'On Guard' for Fencing at Birmingham

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The swashbuckling two-day event, starting on Saturday 7 April, gives UK fencers the opportunity to vie in a high standard event against some of the top-class, overseas competitors.

More than 19 nations will be represented including China, Denmark, Greece, USA, Sweden, Australia, Kazakstan, Turkey, and Nigera.

Along with their UK opponents, all will compete in team and individual events across the categories of foil, sabre and epee, with numerous members of the top ten GB fencers in all groups being involved.

Following the success of the university fencing club in the BUSA (British University Sports Association) leagues, many of the university team members will themselves be taking part.

Included in those competing are Andrew Emery (mens foil) who finished third in the BUSA finals and is currently ranked 38th in GB, Hannah Chenneour and Helen Hollaway (womens epee), ranked 8th and 12th respectively in GB, and Tom Olphin (mens sabre) who is ranked 36 in GB and also finished 3rd in the BUSA finals.

Originally held in Leamington Spa, the tournament follows a long-standing tradition from when European Spa towns competed against each other during the same weekend each year. The contest rapidly outgrew its original Pump Rooms venue and in 1975 made the move to the University of Birmingham where it has been held ever since.

Zena Wooldridge, Director of Sport at the University says: “We are delighted to once again stage this world-class tournament at Birmingham and we are proud of our long-standing relationship with this successful event. It gives us a strong platform to develop fencing at the university as part of our major development plans over the next few years that will provide an enhanced venue for this event for decades to come.”

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