

FENCING HOPES

WILL IRELAND be represented at fencing at the 1968 Olympic Games? The Irish Fencing Association have suggested to the Olympic Council of Ireland that a party of five fencers be sent to Mexico City next autumn. But with funds so short and travelling-acclimatisation costs so high so big a representation from one of the weaker of the Irish sports is hardly likely to be asked to make the long trip. Among those high up in the list of candidates for selection for probably one or two places must be John Bouchier-Hayes, Colm O'Brien, Finbarr Farrell, Michael Ryan and Laurence Gough.

Of these Gough has already accomplished the qualifying standard laid down by the Fencing Association of competing in three foreign international competitions and being placed in at least one of them. In Istanbul this month 18-year-old Gough finished sixth in a top-class foil tournament, beating several opponents of international renown.

Gough, the first U.C.D. student to be awarded a "colour" for fencing, has Mexico City as his prime objective. Before then, however, he aims to take part in the Junior World championships in London at Easter and in the European championships in Germany the following week. He will also captain "College" in defence of their Universities championship title in Belfast in February when their strongest challengers are likely to be Dublin University, who defeated them very decisively 20-7 last week.

Dublin University have received confirmation that Soest Fencing Club, one of the better known German Clubs, will travel to Dublin on April 18th and 19th next. This visit, which shows renewed interest in Irish Fencing from the continent, is in return for a Trinity tour to Germany earlier this year. The students have received an invitation to send an epee team to Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, in September of next year. The invitation has been accepted and the University hope to send a strong team.

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