

PE fencers stand proud at Eastern Cape awards

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EXCELSIOR Fencing Eastern Cape, hosts of the Eastern Cape Open National Ranking Competitions, have held an awards ceremony to honour their fencing stars.

Former Protea fencer and modern pentathlon star Jon-Paul Raper won this year's Best Senior Fencer award in the Eastern Cape at the function in Seaview on Sunday night.

"He is ranked No 8 in South Africa," modern pentathlon and fencing Eastern Cape coach Jessica Raper said.

"This makes his performance outstanding because he competes against fencers who are coached by top Russian coaches elsewhere in the country."

Next to scoop an award was Grade 10 Pearson High School pupil Isabella Finestone, 16.

Finestone is the Eastern Cape's top woman fencer and the seventh-ranked under-17 South African.

"Jon-Paul and Isabella have remarkable talent in summing up their opponents and plan their

strategies of attack or defence in seconds," Jessica Raper said.

A new award, the Most Promising Fencers, was introduced and Grade 7 St George's Primary pupil Rachel Beukes, 13, won the women's trophy, while Salmaan Schmidt, 19, a first-year NMMU BCom student, bagged the men's gong.

Raper said: "Although these two fencers are beginners, they

‘ All four of these fencers excelled at the EC Open national ranking competition

have the ability to rapidly apply what they are taught and that is a very good asset in fencing. All four fencers excelled at the Eastern Cape Open national ranking competition, held last month.

"It was one of the biggest national ranking competitions this year. People just love coming to the Bay," she said.

Fencing is an Olympic sport for participants from age seven and up. For more information, e-mail: coach.jessicaraper@gmail.com



SWORD FIGHTERS: Proudly showing their trophies are, from left, Rachel Beukes, Isabella Finestone, Salmaan Schmidt and Jon-Paul Raper