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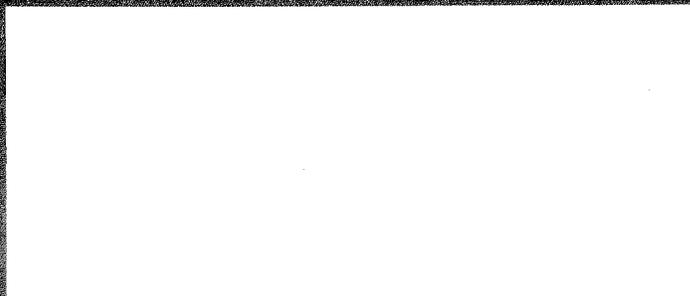
WINTER 2004

U.S. Fencers take on the world

A report from the Senior Worlds In Cuba



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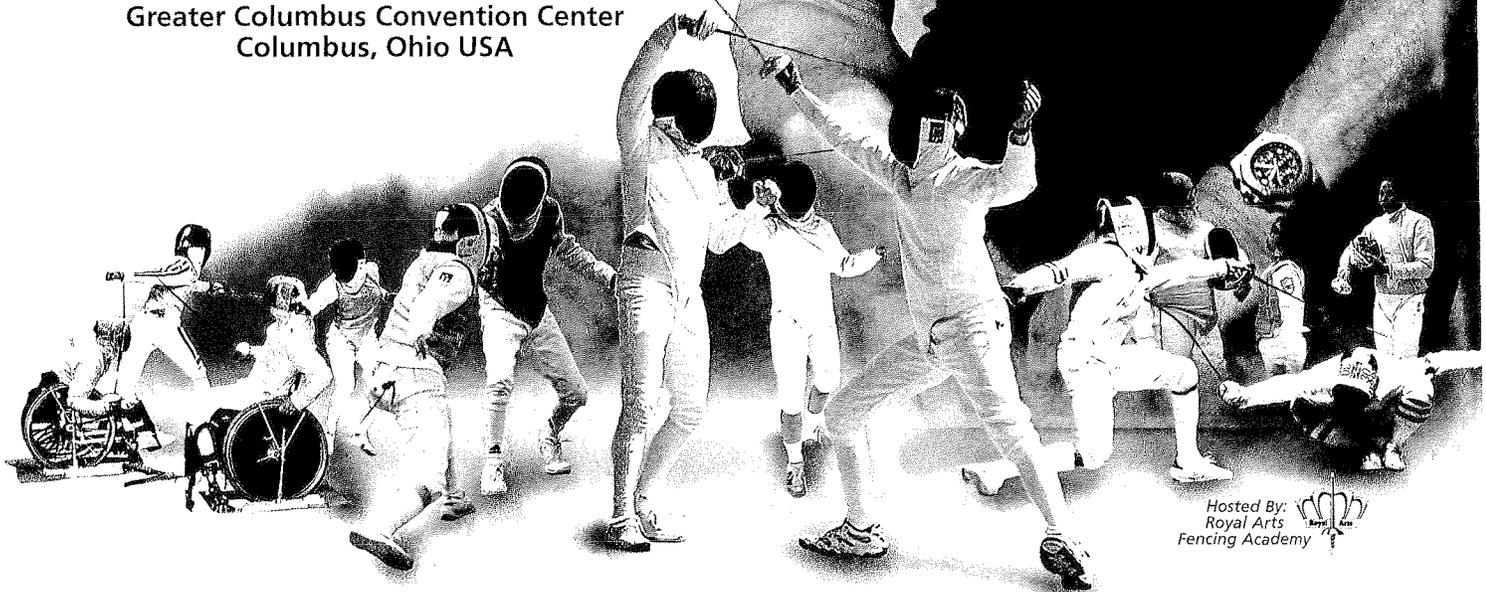


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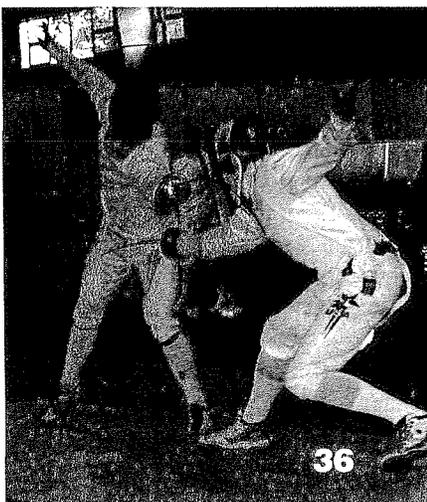
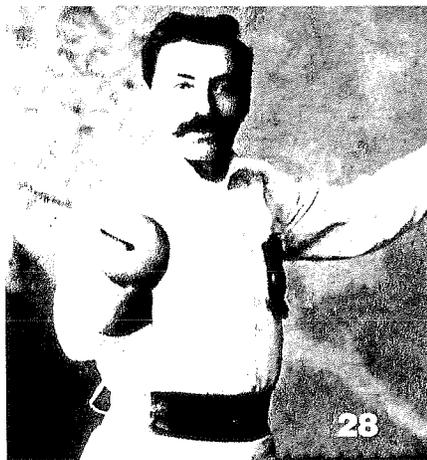
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American FENCING

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On the Cover: The U.S. Fencing Team made its presence known at the Senior Worlds in Cuba. Photo: Serge Timacheff

A Big Year Ahead U.S. FENCING 2004

by Stacey Johnson, President, United States Fencing Association



It is near the end of 2003 and the holidays are approaching as I write this column. Writing at this time of year always makes me reflective and also very grateful for my affiliation with the USFA and the wonderful friends and colleagues it provides.

Speaking of those valued friends and co-workers, I just got off the phone from speaking with **Ralph Zimmerman**, the USFA's international vice president. As you might recall from my last column, Ralph is working on his recovery and had a very specific message that he wanted me to convey. He reports that although he has encountered a few more hurdles in his recovery, he is coming along and plans to be back in the fold again soon. He appreciates deeply the response that he has received from the last column and says he received many cards and letters, which lifted his spirits. "Don't count me out yet," Ralph said. "I am working now to try to make it to the February JO's meeting!" Ralph will officially join the USFA Executive Committee during their next conference call later this month. If this isn't the best kind of holiday news to receive, I don't know what is.

All of us in the USFA work together to support athletes at all levels in our organization. Yesterday, I had a telephone conversation with **Jeff Bukantz**, who has been leading U.S. teams as captain. We were discussing our current situation with some of our athletes. He said, "Our athletes remind me of the great horse racing champion Sea Biscuit. We might not be the biggest horse in the race, but we have the greatest heart." Bukantz went on to explain some recent results. **Kamara James** had a devastating first round elimination at the World Championships and **Mariel Zagunis** lost a very tough team defeat in Cuba. However, they both got up and dusted themselves off and went right out and each won a junior world cup respectively. Bukantz cited another example, in which **Jon Tiomkin** took a second-place finish to teammate **Dan Kellner** at the Pan Am Games; he initially took losing the gold hard. But then Jonathan simply shook that experience off, refocused and just made the finals of a world cup with an eighth-place finish in Vienna — an outstanding result for U.S. men's foil.

"Our athletes epitomize this great grit and determination, like Sea Biscuit. Our rallying cry for Athens is to remember that we have the biggest hearts in the world and that's why we can win," concluded Bukantz. Along with Jeff, I believe the indomitable spirit and great heart that our athletes demonstrate can also serve as inspiration to drive our staff and the

many volunteers to greater and greater achievements within the organization.

On the international scene, I journeyed to Leipzig, Germany for the FIE Congress in November with **Sam Chervis**, **George Kolombatovich**, **Jeff Bukantz** and **Carl Borack**. The U.S. contingent worked very well together as a team on a variety of issues. In this issue of the magazine, Jeff provides more detail about impending rules changes to be tested next season in foil. The U.S. influence is only continuing to gather strength and legitimacy. The U.S. was referred to as one of the "larger and more powerful of countries" by the FIE president from the dais. Adjectives such as these have not been used in the past to describe the United States in the sport of fencing. Along with our good friends and allies in the Pan American Confederation, we must now widen our base of influence and trust, and continue to lead through example and work towards greater inclusivity of all countries and fairness in all aspects of our sport.

The U.S. Olympic Committee provided support for our international initiatives by allocating a \$10,000 grant this year and we have already submitted a 2004 grant proposal that received initial favorable review. We will receive a final word in January on this grant, but the USFA believes we are working well on our international initiatives, which we believe will eventually yield a U.S. candidate for president in another quadrennial.

This spring marks the time when a new USFA administration will be named. It is my hope for the New Year that, after the Olympic Games, our organization will experience a smooth transition for the next volunteer team of officers and that they will continue to move the organization forward.

In closing, please remember our organization: the staff members who work in Colorado Springs, and the many thousands of volunteers who work throughout our country in divisions, sections, nationally and internationally. **Michael Mas-sik**, USFA executive director, told me recently that we already have 14,000 members registered as of early December. This is about 4,000 more than usual for this time of year. What this means is that the goal we set four years ago to reach a membership of 20,000 by the close of 2004 is now becoming a reality. The USFA truly has greater strength than ever before because we have abundant membership growth, we have great heart and fighting spirit, and we have the momentum now to capture our dreams.

— AF

The UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION Member Services Directory

The UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION is the national governing body for the sport of fencing in the United States. The USFA is affiliated with the Federation Internationale d'Escrime, the international federation for fencing. The mission of the United States Fencing Association is to develop fencers to achieve international success and to administer and promote the sport in the United States.

The United States Fencing Association

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From the Executive Editor ... Changes At AMERICAN FENCING

Dear Readers:

This year marks my fourth as editor of AMERICAN FENCING. It's been a labor of love, but it's also been countless hours trying to improve my Photoshop chops and not enough time spent developing new ideas for appealing editorial. So what's an editor to do? Ask for help, that's what.

I'm happy to announce some changes around the AMERICAN FENCING editorial halls. First, welcome **Cindy Bent Findlay** as the new and improved editor. Cindy comes to the magazine with a wealth of fencing and journalism experience—a perfect “one, two” combination. Cindy's fencing career landed her in the Top 10 of women's foil in recent years, so she knows, first-hand, the trials and tribulations of competitive fencing. Her other contributions include serving as the USFA's media contact, refereeing at USFA competitions, and assisting me with copy editing and writing for the past two years. Outside of the USFA, Cindy is a freelance journalist and a foodie, reviewing restaurants for a local weekly.

Most important, though, is Cindy's understanding of the breadth of the USFA membership and her concern that all voices find a home in these pages. The USFA isn't just comprised of competitive fencers. You'll find coaches, parents, referees, recreational fencers, volunteers who don't fence but love the sport, and veterans throughout the membership. In this issue, we begin to expand our editorial to include these voices. You'll notice a new column for parents, for example, and another for clubs. And for those who do compete, we're introducing a Q&A column written by competitive fencers, accompanied by training tips from their coaches. Cindy welcomes your feature story ideas, as well as column suggestions.

As editor, Cindy's job is to direct the nuts and bolts of the magazine — assigning a good balance of feature stories, fact-checking and copyediting stories and columns as they come in, coordinating the page count and production schedule, ensuring that the magazine gets to the printer on time, and proofing the final layout. As “executive editor,” my job will be to oversee this process.

You'll also notice a crisp look to the magazine, thanks to **Michael Jacobsen** of The Sherry Group, Parsippany, N.J. Mike is our go-to guy for design and you'll see his expertise in better graphics, improved photo editing, and a cohesive presentation. Mike even comes with his own fencing background, having already shepherded one son through high school fencing and now having the pleasure of watching his younger son (varsity captain as a senior) and daughter fence for that same high school team in New Jersey.

Finally, a word about our writers and photographers. I have developed a great fondness for each of our columnists, our feature writers and our resident Peter Parkers. This group never ceases to amaze me with their generosity, sense of humor, and commitment. Issue after issue, they write their hearts out, send dozens (or in the case of the prolific Serge Timacheff, hundreds) of images, and trust us to do the right thing with their work. All without complaining. All for free. How, I wonder, does Jeff Bukantz find the time to write a five-page report, plus a column, and lead the U.S. team to events across the globe? In your own travels throughout the USFA's events, I hope you'll introduce yourself to our contributors and thank them for their work.

Here's to a new year. It's gonna be great.

— Meg Gallpault, Executive Editor

What are we teaching?

I have always wished to learn the art of fencing. Even though many of the cavalry regiments that I served with in the British Army had fencing teams, I never really had the opportunity to learn until eight months ago. I must say that for the most part it has been a very pleasurable experience. I looked forward to my first competition in September with anticipation. I didn't win much, but I learned a great deal. I also experienced something that I never thought to see first hand — bad sportsmanship.

I thought that this was something that I would only see on television with professional sportsmen. I thought that fencing at the club level would not be subject to this ugly display. I thought that it was just

my middle-aged British sensibilities that were making more out of this than was actually happening, but having been to several competitions now, and watching others' reaction to the fencers in question, I am afraid to say that it isn't just me. The sad thing is that the fencers who display this are very young and seem to be encouraged by their coaches/fathers. There also does not appear to be anyone willing to put a stop to it.

I may concede that in the heat of a bout, shouting at the director for a point is understandable now and again. Not, however, at almost every point. Turning to appeal to their coach at every lost point. Crying and temper tantrums at every lost bout. Questioning decisions, and the

coach doing so as well, and I will not start on the bad manners. This is club fencing, not life and death. War is life and death, and believe me, I know the difference.

This all leads to: what is it that we are teaching these kids? Is winning all that matters, and to hell with the spirit of the sport? Is anyone willing to step in and say, “Enough?” Who is responsible at the division level for policing this sort of thing? It is clear that someone needs to talk to both the fencers and their coaches/fathers. It just remains to decide who. It will be a shame if this is allowed to continue. It ruins the sport for the rest of us. They are very good fencers, but very bad sportsmen.

— Matt Mather, Flint, Mich.

Rule Changes Being Tested For Saber and Foil This Season

On November 23rd, the FIE Congress in Leipzig, Germany voted to accept some of the proposals on the table for changing the rules in foil and saber.

It must be noted that these changes will only be tested at the Junior World Cups in the 2004-2005 season, and can't go into effect until after the Congress meets again in 2005.

In other words, this is only a test but it will affect the Junior fencers starting next season. Furthermore, until the official FIE text comes out, nothing can be construed as official. Here are the key points:

1. The off-target light in foil will remain as is.
2. The blockage time in foil will be 300 milliseconds.
3. The blockage time in saber will be 120 milliseconds.
4. The duration of the contact time in foil will be 14-16 milliseconds.
5. The bend in the foil will be limited to one centimeter.
6. The pressure of the foil point will go to 750 grams.
7. The fleche in foil will remain.
8. Inversion of the line of the shoulders in foil will no longer be considered as a distinct offense, as covering target will suffice.
9. The electric saber mask will not be utilized in foil.
10. The bib will not become valid target in foil.

Again, nothing is official until the FIE text comes out. The HPC, FOC, EC and Board will deal with everything at that time.

The Congress was attended by USFA President **Stacey Johnson**, FIE Executive Committee member **Samuel Cheris**, FIE Arbitrage Commission

member **George Kolombatovich**, FIE Publicity and Promotion Commission member **Carl Borack**, and FIE Rules Commission member **Jeff Bukantz**.

In my opinion, these changes will not ruin the sanctity of foil, while the tinkering with the point will potentially only serve to deter some of the flicking, which is the goal of the Ad-Hoc Commission. — *Jeff Bukantz*

Westbrook Foundation Receives Donation

Proprintwear, the official merchandiser of the USFA, has donated more than \$2,500 in T-shirts, stickers and iron-on patches to the Peter Westbrook Foundation, a New York, N.Y. nonprofit organized by six-time Olympian Peter Westbrook to mentor inner-city kids through the sport of fencing.

Proprintwear President Phil Daly said the company selected the foundation to receive the merchandise because of their nonprofit status and their sportsmanship during the course of intense competition.

"I have always been truly impressed by the way these athletes hold themselves as young men and women and wanted to recognize them for this," says Daly.

Westbrook Foundation founder Peter Westbrook, foundation coach Herb Raynaud, and Proprintwear's Phil Daly.



A special note from the editors ...

On the day that AMERICAN FENCING was going to press with this issue, we received the sad news that **Irwin Bernstein**, former USFA president, USFA executive and budget committee member and member of the U.S. Fencing Foundation board of trustees, passed away very suddenly. Irwin contributed an article for this issue of AMERICAN FENCING on page 25, advocating support of the foundation. Our sincerest condolences go out to his family.

AMERICAN FENCING welcomes letters from readers. Please send your letter to: Attn: American Fencing Editor; United States Fencing Association; One Olympic Plaza; Colorado Springs CO 80909 or email to magoocolumbus.rr.com. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and/or space. Letters must be signed (except those emailed, of course) and include a phone number and address.

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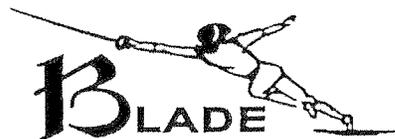
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He'll be back ... and he'll be fencing

Think you're a tough guy on the strip? Now picture facing the Terminator with a saber in his hand.

You may have your chance in Columbus, Ohio this spring. The Arnold Fitness Weekend, a huge national fitness expo held March 5-7 and hosted by California's muscular governor, will feature fencing for the first time this year.

The three-day fitness and sports event will welcome more than 11,000 athletes in 16 different events, including martial arts, men's and women's bodybuilding, fitness competitions, strong man competitions, cheerleading, gymnastics, and a 5K Pump & Run. The weekend welcomes 80,000 fitness enthusiasts and displays 600 exhibit booths.

"We are extremely gratified to intro-

duce the Olympic sport of fencing to the Arnold Fitness Weekend in 2004," said Jim Lorimer, the weekend's producer and a partner of Schwarzenegger for more than 28 years. "The Arnold Fitness Weekend will showcase six Olympic sports in 2004, including fencing, tae kwon do, judo, running, Olympic lifting and gymnastics."

The inaugural Arnold Fencing Classic will involve Olympic-level and amateur fencers from across the United States. The competition will include unique team matches following the Titan Games relay-format in youth and adult categories. Fencers from all around the country, possibly including Olympic veterans, are expected to attend.

Julia Richey, a 13-year member of the Russian fencing team now coach-

ing in Columbus, and Donald Anthony, current USFA secretary, were both instrumental in introducing fencing to the AFW. Richey says she's still welcoming entries for the competition.

For registration and sponsorship information visit www.royalarts.org/register.html. For information regarding the Arnold Fitness Weekend visit any of the weekend's web sites, including www.arnoldfitnessweekend.com and www.arnoldclassic.com.



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Culver Academies is committed to the development of an Olympic training program that will feed the nation's top youth, cadet, and junior fencers into our top fencing universities, like Notre Dame and Ohio State. It is time for America to lead the world in fencing, and Culver Academies is assembling the nation's most talented young fencers in one location.

For details, please call Head Coach Igor Stefani at 574-842-7054 or 574-842-3275. His email address is stefani@culver.org.

On Guard SERVICES CLASH

Military Fencing Championship held in San Diego • by Josh **RUNYAN**

On November 16, 2003, military fencers from across the country came to San Diego's Naval Air Station on North Island for the Sixth Annual Military Fencing Championship. Amidst the backdrop of the San Diego Bay and the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, a spirited competition was held.

The tournament was an individual competition to determine this season's champions and to give military fencers a chance to see how they stack up against other service personnel. It was open to active duty, reserve and retired military. The format was mixed pools of men and women. The pool results were seeded into separate direct elimination tables. The results of this competition are used in combination with USFA ratings to determine rankings of the military's top active fencers for the United States.

Despite Navy having been the host, the event was largely fought out between Army and Air Force, since the largest contingent came from the teams of Air Force Academy and West Point, both of which have robust collegiate fencing programs. Annapolis (the Naval Academy), which has a growing club team, was unfortunately unable to make the trip. Added to the mix from the academies were active duty and reserve fencers.

Though this was an individual tournament, each branch took pride and heartily cheered their members. As the competition played out, Air Force and Army clearly held the most territory. The Air Force, thanks to its strong Academy fencers, took the high ground in men's and women's epee, led by **Timothy French** and **Apphia Taylor**. They won all but two of the medals that went to the top three

places. Army, however, dominated the foil battlefield. West Point fencers **Emily Hannenburg** and **Charlie Shin** took the gold. Then with strong reinforcements from Army ROTC and Army National Guard, Army earned all but one of the remaining foil medals. In saber, the results were not as decisive. Women's saber saw Army's **Michelle Weinbaum** prevail over a strong team of Air Force fencers, who took the remaining places. In men's saber, Navy won their only medal as **Josh Runyan** (your humble scribe) won a narrow 15-14 victory over Air Force's silver medalist, **Sam Bartron**. The Marines, with just "the few" in attendance, made a good showing, taking third place in men's saber and men's epee.

The U.S. military championship was started by the Air Force Academy's coach **Abdel Salem** and hosted by them in Colorado Springs for the first three years. Last season West Point hosted the event. This season the Navy brought the event to the West Coast, thanks to great support from the San Diego Division of the USFA.

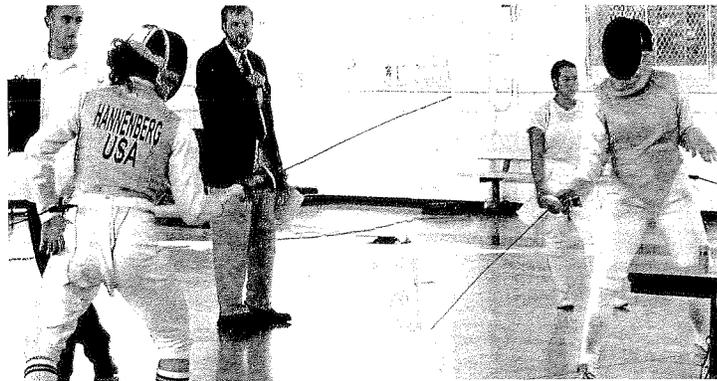
Fencing and the military can complement each other nicely. This year's championship was a great opportunity for testing skills of those blending the two endeavors. It was a success, but there are tough challenges for many these days due to our current war tempo of operations. Any encouragement given the military fencer who stops by your club is always appreciated. For information: <http://members.cox.net/baileycp/> — AF

Submitted by Josh Runyan, CDR USNR,
jrunyan1@san.rr.com

Smith v Jones: Kiel Smith (Marines) battles Gary Jones (Army)



Women's foil: Emily Hannenburg (Army) vs. Christy Stewart (Army) championship bout.



Health Q&A:

WHAT TO EAT, AND WHENHow to stay strong during competition • by Peter **HARMER, Ph.D, ATC**

Q *What should you eat and drink during a competition to maintain endurance and strength? Oftentimes, it is difficult to refuel during a tournament and even harder to know what is good versus what is bad.*

A There are several general guidelines that may be helpful in finding the best approach to eating and drinking during fencing competitions. However, because there are significant individual differences in how people react during exercise, whichever approach you choose you need to test during training so there are no surprises during competition.

The most important nutritional consideration in fencing is fluid replacement. This can range from plain water through commercial sports drinks. Although plain water can be perfectly adequate in most circumstances, if it is particularly hot and humid and/or the fencer is competing for an extended period and sweating profusely, a sports drink with good electrolyte and carbohydrate composition is recommended.

This is a slight switch on previous thinking, as recently there have been more reported cases of athletes rehydrating with plain water suffering from hyponatremia, a lower-than-normal concentration of sodium in the blood that can result in fatigue, confusion and nausea.

The other advantage of a sports drink is that it can supply the carbohydrates necessary to support the high intensity, short duration activity typical in fencing. It is recommended that the drink have 5-7 percent simple carbohydrate by volume to enhance quick uptake from the gastrointestinal tract. You should start drinking no earlier than 30-45 minutes

before beginning activity but can drink as necessary during the day. As mentioned previously, it is important to test drinks for taste, etc., before you are at an important competition.

Food presents a bigger challenge. Generally, the food that you eat during the day is not important for maintaining endurance and strength, but it can adversely affect performance. Foods that have high fat and/or protein content take several hours to digest and blood flow to the gut for digestion means less to the muscles for activity.

Fruit, bagels or crackers, sports bars, and light snacks can be used to alleviate feelings of hunger without adversely affecting performance. In addition, portion size and timing are also important: that is, do not eat too much and not just before heading into the tableau.

For further information on eating and competing, go to the Gatorade Sports Science Institute (GSSI) website (www.gssiweb.com) and type in "sports foods." Follow the link to the international roundtable on sports foods for athletes.

Q *I heard that there's a new kind of infection that fencers can get that is very serious. Is this true and what should I do to make sure it doesn't happen?*

A A number of members of the USFA have expressed concern about the risk of infection from methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) following an Associated Press report in the fall detailing outbreaks in athletes in a variety of sports, including fencing. Although MRSA can cause significant health problems in infected individuals, the risk in fencing is exceedingly low

because, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), MRSA is almost always spread by direct physical contact — so it's much more likely in wrestlers or football players. However, it is possible to spread MRSA by touching objects contaminated by the infected skin of a person with MRSA. The investigation of the fencing cluster identified body cords as a possible mechanism of transmission, but this was not proven. The source of the MRSA in the fencing group (not all of those involved were fencers) and how it moved from person to person are still unknown.

Despite the fact that MRSA infection is a highly unlikely problem for fencers, it is possible. A few simple precautions can lower this very small risk even further:

- Practice good personal hygiene (wash hands thoroughly with soap and water, particularly after blowing your nose).
- Keep any cuts or abrasions clean and covered.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or material contaminated from wounds.
- Keep your clothing and equipment clean.
- Finally, consult your physician if you have any concerns about skin lesions.

For more information about MRSA: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/Aresist/mrsafaq.htm

Professor Peter Harmer is a member of the FIE Medical Commission and associate chair of the USFA Sports Medicine & Science Committee. Email questions and comments to: pharmer@willamette.edu.

Capturing the magic

MIND GAMES

A look at the sport's mental side • by JohnHEIL & JasonMALCY

*The will to win pales in contrast to the will to prepare to win.**

The roots of competitive success are sunk deep in the “blood, sweat and tears” of training. To excel, the fencer needs the complete package – a foundation of strength and conditioning, a repertoire of technical skills, tactical knowledge to guide the use of these skills, and the will to push through adversity. All this is built through days and days and days of training. A rule of thumb for the development of elite level expertise is “10 years or 10,000 hours.” Not surprisingly, this applies to science and the arts, as well as to sport.

Great touches on the strip capture our fascination, often giving rise to the question, “What was the magic that led to that moment?” More often than not, it is simply having trained for that moment, having thought through the possibilities, and having prepared systematically for them.

All recognize the importance of the mental game, though much of its allure rests in its mystery. The way to create magic on the strip comes from seeing through the mystery of competition and turning it into a plan for action. This is the role of sport psychology. Mental training is about preparing for the situations the athlete encounters in competition.

There are five cardinal skills of mental training: intensity control (relaxation-activation), concentration (focusing-refocusing), self-talk (“left brain” logical thinking), imagery (“right brain” action thinking), and performance routines (a competition plan). The performance routine combines intensity control, concentration, imagery and self-talk, and applies these to the specific

goals and challenges of competition. It typically takes the form of a mental training script — that is, a step-by-step plan that is meant to be rehearsed in the imagination. It is like a daydream, where you focus on the goals of your dreams.

Through a series of seminars, the national Men's Epee squad has developed a Mental Training Protocol that is available to the general membership at www.usfencing.org.

While this includes a variety of materials, the mental training script is the centerpiece. This script creates a “theatre of the mind” where events from the competition can be rehearsed. By anticipating events and by practicing these in one's imagination, the fencer prepares psychologically – hence, the term “mental training.”

The script begins by focusing on the mind-set that is instrumental for success, which is here conveyed by the key words: positive, focused and relaxed. Following a brief introduction that emphasizes relaxation, the “mental stage” for competition is set by identifying the sights and sounds and feel of competition. Then the fencer is guided through a series of scenarios that recreate the challenges that are typically encountered on competition day. There are eight scenarios in all – three related to preparation for competition, and five situations that may arise as competition unfolds. For each challenge, a response is identified, and this response is rehearsed.

Note the following excerpt from the preparation phase of the training script that focuses on that critical moment before the first bout:

Now your mind's eye opens. Imag-

ine you are on the strip as the first bout is ready to begin. You are thinking only about fencing. You feel intense but not tense. When you say “ready,” you are ready. Your breathing is slow, deep, and regular ... slow, deep, and regular. You are positive, focused and relaxed.

The moments before competition can be difficult ones, prone to anxiety or self-doubt. Being prepared with a positive self-statement can go a long way to creating the right mindset.

Consider also the simple readiness plan for fencing a critical touch:

Now your mind's eye opens. You are at a critical point. You pause for a moment and consider your next action. Once you decide, you resolve to “prepare and go.” You are ready to act decisively. When you say “ready,” you are positive, focused and relaxed.

Please keep in mind that this script is a “sampler” designed to illustrate how mental training methods can be applied. Revising the script to suit a particular fencer allows for a more specific and personalized plan, and hence boosts its effectiveness.

Remember that these excerpts are like pieces in a puzzle. To get the full picture they need to be experienced in the context of the overall method.

For all the complexity and challenge of fencing, the key ingredients are self-control and self-confidence. No matter what happens, preparing to win begins with being in command of your own thoughts and feelings. This is the goal of mental training.

** Would anyone care to venture a guess as to who the source is of the opening quote in this column? — AF*

If you can't counter beat 'em **THEN JOIN 'EM**

You can't beat the beat • by Jeff **BUKANTZ**



Two issues ago, I wrote about “sucker actions.” These are actions, such as the out-of-time remise and the quick but out-of-time counterattack, that often bamboozle many referees.

In this column, however, the shoe is on the other foot, as it is the fencers who are bamboozled. We’re going to delve into one of the most controversial and misunderstood actions, and the one that drives many fencers, coaches, and yes, even parents, into an incredulous frenzy. But, in contrast to the “sucker actions,” in this instance most of the referees are getting the call right.

I’m talking about the oft-attempted and rarely given (by the referees) “counter beat,” primarily in foil. This is where both fencers appear to beat the blade at the same time, as opposed to an action where there are two separate and distinct beats.

Within a three-week period, I witnessed a combination of anger and befuddlement on the behalf of fencers of all ages at both the World Championships and the New York Regional Youth Event when they did not get the call when employing a counter beat.

On the surface, utilizing this action seems to make a sense. Your opponent presents the blade, attempts to beat your blade, and is commencing an attack. The natural response is to beat the blade and either pre-empt the opponent’s beat attack or to react with what you think is a parry, and then riposte.

The concept is sound, as you are trying to beat the opponent’s blade in order to gain the right-of-way. However, the reality is that a counter beat is akin to a counterattack, as it does not earn the right-of-way.

The word “counter” means “against or in opposition to.” A counterattack is an attack against an already commenced attack. A counter beat is a beat against an already commenced beat. Therefore, according to both the dictionary’s definition and the USFA/FIE Rulebook, the already commenced beat earns the right-of-way.

There is no doubt that the beat-counter beat scenario often falls into the gray zone for various reasons: No two referees see every action the same way; no two actions are executed in the same way; sometimes the forward-moving aggressor does not necessarily commence the beat first; sometimes the retreating fencer does beat the blade first; sometimes these actions appear to be simultaneous; sometimes the counter beat appears to be more forceful.

Whatever the case, you need to accept that in order to increase your odds of getting the call, you must illustrate to the referee one of the following:

- 1) That you actually started to beat before your opponent did, or
- 2) That you replied to the beat with a separate second beat, which is technically a parry.

Until you come on board to that reasoning, you will continue to ‘beat’ your head against the wall. You can holler, yell, scream, cajole, jump up and down, make angry faces, and scratch your head until the cows come home. The fact remains that the referees are taught to call the action in favor of the original beat. This is clarified repeatedly at both USFA and FIE refereeing seminars.

While I have tried to explain the rights and wrongs about this action, there is no denying that it is often a very difficult action to call. And, yes, it is not always called correctly. You have to deal with that reality, and not be so stubborn as to keep trying a counter beat when it is clear that a referee is not giving it to you.

Let me give you an example of a world-class fencer who didn’t get it.

A few years ago, I was officiating at a women’s foil world cup in Europe. The bout to reach the final eight was between the favored Boiko of Russia and the aggressive Wulleme of France. Boiko had a beautiful defense, and relied on beating or parrying while retreating. Wulleme was the aggressor from start to finish, and commenced every single action with a crystal clear beat. Unfortunately for Boiko, she couldn’t comprehend why I wouldn’t give her counter beats as parries. In order to prove me wrong, she did the same action nine or ten times. She lost 15-6.

Unfortunately for me, the Russ-

ian captain, Ivanov, to this day holds me accountable for Boiko's loss. But instead of telling his fencer to change her tactics, his tactic was to stomp around the gym making hand gestures about the size of my nose.

The message is clear: You might as well change the action, because you can't change the size of the referee's nose! (Nor can you change the ref's calls, so why expend negative energy getting the ref's nose out of joint?)

On the other hand, let me be candid about how this action can be incredibly tough to call correctly.

At the 1996 Olympic Games, I officiated the bout in the round of four of men's foil between eventual champion Puccini of Italy and Boidin of France. Sure enough, there was a classic beat-counter beat action. I called it and nobody in the audience

booed and the touched fencer didn't say boo.

So, I must've gotten that one right. Whew.

A few months later, Marcos Lucchetti sent me a videotape from the television feed that he had procured of the match, and I watched it closely to see how I did. I watched it in regular speed, slow motion, and super slow-motion. And I watched it over and over again.

Sure enough, I came to the aforementioned beat-counter beat action. And, I was stunned. It was clearly an ultra-fine borderline call. At regular speed, it appeared as if my call was correct. In slow-motion, I might have given it the other way! By the time I got to super slow-motion, I wasn't sure which way the call should have gone!

The point I'm trying to make is that since this is often a very diffi-

cult action to call, no matter the level of the referee or the fencers, it is generally a very risky action to attempt.

However, hopefully you now understand why you don't usually get the counter beat, why you generally shouldn't get the counter beat, and why many referees call it the way they do.

Since we were kids, Americans were taught the old adage that in baseball, the "tie goes to the runner."

So, keep in mind that whether you are 12-year-old youth fencer or an elite senior fencer, in our sport, the "tie goes to the original beat, not the counter beat."

Jeff Bukantz is the chair of the FOC and its rules subcommittee, and is a member of the FIE Rules Commission. Email your comments to bukieboy@aol.com.

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Down on the Bayou

LOVE OF THE SPORT

The Bayou City Fencing Academy Aims High • by LouiseLEPIE

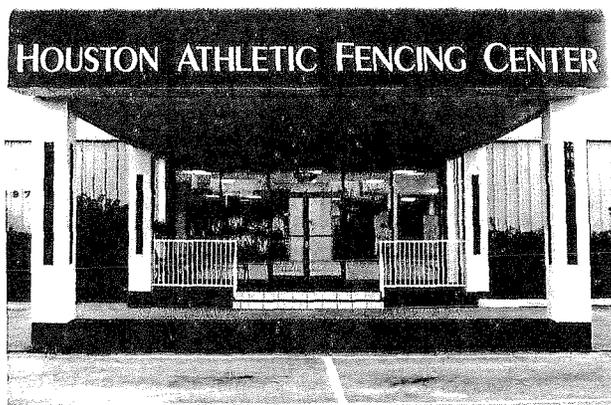
I'm often asked why a non-fencer such as myself is so passionate about fencing. It could be because two of my three sons became fencers and one still fences. But the short answer is, for whatever reason, I love the sport. This love of the sport is why I put in the time, effort and expense of totally renovating a facility in southwest Houston into the Bayou City Fencing Academy's home.

The path that led to the establishment of the Houston Athletic Fencing Center (HAFC) was an arduous one. For years, the Bayou City Fencing Academy (BCFA) moved from location to location, renting recreation centers and gymnasiums, losing members with each move. After many years of having to move for the basketball season and seeing students come and go, we came to the realization that we needed our own home.

We evaluated whether to purchase our own building or to sign a long-term lease on a facility. As a business owner many times over, my experience told me that it was better to put our funds into a building and own it rather than throw money away on rent. So we began the search for a property.

The BCFA ended up finding a home in a building that we had previously rented, a former racquet club. It was sorely dilapidated, having been neglected over the years, and the price tag wasn't cheap, but it held almost unlimited promise.

The building was purchased in December of 2001 and remade from top to bottom: walls knocked out, new wiring, new floors, new lighting, new cabinetry, new plumbing, and a new entrance. It was neither inexpensive nor easy as I acted as my own general contractor, hiring and supervising the crews, buying all the construction materials and often doing some of the labor.



The result is a 22,000-square-foot facility dedicated to the sport of fencing. The east wing, about 7,800 square feet, houses 12 permanent regulation-size fencing strips and two practice strips. In the west wing, more than 8,000 square feet, is room for another nine strips. All 21 strips are set up on the first Friday of every month when members of every local fencing club are invited to a night of open fencing. On those nights, fencers can compete against others of all skill levels. No fee is charged, and equipment is available on loan.

Between the two wings lies the renovated lobby, and a fully stocked fencing equipment store. The store sells everything a fencer might need: masks, jackets, knickers, shoes, lames, foils, epees, sabers, T-shirts and teddy bears. There is also a lounge area with a large-screen TV for viewing videos of practices and tournaments, and a laundry room where club uniforms are always being cleaned. There is a large office known as the "schmoozing place" where parents congregate to talk about upcoming events and interesting news in the fencing world, such as the recent silver medal in women's epee won by our fencer **Brita Goldie** at the World Cup in Louisville, Kentucky. There is a Wall of Fame for all of our fencers who have won medals at various tournaments. In the west wing there is an armory manned by our full-time certified armorer **Terry Unrein**.

The Center is closed most of the day while coaches teach at various school programs, but by 6 p.m. it takes on a life of its own. The first glimmer of excitement begins as fencers start flooding the building in early evening. Classes are offered at all levels for both recreational and competitive fencers, ages 6 on up through adults in all three weapons.

It is simply a necessity to have good coaches – but that's not always easy. I believe that we as an association should do more to help clubs find

MARKETING TIPS FOR NEW CLUBS

- **Hold competitions in public places.** Often, shopping malls will let your group hold tournaments in their public spaces for free! Make sure that there is plenty of information on your club for passers-by to take with them.
- **Yellow Pages are a must, as are signage and web pages.** Make sure that you have a business telephone line – that will also give you your Yellow Pages listing. Do not skimp on your web page, make sure your page's code contains appropriate "metatags" or keywords, for instance, so that families searching on the web for fencing clubs can find it; one good guide for beginners: <http://www.virtualyignorant.com>.
- **Always report competition results to your local papers.** Many a story has been sparked when sports page staffers come across results and ask, "There's fencing in this town?"
- **Camps, camps, camps: plan lots!** Busy parents are always on the lookout for somewhere to send their kids during summer days when they're at work. Camps are great revenue-builders and even better recruiting tools.

coaches, that we should set up a database for clubs seeking coaches and coaches from around the world who are seeking clubs.

The quality of Bayou City's coaches equals the excellence of the huge airy facility. There are two foil coaches, **Kamilla Skladanowska**, a four-time Olympian from Poland, and head coach **Delfina Perka**, her Olympic teammate. The two epee coaches are **Brad Goldie** of Canada, coach to his daughter, our silver junior world medalist, and **Witold Rutkowski** of Poland. Our saber coach **Thomas Stusinski** is also an Olympian from Poland who participated in the Sydney Olympics. We are also looking for additional coaches to augment our teaching staff.

Looking in at the Academy's store (below), at a practice session in the club's East Wing (center) and a beginner's tournament held at the club (top right photo).



People often ask if interest in fencing has peaked or if it continues to grow. In Houston, the fourth largest city in the nation, the Center is not only a dream come true, but a realization that many future fencers are just waiting to discover the sport. "Build it and they will come" seems to be working. The number of fencers attending our classes is definitely increasing. When we host tournaments, people just walk in off the street to see what's going on in the building. Spreading the word about what this sport is about has been one of our primary missions. We must be reaching people, as we have been getting less calls to build fences.

Self-sufficiency is absolutely a goal for this club, as any, and, we think that is an attainable goal. Tournaments are a major source of income, along with classes. We also hold summer and winter camps that are a great way to



tide the club over between school semesters.

We have been trying to share our good fortune of having such a facility by offering use of our facility to other clubs to host their own tournaments at little to no cost. We have offered to host the collegiate championships for our area. We have also put together plans for "Battle on the Bayou" this coming February, a super-tournament involving many of the area's fencing clubs. This event is to serve as a benefit for the smaller clubs that do not always have the means for fund raising to purchase equipment.

While opening such a center involved a huge risk, it has brought a lot of excitement to fencing in this area in a very short time. This has been a calling. The Center is indeed the product of the "love of the sport."

If you are interested in learning more about the Bayou City Fencing Academy, you may contact Louise Lepie at deycohen@aol.com. — AF

Louise Lepie is the executive director of the Bayou City Fencing Academy and owner of the Houston Athletic Fencing Center.

This issue marks the first appearance of AMERICAN FENCING's Club Corner. Every issue, we will profile a club with an interesting tale to share and provide tips for starting, growing and running fencing clubs. If you have a topic you'd love to see us cover, write to Cindy Bent Findlay at USFencingMedia@earthlink.net.

Supporting your fencer

THE PARENT TRAP

A new column for fencing parents • by Ron DILBERT

What is the proper etiquette for parents of fencers? How should we act at our kid's tournaments?

What is expected of a fencer's parent? How can you help your fencer?

What should we and shouldn't we do for our children when it comes to fencing?

Welcome to the Parent's Corner column of *AMERICAN FENCING*. I will be writing about issues and interests that concern fencing parents. I've been involved with fencing over six years through my son John, a foil fencer.

I've been lucky enough to meet a number of people who have made my fencing experiences so much more enjoyable and fulfilling, so I am eager to give back to the sport. I hope to accomplish this by touching on topics in which parents show an interest. Therefore, I look forward to any feedback or suggestions from any of our fencing families. I look forward to presenting an interesting and informative column.

I've accompanied my son to many tournaments the last several years and have had the opportunity to witness the spectrum of parent behavior. I have been both extremely impressed by some parents and very dismayed by others. I've seen parents reading publications while their child fences, parents running around to help prepare their kids to fence, others yelling at their kids and the referees, as well as parents getting penalty cards for their behavior. What determines how a parent acts and what is the "correct" way to act?

After witnessing this wide range of behaviors, I had to ask myself how and

why each parent is different and as a result what impact this has on the kids. How do we, as parents, know what our kids expect from us? The best way to answer this is to talk with your son or daughter. Remember that each child is different and each child has their own needs. For example, I've found with my son John, that being "there for him" — just supporting him — is what he really wants from me. Additionally, he is comfortable knowing that if he needs his "favorite weapon" fixed or he needs another bottle of water, I am there to help and that allows him to focus on his fencing. Remember, we are primarily there for our kids when and if they need us — not for ourselves, for our egos, nor for us to relive our own childhood and certainly not to embarrass them! We should be at these tournaments because our kids want us there.

The parent that reads the paper or a book can still be there for his or her kids. After talking with some of these parents, I found that reading helps them relax and their kids are secure in knowing that their parents are around if they need them. I, on the other hand, can't sit when my son is fencing, but have a need to pace while I watch him. The bottom line is that as long as we are there for our kids, in whatever aspect that may be, then we are fulfilling our place as parents.

On the other hand, at last summer's Nationals in Austin, Texas, I saw a parent getting carded after several warnings from a very competent, and I must admit, patient referee. The boy's father not only embarrassed himself, but more importantly he embarrassed his son. The

result of the red card was that he cost his son a touch based on an argument of a call that never occurred because the rule had changed and he didn't know it. He argued that his son's opponent should have been carded because he fell on the strip, but the rule had been changed last year. Remember that the referees are human and the fencer does have the ability to question a call by asking the referee to explain how they saw the action. This is a fencer's prerogative, but by no means is it the parent's.

When you're tempted to get involved in what's going on on the strip, please step back and remember why you wanted your child involved with sports in the first place. Fencing is a chance for your kids to learn a little bit about growing up, about how to handle all kinds of situations — fair ones and unfair ones, winning and losing.

Junior competitions are not the Olympic Games, job interviews or college applications, but they can be important rehearsals for such big challenges. Your child will not be mortally wounded if she loses the big bout, but she could gain something great. If you butt in and try to handle everything for your child, they lose a big opportunity to learn, whether it is how to lose gracefully, question authority — or turn a situation to their advantage and win.

Remember, what we do as parents affects both ourselves and our children. We should be considerate of other fencers, referees and parents. It is there that we really set a good example for our kids — not on their fencing strip. — AF

All tangled up

MANNERS DO MATTER

There are ways make tournament life easier • by Joe **BYRNES**

How do you make yourself an object of loathing to the armory staff when you show up to have your equipment inspected at a major event? It's really quite easy, and you don't have to say a word. (Speaking of words, we have had trash-talking weirdos, now and again, and I once witnessed somebody mouthing terroristic threats — but those were admittedly exceptional cases. I am talking here about the garden-variety of loathsomeness.)

Don't Do This

Just nonchalantly dump your body cords onto the table in a tangle. Just toss them down, all neatly, obsessively, anal-retentively wrapped up into the smallest compass you could manage. Better yet, slap down a plastic zip bag with the things all snarled up inside it. Then, stand there gossiping with your friend next in line, who has probably dreamed up another way of slowing things down and irritating the armorer. Present an electrical jacket inside out, or on a hanger. Better yet: inside a zipped-up garment bag. Present a saber jacket with the body cord run up the sleeve and the mask wire clipped onto the collar tab.

Slap down your mask with all sorts of good stuff crammed into it: maybe the electrical jacket and the body cords, and heaven knows what else? (It had better be a big mask.)

Present any piece of equipment that you are (really, to be honest

about it) pretty sure can't pass, but you are just giving it a try, on the off-chance that the inspector may be tired or a bit careless or just in a very forgiving mood.

AVOIDING THE RESENTMENT FACTOR

If you consider the sheer number of competitors who have their gear examined in the limited run-up time to a major event (and how many such major events there are at a big NAC or the Summer Nationals), there is a premium on getting the inspection done efficiently — and fast. Any behavior on the part of the competitor that makes the process drag on longer than necessary is going to create resentment.

The resentment will show in your fellow competitors, of course, but you don't want to make them happy, do you?

MANNERS DO MATTER

It should be a matter of greater concern to you that you might be irritating the person who is going to have to approve your equipment. Although we armorers try to roll with the punches, and often succeed in ignoring a lot of the irritating bad manners, there is no question that such behavior on the part of the fencer standing at the inspection table (and even more, the underlying attitude that evidently creates that behavior) does nothing to smooth the way for the fencer concerned.

It does come down to this: bad

manners. Fencing is supposed to inculcate, or reflect, courtesy, isn't it? And not only on the strip. Much bad-mannered behavior springs from thoughtlessness — so we are often told. But all fencers should come to realize that doing a few simple things can speed up the process of inspection, and thus speed up the line, and thus shorten the wait.

BE SMART, BE PLEASANT

From these observations, a smart fencer should be able to figure out how to make the experience of inspection as quick and pleasant as possible.

And while I'm lecturing people on how to behave, let me make a small suggestion about how to, and how not to, wrap up body cords. I have no objection to people wrapping their body cords into as tight little coils as they can manage, so long as they unwrap them when they present them to me for checking.

But I do wonder at those fencers who make a tight package of the cord and then snap the big clip ("what big teeth you have, grandma") onto the wire. Bad move. Clipping those teeth onto something substantial, like the plug, is OK, because at the worst a little cosmetic imperfection might be imparted, but clipping those teeth into the wire can do a real number on the cord. Avoid it.

— AF

Report from Havana

U.S. TAKES ON THE FENCING WORLD

2003 World Championships were a test • by Jeff **BUKANTZ**

The United States Fencing Team traveled to Havana with high hopes based on the great success at the Junior Worlds and the Pan American Games. Our sights were realistic, however, as the Senior Worlds would be a whole different ball of wax.

Expectations were especially high for the Women's Saber Team, which had won three World Cups this season as well as the overall World Cup; for **Sada Jacobson**, who won the Women's Saber World Cup (the first U.S. athlete in history to do so on the senior level); and for **Keeth Smart**, who had for some time this season attained the No. 1 ranking in men's saber.

However, the primary focus was on individuals and teams attaining results that would enhance their Olympic qualifying chances, as the Worlds count for double points.

While we earned no medals, which was a tremendous disappointment, there were three individual finalists: **Soren Thompson** (men's epee), Sada Jacobson, and **Mariel Zagunis** (both women's saber). And except for men's epee, the other potential Olympic teams improved or solidified their hemispheric qualifying positions for Athens. Men's saber and men's foil are virtual locks to qualify through the hemisphere, and women's epee is currently leading in their weapon. Men's epee is still in contention.

The Havana World Championships will be remembered for the nightmarish amount of near misses. Only a handful of touches separated the team from three or four medals.

Soren Thompson lost 15-14 to get into the medal round. Both Mariel Zagunis and Sada Jacobson lost close bouts to get into the medal round. **Ivan Lee** lost 15-14 to get into the men's saber top 8. **Dan Kellner** and **Jed Dupree** both lost 15-14 in the men's foil bracket to get into the 32. Both Keeth Smart and **Jason Rogers** lost 15-14 to get into the men's saber top 16. Men's epeeist **Seth Kelsey** lost 15-14 in the 64. Women's foilist **Hanna Thompson** lost 15-14 to get into the 32. Sydney Olympic women's foil veteran **Iris Zimmermann** lost 15-14 to get into the 16.

In the team events, the heartbreaks continued. Men's epee lost to Egypt 45-44 in the 32. Men's foil lost to Russia 45-43 in the 16 (sadly, a horrendous reversal at 43-43 likely changed the outcome of this great match). Women's saber lost to Azerbaijan 45-44 to get into the medal round, and then to Russia 45-44.

Men's saber lost to France 45-43 in the 16. The following is a snapshot of the results, including first round results and final placings:

MEN'S EPEE INDIVIDUAL (160 COMPETITORS)

Seth Kelsey 3-2; +4; seeded 55th

Beat Partits (Greece) 15-8 and Mejias (Venezuela) 15-14 to reach the top 64 • Lost to Robatsch (Austria) 15-14 • Final placing: 56th

Eric Hansen 3-2; 0; seeded 60th

Beat Muradyan (Armenia) 12-11 • Lost to Frazao (Portugal) 15-13 to miss the top 64 • Final placing: 82nd

Cody Mattern 3-3; -1; seeded 77th

Beat Thyamagundla (Indonesia) 15-3 and Abdel Rahim (Egypt) 15-12 to reach the top 64. • Lost to Fischer (Switzerland) 15-10 • Final placing: 61st

Soren Thompson 4-2; 0; seeded 51st

Beat Bustos (Equador) 15-4 and Penzo Junge (Chile) 15-14 to reach the top 64. • Beat Kovacs (Hungary) 15-14, Nilsson (Sweden) 15-10 and Kim (Korea) 15-12 to reach the final 8 • Lost to eventual silver-medalist Khvorost (Ukraine) 15-14 • Final placing: 8th

Soren's result was a genuine breakthrough, both for him and the entire epee team. He fenced within himself, and his performance will undoubtedly inspire and instill confidence in the others.

MEN'S FOIL INDIVIDUAL (124 COMPETITORS)

Jon Tiomkin 2-4; -7; seeded 78th

Beat Wong (Hong Kong) 15-8 and Zhou (China) 15-8 to reach the top 64 • Lost to Wessels (Germany) 15-12 • Final Placing: 64th

Dan Kellner 3-3; -3; seeded 59th

Had a bye and beat Al Daikan (Kuwait) 15-3 to reach the top 64. Lost to Sanzo (Italy) 15-14 • Final placing: 59th

Steve Gerberman 3-3; -2; seeded 56th

Had a bye and beat Park (Korea) 15-14 to get into the top 64 • Lost to Gohy (France) 15-12 • Final placing: 57th

Jed Dupree 5-1; +13; seeded 14th

Drew a bye directly into the top 64. (Amazing what a good result in the pools can do!) • Lost to Cieply (Poland) 15-14 • Final placing: 38th

Jed's loss was a killer, as he was the victim of circumstances and an incredibly tough call. With the score 14-13, Jed (who already had a yellow card) appeared to attack into the opponent's preparation with a fleche that almost provoked a one-light action. Jed, in out-right glee, whipped off his mask as he raised his arms in triumph and it flew about ten feet onto the adjacent strip. The referee not only called the opponent's attack off-target, but gave Jed a red card for throwing his mask. (Ironically, the referee blew the right-of-way but didn't hesitate to throw the red card. The intent of this rule was to penalize bad behavior, not to penalize honest displays of exultation!)

So instead of winning the bout, the score was now 14-14. It was not meant to be, as Cieply scored the last touch.

MEN'S SABER INDIVIDUAL (106 COMPETITORS)

Ivan Lee 5-0; +14; seeded 5th

Drew a bye directly into the 64 based on result in pools • Beat Diaz Acosta (Cuba) 15-11 • Beat Gael Touya (France) 15-13 • Lost to Pastore (Italy) 15-14 • Final placing: 12th

Jason Rogers 3-3; +6; seeded 41st

Beat Sheheta Mahmoud (Egypt) 15-5 to reach the top 64 • Beat Pina (Spain) 15-12 • Lost to Herm (Germany) 15-14 • Final placing: 31st

Tim Hagaman 3-3; +2; seeded 46th

Beat Moran (Panama) 15-4 to reach the top 64 • Lost to Pillet (France) 15-6 • Final placing: 58th

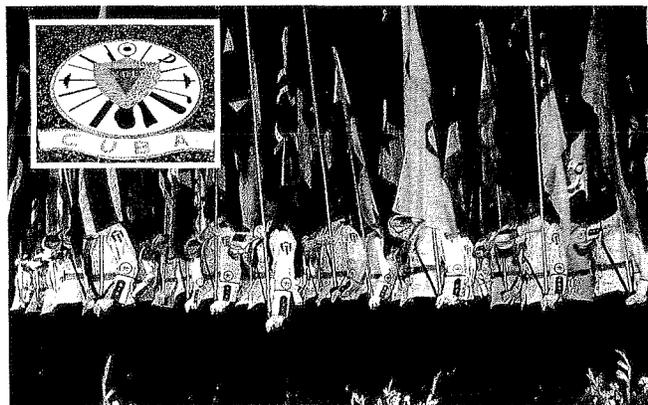
Keeth Smart Bye to 64 as #6 original seed

Beat Boiko (Ukraine) 15-6 • Lost to Pastore 15-14 • Final placing: 18th

Ivan had a great summer, winning the Pan Am gold medal and just missing the final here. He has the talent and the drive, and he is destined to improve.

Of course, this was a disappointing result for Keeth. Had he beaten Pastore, he and Ivan would have met in the 16, thereby guaranteeing a finalist and increasing the odds of a medalist. It was a long and extraordinarily successful season for Keeth, as he temporarily attained the No. 1 world ranking and was seeded 6th in Havana. We're proud of him and look forward to further greatness this season.

A scene from the Opening Ceremonies, which ironically included Cuban military personnel carrying an American flag. Photo: Serge Timacheff



WOMEN'S EPEE INDIVIDUAL (120 COMPETITORS)

Kamara James 2-4; -10; seeded 82nd

Did not qualify for tableau • Final placing: 98th

Kelley Hurley 1-4; -7; seeded 83rd

Did not qualify for tableau • Final placing: 99th

Stephanie Eim 3-3; -1; seeded 56th

Beat Haarlem (Sweden) 10-9 to reach the top 64 • Lost to Logounova (Russia) 11-7 • Final placing: 57th

Elizabeth Spilman 3-3; -4; seeded 62nd

Lost to Pereira Mustelier (Cuba) 15-10 to get into the top 64 • Final placing: 82nd

WOMEN'S FOIL INDIVIDUAL (68 COMPETITORS)

Iris Zimmermann 5-1; +16; seeded 5th

Drew a bye into the 64 • Beat Khismatulina (Ukraine) 15-8 • Lost to Bauer (Germany) 15-14 • Final placing: 24th

Emily Cross 2-2; -5; seeded 32nd

Drew a bye into the 64 • Lost to Granbassi (Italy) 15-11 • Final placing: 50th

Erinn Smart 6-0; +17; seeded #1

Drew a bye into the 64 • Beat Gonzalez (Venezuela) 15-11 (thereby gaining revenge for the Pan Am Games loss in the semis); Beat Angad-Gaur (Netherlands) 10-9 • Lost to Youcheva (Russia) 15-6 • Final placing: 11th

Hanna Thompson 3-3; +1; seeded 27th

Drew a bye into the 64 • Lost to Mroczkiewicz (Poland) 15-14 • Final placing: 27th

WOMEN'S SABER INDIVIDUAL (73 COMPETITORS)

Sada Jacobson Bye to the 64 as original 1st seed

Bye to the 32. Beat Gheorghitoaia (Romania) 15-6 • Beat Benad (Germany) 15-12 • Lost to Tan (China) 15-12 • Final placing: 5th Finalist

Mariel Zagunis 5-1; +20; seeded 4th

Beat Huang (China) 15-10 • Beat Touya (France) 15-13 • Beat Jemayeva (Azerbaijan) 15-8 • Lost to Socha (Poland) 15-9 • Final placing: 7th Finalist

Christine Becker 3-2; +7; seeded 19th

Lost to Velikaia 15-10 in the 64 • Final placing: 43rd

Emily Jacobson Bye to the 64 as original 11th seed

Lost to Varga (Hungary) 15-7 • Final placing: 33rd

Sada and Mariel were so close to earning medals. Both have proven to be contenders for the hardware in Athens next summer. Emily had an off-tournament, but her 11th seed is indicative of her capability, and she will be in the mix, as well.

Cody Mattern against an unidentified opponent. Photo: Serge Timacheff



MEN'S EPEE TEAM (39 TEAMS)
11th Seed; Bye in 64
Lost to Egypt 44-45
Final Placing: 18th

The team was seeded 11th and drew a bye in the 64. In the 32, the team fell behind Egypt 10-3, fought back valiantly, but could never get over the hump, as it lost 45-44.

Kelsey was 9-7 (+2), Mattern was 20-20 (0), and Thompson was 15-18 (-3).

MEN'S FOIL TEAM (27 TEAMS)
7th Seed
Beat Equador 45-13
Lost to Russia 43-45
Beat Hungary 45-42
Beat Egypt 45-27
Beat Spain 45-34
Final Placing: 9th

This team showed tremendous heart throughout the entire grueling summer. As you know, they defeated Cuba 45-44 at the Pan Am Games in July. After trouncing Equador 45-13 in the 32 [Tiomkin 15-5 (+10); Dupree 15-2 (+13); Kellner 15-6 (+9)], Russia loomed.

While Russia had overwhelmed the foilists the last time they met, our guys have made tremendous progress and went into this match with a combination of newfound confidence and cautious optimism.

Tiomkin fenced out of his mind, and Kellner was once again put in the high pressure closing position. After his remarkable comeback against Cuba in the Pan Am finals, where Dan overcame a 30-40 deficit, we were confident that he would be able to overcome a 37-40 deficit against Nassibouline.

Dan was doing it again, tying the score at 43. Then, disaster struck. Dan made a textbook riposte to the Russian's flank, and we jumped for joy. Not so fast, as the referee incredibly said that Dan's "first action missed." There was only one action, and that action was a highlight reel riposte. The video proved that to every person we showed it to. But the referee made a terrible call at the worst possible moment. Instead of being one touch from victory, we were deflated and one touch from losing.

We lost the next touch and the match 45-43. [Tiomkin 22-15 (+7); Dupree 9-15 (-6); Kellner 12-15 (-3)]

The guys fenced their hearts out, and deserved much better. They are clearly emerging as a threat. But, while the wind was sucked out of their sails, they were faced with two choices: Either mail in the remaining placement matches or regroup and show what they're made of. They chose the latter, and fought until the last touch of the day.

Next was Hungary, an ornery and capable team. Comeback Kellner did it again, as he turned a 36-40 deficit into a 45-42 victory by outscoring Marsi 9-2. The team showed great poise and willpower by refusing to get lulled into trench warfare, which seemed to be Hungary's goal from the outset. [Kellner

18-9 (+9); Tiomkin 16-11 (+5); Dupree 11-22 (-11)] The team then beat Egypt 45-27 [Tiomkin 15-7 (+8); Dupree 15-9 (+6); Kellner 15-11 (+4)] and Spain 45-34 [Kellner 18-9 (+9); Dupree 14-12 (+2); Tiomkin 13-13 (0)] to finish a well-earned 9th.

MEN'S SABER TEAM (20)
10th Seed
Bye in 32
Lost to France 43-45
Beat Cuba 45-33
Lost to Poland 42-45
Lost to South Korea 23-45
Final Placing: 12th

The team was seeded 10th and drew a bye in the 32. The men lost a heartbreaker to France 45-43 in the 16. It was a bloodbath and had a few lead changes, but they just fell short. Smart was 12-11 (+1), Lee was 18-19 (-1) and Rogers was 13-15 (-2).

As with the foilists, the sabreurs had to pull themselves together for the placement matches. After easily handling former arch-rival Cuba 45-33 [Rogers 15-8 (+7); Smart 15-12 (+3); and Lee 15-13 (+2)], the team fell short against Poland 45-42 [Smart 22-16 (+6); Lee 14-14 (0); and Rogers 4-10 (-6)].

A clearly deflated team then lost to South Korea 45-23 [Smart 12-15 (-3); Lee 1-5 (-4); Rogers 9-15 (-6); and Hagaman 1-10 (-9)].

For the day, Smart was 61-54 (+7), Lee was 48-51 (-3), Rogers was 41-48 (-7), and Hagaman was 3-15 (-12).

WOMEN'S EPEE TEAM (23)
14th Seed
Beat Chile 45-31
Lost to Germany 32-45
Lost to China 42-45
Beat Cuba 45-42
Beat Switzerland 45-41
Final Placing: 13th

Jessica Burke was added to the team in place of the inexperienced 15-year-old Hurley, whose time will certainly come.

The team was seeded 14th and beat Chile in the 32 by 45-31. James was 21-6 (+15), Eim 15-8 (+7), Burke 2-3 (-1), and Spilman 6-14 (-8).

In the 16, they hung tough against Germany for the first half of the match but eventually succumbed 45-32. Eim was 3-5 (-2), James 16-21 (-5), and Burke 13-19 (-6).

In the first match in the 9-16 bracket, the women lost a bleeder to China 45-42 [Burke 17-13 (+4), James 17-20 (-3), and Eim 8-12 (-4)].

With an Olympic berth on the horizon, and both Canada and Cuba fighting for position within the 13-16 bracket, the women's epee team had plenty of incentive to keep fighting in their remaining matches.

At the Pan Am Games, the Cubans beat us handily for the Gold

Medal. However, the addition of James and Burke helped make the difference, and the team gained revenge in Havana by a score of 45-42. Burke was 18-14 (+4), James was 16-16 (0), and Eim was 11-12 (-1).

The team, which had already fought in four emotionally and physically draining matches, pulled together to finish strong by beating Switzerland 45-41. James was 24-20 (+4), Burke was 15-15 (0), and Eim was 6-6 (0).

For the day, James was 94-83 (+11), Burke was 65-64 (+1), Eim was 43-43 (0), and Spilman was 6-14 (-8).

WOMEN'S FOIL TEAM (14)

7th Seed

Lost to China 33-45

Beat South Korea 43-41

Beat Germany 45-38

Final Placing 9th

The Women's Foil Team was seeded 7th and unluckily drew 10th seeded China. The highlight of the match took place in the 5th encounter, as **Emily Cross** overcame an 18-14 deficit by outscoring Meng 8-0 to give us our last lead at 22-18. Unfortunately, the Chinese prevailed by a sound 45-33 score. For the match, Cross was 14-15 (-1), Smart was 12-14 (-2), and Zimmermann was 7-16 (-9).

The team then had a bye in the first match of the 9-16 bracket. South Korea was next, and the team led from the outset in a hard-fought 43-41 victory. Zimmermann was 17-13 (+4), Smart was 15-11 (+4), and Cross was 11-17 (-6).

For all intents and purposes, it really didn't matter if the team finished 9th or 10th, as there was no Olympic berth at stake. So, we decided to use the Germany match to see if Smart could handle the closer position, if Cross could rebound from the South Korea match, and to give Hanna Thompson a look-see for an entire match.

As it turned out, all three came through with flying colors, as the team scored an impressive 45-38 victory. Smart was 11-7 (+4), Thompson was 16-13 (+3), and Cross was 18-18 (0).

For the day, Smart was 38-32 (+6), Thompson was 16-13 (+3), Zimmermann was 24-29 (-5), and Cross was 43-50 (-7).

WOMEN'S SABER TEAM (15)

4th Seed

Beat Hong Kong 45-25

Lost to Azerbaijan 44-45

Beat Hungary 45-42

Lost to Russia 44-45

Final Placing: 6th

Needless to say, we had high hopes for the team, as they had won three gold medals during the FIE World Cup season on their way to the overall World Cup title. Unfortunately, this was not their day.

The team was seeded 4th and dispensed with Hong Kong 45-25 in the 16. Sada Jacobson was 10-4 (+6), **Emily Jacobson** was 15-10 (+5), Zagunis was 15-10 (+5), and Becker was 5-1 (+4).

The match to get into the medal round was against Azerbaijan, which boasted Elena Jemayeva, always a World Cup leader and a former World Champion. The team led all the way, and came to the

ninth encounter with a seemingly safe 40-35 lead, as Zagunis had beaten Jemayeva 15-8 in the individuals. Unfortunately, Jemayeva bested Zagunis 10-4 to shock us 45-44.

Sada was 15-7 (+8), Emily was 15-18 (-3), and Mariel was 14-20 (-6).

In the 5-8 bracket, our familiar opponent, Hungary, was next. The team trailed until the 5th encounter, when Zagunis scored a big 7-3 victory over Nagy to give us our first lead at 25-23. After again falling behind 35-30, Sada walloped Varga 10-4 to give us a 40-39 edge going into the last bout. Zagunis closed the deal as the team won 45-42.

Zagunis was 15-11 (+4), Sada was 19-16 (+3), and Emily was 11-15 (-4).

In the match for 5th, the team had a 40-31 lead over Russia going into the last bout. There was to be one more Havana heartbreak, however, as Netchaeva beat Sada 14-4 to give the Russians a dramatic 45-44 win.

Emily was 16-9 (+7), Sada was 14-17 (-3), and Zagunis was 14-19 (-5).

For the day, Sada was 58-44 (+14), Emily was 57-52 (+5), Becker was 5-1 (+4), and Zagunis was 58-60 (-2).

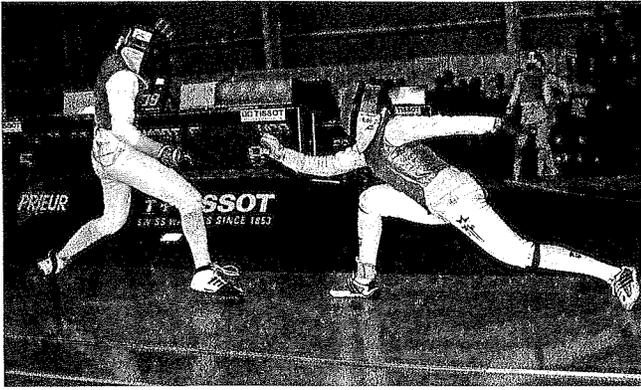
WRAP-UP AND OUTLOOK FOR U.S. FENCING

On the surface, this appears to be a disappointing result for our federation. However, while there is no denying the bottom line, there is a silver lining in the cloud. Here are some of the positives:

- 1) Keeth Smart remains a genuine medal contender.
- 2) Sada Jacobson remains a genuine medal contender.
- 3) Mariel Zagunis appears to be returning to top form, and can be a medal contender.
- 4) Ivan Lee continues to improve, and is a threat at the highest level.
- 5) Iris Zimmermann, if she regains her confidence and her conditioning, can be a medal contender.
- 6) Erinn Smart's result shows that she can have significant results.
- 7) Although their team event is not included in the Olympics, the

At right, Eric Hansen and Portugal's Frazao. Bottom right, the U.S. Men's Foil Team; bottom left, Seth Kelsey; below, Keeth Smart.





Erinn Smart faces off against Angad-Gaur, The Netherlands

women's saber team remains one of the elite teams.

8) The women's epee team showed tremendous heart in fighting for its 13th place, which vaulted them ahead of Cuba and Canada for the hemisphere's Olympic qualifying spot.

9) Soren Thompson's near medal may instill a newfound confidence for the men's epeeists.

10) Although not an Olympic event, the women's foil team can once again be a contender. The emergence of Emily Cross and Hanna Thompson, as well as the potential return of **Felicia Zimmermann**, can complement the experienced Smart and Iris Zimmermann.

11) While the untimely loss to Egypt clearly set back the Olympic hopes of the men's epee team, the tightly knit squad has a great attitude and can continue to build on this past season's results, which included a victory over Italy.

12) The men's foil team is the sleeper. The near-miss against Russia illustrates this. Dupree is extremely talented, Tiomkin has incredible heart and drive, and Kellner has emerged as a bona fide closer to be relied on. I expect further improvement from the foilists.

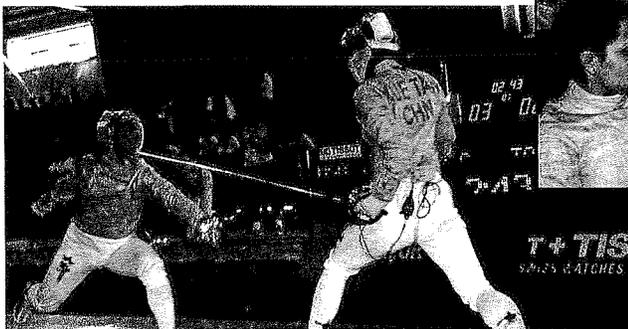
13) The men's saber team is also close to emerging. Smart and Lee are the leaders, and Rogers, Hagaman, Spencer-El and Crompton have all proven to be players. This team, with a little fine-tuning, can contend.

The Olympics are always a crapshoot. They are held in a direct elimination format, without a preliminary seeding pool, and anything can happen...in a hurry.

We have to strive for a better result in Athens, and we have a legitimate shot at medals, but we can't view the quadrennial's success or failure based on what transpires in a matter of minutes during a handful of bouts.

We have emerged as a world power at the Junior and Cadet level, and in order to parlay the newfound success, the USFA has to figure

At right, the Jacobsons wait for their turn against the Russians. Below, Sada Jacobson against Xue Tan of China.



out how to bridge the gap into the Senior ranks. Until we provide more funding for our Senior athletes, or an avenue for them to raise their own funds, we will not reach our potential.

As we have the critical mass of athletes and coaches and have achieved extraordinary results at the younger ages, we have to focus on leveling the playing field once the athletes enter the real world. The fact that we have athletes excelling at the highest level is incredible.

It should be noted that the men's foil team of Kellner, Tiomkin and Dupree train full-time together, and have made significant strides. This was proven by their near-miss against Russia, a team which had last beaten them by nearly 20 touches.

It is a miracle that Keeth Smart reached No. 1 in the world considering he also has to work 40 hours a week. It's a tribute to Keeth, but ultimately, an aberration. Rest assured, none of the other medal contenders have the same responsibilities.

Until we concentrate our efforts on providing our best athletes with a similar training regimen to their competitors, we will be occasional contenders, but we will not make the impact we are clearly capable of making at the senior level.

As an aside, it must be noted that the decision of the High Performance Committee to allow National Coaches to bring an alternate (a 5th fencer, chosen by the Head Weapon Coach subjectively) was successfully utilized in women's epee. Newly appointed Women's Epee Coach **Kornel Udvarhelyi's** request to bring Jessie Burke was granted by the HPC, and Burke's presence enabled the team to earn 13th place, which was enough to vault them over Canada for the time-being. Without Burke, it is probable that the team's result would have been considerably lower, and its chances for an Olympic berth substantially less.

KUDOS ALL AROUND

Once again I must commend the athletes for their mature and professional attitude. The team was focused on the task at hand, and was so close to much greater results. Those results will come, especially when we develop the confidence to win the close ones.

The cadre was terrific. **Carl Borack** was the chief of mission, and constantly imparting his wisdom and supporting me. Carl's mentoring has helped me enormously during the learning curve stage. **Bob Largman** was, as always, the calm, competent and caring team manager. **Carla-Mae Richards** was a great help to the team as USFA team liaison. **Matthew Porter** was a diligent armorer. **Lonnie Sellers** and **Doug Rank**, the team trainers, never rubbed people the wrong way.

I would like to thank team coaches **Nat Goodhartz**, **Paul Soter**, **Yury Gelman**, **Simon Gershon**, **Kornel Udvarhelyi** and **Ed Korfanty**, as they allowed me to work with them in a productive and cohesive manner. Thanks to **Arkady Burdan** and **Buckie Leach**, as well.

The team was well-represented at the FIE level as **Nancy Anderson** (Directoire Technique), **George Kolombatovich** (Arbitrage), **Peter Harmer** (Medical), **Dan DeChaine** (SEMI) **Sam Cheris** (EC), and **Derek Cotton** (Referee) all enhanced the United States' presence.

Thanks to **John Heil** (sport psychologist) and self-funded personal coaches **Karl Christie**, **Gagik Demerchian**, **Mauro Hamza**, **Robert Hurley**, **Alex Kuznetsov**, **Michael Marx** and **Vladimir Nazlymov**. — AF

U.S. Fencing Foundation **INVESTING IN THE FUTURE**

The role of USFF in safeguarding the sport • by Irwin **BERNSTEIN**

For most of our members, fencing is a sport in which they have the opportunity to develop their skills, enjoy the benefits of training and competing in a highly technical and intellectually challenging sport, and associate with well-educated and strongly motivated people from a wide range of backgrounds. The financial aspects of the sport are usually considered only when one's own interests are affected. For some of us, however, participating in the sport means working towards its preservation and enhancement through the support of and service to the U.S. Fencing Association. Integral to the long-range financial stability of the USFA is the U.S. Fencing Foundation.

BIRTHPLACE AT THE OLYMPICS

The U.S. Fencing Foundation was established in 1986 as one of several similar corporations formed by National Governing Bodies (NGBs) with their share of the proceeds of the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. That Olympics was unique in that the Los Angeles Organizing Committee would not accept the full financial responsibility for the Games and thus the U.S. Olympic Committee became a partner in the Games. When the L.A. Olympics achieved unprecedented financial success, 40 percent of the surplus was awarded to the USOC and another 20 percent was split among the National Governing Bodies, yielding each a little over one million dollars. The USOC and the prudent NGBs, including the USFA, established foundations to shield the money from immediate use and provide a revenue stream for future grants to their operating organizations.

The purpose of the U.S. Fencing Foundation is "to provide financial and other aid and support for the benefit of and to carry out the purposes of the U.S. Fencing Association." The USFF has a board of five trustees, of whom two must be current officers of the USFA and three may not be current USFA officers. They are elected by the USFA Board of Directors to four-year terms in the same year as the USFA national elections, which are held in the years of the Summer Olympics.

THE ROLE OF THE TRUSTEES

Currently, those trustees are myself (**Irwin Bernstein**); **Steve Sobel**, former USFA president; **Bob Prifrel**, former USFA treasurer; **Sherry Posthumus**, current vice president of the USFA; and **Mike Sullivan**, the USFA's current treasurer.

The trustees endeavor to invest the capital of the Foundation in conservative but productive securities in order to make grants to the USFA from the fund's earnings. The trustees are not per-

mitted to distribute any of the capital of the Foundation or to make grants to anyone other than the USFA without 90 days notice to the USFA Executive Committee and Board of Directors. Such action has never been taken by the Foundation.

Soon after the USFF was established, the U.S. Olympic Foundation opened its investment facilities to the NGBs and became a "mutual fund" for them. The USFF took advantage of the larger foundation's financial expertise and invested all of its funds with the USOE. Although a few recent years of market woes took their toll, the overall history of these investments has been very strong. In 2001, the capital in the Foundation was increased when the USFA received a bequest from the estate of Jack Baker and turned over the \$325,000 to the USFF, which invested it separately in a diversified portfolio through a national brokerage firm.

In the early years of the foundation, the grants were modest in size. But in 1992, when the USFA began to invest more aggressively in its international programs, the Foundation increased its grants until they approached 100 percent of the income. Over the Foundation's history, it has earned over \$2 million on the original \$1.1 million from the 1984 Games and has distributed almost all of those earnings to the USFA. Still, the Foundation holds and invests a balance of about \$1.2 million.

ENSURING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE USFA

With its long range mission and conservative financial approach, the Foundation is a very sound means of ensuring financial support for the USFA. One area that has been underutilized, however, is the use of the USFF for fundraising. Foundations are logical repositories for donations or bequests because of their emphasis on the long term. Supporters of fencing who are in a position to donate significant funds through current contributions, wills or charitable remainder trusts, etc. should be encouraged to name the U.S. Fencing Foundation as a beneficiary, with the confidence that the funds will be prudently managed and used only for the future support of the U.S. Fencing Association. Information about such donations can be obtained from the executive director of the USFA. —AF

Irwin Bernstein was on the board of directors of the USFA from 1962 to 1996 and served as president from 1976 to 1980. An original member of the USFF board of trustees, he has been its president since 1992. Mr. Bernstein was inducted into the USFA's Hall of Fame in 1998.

Real pressure FAMILY FEUDS

What do you do when your opponent is related? • by Nathaniel CERF

Your next bout is a big one. As you hook up on the strip, you watch your opponent do the same. You know this person's moves. You know what you have to do. Ha! You even know where this fencer lives.

That's what makes you nervous. They know the same things about you.

Why?

Because you share the same address. The other fencer is your sister ... or brother ... or worse – a parental unit.

Families that fence are really not very uncommon. Look around your club. Odds are pretty good that you will find at least one case of sibling rivalry, possibly even a transgenerational epic.

In interviewing fencing families from around the country two things became very clear. First, there are a million ways in which families handle the pressure and joy of competition. Second, most fortunately, there seems to be a universal sense of fun and respect held by the family competitors, regardless of age.

For some families the rivalries are intense. The banter between three jovial musketeers of the Benford clan in Minneapolis can put d'Artagnan, Athos, Porthos and Aramis to shame. With the Benfords, both a quick foil and a rapier wit are crucial.

Maria (a.k.a. Mom) Benford explains: "In my family, we're pretty competitive. We want to beat each other. There are braggin' rights."

Her 14-year-old son, **J.B.**, agrees while describing family bouts.

"If I lose, I get my bragging rights taken from me," he says, shaking his head, but smiling.

Shanté, 11, gladly enters the fray with her sleeves rolled up. She's not about to take any guff from her big brother. She has her own battle plan when taking on J.B.

"I'm in my mind sayin', 'He's a jerk; I gotta get my revenge,'" she says.

J.B. laughs, "If I lose to her, my dignity is definitely flushed down the toilet."

Maria is no pushover, herself, competing against her kids.

On the strip she is, "half-way parent, half-way competitive, half-way coach." Adding up the math, Maria laughs. "It's tough, but I still want to win."

Despite all of the zingers and competition, the respect they have for one another is obvious. At a tournament hosted by the Minnesota Sword Club this past October, the Benfords could always be found together at strip-side: coaching each other, cheering for each other, caring for each other ... while trading barbs, naturally.

More than 1,500 miles away, in Spokane, Wash., father and son **John** and **Dan Ames** have been fencing together for more than half a decade. They both admit to sharing a lot of good times on the strip, but not quite the same rivalry as the Benfords, who take their bragging rights home with them.

"It has to stay on the strip now," John says, pausing for a second, "I can't beat him."

Dan agrees, for the most part, but concedes, "Sometimes we trade jokes back and forth about how we fence."

Back in Minneapolis, father and son, **Jeff** and **Eric O'Hara** started fencing at the same time three years ago. The repartee between them is sometimes faster than the parry-ripostes.

"I'm just constantly amazed at how fast he (Eric, 15) progresses against someone my age," Jeff says... though he declines to disclose that age. "But, I do relish the points I get on him."

Eric cuts loose with a wry smile, "He always tells me I'm not gonna get a ride home if I win. I just win anyway; I can walk."

Eric adds, "We take it all light-heartedly."

Does the fencing rivalry stay at the salle?

"We banter a bit at home, but I don't have a whole lot of ammunition," Jeff laughs.

Eric also has an unfair household advantage: "Sometimes I poke my dad with my fingers, but our dog won't let him come after me. Skeet is my parrying dog."

Some rivalries don't end in childhood. At The Fencing Club of Sioux Falls (South Dakota), **Liz VerSteeg** and her brother **Dave Park** are still crossing swords despite the fact that they have teenage children of their own.

"It's very exhilarating – a throwback to the past of sibling rivalry," Liz says. "We giggle the whole time."

Dave agrees but also has his hands full with his 17-year-old son, **Kyle**.

"There's always a family rivalry," Dave says.

In the father-son duels Kyle has the upper hand, but he is pretty good-natured about it.

"I don't rub it in too bad," Kyle says. "I'm sure he'll get me back next time."

Not all families look at competition as a means to bragging rights. Some find fencing brings them closer together.

Margi MacMurdo-Reading and her son **Walker**, 14, relate to each other through the sport.

"It's something we have to talk about and do together," Margi says. "We're really supportive of each other."

Family fencing in clubs all around the country in many ways doesn't differ at heart from fencing with your sibling at the highest level. **Felicia** and **Iris Zimmermann**, for instance, two of the most well-known sisters in the sport, say even at the Olympics, fencing is just that: a sport.

"It is a little harder fencing a sibling since the person you are fencing is also someone you are very close to, but I put fencing competitions into perspective," says Felicia. "Sometimes it is a little hard because we are so close, but we know that fencing is just a sport and that we are sisters forever."

Felicia emphasizes that one of the greatest thrills in her lifetime came from the fact that she was able to walk with her sister into the opening ceremonies of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney.

Elite fencer **Metta Thompson** and her identical twin sister **Hanna**, both foil fencers at Ohio State, agree that they have a great time squaring off against one another on the strip. Hanna and Metta have both competed on NCAA and on Junior World Championships teams together in recent years, and this year Hanna represented the U.S. at the the 2003 World Championships.

That means practice is a serious, daily occupation for both. A unique combination of competition between the two on the strip and unending affection and support has helped elevate their fencing, say both twins. However, Metta says that there isn't an intense rivalry.

"Hanna and I are very competitive, but what happens on the strip always stays on the strip," she says.

Respect is key. Sometimes it is shown through the family rivalries, other times it is shown through the caring and support for one another during competition. Either way, like the fun professed by all of the people interviewed, respect seems omnipresent. It is a vital element.

"It all has to do with respect," says **Dr. John Heil**, a sport psychologist with the Lewis-Gale Clinic in Roanoke, Va.

Of course, not all families (and even friends) have such great rapport when competing. If the respect is lost or the adversity or pressure become too difficult, Dr. Heil offers some great advice on how to cope on the strip: "Go back to the basics of competing. You compete to win, and when you do it in a way that is fair, you honor your competitor and force them to raise the level of their game."

"Of course, what happens on the strip stays there," agrees Felicia Zimmermann. "Sometimes when things are tense it helps to laugh. Fencing is just a fun and great sport that I love and you can't bring yourself or others down with negativity." — AF

Nathaniel Cerf is a fencing coach in Sioux Falls, S.D., and a self-professed "swashbuckler."

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In the beginning ...

THE AFLA/USFA STORY

Our sport has quite a past in America • by Andy **SHAW**

The late 1800's was a great period in American fencing history. A handful of factors combined to create a golden age for our sport. The Industrial Revolution and the growing urbanization of our population was causing many popular authors to speak out about our unhealthy, apartment-living constituents.

Harper's Weekly referred to a "physical deterioration" of the city's sedentary population that would have been obvious to the tourists of the time. City-dwelling women were found to be so sedentary that they appeared to be living "contrary to the laws of nature."

Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, "I am satisfied that such a set of black-coated, stiff-jointed, soft-muscled, paste-complexioned youth as we can boast in our Atlantic cities never before sprang from loins of AngloSaxon lineage...and as for any great athletic feat performed by a gentleman in these latitudes, society would drop a man who should run round the Common in five minutes."

This onslaught of literary comment led to a boom in the gymnasium and health club industry all geared to New York's elite society. Following society's love affair with the bicycle (all of New York's best families purchased cycles from companies like the Perry Mason Co. of Boston), fencing was next pronounced to be the perfect sport for Society's ladies and gentlemen to promote health, muscle tone and poise. **Made-moiselle Stamm**, who opened a private fencing salle for some of "society's" ladies who wanted to avoid the unwanted attention from New York's press, said, "Fencing is not only an accomplishment. Its main value is in the charm of person and grace of motion it develops for the persevering pupil."

Fencing became so popular that Broadway star **Marie Tempest** was cast in the starring role on Broadway in *The Fencing Master*.

The simple announcement that **Mrs. John Jacob Astor** was one of the best fencers in the metropolis caused a perceptible increase in the demand for foils and fencing outfits (all custom-made in velvets and silks), and doubled the

classes of Regis Senac and other maitres d'armes. The fad was just beginning.

Fencing went mainstream. Aside from the venerable New York Fencers' Club and Salle Senac, which specialized in fencing (they both now had Ladies' Classes), clubs like the Manhattan Working Girls' Club on East 57th Street, The Berkeley Athletic Club, the NY Racquet Club, the Pastime Athletic Club, the Central Turnverein, the New York Athletic Club, The NY Turnverein, and the Professional Woman's League, to name just a sampling, all introduced fencing classes during this period.

Unofficial fencing championships and demonstrations were popping up all over the city. Some claimed to be holding the "Professional Championships of the World," while others claimed to be hosting the "American Fencing Championships."

But the fitness craze was for real. In response to this new-found athletic enthusiasm, fencing coaches were doing great. The most popular and successful of the New York coaches was **Regis Senac**. Other top fencing professionals included **Captain Hippolyte**

Regis Senac was one of America's most successful coaches as the sport gained a foothold in America, training most of our country's early champions.



Nicolas, Prof. James Murray, Prof. M. Capdevielle, Prof. Charles Koch, Prof. H. Armand Jacoby, Prof. L. Vauthier, Miss Olive Oliver (also an actress on Broadway; at that time all "Broadway" shows were actually located along Broadway beginning at 14th Street), **Prof. A. Gouspy** and **Made-moiselle Leonie Stamm**.

The newly formed Amateur Athletic Union in 1888 set up the first Official United States National Fencing Championships on April 3rd and 4th, 1888 in New York City under the following rules:

1. Jury composed of Referee and 4 judges.
2. Direct elimination from beginning to end.
3. All defeated fencers could compete for second place.
4. All seeds drawn by lot.
5. Foil and Saber bouts were fenced for five touches and Duelling Sword for one touch (officially the term "epee" was not used until 1915).

The referee was **Perry Belmont**, son of **August Belmont**. The Belmont family

(including **Eugenia Belmont**) not only was involved in fencing but also built and owned the IRT subway now known as the Broadway 1 and 9. His stables remain famous today with the still-named Belmont Stakes.

First place in the men's foil competition was won by **William Thornton Lawson** of the NYAC. Mr. Lawson, a lawyer by profession, was also the captain of the Columbia football and cricket teams, was trained by **Prof. Hartl** in Vienna, and also studied foil fencing in France.

Mr. Eugene Higgins of the NYAC won the first Men's Duelling Sword (Epee) Championship. Mr. Higgins, also trained in Europe, was coached by **Adolphe Ruzé** and was a graduate of Columbia. He was described in the *New York Times* as "America's Richest Bachelor."

The first Men's Saber Champion was **Hildreth Kennedy Bloodgood** of the NYAC. Mr. Bloodgood owned a farm near Lenox where he bred fine horses. He studied foil fencing in France and broadsword in Vienna with Professor Hartl.

By the second championships, the event was very crowded, did not commence on time, and the fencers were extremely displeased with the organizers. More importantly, they were horrified that professional coaches were allowed to officiate. To a man, they felt that professionals tainted the amateur nature of the sport and that these coaches could not be objective. All of the fencers competing in these events were men who did not "need" to work for a living although some of them chose to do so.

New York's best fencers were fed up with the lax AAU rules on professionals and they believed that the only fair way to determine a champion was with the use of pools.

"While a long series of bouts may demonstrate the superiority of one swordsman over another, the winner of such a tournament as annually decides the championship in New York may really be inferior to several less fortunate contestants," wrote *The Illustrated American* in an editorial printed in May, 1890. "As in all athletic contests where a single defeat puts a man out of court, the best fencers may oppose one another in the preliminary rounds, with the result that half of them must stand down and look on, while men of inferior skill, who have been matched against opponents of their own calibre, gain the glory of contesting the finals."

The American also took a poke at the rivalry between coaches which, the article suggests, was sufficiently intense as to interfere in the contests between their fencers.

"The absurd jealousy between professional instructors which formerly wrought no little harm to the interests of fencing, and even now crops out occasionally, also placed a difficulty in the way of general competition between the graduates of different schools," the article continues. "A change in the rules at present governing the championships is advocated by prominent swordsmen, and it is not improbable that a championship class composed of the best men from each organization may be instituted."

So the Amateur Fencers League of America was founded at a meeting at the NYAC members of that club, the Manhattan Athletic Club, the Columbia College Fencing Club, the Central Turn Verein and the New York Fencers Club all composed the first executive committee.

A newspaper of the day marked the event this way:

"On the evening of Wednesday April 22nd, 1891, the Fencers of the New York Athletic Club held a Fencing Entertainment in their Club rooms. Numerous members of the various clubs interested in the art were invited and took part. Following the exhibition the contestants and guests were provided with a collation. After numerous speeches and remarks had been passed regarding the present condition of Swordsmanship in America, and many valuable suggestions had been presented and new ideas discussed, it was proposed and unanimously carried: To form from the fencers there present, acting in their individual capacity, a Committee of the whole and immediately proceed to organize and establish THE AMATEUR FENCERS LEAGUE OF AMERICA."

The AFLA was founded with a constitution to make sure that rules were followed and only the "appropriate people" to become involved.

Membership was achieved only by election by the Board of Governors, or by being nominated and then seconded for membership by two members of the League.

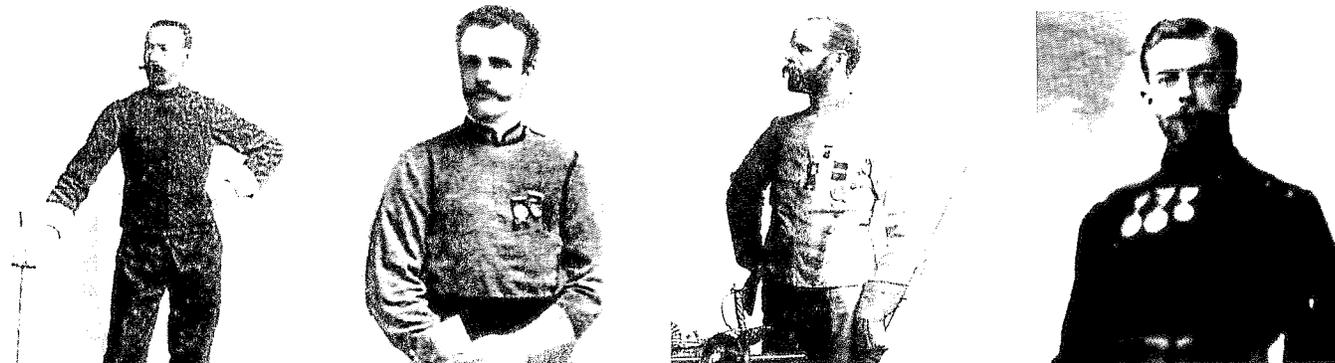
There were three types of membership at the beginning:

1. Honorary Membership, which required a unanimous vote of the Board of Governors for distinguished service.
2. Active Membership, open only to amateur athletes in good standing.
3. Associate Membership — comprised of women only.

The constitution excluded professionals, of course, as well as the following:

"A fencer who is known to frequently assist an instructor, or one who is known to habitually attend salle d'armes, assisting an

Early luminaries in American fencing (from left): Armand Jacoby, Charles Koch, Richard Malchien and Samuel Shaw.





Well-bred women (above) helped to popularize the sport as a healthy activity for young women. At right, Mme. Leonie Stamm made a name for herself as a fencing coach to members of "society."

instructor in the discharge of his duties," whether paid or not.

The secession of this group of the sport's elite caused, believe it or not, a flurry of press attention and words flew back and forth between the AAU and the AFLA. Eventually, of course, the AFLA became the predominant body and today the AAU is not involved in fencing at all.

And, as we all know, our sport has changed to such an extent over time that the founders of the AFLA would surely spin in their graves! By 1981, the very name of the organization was considered elitist. "This is not an organization of amateurs only, it is not a private elitist fencing club which is what the name implies, it is THE fencing organization in the United States to which all those interested in fencing belong or should belong," wrote Emily Johnson, president of the newly dubbed USFA in 1981.

And of course, though competition formats seem to change with every season, the dissatisfaction with the direct elimination bout long ago fell by the wayside. — AF



Andy Shaw lives in Shreveport, Louisiana and is the official historian, USFA. He will be writing a regular column on the history of fencing in this country for AMERICAN FENCING.

SERGEI GOLUBITSKY ADVANCED FOIL CLINIC

JOIN US IN BEING A PART OF FENCING HISTORY.

Experience learning from the best in the history of the art! The Amarillo College Fencing Association takes the pleasure to sponsor and host the Sergei Golubitsky Advanced Foil Clinic. This once in a lifetime opportunity will be held on Saturday and Sunday, May the 15th and 16th, 2004 in Amarillo, Texas on the Amarillo College Washington Street Campus Fencing Salle - Russell Hall Room 104.

Sergei Golubitsky has marked the sport of fencing by winning three consecutive world foil championship titles, consequently carving himself a niche in the history of the sport by improving the feats of France's legendary Christian d'Oriola. Sergei Golubitsky, was born December 20, 1969 in Kiev, Ukraine. He began fencing at the age of 9 and today is arguably the best men's foil fencer in history. He has won more consecutive World Championships than anyone in history, has a record 19 World Cup tournament victories, countless silver and bronze World Cup tournament finishes, and is the 5 time World Cup Champion (season #1 points leader). Today, Sergei lives and trains in Conegliano, Italy.

"It's hard to describe three years of working with Sergei in just a few sentences. I think the most important thing that I got from this training though, was literally: 'how to fence'. How to fence when



you want to fence defensively, how to fence if you want to attack, how to fence when you're behind and you have to come back, how to fence against lefthanders etc. etc. From training with Sergei, you learn how to think while you fence and you learn about the way fencing works on high-level." - Boaz Aronson (Netherlands)

This clinic will be presented in the form of an interactive discussion-demonstration format. Saturday 15 May, 2004 - Offensive Foil Tactics. Sunday 16 May, 2004 - Defensive Foil Tactics.

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CONTACTS AND INFORMATION ABOUT LODGING
Preregistration is required for this event as only 40 students will be accepted. Slots will be filled on a first-come-first-serve basis. Each participating fencer is welcome to have his major coach in attendance to observe strategies and instructional techniques of this master fencer and teacher. To pre-register or for more information, email Chuck Slaughter at chuck@acfencers.com or call at (806) 352-3093. Clinic Cost: \$200.00

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Tournament HIGHLIGHTS

2003 NITTANY LION CUP OPEN • State College, PA • October 4-5, 2003

Final Results – Women's Sabre • Group E1

1.	Heather Brosnan	Ohio Fencing Alliance
2.	Caroline Vloka	Polish-American Fencing School
3T.	Martyna Wieczorek	Polish-American Fencing School
3T.	Amanda Goldeberg	Polish-American Fencing School
5.	Danielle Kamis	Fencing Acad. Of Phila.
6.	Monica Aksamit	Polish-American Fencing School
7.	Laura Hillstrom	Penn State
8.	Lavinia Lindsay	Penn State Univ.
9.	Molly Kozminsky	PFC
10.	Lindsey Clark	Penn State Univ.
11.	Cara Digirolama	Mission
12.	Mary Poorbaugh	Ligonier
13.	Megan Propst	Penn State Univ. Club

Men's Foil • Group B2

1.	Ian Schlaepfer	Penn State Univ.
2.	Alex Louton	BD
3T.	Alex Kao	Fencers Club
3T.	Jake Clark	Penn State Univ.
5.	Andy Gearhart	Penn State Univ.
6.	Joe Brown	Penn State Univ.
7.	Brendan Bartels	Liberty Fenc. Alliance
8.	Rob MacClaren	Island Fenc. Acad.
9.	Ian Hamilton	Penn State Univ.
10.	Adam Hendricks	Fencers Club
11.	Eric Pho	Binghamton
12.	Stephen DeCosmo	Ligonier
13.	Ed Kane	Black Diamond Fencing
14.	Benjamin Von Son	Island Fenc. Acad.
15.	Kyle Mezzi	Penn State Univ.
16.	Nathan Richman	Mission
17.	Waqas Shaik	Binghamton
18.	Giovanni Facco	Penn State Univ. FC
19.	Ed Ploy	Williamsport
20.	Raymond Fan	Three Rivers
21.	Jason Dabenigno	Mission
22.	Tony Sacksteder	Fenc. Acad. Phila.
23.	Jared Rebor	Gristmill
24.	Devin Gomez	Mission
25.	Richard Hoopes Jr.	LKF
26.	Tristan Jackson	Three Rivers
27.	Jon Beam	Williamsport
28.	Robert Rich	Unattached
29.	Jeremiah Patterson	Gristmill
30.	Joseph Mazzara	Penn State Univ. FC
31.	Andy Schiffman	Black Diamond Fencing
32.	Ethan Patterson	Gristmill
33.	Yung Fan	Three Rivers

Men's Sabre • Group A1

1.	Farr, Ian	Penn State Univ.
2.	Rahimi, Amir	Penn State Univ.
3T.	Zagunis, Marten	Penn State Univ.
3T.	Vashro, Layne	Penn State Univ.
5.	Beatty, Brendan	Corsair
6.	Struck, Bryce	Lilov
7.	Meehan, Justin	Fenc. Club Long Island
8.	Gillig, Matt	Penn State Univ.
9.	Jagielski, Paul	Penn State Univ.
10.	Skydell, Samuel	Island Fenc. Acad.
11.	Pineda, Charles	Fenc. Club Long Island
12.	Kolakowski, Dennis	Fenc. Club Long Island
13.	Shortle, Sam	Penn State Univ. FC
14.	Mangulson, Leif	Penn State Univ. FC
15.	Holden, Tim	Mission
16.	Bak, Daniel	National Fenc. Acad.
17.	Bak, Adrian	National Fenc. Acad.
18.	Espinoza, Guillermo	Unattached
19.	Baumgartner, Wayne	D.C. Fencers Club
20.	Kane, Ed	Black Diamond Fencing
21.	Burger, John	LFC
22.	Arginteanu, David	Penn State Univ. FC
23.	Alvarez, Tony	Black Diamond Fencing

Women's Epee • Group A1

1.	Kasia Trzopek	Penn State Univ.
2.	Mary Frye	Fenc. Acad. Phila.
3T.	Case Szarwark	Penn State Univ.
3T.	Morgan Midgley	Unattached
5.	Katie Cook	Penn State Univ.
6.	Kellie Fry	Medeo
7.	Klaudia Kosowska	Black Diamond
8.	Christina Salvatore	D.C. Fencers Club
9.	Andrea Wine	Penn State Univ.
10.	April Korch	Cornell
11.	Leslie Lampman	Three Rivers
12.	Katherine Durrell	Penn State Univ. FC
13.	Erica Wilhelm	Cornell
14.	Angelica Miranda	St. John's
15.	Lauren Wangner	Fenc. Club Long Island
16.	Kara Lopata	Binhamton
17.	Alexandra Beddell	Penn State Univ. FC
18.	Elizabeth Hammell	Penn State Univ.
19.	Samantha Poorbaugh	Ligonier

Women's Foil • Group E1

1.	Annekathrin Donath	Penn State Univ.
2.	Meredit Chin	Penn State Univ.
3T.	Anne Jackson	Three Rivers
3T.	Sophie Hiss	Penn State Univ.
5.	Rachel Smith	Penn State Univ.
6.	Klaudia Kosowska	Black Diamond Fencing
7.	Tamara Najm	Penn State Univ.
8.	Amrit Bhinder	Candlewood
9.	Cookie Cook	Ward-Melville
10.	Keri Haars	D.C. Fencers Club
11.	Lee Grace Valigorsky	Du Bois
12.	Alyssa Dublov	Medeo

Men's Epee • Group A2

1.	Isaac Erbele	D.C. Fencers Club
2.	Rick Hoopes III	Unattached
3T.	Dennis Kraft	Ligonier
3T.	Daniel Landgren	Penn State Univ. FC
5.	Justin Meehan	Fenc. Club Long Island
6.	Ed Kane	Black Diamond
7.	Daniel Wheeler	D.C. Fencers Club
8.	Eric Pho	Binghamton
9.	Nathan Woolridge	Ligonier
10.	Ryan Wangner	Penn State Univ.
11.	Greg Rotondi	Penn State Univ. FC
12.	Alexander Bruscke	Penn State Univ.
13.	Matthew Naides	Black Diamond
14.	Richard Hoopes Jr.	Unattached
15.	Matthew Speckenbach	Penn State Univ. FC
16.	Sean McGrath	Medeo
17.	Stephen DeCosmo	Ligonier
18.	Michael Robbins	Morristown HS
19.	Nevin King	Penn State Univ.
20.	Tin McMahon	Williamsport
21.	David Palmer	Penn State Univ. FC
22.	Eric Hoopes	LKF
23.	Ed Ploy	Williamsport
24.	Jack Cillo	Penn State Univ. FC
25.	Peter Marbach	St. Vincent FC
26.	Michael Springer	Ligonier
27.	Evan Weisfield	Penn State Univ.
28.	Tony Sacksteder	Fenc. Acad. Phila.
29.	John Fitzpatrick	Fenc. Acad. Phila.
30.	John Burger	Ligonier
31.	Fritz Jacklitsch	Ligonier
32.	Tim Norton	Richard Stockton Col
33.	Dion Shively	Zen FA
34.	Travis Shick	Black Diamond

2003 PENN STATE JUNIOR OPEN • State College, PA • October 4-5, 2003

Junior Women's Saber • Group E1

1. Alexandra Heiss	Fencers Club
2. Laura Hillstrom	Penn State Univ.
3T. Caitlyn Young	Fenc. Club. of Long Isd
3T. Martyna Wieczorek	Polish Am FS
5. Jennifer Paulson	Penn State Univ.
6. Monica Aksamit	Polish Am FS
7. Molly Kozminsky	Penn State Univ. FC
8. Amanda Goldenberg	PAFS
9. Cara Digriolamo	Mission FC
10. Mary Poorbaugh	Ligonier
11. Megan Propst	Penn State Univ. FC
12. Ashley Hughes	Ligonier

Junior Men's Foil • Group B2

1. Ian Hamilton	Penn State Univ.
2. Alex Kao	Fencer's Club
3T. Rob MacClaren	IFA
3T. Brendan Bartels	Liberty FA
5. Peter Kovacs	Fencers Club
6. Benjamin Von Son	IFA
7. Adam Hendricks	NYFC
8. Zsolt Zavodsky	Three Rivers
9. Sean Leahy	DCFC
10. Raymond Fan	Three Rivers
11. Nathan Richman	Mission FC
12. Alexander Marsh	TWC
13. Chris Williams	Bethel Park
14. Ethan Patterson	Gristonell FC
15. Jeremiah Patterson	Gristonell FC
16. Shaikh Waqas	Binghamton
17. Tristan Jackson	Three Rivers
18. Eric Sher	Salle Jeanne
19. James Bassett	Medeo
20. Ben Laman-Maharg	PFC
21. Joseph Mazzara	Penn State Univ. FC

22. Jason Dabenigno	Bethel Park
23. Jack Piaso	DuBois FC
24. Joshua Wilensky	Fenc. Acad. Of S. Jersey
25. Jared Rebeor	Gristmill FC
26. Andy Schiffman	Black Diamond
27. Sebastian Rauenzahn	Black Diamond
28. Andrew Lichtenfels	Johnstown FC

Junior Men's Saber • Group E1

1. Ian Farr	Penn State Univ.
2. Bryce Struck	Lilov FA
3T. Sam Shortle	Penn State Univ. FC
3T. Charles Pineda	F. Club. of Long Island
5. Dennis Kolakowski	F. Club. of Long Island
6. Jared Hammond	Medeo
7. Paul Jagelski	Penn State Univ.
8. Bob Curtin	Island Fenc. Acad.
9. Guillermo Espinoza	Unattached
10. Leif Mangulson	Penn State Univ. FC
11. Tim Holden	Ward Melville
12. Kyle Lange	Altoona FC

Women's Epee • Group B1

1. Szarwark, Case	Penn State Univ.
2. Lampman, Leslie	Three Rivers
3T. Andrea Wine	Penn State Univ.
3T. Morgan Midgely	Unattached
5. Melissa Forsythe	Mountaintop
6. Amrit Bhinder	Candlewood
7. Kellie Fry	Medeo
8. Jasjit Bhinder	Candlewood
9. Katie Cook	Penn State Univ.
10. Angelica Verrelli	F. Club. of Long Island
11. Samantha Poorbaugh	Ligonier
12. Megan Luteran	Mountaintop
13. Kara Lopata	Binghamton

14. Saya Signs	Rochester Fenc. Center
15. Ashley Oliver	PFC
16. Angelica Miranda	St. John's

Junior Women's Foil • Group E1

1. Sophie Hiss	Penn State Univ.
2. Annie Jackson	Three Rivers
3T. Tamara Najm	Penn State Univ.
3T. Ashlee Phillips	Brentwood HS
5. Colleen Young	F. Club. of Long Island
6. Andrea Oliva	Fenc. Acad. of Phila.
7. Cookie Cook	Ward Melville
8. Analiese Pelegge	Gristmill FC
9. Lee Grace Valigorsky	DuBois FC
10. Kasandra Damiano	PFC
11. Hallie Morrison	Vassar
12. Lana Whitaker	PFC
13. Shannon Quinlisk	Bethel Park

Junior Men's Epee • Group C1

1. Dennis Kraft	Ligonier
2. Tim McMahon	Williamsport
3T. Matthew Naides	BDF
3T. Sean McGrath	Medeo
5. Nathan Woolridge	Ligonier
6. Sean Bani	Unattached
7. Erik Hoopes	LKF
8. Milton Lindsay	Fenc. Acad. of Phila.
9. Evan Weisfeld	Penn State Univ.
10. Michael Robbins	Morristown HS
11. James Smith	PFC
12. Nevin King	Penn State Univ.
13. Fritz Jacklitch	Ligonier
14. Alexander Marsh	TWC
15. Ben Beckerman	PFC
16. Case Dillon	CPFA

2003 REMENYIK OPEN • NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY • October 18-19, 2003

Overall Foil

1. Marsh	Ann	MICHIGAN
2. Cho	Michael	MICHIGAN
3T. Purcell	Justin	MICHIGAN
3T. Habala	Peter	ILLINOIS
5. Wallrabenstein	Inga	MICHIGAN
6. Jeter	William	SW OHIO
7. Cameron	Matt	ILLINOIS
8. Klimov	Sergei	MICHIGAN
9. Nemecek	Samantha	MICHIGAN
10. Senic	Anatolie	MICHIGAN
11. Kaihatsu	Ed	ILLINOIS
12. Karnezis	Phillip	ILLINOIS
13. Biebel	Joe	WISCONSIN
14. Franz	Alfred	NEBR-S.DAK
15. Chen	Lilia	ILLINOIS
16. Hedien	Mark	NORTH OHIO
17. Inzerillo	Joe	ILLINOIS
18. Hagen	Chris	MINNESOTA
19. Self	Benjamin	ST. LOUIS
20. Bralow	Rob	ILLINOIS
21. Hayenga	Gary	MICHIGAN
22. Neevel	Dave	WISCONSIN
23. Richardson	Peirce	IOWA
24. Smith	Shawn	ILLINOIS
24. Spicer	Richard	NORTH OHIO
26. Krotcov	Constantin	IOWA
27. Lipman	Jonathan	ILLINOIS

27. O'Brien	Sean	MICHIGAN
29. Gustafson	Gordy	MINNESOTA
30. Robbins	Daniel	ILLINOIS
31. Herman	Ron	IOWA
32. Awsumb	Lance	MINNESOTA
33. Budzynski	Craig	MICHIGAN
34. Bass	Nathan	MICHIGAN
35. Blankenbaker	Zach	ILLINOIS
36. Bass	Daniel	ST. LOUIS
37. Rusiewski	Calvin	ILLINOIS
38. Robinson	Matthew	ILLINOIS
39. Musgrave	Jim	IOWA
40. Tovbis	Ilya	NORTH OHIO
41. Chaplin	Matt	ILLINOIS
42. Rudolph	Paul	SW OHIO
43. Polasek	Ryan	MICHIGAN
44. Di Cori	Sandro	MICHIGAN
45. Cohen	Alexander	ST. LOUIS
46. O'Hara	Eric	MINNESOTA
47. Elward	Barret	MINNESOTA
47. Fegenbush	Matt	KENTUCKY
49. Mazzoli	Julio	MICHIGAN
50. Williams	Joseph	MICHIGAN
51. Cain	Benjamin	WISCONSIN
51. Caro	Michael	MICHIGAN
53. Prilutsky	Stan	COLUMBUS
54. Schleis	Benjamin	MICHIGAN
55. Duclos	Cedric	MICHIGAN

56. Schlisman	Paul	ILLINOIS
57. Webster	Patrick	MICHIGAN
58. Lyon	Eric	MICHIGAN
59. Smith	Richard	ILLINOIS
60. Bollen	Viktor	MICHIGAN
61. Davis	Christophe	IOWA
62. Jacques	Josh	MICHIGAN
63. Lineberry	Chris	IOWA
64. Goodwin	Charles	ILLINOIS
65. Blankenbaker	Rick	ILLINOIS
66. Haynes	Stephen	MICHIGAN
67. Cameron	Gordon	MINNESOTA
68. DeMartino	Joe	ILLINOIS
69. Hetherton	Grant	ILLINOIS

Women's Foil

1. Marsh	Ann	MICHIGAN
2. Foldi	Julie	ILLINOIS
3T. Florendo	Jessica	ILLINOIS
3T. Wallrabenstein	Inga	MICHIGAN
5. Nemecek	Samantha	MICHIGAN
6. Abdikulov	Zoya	ILLINOIS
7. Wang	Christina	ILLINOIS
8. Douglas	Mary	MICHIGAN
9. Sarkisova	Dayana	MICHIGAN
10. Covault	Rachel	MINNESOTA
11. Sarkisova	Radmila	MICHIGAN
12. Hedien	Heather	COLUMBUS

Inside the game

OLYMPIC THRILLS, CHILLS

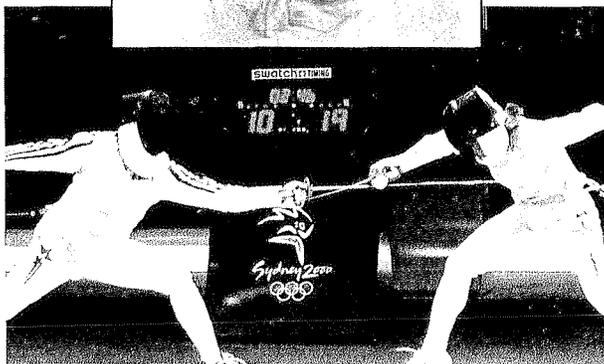
Felicia Zimmermann speaks on her career and experiences

Welcome to AMERICAN FENCING'S inaugural Ask an Athlete – our new forum where you, our readers and members, get to pick the brains of the country's top athletes for their training and competition tips.

Felicia Zimmermann, '96 and '00 Olympic veteran, kicks off the column in style this issue. Felicia, 28, is one of American fencing's most accomplished stars, and a pioneer of the success that U.S. fencing enjoys today. She became the first U.S. fencer ever to win a world cup championship, when she was crowned Junior World Cup Champion in 1995. She was also the first U.S. woman ever to win an individual world cup gold, in Pistoia, Italy, in 1993. She was a member of the fourth-place U.S. Women's Foil Team at the 2000 Olympics – the highest U.S. women's team finish ever in an Olympic Games – and was also a member of the bronze-medal 2001 World Championships women's foil team – another top result for a U.S. women's foil squad.

Felicia lives in Rush, N.Y. and trains at the Rochester Fencing Center with coach **Nat Goodhartz**. "For this opening column," she says, "I'll answer the question that I probably get the most often at the workshops I do: 'How did you like the Olympics?'"

FZ: How did you like the Olympics? I get that a lot. And I always say, it was the most amazing and the most



stressful experience in my life. It's amazing and horrible all at the same time.

The amazing part is the opening ceremonies. You've reached a place in your career where you can say I've made it as high as I can possibly go. The opening ceremony is a celebration of that. You're surrounded by other athletes from all around the world who trained their hearts, guts, blood, sweat and tears out; standing with them, you feel just so lucky to have made it.

The worst part is the day of competition. You're so nervous! You have just that one shot, it comes once every four

years, so it has that stigma to it. When you end up losing, taking fourth instead of third, it's the worst feeling you could ever possibly imagine. You think, "No, I'm not done yet!"

But at the same time, it's such a blessing – you did it, you're there. You feel grateful, and what runs through your head is that you didn't make it on your own but climbed a lot of shoulders. In that opening ceremony, you think of every single person who helped you take that step forward, climbing that mountain. You realize over and over you wouldn't be anywhere without your teammates. You worked for so long with all of them, and it feels like the luck of the draw that you made the team – it could have been any of them. You think of friends who took you out to dinner,

which meant \$20 you could put toward training; you think of all of the cards from elementary school classes from your hometown wishing you good luck. To this day, I have this towel that someone gave to me that says "Go for the gold" on it. You think of all your coaches. You're just in awe.

And I got to walk in with Iris [Felicia's sister, also a 2000 athlete] in Sydney, and we were just bawling! Everyone was cheering for you, it's a huge celebration of an accomplishment. It's cool. It's great and stressful at the same time. Everyone looks at you, looks up to you, telling you, "You're going to do it!" – it's an unbelievable

FencingDRILL

1. Fencer A pushes with two quick advances while fencer B gets away and then starts forward with a slow "rock" on the front foot while watching for a parry, or no blade reaction. If there is a parry, B must disengage and hit. If there is no reaction, B must finish with a beat attack. Fencer A accelerates his/her reaction with the disengage attack, or the beat attack.

2. Drill No. 1 is repeated with the element of movement added between actions. There is now a leader and a follower. The follower makes a quick double advance on one of the leader's advances and presents the blade. This is done as an interruption. The leader then responds with a quick double retreat, and a slow advance. The follower will then do the same actions as in drill #1. The follower can keep the blade where it is, and the leader will then do a beat attack. Or, the follower can try to parry the leader's blade on their advance, and the leader will then disengage and hit.

Comments: The change in direction may pose difficulties. It must be done quickly, and crisply. It is also difficult to retreat quickly, begin an advance immediately, but make the advance a slow one. The tempo change requires practice with just footwork drills. Even with a slow advance, it may be difficult to see, in time, whether the opponent is going to parry or not respond. The drill requires controlled footwork, explosiveness, direction change and tempo change.

Drill courtesy of Felicia's coaches Nat Goodhartz/Julianna Sikes, Rochester Fencing Center, New York. Goodhartz is also one of two U.S. national women's foil coaches.

amount of stress.

The Olympics is definitely something to strive toward – if you shoot for the moon and land on a star, you've still done something amazing. If I didn't make the team last time I'd still be training now – and I did, and I'm still training now!

But you don't have to be an Olympian to feel good about yourself – that just happened to be my goal. It takes an extreme amount of commitment, you put so much on hold – your life, your career; your family wonders what the heck you're doing sometimes. When you're younger you don't think about it as much, but as you get older, you're thinking, "What are you going to do when you finish with this?" You see that everyone around you has jobs and careers moving forward ... but then if you make it, wow. You've worked toward that goal and accomplished it and all those years of work become worth it. — AF

GOOD NEWS *for You*

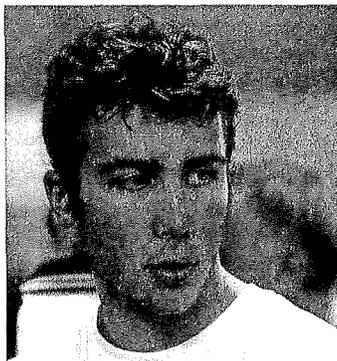


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Soren THOMPSON • 22, San Diego/New York Athletic Club/Princeton '04

Ranked first in the U.S. Senior, 36th in World Cup Standings. Soren started fencing in a recreational class at the University of Southern California Davis when he was seven years old. At the tender age of 12, he

began commuting over two hours several times each week to train in Los Angeles. More than a decade of effort paid off in a spectacular fashion as Soren became the first U.S. men's epee fencer in more than a decade to reach the top eight at the World Championships, in 2003.

Event: Men's Epee
Birth Date: May 5th, 1981 (San Diego, California)
Hometown: San Diego, California
Height: 6'-3"
Weight: 185 pounds
High School: Torrey Pines High School, Class of '99
College: Princeton University
Club: New York Athletic Club/Princeton
Coaches: Gago Demirchian, Yefim Litvan, Michel Sebastiani and Michael D'Asaro Sr.

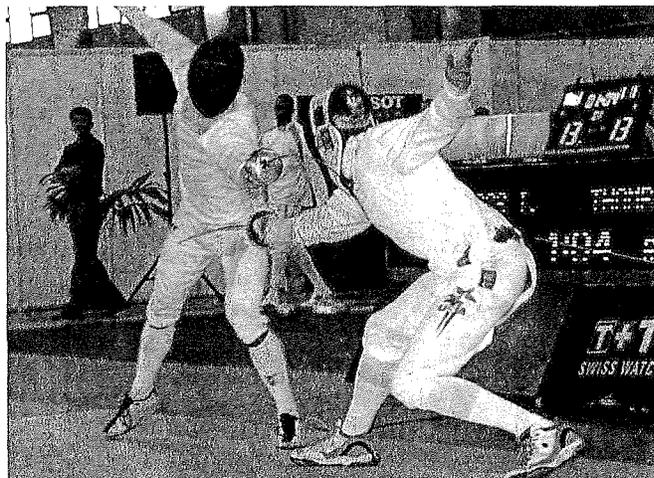
Career Highlights:

- 2nd, 2003 Division I National Championships and member, gold-medal team.
- 2001 NCAA National Champion and runner-up, 2002
- 7th, Senior "A" World Cup, Stockholm, Sweden, 6/02
- Gold, Copa del Mundo "B" World Cup; San Juan, Puerto Rico, 6/02
- April 2000 USOC Athlete of the Month, and California State Games all-sport Male Athlete of the Year, 1997 and 1998.

Favorite Swashbuckling Movie? "The Princess Bride is a classic and among my favorite swordfighting movies."

What is your favorite type of blade? "I use BF FIE blades exclusively. I generally look for stiff ones without any kinks or weak points."

Best Bouts So Far? "My favorite bout was my win against



Soren Thompson battles I. Kovacs of Hungary at the 2003 World Championships. Photo: Serge Timacheff

Kovacs to make the round of 32 at the World Championships. My comeback from a 13-14 deficit put me in the mindset to win the next two matches and make the final."

Soren Thompson meets with USAF psychologist and AF contributing writer John Heil during the World Championships in Cuba last year. Photo: Serge Timacheff

Worst Bout So Far? "My least favorite bout was my loss in the top eight to Khvorost at Worlds. I feel I lost my concentration towards the end of the match. After reviewing some tape of the bout, I'm confident that I would have won if I had stayed mentally tough."

Who inspires you? "I'm inspired by most epeeists who have achieved a high level of Olympic and international success, particularly those who innovate the sport. Of the active athletes, I have a great deal of respect for Kolobkov, Milanoli, Fischer and others."
 — AF





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OLYMPIC GAMES – 2004 EDITION

In less than one year, 8 months to be exact, the Olympic Games will be held in Athens, Greece, with Opening Ceremonies the evening of August 13, and the first day of fencing on August 14. The emblem of these Games is an olive wreath, which the Olympic winner was crowned in classical times. It is a symbolic ideal, peace and the city of Athens, whose sacred tree was the olive tree. Its circular shape projects universal meanings of the unity of the world, the circle of life and the link between time past and present.



Cartan Tours, Inc. as an Authorized Travel Company of the USOC, offers travel to the Athens Olympic Games consisting of accommodations, transportation and other services. For more details, visit their web site, www.cartan.com or call 1-800-360-2004.

Another resource is CoSport, an official sponsor of the 2004 U.S. Olympic Team and Athens 2004 Games, offers one stop Olympic Games shopping for packages that include tickets, accommodations, and other services to US consumers. For more details, visit their web site, www.cosport.com or call toll free, 1-877-457-4647.

In Athens nearly 200 countries will compete in 28 sports in 296 separate events. Aquatics (diving, swimming, synchronized swimming and water polo), archery, badminton, baseball, basketball, boxing, canoe-kayak, cycling, equestrian, fencing, field hockey, gymnastics, handball, judo, modern pentathlon, sailing, shooting, softball, soccer, table tennis, taekwondo, tennis, track and field, triathlon, volleyball, weightlifting and wrestling.

The delegations reside in the Olympic Village which is located at the foot of Mount Parnitha, a short distance from the Athens Olympic Sport Complex and will accommodate all athletes of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

FENCING AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Aug. 13 - Opening Ceremonies
Aug. 14 - Men's Sabre, Individual
Aug. 15 - Women's Epee, Individual
Aug. 16 - Men's Foil Individual
Aug. 17 - Women's Sabre, Individual
Men's Epee, Individual
Aug. 18 - Women's Foil, Individual
Aug. 19 - Men's Team Sabre
Aug. 20 - Women's Team Epee
Aug. 21 - Men's Team Foil
Aug. 22 - Men's Team Epee
Aug. 29 - Closing Ceremonies

Three worldwide sporting events will be hosted at the Indoor Arena and the Fencing Hall of the Helliniko Olympic Complex (a southern suburb of Athens). The preliminaries of basketball and the finals of handball will take place at the Indoor Arena and the preliminaries and finals of fencing, at the Fencing Hall. The Indoor Arena includes a 15,000-seated capacity area, whereas the Fencing Hall has two rooms: one of 3,500 seats for the preliminaries and a 5,000 seated room for the finals of fencing.

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2004 WORLD JUNIOR AND CADET CHAMPIONSHIPS

Between April 1 and April 8 the World Junior & Cadet Championships will be held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, an attractive city about an hour and half drive from Sofia. Each country is limited to three fencers in each weapon and in each age category. For the Junior category, fencers must be born between 1984 and 1990 and for the Cadet category, between 1987 and 1990. Not only must athletes meet the age criteria but they must be citizens of their country. It is up to each country to decide how fencers will be selected for those teams. The USFA uses its point standings extensively in selecting athletes for the team. There are instances when a fourth fencer may be taken in one or more weapons for the Junior team competitions. These instances will be at the recommendation of the national coach of the weapon.

The team point standings for selection of the team athletes are calculated according to the following description. Selection will be completed no later than February 25, 2004. The point totals are calculated as Group I sum plus Group II sum.

2004 WORLD JUNIOR (UNDER-20) CHAMPIONSHIPS

GROUP I = SUM OF FOUR HIGHEST POINTS EARNED AT 1-6

1. 2003 Under-19 National Championships
2. NAC Junior (Under-20) Jan. 2004
3. NAC Division I, Dec. 2003, Jan. 2004
4. 2004 Junior Olympic Under-20 Championships
5. Division I National Championships, July 2003
6. Group II competitions not included in Group II totals

GROUP II = SUM OF THE FOUR HIGHEST POINTS EARNED AT 7-9

7. Designated Junior "A"² World Cup¹ competitions³ [Sept. 1, '03 – Feb. 22, '04]
8. Designated Senior "A"² World Cup competitions³ [Nov. 1, '03 – Feb. 22, '04]
9. 2003 Senior World Championships

Points earned at Group II individual competitions not included in Group II total will be considered in Group I calculations
(CORRECTION TO ATHLETE HANDBOOK)

¹ The USFA six-weapon Junior "A" in November counted as a NAC Junior in Group I.

² Points awarded according to the Strength Factor applied to relevant columns in the USFA Point Table.

³ For international results to be included in team point standings the results must be received within 30 days of the competition and no later than five business days after the ending date for selection of members of the team (Section 3.6).

2004 WORLD CADET (UNDER-17) CHAMPIONSHIPS

GROUP I = SUM OF FOUR HIGHEST POINTS EARNED AT 1-7

1. 2003 Under-16 National Championships
2. 2003 Under-19 National Championships
3. NAC Cadet (Under-17) Oct. 2003¹
4. NAC Junior (Under-20) Jan. 2004¹
5. 2004 Junior Olympic Under-17 Championships
6. 2004 Junior Olympic Under-20 Championships
7. Group II competitions not included in Group II total

GROUP II = SUM OF THE FOUR HIGHEST POINTS EARNED AT 8-13,

8. NAC Division I, December 2003, Jan. 2004
9. Division I National Championships, July 2003
10. Designated Cadet "B" competition³
11. Designated Junior "A"² World Cup¹ competitions³ [Sept. 2003-Feb. 22, 2004]
12. Designated Senior "A"² World Cup competitions³ [Nov. 2003-Feb. 22, 2004]
13. 2003 Senior World Championships

Points earned at Group II individual competitions not included in Group II total will be considered in Group I calculations
(CORRECTION TO ATHLETE HANDBOOK)

RAY MILLER OLYMPIC FUND

Ray Miller, long time coach at William Patterson College in New Jersey who died in 2002, bequeathed to the US Fencing Association \$375,000. The Board of Directors decided that these funds would be dedicated to US athletes who are striving to win medals at the Olympic Games. Thus one half of the bequest has been set aside for the 2004 Olympic Games and the remainder to the 2008 Olympic Games. Grants are issued to athletes who are high in the FIE world standings.

In recognition of these accomplishments the athletes will be wearing a special patch honoring their benefactor, Ray Miller. The patch is the Ray Miller Award Recipient and there are now 8 athletes who have been awarded special grants from this fund: Chris Becker, Sada Jacobson, Emily Jacobson, Erinn Smart, Keeth Smart, Felicia Zimmermann, Iris Zimmermann, and Mariel Zaganis.

When you see a fencer wearing this patch, congratulate the fencer on his or her superb performances.

CORRECTION TO ATHLETE HANDBOOK

There are two errors in the Athlete Handbook, one regarding the wording of the selection criteria for the Junior and Cadet World teams and the other with the Men's Epee "A" competitions that will NOT be counted for either Group I or Group II.

World Junior and World Cadet Teams: The last criteria under Group I should read "Any competition considered in Group II but not counted in Group II points will be considered in Group I."

GROUP II FOR EACH WEAPON

M. EPEE Quota = 8 Fencers	Entry Deadline
Entry Request from top 16 Srs & top 8 Jrs	
10/5/03, World Championships	
1/24, Tallin EST	12/18/03
2/14, Bratislava, SVQ	1/6/04
2/21, Budapest, HUN	1/14/04
3/06, Bern, SUI	1/29/04
3/20, Vancouver, CAN	2/10/04
GROUP II = SUM OF 5 HIGHEST PTS ABOVE	

M. EPEE—Count for Group I	
1/10, Doha, QAT	11/12/03
1/31, Lisbon, POR	12/22/03
2/7, Barcelona, ESP	12/29/03
2/28, London, GBR	1/22/04
3/27, Bogota, COL	2/19/04
WILL NOT COUNT FOR GRP I OR II	
3/13 – PARIS, FRA.	

ATHLETE SELECTION CRITERIA – OLYMPIC GAMES & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS TEAM – WOMEN'S FOIL AND WOMEN'S SABRE – GROUP I POINTS PLUS GROUP II POINTS

WOMEN'S FOIL Quota = 8	Entry Deadline
Entry Request from top 16 Srs & top 8 Jrs	
10/5/03, World Championships	
1/31, Como, ITA	12/22/03
2/21, Salzburg, AUT	1/14/04
2/28, Incheon KOR	1/22/04
3/13, Athens, GRE	2/5/04
GROUP II = SUM OF 4 HIGHEST PTS ABOVE	

WOMEN'S SABRE Quota = 13	Entry Deadline
Entry Request from top 20 Srs & from 8 Jrs	
10/5/03, World Championships	
2/28, Budapest, HUN	1/22/04
3/20, Moscow, RUS	2/5/04
3/26, Lamezia, ITA	2/19/04
GROUP II = SUM OF 3 HIGHEST PTS ABOVE	

WOMEN'S EPEE Quota = 8	Entry Deadline
Entry request from top 16 Srs & top 8 Jrs	
10/2003, World Championships.	
1/24, Budapest	12/18/03
2/7, St. Maur, FRA	12/29/03
2/21, Tauber., GER	1/14/04
3/6, Luxembourg, LUX	1/29/04
3/27, Estoril, POR	2/19/04
GROUP II = SUM OF 5 HIGHEST PTS ABOVE	

MEN'S. FOIL Quota =9	Entry Deadline
Entry Request from top 16 Srs & top 8 Jrs	
10/5/03, World Championships	
12/6, Vienna, AUT	10/30/03
1/24, Paris, FRA	12/18/03
2/13, La Coruna, ESP	1/6/04
3/6, Shanghai, CHN	1/29/04
CAMP bet. CHN/EGY	
3/13, Cairo, EGY	1/29/04
3/27, St. Petersburg	2/10/04
GROUP II = SUM OF 5 HIGHEST PTS ABOVE	

MEN'S SABRE Quota = 10	Entry Deadline
Entry Request from top 16 Srs & from top 8 Jrs.	
10/5/03, World Championships	
1/31, Budapest, HUN	12/22/03
2/14, Bonn, GER camp in Germany after Bonn	1/6/04
3/12, Athens, GRE	2/5/04
3/20, Moscow, RUS	2/5/04
3/27, Plovdiv, BUL	2/19/04
GROUP II = SUM OF 5 HIGHEST PTS ABOVE	

GROUP I COMPETITIONS FOR POINTS FOR TEAMS QUALIFYING FOR OLYMPIC GAMES AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS TEAMS FOR WOMEN'S FOIL AND WOMEN'S SABRE

GROUP I – SUM OF TWO HIGHEST POINTS, 1-5

1. NAC Division I competitions [Dec. 2003, Jan. 2004]
2. 2004 Division I National Championships [April 2004]
3. European "B" Competitions [Dec. 2003- March 29, 2004]
4. Non Designated "A" Competitions [Dec. 2003- March 29, 2004]
5. Group II competitions for which points earned are not included in Group II sum

For those weapons in which no individual or team has qualified for the Olympic Games there is a Continental Olympic qualifying competition in April to which we can send one fencer. The selection criteria are as stated above EXCEPT that 2003 Division I Nationals is included in Group I instead of the 2004 Division I National Championships.

QUALIFYING PATHS TO SUMMER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The following reflects changes approved at the October 2003 USFA Board of Directors Meeting

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL QUALIFIERS FOR SUMMER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS BASED ON THE 25% RULE												
# Competitors	1	2	3 to 12	13-16	17-20	21-24	25-28	29-32	33-36	37-40	41-44	45-48
# Qualifiers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

QUALIFICATION FROM SECTION TOURNAMENTS

The Senior Section Championships is the qualifying competition for Division I-A. The Under-19 Section Championships is the qualifying competition for the Under-19 Championships

DIVISION I-A CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fencers must have been born no later than 1990 AND

- Place in the top 25% (with a minimum of 8) at the 2004 Senior Section Championships OR
- Placed in top 8 at the 2003 Division I-A National Championships OR
- Placed in top 4 at the 2003 Division II National Championships OR
- Be the current 2004 Under-19 Section Champion.

UNDER-19 CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fencer's must have been born between 1985 and 1991** AND

- Place in the top 25% at the 2004 Under-19 Section Championships OR
- Be on the Junior (Under-19) point standings as of May 1, 2004 OR
- Be in the top 16 of the Cadet (Under-16) point standings as of May 1, 2004.

** Athletes can fence in their Division or Section qualifying competitions for the Summer Nationals IF: 1) the athlete's birth year falls in that age bracket OR 2) the athlete is on the national rolling point standings in the next younger age bracket. For example, a fencer born in 1993, can fence in Youth 10 and Youth 12 at the Summer Nationals without any special qualification requirements. A fencer born in 1993 is eligible to fence in the Youth 14 Division's qualifying competition ONLY IF the fencer is on the current Youth 12 point standings. For that same fencer to be eligible to fence in the Division's Cadet (U-16) qualifying competition, the fencer must be listed on the current Youth 14 point standings. Current is defined as the point standings at the time of the qualifying competitions. A similar rule applies for qualifying competitions for the Under-19 Summer National Championships: if the athlete is younger than age criteria, the athlete must be on current Cadet standings.

QUALIFICATION FROM DIVISION TOURNAMENTS

DIVISION II CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fencers must have a classification in the weapon of "C", "D", "E" or Unclassified at the time of the qualifying competition AND born no later than 1991 AND

- Place in the top 25% of the 2004 Division Qualifying competition OR
- Qualify for Division I-A National Championships OR
- Qualify for the 2004 Under-19 National Championships in that weapon OR
- Qualify for the 2004 Under-16 National Championships in that weapon OR
- Placed in the top 4 at the 2003 Division III National Championships.

DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fencers must have a classification in the weapon of "D", "E" or Unclassified at the time of the qualifying competition AND have been born no later than 1991 AND

- Place in the top 25% of the total number of "D", "E" or "U" fencers competing in the 2004 Division's Division II Qualifying competition for the Division II National Championships OR
- If separate Division III qualifying competition held by Division, then top 25% of the field will qualify for Division III National Championships OR
- Qualify for Division I-A National Championships OR
- Qualify for the 2004 Under-19 National Championships in that weapon OR
- Qualify for the 2004 Under-16 National Championships in that weapon.

Just to be clear(er), the Div III qualifiers are:

- Chosen from among those Div II contestants who are D or below AND
- Did not qualify for Div II AND
- Their number is equal to 25% of the total number of D and under contestants.

UNDER-16 CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fencers must have been born between 1988 and 1991** AND

- Be on the Cadet (Under-16) point standings as of May 1, 2004 OR
- Place in the top 25% of the Division's U-16 qualifying competition OR
- Be in the Top 8 of the Youth 14 point standings as of May 1, 2004.

YOUTH 14 CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fencers must have been born between 1989 and 1992** AND

- Be on the Youth 14 NRPS as of May 1, 2004 OR
- Place in the top 25% of the Division's Youth 14 qualifying competition.

YOUTH-12 OPEN

Fencers must have been born between 1991 and 1994** AND

- Fenced in one Regional or Super Regional Youth Circuit competition in 2003-2004 season in that age category and that weapon OR
- Be on the Youth 12 national point standings as of May 1, 2004.

YOUTH-10 OPEN

Fencers must have been born between 1993 and 1996 AND

- Fenced in one Regional or Super Regional Youth Circuit competition in 2003-2004 season in that age category and that weapon OR
- Be on the Youth 10 national point standings as of May 1, 2004.

NRPS - National Rolling Point Standings

TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Based on number of different USFA Member Clubs represented at each of the 2004 Division's Division I Team, Senior Team, Under-19 Team qualifying competitions. Same qualification requirements for each of the three categories of team Championships

- Place in the top 50% (minimum of 2) of the 2004 Division qualifying competition **OR**
- Be a USFA member club that placed in the top 4 at the 2003 National Team Championships in that category of team championships.

Members of the team must be born no later than 1990.

NOTE 1: A division may hold either one Division I Team Championships to qualify clubs for Division I National Team Championships and Senior National Team Championships or separate Team qualifying competitions for each category.

VETERAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Any current competitive member born 1963 or earlier who has competed in

- 2004 Section Championships **OR**
- 2004 Division qualifying competition for Division II Championships in which only Veterans with a "C" classification or lower (D,E, or U) may compete **OR**
- any NAC during the 2003-2004 season.

For 2004, the Veterans Age Championships will be held in three age categories: "40-49" as of 1/1/04; "50-59", [9/2/44-9/1/54] and "60 and older" [9/1/44 or earlier] as of Sept. 1, 2004. The international fencing governing body (the FIE) has determined that age eligibility for the two age categories at the World Veterans Championships – 50-59 and 60 and older – will be as of the first of the month in which the Veterans World Championships are held.

EMAIL NEWSLETTER

US Fencing is in the process of setting up an email newsletter. An electronic newsletter, along with greater linkage to the usfencing.org website, will allow us to fully embrace new technologies, reduce production and distribution costs, and ultimately communicate more effectively, and with greater frequency, to members.

Your feedback on our new online initiative is welcome and encouraged. Members will have the opportunity to opt out of this service. If you wish to receive these email newsletters by USPS, please send a SASE to: USFA Newsletter, 1 Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

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Amateurism, Cash Prizes, and Eligibility

What you don't know can hurt you.

By Steve Sobel

Roger Clemens, pitcher for the New York Yankees, who earns millions of dollars each year, announced that he plans to retire from professional baseball at the end of this season, but was interested in winning an Olympic Gold Medal pitching for the USA Baseball team in Athens. Since he has violated no rules concerning Olympic eligibility, this is possible. On the other hand, if a college alumnus takes a high school fencer out to lunch and pays the check, even if the bill is only ten dollars, this violates NCAA recruiting rules and the high school fencer could lose eligibility to compete on the college fencing team. NCAA rules prohibit all gifts to student athletes and recruits, making no distinction between a \$50,000 sports car and a \$10 lunch. When it comes to reconciling conflicting eligibility rules, logic has been replaced by hypocrisy.

Eligibility to compete depends on which organization governs the particular competition, what the eligibility rules are, and whether the athlete has violated those rules. The rules of the international fencing federation (FIE), govern international fencing competitions. Since the rules of the USFA cannot be more restrictive than those of the FIE under federal law and the USOC Constitution, FIE eligibility rules also govern USFA Competitions. But FIE rules do not apply to college competitions, which are governed by the NCAA or to high school events, which are governed by each state high school association. In simple terms, a fencer accepting a cash prize does not violate FIE rules and will not lose eligibility to compete in World Championships or the Olympics. However, accepting a cash prize violates NCAA rules and will result in a loss of collegiate eligibility.

The following motion was on the agenda of the USFA Board of Directors the meeting during the 2003 nationals:

"Resolved that because the USFA has adopted the FIE standards on amateurism and because the FIE no longer restricts the award of prizes in fencing competitions, prizes may be awarded in USFA sanctioned events"

This motion changes nothing. If the FIE permits cash prizes, the USFA rules cannot be more restrictive. It will still violate NCAA rules. Fencers concerned with college eligibility cannot win cash prizes, and must not accept them.

High School and college fencers must exercise caution. If you violate NCAA rules you can be subject to sanctions that can include loss of eligibility. Ignorance of the rules, or receiving incorrect advice is no defense. What should you do? Learn the rules. Ask only a responsible authority for the correct interpretation. The best source is usually the compliance officer in the Athletic Department of the College or High School. If in doubt, don't do it. It is better to be safe than sorry.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee was appointed in July and has submitted their selection of nominees for officers of the USFA for the period September 2004 through August 2008.

President:	Nancy Anderson
Vice President:	Sam Cheris
Vice President:	Ro Sobalvarro
Vice President:	Ed Wright
Secretary:	Linda Merritt
Treasurer:	Derek Cotton

EXCERPTS FROM USFA BYLAWS, 2001 – ARTICLE XXV

2. Section Nominations by Petition. Additional nominations may be made on the written petition of not less than two percent of the voting membership as of the close of the preceding membership year (18,066 members or 362 signatures) with at least twenty-five members from each of three different Sections signing the petition. For a signature on a petition to be valid, it must be signed by a member eligible to vote in the election for which the petition is intended, and legibly show the first and last names and divisional affiliation of the signer. A petition may designate one or more persons as candidates. No petition shall serve to nominate candidates for office unless the original of all parts thereof is received in the National Office and a copy is received by the Secretary (Donald Anthony) before April 1 of the year (2004) in which the election is to be conducted. Proof of mailing by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, or by private delivery service guaranteeing delivery within two days and providing proof of delivery, postage or shipping prepaid, properly addressed to the intended recipient, not less than 10 days before due, shall raise a presumption of timely delivery to the addressee.
3. Section No Voting by Slates. Candidates for office stand for election as individuals. Ballots shall not take into account or provide for a vote for any candidate to be tied or joined to a vote for any other candidate.
4. Section Election Committee. The Election Committee consists of five members, four elected by the Board of Directors (Marshall Hibnes, Sasha Zucker, George Masin, and Bob Cochrane) and one athlete to be named by Athlete Advisory Group.
 - a) The Election Committee shall be responsible to fairly administer the election of National officers. Only voting members of the USFA may serve on the Election Committee. The Committee shall validate the submissions of all candidates for nomination by petition; shall enforce such electoral rules not inconsistent with these Bylaws as the Board of Directors may adopt; shall provide for the mailing, validation and tallying of ballots; shall certify the results of the election; and shall arbitrate, after notice and an opportunity to be heard, the grievances of any interested party concerning electoral procedures. Each candidate for the office of President may designate a representative to attend meetings of the Committee, and reasonable notice shall be given to said representative to provide for fair opportunity to attend all meetings of the Committee, but not at the expense of the USFA. The proceedings of the Committee shall be open, except for deliberations in arbitration and consultations with counsel concerning legal matters within the protection of the attorney-client privilege.
5. Section Uncontested Elections. If no additional timely nominations have been made for any office, then the nominees of the Nominating Committee for such office or offices shall be certified by the Election Committee as having been unanimously elected.
6. Section Ballots for Contested Elections. When more than one candidate has been nominated for an office, the Election Committee shall provide for voting by secret ballot as follows:
 - (i) Notice of the contested election and the names of the duly qualified candidates shall be mailed by first class mail to each member entitled to vote therein. Notice shall be sent to each such member at the address last designated by the member in writing to the National Office of the organization or, failing such designation, in care of the Secretary of the member's Division. Such notice shall be mailed not later than May 1 of the year in which the election is to be conducted; shall indicate the offices being contested and the duly qualified candidates, identifying those who were nominated by petition; shall include those portions of any report of the Nominating Committee which relate to the contested offices and statements provided by the candidates at their option, the length of which may not exceed one page of 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper copied on both sides; and shall include a form of ballot and a sealable return envelope.
7. Section Elections by Majority. The National officers of the USFA shall be elected by a majority of the votes cast. Voting members must be 18 or older as of February 1, 2004 whose membership has been received by the USFA office and paid in full by February 1, 2004.

2004 CALENDAR (Subject to Change)

Dates	Entry Deadline	Tournament	Location
Jan. 10 – 12, 2004	Dec. 10	NAC Div. I/Junior: M.Epee, M.Sabre, W. Sabre	San Jose, CA
Jan. 16 – 18, 2004	Dec. 16	NAC Div. I/Junior: M. Foil, W. Foil, W. Epee	San Jose, CA
Feb. 13 – 16, 2004	Jan. 22	JUNIOR OLYMPIC FENCING CHAMPS. Feb. 13 - JMS, CWF, CME Feb. 14 - JWS, CWE, CMF Feb. 15 - JWF, JME, CMS Feb. 16 - JWE, JMF, CWS	Cleveland, OH
Mar. 12 – 15, 2004	Feb. 12	NAC Division II, III, Veterans	Arlington, TX
Mar. 25 – 28, 2004		NCAA Fencing Championships	Brandeis Univ.
Apr. 1 – 8, 2004		World Junior & Cadet Championships	Plovdiv, Bulgaria
Apr. 23– 26, 2004	March 23	Div. I National Championships, NAC Youth, Wheelchair National Championships	Atlanta, GA
April 24-25, 2004		Continental Olympic Qualifying Tournament Women's Foil, Men's Foil, Women's Sabre	Bolivia
April 2004		Continental Olympic Qualifying Tournament Women's Epee, Men's Epee, Men's Sabre	Mexico
June 11 – 14, 2004		Senior "A"***: M. Sabre, W. Sabre, W. Foil World Team Championships - W. Sabre, W. Foil ***U.S. Fencer must be on Sr. Point standings to enter	New York City, NY
July 3 – 11, 2004	May 27	SUMMER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	Charlotte, NC
Aug. 13 – 29, 2004		OLYMPIC GAMES	Athens, GRE
Aug. 14-22, 2004		Fencing at the Olympic Games	Helliniko Complex
Sept. 3-5, 2004		Veterans World Championships	Krems, Austria
Sept. 17 – 28, 2004		PARALYMPIC GAMES	Athens, GRE
Sept. 18 – 23, 2004		Paralympic Fencing Competitions	Helliniko Complex

INTERNATIONAL MEDALISTS

Max Williams, 2nd, Cadet MS, POL
 Rebecca Ward, 1st, Cadet WS, POL; 3rd, Junior "A" WS, ITA
 Jonathan Berkowsky, 2nd, Cadet MS, HUN
 Mera Keltner, 1st, Cadet WS, HUN
 Nicholas Chinman, 2nd, Junior "A" ME, SVK; 3rd, Cadet ME, GER
 Abigail Emerson, 2nd, Cadet WF, SVK
 Arielle Pensler, 3rd, Cadet WF, SVK
 Clayton Kenney, 3rd, Cadet ME, GER
 Mariel Zagunis, 1st, Junior "A" WS, ITA
 Kamara James, 1st, Junior "A" WE, ITA; 2nd, Junior "A" ME, SVK
 Emily Cross, 1st, Junior "A", WF, ITA
 Tim Hagamen, 2nd, Junior "A", MS, GER

2004 SUMMER CAMP LISTINGS

The next issue of the USFA National Newsletter in March will contain the summer camp listings. If you would like to have your summer camp listed, contact Chris Cuddy at the USFA office.

The cost to list your camp is \$60, which also includes posting to the USFA website. The deadline for submitting summer camp ads is February 20, 2004.

FIE CONGRESS

In November the FIE held its bi-annual Congress and many of you have accessed the FIE Web site and read the Press Release summarizing actions at the Congress. Please note that it is a press release and not the official documentation which the USFA will review. The USFA Board of Directors will determine which of the changes it will implement for the USFA for the following season. It is important to note that none of these changes will take effect internationally this season. The USFA will consider the likelihood that some of the changes will start in the next season. Some foil changes require retooling or redoing chips for the scoring machines. It is not known at this time when those equipment modifications can occur. The USFA will inform its membership via the web and the National Newsletter what changes it has adopted and the timeline for such changes.

Rumors persist, but the WHITE light in FOIL will continue, and for foil the bib will remain off target. Several of the changes reflect the decision of the FIE to reduce the "flick" action and to make the weapon more appealing to television.

US FENCING TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

NORTH AMERICAN CUP "E": Division II/Division III/Veteran

Arlington, TX – March 12-15, 2004

REGISTRATION SCHEDULE

Date	M. Épée	M. Foil	M. Sabre	W. Épée	W. Foil	W. Sabre
Friday, Mar 12		Division II	Veteran	Division III		Division III
Saturday, Mar 13	Veteran	Division III		Division II	Veteran	Division II
Sunday, Mar 14	Division II	Veteran	Division III	Veteran	Division II	Veteran
Monday, Mar 15	Division III		Division II		Division III	

Venue:

Arlington Convention Center
1200 Ballpark Way
Arlington, TX 76011
www.arlingtoncc.com

Headquarter Hotel:

Hilton Hotel
2401 Lamar Boulevard
Arlington, TX 76006
Rate: \$99

Overflow Hotel:

Holiday Inn Express Six Flags
2451 E. Randol Mill Road
Arlington, TX 76011
Rate: \$79

US Fencing rate only available by making hotel reservations through:

Contact Tournament Housing Services (THS)
Official Housing Company of US Fencing
<http://www.ths-usf.com>
888-536-TEAM (8326)

Travel:

Guide Travel: (800) 836-6072 or
United Olympic Desk: (800) 841-0460.
Mention USFA for discounted rates.

Avis rental car call 1-800-331-1600.
US Fencing's
Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD)
Number is B740999

NORTH AMERICAN CUP "F": Youth

Division I National Championships

Wheelchair National Championships

Atlanta, GA – April 23-26, 2004

REGISTRATION SCHEDULE

Date	M. Épée	M. Foil	M. Sabre	W. Épée	W. Foil	W. Sabre
Friday, Apr 23	Youth 14	Division I	Youth 12	Division I	Youth 14	Youth 10
		Wheelchair		Wheelchair		
Saturday, Apr 24	Youth 12	Youth 10	Youth 14	Youth 10	Youth 10	Division I
		Div I Team	Wheelchair	Div I Team	Wheelchair	Youth 12
Sunday, Apr 25	Division I	Youth 12	Division I	Youth 14	Division I	Div I Team
	Wheelchair		Youth 10		Youth 12	
Monday, Apr 26	Youth 10	Youth 14	Div I Team	Youth 12	Div I Team	Youth 14
	Div I Team					

Youth 14 ME and Youth 14 WF camps, Saturday, April 24.

Venue:

Georgia World Congress Center
285 Andrew Young Int'l Blvd. NW
Atlanta, GA 30313
www.gwcc.com

Hotel:

Westin Hotel Peachtree Plaza
210 Peachtree St.
Atlanta, GA
Rate: \$99.95

US Fencing rate only available by making hotel reservations through:

Contact Tournament Housing Services (THS)
Official Housing Company of US Fencing
<http://www.ths-usf.com>
888-536-TEAM (8326)

Travel:

See NAC E information above

DIVISION I CHAMPIONSHIPS QUALIFYING PATHS

Fencers must be born no later than 1990 AND

- Be on the National Senior NRPS on Mar. 1, 2004 OR
- Be in the top 8 of the Junior (U-20) NRPS on March 1, 2004 OR
- Be in the top 4 of the Cadet (U-17) NRPS on March 1, 2004 OR
- Placed in the top 8 in the 2003 Division I-A National Championships OR
- Placed in the top 4 in the 2003 Division II National Championships OR
- In men's epee and women's epee be one of three athletes named by the U.S. Modern Pentathlon Association.



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