

METRO TACOMA FENCING CLUB

8629 South Tacoma Way
Lakewood, WA 98499
253-584-1986

Western Washington Division
www.tacomafencing.com
info@tacomafencing.com



16 January 2021

Dear Metro Tacoma Fencing Club Families and Friends,

Happy New Year! It is with profound gratitude that I write our Metro Tacoma Fencing Club (MTFC) friends and families as we start a new year during a worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. I wanted to give everyone a sense of how our club is doing in terms of classes, membership, and finances. I wanted to share some of the things we continue to do to try to keep everyone safe and healthy. And for our new members I want to share with you what we hope to get back to once things settle down and return to earlier times.

As of 11 January, Washington State has allowed return to classes and limited in-person sports. Throughout 2020 our club was closed for 145 total days which has been incredibly challenging for our little not-for profit organization. Currently with all the changes we have needed to make in order to keep class sizes small and to separate private lessons from small group sessions the best way to schedule fencing for you or your family is to e-mail info@tacomafencing.com. Tournaments are not allowed at present in Washington State. The last national level event hosted in the United States was Junior Olympics in February 2020. Summer Olympics includes fencing, and we are eager to see if the 2020 Tokyo Olympics postponed until this year will be able to proceed.

Our membership is holding steady right now compared with a year ago. Currently we have 80 families of whom approximately a quarter started during the pandemic. Welcome! We are so excited to have you join our community! We hope to meet you and get to know you in person. For our new members, there is an updated [Beginner Fencers' Guide](#) that is available at our website www.tacomafencing.com under the *Resources* tab and in the *Fencing Information and Guides* section.

Financially, our hard-working volunteer board has been able to help the club navigate 2020 with our three dedicated and wonderful full-time coaches and our one tireless part-time administrator. We still have a bit of a rainy-day fund saved though it was admittedly more robust before the pandemic and was originally intended to be a down payment for our own space someday. We never would have anticipated that all the years of saving would go to help us get through a

terribly rainy (more like torrential) year. We have been fortunate as a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization that we had generous membership support through donations early in the pandemic. We have applied for and received six governmental grants to help keep our doors open and keep our coaches employed. We are in the process of submitting an application for the next round of Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funds. And of course, our current members and our current programming is allowing us to keep this wonderful sport alive in South Puget Sound.

We continue to work hard to keep all our members and coaches safe as we allow our community a chance to stay healthy and active with fencing. We continue to follow all the strict protocols required by the *Healthy Washington—Roadmap to Recovery* plan. Health screening, temperature checks, hand sanitizing, required face mask coverings, and small class sizes are now routine. We try to hold as much activity outside as possible for the safety of our members. We have had wonderful volunteers build air purifiers for our club that may be even better than what is available for purchase. Our club just ordered a carbon dioxide (CO₂) monitor as there is some evidence that the CO₂ levels may serve as a reasonable proxy to good ventilation indoors. We are fortunate that our small and committed group charged with our Metro Tacoma Fencing Club (MTFC) health and safety protocols during COVID-19 includes individuals with medical degrees and a public health degree.

We all miss seeing our members, making new friends, hanging out together, fencing at open fencing at our club, and cheering for each other at tournaments. In a typical fencing year, we would be hosting in-house events for our beginners to try a taste of competition—a friendly event just among our members where families can also get to know one another. We would have more opportunity to socialize with each other during classes, during tournaments, and outside of fencing. With COVID-19 vaccines that are starting to be administered perhaps we can get back to some of these things in the not-too-distant future.

Thank you again for being such an important part of our community. You can reach us at info@tacomafencing.com with any questions, comments, or concerns.

With much appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Toby Lee".

Toby Lee, MD on behalf of Diane Bartels, MD, Deborah Li, Jose Porras, Ji Yon Kim, Lisa Wonneberg, and Joy Kim
Metro Tacoma Fencing Club (MTFC) Board of Directors