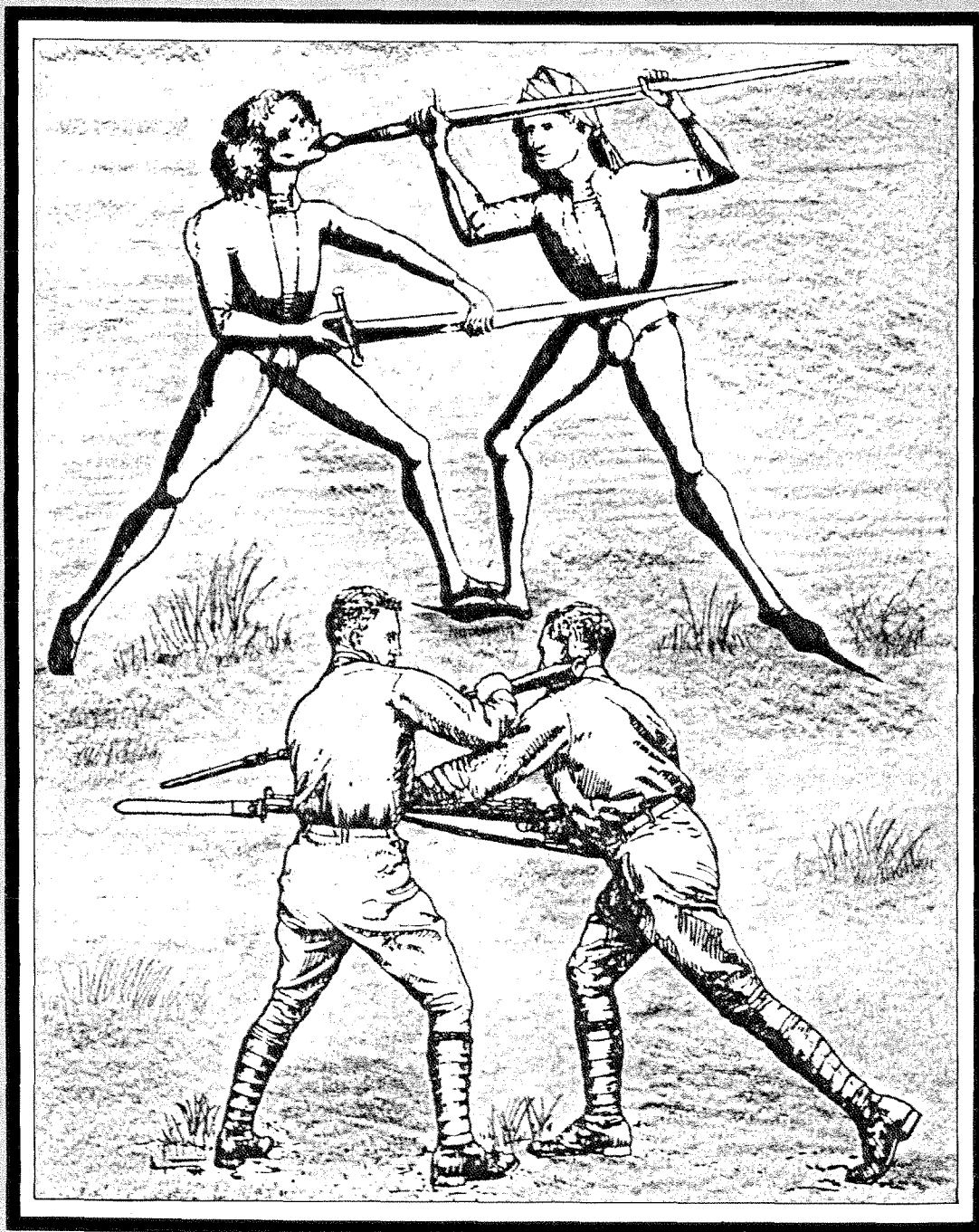


Sept/Oct/Nov 1987

American

FENCING



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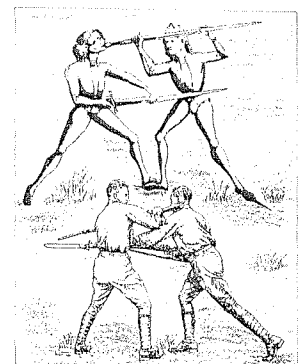
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On The Cover
Two figures, showing the evolution of tactical weapon techniques over a period of more than five hundred years.



The More Things Change —

The cover of this issue of *American Fencing* came into being quite by accident. I was given a present of a book on cut and thrust weapons which is an excellent source of interesting fencing illustrations. Alexander Hern, a fencing teacher and a friend who has had tremendous influence in shaping my fencing technique, smiled upon seeing the page showing the upper woodcut. He turned to his library shelves, drew out a book on "modern bayonet techniques", and turning to a page which showed the lower drawing, said "Now this is a remarkable juxtaposition"—and as I studied the two drawings, the more I realized how identical they were and how much truth there is in that old saying, "the more it changes, the more it remains the same". And a cover was born.

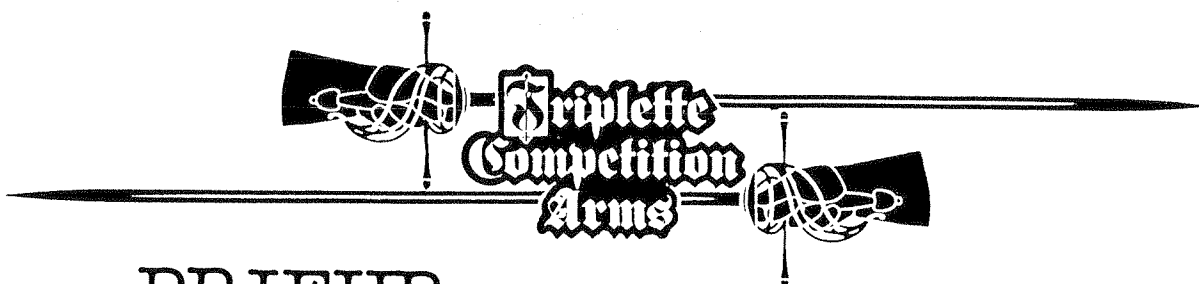
The apparent lack of progress is not just imagined. Weapons have changed dramatically in weight and shape, yet the basic techniques are perpetuated from generation to generation. In foil, we still teach that we must parry with the "strong" against the "weak", denying the true effectiveness of the beat. "Electrification" of the weapon has not had real effect on technique—the game only becomes more physical and aggressive. And this was more likely due to the changes

in training regimens and the granting of significant rewards for winning introduced by the Russians after their first Olympic experience in Helsinki, 1952.

The slow progress (change is not necessarily progress) is not unique to fencing—it exists in other fields and other disciplines. The primary reason for the arduous progress can be stated simply. It is that people teach what they were taught rather than what they have learned from their own experience. The moment they assume the mantle of teacher and act out their new role they imitate and emulate their old and beloved fencing master. They teach and say "do as I say, not as I do". And herein lies the problem. Clones of our fencing masters are coaching and without being aware of what they are doing, strip the benefit of their learning from their teaching.

The article, "Introductory", is the introduction to a book written over forty years ago—a book never published because the manuscript, rich with excellent illustrations, was lost. These words, written so long ago, are completely apropos and illustrate even further how little things have changed.

the Editor



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On The Development of Young Fencers

by Eric Rosenberg

For too long American fencing administrations, fraught with factionalism and regional politics, have been unable to develop a cohesive long-term development program for the younger fencers. Now that we are the beneficiaries of a substantial endowment from the USOC, the question that everyone is reluctant to ask aloud is becoming more difficult to ignore—Why can't we create an ongoing training program that produces world-class fencers?

I believe we can.

In order to create such programs we must first study the examples of successful countries, adapt them to the limitations and conditions that exist here in the United States, and then muster the necessary commitment to follow through on a long-term basis.

American fencers have long argued that because the U.S. is a country with no "established tradition" of fencing, it can't compete with Eastern and Western European "super powers". The emergence of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and East and West Germany from relative obscurity as major fencing powers would suggest otherwise.

What all the "super-powers" seem to have in common is some form of organized junior development program. For example, in the USSR and West Germany pre-adolescent children are exposed to a wide range of sports and are encouraged to participate. Each local club attempts to recruit as many as 100 prospective fencers, to whom they offer group instruction, stressing the basics, while encouraging bouts and intra-group competition as early as possible. During the course of the year, natural attrition occurs, and that original group usually reduces to about 20—those most motivated and talented. The coaches then "zero in" on the 3 or 4 individuals who show the greatest aptitude and coach them extensively. These few are fed into an existing competitive field where perhaps only one will have a potential for success on a national level. This "sole survivor" is then co-opted into the national squad. Although these numbers are not presented as strictly accurate and representative scientific sampling of international experience, the general concept of pyramiding within a fencing center is widely practiced.

The developing fencer is guided to specific schools to facilitate his or her growth as a student/athlete. Ultimately, job opportunities are made available to the serious competitor that permits a successful athletic career that is not at the expense of a post-competitive avocation.

Stated simply, the three fundamental phases of the many development programs currently in operation are as follows:

1. Recruitment of a large field of young potential talent, provide them with basic instruction and encourage competition within the group.
2. After natural attrition occurs, selection of those most talented, based on competitive results, motivation and coaches evaluation and provide this smaller group more extensive training.
3. Centralization of talent to create the strongest competitive and training environment, while providing educational and career opportunities.

The first step in adapting this model is finding suitable sites. It seems logical to look for an area with a high popula-



Saturday mornings at the Fencers' Club

photo by A. Axelrod

tion density (to obtain young recruits), and an existing infrastructure for fencing (clubs, schools and qualified coaches). For these reasons, I believe New York to be ideal. It has several well established fencing clubs with nationally prominent coaches, an under-exploited high school fencing program that has been in place for over fifty years, and a number of colleges of high academic standing and excellent fencing teams.

Were each major club in New York to recruit fifty to one hundred junior high-school students ranging in age from 12 to 15 and teach them the basics in daily group lessons, we could successfully complete "phase one" of the program. Students could then be directed to high school programs where their competitive results would help the coaches select and focus on potential talent. By the age of fourteen, a truly talented fencer would be receiving lessons from a qualified coach. This coaching, along with rigorous after-school competitive peer group training sessions would create the pyramid effect that produces highly successful junior fencers. At age 17, members of this group would then be encouraged to enter one of the many local colleges with fencing teams. The continuity of the program—in coaching and centralization of a strong competitive training environment—could be maintained over a ten year period. After completing college, an expanded Olympic Job Development Committee could function to help place athletes in career positions which could accommodate their training schedules.

Similar models to the one I have proposed have been run successfully on a small scale in Canada by Jean-Pierre LeCoz. He began his programs without "federation" help and developed some fine world-class fencers, as did Emil Beck, the controversial head coach of Tauber-Bishofsheim in West Germany who is grudgingly credited with the rise of German fencing.

The Fencers Club of New York has, for over ten years, been running a Saturday morning training program which provides free group and private lessons for hopeful fencers ranging in age from 12 through 16 years. Attendance runs from thirty to fifty per session and continues for ten months of the

n The Development —

(Continued)

ar. Many come to the club during the summer where they continue to practice and receive help.

This program has been ably chaired by Professor Julia Jones-Pugliese of Hunter College with help from several top level active and retired fencers on a strictly voluntary basis and no assistance from the national organization. This truly grass roots program has contributed to the development of many notable fencers such as Sharon Montplaisir, Lisa Piazza, William Mindel and Tzu Moy and continues to do so. Ideally, if this program could be expanded to three or five days a week on a year-round basis, its results would be even more dramatic.

Another area which has potential is the Los Angeles area under the guidance of the Westside Fencing Center. This group has benefited from a significant \$20,000 grant from the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles. However, their current task is to build that infra-structure of high-school fencing programs in order to enter "phase one" of a good development program.

Other coaches who have focused on junior development in this way, notably Joe Peckinsky in Boston and Bill Reith in Cleveland, have produced excellent results in the junior ranks.

There is no doubt that there are other major cities which can embark on such a program—it is essential that the coaches and fencers of those cities lay the necessary groundwork as best they can and demonstrate to the USFA that they have reached a point where they are ready for subsequent program phases and hopefully receive the funds essential to expand their efforts.

Currently, a significant portion of the junior development budget is spent on one or two-week long summer camps. Qualified juniors from all over the country are sent to these camps where they take lessons, fence and are taught the overall training techniques. While these camps are politically expedient, they are a poor substitute for year-round supervised training. *The funding of year-round programs at selected salles and clubs would allow for the development of disciplined*



Volunteers Chaba, Julia, and Eric relax. photo by A. Axelrod
programs and ultimately to the development of strong junior training centers.

Obviously, the implementation of these plans is not easy. It requires the coordination of people and resources not easily coordinated. It requires a long-term commitment to a specific project—something the USFA has been unwilling (or unable) to undertake. It requires the centralization of financial resources and talents into areas which fit the model and has the potential to meet the prescribed objectives. This requirement has been vehemently resisted by the many regions which cannot possibly undertake such programs—regions to which successive administrations have catered to out of political considerations.

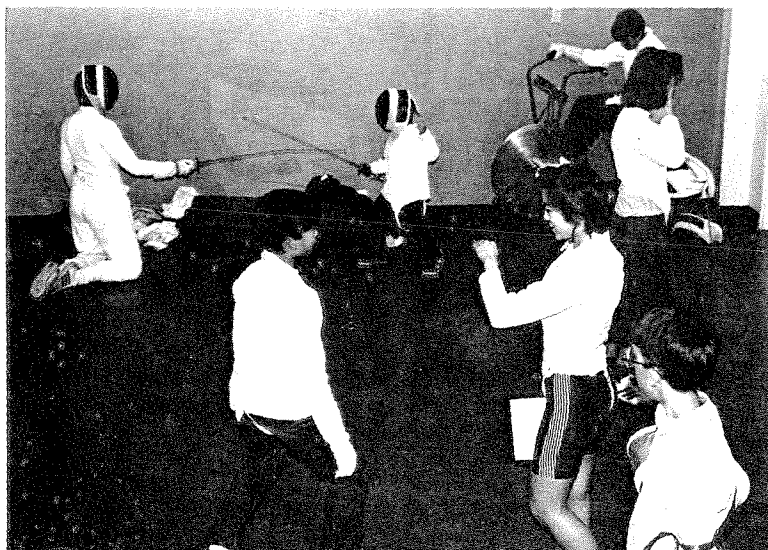
But what has the status quo yielded so far? The talent pool that exists in the United States remains unexploited. Younger fencers of proven ability have limited outlets for developing their talents and successful college fencers drop out of fencing due to career conflicts and lack of direction.

And everyone wonders why we cannot produce world-class fencers!

And On Other Fronts

Other fencing clubs and community centers are attacking the problem as well as they can. The Palo Alto Jewish Community Center is one such of many, and as can be seen from the photo on the right, they are really going after the young! And of course, the coaches are also volunteers.

In the background, Lisa Posthumus is giving a lesson to 7 year old Jonathan Huang. Jenny Posthumus wipes her brow as she prepares for the next youngster. In the foreground, Jessica Yu gives footwork instruction to Randy Lee under the observing eye of Aaron Hartzman.



Training for the very young!

photo by Connie Yu

Don't Throw it away

by Marty Kirshner, Instructor,
Westside Fencing Center

The sophomore fencer gets on the strip and attempts to put into play all the wonderful actions he has added to his repertoire in his most recent encounters with his fencing coach. A period of frustration ensues. Very little seems to work. How come it goes so well in the lesson structure and fails so ignominiously in the bout situation. The classic "one-two on the advance" proceeds directly to the target in perfect rhythm with the footwork during the lesson but meets with very limited success when attempted in a bout. There must be some rational reason. There is, or rather, there are, for in most cases the reasons are in the plurality. Those of us who indulge in the secondary hobby of golf will tell you that the seemingly simple action of swinging the club is made up of many parts. The misapplication of any one of them will cause the ball to go anywhere but "straight down the middle". So it is in fencing. A lack of coordination in body movement or timing causes the planned action to go astray.

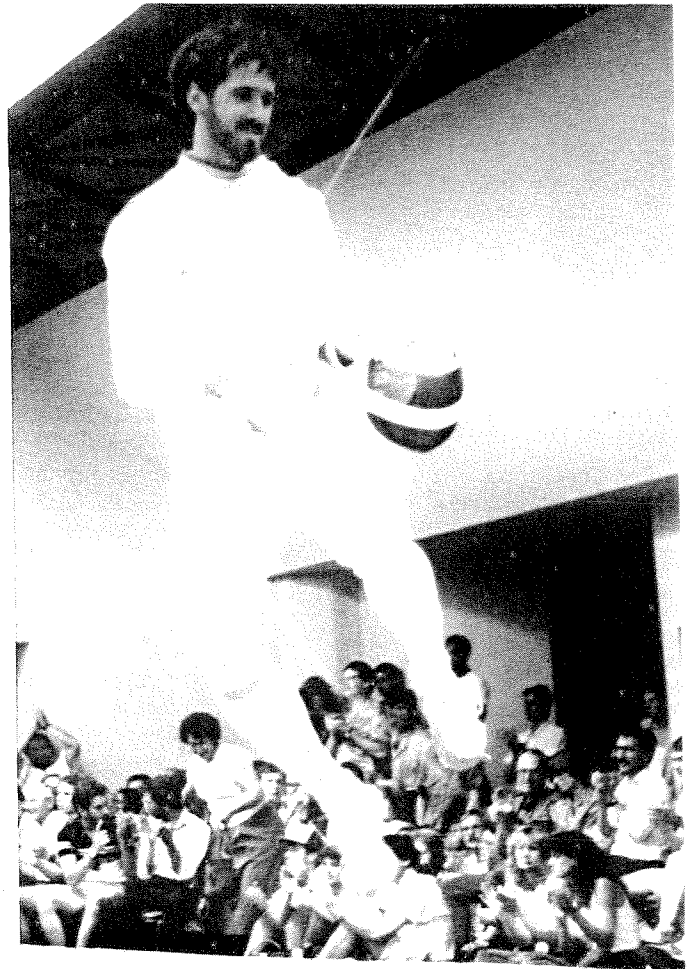
One of the most obvious differences between the lesson and the bout is, of course, the fact that the teacher presents an almost classic response in distance, timing, and complementary movement which enables the student to hit with the prescribed action, while an opponent attempts to do exactly the opposite. When the coach instructs his pupil to make a "one-two", the pupil may be assured that the coach will make a lateral parry. In a bout, the provoked parry may, just as easily, be a counter, thereby frustrating the attack. I mention this to acknowledge the obvious, but the purpose of this essay lies in another direction.

When the attacks launched by the beginning and intermediate fencer fail it is usually because they have "thrown away the feint." All effort and enthusiasm has been lavished on the final thrust to the exclusion of all else. In attacks such as the "one-two" or the "double" it is difficult to impress on the neophyte that the feint of a disengage is more important than the second action. Since the action of the attacker is subordinate to the defense of the opponent, it becomes imperative that the preparation and feint draw an expected response so that the opponents blade may be controlled or evaded. If the feint is not effective (threatening) then the response, if any, will probably not be what is needed to complete the anticipated action. One frequently sees beginning fencers start a "one-two" from a closed line, make an ineffective feint, and end up back in the same closed line because their opponent never responded.

When working with new people, care should be taken in the verbal description of an action. For example, a "one-two" should not be described as "two disengages in opposite directions" but rather as "a feint of a disengage and the deception of a lateral parry," placing the emphasis on the "feint of a disengage." A "double" is a "feint of a disengage and the deception of a circular parry." Early instruction in attacks should include a great number of actions starting with a "feint of straight thrust" thus laying emphasis on effectively threatening the target. This, coupled with an advance, creates the illusion of a full attack lending credence to the feint. It must be convincing. The opponent must believe he is facing the actual attack. The attacking fencer must believe in it from the waist up. After all, basically, the feint is the most essential part of the attack prior to the lunge.

Fencers inculcated with the perception of a good feint in

their early training never lose it. Whether it be a false attack in second intent or an action involving the deception of a parry, the concept is the same—threaten the target. The feint creates the opportunity for the touch. Don't throw it away.



Michael Marx walks on air after his record-setting 6th consecutive Men's National Foil Championship title

photo by Frank Widder

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Introductory

by Alexander Hern

In a book which everyone has read¹, the hero, an amateur naturalist, records a peculiar experience among a tribe of South American Indians. To while away the time, he fashioned several foils of wood and gave demonstrations to the native youngsters, who never ceased to be amazed at his great skill with the strange weapon. One of the boys patiently took fencing lessons and then "no sooner was he in position, foil in hand, than all my instructions were thrown to the winds, and he would charge and attack me in his own barbarous manner, with the result that I would send his foil spinning a dozen yards away, while he, struck motionless, would gaze after it in open-mouthed astonishment."

The Indian boy was *socially* incapable of engaging seriously in the new game. His reliance on a poisoned spear for self-protection and food, precluded any preparation for the subtleties of the foil (or foil-fencing).

In primitive societies the principle tool is also the chief weapon. Thus the stone-hatchet of the Maoris was used to hollow out canoes, to drive posts for huts, to grub roots, to break firewood, to kill animals for food, to strip the meat from the bones when eating and to fight the enemy. Certain African, Australian and South American tribes who spend much of their time on the water, sharpen their canoe-paddles into swords, or propel the craft with their spears. Other tribes "make their baskets with their sharpened spearheads; and the . . . Kafirs . . . still shave themselves with the assegai."²

Even in comparatively advanced societies, whenever a tool serves an all-around purpose, it also becomes the sword. The machete of tropical America, in addition to its domestic uses as a knife, axe and scythe, is a hunting and fighting weapon. It served the natives as their chief instrument of warfare in the Cuban revolution, and remains to this day the symbol of struggle of the Mexican peasants and laborers.

With weapons of such a general nature the art of fencing has always remained at a rudimentary stage. There could be no science of fencing until the sword became a specialized weapon. And, to return once more to Hudson's savage—the society which did not provide any specialized tools unfitted its members to develop a specialized art of the sword, or to appreciate such an art brought to them from the outside.

It was not until the emergence of well-constructed societies where specialization of duties was highly developed, that the Sword acquired its unique function. This does not mean that once freed of its domestic duties, the Sword rapidly developed into a highly scientific instrument. Quite the contrary. Each new principle of Fence was "discovered" only in reflection of the social culture of the times. Castle, in his great work on the history of modern fencing³, gives us three examples of this process:

"The rough untutored fighting of the Middle Ages represented the reign of brute force in social life as well as in Politics. The stoutest arm and the weightiest sword won the day, even as did the sturdiest baron or the most warlike king. Those were the days of crushing blows with mace or glaive, when a knight's superiority in action depended on his power of wearing heavier armour and dealing heavier blows than his neighbor, when strength was lauded more than skill, and minstrels sang of enchanted blades that nought could break.

"Later on, after the Renaissance, when life was taken more easily, the depressing armour was discarded in the private walks of life. The discovery of a greater variety of interests and pleasures induced men to lead a more active existence, and they began to walk where before they had ridden in state, reduced the dimensions of their ancestor's sword, and . . . came to rely on their agility and cunning to make up for the scantier protection of cloak or hand buckler . . . in the absence of any very definite mode of self-defense (which had yet to be invented), everyone indulged in as much fantasy in his sword-play as his individual energy enabled him to carry out. The prevailing idea was the discovery of a 'botte secrete' and a 'universal parry', which was to the fencer of those times what the philosopher's stone was to the alchemist or the Eldorado to the mariner. Those were the days of the 'Rapier' and of the companion of its infancy, the dagger. It corresponds in character to the Elizabethan, and later on, to the Cavalier period. . . The rapier was as elegant and vicious as its ancestor was sturdy and brutal, its practice as fantastic as the prevailing taste in speech and literature and notions of the outer world."

"Through the whole of the 18th century, the use of the *small* sword was carefully and almost exclusively cultivated, and the refinements introduced were in due course applied to the other weapons. . . .

"Here, again, it is noticeable how the manner of using the sword in that century reflects some of its chief features. The light, elegant small sword, managed by the wrist and with a comparatively small expenditure of strength, though at the same time, if anything, even more deadly than the rapier, seems, in truth, a fit weapon wherewith to settle quarrels between bewigged, beruffed, and bepowdered gentlemen, in a courteous and highly refined manner.

"Small sword fencing, with its simplified guards, correct attitudes and regular movements, is obviously characteristic of the age which appreciated the polished and precise style of Addison, Pope and Hume, just as the wild impulsive and imaginative rapier and dagger play tallies in our minds, with the involved and hyperbolic speech of Elizabeth and James's courtiers."

(The reader who took up this book in the hope of learning something about a new method of fencing must by this time be growing impatient at my lengthy excursion into the past. He is asked to follow a little longer. I am attempting to point a direction as well as expound a technique.)

Castle gives us one more illustration—this time an unconscious one—of how the swordsman is bound by the dominant customs of his day. After upbraiding many an old master for not being "bold enough in his innovations" to advance to the next "obvious" principle, he reveals his own attitude toward innovation by assuming that "the theory of fencing has long since reached its culminating point": he refers to "the science—now so complete," "our perfect method of lunging and recovering," and the successful reduction of "the movements of the weapon and hand to the smallest practical limits." It is a prominent fact that the writer-swordsman in every age has felt assured of having witnessed, if not assisted, the fullest flowering of the fencing art, and that any further develop-

Introductory

(Continued)

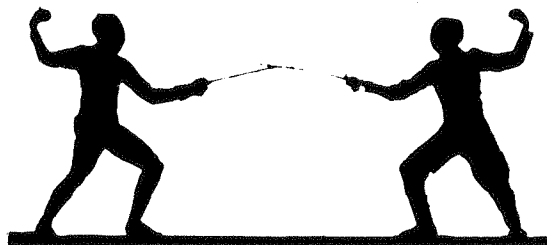
ment could lead only to decadence. In brief, the most brilliant and creative teachers have never been able to escape from their own cultural environment. They were able to “perfect” the science for their own day. It is equally up to ourselves to carry it forward in the present.

Although it has already been left behind on the fencing-strips by some of our young competitive foilsmen⁴, Castle’s conception of the perfect parry still prevails in the theory. This makes an excellent point from which to launch our examination of the new technique. Let us re-state the principle which Castle believed could never be improved:

“A universal rule concerning parries of any kind is, that at the moment when the adversary’s stroke is to be finally thrown aside or stopped, the forte of the weapon should be opposed to the adversary’s foible.”

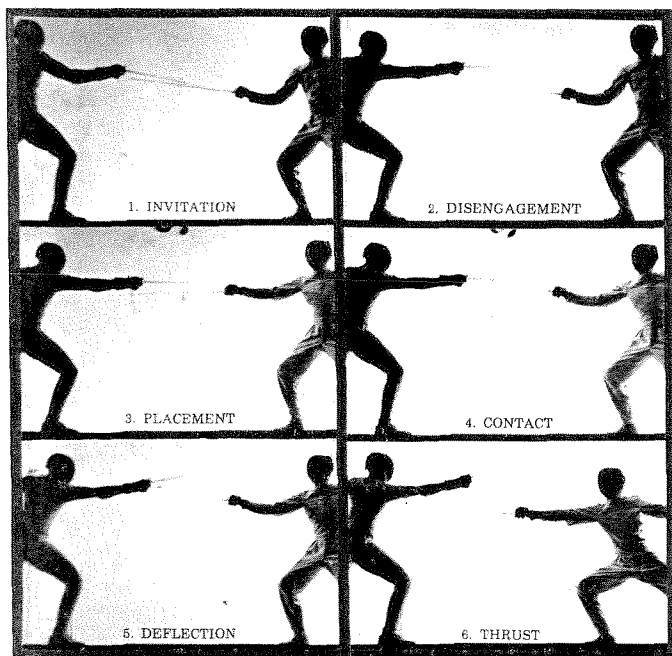
“This opposition, besides minimizing the effort necessary to counteract a hit by affording superiority in leverage, reduces the movement of the weapon and hand to the smallest practical limits.”

This is another way of saying that the smallest defensive movement is one by which the hand barely crosses the target. But this no longer impresses us as the maximum of efficiency. We are so well accustomed to a large return for any expenditure of energy, that we feel justified in asking whether we cannot deflect the opponent’s weapon *without* crossing the target. The answer is, of course—for that’s what this book is about—that we can: by striking smartly with the foible against the opposing forte. Such a notion would have been rejected (without examination) as unscientific by any of Castle’s contemporaries. For does not foible mean ‘weak’ and forte ‘strong’; and is not the entire science of defense based upon the perfect principle of applying the strong part of one’s weapon to the weak portion of the attacking blade?

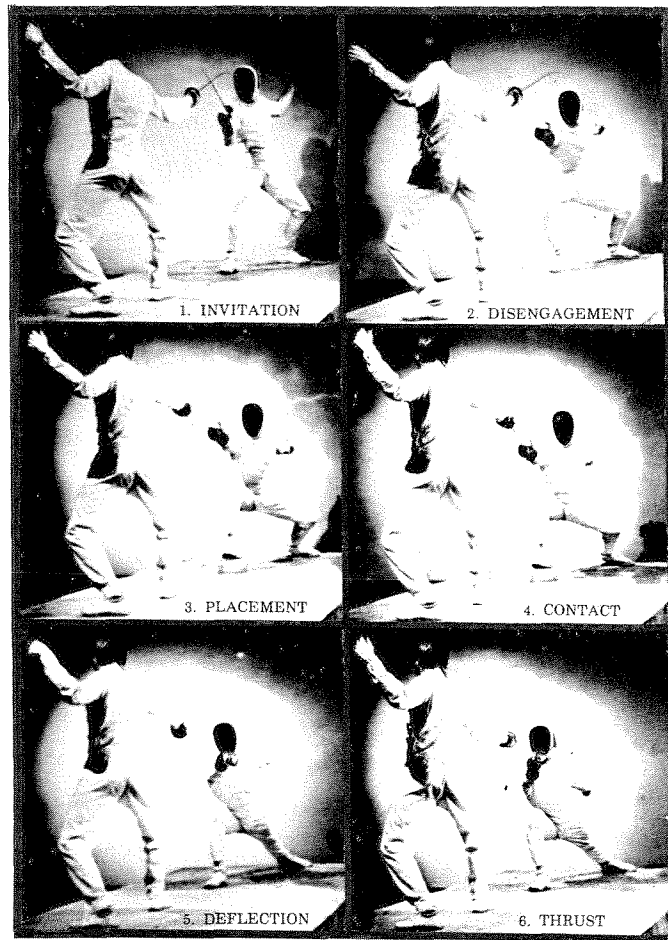


It is perfectly true that the superior leverage exerted with the forte is the chief consideration as long as we are content to ‘oppose’ (or push) the adverse blade out of line. But when we wish to ‘beat’ the weapon aside we ought to consider not the point of greatest pressure, but the point at which the greatest *striking* power is achieved. In any modern weapon this point lies in the third of the blade nearest the point—the foible, in short. We are thus able not only to ‘beat’ without recourse to the ‘opposition’ principle, but to beat more strongly than otherwise.

This latter fact is half-recognized in current manuals, which recommend performing the beat with middle, *although closing the line as before* in loyalty to ‘opposition’. The manner in which the beat establishes its own principle, in *contrast* to the ‘opposition’ principle, is illustrated below.:



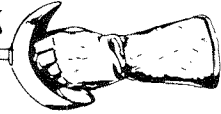
courtesy of Alexander Hern



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U.S. Defeats Great Britain In Thompson Trophy Match

by Jeffrey R. Tishman

In a revival of a tradition last observed in 1948. The U.S. fenced and defeated Great Britain, 3-2, in a best of five weapons match for the Robert Means Thompson Trophy. The event was hosted by Hunter College of the City University of New York on October 11.

This was the seventh dual meeting between the two nations since 1921, for a trophy donated by Colonel Robert Means Thompson.

The competition was a men's three-weapon match the first five times it was conducted. Women's foil was added to the program at the previous meeting in 1948. This year women's epee was included.

Lee Shelley of the U.S. all three of his bouts at epee, while Fiona McIntosh did the same at foil for Great Britain. Donna Stone of the U.S. was the only fencer on either team to start in two weapons. She went 2-0 at epee and 1-1 at foil.

The team match results follow:

Men's Foil	Great Britain	5	U.S.A.	1
Men's Epee	U.S.A.	5	Great Britain	4
Men's Sabre	U.S.A.	5	Great Britain	3
Women's Foil	Great Britain	5	U.S.A.	2
Women's Epee	U.S.A.	5	Great Britain	3

The results of prior competitions are:

1921	U.S.A.	25	Great Britain	21
1923	Great Britain	24	U.S.A.	22
1926	U.S.A.	27	Great Britain	21
1930	U.S.A.	25	Great Britain	23
1934	U.S.A.	26	Great Britain	20
1948	U.S.A.	41	Great Britain	22

The British team were the guests of the New York Fencers Club at a dinner the Friday preceding the match. Speakers included James Melcher, president of the Fencers Club; Eugène Blanc, Jr., honorary president of the Fencers Club; Lewis Siegel, president of the Amateur Fencing Association (of Great Britain); and Maria Cerra Tishman, a competitor on the U.S. Thompson Trophy team of 1948, who gave a brief history of the event, a profile of Colonel Thompson, and called for the restoration of the British-American match on a regular basis.

Other Thompson Trophy competitors that were present at the dinner or the match included Dr. Daniel Bukantz, George Worth, Dernel Every, Ralph M. Goldstein and Bess Aboulafia Feig.

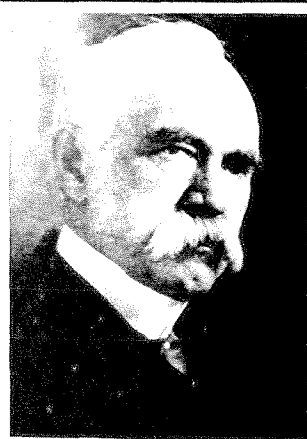
Julia Jones, coach of Hunter College, was a gracious hostess for the event that was held in Hunter's new gymnasium on short notice.

The British announced tentative plans to host the event next year in Edinburgh, Scotland.



The U.S.A. and Great Britain Teams prepare to fight for the Robert Means Thompson Trophy
photo by Peter Tishman

Robert Means Thompson led a full, active and colorful life. A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, he entered Harvard after his period of service. He graduated with a law degree in 1874, and went on to become chairman of the International Nickel Company. His success and considerable fortune allowed him to give generously to a variety of public activities.



How was the first president of the American Olympic Association (forerunner to the U.S.O.C.), organizer of the Naval Academy Alumni Association and the Navy Athletic Association, and president of the new York Athletic Club. he was in charge of the U.S. delegation at the Olympic games of 1912 and 1924 and was the largest individual contributor to the U.S. Olympic Team of 1920. The revival of this event is a fitting tribute to his memory.

Col. Robert Means Thompson
[1849-1930]



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Performance Of The Pan-American Team

An interview with Aladar Kogler, by A. Axelrod

AA The Pan-American Games are now behind us. How would you evaluate the performance of our American fencers? As teams and as individuals?

AK Well, performance is a difficult thing to evaluate. It depends on which aspects you select as criteria and how you chose to apply them.

For me, I cannot evaluate the Pan-American results without considering the World Cup and the World Championship results. These are objective and realistic results.

Take the gold medal of the women's team. The value of this gold medal can be evaluated in different ways. If you consider results on the basis of world events, a few of them here and there made the third round in a world cup event, and only one fencer made the direct elimination in the world championship event. These results by themselves are not good—but if you take into account not the gold medal (which is a worthy prize), but the fact that the women did excellent work, functioned well as a team and fenced close to and sometimes above their maximum capabilities, then they achieved high results in the Pan-American Games.

If we evaluate the results for our other teams, from the point of view that the Pan-American games are not at a very high level, compared to world championships, then we might not be satisfied with the results. We did not even do as well compared to the last Pan-American games.

If you consider that our team has had minimal training and conditioning with an average of 2.5 lessons a week, then you must evaluate their performance as high, and in a very positive way. So you see that it depends on what aspect you evaluate from as well your expectations.

AA What criteria do you apply to rank a fencer's performance level?

AK You should use results of world class events to rank fencers. In fencing, one result, even a top result in a world cup, is not indicative of true fencing level. Usually, the level here is that when a fencer achieves the level at which he goes to a world cup competition, he makes the second or third round and if his consistent results are second to third round, he is at a level of a fencer who makes the second round. When he progresses to where he makes the third round and here and there makes the direct elimination, then his constant result is the level of a third round fencer. Then there is a higher stage where he makes the direct elimination and here and there makes the finals. Sometimes you can jump one level higher in a competition. If he does this often then he has moved up into the next level. At present, our team is mostly second and third round level, with a few direct elimination fencers. Of course, I am not talking about the potential, but only the current level of our fencers.

AA How do you apply this to the Pan-American results?

AK The games in Indianapolis were essentially of the third round level, so there was a good match between the better of the teams. I would say that the team achieved very good results, consistent with the amount of training they did. However, the team results are still best evaluated in terms of the performance of the individuals, which was often less than their actual level.

In many cases, the reason for losses were not mental state, but bad tactics. They were unable to change their game, or their timing. Some fencers were off their best form and showed peaking—for example, Lee Shelley. His game requires good fitness and speed, but he seemed tired. He did not achieve his best. Sometimes a fencer collapses because of their mental state, but it is usually not the mental state. It was tactics, and sometimes simply poor execution. For example, if you take the foil fencers, our best foil fencers are Michael and Peter. I think that their results are not a disappointment because I know how much fencing and training they had—2.5 to 2.7 lessons a week. With this type of preparation you can't expect anything more. Neither of them made any direct elimination in a World Cup and Michael once made the third round. The Cuban level is higher. So in their case it was not bad preparation or mental state. They did simply did not do sufficient work during the whole season.

In the case of Sharon in the individuals, she is capable of more. In the team competition, she fenced well.

AA Actually, Sharon fenced well in the individuals. We never saw what she could have done. Remember, she was taken out of the running by what was undoubtedly one of the worst calls of the competition.

AK That's true, but the results were not so close that one bad call would change the result. So, I would not put everything on just one bad call.

AA You seem to be saying that our team of third round fencers and on occasion a direct elimination fencer, found a fairly uniform match in the better of the Pan-Am teams. And considering our lack of training and practice, we did well, but below the expectations held for the team.

AK Yes, except for the women's team. They did well. If I talk about the women's team, then I mention in the case of Katie, I don't know why she did not perform better. Perhaps it was a letdown after fighting for the individual gold. Sharon was solid in the team—she had ten victories in eleven fights and won all against the Cubans. The Cuban girls were certainly not as good as the Cuban men's teams. That was a factor leading to a gold medal. But even if the Cubans were stronger, there was a very important factor working for the girls. It was their spirit and their fighting edge.

AA I feel that you've just brought up something significant. It was this "spirit" and "fighting edge" that I'd like to touch on—that spontaneous ability to fight together and stimulate each other to greater heights.

For instance, I have here a picture of the Italian foilsman, Vitalesta, who has just scored the winning touch in a very important team match. You can see from this man's eyes and his coiled body, the focus, the concentration, the anger, the intensity, the aggression and the total commitment so essential to winning. (see photo on next page)

To what degree did our team or its members display this attitude? I feel that if only some members of a team show this attitude, it will spread to the rest of the team.

Did you see any of this happen in any of the team events?

AK Yes. The women's team was a classical example. Everybody was fighting, doing their best and showed all the

Performance —

(Continued)

positive things we are talking about. Fighting spirit, team spirit and everybody supporting each other.

The structure of the team was unique. It functioned as a unit, even with the many different styles of its members. Katie, as you know is a very good competitor, Sherry is also a very good competitor, and Cheris fenced a good thinking game and used second intention. So the very thing we were talking about happened with the women's team.

AA How about the other teams? The men's foil team, for example?

AK The foil team's performance was the worst as a team. In the individuals, I could not expect more. Their best results in world cup events was third round. If you are objective about this, you could not expect anything better. As a team, it was worse—you could not see anything that showed it was a team—there was no spirit, no mutual support—just not good. It was the same in the world championships.

AA That's an interesting observation. I'm not that close or familiar with the other teams, but I have seen, on saber nights at the Fencers Club, Westbrook, Mormando, Lofton, House, the Friedbergs, our top contenders for the olympic team, assembled and practicing at the same time. At the NYAC, you can find Trevor, Shelley, Masin, and all the others who are essentially our olympic contenders. On Fencers Club foil nights, on the other hand, I see our top East Coast contenders come at 6 P.M., have a lesson, fence some hard bouts, and by 8:30 they're gone. And they aren't all there at the same time. And our other top foilsman practice in other cities!

This summer, an offer to provide a training site for the en-

tire World Championship team at no cost to the USFA was declined because several team members could not add another week to the time already necessitated by the World Championships and the Pan-Am games following immediately after. Had this taken place, they would have come to know one another, on a social basis, as a united group of foil, epee and saber fencers, not as four separate fencing teams that occasionally meet during the year.

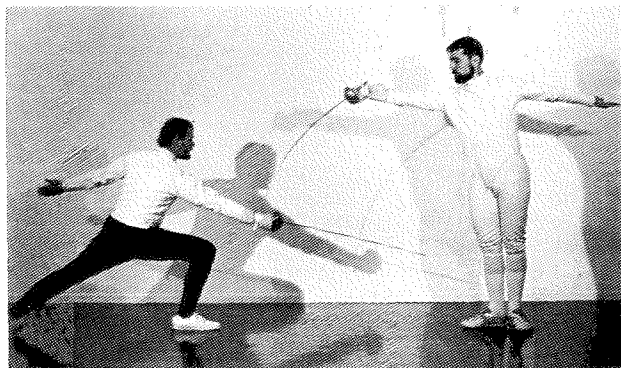
AK That is only one of the problems. If you look at the work done by the foil fencers, even in the last month, you would know that the foil fencers worked much less than the other team members. For example when Michael Marx was here, he fenced so rarely with Peter. Perhaps it was just a matter of timing, but that's how it was. And the foil fencers fenced less than the epee and saber fencers, and they did not come at the same time. That is one of the reasons that technically foil is the weakest weapon in our country.

AA You say that foil is technically the weakest weapon. Is this a learning problem or a teaching problem? Is it the coaches or the pupils?

AK Both. In general, the highest amount of technique is in foil, because foil gives you the opportunity to utilize all one's specific abilities. We see this in all levels of fencing in Europe. In epee, there are some physical and mental qualities which one can utilize sooner, and achieve a relatively high level. To utilize the personal qualities that a fencer has, in foil particularly, one has to have a smooth technique, more for example than in epee. And, in my opinion, there are both teaching problems and learning problems.

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Our fencers have a lot of technical errors. The time taken by the foil fencers for practicing is not enough—the epee and saber fencers practice more. It can be seen, not just from the Pan-American results, but from the long-term achievements of our fencers in world cup and world championship competitions. We had three or four epee fencers who made the world cup final during the last few years. We had saber fencers who made direct eliminations, and Westbrook even won a medal in Los Angeles. We have a woman who made the direct elimination in a world championship. We don't have any foil fencers who have achieved similar results, and objectively judging from these results, the foil is our weakest weapon. You heard my discussion with Peter—during the last two weeks he had one lesson.

AA Aladar, this is the beginning of the season and there was much fencing this summer. Maybe he doesn't want to overpeak, maybe he is just resting.

AK No, you can't joke about these things. It is not enough to have the required physical and mental qualities. It is necessary also to have the commitment. If commitment is missing, then we cannot expect anything good. We know how much time top European fencers train. If we cannot approach the same volume and intensity of work, we cannot expect better results. I remember how amazed the swimmers in Europe were when they found out how much time our swimmers spent swimming. When they realized this, they doubled the amount of time they spent swimming, and their records all improved. Take track and field—our young athletes with olympic aspirations practice and train constantly—and our fencers practice maybe three times a week! This is far below

the minimum. The fact is that all today's finalists fence five or six days a week and train hard. And if a junior does not go into all the junior and world cup tournaments, training hard for each, he cannot succeed.

AA This is a rather gloomy picture for American fencing.

AK It is. And I can tell you, if we don't take into account the minimum requirements for training and practice, then we can't expect any other results. If a fencer cannot afford, because of his motivation or his objective conditions to put in the necessary time for practice and competition, then he cannot expect results.

The Pan-American results are marvelous based on the volume, quantity and intensity of their training. However, if we don't create better conditions for our fencers and if our fencers don't have the commitment to work harder, then we can't expect better results. Even the 2.5 and 2.7 average lessons a week was influenced by fencers like Katie Bilodeaux, Steve Trevor and Bob Cottingham who fenced four or five times a week. So the average, without them, might be only two times a week.

Success in competition requires contributions from two directions. The fencer must have the talent, the time and the commitment. However, the fencing federation must also make an important contribution. In Czechoslovakia, where I was working, there was no tradition, no money, and fencing was near the bottom. We had two or three persons with world class potential. The federation gave full support for these people—they were sent to every world cup and their level improved. It was not easy to get this support—it was necessary to fight for it. And our federation must also realize

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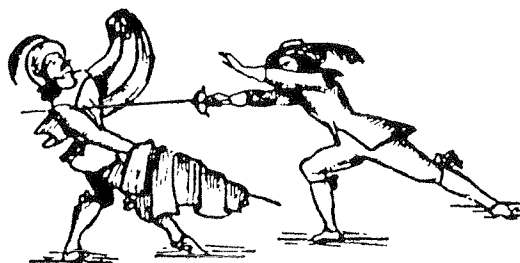
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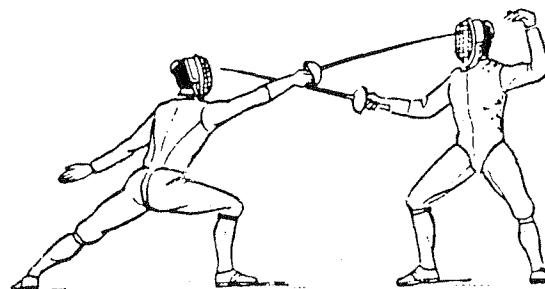


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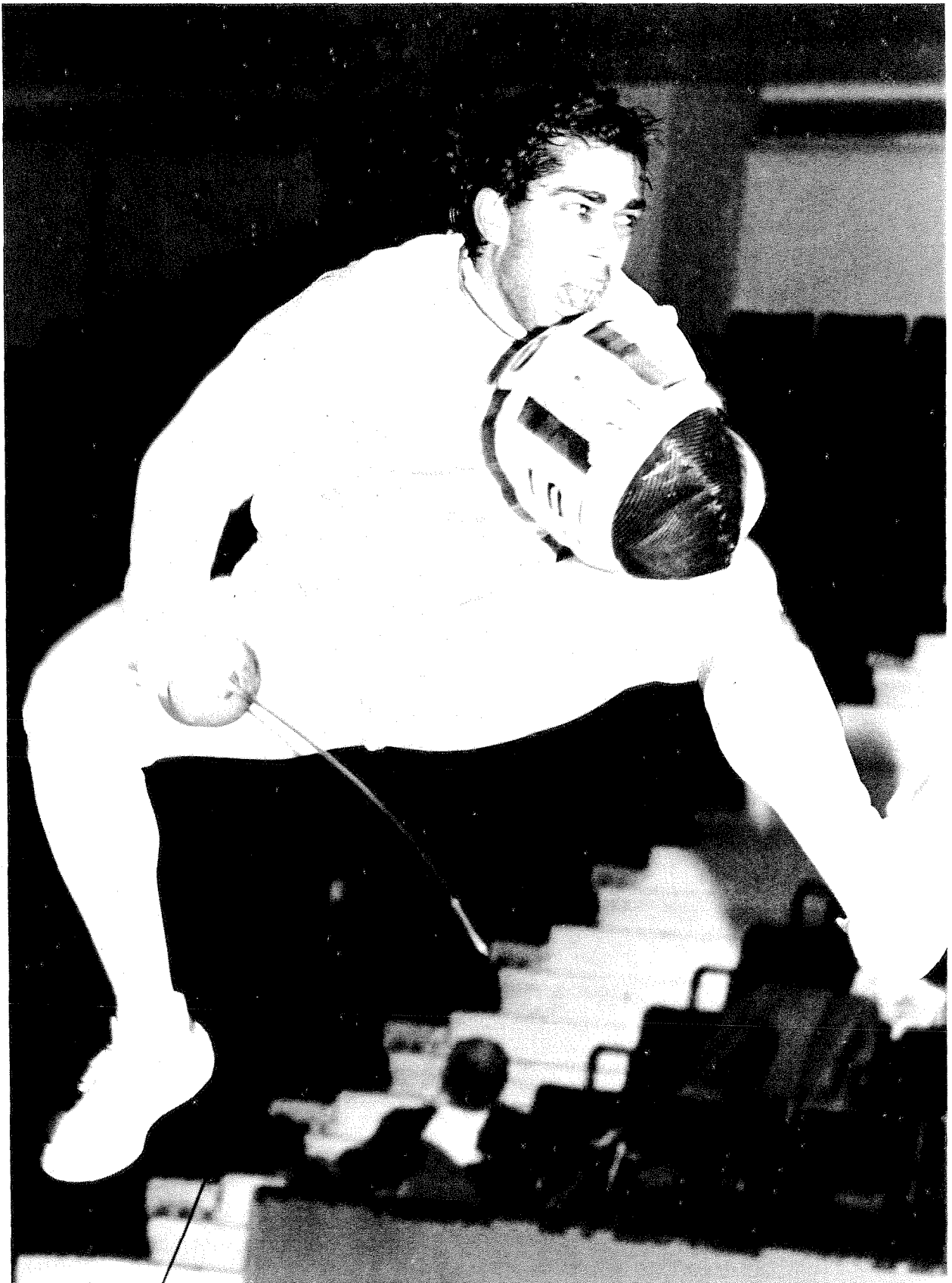
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Vitalesta of Italy defeats Behr in the final of the Coupe d'Europe in which Rome beat Tauberbischofsheim

photo by Karina A. Hoskyns (reprinted from The Sword)

Performance —

(Continued)

that if we give full support for some of the potential fencers who can achieve high results, and they get some extra support, then we can expect higher results.

If money is spread equally, because of demographic or democratic policies, then we cannot expect good results. I understand the problem of organizational and regional politics and I don't want to become involved in a philosophy discussion—however, if winning teams are the objective, then the way to achieve them has been demonstrated by countries the world over. And not just by countries in the Eastern bloc.

AA—But this is a real problem here. Especially because fencers don't mature until they reach their mid-twenties. We have the case of Mike D'Asaro who said "I want to go to the World Championships" and his boss said "Go. But if you do go, don't come back—we hired an advertising agency man and don't intend to subsidize an athlete". And Peter Lewison, in all fairness, is now involved in shaping his career and involved in establishing his future security—how much time can he take off?

AK When I talk about giving support, it should be for a person who has the potential, commitment and the ability to make this commitment.

AA Those are heavy demands on any individual. Potential, commitment, and availability. But it isn't enough to have the commitment. If you have a job and responsibilities, you cannot exercise your commitment. Why didn't the team go to the training camp this summer? Three people had to work, so the teams practiced separately and went into competition as four teams under one flag. Doesn't this lead to lessened team spirit? Yet the reasons for doing this were logical and easily rationalized. The fencers do have responsibilities and do what they must.

AK It is as you say, however the questions remain: does the fencer have the talent, does he have the commitment, and can he make the commitment? Because if he cannot make the commitment, then no matter how much talent he has, there is no way to develop it.

AA There is a real problem here. If one accepts what has

just been said, then fencing becomes a sport for the elite, for the rich, for people supported by either a prosperous federation or the government itself.

AK I'm not so sure. Katie Bilodeaux had this kind of a chance—until she got married. Time will tell how she manages her fencing time. But before this, she proved her commitment, made the time, practiced hard and showed good results with steady improvement. There are now several such candidates—they must be screened carefully and provided with fully committed support from the federation. All that is required is the support of four or five demonstrably strong and motivated fencers to produce good international results.

This is not a question for the future. I sit at meetings and listen to talk about gold medals—how can they talk about gold medals in Olympic Games in the face of actual international results to date? Unless the proper investment is made to develop strong fencers, we will not have any good results.

Editors note:

Support for Olympic team squads is the perennial problem of all sports federations. Perhaps more so in fencing.

Skiers, skaters, tennis players and most other sports-minded people participate for personal pleasure and exercise and without aspirations for making an Olympic Team or finals at Forest Hills. Yet they support their national associations because they take pride in the international performance of their teams. They contribute to the support of the teams, and expect nothing in return.

Fencers seem to be different. Every division feels they should be "getting" more, that their local programs are not adequately funded, and that too much is spent on "elite" athletes. If we are ever to experience pride in the international performance of our fencers, we must take the steps and make the sacrifice necessary to develop them. And we must bear in mind that the fencers who have elected to take this path are making the greater sacrifice—more than most of the fencing membership is prepared to make.

Introductory

(Concluded)

One can see, without too much difficulty, that the beat, by reducing the effort required to deflect the adverse blade, conserves "time" and "distance" to a degree which makes it possible to raise the speed of the entire bout. This leads in turn to such a changed situation that all related movements need to be examined in a new light. But high-speed fencing is dependent upon fairly simple combinations. In order to justify itself then, the beat must make possible a simple organization of the principles upon which the fencing science rests. A closer examination of the beat will disclose how well it fulfills this function.

These introductory remarks may be summed up briefly. The Sword has passed through two principle stages: first, the tool-weapon with its diverse uses; then the specialized weapon with combat as its only function. It is now in its third or 'foil' stage, in which the acquirement of skill is cultivated as an end in itself, with only a bow to the logic of the

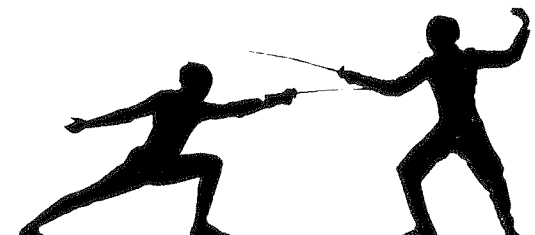
duel or other serious combat. Each of the earlier periods of development was necessary, and each has made its valuable contribution to fencing. Our own period may be expected to evolve a brilliancy of technique unattainable heretofore.

¹W. H. Hudson, "Green Mansions"

²Burton, "Book of the Sword" London 1884

³Egerton Castle, "Schools and Masters of Fence" London, 1884

⁴For example: Norman Lewis, National Foils Champion, 1939, and Austin Prokop, Hammond Junior Foils Champion, 1940



Women's Epee Clinic In San Francisco

An Olympic Foundation grant received by the U.S.F.A. provided the funds for an epee clinic which was well attended and proved to be valuable to all the participants. The clinic was organized by Vincent Bradford, Chairperson of the Women's Epee Committee and Eleanor Turney of San Francisco. The weekend event featured sessions of footwork, blade drills and bouts under the watchful direction of the official women's epee coaches, Gil Pezza and Michael D'Asaro.

The Halberstadt Fencing Club in San Francisco was the site for most of the clinic. The clinic started Friday evening with an introduction to the training methods and competitive techniques that would be used during the two-day clinic. Following the initial orientation period, Eleanor Turney led a weapons maintenance clinic with the assistance of Kathy Kruzen, a Halberstadt fencer.

The two day clinic included concentrated drilling, lessons with emphasis on the use of fleche and bouts which took full advantage of the available four strips.

A special meeting was held to familiarize the competitors with the activities of the Women's Epee Committee on their behalf, and their work to establish development of a program to solicit funds and corporate support for additional women's epee programs. Marlene Adrian, with her professional knowledge of grant writing procedures, provided the committee with valuable advice on the process of identifying and establishing a firm set of goals for this organization in preparation for applying for additional grants.



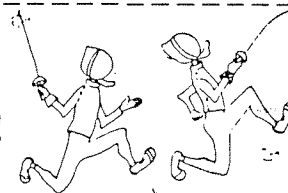
*Sally Still and Marlene Adrian practice tactical footwork
photo by Vincent Bradford*

The grant that provided for this particular clinic will also support two additional clinics: November 11, 12, 13 in San Antonio and one in May in Philadelphia. These clinics are open to fencers of all levels, however, the size of these clinics is limited—sign up early to ensure a place.



*Michael D'Asaro and Gil Pezza, national women's coaches, preside over the clinic
photo by Vincent Bradford*

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Leaving A Winner

by Bill Nichols

John Szent Kiraly quietly slipped into retirement this year as Cleveland State University's fencing coach.

There was no fanfare. There were no retirement parties. He didn't even get a watch. He simply walked away, leaving behind a legacy of fencing success.

Szent Kiraly, 62, is a quiet man who smiles easily. When he speaks, people listen. He has had a career of making fencers out of non-fencers. He leaves CSU after 26 years as fencing coach. In the last 14 years he had a winning percentage of .712, better than any other coach at the school.

"It's time for me to walk away," Szent Kiraly said. "It's probably good for the team to get someone else.

"I've enjoyed it very much. I'm probably the luckiest coach here. I have never had serious attitude problems. These people are more professional in their approach than most others."

Szent Kiraly will continue to work as an accountant at the Ford Motor Co. He occasionally will counsel current coach Joe Fazekas.

In 1980, Szent Kiraly led the Vikings to fourth-place in the NCAA championships, the best ever for CSU. He coached All-Americans Carlo Songini and Pete Rozsa. Songini and Rozsa arrived at CSU as experienced fencers. That is the exception rather than the rule.

Unlike basketball, swimming, wrestling and baseball, new candidates for the CSU fencing team seldom have experience. Four years later, they compete favorably with the best squads in the Midwest.

"Less than one percent of the people coming to CSU know how to fence," Szent Kiraly said. "If I have a young man four years, it is not enough time to prepare him for NCAA tournament competition. These young people need six or seven years of experience to be ready for that kind of competition. To be successful, you must find men with experience.

"I like working with young people. I feel I understand them and eventually, they understand me. I'm very proud of my 26 years at Cleveland State."

Szent Kiraly, a native of Hungary, arrived in the United States in 1950. He was wounded three times when he was in the Hungarian army.

Prof. N. Goodhartz Honored

Prof. Nat Goodhartz, former coach of the SUNY Brockport women's fencing team, was recently honored by the State University of New York with the Chancellor's Award, a statewide recognition as a Great Teacher. An assistant professor of physical education at Brockport, Prof. Goodhartz is also director of the school's exercise physiology lab and active in the field of dance kinesiology. She coached at SUNY Brockport from 1973 to 1978, when our sport was inexplicably dropped from the school's winter sports schedule. In 1975, Prof. Goodhartz hosted the 47th NIWFA Championship, the largest women's intercollegiate fencing championship held up to that time. Prof. Goodhartz has been teaching for the past five years at the Rochester Fencing Centre, where she is a colleague of Bucky Leach.

A Budding Champion

Felicia Zimmerman may well be one of our brightest hopes for the future, judging from achievements in her very young career.

Only 12 years old, Felicia is the youngest competitor to have won the gold medal in the Empire State Scholastic Foil competition. In a past New York State age group competition, she won the under-10, the under-12, and placed third in the under-14 competitions. Only 5ft.-1in. tall, her ability to perceive, analyse and apply correct tactics usually brings her opponents to size.

She is in the seventh grade at Monroe Junior High School, in Rush, New York. A straight "A" student, she is a third year Spanish and a sixth year Chinese language student. And, she has also studied piano for six years. Her father feels that here is a future Olympic winner, and judging from her performance, here is a girl to keep an eye on.



Felicia Zimmerman — Age 12



The Enterprise Press Sabre World Cup "A" Tournament will be held in New York City on Saturday and Sunday, March 19 and 20. The finals on Sunday March 20, 1988, featuring the new electronic sabre equipment, will again be held at the Jerome Coles Field House at New York University. This is your chance to see the best sabre fencers in the world in action. Preliminary indications are that the Russian sabre team will attend this event for the first time. Tickets can be purchased in advance or at the door. Special discounts for the tournament are available to high school students.

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As this column is being written, I have just received the first USFA Cadre Manual. This manual is the result of a huge amount of work by Robert Blum and John Nonna.

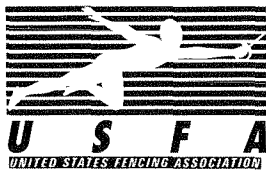
Cadre is a term used to describe the chief of mission, captain, coaches, and armorer who work with and accompany USFA fencers to international competitions. Cadre members put in a huge amount of effort and get none of the credit and most of the blame for what happens to our fencers. The work

is grueling and the rewards lie mostly in the inner knowledge of a job well done and being an important of American fencing. Although it is not a very enticing job description, I urge you to try it. The USFA Cadre Manual will soon be available from the National Office for those of you who are considering or would like to become cadre members for USFA team.

The International Fencing Federation (FIE) has recently passed stringent rules requiring all federations to send qualified directors to international tournaments. This means that the U.S. needs more qualified directors at the international level. If you are interested, please contact the Fencing Officials Commission for information on obtaining an international directors license. With the Junior World Championships being held at Notre Dame this March, there is an excellent opportunity for you to take the international test in the United States.

The COACHES COLLEGE will be held this summer in Colorado Springs from July 30 through August 7. The COACHES COLLEGE has been one of the most successful programs ever conducted by the USFA and is certainly one of the most important. Here is your chance to learn the correct basics of teaching fencing from some of the best coaches in the United States. The COACHES COLLEGE is held at the Olympic Training Center and room and board are free. For more information on the COACHES COLLEGE and how you can attend, please contact the National office.

— — Happy New Year — —



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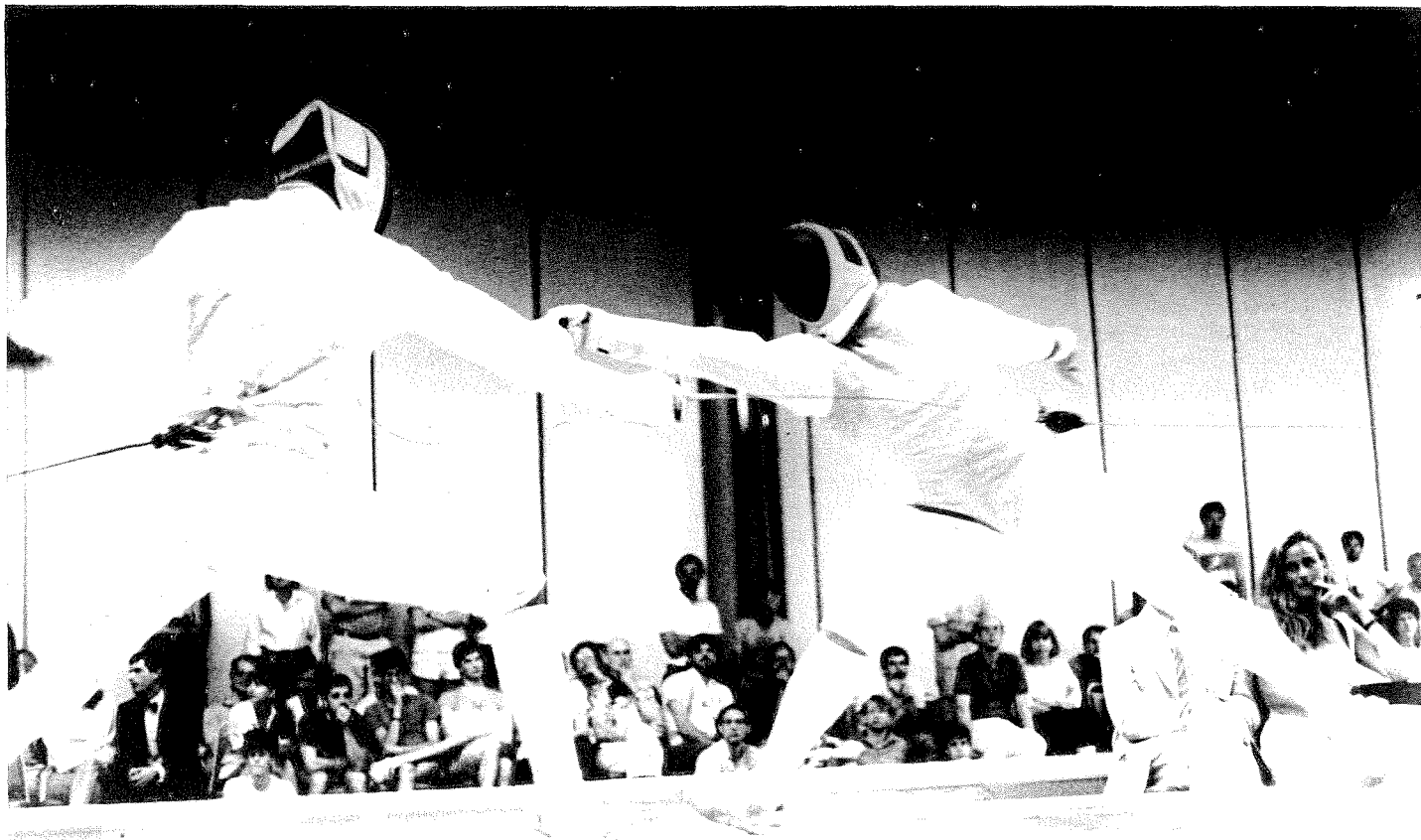
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Michael Marx (r.) scores in semi-finals bout against Peter Lewison (l.) during 1987 Men's Foil Nationals in Phoenix photo by Frank Widder

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Touche! Fencing a palpable hit

by Janet Zimmerman
Herald staff writer

Olympic funds spawn renaissance of sport in L.A. schools

Students at some Los Angeles area high schools are involved in the revival of the lost art of fencing, thanks to a program established with profits from the 1984 Olympics.

The first organized fencing tournament for students in the Los Angeles area in more than 20 years took place last June, with students from four high schools competing.

According to the pros, fencing is not just a sport for the physically fit and there are no height or weight requirements.

Fencers capitalize on their strengths and their opponents' weaknesses to score, which is why the popularity of the sport is spreading quickly, said Phyllis Elliott, manager of the Salle Gascon Fencing Club in Culver City.

"It's identifying and developing your own talent. There's a fulfillment in this sport that carries over into other areas of a person's life," Elliott said.

Rachael Campbell, a 16-year-old sophomore in Canyon High School in Canyon Country, is a good example of how the shapes and sizes of fencers can vary.

Campbell said that because she is 4 feet, 2 inches tall, other sports, such as running and swimming, didn't come easily because her stride and reach weren't as long as other competitors'.

But in fencing, Campbell puts her height to work, catching her opponents off-balance by making them kneel to her level.

Although Campbell said she doesn't have the aggressive personality required to fence, she came off as being confident and competitive yesterday as she beat her opponent in two out of three games.

The Salle Gascon Fencing Club was awarded a \$20,000 grant in 1985 by the Amateur Athletic Foundation, which was in charge of distributing \$90 million in profits from the Olympics.

Five area high schools, including Canyon, Charter Oak, Garfield, Nogales and the Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies were chosen for pilot fencing programs. The grant also provided money for foils, masks, jackets and gloves.

Theodore Katzoff, director of the club, said fencing became popular after the Olympics. Portrayals of fencers in recent movies, TV shows and rock bands have also helped promote the sport.

Because the program doesn't push participants to become professionals, as in other sports, "more attention can be paid to aspects of the game that include honor, respect and tradition," Katzoff said.

Marlene Holoman, a fencing teacher at Canyon High School, said the sport usually interests students who aren't fond of general physical education classes.


Even though fencing is not a traditional sport of the big man on campus, Holoman said the sport's combative nature, along with its mystique and strange uniforms have given rise to its popularity.

"The response has been great," Holoman said. "With all the students that stop by and watch practice, I bet a lot of them will sign up just because it looks interesting."

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The Italian Formula For Success

by William M. Gaugler

The Italian formula for success is simple: during the course of the lesson the fencer is taught the contrary of every action. In other words, he learns, from the very beginning of his fencing instruction, the relationship between action and counteraction. For example, the contrary of the counterattack is countertime; the contrary of countertime is the feint in time; and the contrary of the feint in time is the arrest in countertime. Once the fencer understands how every action may be opposed, he can easily deal with the variables that occur in competition. This is, of course, another way of stating that the skilled fencer will be able to defeat both orthodox and unorthodox opponents through the correct use of contraries.

Instead of spending time on general exercise and games, as is common practice in Eastern Europe, the Italian fencer accomplishes his training almost exclusively on the fencing strip, with the weapon in hand. This difference in pedagogical approach between East and West is clearly apparent in two recent publications. Jerzy Wezowski, in the French edition of his book, *L'escrime*, published at Warsaw in 1981, devotes the major part of his 84-page work to general exercise and games, and only twenty pages to technique and tactics, while Renzo Nostini, in his book, *Scherma di fioretto*, published at Rome in 1979, dedicates the bulk of his 123-page volume to technique and tactics, and only five pages to general exercise.

From the Italian point of view, fencing technique and conditioning can be accomplished simultaneously during the course of the individual lesson. Through changes in time, fencing measure, and placement of the weapon, the master can duplicate in the lesson the ever-changing conditions encountered on the fencing strip. This method of instruction has attained its greatest success at Mestre, where Maestro Livio Di Rosa has trained such World and Olympic champions as Fabio Dal Zotto, Dorina Vaccaroni, Mauro Numa, and Andrea Borella. In a seminar held in Rome in 1981 Maestro Di Rosa indicated that it is the master's role to present the student with a series of problems which the student must learn to solve.

A similar pedagogical approach is evident in the majority of fencing salles in Italy today. Recently, I observed the masters examinations at Naples, as well as lessons in the military school at Orvieto and in a private salle d'armes at Siena. In every case lessons were conducted from beginning to end in



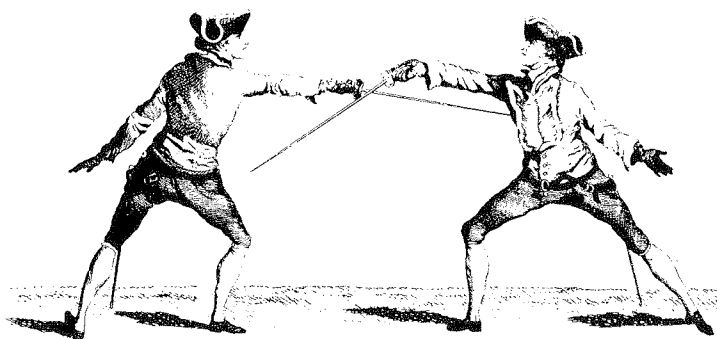
time and with constant mobility on the fencing strip. Classical form was rarely stressed. The correct relationship of the blades, strong against medium or weak, was often not respected, and the student's left hand in foil and epee was frequently in a lowered position. Emphasis was on speed, mobility, and the proper choice of counteraction.

Maestro Salvatore Ponturo's epee lesson at Orvieto was typical of this approach to instruction. Keeping the student in motion, alternating advances and retreats, he moved up and down the fencing strip, progressively increasing the pace of the lesson. With the electrical scoring device switched on, angulations were placed above, below, to the inside, and to the outside of the wrist in quick succession. Rapid execution and accuracy were stressed.

The defensive exercises consisted of single and double circular parries performed so close to the body, with the arm drawn back, that the hand was to the right of—and nearly touching—the breast. The purpose of the parrying exercises at close quarters was to train the defender to parry and riposte as the opponent was passing in a running attack.

At Siena I was invited to observe a private training session in foil given by Dr. Zalaffi. Dr. Zalaffi refers to his drills as "gymnastics with the weapon in hand." By setting up a series of "obstacles" Dr. Zalaffi has trained his fencers to penetrate virtually every conceivable defensive system. He employs both orthodox and unorthodox fencing movements to develop their problem-solving capacities, keeping them moving, and providing varied placements of the weapon, or provoking counter-parry riposte exchanges. For instance, Dr. Zalaffi advances and retreats attempting to engage the opposing steel. As he advances, his student avoids the engagement by disengaging in time and lunging, or feints by disengagement in time and disengages or deceives in opposition to the parry he prompts.

This method of training is used by Dr. Zalaffi in preparing fencers for competition; some also take a classical foil lesson from Maestro Ruggero D'Argenio. The two forms of preparation complement one other; the exercises develop the tactical sense, and the traditional foil lesson provides a good technical base. Judging by Ms. Zalaffi's success in international competition, the system of training she undergoes from her father provides optimum results.



The Italian Formula —

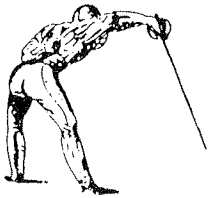
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Regrettably, our own top-level fencers are not well equipped to handle adversaries trained in this fashion. The Italians develop tactical flexibility through carefully-organized daily practice drills such as those described above, take classical lessons regularly, and then compete—often on a monthly basis—in international competition, while our strongest fencers repeat standard, predetermined exercises, take lessons sporadically, and only occasionally participate in competition outside the United States. When they finally meet their European rivals on the fencing strip they generally enter combat in search of an opening, hoping—by chance—to score a hit with one of the two or three attacks that have worked successfully against American opponents. Unfortunately, this naive tactical approach usually results in frustration and defeat.

In the brief time that remains before the Olympic Games of 1988, we would do well to follow the Italian example and pro-

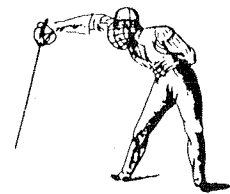
vide our national team members with daily lessons that emphasize problem-solving, so that they will learn to think in terms of contraries. During the lesson and in free fencing the fencer must constantly exercise his ability to solve problems. It is not too late, even now, to correct this weakness in our method. The principle underlying the use of contraries is, of course, easy to comprehend, but much practice is required.

Although contemporary European world-class fencers enter competition in excellent physical condition and with considerable tactical skill, they lack the refined technique of fencers of an earlier generation. Their movements tend to be large, they often miss the target, and they have difficulty opposing actions on the blade. Our success—if we are to have any—will depend, in my opinion, on whether or not our fencers can be taught to take advantage of these deficiencies.




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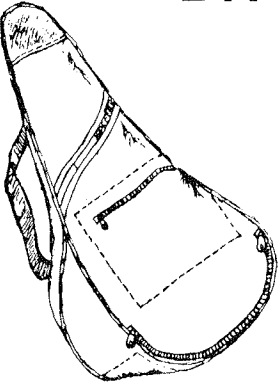


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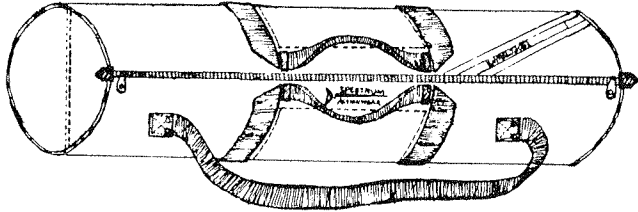


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Sports Medicine Update

by Irwin F. Bernstein

Since 1982, The USFA has conducted Sports Medicine projects under the auspices of the U.S. Olympic Committee. In this, the fifth report in American Fencing, we present a new phase of the project, the availability of Scientific Services to our top fencers.

During the summers of 1986 and 1987, the project has been based in the Sports Psychology Laboratory at Columbia University, under the leadership of Dr. Aladar Kogler. The laboratory is equipped with a variety of modern devices of a biofeedback nature plus apparatus custom designed and constructed by engineering students at Columbia for our specific needs. The program consists of individual diagnostic and counseling services for our elite fencers, on a volunteer basis, scheduled to coincide with their visits to New York or national team training sessions there.

The main emphasis in diagnostics is stress response monitoring and decision making evaluation (speed and accuracy). The fencers are trained to be aware of their arousal states and to recreate the levels found to be most effective for competitive performance. They are also counseled on training techniques, including exercises that do not require a coach.

Although the data gathered so far is too small for scientific conclusions to be formed, there is clearly practical evidence that the fencers benefit from the program and improve in their competitive performances by applying its principles. Coaches are encouraged to accompany their participating fencers so that they can reinforce the training received as well as obtain insights that they can use with their other students.

Looking ahead to 1988, we have applied for new U.S. Olympic Committee grants for two new projects. The first is a continuation of the Scientific Services Project with the main focus on the U.S. Olympic team. In addition, we would like to initiate a Research Project, which will involve similar testing with non-elite fencers to identify decision factors related to success and to develop methods to improve their decision making during competition. Our project team has been significantly strengthened by the addition of Dr. Marlene Adrian, a professor of physical education and bio-engineering and an active epee competitor.

Although it is not yet available to our general population of fencers, sports medicine is definitely on the scene in U.S.A. fencing.

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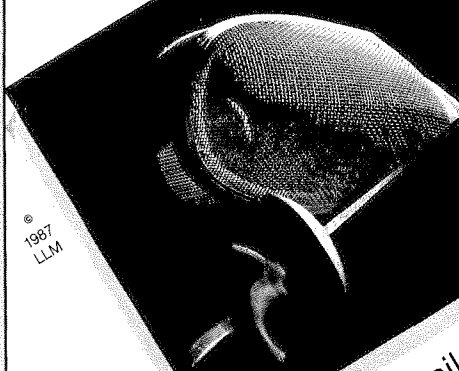
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Nuts, Screws and Bolts

by Joe Byrnes

Old saying: it's the little thing that will do you in. The little things about fencing equipment are mostly fasteners: screws, nuts, bolts. Consider the point screws in foils and epees. They have to be firmly turned down, of course; but for foils it is possible to fasten them down too tight—at least with some models of point assembly. After all, they are unlikely to be lost, being covered with tape, so why try to make them unremovable? With epee, on the other hand, the incessant banging around of the blades tends to loosen up the screws, no matter how firmly you have taken them in hand. Eventually one or both will fly off, if unattended. The smart epee fencer checks those point screws after every bout, along with verifying the point travel.

Elsewhere in the tout ensemble of the fencer's personal equipment there are set screws galore, all of which contribute their bit to keeping the electrical resistance as low as it needs to be, or conversely, if loose, to letting it get too high. You may have a set screw holding your blade wire to your guard socket, in foil; if not a set screw, the wire is held between a couple of nuts, which also have to be tight. Epee wires are usually held by nuts or oversize screws.

What gets plugged into the foil or epee socket at your guard—the plug on the end of your body cord—can have anywhere from two to four attachments affecting the electron flow, most of which will be made by screws. They all have to be tight too. Down at the other end of the body cord: more set screws, as a rule. The only exception would be if you have one of the old cords that were soldered together, and if you have one of those it is probably so decayed that it's a wonder you can still use it.

Next you connect the body cord to the reel connector: more set screws, usually. If you work on reels, remember that the sneaky intermittent fault can result from the additive resistances of all these (loosened) connections. Even if you open the pouch of the reel connection and see soldered connections, look closer: yes, the wires are probably soldered to

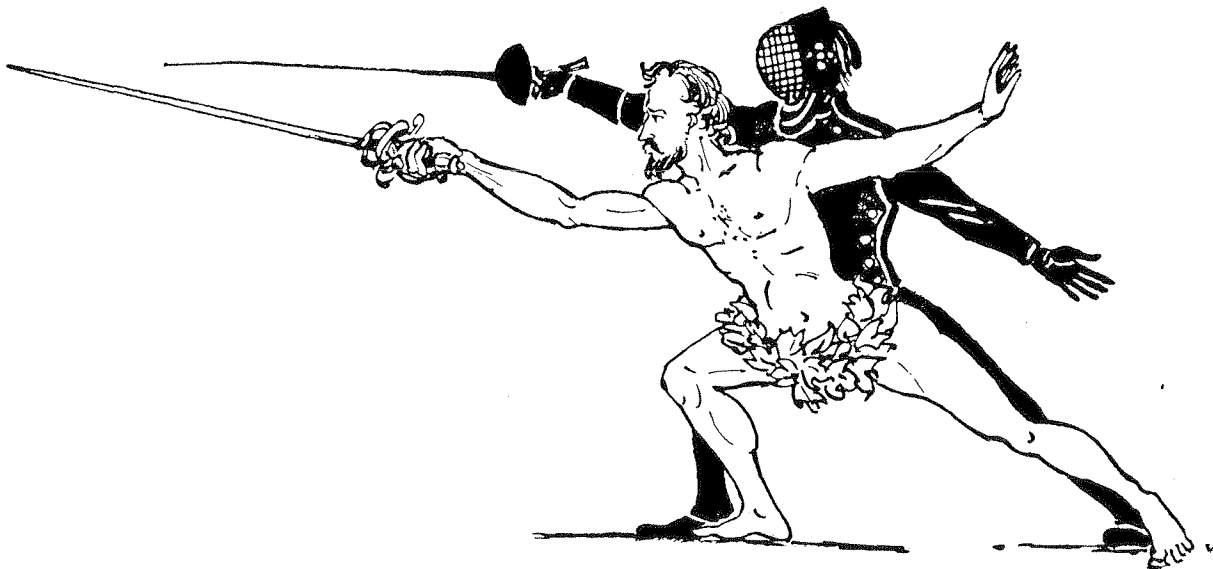
solder lugs, but what's holding the lugs tight? How about nuts? Are they tight? Maybe not.

Then there's the inside of the reel. Unless it is one of the soldered-through (no wiping contacts) models, there will be a pressure transmission of the electrical conductors through a system of rings and brushes or some comparable method. These things are larger than set screws—thank goodness—but they have to be kept clean and firm, and the wires that lead to them and from them will be attached with more screws. Same old story; it's getting monotonous, isn't it?

Next comes the floor cable. Nothing ever goes wrong with floor cables, or does it? Judging by the way people toss them around, and hook them up without checking, you would think that was true. Well, I agree that in general the floor cable is, next to the machine, the least likely thing to go wrong. It is sometimes amazing how well they continue to work, even with their set screws—yes, there's usually six in one of them—rather loose. If any of them gets really loose, and it can happen: grief. The pins of the floor cables can also be a problem area. Not all pins on those things are equally well designed; sometimes they are short, sometimes their expansion springs have flattened, sometimes both. When that happens, intermittent conductivity can result.

The hip bone connected to the leg bone. . . sorry, I mean the floor cable connects to the machine. All right: how about those jacks on the back of the machine itself, that the floor cable plus into? Of all the possible sources of trouble in this long chain, a failure at one of these jacks is undoubtedly the most remote of possibilities, but you must not say it never happens. What, never? Well, hardly ever! I have seen some cases.

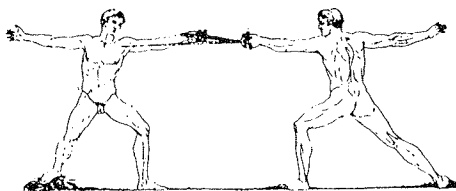
If all this seems a little discouraging, if perhaps you are now wondering how the whole cockeyed system ever works, contemplate the 747. Of course, those planes undoubtedly get better maintenance than most of our scoring equipment.



NOTICE:

The number of entries in National Division I and Division II Competitions, Circuit Opens and J.O. events have grown significantly in recent years. The use of repechage and inclusion of the Brazilian system has added still further to the amount of records required for each competition. For this reason, complete reporting of all events cannot be accommodated in American Fencing.

Complete records can be obtained from the USFA office in Colorado Springs for \$2.50 + postage.



RESULTS OF THE 1987 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (Corrected)

Women's Foil Team — 21 Entries

1st Tanner City Fencers Club

— C. McClellan, J. Hall, M. Sullivan,
J. Hynes, M. J. O'Neill
Coach — Joseph Pechinsky

2nd Fencers Club, Inc.

— Metropolitan Division
C. Bilodeaux, M. Verhave,
P. Medina, S. Monplaisir, T. Ling Moy
Coaches — A. Kogler & S. Pinkhasov

3rd Salle Santelli, New Jersey

— New Jersey Division
D. Stone, D. Cinotti, D. Piccinnino,
I. Hayes, J. Weitzman
Coach — J. Gryzmski

4th Salle Csiszar

— Philadelphia Division
R. Hayes, K. Lewis,
M. Szabunia, J. Yee
Coach — L. Csiszar

Women's Epee Team

1st Salle Csiszar

— Philadelphia Division
D. Aitken, M. Kosch, K. Lewis,
M. Szabunia
Coach — L. Csiszar & A. Salem

2nd Salle Auriol

— Oregon Division
A. Klinger, L. Maskell, B. Turpin,
T. Goodnight, T. Kent

3rd New Jersey Division Composite

D. Stone, J. Zester, J. Foster,
D. Pratschler, L. Campi
Coach — J. Gryzmski

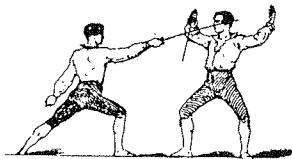
4th U.S. Modern Pentathlon

— South Texas Division
K. Dunlop, L. Skomski, T. Lewis,
T. Kelly
Coach — J. Peziak

ARIZONA DIVISION

Women's Sabre Open Individual—21 Entries
Conducted concurrent with the nationals.

1. Kathryn Krusen—Halberstadt
2. Karen Dorren—Salle Grenadier
3. Marlene Adrian—Tanner City FC
4. Michelle McCreary—Unat
5. Sherry Woodruff—Cheyenne Fenc. Soc.
6. Robin Dobson—Mori
7. Laura Boucher—Salle Gaston
8. Margaret Eshelman—Silver Stein
9. Ruby V. Watson—Fencers Club
10. Barbara Campi—Purdue
11. Renee J. Lewis—Spokane Fencers



1987 FALL FOLIAGE "C" TOURNAMENT

Knoxville TN — October 10-11, 1987

Men's Foil — 13 Entries

1. Isbell, Lee—Vanderbilt
2. Garrett, Robert—Varangian Guard, KY
3. Adkins, Jerry—D.R.A.F.T., Indiana
4. Hyder, Kirk—Varangian Guard, Kentucky
5. Bowman, Wayne—Virginia
6. Whitmer, Josh—Vanderbilt

Men's Epee — 17 Entries

1. Adkins, Jerry—D.R.A.F.T., Indiana
2. Isbell, Lee—Vanderbilt
3. Bowman, Wayne—Virginia
4. Garrett, Robert—Varangian Guard, KY
5. Whitmer, Josh—Vanderbilt
6. Abraham, David—Un. of Tenn.

Men's Sabre — 6 Entries

1. Adkins, Jerry—D.R.A.F.T., Indiana
2. Isbell, Lee—Vanderbilt
3. Bowman, Wayne—Virginia

Women's Foil — 5 Entries

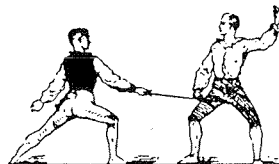
1. Carter, Melinda—Un. of Tenn.
2. Shearer, Jean—D.R.A.F.T., Indiana
3. Ziegler, Cynthia—Vanderbilt

Women's Epee — 5 Entries

1. Ziegler, Cynthia—Vanderbilt
2. Tipton, Melissa—Varangian Guard, KY
3. Holman, Linda—D.R.A.F.T., Indiana

Women's Sabre — 4 Entries

1. Watts, Lisa—Univ. of Tenn.
2. Ziegler, Cynthia—Vanderbilt
3. Holman, Linda—D.R.A.F.T., Indiana



Lois Goldthwaite Women's Foil and Women's Epee Tournament

Rice Univ., Houston, TX — October 24, 1987

Women's Foil — 23 Entries

1. Tracey Hurley—Unat.
2. Katie Kowalski—Bayou City Blades
3. Nancy Sumpter—Unat.

Women's Epee — 9 Entries

1. Terry Lewis—USMPTC
2. Susanne Lindberg—
3. Kerryn Rodriguez—Univ. of Texas

Michigan Invitational

Yosilanti, Michigan — Oct. 31 — Nov. 1, 1987

Men's Foil — 26 Entries

1. Kiel, Albrecht—Unat.
2. Higgs-Coulter, C.—Unat.
3. Osborn, Frank—FAM

Men's Epee — 15 Entries

1. Block, Claus Dieter—Unat.
2. Schneider, Charles—FAM
3. Birkel, Jeff—Salle Kadar

Women's Foil — 11 Entries

1. Goering, William—FAM
2. Moriarty, Sean—Windsor
3. Dosman, Matt—Unat.

Women's Foil — 21 Entries

1. Marsh, Ann—FAM
2. Huey, Gina—Gamble-Nippert
3. Woods, Claudia—Salle Kadar

Team Events

Men's Foil—KOS (Kiel, Osborn, Surowiec)

Mixed Epee—WSU (Block, Ranza, Wirges)

Men's Sabre—Windsor (Moceri, Moriarty, Souter)

Women's Foil—FAM (Marsch, Tomasso, Westrick)



1987 Sosnovsky Open Tournament

Chicago, Illinois — September 26, 1987

Men's Foil — 17 Entries

1. Steve Gillette—Un. of Illinois
2. Tom Chung—Illinois Fencers Club
3. Frank Domansky—Spartans

Men's Epee — 11 Entries

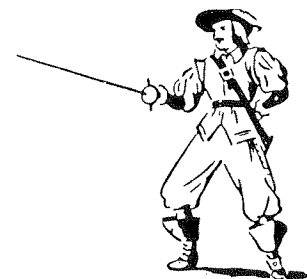
1. Tim Glass — Illinois Fencers Club
2. Bernard Dolph—Illinois Fencers Club
3. Bob Chidel—Pioneer Fencers Club

Men's Sabre — 10 Entries

1. Brad Burget—GLFA
2. Mike Ansani—GLFA
3. Don Koser—GLFA

Women's Foil — 9 Entries

1. Jeannine Prokop—Northwestern Univ.
2. Allison Draper—Northwestern Univ.
3. Verena Owen—CLC



Take Pride In The Senior Age Program

by Maxwell Garret U.S.F.A. Chairman, Senior Age Activities

The Senior Age Program is designed to promote involvement for those fencers over 40 years of age and to recognize them for having given many years of service and financial support to the sport. This program should generate renewed awareness by these individuals for the sport. Through this program we hope the older fencers will be encouraged to speak out, write articles, adopt a novice fencer, organize fencing promotional and educational efforts in their communities and generally become involved with fencing.

The Senior Age Competition, held in Phoenix this summer, had 88 entries in six weapons (foil, epee, and saber—men and women). A very notable long-time fencer is Salvatore E. Manzo, who celebrated his turning 70 by competing and taking first in the over 60 group and third in an epee round which included age 40 and over.

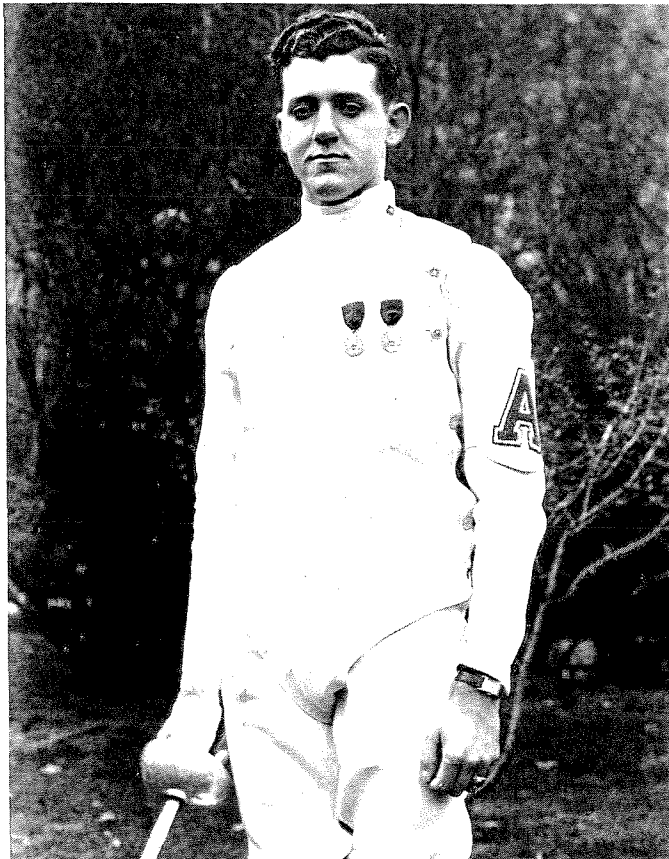
"Sal" Manzo is currently the Assistant Dean for Executive Development of the Jesse H. Owens Graduate School of Administration at Rice University. For over 50 years, Sal Manzo has enjoyed the physical and mental challenge of fencing. He learned to fence under Jack Diamond at West Point at the age of 17 in 1935. He made the plebe team in epee that year and the varsity the next three years. Sal won the Pentagonal epee championship and the Intercollegiate Class "A" epee championship in his senior year and placed tenth in the nationals in 1939. In 1940, Sal was member of the Olympic training squad.

In 1941 he won the Puerto Rican foil and epee individual titles.

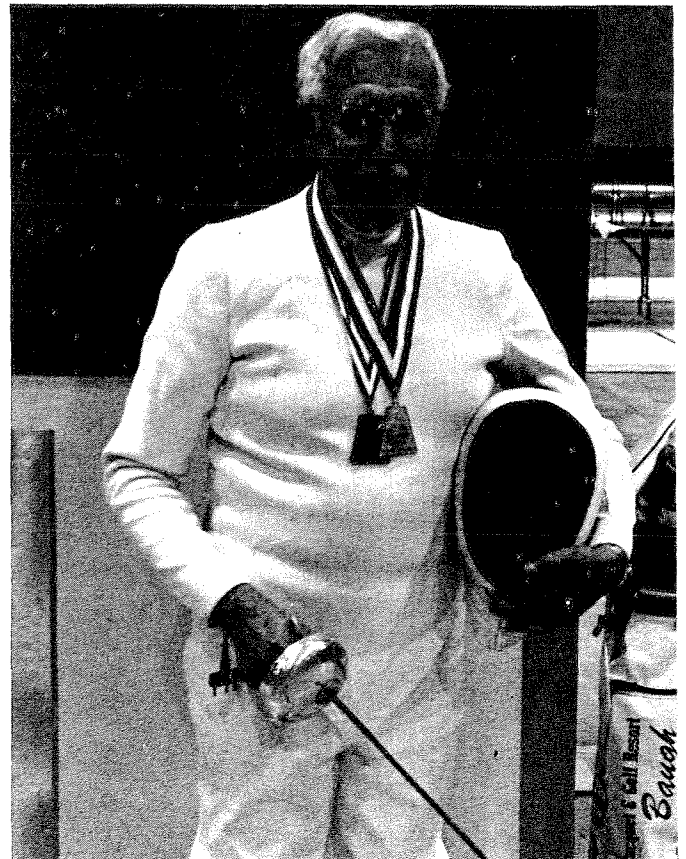
After graduating from West Point, Manzo served 23 years with the U.S. Air Force commanding a B-24 bomber group in Italy during World War II, where he earned several decorations including a Soldier's Medal and two Distinguished Flying Crosses. He later commanded Strategic Air Command B-52 air divisions at Biggs Air Force Base in El Paso and at the Amarillo Air Force Base. Colonel Manzo was director of training under General Curtis E. LeMay, during SAC's expansion and conversion to jet aircraft. He left the Air Force in 1962 to work for a Texas based international construction engineering firm which led to positions with the airport planning group of New York and in 1967 to the Director of Aviation for the city of Houston. Subsequent to this, he moved to Brazil where he planned airports for their major cities. In 1979, he joined the Rice Management School, where he oversees executive development programs.

Sal is planning to enter the June 1988 Senior Age Tournament to be held in Chicago during the U.S.F.A. nationals, and is encouraging all fencers over 40 to participate. How about you?

For information about the forthcoming Senior events, write to: Maxwell Garret, 633 Easterly Parkway, State College, PA 16801.



West Pointer and Intercollegiate Champion Salvatore E. Manzo



"Sal" Manzo, still a victor, in the Senior Age Program