracted fencers from out of country, and the American veteran who participated was very enthused about the experience with the US Vet Community, leading us to consider future events situated in geographical proximity to the USA. We therefore planned a 2-day fence and vacation event in April in Kingston, Ontario, and were working to promote the event to our counterparts in the US. Unfortunately, the event had to be cancelled due to COVID. We intend to try again, when the global health crisis abates. The last event that we did have in early March was a 'Great Epee Poule Party' which part training and part Swiss-style competition amongst the tournament. This was the first time we had tried this format, and it was a very good success, with lots of positive feedback from the participants. Importantly, this format allowed us to attract a lot of recreational fencers, who found the format very appealing. We were in the planning stage of the 'Great Foil Poule Party', when the province shut down due to COVID.

In the months since the arrival of COVID, the Veteran Community has existed only on Zoom, where a segment of our membership is participating in the OFA-sponsored fitness and footwork classes. In the non-OFA sponsored footwork class the Yoann Lebrun hosts on Saturdays, there is a mainly Vet audience, which also includes a half-dozen American participants, and illustrates the strength of the relationships that exists between the two communities. We hope that once the situation returns to 'normal' that the Vet Committee will be able to continue offering programming to serve our membership, and to use the relationships forged during COVID to increase our interaction with our American vet community friends.