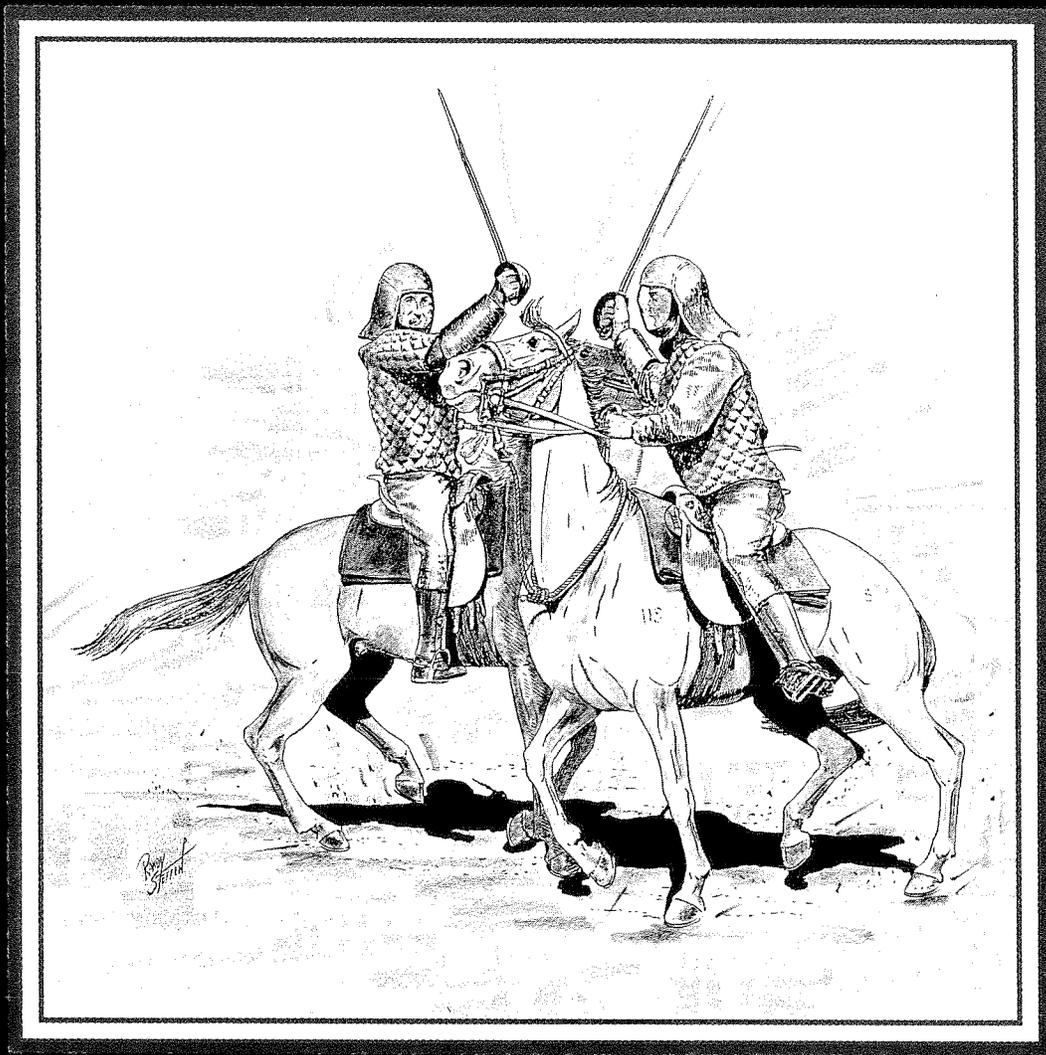


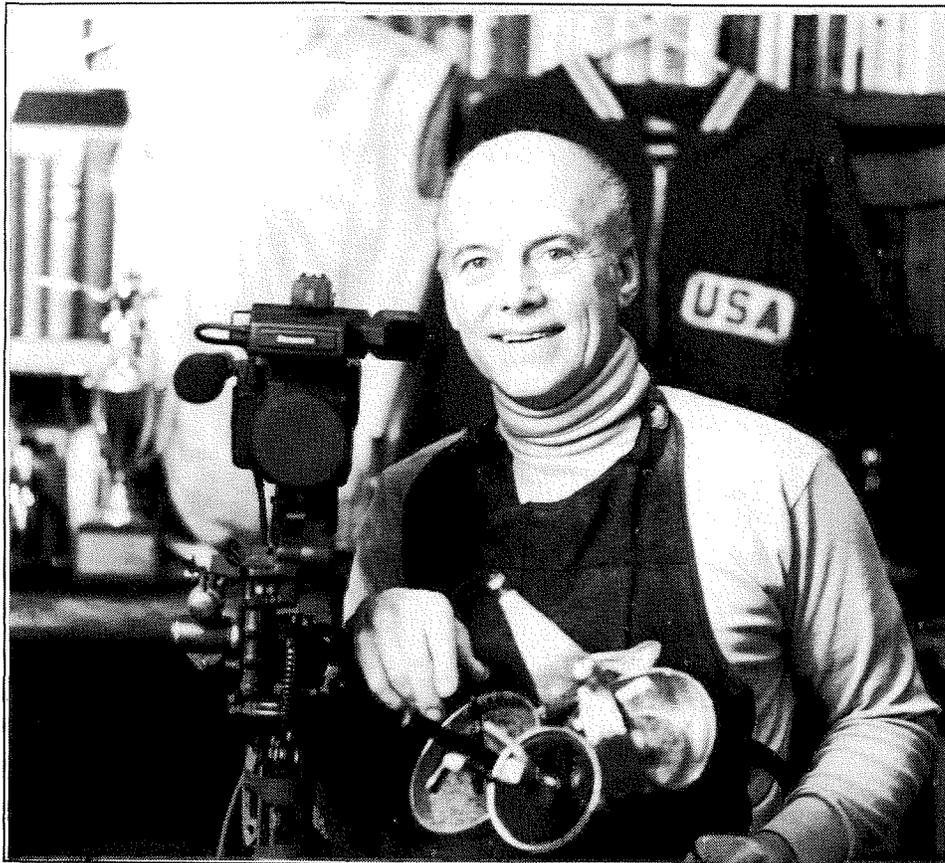
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AMERICAN FENCING magazine (ISSN 0002-8436) is published quarterly by the United States Fencing Association, Inc. 1750 East Boulder Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80909. Subscription for non-members of the U.S.F.A. is \$12.00 in the U.S. and \$18.00 elsewhere. Single copies \$3.00. Members of the U.S.F.A. subscribe through their dues. Address all correspondence concerning membership to the U.S.F.A. office in Colorado Springs, CO. Second class postage paid at Colorado Springs, CO and additional mailing offices.

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Editorial and advertising offices: 967 Marquette Lane, Foster City, CA 94404 (415) 572-8414. The editor suggests that while calls from enthusiastic readers, contributors and advertisers are most welcome, these be confined to normal West Coast waking hours — he does *not* normally begin his business day at 6:15 a.m. (9:15, EST).

Contributors please note: Articles, results of competitions, photos and cartoons are cordially solicited. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double spaced, on one side of the paper only. Photos should preferably be black and white and with a complete caption. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless submitted with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. No anonymous articles accepted.

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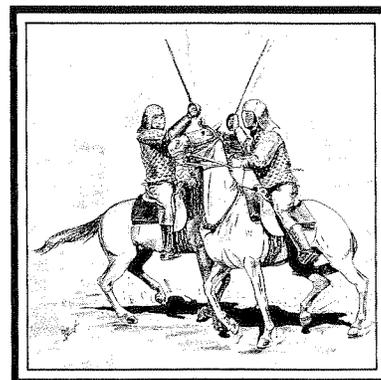
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ON OUR COVER

Fencing in 1912 — U.S. Army cavalrymen practicing for the Big Game on horseback. Note the total lack of protection for their mounts — I wouldn't have wanted to be aboard a horse that had just been whipped over the ear with a saber!



"As we approached the brow of the hill from which it was expected we could see Harris' camp, and possibly find his men formed to meet us, my heart kept getting higher and higher until it felt to me as though it was in my throat. I would have given anything then to be back in Illinois..."

"When we reached the place where Harris had been encamped, the (Confederate) troops were gone. My heart resumed its place. It occurred to me at once that Harris had been as much afraid of me as I was of him.

"This was a view of the question I had never taken before; but it was one that I never forgot afterwards. The lesson was valuable..."

Reading these words, penned by Ulysses S. Grant in his description of his command of a small Union force in the early days of our Civil War, I was struck by the similarity of the emotions he described to those which I often used to feel as a competitor, or witness in my team members as a coach. And although death and defeat, in the case of our sport, are usually no more than symbolic, there is still a connection to be made.

Fencers, as well as many other athletes, have this much in common with soldiers, or anyone else about to enter a competitive situation. We often forget that our opponent is just as human as we are, with the same anxieties, the same uncertainties, and the same outright fear that we occasionally find in ourselves.

In this issue, our tardy second (by rights the next issue should be in the mail in about four days to get us back on schedule, but I advise you not to hold your breath waiting for

it!), we take a look back at the history of one of America's most famous competitive fencers and soliders, George S. Patton, by Charles Conwell.

Patton's suggestion that "a man who does not admit touches should be tried (by court martial) or in some other way to have his sensibilities awakened," seems like a pretty good idea to me. Perhaps our new president, Michel Mamlouk (whose introductory address to the USFA also appears in this issue) will take up this matter at a subsequent meeting.

Wanna build a fencing club? Read Michael McDaniel's article. And for an excellent description of how to get some solid local publicity, I highly commend Tom Cragg's piece, "The Sportscenter's Challenge." But I suppose the table of contents would do this as well.

One final note. Articles and photos, although they have been pouring in at an alarming rate, are always more than welcome — especially art, as witnessed by some of the fencing cartoons we present in this issue. But no editor ever feels he or she has enough quality material (although I must confess that there were several excellent articles that couldn't fit into this issue which will appear in the next). So please write. And if you send results of a major local tournament, please include a photo or two, and perhaps even a brief description of the event and its importance.

By our next issue, we hope to have the courage to print our mailing dates, and you can expect that during 1991 every effort will be made to maintain them. Honest!

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To The Editor

Strategy — What Strategy?

I would like to congratulate David Littell for one of the most interesting and informative articles that I have read in *American Fencing* (V. 41, No. 3) in a long time. His very keen and astute observation about the applications of tactics in a fencing bout and how they are used by world-class fencers is the absolute essence of competitive fencing. Tactics and strategy is the soul of fencing, and its application is the genius of the fencer.

What struck me most about Mr. Littell's article was when he came to this realization, "When I began fencing in World Cup events several years ago..." I know Mr. Littell, and I have admired his fencing for many years — he is one of our better and most intelligent fencers; and I also know that Mr. Littell has been fencing for over ten years. It is certainly to his credit that he made this brilliant discovery about fencing tactics.

I would venture to state that most fencers in this country never come to this realization, and many of them have had much more international "experience." Mr. Littell comes against his European counterpart, who also has been fencing competitively for ten years, and realizes that these fencers are well versed in a strategic understanding of the game. They have been trained in tactics and strategy from day one and now have ten years of experience at it.

Who do you think has the advantage? The first questions that come to my mind are: "Why did it take David so long to learn this lesson? Why was he left on his own to learn this lesson? Why wasn't he taught this lesson as part of his competitive fencing preparation?"

The fact of the matter is, we are not taught tactics as a major part of our fencing training. We are taught "technique." Sure, many coaches pay a lot of lip service to tactics, but few, if any, actually incorporate it as an integral part of the fencing lesson. As fencing coaches, we are still teaching fencing actions which are detached, linear and static. The extent of tactical training for many coaches in this country is that, during a lesson, they attempt to take the student's blade and ask the student to execute a counter disengage. For them, this is a tactical lesson. As professor Czajkowski so eloquently put it at our Coaches College, "You Americans are still teaching 19th century fencing."

I sincerely hope that every fencer pays attention to Mr. Littell's observation and incorporate strategy and tactics as the foundation of their competitive fencing game. It should be taught from day one, not after the fencer has "mastered" the technique. The technique will improve and excel to meet the demands of the tactics and strategies. The more sophisticated the strategy, the more sophisticated the technique to carry out the strategy. Technique without the knowledge of when and how to use it is ludicrous.

Coaches are of paramount importance in the teaching of tactics and strategy. A coach can greatly help the student develop a sound understanding of strategy by incorporating it in the fencing lesson. The way this is done is by allowing the student to take the initiative in the lesson rather than the coach initiating with cues or commands. The student initiates with a preparation and the coach gives the appropriate response.

In the beginning, the coach gives the most obvious and naive response to the student's preparation; as the student improves, the coach can give more devious and sophisticated responses. This kind of lesson is not only of tremendous importance, it is also great fun for both fencer and coach.

Eventually, each fencer explores all of the possible preparations and every appropriate response to these preparations. With this drill a fencer learns to develop a tactical and strategic game. A fencer also builds a strategic game by experimenting with different strategies under all circumstances during their practice sparring. By concentrating on your tactic and strategy while practicing, your fencing will become much more effective and enjoyable.

We all owe David Littell our deepest gratitude for sharing his insightful observation with us.

Michael D'Asaro
Ashland, OR



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Building a Fencing Club or What's a Collegiate Fencer To Do After Graduation?

by Michael L. McDaniel

It is a sad but undeniable fact that roughly half a million Americans have fenced at one time or another, but the USFA's membership is less than ten thousand. Vast numbers of people are exposed to fencing in college, but very few stay with the sport after graduation. The cause of this is a critical lack of fencing clubs. If fencing is to thrive, there must be more fencing clubs. This article is intended to serve as a guide to creating a fencing club, and is based on my own experience in forming the Southern Maryland Fencing Club.

Is All This Really Necessary?

My first item of advice is to avoid starting a new fencing club unless absolutely necessary. Starting a club involves a lot of groundwork, and expanding an existing club will usually pay off much better. Therefore, the first order of business must be to locate any fencing clubs or classes in the area. Even if this search doesn't turn up any clubs, it will usually help locate potential club sites and sponsors.

Don't turn up your nose at a fencing class, even if it is supposed to be for novices. Often, these are sponsored by small clubs, in return for practice space. Even if they aren't, these classes have an instructor who you can practice with after hours, and who would probably welcome your help teaching.

In general, there are three potential locations of fencing clubs and classes: College clubs, college classes, and the local Parks and Recreation agencies.

Almost all colleges have a fencing club. Ask the athletic office, and you should get their meeting place and time. Most college clubs will welcome an experienced fencer with open arms, for he provides a fresh view on tactics and techniques and staves off inbreeding.

Also, check the colleges for fencing classes. These are frequently either sponsored by clubs, or are being run by someone trying to start a club.

Check with the various local Parks and Recreation agencies. They frequently sponsor classes, or at least know of club in the area.

Check the telephone book, if you live in a large city.

Call the USFA and get the names of the divisional officers. These people know where the fencing clubs and classes are — even the small outfits that are not formally affiliated with the USFA.

Finally, check the recreation section of the newspaper. They often list clubs of all types, which includes fencing clubs.

Biting the Bullet

After your search, you may find that there are no fencing clubs in the area. At this point, a fencer must

decide if he has the nerve to bite the bullet and start a fencing club. Probably the greatest question in a candidate's mind is whether or not he is qualified to teach. My own opinion is that any fencer with two or more years experience can teach. Perhaps not exceptionally well, but something is far better than nothing.

A fencer who has decided, after a search, to start a fencing club has already taken the first step — he has made contact with potential sponsors. Many community colleges and Parks and Recreation agencies are very willing to sponsor a fencing class. If you are willing to teach it for free, they will usually relax the minimum class size requirements. If this is not available, try the schools and libraries. These often have meeting rooms which can be rented for a nominal charge.

The next step is to advertise. This will attract both prospective students and experienced fencers in the area. Your sponsor may help with this, but don't just rely on what they can provide. A new club needs all the recruits it can get. Post flyers on every bulletin board you can find. Put ads in the newspaper — most papers have an activities section which is free. Perform demonstrations. The more publicity you can get, the better off your club will be.

Hopefully, these steps will allow you to obtain access to a suitable practice area at a reasonable cost, and to recruit both experienced fencers and novices for your club. Now comes the hard part — training.

Equipment

One of the most vexing problems facing a new club is that of equipment. The prospective founder of a new club should have his own gear, but new students will have none. The question is whether the club will require students to buy their own gear, or if the club will provide it and recoup the initial cost through dues. Requiring people to provide their own equipment will drive off prospective students, while attempting to acquire a set of club equipment can overstress a small club's resources.

My own experience with the Southern Maryland Fencing Club has been that a compromise, in which the club has a few items of loaner equipment for students but stresses self-sufficiency, works best. The founders of a club usually lack the funds to buy much club equipment, but a few items are essential to introduce novices to the sport and persuade them to stay, learn, and buy their own fencing kit. One or two of the basic fencing starter sets (sword, mask, jacket, and glove) will provide enough equipment. If additional funds are available, I would suggest one or two

Continued on next page...

more weapons, for point control drills.

Students should be encouraged to equip themselves as soon as possible, since this will free up club equipment for others. Clubs may wish to have dues and equipment rental separated, both to encourage self-sufficiency and to establish a defined club equipment fund.

Buying a scoring machine is, of course, out of the question for most clubs. A reasonable alternative is buying a pair of scoring boxes that plug directly into the body cord. Several manufacturers make these, at a price of \$20-\$25 each. A pair of these will allow fencers to know if they have scored a touch at a reasonable price.

Choice of Weapon

Another problem faced by a new club is deciding which weapon to teach students first. This is not as simple as it may seem, because tradition and logic are often at odds in this decision. The traditional starting weapon is the foil, with saber and epee taught afterward. However, collegiate training experience has shown that a foil background does not assist saber or epee greatly. Foilists have a good knowledge of footwork, but the handwork must often be completely untaught before progress with the saber or epee can be made. Cost and the instructor's own field of expertise is usually a better guide.

Cost must be judged on whether or not students will fence competitively. When fencing dry, foil is the cheapest, followed by saber and epee in that order. Competition, however, demands electric scoring equipment for foil and epee (electric saber is a rarity), which makes saber the cheapest weapon to compete in, followed by epee and foil, in that order.

The instructor's own field of expertise is, in my view, decisive. An instructor should start students on the weapon with which he is the most familiar, since this will be the weapon he is best qualified to teach. If there are several instructors, the weapon with which they have the most collective familiarity is usually the best choice.

Do not let the possibility of female students affect the choice of a starting weapon. I have never seen an epeeist or sabreur turned away from a tournament because of gender, and the idea that women are too weak to wield anything but a foil is long dead.

If possible, it is wise to eventually expose students to all three weapons. Not only will this give them breadth of experience, it will also enable students to fence even when there is no one available who fences their preferred weapon.

Training Procedures

While searching for a site, students, and equipment, the prospective fencing instructor must give thought to his training syllabus. If he is offering a formal class under the aegis of a community college or similar organization, the nominal length of the course will be dictated by the sponsoring group. Under normal circumstances, though, the instructor will be able to set up his course with minimal regard to the calendar, inserting breaks in his syllabus at the appropriate points.

The need for some sort of a syllabus of drills and instruction cannot be overemphasized. Too many clubs do nothing but free-fence, which does little for the skills

of experienced fencers and nothing whatsoever for novices. At least half the available time should be spent on drills of one sort or another.

Naturally, any syllabus will start with footwork, followed by handwork, and developing into actual fencing. My own experience has shown that a simple system works best, concentrating on two or three parries and attacks. If a class meets for three or four hours a week, this system will enable students to fence passably well in two or three months. Later, this offensive and defensive system can be expanded.

When to introduce students to handwork and to actual bouting is a subject of great debate. I tend to introduce handwork in the first training session, but strongly emphasize footwork for the first two months. After the student's basic footwork is reasonably smooth, the emphasis shifts to handwork. Seasoned fencers in the Southern Maryland Fencing Club usually work on handwork and footwork in a 60:40 proportion.

Introducing students to bouting is another controversial subject. The Southern Maryland Fencing Club has experimented with both waiting one or two months (as is customary in most collegiate programs) and with starting students with bouting from their first practice. Waiting a month or two ensures that students will have a reasonable skill level when they do fence, and will not be discouraged by being crushed by experienced fencers. However, waiting a month or two can be discouraging to enthusiastic students. Starting students fencing from the outset of training provides an immediate reward for a novice's labors, but can quickly wipe out his confidence when an experienced fencer defeats him. At present, we tend to have students train about six weeks before serious bouting, but do permit a novice to fence an occasional bout to whet their appetites.

The greatest problem which an instructor must face is the disappointment at the dropout rate. Normally, 60% of the students who walk in the door will drop out of the class in the first week. And only half of those who come back after a week will stay more than a month. This can be very discouraging, but try not to let it affect you. The majority of students expect to become instant swashbucklers without effort, and when they find that fencing demands effort even to move and hold a sword, they drop the sport. This dropout rate is inevitable, and it is imperative that instructors not take it as a comment on their teaching abilities.

Conclusion

Starting a fencing club is not easy, and not to be undertaken lightly. Finding a place to fence locating both experienced fencers and new students, acquiring equipment, and setting up a training syllabus is not easy. Actually teaching a class is a great deal of work. However, the rewards of helping to spread fencing, meeting new fencers, and keeping your own hard-earned skills honed make the effort worthwhile. While I have had difficulties forming the Southern Maryland Fencing Club, I have never regretted my decision to do so.

President's Corner

by Michel Mamlouk

Address by Michel Mamlouk to The USFA Board of Directors in Colorado Springs, Oct. 13, 1990.

Six short months from now — April 21, 1991 to be precise — the United States Fencing Federation will celebrate its centennial and the beginning of its second century.

I interpret your vote in the recent election as a mandate to get our next hundred years off to the right start. If the administration I lead does its job well, it will lay a solid foundation of programs that make certain the future is golden — Olympic golden — for American fencing and the athletes who represent it.

As President, my chief responsibility is to see that the programs we initiate and the changes we implement are fundamental and positive. Our programs must address — within the limits of our financial capability to do so — many important considerations. We must examine each and every program to see that it contributes to such major goals as these:

- 1) Greater numbers of competitors, especially younger ones.
- 2) Greater numbers of qualified coaches.
- 3) Greater numbers of competent officials.
- 4) More effective international performances.
- 5) More efficient administration and support services.

I think we should salute those programs developed by past administrators that have addressed some of these issues well and that still work well today.

I just as strongly believe in surgery for those that have not built a long lasting, fundamentally sound base for achieving our goals.

The vote of the USFA membership tells me there is a feeling of frustration out there. Why have we been at this for a century and cannot yet boast of a gold medal performance in world or Olympic competitions?

I sense the membership's resolve to end this state of frustration and to get on with programs that will get the job done.

Therefore let us begin. Together. Because it will take all of us who truly love this sport.

The guiding principle of my administration will be to say "no" to spending and "yes" to investment.

We must change our view of fund management from one of expenditure on short-term projects to investment in those that produce long lasting benefits.

It has been six years since the financial windfall of the 1984 Olympics. Those funds gave us the capability to do many things we couldn't afford to do before.

In those six years, we've seen a lot of money spent on what amounts to a medal chase. But we don't have any medals. And we haven't gained any long-term benefits from those expenditures.

Now is the time to step back; to look at what we're doing with our funds; and to develop a sharper focus on our goals.

I don't say the USFA needs to make an **agonizing** re-appraisal but I do say we need to make an **organizing** re-appraisal.

We must establish and fund as our **highest priority** programs that attract and pump athletes through a development and competitive structure that produces the best competitors and results.

The heartbeat of fencing in America is the energy and will of our fencers, our coaches, our clubs, and the people who sit in this room at this very moment.

Now I'd like to ask you all a question. Does anyone doubt that good fencing can exist without good coaching? Or that good coaching and good coaches can exist without financial support?

We've got to examine our funding to make certain that coaching in the United States stays healthy — not just in this administration, but for all administrations to come.

We also have to look at junior development programs to make certain not just that we're attracting more kids but that the kids get better with every passing year because the USFA structure is designed to help them do it.

Well, I certainly don't intend to speak for 100 years, so let me outline the major goals I want my administration to accomplish!

I want to see greater **administrative efficiency**: That includes streamlining of the Colorado Springs office and implementation of new computer programs. It also means examining all assignments that require travel by administration personnel to maximize the efficiency of our travel budgets.

We'll need an ongoing review of the function and operations of the many committees, sub committees and sub, sub committees running USFA programs.

It will include a study of USFA by-laws to clarify procedures — particularly electoral — by which the USFA must operate.

I want to see more focused DEVELOPMENT programs — that include fencers, coaches and officials.

These will include: programs that directly address elementary and high school fencing.

We will increase support for programs such as the coaches college and area seminars that are focused on producing more and better coaching at the grass roots and intermediate levels.

We will examine the feasibility of establishing a permanent center for coach development at Colorado Springs with satellite centers to be developed as soon as possible.

Let me say that I am looking forward to a new era of cooperation between the USFA and USFCA to build the broader base of solid coaching we so desperately need.

If good coaches are vital to fencing, so are good officials. The Fencing Officials Commission has made effective strides in official's development. I would ask that they increase these efforts, so that more candidates are recruited, more good directors can be found in the immediate geographic area of important events such as the junior and senior circuits, and more directors achieve international ratings.

When these things have been accomplished, our fencers will be developing and competing in a more rewarding environment. That environment ought to include rewards for performance in the national championships, the circuits and international events.

Furthermore, the rewards should be shared by the coaches and clubs that produced them.

To accomplish these goals we will have to emphasize long-range planning, while we cope with short-term needs.

We have a lot of work to do in a time frame shortened by some three months due to the events of this past summer.

Not everything that should be in place — budgeting, committees and other matters — has been fully addressed at this time. But it will be soon.

I realize I have earned your vote because you are confident that an administration I lead will do something to raise the standards of American fencing.

I'm going to work hard — together with you — to make that happen.

APOLOGY

Many unfortunate things were said in the heat of battle during the past Presidential election. The Committee to Re-elect Michel Mamlouk exercised poor judgment in the letter it sent to the USFA members. I was in Europe at the time the letter was sent and did not approve its contents. I want to apologize for this letter and the implications it made about American Fencers Supply Company. This should not have been done and I am sorry it took place. I request that this apology be published in *American Fencing*.

—Michel Mamlouk

Coaches College: An International Symposium

by Michael A. D'Asaro

For the second year in a row, the 1990 Coaches College brought some of the best coaches in the world to share their coaching experience, methodology and personal styles with us. To say that this experience was enlightening, informative and inspirational is a gross understatement. To work side by side with previous world champions, coaches of world and Olympic champions, using the same methods and techniques is truly an awakening experience.

The National Coaching Staff of the USFA has developed a very successful teaching and coaching program which has been taught at the coaches college for the past five years. We have developed a sound, basic teaching methodology for first-time teachers of fencing. However, this program is designed for teachers with any degree of fencing skill and teaching experience, from a competitive fencing background to absolutely no fencing experience at all. Once we established this basic course, we felt it was necessary to expand the curriculum and add advanced material for coaches who had already taken this course and for those coaches who were already training many of our better junior and senior fencers. These coaches who were training our internationally competitive American fencers would surely add to their coaching expertise and help them to train their fencers to be more effective competitors by having this more advanced material: additional training exercises and strategies and tactics, sharing of information and fencing experiences, and a first-hand exposure to the highest and latest fencing teaching and coaching techniques from some of the best coaches in the world.

The invited coaches who gave the clinic were Prof. Czajowski in foil and Master Stawiski in sabre, both

from Poland; Master Saichuk in epee, and Master Nazlimov and Mendasgrassov in sabre, all from Russia. Nazlimov's son, a top junior fencer in Russia, was also present.

How do I explain what went on during those marvelous seminars? I could only speak from my own perspective, which I assure you from the very beginning is very biased — biased from the point of view that I have very strong feelings about fencing which may or may not be shared by other fencers or coaches. My standards for fencing are very high, almost to a fault. I expect the highest dedication and commitment to fencing from those involved in it, particularly from those who participate on the highest level. I expect the highest physical and technical preparation of fencers and coaches, as well as the highest moral values. Our astute guests far exceeded my highest expectations.

All of these coaches are totally involved in fencing. They all love fencing with a passion. Whenever they taught or talked about fencing, they would light up. They had the same enthusiasm as if they were doing it for the first time. They loved talking about fencing. They were never bored with it — and we did plenty of it! They never gave us the impression that they were just putting up with us. They truly wanted to teach us. They were not satisfied with a half-hearted attempt on our part. They also expected us to do our best.

Of course, they realized and respected each individual's personal limitations, and they insisted that we perform up to those limitations and accepted nothing short of it. They always gave one hundred percent of themselves. All of them were very active coaches.

One very striking observation was that no two teaching methods were exactly alike, even with coaches from the same country. They each had a slightly different emphasis, a different point of view, and a different way of doing things, and they were all correct. Each seemed to have a particular preference, and they worked very diligently in their area. Their preference was based on very sound principals that worked, that were effective, that scored touches, not based on some theory, school or style of fencing. Yet they were willing to change their methodology if it no longer proved effective and was not scoring touches on the strip.

All of their methodologies were very pragmatic. They constantly study the game and study the opponents. They know how to fence each opponent. They study and know the strengths and weaknesses of each of their opponents, which was demonstrated to us time and time again through examples. In addition, they change their teaching to meet the change in the fencing rules and regulations, i.e., shorter strip in epee and sabre, no meter warning, electrical sabre, etc. These were all intelligent, intuitive and creative coaches, true masters in their field.

Continued on page 22

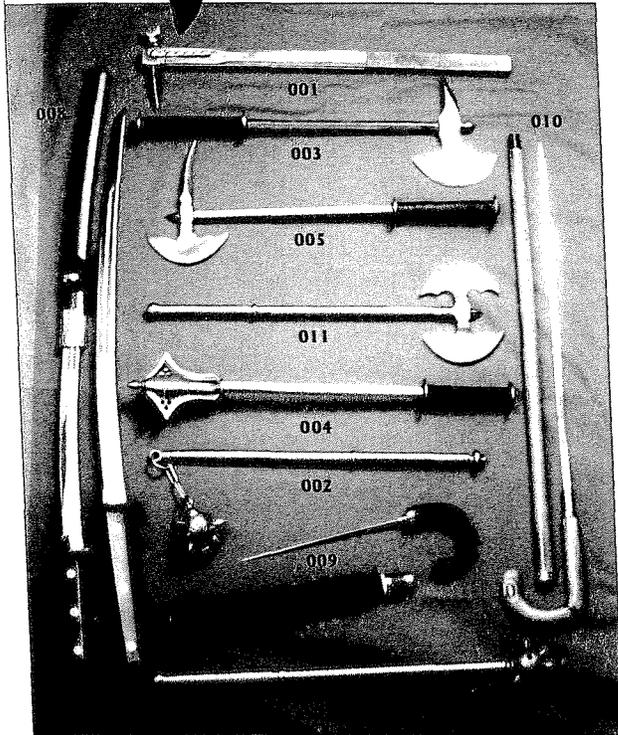


1990 Coaches College: Soviet coach Vladimir Nazlymov gives a sabre lesson (photo by Harold Hayes).



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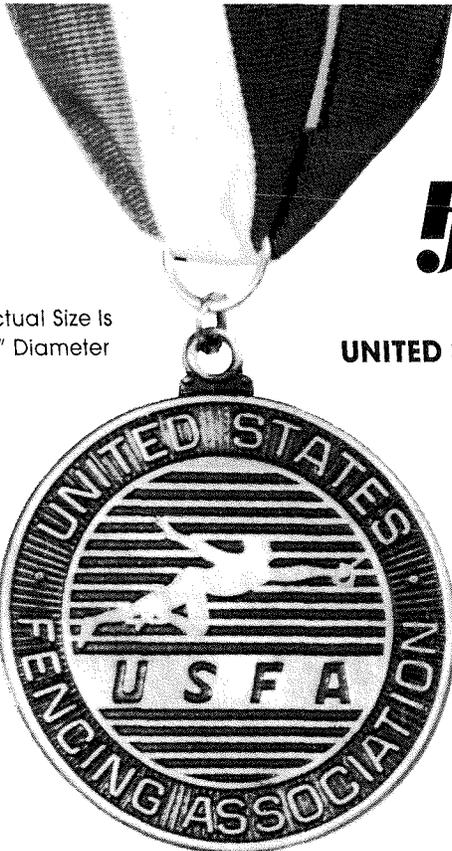
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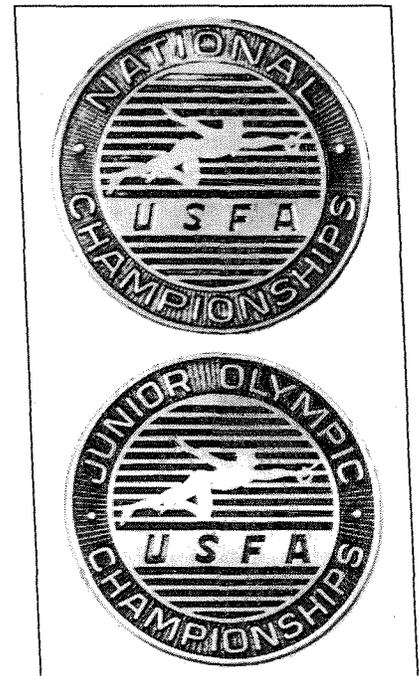
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News Briefs

Swordplay Returns To The Silver Screen...

From the Hollywood bureau of *American Fencing* comes news of a fencing film in the making, "By the Sword," which will star Academy Award winner F. Murray Abraham (best actor, "Amadeus") and Oscar nominee Eric Roberts ("Runaway Train"). Reports are that lots of fencing will take place on-screen, and who knows — it might even look like the real thing.

The film will follow the career of a former fencing champion (Abraham) who, as a young fencer, kills his coach (not, as reported in the popular press, over a disputed right-of-way call!) in a "crime of passion" and then spends 25 years in the slammer. After he gets out, what could be more natural but that he wants to return to fencing; plus he feels he owes a debt to the son of the man he so neatly spitted those many years ago.

Unfortunately, the son (Roberts), seems to be curiously lacking in affection for Abraham. And just because Murray killed his father in a duel — people get so caught up in this sport! Well, as it turns out, the son is a fencer, too, and I suppose you can guess what **that** leads to. Who knows — it might be fun. No date has been set for the film's release.

...And It Even Gets On The Telly!

From the British fencing magazine *The Sword* comes the report of a gala fencing exhibition held last March featuring a five-weapon team match between the U.S. and Great Britain.

The event, which was televised in England, drew 600 executives and spouses, each posting over \$85 for the privilege of seeing the British fencers narrowly trounce the Americans, 28-17.

A video of this match is available from TVS Productions Ltd., Television Centre, Southampton S09 5HZ, England. The cost is 15 pounds including postage — I would suggest sending International Reply Coupons and adding 20% to that total.

Summer Fencing in France

Sport For Understanding, a non-profit education organization, is offering teenage fencers the opportunity to spend four weeks in France next June and July, fencing at French clubs and staying with a French family. For information, contact Sport for Understanding, 3501 Newark St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016; (202) 966-6900.

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News Briefs

Kudos To Pentathlete

Modern pentathlete Lori Norwood has been named the "Sudafed Amateur Sportswoman of the Year" by the Women's Sports Foundation.

Free Stuff For Women Coaches

The Women's Sports Foundation, in association with the Wilson Sporting Goods Company, is offering (what appear to be) free copies of *A Woman's Guide to Coaching* to interested parties. The 24-page booklet, while a bit weak on hard information, does contain suggestions for women interested in volunteer and professional coaching opportunities. It is available from the Women's Sports Foundation, 342 Madison Ave., Suite 728, New York, NY 10017; (800) 227-3988.

Attention Division Secretaries:

American Fencing tells you what's happening around the country — in turn, we would very much like to know what's going on in *your* fencing neck of the woods. So please put us on your mailing list so we can better report major events and other items of interest. Send your newsletter to:

American Fencing
967 Marquette Lane
Foster City, CA 94404



Photo by Kimberly Butler

Jana Angelakis, two-time Olympian, was one of over 70 American athletes present for the "Grand March of Champions" at a gala dinner held October 15 by the Women's Sports Foundation. The annual affair, attended by nearly 900 people, honors the leaders in women's sports.

"My Coach Said..."

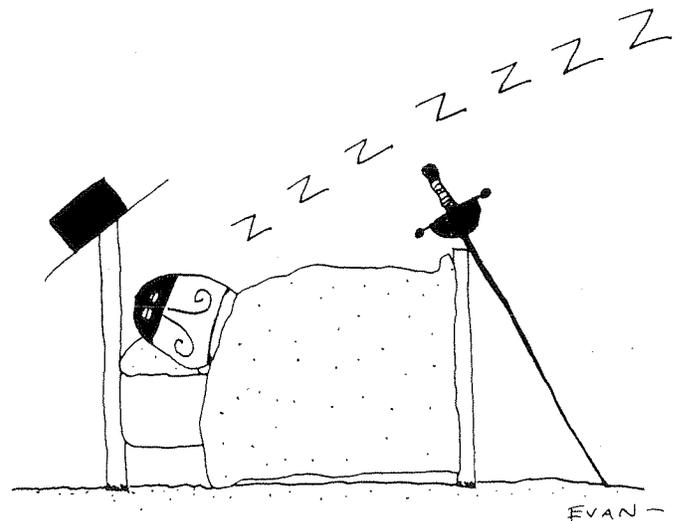
Did any of your fencing coaches ever give you one key piece of advice that you never forgot? If so, we'd like to print it in the next issue of *American Fencing*. Send us just a sentence or two, quoting your coach (and if you want to give us his or her name, that would be just dandy), and perhaps telling us what their advice meant to you. Just in case you can't find our address on page three, here it is again. Send to:

COACH
American Fencing
967 Marquette Lane
Foster City, CA 94404

Just to get things started, I'll tell what **my** high school coach once said to me. He was actually a football coach just filling in, and although he tried to help us, he freely admitted that we knew far more about the sport than he did. So one day, in the middle of a very tense bout, he called for a timeout and came over to me. First he glanced over at my opponent, and then he looked me right in the eye, and this is what he said:

"Don't lose."

Even today, these many years later, I still find merit in his advice.



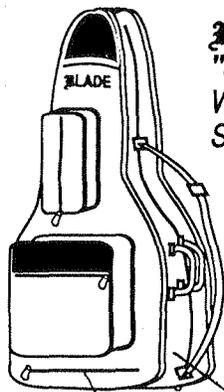
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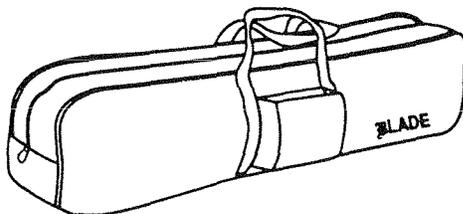
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The Sportscaster's Challenge

by Tom Cragg

The idea was simple enough. Get a sportscaster, teach him epee in three easy lessons, then enter him in the Florida Sunshine State Games. Good press.

But it didn't stop there. Sitting down, we discussed our best possible victim — er, sportscaster — from the stations in the Miami area. Looking over the list we made, we suddenly realized that we had a real tiger by the tail. What if they all said yes? It was one heck of a "what if," but why not?

Next we had to plan. The first thing we did was approach the state with the idea. Convincing them that we were not crazy was the greatest obstacle, or so it would seem.

Actually, the director of the Games, Nick Gailey, was all for our effort, and was very helpful with what paperwork we needed. Next we talked to Jim Campoli, director of the fencing competition. His, "Sounds good to me," was like a starting gun at the gates, and we were off and running, expanding our list to include any sportscaster from around the state. We contacted a lot of other clubs, and everyone involved was very helpful.

In Miami, we placed our first phone call.

"Hello, Channel 6 News, may I help you?"

"Hi, my name is Tom, I teach fencing at the Miami Fencing Club. Is there a sportscaster available?"

You have to take a deep breath before you pump one out like that. The surprising thing was that the call went through. At each television station, we were able to talk directly to the sportscasters. With out exception, we were treated with courtesy and interest.

Since we were legitimate with the State Games Commission, the first question we were normally asked was, "Who else is going to be in this?"

For this we were ready. "We're asking all the local stations, and from around the state, and there's a lot of interest. We're shooting for an even number of eight. Can I send you a letter?"

The answer was always yes, since letters are easy to deal with, and contain a lot more information and details than you can get from a quick phone call. Remember, these people are always busy putting their daily programs together. Also, with the letter we were sure to enclose a copy of the official letter we received, "on request," from the director of the games, complete with his letterhead and phone number.

Once the time frame was right for the letters to have arrived, we made our follow-up calls, and were amazed at the results. Out of the four major stations in the area, only one couldn't help. The sportscaster there who was really interested would be in California on the day of the match, the second in command didn't like the thought of a blade of any type being stuck at him, and the third was leaving the company.

From Channel 4 in Miami we had Ned Smith, who was instructed by Palmetto Fencing Clubs Steve Larusso. From Channel 7 we had Paul Seebeck, and was given instruction by the Miami Fencing Clubs Howard Williams. From Channel 12 in West Palm

Beach, we had Dan Oliver, taught by Florida Atlantic University's Lior Hirvonen. From Channel 51 came German Rios, taught by Hollywood Fencing Club's Dan Maristany. And last were the Miami Herald's Raul Rubiera and Channel 6's Russel Shimooka, taught by the Miami Fencing Club's Tom Cragg.

These were our players. So far, so good, but there were many other details to attend to. Next we asked for, and received, permission from the State Games Commission to use its tax-free status to procure things such as hotel rooms for the out-of-town sportscasters and their camera people.

Our biggest score, however, was a pair of tickets from Midway Airlines to anywhere in its system, which we put up as first prize. The phone calls were many, but split among our group, the work-load was a little lighter than it could have been.

The training went well, with most of the stations doing a program on what they were taught, which included the club and members. The Miami Fencing Club (my club) got a five-minute excerpt, where Russel Shimooka was shown being taught by each of the club's members, then having a bout with Kerry Waldrep, one of our newer fencers.

The filming was almost as much fun as seeing ourselves on the tube. We had great hopes for Russel's abilities, but later he found out he would be out of town and we could not get a replacement for him from the station. So it was back to the phone again, and with time running short we called the Homestead News Leader and spoke to the editor.

He was interested, and although he couldn't make the Games, he asked if he could come up and interview us. We agree, and found him and his photographer to be very pleasant and low-key. Our talk and photo session were very laid back, so you can imagine our surprise when we found a whole page of the paper dedicated to our club.

The day of the Games was very hectic, but proved fruitful beyond anyone's dreams. Remember Channel 10? The new man had shown up, checking around, was told that the "happening" for television was at the fencing venue. He came down with a camera crew, and began looking for interviews. Since I had the job of coordinating the sportscasters, I quickly went over and tried to convince him to suit up, and join us. The next thing I knew, I had a camera stuck in my face, and I was stuttering through an interview of my own.

About this time Channel 4 was setting up. They did a live remote right from the venue, using the fencing as a backdrop. The other stations, not to be outdone, had more cameras setting up, not to mention the constant flash of the photographer from the Miami Herald.

The tournament itself was easy to run. We deliberately chose the epee for its ease of no "right of way." Each fencer had as many lessons as he wanted to fit in,

Continued on next page

Sportscaster's Challenge

Continued from page 15

but the average was three. The energy level was very high, and there was no lack of fire in the attacks that were made.

First-place honors went to Channel 4's Ned Smith, whose 6-foot 5-inch height played well with the speed he was able to manage. Second place went to Raul Rubiera from the Miami Herald, and he worked hard for every point he made. Third place went to Channel 7's Paul Seebeck. Paul was disarmed during one of his bouts, and made a beautiful lunge for his weapon, not realizing that the action had stopped.

This project was both fun and fruitful. It brought us in new students, and many "well dones" from our fellow fencers from around the state. I would suggest this same format for any division that might be hosting a state game. It's not as hard as you might think, and you would be amazed at who will talk to you if you simply give them a call. "Reach out and touch someone" could take on a whole new meaning to fencers.

More Letters . . .

Change Qualification System

I have swallowed the disappointment, the indignation and the resentment of not fencing in the Nationals this year, I'd like to suggest some changes in the way the qualifications for Division I U.S. Championships are made.

I am talking about epee fencers, but I know that the problem is the same for all three weapons.

This year, in our Sectional Championships in epee, **five out of eight** automatic qualifiers did not make the top 16. That's okay, we fencers, know better than in any sport, that it can happen to the greatest. But think about the regular guy (guess who?) who finishes seventh when the rule is to take only six, with an indicator so close to the sixth! He won't be forgiven like the automatic. It had to be that day, against that (...) guy, in direct elimination, once a year.

Is there any (good) reason not to allow alternates to the Division I Nationals?

Especially when **three out of these six** qualified fencers knew from the very beginning that they were not going to fence the Nationals anyway, and I am not talking (am I?) about two of them who didn't even qualify for the Sectionals through the Divisional (apologies, guys, I just heard that you had medical certificates).

Is the USFA rich enough to disregard all these potential entry fees for the Nationals anyway?

Shouldn't it be a fair way to qualify through local tournaments during the year, to reward the consistency and the work of the fencers who can't afford to fence the expensive circuit events and should not have only once chance in a year to fence the big guns?

We are not in France or in Germany where most of the tournaments are within driving distances! And medical certificates are heavy expenses I don't want to add on an already costly sport.

What about earning an "A" during the fencing year before the Nationals? Please, USFA gods, look down to the anonymous fencers. And remember that you must have a wide base to have a big pyramid.

Bruno Goossens
San Francisco, CA

Steve Mormando, '84 and '88 Olympian Opens The Belle and Blade

Steve Mormando, 1984 and 1988 Olympic sabreur and head coach of fencing at New York University, has announced the opening of The Belle and Blade, and new mail-order business dealing in top-quality medieval replica arms and armor.

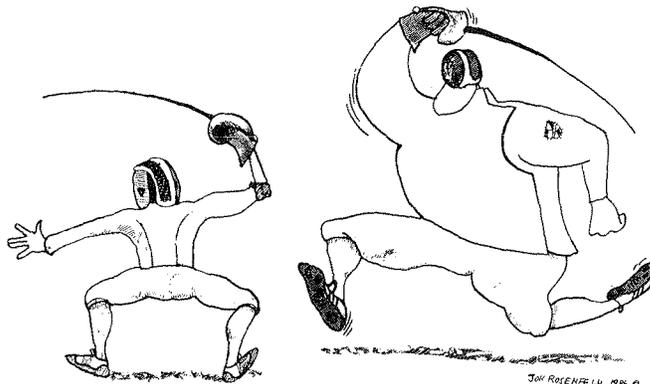
The Belle and Blade carries a full line of all types of weapons and trappings of war including swords, axes, maces, flails, spears, shields, daggers, and even full suits of armor. Suitable for trophies, displays, gifts or stage and film combat, all replica weapons are made by skilled craftsmen of high carbon steel.

In addition, Mormando has formed a subsidiary company called The Armchair Swashbuckler to supply classic and current swashbuckling adventure videos at bargain prices. Difficult-to-find old favorites featuring stars such as Douglas Fairbanks Sr., or Jr., Errol Flynn, Tyrone Power, Rudolph Valentino or Cornell Wilde (a former Olympic Level Fencer) are now in stock.

Both The Armchair Swashbuckler and The Belle and the Blade will search for any items or titles not listed in their catalogues. Custom arms and armor or machines of war can also be made to specific requirements.

Besides his participation in the 1984 and 1988 Olympics, Mormando was a United States national sabre champion in 1987, Olympic Festival sabre champion in 1982 and 1989, and Pan Am Games silver medalist three times and national championship Team Gold Medalist.

For more information contact: Steve Mormando, The Belle and Blade, 131 Mercer St., Jersey City, NJ 07032; (201) 432-3921.



Last time it was weights, their care and feeding, etc. This time it's what we call shims, probably for want of a better term. Technically, there is a use for shims in all three weapons, but since it is in epee that their application is most critical, let's start there.

Once again we find an area where the FIE is perceived to lay down some seemingly very specific requirements, which, on closer inspection, prove to be something less than very precise. I happen to know that, quite some years ago, the Swiss Federation called the attention of the FIE supreme powers to the fact that the plus/minus allowance for shims was — from an engineering point of view (whatever it may do for the convenience of the manufacturers) — not very sensible. The 0.5mm specification, they pointed out, ought to be 0.5mm as a floor, with any tolerance allowed only on the high side, thus guaranteeing that every fencer would have the 0.5 minimum travel desired.

Maybe because it would be more costly to monitor compliance, and undoubtedly more costly for the manufacturers to produce such shims (there could be a rather high rejection rate, one suspects, as the stuff came off the assembly line), nothing has ever been done. In this respect, the same principle — or lack of it? — as I described last time about the weights is what prevails.

So let's pass over that; nothing's going to be done anyway. But how about some other things that you might expect to see specified? Quick: what's the requirement as to how deep the cuts or indentations must be in a set of shims? Don't waste time running to your rule book; you won't find it there. That's what accounts for the wide range of difference in all the shim sets we see, as sold by the various suppliers, or produced by whoever wants to. You see them with itty-bitty little fractions of a moon at the tip, and then there are those that will slide in all the way and embrace the gap in the tip for about three-quarters of its circumference. And there are those in between.

What difference does that make? I hear you asking, rather bored with my pedantic niggling. Consider how a director makes the tests. First the 1.5mm shim is applied to the slot; all it has to do is fit in. Then the 0.5mm is inserted (after the 1.5mm is removed: don't laugh; somebody has to say it). This is the no-go test. Pass on these two points and you have passed.

How many directors have you seen insert shims several times: i.e., at three or four points around the perimeter? Why do they do that? See below. Worse: maybe you've seen them put it in and rotate the thing all around the pint, usually, meanwhile, pressing down on the tip. Ugh. You have probably seen shim sets that show the signs of such misuse: they show regular rings ground onto them at the end. Even steel gets worn down if you do that long enough. That sort of abuse will ultimately change the specification of the gauge, and it does nothing really useful as a test. Maybe these directors do it because they saw somebody do it that way five or ten or twenty years ago (and that somebody

saw a distinguished EUROPEAN do it that way even farther back in the mists of time).

If the shim is one that slides on fully (i.e., so it projects beyond, and embraces about three-quarters of the circumference of the point), why apply it in more than one position? What do you gain? Think about it: what is the second or third application going to show that the first didn't?

Granted, if the shim has one of those very shallow (sliver-of-a-moon) cuts, maybe the directors are afraid that the test isn't being done right? We can forgive them for the suspicion, I suppose. With one of those, then maybe there is some justification for doing a series of "insertions" (so to speak) all around the perimeter, but then what is not justified is for the official to rock the point, trying to "make it misbehave." Think about that, too. What the test should be is the application of pressure on the very center of the tip: straight down the bore, so to speak, to create the equivalent of the test made with a shim properly — dare I say it? — cut out.

Facing the prevailing methods of testing, the epee fencer who wants to avoid trouble over the travel/shim test, needs to adjust the tip spring down as low as possible, consistent with reliable results. One problem with the FIE rule (this is what the Swiss meant) is that it is not merely theoretically possible — it actually does happen now and again — for a fencer to set up an epee with a shim set that is perfectly in the FIE ball park, but at the **top** of the range: i.e., 0.5mm, and then have it flunked by another perfectly legal FIE-spec shim, down at the **bottom** of the range (0.45mm).

For the nearest thing to absolute safety, I recommend setting up at just below 0.45mm, as have many of the best, most experienced, and most successful American epeeists of past years. How to do that? What you need is your own special shim or measuring gauge that will let you actually get down to or preferably just a bit below 0.45mm. Any automatic supply store will have sets of "feeler gauges," one of which will be for 0.017" (seventeen-thousandths of an inch), which equals 0.432mm, the nearest available standard valve just below the FIE bottom. It works like a charm.

While discussing this area, let me give away a little secret of running a successful high-level competition. It is one occasionally applied by (knowledgeable and compassionate and let's-avoid-trouble) organizers and technicians. That is to locate and reserve the thickest shims they can find (that are still legal, of course, i.e., the 0.55mm ones) for as much of the competition as possible, certainly for finals. That way embarrassment can be avoided if somebody's epee has been jarred just a bit off its original setting. The other route, favored by the rigid rule types, is to find the sets that are absolutely 0.5mm, and the devil take the hindmost. Then there are the organizers who don't know and/or don't care. The lesson should be that you might get a little leeway at some competitions, but don't count on it: you may be

Continued on next page

facing nothing but 0.45mm shims all the way; so learn to take care of yourself.

Also in this connection, I have seen clever international directors, who did not want an international incident on their strips, deliberately misshape the shim issued to them, by splaying it — just a bit: the result is that nobody flunks; nobody could. You sometimes come across sets of shims that have been maltreated this way. Since it doesn't take much distortion to make them absolutely "safe," there is good reason for you organizers to have your ship sets checked out frequently, if you are interested in abiding by the rules. Regrettably, the deeper-cut types (which, as I guess you understand, I prefer and recommend) are more susceptible to such manipulation than are the shallow-cut models.

As I noted at the beginning, a form of shim testing is specified or at least implied for all weapons. In sabre, the tests specified are for the thickness of the blade. A proper latest-model shim set for sabre will have three cut-outs: 1.2mm, 4mm, and 6mm. The whole blade of the sabre near the tip is what is tested (though in practice only the last few inches are actually verified, barring *prima facie* evidence of gross grinding down, or something of the sort). The first two dimensions are the

"no-no" ones: the two thicknesses of the blade respectively cannot be thinner than those. If the blade fits in, it flunks. The 4mm cut-out is also used for the tip; in neither dimension can it be small enough to fit in. The 6mm one is the reverse sort of test: the tip must fit into it. Incidentally, an interesting feature of sabre shims is that, properly, they are supposed to be 3mm thick; not all are.

The implied test these days is the one for foil. Many years ago it was regularly performed, but it has been a long time since any mention of the foil shim has appeared in the FIE literature, and many years since it has regularly been supplied as part of a shim set. The gap specification for a foil tip, however, is still there in the rule book, in a manner of speaking. The travel of a foil point that is required to cause a touch can be very small; the rules use the delightful term "infinitesimal." The typical FIE fun starts when you compare articles 211/2a with 719/4 in the rule book. I wish someone would tell me whether they mean the gap can actually be 1.0000mm or that it must not be more than 0.9999...mm. In the old days, a supposedly 1.0mm shim was used; most people took the "if it goes in it flunks" approach.

Note: Readers — and would-be contributors — should not get the idea that we will soon be changing our name to "The American Journal of Fencing Poetry," but this one was just too good to leave out. — Ed.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It has oft drawn my attention,
So I feel I ought to mention
What appalling foods most fencers like to eat.
They consume in competition
Food of dubious nutrition
In a vain attempt to win when they compete.

Many wishfully suppose
Diet will defeat their foes
And neglect to train the basics of our sport.
Footwork, parries, drills, and such,
These will help you get your touch,
Not the food you eat, regardless of the sort.

At a fencing tournament
See how much attention's spent
On your adversaries' competition fare.
Some eat quite specific foods,
Some, according to their moods,
Yet each thinks his diet well beyond compare.

Snickers, Razzles, Lemon Drops,
Twinkies, Ding-Dongs, Lollipops,
Hoagies, Whoppers, Big Macs, donuts, cupcakes, fries;
And, of course, the Oreo,
Symbol of such glory: O!
It's the winning food all fencers idolize.

Now, what I should like to know
Is how each one claims to show
That his diet is the one the champions use.
For they're all so contradict'ry,
Yet each claims to lead to vict'ry
And says, "Follow me and you will never lose."

Now despite this common trait —
Food God himself would not create —
Every fencer claims his snack has lucky charms.
Yes, each swordsman has his menu
He'll defend with valor when you
Point out how his provender is full of harms.

For a fencer's needs aren't static,
And with food he get emphatic
And insists his diet is to be defended.
Whether sanguine or phlegmatic,
In a style idiosyncratic
He will push to make his point (no pun intended):

"Coke restores electrolytes!"
So say many modern knights.
"So I drink it and the carbos keep me strong."
"No, quick energy's the answer!"
Cries the suger-binged romancer.
"With my Hershey's chocolate bars I can't go wrong."

"Give it up!" says the emphatic
Self-obsessed health food fanatic.
"That type food just turns your body to a wreck.
Take granola mix, you see,
Blend in nuts and flakes like me;
Healthy foods will put that ribbon 'round your neck."

"All those health foods make me nauseous.
There's no need to be so cautious."
Thus speaks he to whom a diet's no concern.
"When I eat, it matters little
What goes down as long as it'll
Give me all those extra calories to burn!"

Yes, all diets come and go;
'Tis not they who beat your foe,
For there's but one thing that will, I have a hunch.
It involves two basic moves,
Mastery of which behooves
Us all to learn: always extend before you lunch!

—Paul Epply-Schmidt
Fencing Coach
Princeton Day School

Patton And His Saber

by Charles Conwell

George S. Patton, famous for panache, pearl-handled pistols, and tanks, was also one of America's most prominent swordsmen. He occupies an important position in the age-old argument about the superiority of the cut or the thrust. He was the first U.S. officer to hold the title, Master of the Sword, and perhaps the last. (*Note: The Director of Athletics at West Point has a parking space reserved in that title, but they have no varsity fencing team! Ed.*). His career, which culminated in the mechanized armoured fighting of World War II, began in the days of horse and saber.

Patton began fencing at West Point as a freshman in 1904. He studied both the duelling sword (epee) and the broadsword (cavalry saber). Broadsword practice was not the light contact sport which saber is today. Patton described his classwork in a letter to his father in 1908.

"I am the best or one of the best in the class with the broadsword. It is lots of fun and I practice it as much as possible. You should see the sparks fly on some of the parries also the blood if you chance to stick your unguarded left hand in the way. The other day I was fencing with a man who would not acknowledge my touches through they nearly knocked him down, so I tried a duelling cut not supposed to be used in fencing at the right wrist. As a result he could not hold a pen for a day but will probably be a better sport in the future."

In a letter to his future wife, Patton described a fencing victory over a professional member of a fencing club in New York.

"I think he was out of practice, still I was glad to beat him. Please pardon my boasting but...I would like so to be good with the sword."

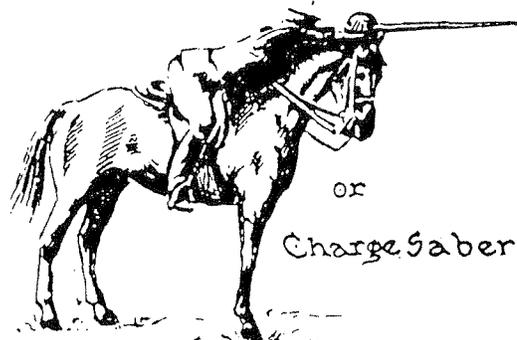
In 1912 Patton represented the US Army in the Fifth Olympics held in Stockholm, Sweden. His event, the modern pentathlon, included riding, pistol shooting, fencing, swimming, and running. It was based on a fictitious military scenario. A messenger rides, loses his horse, fires at the enemy, engages the enemy with sword when out of ammunition, swims a river, and runs to deliver the message. In fact, the five events are held on separate days. Overall, Patton placed fifth out of 42 contestants. He ranked third in fencing and was the only competitor to give the fencing champion of the French army a loss. The weapon used with the epee, then called the duelling sword. Patton called it,

"the rapier of history and the ancestor of all swords... The curved saber is a hybrid, being a cross between the rapier and the scimitar and having the good qualities of neither."

Patton inquired of his fellow Olympic fencers in Stockholm about who was considered to be the best fencing master in Europe. The consensus named Clery, master of arms and instructor of fencing at the Cavalry School in Saumur, France. He was the professional champion of Europe in the foil, saber, and duelling sword.

For two weeks following the Olympics, Patton studied saber and duelling sword with Clery. For mounted combat

Lunge to the Front



Clery stressed the thrust with the saber rather than the cut commonly favored in U.S. cavalry training. On his return to the U.S., Patton submitted the following conclusions to the Adjutant General.

"The whole French system of mounted saber fencing is concentrated in the word: "Attack!"

The recruit is taught little or no fencing mounted but he has the one idea to reach his adversary with the point hammered into him constantly and he spends much time running at dummies mounted.

It is argued that America being a country of axmen the edge comes more natural but from what I saw and was told the French recruit wants to use the edge just as much as ours do but it is drilled out of them...

Charging with the point gives the advantage of reaching the enemy at least a year sooner than does our, of presenting during the approach about one third of the human target, and of instilling the desire to speed up and hit hard...

For these reasons the French, English, and the Swedes are adopting straight swords or sabers."

Patton's weeks with Clery were decisive in the development of the Patton Saber, US Model 1913, the last sword manufactured for combat in the United States. Under Clery's influence Patton reversed the emphasis on cutting in American cavalry swordsmanship.

Patton aggressively promoted the adoption of a straight saber and training that would emphasize the thrust almost to the exclusion of cutting and parrying. He circulated quotations from the British Cavalry *Sword and Saber Notes*, 1911, and his own translation of the French Cavalry *Drill Instructions* of the same year.

"In the melee... the troopers single out their adversaries seeking especially the officers. They attack with the point, shouting, "Thrust, thrust!"

In the summer of 1913 Patton received permission to return to Saumur and continue his studies with Clery for six weeks before reporting to the Mounted Service School at Fort Riley, Kansas, on October 1st. At the end of their time together, Clery presented Patton with a picture of himself in fencing attire inscribed in French "To my best pupil."

Continued on next page

At Fort Riley, Second Lieutenant Patton was both a cavalry student and a sword instructor. His title was Master of the Sword. Many of his students were superior officers. While he taught, he wrote a manual for the use of the new saber published in March, 1914, as *Saber Exercise*. He announced his philosophy on the first page.

"The saber is solely a weapon of offense and is used in conjunction with the other offensive weapon, the horse. In all the training, the idea of speed must be conserved. No direct parries are taught, because at the completion of a parry the enemy is already beyond the reach of attack. The surest parry is a disabled opponent.

"In the charge and in the melee, the trooper must remember that on the speed of his horse in attack, and on his own offensive spirits, rest nine-tenths of his chances of success."

The manual details a course of instruction that progresses from the exercises on foot, to mounted charges over obstacles and against dummies, to full scale combat with masks and dull exercise sabers. A trooper who has touched was required to raise his saber and leave the designated area. Perhaps remembering his opponent at West Point, Patton wrote

"A man who does not admit touches should be tried (by court martial) or in some other way have his sensibilities awakened."

In June 1915, Patton published *The Diary of the Instructor of Swordsmanship*. He repeated the importance of the saber as an offensive weapon. The saber was:

"not an individual defense...The men must be impressed with the idea that the proper defense is a transfixing opponent."

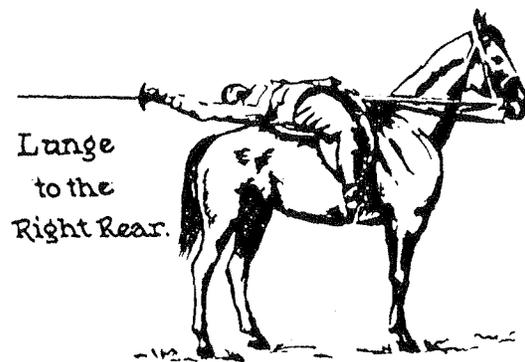
In 1916 the Cavalry Board of Equipment considered replacing the 1913 saber with a curved weapon. Patton vigorously defended the weight, length, shape, and balance of the weapon he designed. The distribution of weight

"was very carefully arranged to give maximum effect to the charge with the point and to the lunge...In this particular the present saber is the superior of any existing weapon in the hands of foreign nations."

He cited the effective cutting power of the straight swords used by medieval knights, Scottish highlanders, Rupert and Cromwell in the English Civil War, Charles XII, and Peter the Great. He quoted numerous historical advocates of the point including Napoleon:

"At Wagram, when the cavalry of the Guard passed in review before a charge, Napoleon called to them: 'Don't cut! the point! the point!'"

Patton's career as Master of the Sword ended in 1914 soon after Pancho Villa raided Columbus, New Mexico, and killed 17 Americans. Patton was assigned to the 8th Cavalry at Fort Bliss Texas. He describes a regimental review in a letter to his wife.



"It was a fine sight all the sabers drawn and all my sabers. It gives you a thrill and my eyes filled with tears..."

"It is the call of ones ancestors and the glory of combat. It seems to me that at the head of a regiment of cavalry any thing would be possible..."

Patton's dreams were soon to be frustrated. On Thanksgiving Day, 1914, he was ordered to attack a band of 80 Mexicans who were camped on the American side of the Rio Grande. Patton planned a saber charge at dawn. His immediate superiors ordered the sabers to be left at the fort. The Mexicans were not found and his men returned after eleven hours in the saddle. During this campaign Patton and ten soldiers traveling in three automobiles shot and killed a well-known Villista officer and two of his comrades. This was the first time that a U.S. Army unit had motored into action. The days of the saber were in decline and mechanized warfare was born. Patton remained an interested theorist in fighting with the sword. He became a monumentally successful practitioner of modern mobile warfare.

In April, 1934, the Adjutant General's Office discontinued the saber as an item of issue to the cavalry and completely discarded it as a weapon. By this time Patton was involved in the development of the U.S. Tank Corps and the demise of the saber passed without his documented comment.

Patton never used his saber in battle, but he demonstrated in World War II this will to charge the enemy with the tanks and half-tracks that earned his armored cavalry the nickname, "Hell on Wheels."

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Fencing Bulletin Board

Junior College Nationals?

If you are affiliated with a junior college fencing program and are interested in the possibility of someday being part of a national championship tournament for your club/team, contact:

Dr. Dana Groves
Arts & Sciences
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Hungarian Coach Available...

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V. Bikov, reportedly 5-time USSR champion and a coach for that nation's national team, is interested in working on a contractual basis or in conducting seminars. For information, contact: International Sports Management, 33 Randolph Ave., Avenel, NJ 07701; (800) 969-6650.

...and would whomever sent me the resume for Terchinski Oleg Izoslavovich — another Soviet coach and former fencing champion — please forward his address, too?

Plus Here's Another One

Yuachun Ma, currently in the last year of a masters program in physical education at the Ohio State University (where he is also an assistant fencing coach), would like a full-time coaching position next year. He can coach all three weapons as well as pentathlon sports, and is a former member of the Olympic Fencing Team of the People's Republic of China. Contact him at: 2617 Lorain Court, Columbus, OH 43210; (614) 293-0540.

Save Your Soles

Steve J. Amich, of 318 E. Calumet St., Appleton, WI 54915; (414) 730-8259, offers a service of interest to all fencers, to wit, resoling of your tired old shoes with new non-skid soles. Mr. Amich will resole your shoes for \$24.50 plus \$7.00 for tax and shipping. Additional charges for holes, etc., might apply — best to ask first. Turnaround time on shoes is less than two weeks, plus delivery times.



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COLLEEN OLNEY

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Prof. Czajkowski of Poland is a most flamboyant, colorful and scholarly master. He speaks a dozen languages, is a medical doctor and has advanced degrees in psychology, physiology and physical education. I am sure I have left out a bunch of other degrees he holds. He is chairman of the physical education department of the Academy of Physical Education, in Katowice, Poland. Prof. Czajkowski has written many books and articles for the physical education professional and the scientific community. He was former Polish Olympic team coach and has developed champions in all weapons, most notably, Egon Franke, Tokyo Olympics foil champion. He is presently coach of his nations women's epee team.

I first met Prof. Czajkowski in 1961 in Warsaw, Poland at the sabre Match of Nations where he was coaching the great Polish sabre team. He taught me many lessons and instilled in me many concepts, strategies, psychological considerations and training principals which served me for many years right up to the present. He is a walking encyclopedia of fencing knowledge. He knows the history of fencing in each country, knows every fencing school, development and theory that is known in fencing. He is quick to apply all of the current scientific knowledge of physiology and physical education to fencing. He also has a photographic memory. He is a fountain of information. His theory class at the college covered every possible aspect of fencing.

His practical foil lessons were outstanding. Every single foil movement had a meaning and the fencing coach had to know exactly what he was doing and why he was doing it. The individual lessons were practical, fluid and with a particular purpose; they had continuity and the student knew what he was doing at all times. Prof. Czajkowski was quick to demonstrate all of the fencing movements using the lunge and fleche during his lessons. Did I mention that he is in his seventies? He is in better condition than many at half his age.

Prof. Czajkowski did not mince words with us. Where other coaches referred to our (American) fencing as "classical," he called it "antiquated." He said that we were still fencing with nineteenth-century styles and concepts. He thought that our teaching in this country had little connection with what actually takes place on the fencing strip. His lessons stressed perception, speed of reaction, decision-making, observation, control of distance, the right choice of action, changing from offense to defense, changing the action, misleading the opponent, acceleration and many other decisions that a fencer has to make during the course of battle.

I'll never forget the remark he made to me in 1961, "In three to four months you could teach a monkey to make a parry four... the important thing is how do you apply it, when do you use it and how do you use it — this is the true genius of the fencer, not whether he can execute the stroke, but when!"

Another important concept that he left us with was

the worth of a fencing master nowadays; it is not only what the master can do in the plastron, but how well he/she can organize and supervise fencing group and paired drills. It is very important that fencers take the responsibility for their own development and that they learn to work together for their own improvement. The coach is there to assist and motivate the students.

Master Stawiski, the Polish national sabre coach, is the one coach that I personally knew the least about prior to this seminar. He had a nice smooth, relaxed and fluid style about him. Since we had two sabre coaches, it was decided that he would demonstrate and teach the basic development of a sabre fencer. He taught us many preparatory and inductive exercises leading to specific fencing movements.

We were familiar with some of the exercises, and many others were new to us. The newer exercises were based on when the arm is extended in the cut and coordinating the arm and hand movement with the foot. Many exercises had to do with developing a soft fluid arm movement. These basic exercises are usually used as a warmup to an individual lesson and students use them quite frequently in paired drills. The interesting thing about the exercises that were familiar to us is the amount of time and concentration that is put into them. In this country, we usually practice these drills for a short period of time and then quickly move on to performing specific fencing actions, rarely returning to these basic loosening-up exercises. Stawiski stressed the importance of continually using these basic exercises throughout the fencer's training.

Master Stawiski demonstrated a sabre lesson teaching the basic offensive and defensive sabre movements while teaching the student to always have in mind what he was doing and why he was doing it. We all had ample opportunity to practice this lesson with each other and each coach's ability to give a basic sabre lesson improved dramatically. Master Stawiski made many friends at this camp. He spoke no English at all when he arrived. By the time he left he had a vocabulary of a couple of hundred words, slang and all, and still growing. By the way, he also speaks four other languages.

Master Saichuk, the Russian national epee coach, is a most interesting man. He has been involved with coaching and the organization of the Soviet fencing system since the early 1950s, which decade marked the beginning of the success of the Russians on the fencing scene. It amazes me how someone can remain in such an influential position through all of the political and administrative changes in an organization, regardless of the political system. Master Saichuk is a tall, imposing man and although he is very big in stature, he is very sensitive and gentle. In addition to being a great epee master, he has a great voice and loves to sing, and is also a wonderful landscape painter.

Master Saichuk has a marvelous approach to epee

Continued on next page

fencing. I think it is quite a unique teaching method, the likes of which with I was not familiar. He does not teach epee as an extension of the foil. He believes that a fencer can start with the epee, without a foil background. He develops the concept of epee fencing by introducing simple reflex games with the epee. These games take on a strategy and this strategy carries over to the actual epee fencing.

Each time a new fencing concept is presented, it is first introduced as a strategy or a tactic. The "technique" is emphasized after the concept and strategy of the movement is clearly understood.

Again, every action taught has a practical application; it is clearly related to the bouting situation. Every movement is taught and practiced within the confines of offense or defense, preparation, timing and distance. When appropriate, position on the strip and time remaining in the bout is also considered.

Master Saichuk had a very interesting way of teaching the footwork. He taught the fencers to move from the toes and balls of their feet just like a boxer. From this movement he was able to demonstrate very quick changes of direction and fast accelerated attacks and counter attacks. I saw epee fencing being taught as I have never seen it being taught before. Here was epee fencing being taught as a beautiful, dynamic and very effective fighting art.

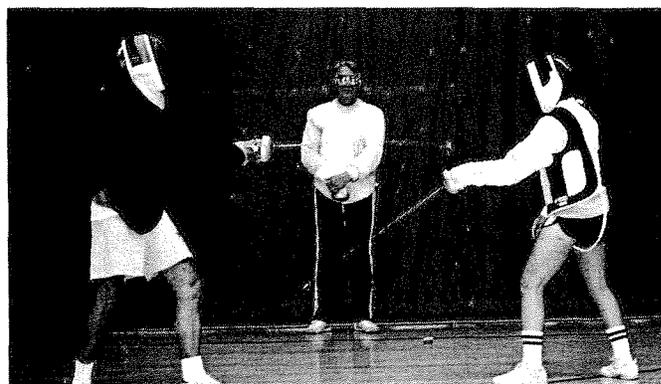
Here is where I personally had the greatest time of all. It was a great pleasure and thrill for me to work with **Master Nazlimov** in sabre. We were contemporaries during our competitive careers in the sixties at the height of the Cold War. Although our respective countries were on most unfriendly terms and the words "communism" and "capitalism" were fighting words, we had a mutual respect for each other.

Although we never actually spoke to each other, we did have the greatest respect and admiration for each other. We could see it in each other's eyes. We fought tooth and nail with each other; we fought hard and long with everything we had.

We were not fighting ideologies, we were competing as sportsmen. We were competing out of love, not hate. We brought out the best in each other. We could see how we both loved fencing, both loved to fence. We loved to fence more than anything else.

We were fencing fanatics. And now I had the opportunity to train with this man. I had the opportunity to share this beautiful fencing experience with one of the greatest fencing artists of our times. Master Nazlimov was three times world champion and ten times a finalist. He has produced many world champions, individually and team. If there is such a thing as a "fenceaholic," he's it. The man eats, sleeps and drinks fencing.

He is a great example of flexibility. The game that is fenced today is not the same game that was fenced during his heyday. Still, he has the ability and foresight to analyze the game, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of his student's opponents, adapt his teaching to



1990 Coaches College: Lev Saitjhuk of the Soviet Union gives a lesson.

the current rules interpretations, current strip rules and dimensions, and the electrical scoring systems. Master Mazlimov emphasizes looseness, balance and mobility. He trains his students to keep absolutely perfect distance.

His lessons are very exacting and precise; the student knows what is going on at all times. The lesson is very structured. The student always prepares slowly either with an appel lunge, advance appel lunge, jump lunge, advance jump lunge, or any combination of the above. It is strictly emphasized that the arm is NOT extended. Then the master give the cue for one of five possible reactions from the student: a direct attack to the open arm, a feint attack against an attempted parry, a parry riposte against an attempted counter-attack (attack on preparation), a stop cut against a compound counter-attack (feigning in time), and a beat attack against a point in line or against a lazy blade.

On a more advanced level, the master may occasionally open the distance on the student's preparation so that the student closes the distance with the appropriate footwork and is ready to make the proper response based on his observations of the coach (or opponent). Another lesson would consist of all of the defensive actions that can be used against the attack (or preparation of the attack). Master Nazlimov also has a very extensive lesson dealing with the point in line, since over 90% of defensive sabre moves are prepared with the point in line.

Another added treat to the seminar was **Sergi Mendgrassov**, former sabre world champion. He is a real champion in the true sense of the word. He is humble, modest and a perfect gentleman. He was always there ready to help and yet he was unassuming. He was always ready to demonstrate a particular action or explain an important concept. He is also a wonderful coach. His soft gentle manner coupled with his practice and good humor made it a joy to work with him. Sergi would take a lesson from everyone to demonstrate what the coach is looking for in the student. It was very interesting to observe a lesson from different levels of

Continued on next page

expertise. To see a beginner and a world champion take the same lesson was definitely an enlightening learning experience. To give a lesson to a world champion who responds like a fine tuned machine is a fascinating teaching experience. Sergi is the epitome of looseness and relaxation. He has a smooth precise fencing style with no unnecessary or extemporaneous movements. It was a joy to watch him fence and take a lesson.

If this array of talent was not enough we were also privileged to observe and work with **Vitalle Nazlimov**, the son of master Nazlimov. Vitalle is one of the best young junior fencers in Russia. It was interesting to see another level of sabre fencing competence. Vitalle is a well-trained and disciplined student. He is strong and moves very well. His actions are very crisp and clean. I enjoyed the comparison between him and Mendagrassov. Although Vitalle was well-trained and took the same lesson and made the same movements as Mendagrassov, Sergi was a little more precise, smoother, more relaxed and always in control with a very strong presence about him.

What struck me the most about Vitalle Nazlimov, like Mendagrassov, was his good manners. He was also a fine gentleman, pleasant, polite and well-behaved. It was certainly very refreshing to see real champions behaving in a modest, pleasant and intelligent manner, unlike the current vogue of sport champions who behave like spoiled brats. It was so refreshing to see these great fencers behave in a mature, well-adjusted manner. I have not figured out whether these good manners are part of the Russian fencing system, the influence and high moral standards of their coach, or that these are just two outstanding and unusual fencers.

Whatever the reason, it was refreshing, enjoyable and very pleasant. I would like to see this attitude catch on as a trend in our sport and see every fencer trying their hardest to emulate this well-adjusted behavior. The good news is that Vitalle will be going to school in this country and we all will be able to see this very fine fencer's high skill level as well as his good manners.

These wonderful and informative coaching experiences are available to every coach and would-be coach in the country. The Coaches College is there for you. Anyone who is interested in teaching or coaching fencing, from those with little or no experience to those who are active and successful are welcome to the Coaches College. We have three separate seminars to meet the needs of all levels of expertise. In addition, we have a dedicated coaching staff with years of experience to assist you and help you personally meet your own coaching expectations. There is plenty of printed material provided so that you will have a permanent written record of the seminar material.

In addition to the fencing material, the Coaches College also includes the American Coaching Effect-

iveness Program (ACEP). ACEP helps coaches develop a positive coaching philosophy, improve communication skills, teach skills effectively, manage their teams, understand the principles of training, and learn the basics of sports first aid. The course includes a text book, *Successful Coaching* which covers sports psychology, physiology, sports medicine, sport and time management. The format consists of eight hours of class, the self-study text and a 100-item take-home test. When the course is completed and the take-home exam passed, each coach is certified by the national office of ACEP.

ACEP is used by many community-based sport programs and is endorsed by the YMCA of the USA and Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Fifteen national governing bodies of Olympic sports and many other national sports organizations offer ACEP courses. And in 1990, the National Federation of State High School Associations selected ACEP as its coaching education program which expands the already extensive use of ACEP in school-based sport programs.

Also, a very successful extension of our Coaches College is our Coaches Area Seminars. This is a series of three weekend workshops where a staff member will come to your area and present the coaches college material to the instructors, coaches and would-be coaches and instructors in your area. There is no charge for this service. The host club or division provides room and board and ground transportation for the participating staff member. The organizers of the seminar publicize the event in their area, arrange the dates and reserve the facility. This opportunity is available to every coach at any level in any section of the country. We encourage every one interested in teaching fencing to take advantage of this exceptional experience.

EDITORIAL OVERSIGHT

Since the appearance of Stephen Sike's article in our last issue ("Handles is Handles") we have received numerous requests from people who wish to contact Mr. Sikes. These people, doubtless encouraged by Mr. Sikes' "drop me a line" invitation, can now do so, by writing him at: 525 Peterson Lane, Dixon, CA 95620.

The Atlanta Fencers' Club

by Richard Conte

In the heart of midtown Atlanta, sets the one-story building that is the AFC. In the shadows of skyscrapers, just off Peachtree traffic comes the sound of clashing foils, epees and sabers. On any given night a visitor to the club could see bouts taking place in the club's four strips, people working on their weapons in the work area, and lessons being taught by the maitre d'armes, Gene Gettler. Gettler runs the Atlanta Fencers' Club. He is coach and owner of one of the best clubs in the South; one that is home to past and future Olympians.

Gene Gettler is a known and respected coach by both students and fellow coaches in most Eastern fencing circles, but like many fencers, he happened upon the sport by accident. While attending high school in Long Island, he wanted to play tennis. He was told that fencing would get him in shape for tennis so he gave it a try. Gettler soon fell in love with fencing and has been at it ever since. Though he points out that he did not excel at first, he stuck with the sport and made the college team at State College in Binghamton, N.Y.

By his junior year Gene was captain of the team. It was also in his junior year this psychology major decided that he wanted to pursue a career as a coach. Gene was captain again in his senior year, and placed seventeenth in the NCAA tournament.

In order to pursue his dream of becoming a coach, he had to choose a Master program. He recalls "two of my teammates went to study at the National Institute of Sport in Paris. They both had a very difficult time with the program, but they both succeeded. I considered it, but then a program was started at Cornell, and that was only 30 minutes away."

The American Fencing Academy at Cornell was run by Jean-Jacques Gillet. It was a two year program that offered Master of Fencing degrees. Gene was one of four in his class, and one of only 18 people to complete the program, which is no longer in existence.

The program was very intensive, according to Gene, one that was like an old-fashioned apprenticeship where one "lived and breathed fencing." In order to graduate, the students at the academy had to pass rigorous exams at the end of the first and second year: skill attained included the giving of group and individual lessons, directing, expertise in all three weapons, and a written thesis. After graduation, Gene learned that breaking into fencing as a coach is no easy task.

College fencing programs were being cut more often they they were hiring coaches around 1976 when Gene finished the Cornell program. Private clubs were the alternative. Gene purchased the two-year-old Atlanta Fencers' Club in 1977 with the help of loans from his parents and a coach at Cornell. These loans were paid back in one year's time. The club just celebrated its eleventh anniversary.

Being the coach at the club is sometimes more rewarding than coaching at a university, Gene says. "I get to work with my students for many years, as opposed to college... It's hard work to tech someone to fence in four years. College coaches can't spend too much time with one student because of drop-outs, graduation, or whatever. I can take someone who is 13 or 14 and spend a lot of time with them." Gene does teach collegiate fencers in a sense. He does teach P.E. classes at Emory and DeKalb Community College, as well as serve as head coach at the club.

Moby Childs took up fencing and studied under Gene for a little more than three years. He went on to become captain of the team at Penn State University. Penn State placed third in the NCAA championship for the third year running. Moby attests to Gene's fine methods. "My Penn State coaches both like the way Gene coaches. When I got there, they could teach me their stuff and didn't have to unteach me anything. Both my coaches are European. One stresses finesse and one power. Gene would teach you what to do and then let you develop your own style," Childs stated.

Gettler makes it a point to teach every student the way it is best for him. No two students are alike, so no two fencers get the same lesson. Each student has his own personality. Gene tries to highlight each student's strengths and minimize his weaknesses. He says, "I try to teach them how to think as well as how to fence. Thinking on the strip is a lightning quick process and is almost as important as the physical aspects."

The Atlanta Fencers' Club has been home to some very formidable competitors — Mark Ellingson, Yorukoglu Morat, Mark Smith (1986 U.S. Olympic team) and others — and continues to produce strong competitors who are eagerly sought by the fencing colleges.

Things have been looking up for Gene Gettler and the Atlanta Fencers' Club from the first six months that Gene owned the club. At that time he had to live in the club to avoid having to pay two rents. Now Gene resides in his new East Point home. The club has been steadily growing, and now boasts over 90 members. He married one of his students, and he and Laura have celebrated their first anniversary.

Although there is a possibility of the club moving downtown within a few years, there is little chance of the club leaving the city. Atlanta and U.S. fencing should be grateful for that.



Shoot the Foreign Coaches?

by Gil Pezza

In order to solve the problem of American fencing, the USFA should do to foreign coaches what Mark Twain suggested we do to lawyers: Shoot ten of them every month as a matter of public policy; on the other hand, my number is bound to come up too, so perhaps it is better to search for a more reasonable alternative. Also, it might be helpful to take a quick look at the employment of foreign coaches both in the United States and Europe, before discussing other viable plans of action.

Many countries, including the U.S., have utilized foreign coaches, but there is a significant contrast in how these coaches are selected in the United States as opposed to Europe. In fact, European federations select the foreign professionals accurately and always retain cover over them.

In the United States most foreign coaches have arrived as immigrants through their own initiative. Indeed, among them there were many fencing masters of extraordinary talent and personality such as Maitres Santelli and Elthes, but there were also many others of mediocre talent who quickly clothed themselves with a fictitious past of Olympic glory.

Despite the talent of a few individuals who have developed some of the top fencers in this country, the overall impact of foreign coaches has been more disruptive (particularly in the past) than unifying; This is due to the tendency, common among immigrants, to resist change and retain their ethnicity and affiliation to their respective schools of fencing. Such conservative propensities are also reflected in their cultural, political and social values and beliefs.

Furthermore, the USFA (and the AFLA before it) developed the "guru system," by giving carte blanche to some of these coaches without retaining an effective control over them, much to the detriment of the development and endorsement of American coaches. In recent years, under the direction of the now-dissolved triumvirate of Keane, Miller and Kogler, effective action has been taken to remedy such a situation by implementing, with great success, through the Coaches' College, a unified methodology of teaching fencing.

However, additional reforms are long overdue. First, the language of fencing in the U.S. should be English and not French or Italian; in fact all countries, except the Anglo-Saxon ones, use their respective language. Secondly, the USFCA training manuals should use American terminology, and foreign terms should be restricted to the field of comparative theory.

Moreover, foreign coaches should determine where their loyalties rest; it is not uncommon for a foreign coach to hold a position at a university for forty years, and then recommend a coach from his native land rather than one of his American colleagues. In summary, just having an American passport does not mean much unless we start thinking American.

In this respect, all of us foreign coaches are guilty and should occasionally recite a "mea culpa," and make

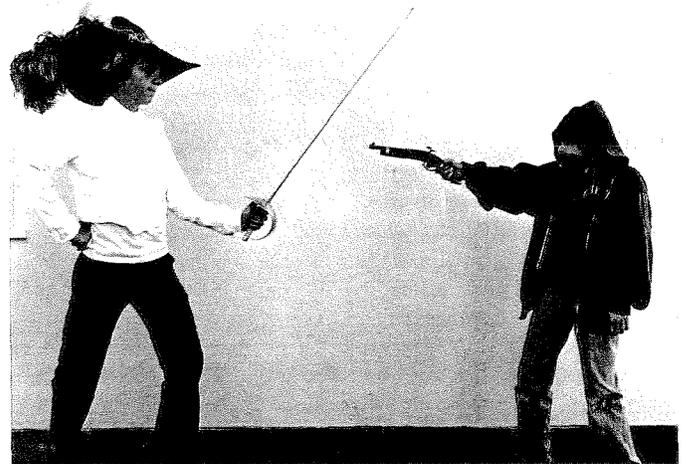
amends. As far as I am concerned I will recommend my job to an American coach when I leave my post at Wayne State. Also, I realize that I am not above reproach because of the number of foreign fencers on my teams, yet I am eager to change this tradition, although I know that my chances of recruiting the JO champions are nil, unless Wayne State joins the Ivy League or the city of Detroit relocates to Southern California.

At the national level, the USFA should control the foreign coaches and use this wealth of talent productively. I strongly feel that the national coach should be an American, and not necessarily a coach. There are many examples of national coaches who are fencing masters, like maitre Beck in Germany, or others who are not coaches like Italy's C.T. Attilio Fini (C.T. stand for "commissario tecnico"). Such an individual must be a talent scout — an administrator — and must have the power to implement his or her objectives. The real problem is finding the qualified individual who has the time to devote to such a mission.

My proposal is that the national coach (or technical director) be an American and that he should be assisted by five technical advisors (one per weapon) of his choice. In addition the USFA should appoint two or three coaches per each weapon, using young American coaches whenever possible.

Also, the USFA should appoint a "technical commission" for the evaluation and selection to the fencers. Obviously, to implement such a program the point system needs to be reassessed, and the mandate of the USFA administration extended to at least four years, but these are matters that can be addressed in a separate article.

In conclusion, I feel that the present programs sponsored by the USFA to unify and develop fencing in the United States are really very important, but I also feel that these efforts are ineffective unless decisive steps are taken to promote pride, self-confidence, and recognition for American coaches.



First Semi-Annual Great Lakes Section Directors' Seminar

by Bruce Gillman

The Great Lakes Section hosted its first section-sponsored directors' clinic on August 25, 1990 at Kent State University, and it was a resounding success. Fencing Officials Commission members George Kolombatavitch and Bill Goering were the featured speakers to a 45-person audience of enthusiastic fencers. Right of way in foil and sabre were covered in depth with a clear focus on directing strategy.

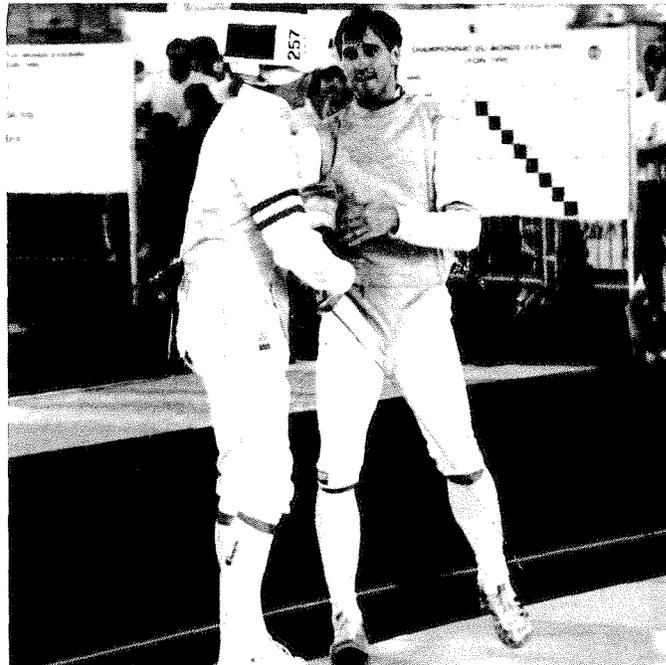
George was a thorough and engaging speaker and Bill acted as a good steadying influence, consistently returning the discussion to its main point, that directors must concentrate on *Fencing Actions* rather than some of the participants applying their new knowledge by directing the two demonstration fencers under the eyes of George and Bill as well as a pretty tough audience of their peers. Written and practical examinations were available on Sunday before and during the mixed foil and mixed sabre competitions held that day. Frank MacKenzie of Flint, Michigan and Jim Vesper of Ypsilanti, earned their Class 5 ratings that day. Quite a few others passed their Class 6 tests that day as well.

Frank Nagorney (USFA Counsel and GL Section Chair) won the sabre tournament after having not picked up a sabre in almost four years.

The concept of a section-hosted directors seminar surfaced at the Great Lakes Section meeting last April. Due to a widely-recognized shortage of qualified officials in the section, it was decided to devote the balance of our funds normally given to our section champions for use at Nationals to training directors to benefit the whole section. Judging from the project's early success we made a good decision, and I encourage other fencers to follow our example.

Andrew Von Boross

Andrew von Boross, former fencing coach at a number of colleges in Florida, Ohio, New York and Vermont, died this past October in Miami, Fla., at the age of 90. Boross, once a member of the Hungarian Olympic team and reportedly the victor in eight duels during his lifetime, most recently had coached at Florida Memorial College, Barry University and the Miami Shores Recreational Center. The Von Boross Open, held in a different Florida city every year since 1982, is named after him.



(photo by Albert Axelrod)

1990 U.S. Men's Foil champion Michael Marx (r.) at the 1990 World Championships in Lyon, France. Hey — wasn't somebody supposed to send us a report on this event?

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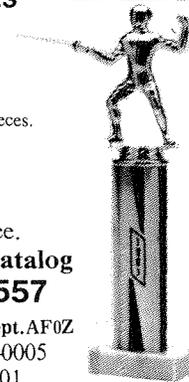
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Results

LEON AURIOL OPEN Oct. 13-14, 1990, Kent, Wash.

Mixed Foil - 52 Entries

1. Craig Bowlsby - Vancouver
2. Pierre Smioth - Victoria
3. Mike Bevers - Portland
4. Hunter Zuker - Bellevue
5. Ted Meenk - Seattle
6. Suzanne Marx - Portland
7. Marshall Hibnes - Seattle
8. Chris Cushnir - Vancouver

Women's Foil - 12 Entries

1. Suzanne Marx - Portland
2. Claudette deBruin - Portland
3. Linda Thompson - Vancouver
4. Contance Radke - Seattle
5. Eugenie Mansfield - Seattle
6. Diana Noe - Seattle
7. Anna Telles - Seattle
8. Maria Duthie - Spokane

Mixed Epee - 36 Entries

1. David Bakoney - Vancouver
2. Mike Jones - Seattle
3. John Varney - Seattle
4. Patrick Muir - Seattle
5. Marshall Hibnes - Seattle
6. Keith Dockery - Portland
7. Peter Bakoney - Vancouver
8. Neal Adolf - Portland

Women's Epee - 10 Entries

1. Anne Klinger - Astoria
2. Eugenie Mansfield - Seattle
3. Stephanie Garrett - Vancouver
4. CJ Beegle - Seattle
5. Tina Hegyes - Vancouver
6. Maria Duthie - Spokane
7. Linda Thompson - Vancouver
8. Carla Corbit - Seattle

Mixed Saber - 14 Entries

1. Zbigniew Petrusinski - Vancouver
2. Pat Tam - Vancouver
3. Tamas Revoczi - Vancouver
4. Clayton Wade - Seattle
5. George Garai - Vancouver
6. Leigh Power - Seattle
7. John Varney - Seattle
8. Tye Minkler - Vancouver

THE MARYLAND STATE GAMES at Frostburg State University July 1990

Men's Foil

1. Don Driskill
2. John Parrott
3. Duane Burchick

Women's Foil

1. Claudia Woods
2. Michelle Burchick
3. LaDonna Burchick



Don Driskill (r.) defeats John Parrott for first place in the Maryland State Games Men's Foil Championships.

Sabre

1. Steve Heck
2. Bob Smith
3. Michael Fox

Epee

1. Jorge Gana
2. Guy Moore
3. Tim Train

NORTH AMERICAN CIRCUIT JUNIOR NO. 2 November, 1990 College of Lake County, Grayslake, Ill.

Under-20 Women's Foil — 51 Entries

1. Olga Chernyak — San Francisco, CA
2. Felicia Zimmerman — Rush, NY
3. Melanie Jones — Cleveland Heights, OH
4. Lisa Honig — Boulder, CO
5. Jennifer Posthumus — San Jose, CA
6. Morgan Hoch — Northbrook, IL
7. Margaret Super — Pennsylvania Furnace, PA
8. Lana Kang — Little Falls, NJ

Under-20 Men's Epee — 50 Entries

1. Tamir Bloom — Millburn, NJ
2. Ben Millett — San Francisco, CA
3. Tad Clinton — Rochester, NY
4. Richard Clark — Fort Myers, FL
5. Jason Kerstein — Waukesha, WI
6. Niels Larsen — Morris Plain, NJ
7. Jawdat Bitar — West Milford, NJ
8. Jonathan Goldstein — Watchung, NJ

Under-20 Women's Epee — 25 Entries

1. Brooke Schneider — Northville, MI
2. Katie Drenker — Boulder, CO
3. Morgan Hoch — Northbrook, IL
4. Tracy Brown — Royal Oak, MN
5. Jennifer Prifrel — St. Paul, MN
6. Kristen Grisham — Boulder, CO
7. Claudette De Bruin — Wilsonville, OR
8. Christine Voreis — Plymouth, IN

1990 MAXWELL GARRETT PENN STATE OPEN State College, PA November 17-18, 1990

Men's Foil — 76 Entries

1. Edward Mufel — Penn State
2. Mark Ellington — Columbia
3. Ted Koehn — Princeton
4. Anthony DuBose — Penn State
5. Stephen Flores — Penn State
6. Jason Kerstein — Wisconsin
7. Raz Boghikan — Univ. of Detroit
8. David Chen — Pennsylvania

Men's Epee — 70 Entries

1. Joe Socolof — William Paterson
2. Chris Hoffman — Princeton
3. Francois Desamours — Air Force
4. David McMahon — Pennsylvania
5. David Brett-Major — Navy
6. Scott Rush — Illinois
7. Richard Clark — Penn State
8. Marc Oshima — Columbia

Men's Sabre — 69 Entries

1. Vitali Nazlimov — Penn State
2. Thomas Strzalkowski — Penn State
3. Stephen Kovacs — Columbia
4. Ali Rezazadeh — Penn State
5. John Maggio — Duke
6. Garreth Sarosi — Princeton
7. David Stollman — Unattached
8. Christ Reuter — Penn State

Women's Foil — 91 Entries

1. Tzu Moy — Columbia
2. Olga Chernyak — Penn State
3. Ute Schaeper — Fairleigh Dickinson
4. Melanie Jones — Fairleigh Dickinson
5. Susie Paxton — Penn State
6. Jennifer Carcich — Penn State
7. Jill Tobia — Columbia
8. Muna Bitar — Temple

CANADIAN HEROS '90 October 6-7, 1990 London, Ontario

Men's Epee — 67 Entries

1. Soucy, M
2. Kocab, Greg
3. Swope, Chris
4. Kirby, Andrew
5. Kalina, J.
6. Clark, Richard
7. Millett, Benjamin
8. Wong, Richard

Men Sabre — 48 Entries

1. Jordanov, Bozislau
2. Nowisielski, Leszek
3. Bardagi, Michael
4. Goering, William
5. Breton, J.M.
6. Jeffrey, Alex
7. Strzalkowski, Thom
8. Franco, Dvorak

Men's Foil — 77 Entries

1. Bernard, Yann
2. Apsimon, Paul
3. Flores, Stephen
4. Zelkowski, John
5. Brouillet, M
6. Shen, Roy
7. Clark, Richard
8. Ritter, Nathan

Women's Sabre — 7 Entries

1. Saworski, Donna
2. Woodby, Sylvia
3. Evans, Jacquie
4. Zernickel, Natascha
5. Baker, Bev
6. Veilleur, Michelle
7. Pritchard, Kathy

Women's Foil — 48 Entries

1. Chernyak, Olga
2. Agnes, Dzik
3. Gryffon, E.
4. Citouward, Ysabelle
5. Saworski, Donna
6. Clinton, Marijory
7. Sikes, Julianna
8. Blanks, Heather

Women's Epee — 55 Entries

1. Bannon, Margaret
2. Chainard, Ysabelle
3. Paquin, Marie-Joese
4. Malek, Anna
5. Crawford, Kim
6. Cornez, Sylvie
7. Pillon, Caroline
8. Frye, Mary

Hungarian Duelling in the Twentieth Century

by Charles Conwell

Saber duels were common in Hungary in the decades preceding World War II. Maestro Lajos Csiszar, the 85-year-old retired fencing coach from the University of Pennsylvania, remembered at least one a week. Csiszar was a protege of Italo Santelli and an assistant coach in Italo's Budapest salle. I had heard one of the master's duelling stories second-hand from my fencing instructor, James Murray, Csiszar's provost. When I visited the annual Csiszar fencing tournament in Philadelphia, I was surprised to find the maestro sitting alone during a lull between bouts. I introduced myself and expressed my interest in Hungarian duelling.

Before I could ask for an interview, he began an enthusiastic 20-minute description of Hungarian duelling. He said he had personally trained men for over 100 duels in Budapest.

Duels were fought over women, politics, and a variety of social offenses. The maestro remembered one duel fought between two members of a party-line telephone. In another duel, the parties involved walked into the salle and began talking to one another, a breach of duelling etiquette. Their seconds asked them to end their conversation as they were about to fight each other. Somehow the duel had been arranged without them realizing exactly who they were going to fight.

Once cards were exchanged, the seconds arranged the terms of the duel. It could be ended at first blood or fought until one of the two doctors present ended the duel because of exhaustion, blood loss, or high blood pressure. The maestro called one duel that included over twenty wounds. Another duel was fought between two extremely cautious elderly gentlemen. One backed the other into a corner but didn't attack. After a long pause the director asked if either gentlemen required a medical examination. Eagerly, they both said, "Yes."

Before each duel began the director warned the duellists that duelling was illegal and asked them if they wanted to proceed. They invariably did. Sometimes a coward would inform the police of the time and place of an impending duel. The police would arrive and send everyone home, much to the coward's relief.

The duels were fought in the salle at nine o'clock after regular fencing hours. Each duellist was accompanied by a second and a doctor. The duellists stripped to the waist and wore bandages on their wrist, armpit, and neck. An unpadded glove was also worn. Their hair was heavily slicked, parted in the middle, and combed directly to either side to deflect or minimize head cuts. The centimeter-wide blades were sharpened along the entire true edge and on the first third of the false edge. The blades were cleaned with alcohol to prevent infection.

The maestro described one duel that was being fought inconclusively with dull sablers. The director of the duel told the maestro to get sharper weapons. He did. Still no blood. The director told the maestro to get the sharpest weapons because he "didn't want to be there all night." He complied and the duel was quickly ended.

According to the maestro, thrusting was forbidden. The maestro remembered only one death. A sabrer inadvertently impaled himself on his opponent's point. The wounded duellist was rushed to the hospital where he died of internal bleeding. The survivor was given a sentence of one year in a minimum security prison.

The maestro trained duellists to concentrate on defense. He taught what he called a "high prime" guard. He demonstrated what I would call a "hanging or yielding fifth." It protected the head, face, and left chest. Cuts to the head and face were favored. The maestro taught his students to cut quickly to the face and return to high guard in one movement. When I asked if any duellist cut to the sword hand or arm to bring a quick and relatively merciful end to the duel, the maestro replied, "We thought it boring to go for the sword hand."

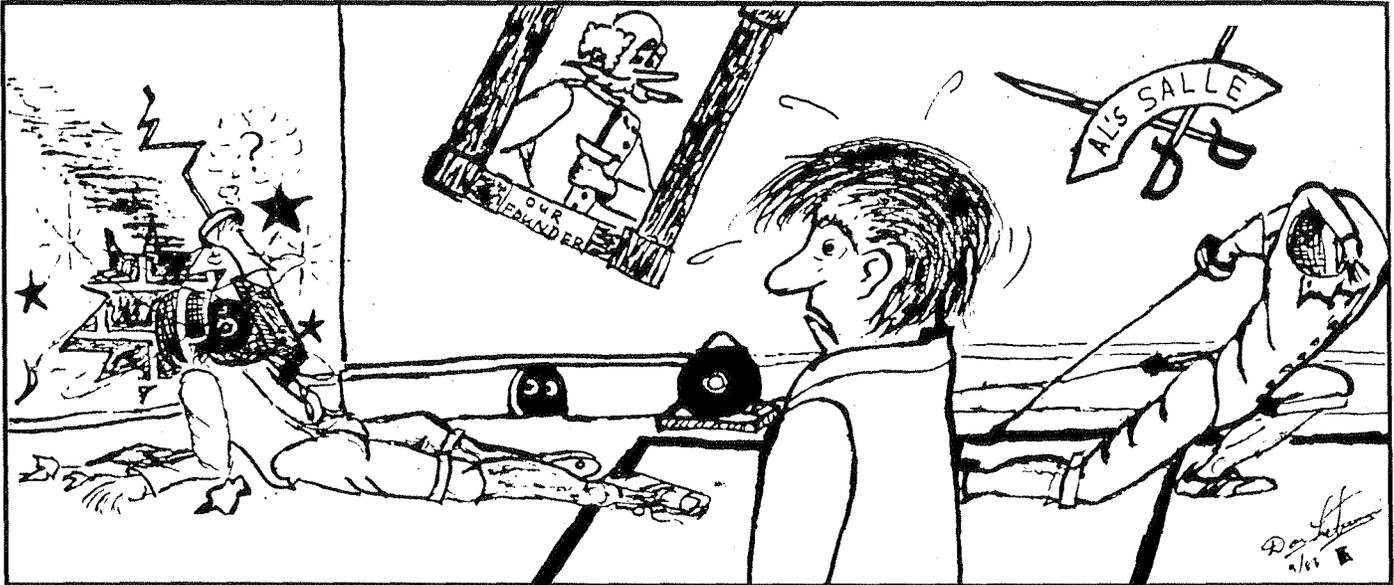
James Murray told me one of the maestro's stories in which an ear was completely cut off in a duel. The doctor was prepared to sew it on but the ear could not be found. The next day the maestro, then a junior member of the staff, was cleaning lockers at one end of the salle. He lifted a mask off the top of one of the lockers and found the shriveled ear inside. The maestro himself remembered another duel in which an ear was almost cut off. The doctor sewed it back on without anesthetic in the salle.

The maestro once trained both adversaries in a duel. Someone had challenged one of maestro's students to a duel and asked the maestro for training. The maestro refused as this was a breach of duelling etiquette. The next time the maestro saw his student, the maestro knew, he replied that his opponent had asked for lessons. The student told the maestro to train his adversary.

The maestro, like most of the best fencers, did not duel. The duel Giorgio Santelli fought to defend his father's honor was an exception. Having a reputation as an expert fencer discouraged challenges. If challenged, the maestro would refuse. "It would have been unfair to take advantage of our skill."

Listening to maestro Csiszar relate his duelling experience was an exciting moment in living history. I am grateful to him for his time and feel privileged to record his experience.

Humor with a Message Dept.:



"You were right, Mr. Jones — that reel does seem to be wound a little tight."

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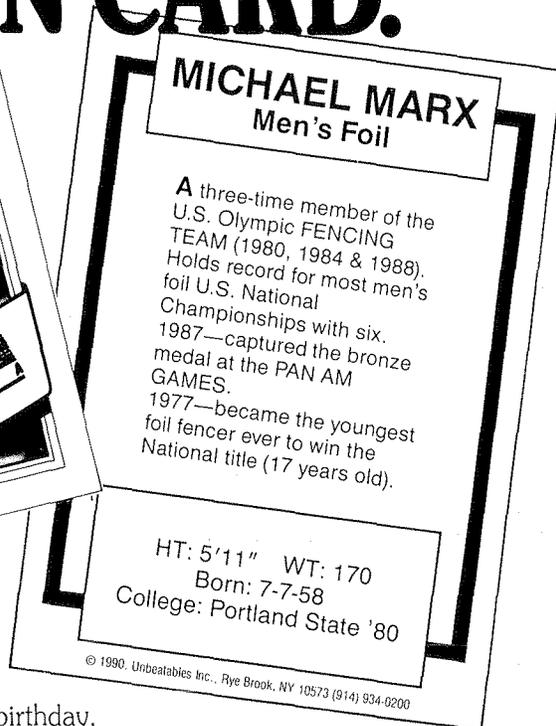
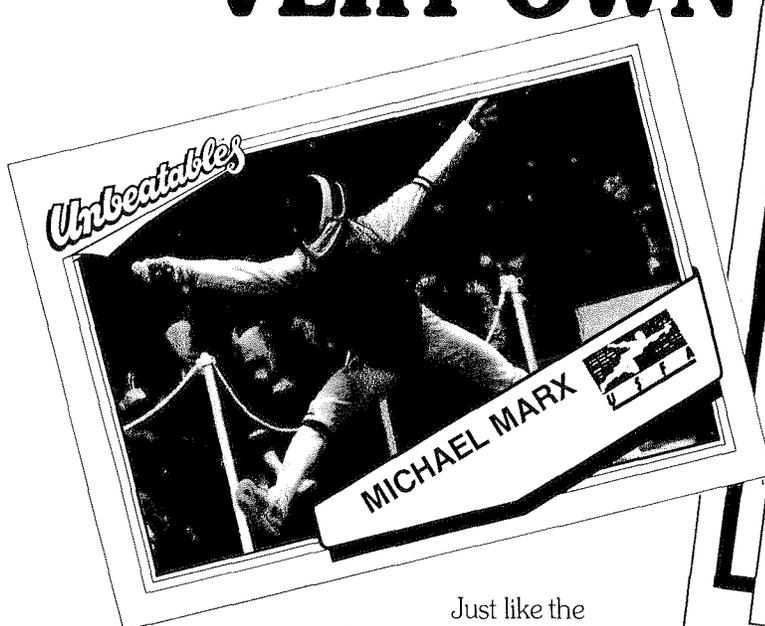
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