Dear CFC members and friends,

As you likely surmised from my delay sending out the club newsletter, I have been carefully evaluating whether Columbia Fencers’ Club should continue meeting or take a break for now, given the daily updates we are receiving from health experts managing the novel coronavirus (Covid-19). Policies and photos of enhanced cleaning, extra laundering of jackets and gloves, disinfectant sprays used on our club masks, sanitizing wipes used on our chest protectors and grips and available at both our sites—all have been in various drafts of the upcoming newsletter, only to be superseded by additional news updates and recommendations. While our sport has limited physical contact, and the Referees’ Commission of USA Fencing smartly suspended last week the rule requiring handshakes with the nongloved hand after bouts, nonetheless, fencing still involves occasions of close distance, corps-a-corps, ‘infighting’ techniques, coaching corrections, and group interaction that appear counter-indicated, given our national health experts’ best advice for aggressive social distancing.

**My best judgment is to suspend for now (as of March 15, 2020 and until further notice) our Columbia Fencers’ Club meetings at both our CFC locations-- the Kahn JCC on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Seven Oaks Park on Wednesdays.** It is my hope that we will look back on this temporary measure and view it as an “overreaction to a problem that never occurred in our area and was an unnecessary measure!” I feel I have an obligation to help in this way to limit the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, and keep you, your families, friends, and community healthy and safe.

I will stay in communication with you by email notifications, to let you know when we will resume meeting. I may also send out videos to view, rules of interest, and the newsletter with photos. I realize that many of you have paid dues in March, and you will not lose the credit for those payments when our club meetings resume.

National and International events have likewise been postponed. However, our SC Division Qualifiers are still “on” and scheduled in Charleston for Saturday, April 25. You are encouraged to sign up on askfred <https://askfred.net/Events/moreInfo.php?tournament_id=46232> .

USA Fencing has extended the registration period for the Summer Nationals and July Challenge to accommodate postponements of many qualifying events. Additional information about our qualifier can be found at <http://scfencing.org/2020/03/15/usa-fencing-corona-virus-update/>

USA Fencing updates can be found at <https://www.usafencing.org/> .

Feel free to reach me by email or phone, and I will reply as promptly as I can. Take care, stay safe and well, and as always,

Best ON GUARDS,

--Jane

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(If you no longer wish to receive the CFC mailings, please contact me to remove your name from our mailing list.)