

American FENCING

summer 2002

**high school clubs—
start your own!**

**TOURNAMENT
HIGHLIGHTS**

politics abroad

American FENCING

Summer 2002 · Volume 52, Number 2

FEATURES

- 21 winners
Fencing vs School: A Competition with Two Winners
by Eric Rosenberg
- 24 **Start Your Own High School Club**
Part One
by Cindy Bent

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 **President's Letter**
- 6 **Letter from the Editor**
- 6 **Your Letters**
- 7 **News** Film, a landmark study, and more
- 9 **Postcards from the Strip** two accounts of politics abroad
- 11 **Tournament Highlights** including the Louisville NAC and selected sectional tournaments
- 16 **Tech Talk** Of Weights, Widths & Wires
- 17 **Sports Med Q&A** Anti-Doping Answers
- 19 **The Grayblade** Guns and Sharp Swords
- 26 **Sport Science** Mind on Winning, Part 1
- 27 **Rules/Referees** To Coach or Not to Coach
- 28 **Touché** Ivan Lee's lost dream

On the cover:

Fencing drama at this year's Duel in the Desert: Sean McClain, left, versus Cedric Anan. Photo courtesy Serge Timacheff, Tiger Mountain Photo.



11



21



28

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

Phone: (719) 866-4511
Fax: (719) 866-4270
E-mail: info@usfencing.org
Web: <http://www.usfencing.org>

President	Stacey Johnson
Vice President	Barbara Lynch
Vice President	Sherry Posthumus
Vice President	Ralph Zimmerman
Secretary	Donald Anthony
Treasurer	Michael Sullivan

American Fencing

Dedicated to the Memory of:

Jose R. DeCapriles 1912-1969
Miguel A. DeCapriles 1906-1981

EDITOR/Layout and Design Meg Galipault
magoo@columbus.rr.com
Copy Editor Cindy Bent

Associate Editors:

Bob Block Veterans
Chris Cuddy Advertising Sales
John Heil Sports Psychology
Sam Lillard Photography
John Moss Rules and Referees
Andy Shaw Official Historian

Editors Emeritus Mary Huddleston, Emily Johnson,
Albert Axelrod, Candi McConaugha

Please send all correspondence and articles for submission to Editor, *American Fencing*, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5774. *American Fencing* is published quarterly in January, April, July and October. Please contact the editor regarding submission deadlines. Please contact Chris Cuddy at (719) 578-4511 regarding advertising.

American Fencing (ISSN 0002-8436) is published quarterly by the United States Fencing Association, Inc., One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5774. Periodicals postage paid at Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5774, and additional offices. Subscriptions to *American Fencing* are included with membership in the association. Individuals can subscribe for \$16 in the United States and \$28 elsewhere. Postmaster: Send address changes to USFA, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5774.

©2002 United States Fencing Association. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission prohibited.

PRESIDENT'S letter

STACEY JOHNSON

President, United States Fencing Association



U.S. Position in the World Fencing Political Arena

One of the issues that must be considered when I sit down to write this column is the time lag between the moment that I create the column to the time it is published, and ultimately how this timing impacts the relevancy of what I write. Although certainly things will have changed by the time this column is printed, it is important to share these current reflections with you. In this very moment, the USFA is dealing with an issue that never in my wildest dreams would I have considered could occur in this administration, or quite frankly, in any administration.

Right now in the world of international fencing there is a great upheaval causing athletes around the globe to boycott World Cup events, and raising administrative challenges to the international body of fencing (the FIE) like never before. It is the struggle to finally achieve parity and equity for women in our sport through the inclusion of women's sabre in the 2004 Olympic program that is causing much of the tumult. While seeking the inclusion of women's sabre, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) steadfastly reiterates that fencing can add this new event but it must also maintain the current number of total events (10) and total athletes (200) allowed in the Olympic Games.

What is the history of the FIE's response to this predicament when the IOC says "yes, we support the necessity of parity and equity," but also says "no, you can't have two more events or any additional individuals added to fencing's Olympic program"? For any of you on the collegiate scene, do you begin to feel a bit of *deja vu* when you think of the challenges Title IX caused and the destructive acrimony it often produced, pitting men's non-revenue sports against women's sports in the scramble to make do with existing collegiate budgets?

At the 2001 December FIE Congress in Havana, Cuba, the FIE voted to support a new format of six individual

events, three team events (foil, sabre and epee) with mixed teams of two female and two male in each discipline, along with one six-weapon team. Immediately following this meeting, several European countries were unhappy with this result because they did not want the mixed teams. They went to work on their IOC representatives to overturn the vote, particularly Germany whose representative is the IOC's vice president, Thomas Bach, an Olympic foil fencer and advisor to Jacques Rogge, new IOC president.

An Extraordinary Congress meeting was then held in Antalya, Turkey, in April, and FIE President Rene Roch told us that we would have to abandon the mixed team concept as the IOC required that this new mixed format must be used in at least two world championships before the Games in 2004. Roch reported that to utilize this new format would cost the FIE too much money by adding two to three days to the already scheduled Lisbon, Portugal World Championships this summer. In addition, Bach arrived at the Antalya meeting and told the audience that we could count on no more medals and no more events in our search to accommodate women's sabre in the Olympic Program in Athens.

In Antalya, the European countries—especially France, Germany, and Italy—moved to undo the vote on parity and equity and the inclusion of women's sabre on the Olympic Program, a principle on which we had agreed unanimously in Havana. Italy called for the vote and Germany requested it be a secret vote. A super majority of 75 percent of the Congress was needed to overturn the previous decision made in Havana; this vote was defeated, lacking even a simple majority. We then moved on to vote on two formats under consideration: six individual events and four team events, where one male team and one female team would be eliminated by lots. The second format was five individual events and five team events, eliminating one weapon (male or female) from the individual events and one weapon (female or male) from team events. Both proposals meant that some athletes would be denied the opportunity to compete—that is why, in Havana, the United States was a proponent for the mixed teams because this decision would allow all athletes the opportunity to compete. In Antalya, a majority of FIE countries voted for the six-and-four solution. Women's team foil and men's team sabre were excluded through a drawing of lots.

After the news of the election spread to the world community, particularly the same European countries that fought the Havana decision, those countries' athletes immediately started to stage boycotts of World Cup events.

At this very moment, we are awaiting the outcomes of the very first meeting of duly elected and appointed FIE athlete representatives (Dan Kellner is representing the United States) in Paris with Rene Roch. The current U.S. position is the same position it has held from the very beginning of this journey. We stand for the inclusion of women's sabre on the program and a format that would allow all athletes in all weapons the opportunity to compete at the Olympic Games. Ultimately, however, I believe the core of the great

upheaval facing the FIE at this moment emanates from the following circumstances:

1. The FIE's inability to develop stronger relationships with the IOC on fencing's behalf.
2. The inability of the FIE's member countries to work better together and find a true consensus response to the problems that face us. Both of the votes in Havana and Antalya were very close with margins of only six-to-10 votes. Whenever an organization is polarized as is evidenced by the votes taken to date, inevitably trouble is not far behind. The United States must use its influence to better facilitate finding "common ground" and building greater levels of consensus with the FIE member countries, not just prevailing in the decisions reached.

Finally, it is critical that the FIE move away from the antique concept of accepting that it is a "right" for men/boys to compete in sports and a privilege for women/girls. Many excuses are being used right now: "Women's sabre is too new; the athletes are not developed enough yet; there are not enough numbers in women's sabre," etc. These are all merely excuses to sidestep the difficult work of integrating a new weapon into the current Olympic fencing program. We have hopes for all our athletes, regardless of gender. Our sport could leverage the information that we are finally creating gender equity and parity to capture more media attention, raise the level of respect for our sport, and demonstrate that we are working to level the playing field in our sport for all athletes. Instead, we are fighting among ourselves in accommodating women's sabre.

I am reminded at this moment, shifting gears just a bit, that recently one of our most revered sabre fencers, Peter Westbrook, was recently awarded the IOC's Sport and Well-being Trophy in Boston, Mass., during a USOC Board of Directors dinner. The award is presented to a prominent figure in the sporting community who has promoted the health and positive psychological and physiological condition of individuals through sport. Westbrook continues to exemplify the role that sport can play in improving the quality of life for all individuals. Peter is opening doors for athletes—men and women who never would have had the opportunity previously, particularly due to economic challenges—to try our sport. The official USFA position can hold no less an ethical/moral stand and work towards equity, parity and universality in the world body of international fencing.

MEG GALIPAULT
Editor

Dear Readers:

Without doubt, politics is weighing heavily on the minds of our USFA officials, international athletes, and others who are concerned about the future of our sport. The recent decision to cut women's foil and men's sabre teams from the 2004 Olympic line-up, in exchange for including individual women's sabre, is untenable for everyone and speaks volumes for our sport's shaky position within the International Olympic Committee. How does this change? Not overnight, that's for certain.

While the USFA and FIE must grapple for a better solution in the future, those of us at the grassroots level must work harder to bring fencing to our communities. A commitment must be made to invest in the long-term: if you want a sport to succeed, you've got to start with the kids. Imagine if each division committed itself to starting at least one high school team each year...or even, every other year. Imagine if each high school team taught elementary school kids or provided lessons to adults on the side. These are just a couple of ideas that are already being put to good use—and you can read about them in this issue of *American Fencing*.

All we need to do is look at the examples set by other highly successful sports, such as soccer or gymnastics. Just 30 years ago, both sports were largely ignored by the public. And while 30 years may seem like a long time, that's the kind of commitment it takes.

your letters

In Response to "Ready for Primetime or Not..."

In the Winter 2002 issue of *American Fencing*, a letter from Mr. Kenneth Wiener appeared, entitled "Ready for Primetime or Not..." In his letter, Mr. Wiener addressed the problems that fencing has encountered concerning television coverage. Mr. Wiener writes that if more Americans make it to the medal rounds in the Olympics, we would get more television coverage. I could not agree with him more. He also writes that if fencing were made more TV-friendly, we would get coverage; he says that if fencers were to wear sheer body suits, we would get TV coverage; and he says that given something of a WWF format, we would get TV coverage. Of the last three, I most emphatically disagree.

If Americans made it to the medal rounds of the Olympics, we would get more TV coverage. We know that to be true as we look at tennis. Tennis is also a universal sport, one in which many countries in all continents compete. No college or national-level tournaments get coverage. However, world level competitions such as the French Open, Wimbledon, and the U.S. Open get coverage. Why?

Because we have and have had top-level tennis players like Arthur Ashe, John McEnroe, Jimmy Connors, Martina Navratilova, Peter Sampras and Andre Agassi, to name a few. If fencing were to gain the prestige that tennis has, then we stand a much better chance at gaining the attention of the media.

If fencing were to become more TV-friendly, we would get more coverage. I am doubtful that fencing will ever become truly TV-friendly. Mr. Wiener mentions that swash-buckling movies are very watch-able. We have had proof of that over the years. Versions of *The Three Musketeers* and *Zorro*, to name a few, have always been popular with movie audiences. The reason is that these movies have an aura that is lost with modern fencing. In the movies, the moves flow with grace and precision. There is gallantry in every move made by our heroes. In modern fencing, this is lost. Our goal today is not to impress audiences with control, grace and elegance, but to make a scoring machine go off. Good, watch-able form is lost when all that matters is pressing a tip onto a lame or mask to make a buzzer sound. If I, a decently experienced fencer, have difficulty following an action at the international level, how is the average American going to have a clue what just happened? When I have to rewind over and over to see if a parry riposte was performed or if it was a lucky counter-attack, how is an untrained eye going to understand what happened, or care for that matter? With so many things to stimulate the mind on television, why would anyone try to watch fencing when they could turn the channel and watch grown men dressed as Power Rangers thrash each other about a ring? I don't have an answer. If fencing is to become TV-friendly, we must really take a look at our goals and re-evaluate.

Then there is the question of the body suits. Fencing is an attempt to civilize the most barbaric action possible in human thought, fighting. Fencing is developed in order that a man can fight in a dignified and intelligent manner. One of the things that come with this is safety. If we make fencing dangerous, then we lose the civilized nature of fencing. If we are to do away with our protective uniforms, why not do it all the way and fight with real swords?

If fencing were to add a WWF-like structure, we would get TV coverage. What a horrible thought. Why degrade our ancient art to the very dregs of society? People who watch fencing for the most part do not have that type of mentality, so why gear fencing towards that? Fencing is an intellectual sport that has a very rich tradition of honor and gallantry. Why destroy that in an attempt to be popular with the average American? No, if fencing is to become popular, it must do the opposite of that. Temper tantrums, equipment throwing and arguing with our directors must go. Our fencers must act in a dignified and gallant manner. Only then will fencing be given the respect and attention that it truly deserves.

Perhaps even years ago fencing had its problems, corrupt judges, arrogance and elitists. I am not suggesting that we turn fencing into what is used to be. Why not learn from the mistakes of the past and adhere to the principles that it

was founded upon? We can make a difference. Leaning upon the excuse that nothing is perfect does not remove us from the responsibility to change that.

Jeremy Cooper
Spindletop Cavaliers Fencing Club
Beaumont, TX

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 magoo@columbus.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.

NEWS

DOCUMENTARY FILM GETS SCREENING IN NYC THIS JULY

Choice of Weapons, a feature documentary on sabre fencers Herby Raynaud, Akhnaten Spencer-El, Keeth Smart and Erinn Smart as they competed for spots on the 2000 U.S. Olympic team, will open at the Screening Room theater in New York City on July 12th for one week.

The theatre was recently in the news as part of Robert DeNiro's Tribeca Film Festival, an effort to jumpstart neighborhood businesses after the crippling effects of 9/11. The digital film is a one-man creation by Christopher Dalrymple, whose daughter, Alexandra, is a member of NYC's Fencers Club. Over the course of a year, Dalrymple shot competitions in Athens and Boston as well as the summer nationals in Austin.

Featured in the film is Peter Westbrook, whose foundation gave Spencer-El and the Smarts their start. Also making appearances are coaches Yury Gelman, Steve Mormando and Mika-il Sankofa as well as USFA officers Michael Massik and Carla Mae Richards. Check newspaper listings for times or call (212) 334-2100 in early July.

(Source: USFA.)

LANDMARK STUDY OF OLYMPIC ATHLETES AVAILABLE

According to the U.S. Olympic Coach E-Magazine, Winter 2002 edition, "The Path to Excellence: A Comprehensive View of Development of

U.S. Olympians Who Competed from 1984-1998" is the first in-depth study conducted by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) that provides information from the Olympians' perspective. Tim Gibbons, researcher, and Tammie Forster, USOC Athlete Development, led the study, which featured a 28-question survey of motives and processes, as well as who helped the athletes reach the upper levels of their sport.

Of the 2,170 Olympians surveyed, 816 shared their experiences and insight with the USOC Athlete Development department and Coaching and Sport Sciences division. An article summarizing the results of the survey's first phase is available on-line at www.coaching.usolympicteam.com; click on the U.S. Olympic Coach E-Magazine, Winter 2002 edition.

Below is an excerpt highlighting some of the study's findings:

▶ Coaching is a critical factor for proper development of talented and motivated athletes. Olympians were asked when their coaches played the most important role during their development; the response indicates the importance of coaching was highest during national and international competitive phases. For women and men, this occurred around 18 and 19 years of age, respectively. Nearly equal in importance was the coaching that occurred during the skill acquisition phase of development. Average age of skill acquisition was 13.3 years for women and 13.8 years for men. Results of the survey strongly suggest

that Olympians regard coaching as an important factor across many phases of development.

▶ Olympians ranked the ability to teach and motivate or encourage as the two most important qualities of a coach. The next three qualities were ranked similarly and included training knowledge, skill competence and strategic knowledge of sport. Interestingly, the qualities reported as least important were assistance with goal setting, management/organizational skills and assistance with balancing athletes' lives. Responses from female winter athletes who medalled suggests that medalists have the ability to motivate themselves rather than seeking a coach to motivate them. They valued a coach's strategic knowledge, regardless of his/her personality. Olympians consider coaching among the top five factors contributing to their success. In fact, among medal-winning female swimmers, coaching ranked as the third most important factor for long-term performance progression.

▶ Most Olympians reported a 12 to 13 year period of talent development from an introduction to a sport until making their first Olympic team. In addition, medalists were younger in age during the first five stages of athletic development than non-medalists, and it is likely that medalists were receiving motor skill development and training at an earlier age. This suggests that physical activity and motor skill development during childhood and early adolescence may be an impor-

tant part of an Olympian's overall development. There are individuals who transcend the average developmental period; however, the data suggests that a long period of training, education, and nurturing are needed to develop Olympic-level talent in most American athletes...

► Many coaches and parents grapple with the idea of having their children specialize in a sport at a young age; however, encouraging findings from the questionnaire indicated some Olympians participated in as many as four sports during their childhood and teenage years. During the teenage years, the time Olympians were involved in multiple sport activities, is when they were becoming competitive at the junior and senior national level. This dispels the myth that early specialization is necessary to be successful.

► The survey indicates that many Olympians became coaches following their athletic careers. Thirty percent reported they were coaches at the time they completed the questionnaire. Female winter athletes finishing between ninth and 25th place in their sport at the Olympic Games were the most likely to become coaches.

(Source: U.S. Olympic Coach E-Magazine, Winter 2002 edition, www.coaching.usolympicteam.com)

BHFC'S NEW HOME: AN UPSCALE SHOPPING MALL

Last spring, the sports center in which the Beverly Hills Fencers' Club (BHFC) was located began a long renovation of the club's fencing room. "We lost a number of members," according to the club's president, Mary Annavedder. "Then the center decided to put us in an even smaller room, and more members were lost." Before long, the BHFC realized that it was going to lose its space entirely because the center decided to offer hour classes in a variety of programs instead of giving the fencing club the room each night.

"We knew our time was limited, and began a search in the fall after a reorganization of the club," says Annavedder.

Over the next five months, the group searched for a new space, while securing temporary lodgings at both a local mall's community room and a senior center.

When looking at the community rooms at the Westside Pavilion, a member noticed that one part of the Pavilion had several available retail spaces. Soon, the BHFC signed a lease for space in the Pavilion. "The mall offered us a lower rent because we are a non-profit corporation and they could take a tax deduction," says Annavedder.

"The real story in our move is not the space search, but the fact that we are now in a highly visible location. Together with the mall management, we developed a creative solution that enables us to bring fencing to a wider audience. With creativity and a little hard work, it is possible to nab a prime location, which is good for business and good for the sport."

The club solicited contributions from its members to help the BHFC stay on top of the first six months, giving the organization time to rebuild its membership.

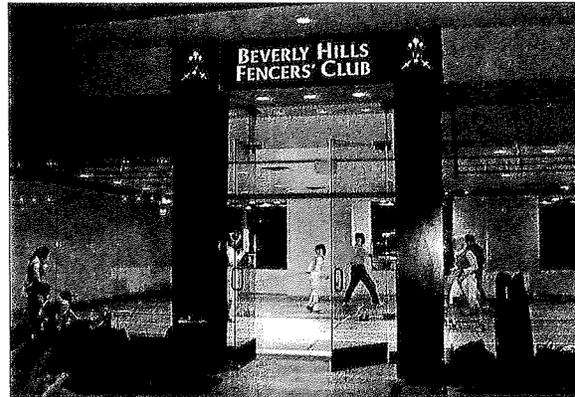
Epeeist John Isaacson created several business models for the BHFC and led the renovation. Over a three-week period, the group spackled walls, fixed holes, painted, and removed the tile from the floor; they also built and painted the floors, and lined the strips.

Lessons at the BHFC are led by epee coaches Karl Christe Carla Corbit, Vadim Diambekov, and Gago Dimerchian, and foil coaches Michael (Misha) Itkin and Boris Kushnir.

The BHFC is located at Westside Pavilion II, 10850 West Pico Blvd., Suite 501A, Los Angeles, Calif., 90064. For more information, call (310) 441-0965.

(Source: Mary Annavedder, President, Beverly Hills Fencers' Club)

Below: The Beverly Hills Fencers' Club at the mall. Photo: Mary Annavedder.



PASSINGS BURTON E. MOORE

A leader in the North Atlantic region, Burton E. Moore founded and managed several fencing teams and camps. Moore died March 13 at home in Westport, CT, after a long illness; he was 69.

A Westport resident for more than 45 years, Moore taught social studies at Roger Ludlowe and Fairfield High Schools before retiring in 1991. He founded fencing teams at both high schools, and led camps at Cornell and Brandeis Universities. Moore was also a certified referee and past chairman of the Connecticut Division.

"His efforts greatly nurtured the growth of fencing as a sport in the North Atlantic region," says Elizabeth Hoffman, a former fencing student and friend. "Fencers and fencing will miss him."

(Source: Elizabeth Hoffman, Seattle, WA; and Westport-News.)

RUBY WATSON

Ruby Watson, a life-long member of the AFLA/USFA, died April 22 in Brooklyn, NYC. Her fencing career began in the 1950s at a time when few African-Americans fenced. She joined the Fencers Club in the 1960s where she fenced for 30 years, and later joined Metropolis Fencing.

Watson contributed significantly to

the NYC fencing community, serving as a board member of the Metropolitan Division for more than 35 years. According to Karen M. Brynildsen, M.D., "She often carried the scoring equipment from club to club by taxi or subway."

Watson's competitive success came primarily as a veteran, earning national and international medals despite frequent interruptions by "the need for cancer surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy." Says Brynildsen, "Ruby's most

important contribution was her persistent campaigning for women's epee and sabre, both as a division official and as a competitor. She was especially proud when the U.S. women won the first Women's Sabre Team World Championship. Without Ruby's hard work, our younger women might not have had that opportunity. Ruby lived long enough to hear the announcement that women's sabre would be included in the Olympic Games."

Watson was born in Harlem on

March 26, 1926, and received a bachelor's degree from Hunter College and a master's from Empire State College.

A memorial service was held on April 30, with family, co-workers, and several dozen fencers from three generations in attendance. George Kolombatovich read a brief eulogy on behalf of USFA President Stacey Johnson.

(Source: Dr. Karen M. Brynildsen, Denville, NJ.)

POSTCARDS from the strip

Fencing & Politics, Part 1 CLOSE THE DOOR AND LET ME PLAY

By Bob Largman

Today, I watched the Cadet Men's Epee World Fencing Championships. The event was held in the beautiful resort town of Kiris (pronounced *Keer-ish*), Turkey, situated on the Mediterranean coast. After the finals were completed and the medals awarded to the athletes, I went back to my hotel room and cried. No, it was not that the United States had just won its third medal of these Junior/Cadet World Championships—it was that our seemingly isolated world of sport had just been violated. Someone had left the door open and let the real world in.

While Ben Bratton was fighting his way into the medal round and the entire U.S. delegation was cheering him onto victory, on the strip across the gym another quarter-final bout was waiting to begin. I was aghast at the series of events that unfolded in front of my eyes.

There was tension in the air, but not the tension of nervous athletes preparing to battle. Not the tension of the coaches having to decide which strategy should be employed to defeat one's opponent. Not the tension from know-

ing the victor of the next bout would advance to the medal round and the vanquished would be left to prepare for another day. The tension was of a political negotiation as an athlete representing Egypt was preparing to fence an athlete from Israel.

The chief of the Egyptian Delegation, with tears in his eyes, was delaying his athlete's approach to the playing field as he waited for a call from the Egyptian Ministry of Sport. The call came and the Egyptian fencer, trying to earn a berth in the finals, was told to withdraw from the event. He would not be given permission to compete against an Israeli. Given the current situation in the Middle East, Egypt—the most moderate of Arab countries and the Arab country with the best relationship with Israel—ordered its athlete to withdraw. Later in the day, we discovered that this same country had severed its diplomatic ties with Israel.

These athletes, all of 17 years old, were caught in the struggle of the real world. All they wanted to do, both the Egyptian and the Israeli, was fence. They wanted to compete. They did not care against who; they did not care the race, religion, or political affiliation of their opponent. They wanted the chance to fence. They wanted a shot at standing on the victor's podium.

They wanted to win...or lose. Why was someone else involved in making this decision? Why wasn't sport allowed to culminate with a victor on the medal stand? In this purest of struggles, why should anything interfere with sport?

The head of the Egyptian Delegation was devastated that he had to wait for this dreaded call. He had a chance to see one of his athletes reach the finals of a world championship—not a common occurrence for Egypt. The athlete was begging to compete. The Israeli didn't understand why something so far away could impact their friendly little swordfight as they set an example for the world in how to cooperate through sport.

But, reality is never far away. Here in Kiris, we are actually very close to the situation—the Middle East is just down the coast. In fact, we (the U.S. National Team) are all much closer to this current conflict than most of us were to the September 11th attacks on the United States. This is very real and this is a strong, cold lesson in what really matters. But why? Why was it necessary to use these children as tools for politics and posturing by governments?

Won't someone just close the door and let us play?

Fencing & Politics, Part 2 EPEE WORLD CUP IN ITALY

By Abdel Salem

Photo by Eric Hansen

Throughout the spring, fencers have been boycotting World Cup events in protest against the recent decision to eliminate Women's Foil Team and Men's Sabre Team events from the 2004 Olympics. Here is one account of the boycott and its effects on the sport.

We heard about the fencer boycott two days before leaving the United States for the Senior Epee World Cup in Legnano, Italy. The word was that it would occur again in Italy.

Personally, I didn't think it would happen; I never imagined I would witness athletes refusing to compete. I knew some fencers had protested because the FIE had dropped men's sabre and women's foil team events from the 2004 Olympic schedule. I advised our fencers to concentrate on the fencing and leave the politics for discussion at the dinner table.

Saturday, May 11th, the tournament followed a relaxed Italian time frame...they were running behind schedule. This gave the fencers a chance to talk. The top 16 fencers were all there, filling out a very strong field. All of our fencers fought very hard. Cody Mattern and Eric Hansen each went five victories and one defeat, yet neither made it directly to the round of 64. By the end of the day Keith Lutchen was the only U.S. fencer qualifying to the round of 64.

As fencers finished for the day, they began to discuss the possibility of a boycott. Through the anger, frustration, and even joking, we felt that something would happen. I was suddenly thrust into the position of being the voice of the U.S. team. No one from the USFA had discussed this with anyone on the team. I quickly got the fencers together for a meeting. No one had a strong position and Keith was actually the only one who qualified. He said he came to fence and wanted to

fence.

On Sunday, Keith and I arrived at the venue. Most of the other U.S. fencers came to support Keith. The French, Germans, Hungarians, and most of the Italians, arrived with their fencing bags but wore street clothes.

Someone from the French team took a microphone at the center of the venue on the strip reserved for the finals. He began calling each fencer from the round of 64. They were to state whether they would protest or fence. The crowd cheered those who protested and booed those who chose to fence. This was a terribly unfair way of putting pressure on fencers to protest. In the midst of this commotion, fencing began.

Our fencers paid their own way and it was Keith's first time to make the round of 64. For us it didn't make a lot of sense to pay all that money and travel that far just to stand around the gym in our jeans with our headphones on. An hour later, Keith received a bye to the round of 32 because the Hungarian fencer, while present, did not report to the strip. A bout between two top Italians had already started when their names were called to come and state if they were protesting or fencing. The bout was interrupted.

Well, how is it that some Italians are fencing and others protesting? It is the politics of fencing between the French and Italians. The Italians knew this would irritate the French. Sure enough, around 10:30 a bout committee representative, who happened to be French, announced that the competition had been cancelled due to two-thirds of the fencers not reporting. There was a lot of cheering and noise.

Fencers who had chosen to compete were confused and definitely not happy. The team captains came close to demanding a refund since the bout committee insisted on canceling. They were upset with the Italian organizers for bowing to the French. Ultimately, the organizers, in effect, fired the bout committee and started anew. Fencing was now going to continue. Some fencers made it to the final without

fencing a bout. In round 32, Keith had a good fight but did not make it to the round of 16.

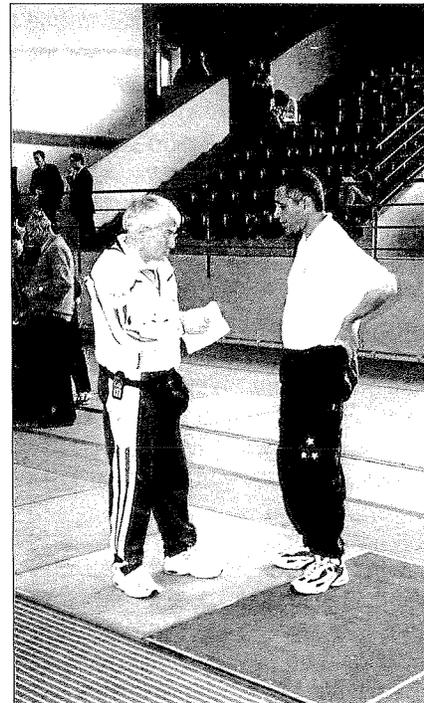
We watched the final. It was interesting, but it was a final without French, Germans, Italians or Hungarians. There was a lot of festivity and many guests. Sponsors were there as was the media.

That night we waited for the bus to transport us to Vercelli for the team event. All of the teams that had entered showed up except for the French and German teams. The U.S. team beat Israel, the Czech Republic and Holland but lost in a close match against Poland. Thus we finished in 9th place. This is the best showing for the men's epee team.

All of the members of the U.S. team were stars. They worked very hard and functioned extremely well as a team. I am proud of them.

We returned and spent the night in Milan. We finished our trip with a visit to the Duomo and eating gelati, "Limoni, grandi, per favore."

U.S. Coach Abdel Salem, right, talking with the Italian head coach.



TOURNAMENT highlights

DIVISION I NATIONALS/YOUTH NAC | Louisville, KY, April 26 - 28

DIVISION I MEN'S EPEE

(55 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group A8 competition

1. Kelsey, Weston S (COLORADO)
2. Mattern, Cody M (OREGON)
- 3.T Feidschuh, Michael (METRO NYC)
- 3.T Rose, Julian M (METRO NYC)
5. Castillo, Alejandro (SO. CALIF.)
6. Burke, Nathaniel (MT. VALLEY)
7. Snider, Jeff H (VIRGINIA)
8. Thompson, Soren (SO. CALIF.)

DIVISION I WOMEN'S EPEE

(45 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group A8 competition

1. Walton, Kerry E (NORTHEAST)
2. Szarwark, Catherine (TENNESSEE)
- 3.T Campi, Lisa Miche (PHILADELPH)
- 3.T James, Kamara L (METRO NYC)
5. Burke, Jessica B (CENTRAL PA)
6. Suchorski, Kristin Fo (CAPITOL)
7. Tar, Marie-Soph (CAPITOL)
8. Hohensee, Kira L (NORTHEAST)

YOUTH-14 MEN'S EPEE

(79 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group C1 competition

1. Kenney, Clayton K (COLORADO)
2. Pearce, Michael A (NORTH CA)
- 3.T Chinman, Nicholas S (COLORADO)
- 3.T Cox, Elliott M (SO. TEXAS)
5. Smith, Dwight A (METRO NYC)
6. French, Peter R.N. (SO. TEXAS)
7. Peck, Max A (LONG ISLND)
8. Kelly, Conor M (NORTHEAST)

YOUTH-14 WOMEN'S EPEE

(43 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group B1 competition

1. Hurley, Kelley A (SO. TEXAS)
2. Rush, Allison Al (COLORADO)
- 3.T Henderson, Danielle A (NEW JERSEY)

DIVISION I MEN'S FOIL

(50 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group A8 competition

1. Dupree, Jedediah (METRO NYC)
2. KirkGordon, Dimitri (CENTRAL CA)
- 3.T Chang, Gregory (NEWENGLAND)
- 3.T Chang, Timothy (CENTRAL CA)
5. Sinkin, Gabriel M (WESTERN NY)
6. Tiomkin, Jonathan C (LONG ISLND)
7. Wood, Alexander (CENTRAL CA)
8. McClain, Michael S (CENTRAL CA)

DIVISION I WOMEN'S FOIL

(43 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group A8 competition

1. Smart, Erinn L (METRO NYC)
2. Cross, Emily R (METRO NYC)
- 3.T Zimmermann, Felicia T (WESTERN NY)
- 3.T Zimmermann, Iris T (WESTERN NY)
5. Ament, Andrea E (INDIANA)
6. Florendo, Jessica S (METRO NYC)
7. Jennings, Susan K (METRO NYC)
8. Leahy, Jacqueline (METRO NYC)

YOUTH-14 MEN'S FOIL

(137 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group C4/B1 competition

1. Chinman, Nicholas S (COLORADO)
2. Kubik, Mark W (SO. TEXAS)
- 3.T Cho, Kevin (S. JERSEY)
- 3.T Hodges, Teddy H (KANSAS)
5. Getz, Kurt A (WEST-ROCK)
6. Stallings, William M. (SO. TEXAS)
7. Vallo, Alexander (UTAH/S.IDA)
8. Pearce, Michael A (NORTH CA)

YOUTH-14 WOMEN'S FOIL

(74 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group B1 competition

1. Willette, Doris E (NORTH CA)
2. Finkel, Kelsey J (METRO NYC)
- 3.T Glasser, Allison D (NORTH CA)

DIVISION I MEN'S SABRE

(50 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group A8 competition

1. Smart, Keeth T (METRO NYC)
2. Lee, Ivan J (METRO NYC)
- 3.T Momtselidze, Mike (COLUMBUSOH)
- 3.T Spencer-El, Akhnaten (METRO NYC)
5. Crompton, Adam C (NEW JERSEY)
6. Raynaud, Herby (METRO NYC)
7. Clement, Luther C (KANSAS)
8. Rogers, Jason N (SO. CALIF.)

DIVISION I WOMEN'S SABRE

(36 Competitors - top 16 earn points)
Group A8 competition

1. Thompson, Caitlin A (OREGON)
2. Gaillard, Amelia F (GEORGIA)
- 3.T Gelman, Julia (METRO NYC)
- 3.T Providenza, Valerie C (OREGON)
5. Becker, Christine (OREGON)
6. Imaizumi, Vivian O (CAPITOL)
7. Oldham Cox, Jennifer K (OREGON)
8. Jemal, Alexis D (METRO NYC)

YOUTH-14 MEN'S SABRE

(74 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group C1 competition

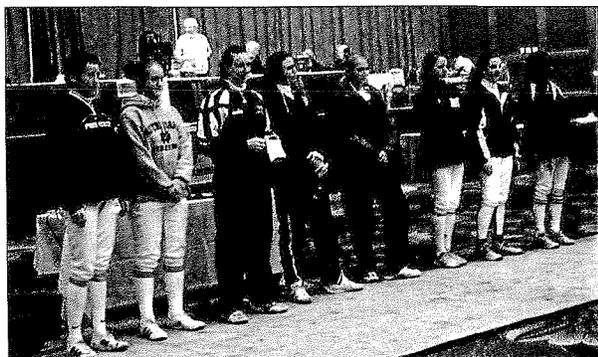
1. Berkowsky, Jonathan E (S. JERSEY)
2. Williams, Maximilian (MT. VALLEY)
- 3.T Rake, Marshall C (KANSAS)
- 3.T Spear, Jeff (HUDS-BERKS)
5. Rudnicki, Alexander (NEW JERSEY)
6. Levitt, Teddy H (SO. CALIF.)
7. Wysocki, Joseph J (GULFCST TX)
8. Liu, Joe C (GEORGIA)

YOUTH-14 WOMEN'S SABRE

(42 Competitors - top 16 earn points)
Group C1 competition

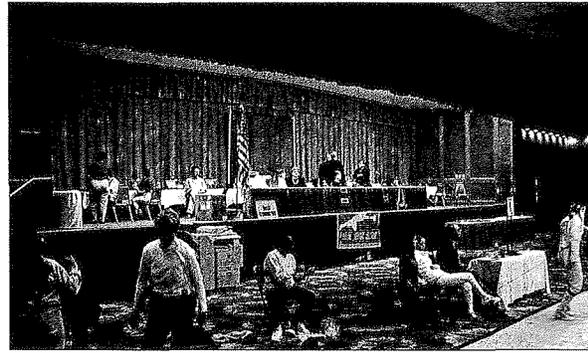
1. Jellison, Eva (NEWENGLAND)
2. Sitek, Zuzanna (NEW JERSEY)
- 3.T Bartoszewicz, Ann (NEW JERSEY)

LOUISVILLE NAC, left to right: Division I Women's Épée finalists; Peter Westbrook and George Kolombatovich; Division I Men's Épée, top four with medals—Rose, Julian M (METRO NYC); Kelsey, Weston S (COLORADO); Mattern, Cody M (OREGON); Feidschuh, Michael (METRO NYC)





SCENES FROM LOUISVILLE NAC. Left, strips in the ballroom; right, bout committee table. Photos: Kerry Swick.



- 3.T Montoya, Kimberlee (NEVADA)
5. French, Christa M (NORTH TEX)
6. French, Kayley A (NORTH TEX)
7. Hatcher, Christina (COLORADO)
8. Vongries, Alyssa L (MINNESOTA)

YOUTH-12 MEN'S EPEE

(52 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group D1 competition

1. Wicas, Graham E (PHILADELPH)
2. Adjemian, Nicolas E (BORDER TEX)
- 3.T Jones, Tristan K (NORTHEAST)
- 3.T Planchard, Sean S (COLORADO)
5. Miller, Stuart J (GEORGIA)
6. Clarke, Joachim A (GULFCST TX)
7. Mansfield, Christophe (UTAH/S.IDA)
8. Choi, Joseph J (COLORADO)

YOUTH-12 WOMEN'S EPEE

(26 Competitors - top 16 earn points)
Group D1 competition

1. Vongries, Alyssa L (MINNESOTA)
2. Cook, Meagan B (S. JERSEY)
- 3.T Bassa, Francesca (GULFCST TX)
- 3.T Hartman, Grace T (MINNESOTA)
5. Clarke, Miriam A (GULFCST TX)
6. Snider, Katherine (SO. TEXAS)
7. Hamer, Hilary A (NORTHEAST)
8. Caven, Elaina M (WESTERN NY)

YOUTH-10 MEN'S EPEE

(22 Competitors - top 8 earn points)
Group D1 competition

1. Kelley, Edward F (SO. TEXAS)
2. Kauli, James T (CAPITOL)
- 3.T Baum, Hunter D (N.CAROLINA)
- 3.T Picou, Antonin R. (CAPITOL)
5. Yergler, Jonathan A (CENTRAL FL)
6. Miller, Jeffrey E (COLORADO)
7. Ameli, Kian (NEVADA)
8. Kubik, Nickolas A (SO. TEXAS)

YOUTH-10 WOMEN'S EPEE

(14 Competitors - top 8 earn points)
Group E1 competition

1. Bassa, Francesca (GULFCST TX)
2. Bhinder, Amrit K (HUDS-BERKS)
- 3.T Ameli, Nik Nik (N (NEVADA)
- 3.T Shaffer, Robyn K (NEWENGLAND)
5. Donnenberg, Elizabeth (GULFCST TX)
6. Condie, Sarah A (COLORADO)
7. Getz, Katherine (WEST-ROCK)
8. Abraham, Lena M (CAPITOL)

- 3.T Nott, Adrienne M (WESTERN NY)
5. Rush, Allison AI (COLORADO)
6. Sinkin, Ilana B (WESTERN NY)
7. Pensler, Arielle R (ILLINOIS)
8. Svengsouk, Jocelyn L (WESTERN NY)

YOUTH-12 MEN'S FOIL

(99 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group C1 competition

1. Parkins, Benjamin B (GULFCST TX)
2. Kubik, Steven J (SO. TEXAS)
- 3.T Meng, Hao (ALABAMA)
- 3.T Willette, David G (NORTH CA)
5. Wicas, Graham E (PHILADELPH)
- 6.T Mansfield, Christophe (UTAH/S.IDA)
- 6.T Simmons, Alex C (NORTH CA)
8. Planchard, Sean S (COLORADO)

YOUTH-12 WOMEN'S FOIL

(54 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group C1 competition

1. Hurley, Courtney L (SO. TEXAS)
2. Ross, Nicole (METRO NYC)
- 3.T Bartholomew, Francesca (NEWENGLAND)
- 3.T Baskies, Meredith S (NEWENGLAND)
5. Yuh, Hyun-Kyung (WEST-ROCK)
6. Sarkisova, Radmila A (MICHIGAN)
7. Henvick, Allison M (NORTH CA)
8. Hirschfeld, Rebecca C (METRO NYC)

YOUTH-10 MEN'S FOIL

(54 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group D1 competition

1. Willette, David G (NORTH CA)
2. Khoshnevisan, Christophe (NORTH CA)
- 3.T Howell, Ryan L (SW OHIO)
- 3.T Van Son, Benjamin S (WESTERN NY)
5. Di Cioccio, Gianni L (METRO NYC)
6. Shmurak, Yevgeniy (KANSAS)
7. Pensler, Alexander (ILLINOIS)
8. Grigoriev, Eduard (METRO NYC)

YOUTH-10 WOMEN'S FOIL

(33 Competitors - top 16 earn points)
Group D1 competition

1. Yuh, Hyun-Kyung (WEST-ROCK)
2. Abdikulova, Aida (ILLINOIS)
- 3.T Bhinder, Amrit K (HUDS-BERKS)
- 3.T Getz, Katherine (WEST-ROCK)
5. Levin, Eve A (METRO NYC)
6. Murphy, Amanda I (KANSAS)
7. Sarkisova, Dayana (MICHIGAN)
8. Van Son, Elizabeth (WESTERN NY)

- 3.T Wozniak, Dagmara (NEW JERSEY)
5. Ward, Becca C (OREGON)
6. Siebert, Lillian (COLUMBUSOH)
7. Kadree, Yewande (GEORGIA)
8. Barroso, Audrey A (GEORGIA)

YOUTH-12 MEN'S SABRE

(52 Competitors - top 32 earn points)
Group C1 competition

1. Murphy, Max D (KANSAS)
2. Strahorn-Brown, Calvin S (OREGON)
- 3.T Reid, Leonon J (MT. VALLEY)
- 3.T Zeltser, Aleksandr (SO. CALIF.)
5. Berliner, Dan (HUDS-BERKS)
6. Douville, Michael C (GEORGIA)
7. Ochocki, Aleksander (NEW JERSEY)
8. Thompson, Bobby B (OREGON)

YOUTH-12 WOMEN'S SABRE

(35 Competitors - top 16 earn points)
Group D1 competition

1. Ward, Becca C (OREGON)
2. Vloka, Caroline N (NEW JERSEY)
- 3.T Kadree, Hafsa (GEORGIA)
- 3.T Wieczorek, Martyna (NEW JERSEY)
5. Bass, Molly M (NORTH TEX)
6. Sachs, Elizabeth (NORTH TEX)
7. Stone, Anne-Eliza (ILLINOIS)
8. Maxfield, Bethany G (NEWENGLAND)

YOUTH-10 MEN'S SABRE

(28 Competitors - top 16 earn points)
Group D1 competition

1. Bak, Adrian (NEW JERSEY)
2. Muccino, Daniel J (KANSAS)
- 3.T Stone, Robert L (ILLINOIS)
- 3.T Wright, Gabriel (KENTUCKY)
5. Johnson, Alex T (KANSAS)
6. Anchor, Austin R (MT. VALLEY)
7. Spear, Will (HUDS-BERKS)
8. Wotton*, Dakota P (CANADA)

YOUTH-10 WOMEN'S SABRE

(23 Competitors - top 16 earn points)
Group D1 competition

1. Murphy, Amanda I (KANSAS)
2. Ford, Tasia (HUDS-BERKS)
- 3.T Kadree, Hafsa (GEORGIA)
- 3.T Stepien, Marta A (NEW JERSEY)
5. Pernice, Erica J (NEWENGLAND)
6. Doyle, K Allison (HUDS-BERKS)
7. Rudnicki, Marie H (NEW JERSEY)
8. Roseman, Shayne A (METRO NYC)

TOURNAMENT highlights

DIVISION I TEAM MEN'S EPEE

(8 Teams)

1. PETER WESTBROOK FOUNDATION, Metropolitan Division
(Ben Bratton, Rashaan Greenhouse, Donovan Holtz, Oba Simmonds)
2. NEW YORK ATHLETIC CLUB, Metropolitan Division
(Michael Feldschuh, Michael Lyons, Chris O'Loughlin, Soren Thompson)
3. NORTHWEST FENCING CENTER, Oregon Division
(Seth Baldwin, Cody Mattern, Nick Testerman)
4. GOLDEN GATE FENCING CENTER, Northern California Division
(Brendan Baby, Dylan Bethel, Eric Hansen, Keith Lichten)

DIVISION I TEAM WOMEN'S EPEE

(7 Teams)

1. NORTHWEST FENCING CENTER, Oregon Division
(Julia Leszko, Amy Orlando, Alli Schirtz, Sharon Sullivan)
2. GOLDEN GATE FENCING CENTER, Northern California Division
(Heath Cabot, Leslie Marx, Janel Obenchain)
3. DC FENCERS CLUB, Capitol Division
(Kristin Foellmer-Suchorski, Margaret Kosmala, Livia Rurarz-Huygens, Marie-Sophie Tar)
4. FENCING ACADEMY OF PHILADELPHIA, Philadelphia Division
(Lisa Campi, Meredith Chin, Mary Frye, Erica Krob)

DIVISION I TEAM MEN'S FOIL

(10 Teams)

1. NEW YORK ATHLETIC CLUB, Metropolitan Division
(Yale Cohen, Kevin Eriksen, Aleksandr Nazarov)
2. STANFORD FENCING CLUB, Central California Division
(Timothy Chang, Eli Miloslavsky, Marc Mulholland, Alex Wood)
3. FENCERS CLUB, Metropolitan Division
(Joe Fisher, Brendan Meyers, Mike Pasinkoff, Jon Tiomkin)
4. ROCHESTER FENCING CENTER, Western NY Division
(Alex Caven, Gabriel Sinkin, Jeremy Sinkin)

DIVISION I TEAM WOMEN'S FOIL

(3 Teams)

1. ROCHESTER FENCING CENTER, Western NY Division
(Adrienne Nott, Ilana Sinkin, Felicia Zimmermann, Iris Zimmermann)
2. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COMPOSITE
(Janet Falcon, Ali Glasser, Tammy Lee, Doris Willette)
3. RHODE ISLAND FENCING ACADEMY, New England Division
(Jessica Davis-Heim, Leanda Ferland, Jill St. Jacques)

DIVISION I TEAM MEN'S SABRE

(7 Teams)

1. PETER WESTBROOK FOUNDATION, Metropolitan Division
(Ivan Lee, Herby Raynaud, Keeth Smart, Akhnaten Spencer-El)
2. FENCERS CLUB, Metropolitan Division
(Tim Hagamen, David Jakus, Tim Morehouse, Steve Mormando)
3. FALCON FENCING CLUB, South California Division
(Ilan Chernov, Paul Friedman, Alex Krul, Anthony Rubin)
4. NY ATHLETIC CLUB, Metropolitan Division
(Patrick Durkan, Ben Igoe, Kim Phillips, Oleg Stetsiv)

DIVISION I TEAM WOMEN'S SABRE

(7 Teams)

1. NELLYA FENCERS, Georgia Division
(Susan Cox, Christina Crane, Amelia Gaillard, Sarah Parker)
2. OREGON FENCING ALLIANCE, Oregon Division
(Chris Becker, Jennifer Oldham Cox, Valerie Providenza, Caitlin Thompson)
3. METROPOLITAN COMPOSITE
(Emma Baratta, Julie Gelman, Alexis Jemal, Joy Miller)
4. LILOV FENCING ACADEMY, New Jersey Division
(Cassandra Frey, Nicole Mustilli, Lauren Phillips, Kataryzna Wierowski)



ROMANKOV & KORETSKI 2002 FOIL TRAINING CAMPS

RAIN CITY FENCING CENTER
AUGUST 12-16 & 19-23

BEVERLY HILLS FENCING CLUB, August 5-10

contact: www.bhfencers.com

STANFORD UNIV. FENCING CLUB, August 24-25

contact: lmilgram@stanford.edu

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.RAINCITYFENCING.COM OR CALL (425) 497-8897

MID-ATLANTIC SECTIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS | Teaneck, NJ, May 4 - 5

MEN'S EPEE

1	Sherrill, Teddy
2	Garrett, Brian
3	Yakimenko, Andrei
4	Gringeri, John
5	Milligan, Bruce
6	Dubrovich, Gary
7	Holbrow, Mark
8	Brooks, Ronald

MEN'S FOIL

1	Berkowsky, Ronald
2	Cellier, Bradley
3	Brooks, Ronald
4	Way, Kashi
5	Bowden, Eric
6	Kao, Alex
7	Schibilia, Jesse
8	Press, Jonathan

MEN'S SABRE

1	Herbert, Ken
2	Tracey, Douglass
3	Berkowsky, Jonathan
4	Kirberger, Eric
5	McCullough, Wayne
6	Lalonde, Ahren
7	Kolasa, Matthew
8	Rudnicki, Alexander

WOMEN'S EPEE

1	Buechel, Holly
2	Lawrence, Maya
3	Campi, Lisa
4	Courtright, Celia
5	Albers, Franziska
6	Midgley, Morgan
7	Frye, Mary
8	Luteran Megan

WOMEN'S FOIL

1	Kaneshige, Christina
2	Gringeri, Melissa
3	Haars, Keri
4	Shellhouse, Darlene
5	Browne, Jeanne
6	Losonczy, Magda
7	Masters, Lara
8	Vogt, Suzanne

WOMEN'S SABRE

1	Baratta, Emma
2	Sitek, Zuzanna
3	Eyre, Jane
4	Wieronski, Anna
5	Phillips, Lauren
6	Delia, Turner
7	Freund, Katherine
8	Wozniak, Dagmara

PACIFIC COAST SECTION SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP | Las Vegas, NV,

May 4 - 5

MEN'S EPEE

1	Demirchian, Gagik
2	Ordody, Gyorgy
3T	Lee, Martin
3T	Loeffler, Carl
5	Mehall, Michael
6	Martin, Jim
7	McNamara, Scott
8	Bittner, Dustin

MEN'S FOIL

1	Cheng, Gerald
2	Kershaw, Clinton
3T	Dew, Eric
3T	Bellanca, Wesley
5	Stauffer, Josh
6	Jeon, Sangick
7	Ricketts, Eric
8	Urbain, Kevin

MEN'S SABRE

1	Runyan, Joshua
2	D'Asaro, Michael
3T	Jackson, Bryan
3T	Williams, Max
5	Burriesci, Matt
6	Martinez, Mario
7	Matsukata, Hajime
8	Juarez, Martin

WOMEN'S EPEE

1	Wertz, Janet
2	Chimient, Michele
3T	Mummery, Alexandra
3T	Korfanty, Alexandra
5	Brinlee, Michelle
6	Fortune, Amy
7	Lacarra, Rosanna
8	Obenchan, Janel

WOMEN'S FOIL

1	Willette, Doris
2	Lee, Tammy
3T	Koehler, Kelly
3T	Falcon, Janet
5	Glasser, Ali
6	Alicia, Pilar
7	Wise, Annie
8	Wang, Christina

WOMEN'S SABRE

1	Kuhn, Sandra
2	Grench, Eileen
3T	Spuehler, Jessica
3T	Phillips, Julia
5	Hirayama, Yukari
6	Runyan, Heidi
7	Griffith, Christine
8	Comes, Rita

GREAT LAKES SECTION CHAMPIONSHIPS | Muncie, IN, May 11 - 12

MEN'S EPEE

1	Howard, Greg
2	Hedien, Mark
3	Geraci, Paul
4	Johnston, Chris
5	Baldwin, Neal
6	Leighton, James
7	Kilmer, Joel
8	Williams, Mike

MEN'S FOIL

1	Findlay, Doug
2	Wunderlich, Sam
3	Streb, Sr., Joseph
4	Streb, Jr., Joseph
5	Mackenzi, Franklin
6	Podlaskowski, Adam
7	Jeter, William
8	Hedien, Mark

MEN'S SABRE

1	Dressell, Todd
2	Neverovich, Alexi
3	Leighton, James
4	Dosmann, Matthew
5	Kelly, Sean
6	Welch, David
7	Smith, Jared
8	Streb, Sr., Joseph

WOMEN'S EPEE

1	Kercsmar, Anne
2	Leighton, Eleanor
3	Willock, Lauren
4	Nation, Sarah
5	Snow, Jeannine

WOMEN'S FOIL

1	Bassik, Judith
2	Nemecek, Samantha
3	Howard, Lindsey
4	Bonello, Rosie
5	Hedien, Heather

WOMEN'S SABRE

1	Stoner, Stanna
2	Dosman, Lisa
3	Sims, Roberta
4	Austin, Christine
5	Jones, Pamela

TOURNAMENT highlights

6 Beavis, Kristi
7 Leader, Brittany
8 Buckman, Molly

6 Leighton, Eleanor
7 Barton, Brook
8 Vaerewycke, Catherine

6 Reese, Drew
7 Moore, Joan

NORTH ATLANTIC SENIOR SECTIONALS | Saratoga Springs, NY, May 11- 12

MEN'S EPEE

1 SAITOC, Sorin
2 YAMASHITA, Taro
3 TYSON, Julian
4 BROOKS, Shawn
5 GALVIN, Matthew
6 OSBORNE, John
7 SAITOC, Tudor
8 BAKER, Bradley

MEN'S FOIL

1 KENNARD, Henry
2 LUTTON, Thomas
3 GETZ, Kurt
4 CARDILLO, Kristian
5 TRINH, Tan
6 SACHS, Jason
7 ITAMERI-KINT, Kai
8 MEEHAN, Justin

MEN'S SABRE

1 BOWER, Brian
2 FUHRO, John
3 CORDERO, Jerome
4 CASTON, James
5 EFSTATHIOU, Evangelos
6 DOLATA, Philip
7 GRANT, Brian
8 LAWSON, Peter

WOMEN'S EPEE

1 TOLLEY, Toby
2 SCHNEIDER, Ruth
3 HOHENSEE, Kira
4 KROLIKOSKI, Courtney
5 FOX, Viveka
6 INMAN, Irena
7 COLLINS, Katherine
8 KOICH, April

WOMEN'S FOIL

1 CHIN, Merideth
2 MENDELSON, Alisa
3 ST. JACQUES, Jill
4 FOX, Viveka
5 EMERSON, Abigail
6 SUMNER, Joelle
7 HUMBLET, Emmanuel
8 OVERTON, Eve

WOMEN'S SABRE

1 SCHUEPP, Tiga
2 GRAY, Caprice
3 DEWEY, Aislinn
4 RUPERT, Eva
5 JELLISON, Eva
6 SCHNEIDER, Daria
7 WEINBAUM, Michelle
8 GORDET, Danielle

WORLD CUP SABRE | Peabody, MA, May 24 - 26

INDIVIDUAL MEN'S SABRE

(119 Competitors)

1. COVALIU, Mihai (ROMANIA)
2. NEMCSIK, Zsolt (HUNGARY)
3. T. SMART, Keeth T (UNITED STATES)
3. T. TARANTINO, Luigi (ITALY)
5. KOTHNY, Wiradech (THAILAND)
6. FERJANCSIK, Domonkos (HUNGARY)
7. FODOR, Kende (HUNGARY)
8. DECSI, Tamas (HUNGARY)
9. BAUER, Dennis (GERMANY)
10. MEDINA, Fernando (SPAIN)
13. T. LEE, Ivan J. (UNITED STATES)
27. SPENCER-EL, Akhnaten (UNITED STATES)
31. CLEMENT, Luther C (UNITED STATES)
32. HAGAMEN, Timothy H (UNITED STATES)
36. ROGERS, Jason N (UNITED STATES)

TEAM MEN'S SABRE

(13 Teams)

1. HUNGARY
2. UKRAINE
3. GERMANY
4. BELARUS
5. UNITED STATES
6. SPAIN
7. ROMANIA
8. ITALY
9. CANADA
10. JAPAN
11. GREECE
12. EL SALVADOR
13. ECUADOR

INDIVIDUAL WOMEN'S SABRE

(95 Competitors)

1. ARGOLAS, Cecile (FRANCE)
2. JACOBSON, Sada M. (UNITED STATES)
3. T. JACOBSON, Emily (UNITED STATES)
3. T. PELEI, Andrea (ROMANIA)
5. JEMAYEVA, Elena (AZERBAIJAN)
6. BIANCO, Ilaria (ITALY)
7. ZAGUNIS, Mariel L. (UNITED STATES)
8. BYRNE, Siobhan (IRELAND)
9. BENAD, Sandra (GERMANY)
10. VIGNAUX, Pascale (FRANCE)
20. MUSTILLI, Nicole (UNITED STATES)
21. IMAIZUMI, Vivian (UNITED STATES)
23. BECKER, Christine (UNITED STATES)
25. LATHAM, Christine (UNITED STATES)
26. CRANE, Christina (UNITED STATES)
28. WRIGHT, Carolyn M (UNITED STATES)
31. GAILLARD, Amelia (UNITED STATES)
36. THOMPSON, Caitlin (UNITED STATES)

TEAM WOMEN'S SABRE

(10 Teams)

1. FRANCE
2. ROMANIA
3. HUNGARY
4. UNITED STATES
5. ITALY
6. AZERBAIJAN
7. GREAT BRITAIN
8. CANADA
9. JAPAN
10. EL SALVADOR

OF WEIGHTS, WIDTHS & WIRES:

a variety of tech tips from Joe Byrnes

A miscellany of topics today. The first is one that I dealt with some years ago, obviously to limited effect, since I note that people are still doing it to themselves. Certainly, all foils and epees have to pass the weight test before a bout; however, if your pressure springs are any good, you ought not have problems. If, of course, you belong to the near-paranoid fringe that insists on cutting spring pressure back to the bare minimum, you bring your grief upon yourself, and I have trouble mustering sympathy. I have said all that before. If, however, you are not a spring-parer, and you still have a problem that you are sure you don't deserve, it can come from your own inadvertence, or laziness, in handling your foil or epee for the inspection.

A sneaky little aspect of the dimension of the test weight being used on you (something that absolutely is not specified in the rule book) may be hanging up your foil or epee. The bore of a weight has no minimum required width, and that is where trouble can arise. If it's foil, you could have too much—i.e., too many layers of—tape at the end, and it is rubbing tightly in a slender bore. Whenever the bore is on the slender side, the problems are not necessarily limited to foils. A few years ago, there were some Eastern European epee points showing up that were simply too wide to go comfortably into some of our test weights. But even if the foil or epee can clear the interior

sides of the thing when facing straight up into it, if you are allowing the blade to sit at a sharp angle, you could be adding a big factor of friction to the job the spring has to do. Conversely, a weight with a very wide bore can rest lop-sidedly on the point and likewise add ugly friction drag. Preventing those problems is up to you; it's largely a matter of how you hold the weapon for inspection.

Another problem recently making fencing life interesting: we see a fair number of body cords for foil and sabre that are wired backwards, so to speak: i.e., "B" is where "C" should be, and vice versa. With most of the sabre machines being used in your average competition (at least for the last year or so), these flipped cords will work, for sabre, but *never* for foil. Since the FIE rule calls for the sabre cord to be the same as a foil cord, all such should be summarily rejected at inspection; but, at smaller competitions, in the interest of getting on with it, they are sometimes allowed—with the understanding that they will be used for sabre only. Inevitably, at some point, one of these jokers is going to appear running up the arm of a foil fencer. Ouch. Make 'em all agree with the rule book spec, please.

Maybe a word of advice about what to use for body cord wire would not be out of order. Outside of the fact that you are required to have three separate lines, well insulated, though connected or twisted together, and of a

suitably low ohmic resistance, there is no prescription about the diameter or color, or appearance of the stuff. Even your connector at the guard can be somewhat eccentric: I have seen some strange adaptations around the world, and within broad limits they will work and be allowable. What is more questionable is whether all such oddities are desirable. This can be especially true for the wire itself, which ideally should not be too stiff (uncomfortable up the arm) or too thick (hard to throttle down to the small connector). I could name names of international competitors who came a cropper on this one—all in the interest of getting themselves a really "strong" and tough cord that would last, one they wouldn't have to worry about. Ha.

A frequent difficulty arises, even with factory assemblies, from the Far Eastern imitations of the bayonet catch foil/sabre plug. These were designed to work with a very slender, insulated wire that slipped easily up into the tiny tubes molded into the assembly, before being tucked over and screwed down in place. The problem lies in using a considerably thicker wire that cannot fit into those slender protective tubes. Therefore the clunky wire has to be run up outside them, unprotected, and frequently stripped before being folded over and screwed into place. Neither of these approaches is desirable; both should be avoided, but that's just about impossible when the wire is too thick.

ANTI-DOPING ANSWERS

what you need to know **By Dr. Peter Harmer**

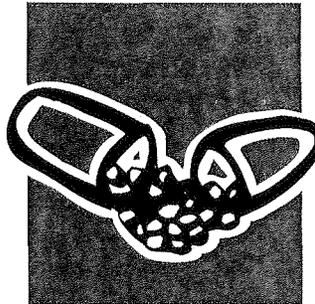
Q: I had heard that there were various exceptions to the anti-doping rules for veterans. I didn't see any reference to this in the article by Dr. Heil in the last issue [Spring 2002] of *American Fencing* and was wondering what the differences were.

A: There have been a number of inquiries regarding exceptions to the scope of drug testing for veterans, mainly based on rumors that those with legitimate pre-existing medical conditions that necessitate using a banned substance will not "fail" a test (i.e., be penalized for a positive test). This is not true. Although this question has been raised by members of the FIE medical commission, as yet it has not been an agenda item of an official commission meeting.

Currently, there are no exceptions for veterans to any provision of the anti-doping code. It is important that veteran fencers understand that they will be held to the same criteria and standards as any other FIE athlete. It is possible that future discussions on this matter may result in policy changes (just as the World Anti-Doping Agency [WADA] is currently reviewing the list of banned substances), but until that time being a veteran fencer doesn't make you exempt.

Q: Is it possible to fail a drug test when using a legal nutritional supplement?

A: Many athletes use nutritional supplements to enhance optimal health and performance. In the United States alone nutritional supplements are a multi-billion dollar industry covering products from vitamins and minerals to



creatine and branched chain amino acids (BCAA). The appeal of nutritional supplements includes the belief that they are safe, legal and effective. However, in the United States dietary and nutritional supplements are exempt from Food and Drug Administration (FDA) oversight. This means that the industry is responsible for policing itself regarding quality control. A recent spate of failed drug tests for high-profile athletes who protested their innocence has focused interest on the purity of nutritional supplements.

The Institute of Biochemistry at the German Sport University in Cologne has just published the results of a 13-nation study (funded by the International Olympic Committee) of nutritional supplements under the direction of Professor Wilhelm Schanzer. The findings are disturbing: of the 634 non-hormonal supplements tested, 94 (approximately 15%) contained prohormones ("chemical building blocks" of hormones) *not listed* on the label in quantities sufficient to potentially produce a positive drug test. The United States ranked fourth overall in the percentage of contaminated products (45 of the 240 products purchased in the United States—nearly 19%—were positive), following the Netherlands

(26%), Austria (23%), and the United Kingdom (19%). More than 14 types of supplements—including creatine, carnitine, vitamins, minerals, BCAA, glutamine, herbal extracts, guarana, zinc, and pyruvate—were found to contain unlisted ingredients. In a related study, one creatine product was found to contain eight different types of undeclared prohormones.

There are several concerns here—the principal one, of course, is that inadvertent use of a prohibited substance is not an excuse for a failed test. This point has been emphasized repeatedly in the anti-doping literature—the athlete is responsible for ensuring that anything taken does not contravene the anti-doping statutes. Numerous failed tests have resulted from athletes confusing the term "illegal" in the criminal sense with "illegal" according to the anti-doping code. Many legal substances are prohibited for use by athletes. However, this current issue is more problematic as athletes have no way of knowing whether the supplement being used may result in a failed test because not all of the ingredients are listed.

The results of this study will be used by the IOC to encourage greater attention to quality control of nutritional supplements by governments and the supplement industry. In the meantime, athletes are strongly encouraged to use only products that have demonstrated quality control, especially for prohormones. The admonition of *caveat emptor* (buyer beware) is particularly important in this situation.

If you have a sports medicine question you would like answered, please direct it to Dr. Peter Harmer, associate chair of Sports Medicine & Science, at pharmer@willamette.edu.



GUNS AND SHARP SWORDS

by Bob Block

*I saw ten thousand talkers whose
Tongues were all broken,
I saw guns and sharp swords, in
The hands of young children,
And it's a hard, and it's a hard*

*...Bob Dylan
A Hard Rain's A Gonna Fall*

It wasn't quite that way. My gun was lethal, designed to stop the enemy du jour, but my sword wasn't sharp. I was a GI who fenced. We were all young then, little more than children. At the tender age of 21 and a recent college graduate, I felt like a mature adult compared to most of my fellow soldiers who were only 18 or 19 years old and barely out of high school. However, we all knew that we were the fortunate sons, for it was the summer of 1966 and instead of being shipped off to Vietnam with many of our infantry classmates, we had been sent to Europe as U.S. Army replacements to help in the two-decade long standoff with the Soviet Army. Compared to a Southeast Asian rice paddy, the Iron Curtain didn't look so bad after all.

The deployment of American troops in recent months to new areas overseas made me think back on my own experiences long ago as a soldier in a strange land. I was part of an infantry medical battalion, more popularly known to the television public as a M*A*S*H unit. We were stationed in Mainz, Germany, at a former "kaserne" (a German barracks) that had been occupied by the U.S. Army since 1945. It was a stout old base built, I suppose, to last for the duration of the Thousand-Year Reich. Fortunately, those tongues had all been broken long before I arrived, but you could still see the outlines of the swastika and eagle emblems that had been blasted off the walls of the buildings by the occupying forces.

Men and women in the armed forces, whether they are in combat or peace-keeping roles, all experience some of the same basic feelings of loneliness and isolation when they are stationed in a foreign country thousands of miles away from friends and family. The holiday season is the most depressing time of all because the sense of where you are not

and who you are not with overwhelms your emotions. Fencing helped me cope with such feelings. The fact that my sword was not sharp allowed me to reach out with it in a foreign country and make new friends in a familiar environment.

Since I'd fenced in college and competed in the old AFLA (the precursor to today's USFA), I decided that resuming my fencing career in Germany would be a great opportunity for me to get some European competitive experience and also find a temporary escape from Army drudgery. I contacted Carl Borack, one of my teammates back home, and asked for information about German fencing clubs. Soon I received a letter from George Worth, then the Foreign Secretary for the AFLA, advising me to write to the German Fencing Federation. Since I didn't have the address of the German Fencing Federation, I decided to go out and look for a club myself.

I got a weekend pass from my first sergeant and caught a train for the short trip over the Rhine River to Frankfurt. I walked up to the information window in the Frankfurt Bahnhof (train station) and asked the attendant if he could tell me where the city's fencing clubs were located. He came up with several suggestions and I chose the one closest to the Bahnhof. I found a taxi and asked the driver to take me to "Eintracht Frankfurt."

The fencing club was part of a much larger German athletic and social establishment. Eintracht Frankfurt occupied a four-story building that included a restaurant and bar on the first floor and gymnasiums, locker rooms, a swimming pool, and even a small bowling alley on the upper floors. By a real stroke of luck, the Eintracht fencers were practicing on the Saturday afternoon when I dropped in out of the blue. After overcoming the language barrier (we soon realized that their English was much better than my limited German), they welcomed me enthusiastically as a fellow member of the fencing fraternity. Someone directed me to Sport-Haus Maul, a sporting goods store where I could buy fencing equipment, and told me to ask for Herr Bauer. The next Saturday I showed up equipped in

brand new gear and ready to fence!

Before long I was a member of the club's epee team along with Horst, Gerhard, Götz and Achim. I journeyed up to Frankfurt as often as I could on Saturdays and practiced with my new fencing family. I also took lessons from a young coach named Werner Schultz who spoke no English at all, so we communicated as best we could through the age-old language of the blade. I started having dinner in the club's restaurant with my friends after workouts, occasionally staying overnight in one of their flats if the hour grew late, and traveled with them to weekend tournaments out of town.

In those days you needed an FIE card in order to compete in Europe. An FIE examination was arranged before an evening tournament and I passed the test administered by a German epee champion (and the last foreigner to win an American national fencing championship) named Max Geuter (today an FIE vice-president and representative for veteran fencing). I received Sport-Pass No. 35300 from the Deutscher Fechter-Bund and began competing in local tournaments with my team and eventually in the Hessian State Championships. Those were exciting and memorable times for a young American abroad who wore Army fatigues and combat boots the other six days of the week.

In 1996 I had a warm reunion with my old Eintracht Frankfurt teammates at a restaurant in the student quarter of the city. I don't think they ever fully understood how much it meant to me to be accepted some three decades earlier into their fencing culture and to be offered their friendship. Although I never encountered any other fencing GIs during my tour in Germany, a few years ago I met one who had fenced in Munich and another who competed in France. So, I suspect that there are probably quite a few others out there who, at one time or another, found the fencing sword an ideal weapon to help beat the GI blues.

Bob Block, aka The Grayblade, fences, coaches fencing, and writes about fencing out of his home near Denver, Colo.

FENCING VS SCHOOL

A COMPETITION WITH TWO WINNERS

NYC's Fencers Club, a not-for-profit organization established in 1883, has been among the most consistently successful competitive clubs in U.S. history. Here, the club's president, Eric Rosenberg, outlines his model for success in merging the sport with education to develop book-smart fencers at The Dwight School.

The Dwight School's fencers.



I began fencing at age 15—more than 30 years ago. Back then, my training consisted of two weekly high school practices, and Saturday mornings at the Fencers Club’s free junior development program in New York City. The highlight of my competitive season was the PSAL (Public School Athletic League) High School Championships, plus a few local AFLA (now USFA) competitions. Fellow teenaged fencers spoke of possibly attending this newly inaugurated tournament called the Junior Olympics. The daydreams of my contemporaries and I were occupied with fanciful visions of World Championship and Olympic medals (when we weren’t thinking about equally unattainable girls).

Now back to the future. Thirty years later, 15-year-old fencers (most with six to seven years’ experience) train four to six times per week supervised by fencing masters with impeccable credentials. Their tournament schedules routinely include regional, national and World Cup competition, where winning medals is no longer a fantasy but an expectation. Spurred by an infusion of visionary coaches and the growth of organized children’s sports programs, fencing has morphed from dilettante to quasi-professional status. Yet with all the success engendered by this Brave New World, it has not exactly been dilemma-free.

I first became involved in designing youth programs at the Fencers Club (FC) in 1980, and over the years I have been confronted with the issue of balance. Serious young fencers were challenged by the task of harmonizing extensive competitive and training schedules with social, family and—most importantly—academic life. I believe school should never take second place to anything. Yet, as club fencers became increasingly successful and needed more time for domestic and international competitions, it became difficult to secure cooperation from public and independent schools.

Public schools are particularly inflexible in accommodating top fencers, regardless of how high their academic standing. (Mayor Rudy Guiliani was more effective in dealing with the

and Cadet fencers is to find a school that will foster the pursuit of both competitive and academic excellence.

I ruminated over these issues with educators and parents, searching for solutions. Then, on a fateful day nearly six years ago, one enthusiastic mother offered to help me pitch my concepts to the chancellor of The Dwight School. Located on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, Dwight has an excellent reputation and is one of only two New York schools accredited to offer the prestigious International Baccalaureate program. My initial meeting with Chancellor Steven Spahn was gratifying. He was familiar with fencing (especially since his youngest son was good friends with Olympian Cliff Bayer) and recognized the appeal that the sport would have with Dwight’s multi-cultural student body. We discussed topics ranging from college recruitment of fencers to re-thinking the traditional scope of independent school sports programs. Fencing, we agreed, was going to have a home at The Dwight School.

Katie Cavan (a three-time Cadet World Team member and finalist in the 2000 Cadet World Championships) was the first participant in our enterprise. Subsequently, the ranks of Dwight students grew to include the following prominent fencers:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Kamara James | 2002 Junior World Team, Women’s Epee;
2001 Senior, Junior and Cadet World
Teams |
| Jon Carter | 2001 Cadet World Team, Men’s Foil |
| Julian Rose | 2001 Cadet World Team, Men’s Epee |
| Jessica Florendo | 2002 Cadet World Team, Women’s Foil |
| Ben Bratton | 2002 Junior and Cadet (Bronze
Medallist) World Teams, Men’s Epee |

At the beginning of the school year, fencers present their teachers and deans with a competition and training schedule. Collectively, they forge a strategy that allows each athlete to fulfill academic requirements without compromising their fencing goals.

FENCING SCHOOL “A key to developing top Junior and Cadet fencers is to find a school that will foster the pursuit of both competitive and academic excellence.”

World Trade Center disaster than he was with the Board of Education’s intractability.) Independent schools are equally problematic. Most tend to be very insular, discouraging any extra-curricular activities that are not school-sponsored. Several public and independent schools participate in fencing leagues that hold high school team and individual tournaments. However, this level of training and competition is neither challenging nor beneficial to elite fencers—if anything, it takes time away from more productive club practices. A key to developing top Junior

ing goals. In addition to their stellar competitive accomplishments, Dwight fencers have been equally successful in the academic arena—earning admission to such prestigious institutions as Columbia/Barnard, the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, New York University and Princeton.

The scope of The Dwight School’s agenda did not end there. Chancellor Spahn and I planned a program—developed in conjunction with After-School Program Director Ellen Grayson, coaches Simon and Irene Gershon, and FC Manager

FEATURE winners

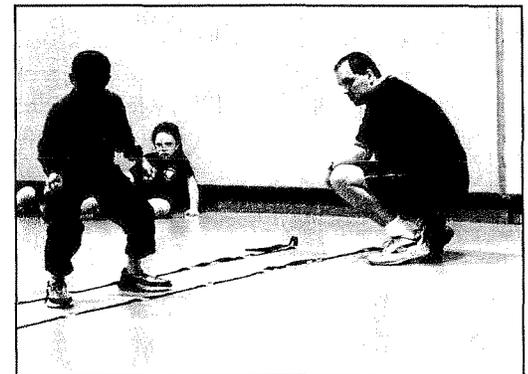
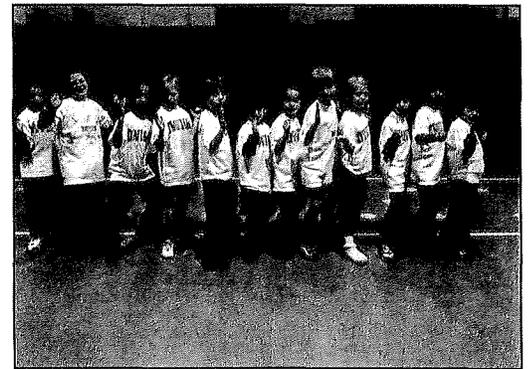
Rita Finkel—to train 7- to 10-year-old beginners at the Fencers Club. Grayson subsequently assumed a multi-purpose role with regard to Dwight fencing, ranging from faculty liaison to spearheading a fencing team trip to Cuba. Having established a critical mass of young fencers, our next step was to hire a coach who could support elite fencers and build an in-house program for kindergarten/first grade and the lower (grades K–5) school.

Dwight made arrangements with the Fencers Club to acquire the services of Kornel Udvarhelyi, a top Hungarian epee coach. At the same time, Sarah Weeks (former captain of the Yale University fencing team) joined the faculty. The combination of Weeks' experience and organizational skills and Udvarhelyi's facility with young children has yielded the most comprehensive school-based development program in the United States. Kindergartners through fifth-grade students now have fencing classes as part of their physical education curriculum, with nationally ranked upperclassmen as their mentors and role models. Properly prepared, these fencers seamlessly meld into the Fencers Club's vigorous infrastructure. After only two years, the program has already produced several promising youth fencers—notably, Miles Chamley-Watson, who was a silver medallist in just his first Youth-12 NAC.

The Dwight School has become a magnet for top fencers in the metropolitan area. Following in the footsteps of their successful predecessors are sabre fencer Matthew Zich and epeeist Dwight Smith, with several others in the pipeline. Most significantly, other New York City independent schools are considering fencing programs based on Dwight's unique template.

The Dwight experience has demonstrated that high academic standards need not be sacrificed while focusing on competitive excellence. Hopefully, many schools across the United States—both public and independent—spurred by proactive parents, guided by visionary educators and coaches, and inspired by talented young athletes, will follow a similar course. The impact on American fencing would be monumental.

Eric Rosenberg is the president of the Fencers Club, spearheading their youth development program for over 25 years. Additionally, he works closely with Peter Westbrook, whose foundation is based and operates out of the Fencers Club. He was a nationally ranked foilist in the '80s and early '90s, participating in several Olympic Festivals and representing the United States as a player/coach on three Maccabiah Games teams.



Photos, top to bottom: Kornel Udvarhelyi with the lower school fencers; the kids do drills; Udvarhelyi working one-on-one; Sarah Weeks takes a turn as a target. Credit: Ellen Grayson.

START YOUR OWN HIGH SCHOOL CLUB

IN THIS TWO-PART SERIES,
THOSE WHO HAVE DONE IT TELL YOU HOW BY CINDY BENT

Every kid in school knows the stereotypes. The starting quarterback, the head cheerleader, the state wrestling champ, the star...foolish?

Not usually. Fencers are used to being anonymous at school—maybe a little too used to it. But it doesn't have to be that way. Around the country, high school clubs, and even varsity teams, are a reality. In this issue, *American Fencing* talks to some ambitious fencers who have started high school programs in their own back yards to get a few tips on bringing fencing to your school.

Whether you're a student who wants the honor of fencing for your school, a parent looking for activities for your kids, or a coach seeking to expand fencing in your community, if you bring the necessary components to the table, you can get your school into fencing: Coach plus Advisor plus Students plus Parents plus WORK = Club. Those who have started clubs say the other needs—funding, space, equipment, cooperation of your school administration—will eventually fall into place.

Getting Started

The process begins with applying to the school for formal club status. That process may differ from school to school, but in general, schools want to see interest from students and a responsible adult who will advise the club.

Don Stanko and Nicole Barron-Joyce, along with two students—Jordan Ritter-Soronen and Sean Boda, who already fenced with the Columbus Fencers Club (CFC) and wanted to bring their sport to school—started the Upper Arlington (UA) High School Fencing Club in the Columbus, Ohio area in 1998

with no funding in a school district that had barely heard of the sport. By the end of their first season, 1999, the UA women's club won the Ohio State High School Championship foil title and the men took second.

Today, the UA club boasts 30-40 steady members and two more state titles—and enough funding to outfit the club with electric equipment. The recipe, they say, is not magic—just determination, imagination, and cooperation with the school.

When Ritter-Soronen and Boda realized they needed an advisor to get started, they asked Stanko, an Upper Arlington police officer who also fenced. Stanko was soon joined by Barron-Joyce, a fellow CFC fencer and UA parent whose daughters fenced and wanted to join.

The next step was to prove to the school that there was sufficient interest for a club.

"It was quite easy actually," says Stanko. "They submitted a simple request form. They had to prove they had a small number of people interested in starting a club, that they had an adult advisor to help run it, and that they'd follow rules and guidelines put in place by the school."

Almost all schools do require an adult advisor. Some schools may require that the advisor be a school staffer, but many do not. Stanko's club had the added advantage of his title; Stanko is the Community Relations Officer for the City of Upper Arlington, Police Division. The school and the city were both eager to build a good relationship between students and the police department, so Stanko's job did grease many wheels for the club.

But even if you don't have a school board member or a police officer working with you, don't despair. If a school sees that a sufficient number of students are interested and they have an advisor, they should allow the students to form their club.

Jeffrey Salmon and Jennie Dhondt, in fact, had no school connections at all when they started their Long Island program in the mid-'90s. They say not to be afraid to start from scratch. Salmon and Dhondt offered the school a free demonstration of the sport. At that demonstration, which they kept brief and as exciting as possible, they asked students interested in forming a school club to sign their names and telephone numbers.

They then took the list to the school's administration as proof of interest, and without a single student with fencing experience, the Ward-Melville Fencing Club was born. "If you

can provide the parts to be a club and can prove interest, the school is obligated to look at it," says Salmon. "If there is no reasonable reason to not approve the club, they should do it."

Salmon and Stanko also both provided evidence of what fencing offers kids in petitions to their respective school administrations. They pointed out that 70 colleges—and 80 percent of Ivy League colleges—have NCAA fencing programs, and that many offer scholarships for fencing. Each presented a laundry list of the benefits fencing has for kids—that it teach-

practice times and locations. Hold competitions in your high school whenever possible and invite school board members. And after every competition, submit results to your community newspapers, especially the local weeklies. Reporting on results often sparks attention from editors and parents who don't know that fencing in the community exists.

Competitions, with added food and merchandise sales sponsored by local companies, can be fundraising and publicity windfalls.

Publicity is not only your key recruiting tool for new students, but also goes hand in hand with fundraising, says Stanko.

es them focus, athleticism, responsibility and drive, and so on. Most often, proof of student interest, evidence of a worthy activity, and a responsible advisor are all a school requires to start a club.

Money Matters

So you have permission—now what? You need space—and money. Don't expect the school to help much with either. The UA club fences on a balcony in the school auditorium; the Long Island club started in a hallway. But they survive.

Expect funding to be your biggest hurdle, say both Stanko and Salmon. Money may come from your school, but probably not. With other districts on Long Island offering fencing, Salmon was able to convince his district to give him a startup budget to keep up with the "Joneses." Stanko's club is an island in Columbus as far as high school programs go, and he had to start from scratch.

"When we started fencing, we traded off masks between bouts," Stanko says. "In lieu of jackets, they had surplus bullet-proof vests, and I was using a telescoping pointer instead of a foil! It was very makeshift, but we did it."

So where can money come from? Your community, as well as through a little publicity and creativity. Stanko's club was so unique and the kids loved his program so much that the community took notice. The USFA's Columbus Division provided grants for equipment, from both the division's fund and from private pockets of some generous division members.

Publicity is not only your key recruiting tool for new students, but also goes hand in hand with fundraising, says Stanko. Last year, the UA club received a grant from community government—\$5,000 from the UA Youth and Family Council. That grant was a result of positive publicity the club had worked for in the community and school.

You can easily generate publicity in several ways. Ask the school to put notices of every club practice, of tournaments coming up and results after competitions, into the morning announcements to the students. With the school's permission, place posters in halls, in the gym and in bathrooms to advertise

"When we held the Ohio High School Championships, 45 businesses donated food and gift certificates, and we netted around \$500 at the event," says Barron-Joyce. She adds that since the school is a non-profit body, contributions to the club are tax-deductible.

Some schools have restrictions on the numbers of in-school—or even in-community—fundraisers because parents are flooded with clubs seeking money, so your fundraiser really has to count.

"We've gone through the typical candy sales, car washes, and they just don't pay off," Salmon says. "The kids work too hard for \$200—it gets to the point that you just want to give it to them." He says that the best fundraisers are sales of products with large profit margins, such as pizza kits or cookie dough. Church dinners are another good income source for Salmon's club—local churches offer space for free (or almost free), parents and kids donate time with cooking, and the club holds raffles at the dinner.

The UA club also teaches elementary school kids who pay a small fee to the club for an after-school program. The Ward-Melville club has offered classes in fencing for the district's adult education programs. The adults paid a nominal class fee and rental for the use of the equipment. Ward-Melville's school district is happy with both programs because they offer greater community outreach.

"The sky's the limit if you put some thought into it," says Salmon.

In the next issue of *American Fencing*, we will explore keeping the club active, recruiting, taking steps toward varsity status, and expanding the program beyond your high school.

Cindy Bent is the USFA's media contact and has fenced for 13 years. She also assisted with coaching two high school programs in Pittsburgh. She intends (and we believe her!) to be on the first-place women's foil team at Summer Nationals. Bent lives in Columbus, Ohio.

MIND ON WINNING, PART 1:

lombardi & rockne by Dr. John Heil

The drive to win is sport's most compelling emotional force, and its deepest source of myth and mystery. This is the first of two articles to examine perspectives on winning. It explores the wisdom of two of the greatest (and most misunderstood) coaches of 20th-century America—Vince Lombardi and Knute Rockne.

Vince Lombardi: "Battles are won primarily in the heart."

Probably the most well known and often repeated statement on winning comes from Vince Lombardi, coach of the great Green Bay Packers' football teams of the '60s. He said: "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing." His full meaning and impact has been the subject of continuing debate. Without a doubt, it speaks to single mindedness of purpose, but at what cost? Stinging criticism has been directed at the application of this philosophy to youth and recreational athletes. At its worst, it has become the justification for negativism and harsh practices by misdirected coaches. This approach to coaching has been shown to undermine personal development and to contribute to sport dropout, ultimately undermining the cultivation of athletic talent.

Even in professional football the "win or else" philosophy has its limits. It is not well known that things eventually took a downturn for Lombardi, causing him to leave the Packers. His son, Vince Lombardi Jr., notes that one of the reasons for this was his harshness, and the overuse of fear and coercion as a means of motivation. In his book, *Coaching for Teamwork*, Lombardi Jr. continued the family tradition of leadership, sharing his father's wisdom and blending this with the perspectives of other great leaders. This broader picture of his father shows a richness of spirit and depth of character, and offers a far more com-

PELLING insight into the man than is revealed by his most famous quote.

Lombardi Sr. believed that winning began with the coach creating a positive attitude first within him or herself, as exemplified in this statement: "I am not going before that ball club without being able to exude confidence." He also emphasized the importance of recognizing effort—independent of outcome—as reflected in a letter sent to each of his team members after the 1962 World Championship: "Character is perfectly disciplined will, and you are men of character. Our greatest glory was not in never falling, but in rising when we fell." This letter was addressed not just to the team, but to their families as well, signaling the important role played by those who supported the athletes. While standing as a symbol of mental toughness, Lombardi also understood the value of being emotionally grounded.

Knute Rockne: "We try to make the spirit of the game one of exhilaration."

The story of Knute Rockne and his legendary Notre Dame football teams of the 1920s has come to personify emotional intensity as the stepping stone to great performance. Rockne is seen as the shining example of the great motivator, and his means for doing so, the "fire and brimstone" speech. But like Lombardi, Rockne's philosophy has been oversimplified and misunderstood.

In 1924, pioneering sport psychologist Coleman Griffith wrote Rockne to discover his secrets of winning. On getting players psychologically prepared, Rockne responded:

"I do not make any effort to key them up, except on rare, exceptional occasions. I keyed them up for the Nebraska game this year, which was a mistake, as we had a reaction the following Saturday against Northwest-

ern. I try to make our boys take the game less seriously than I presume others do, and we try to make the spirit of the game one of exhilaration."

In response to Griffith's question about preparation for a post-season game, Rockne went on to offer some surprising advice on the role of intensity. Working on the assumption that travel and the demands of a warm climate would put a burden on the players, he conducted short, quick practices (rather than tough and demanding ones), minimizing physical demand and emphasizing focus so that the team would be rested and mentally sharp. He noted that although they did lose the resiliency and drive out of their legs, "... the spirit of play manifested itself and the boys were so alert that they took advantage of every mistake."

When asked what he looks for in selecting players, Rockne stated simply: "I do try to pick men who like the game of football and get a lot of fun out of playing."

"Playing for fun" is an increasingly common post-game quote by top level athletes when asked about their outstanding play. So this idea of "fun" is not a new one but an old one that has been rediscovered. And curiously, it has its roots with the great Rockne. The full meaning and value of having fun in the midst of extreme pressure is a true mystery waiting to be unraveled. In fact, it may be contemporary sport's closest parallel to a Zen riddle.

In the next issue of *American Fencing*, we will broaden our look at winning, probing more deeply into history and moving forward to contemporary sport to see what additional lessons emerge.

Dr. John Heil is chair of Sports Medicine and Science for the USFA. He is at Lewis-Gale Clinic in Roanoke, VA; email: jheil@rev.net.

TO COACH OR NOT TO COACH...

one year later **by Jeff Bukantz**

In *American Fencing's* Winter 2001 issue, I discussed the pros and cons of the USFA Board's decision to eliminate Rule t.82, which said, "During the fencing, nobody is allowed to give advice to the fencers."

My opinion was not sugar-coated. I felt that the Board's ruling was not only incorrect (the FIE maintains this rule), but set a dangerous precedent. By overruling the Fencing Officials Commission (FOC), the Board opened the door for any rule or interpretation of a rule to be changed by a political versus judicial process.

The horse has already left the barn...

One year after sanctioning coaching, I can say that, for the most part, it has not been as bad as I thought it would be. The majority of the coaching does not disturb order on the strip. That doesn't justify its existence, nor the precedent it set, but simply states that it has not substantially hindered the smooth running of the competition. As long as the coaching takes place in between actions, an argument can be made that it mirrors "the way they do it in Europe," which was the main reason for the Board's decision.

Needless to say, after the referee's command of "Fence," and until the command of "Halt," there must be a high level of decorum. While many referees have incorrectly chosen to be lenient, it is their duty to maintain a level playing field during the combat. Verbal coaching during the actual fencing can be distracting to the opponent (in the old days, the oppo-

nent was the other fencer, not the other fencer's coach), as well as the referee. This is not "the way they do it in Europe," and the onus is not on the negatively affected fencer to complain, but rather on the referee to proactively enforce the disturbing order rule.

Give someone an inch, and they take a mile...

Recently, the FOC was asked to rule on the whether coaches would be allowed to communicate via wireless transmitters into the fencer's ear piece. Amazingly, they argued that this is not specifically prohibited by the USFA or FIE rule books.

Puh-lease! The FIE rule prohibits all coaching. The USFA's decision to legalize coaching was to specifically conform to what (allegedly) goes on in Europe.

The FOC had to make a judgment call and determined that transmitters would not be allowed. The most prominent reason was the potential safety hazard. A fencer might be distracted by a coach barking instructions through the ear piece, not hear the referee's "Halt," and risk injuring the defenseless opponent who obeyed the command in a timely manner.

Coaches will have to rely on their other devices.

The best laid plans of mice and men go astray...

The FOC's job is to enforce the rules, and the coach's job is to coach. However, the paths inevitably converge.

Since coaching became officially sanctioned, I've noticed a disturbing trend. Here's an example: One of our top junior fencers, and regular point-getter at the senior NACs, was actually crying before a DE bout. The fencer begged the referee to delay the bout until the coach, who was with another fencer across the room, was available to coach her. Evidently, this fencer had become completely reliant on her coach.

On numerous occasions, coaches have requested that the bout committee arrange the strips (both in pools and DE) in such a way so that the coach would be able to coach fencers on adjacent strips.

Certainly, that is not "the way they do it in Europe!"

Steve Higginson, the chair of the FIE Rules Commission, agreed that the "no coaching" rule is not uniformly enforced in Europe. He went on to say that fencers who are used to being coached "officially" run the risk of a tightening of the rule's application, which is often the case in major competitions.

Wouldn't it be tragic if an unintended byproduct of the Board's well-intentioned decision was that a generation of young American fencers became incapable of performing at their best without a coach at their side?

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 Jeff at bukieboy@aol.com.

YOU MAKE THE CALL

For some reason, there are always certain applications of the rules that seem to befuddle fencers, coaches, and yes, even referees. Let's test your own acumen with the following teasers. Anyone who gets all three correct answers will have their name posted on the FOC web page. The answers will be posted after July 31 on the FOC web page, which can be linked through the USFA web site—www.usfencing.org.

1) Fencer A attacks and scores on fencer B. While scoring the hit, or immediately afterwards, Fencer A provokes a corps a corps with Fencer B.

Does the hit count, and what cards, if any, are handed out?

2) Fencer A attacks and scores on Fencer B. While scoring the hit, or immediately afterwards, Fencer A provokes a brutal corps a corps with fencer B.

Does the hit count, and what cards, if any, are handed out?

3) In each of the above cases, what happens if the score was 4-4, 14-14, or 44-44 when the action and infraction occurred and Fencer A already had a yellow card?

Email your answers by July 31 to: rules@usfa.org. If you get all the answers right, your name will appear on the web site after July 31. Good luck!

THE OLYMPICS:

sabrist **Ivan Lee** laments a lost dream

As many may know (and if you don't, read *USFA President Stacey Johnson's column on page 4*), the format of the fencing program at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens has been in flux for the past year, causing a swirl of controversy inside our sport. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has decided to accept women's sabre as an official Olympic event, but at the same time has restricted the total number of fencing events to 10 (disallowing an increase from the Sydney Games in 2000) and the number of athletes to 200. They left responsibility for the final decision of how to fit 12 weapons into 10 medals to the Federation Internationale d'Esclime (FIE).

These required decisions have not been easy ones to make for the international fencing community. The exact sequence of events that led to the most recent formula is beyond the scope of this article, but the end result was this: individual events will be held in each of the six weapons, and four team events will be held. Men's sabre and women's foil teams were chosen by lot for exclusion and the fencing world erupted.

As of this writing, national federations from Europe and athletes from around the world have protested with a variety of actions. Athletes went on strike at world cups (see *Abdul Salem's account of one such protest on page 10 of this issue*) by laying down their weapons and refusing to fence direct elimination bouts or boycotting competitions altogether.

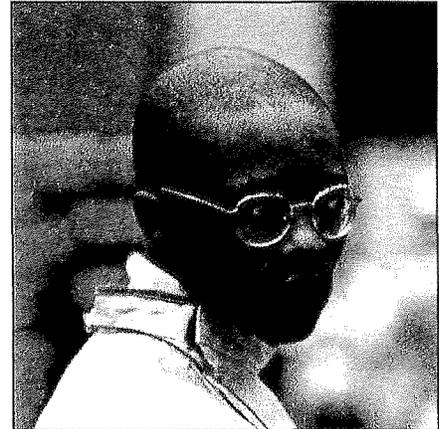
The article here was written by 2001 Senior World Championships team member Ivan Lee, a sabrist, at the request of American Fencing, to give a personal glimpse at how this decision is affecting athletes around the world.

Being a pure amateur in this sport, I can only express a percentage of the agony, disappointment and anger already expressed by European professional fencers. Although I may not travel to as many world cups, train as many hours, or get paid a dime for my athletic performance, I can and do feel the sense of personal loss shared by so many athletes around the world.

Ever since I took up this sport, I had a dream. It's a dream that so many athletes have—to reach perhaps the highest and most prestigious level of athletic competition that exists, the Olympic Games. The Games have been an achievable goal for American fencers for many years. Recently, however, some of our athletes have been denied a realistic opportunity to compete in the next Olympics. Although there is a chance one of us will qualify, we have still been stripped of our chance to compete together as a team representing our country.

Inasmuch as I am happy for the women sabrists who will have that opportunity, erasing team men's sabre and team women's foil obliterates a long history of tradition. It wounds the sport like a dagger through a human heart. It puts a blemish on the face of fencing. It hurts so many athletes who have put their time, money and effort into making the Olympic Team.

I feel like I have been training for nothing. I do not train enough, nor do I compete enough to be on the level of the highest competitors in the world. But I had hopes that our team would finish in the top eight at the 2003 World Championships, putting my teammates and me in the driver's seat and enabling us to compete at the Olympics. Now, even if I do qualify individually, I will most likely be there alone. My motivation has been shot down to the ground like a hunted bird.



Ivan Lee

My heart is heavy with pain and anger because I made so many sacrifices, so many changes, scheduled my entire life around fencing, just to make the Olympics. I missed college courses, spent birthdays on planes, missed family holidays, lost personal time and money just so I can be an Olympian—my biggest goal next to graduating from college and beginning my career as a teacher. My time in this sport is limited due to my amateur status and my need to make a living. These years are very instrumental to me in my quest to make my dream come alive.

I know that there are other American athletes who share this feeling with me. They have put just as much time and effort, if not more, into fencing. They know what it takes to make it all the way to Athens in 2004. They feel this pain. They feel this anger. They understand where I am coming from. And yet, as much as it hurts, we will experience only a percentage of the pain that the European fencers must experience.

Ivan Lee was a member of the 2001 World Championship men's sabre team and is currently a journalism student at St. Johns University.