

THE RIPOSTE



The Riposte

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JOHN ALLAIRE IS DEAD.

John Allaire died last Sunday night at the age of eighty less than 18 months after his retirement from administrative duties in the Amateur Fencers League of America, of which he was honorary vice-president.

Never a titular fencing champion, John Allaire was the first and most vigorous champion of democracy in fencing. Acquainted by personally painful experience with the shortsightedness of those who believed in fencing for the chosen few only, he sponsored the cause of all youngsters who answered to the call of the ancient art, and of those smaller clubs who in the final analysis furnish the lifeblood of competitive sport. Himself a representative of the New York Turn Verein during his competitive career, he devoted much time and money to the support of the Saltus Club during its long and honorable existence at the old French Y.M.C.A., while at the same time holding membership in either the Fencers Club or the New York Athletic Club.

No fencer who has ever been active in National Competition will forget John Allaire's long service as Chairman of the Bout Committee. For 25 years he attended every scheduled tournament of the A.F.L.A. whether for "preps" or "seniors", and he devoted as much painstaking care to the conduct of the one as of the other.

Fencing - rather than his business duties in Wall Street - was always the driving interest of John Allaire's life. He made his final public appearance at the first Veterans Tournament last spring, when the "youngsters" in the competition honored him with membership in the highly exclusive "Fifty-Plus" Club, and the A.F.L.A. presented him with a silver tray engraved with the signatures of the four presidents under whom he served.

The American fencing world mourns John Allaire. May his many years of unselfish devotion to the game be an inspiration to those of us who carry on, and may he find, in the world beyond, a worthy opponent for a pleasant bout with his beloved sabre.

THE RIPOSTE

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SHORT NOTES FROM ALL OVER

Well, we've finally gotten "Mike" de Capriles to admit the real story of his success in the Hungarian Sabre meet this summer...He was able to win largely due to his linguistic ability...The committee in charge of the tournament decided to have some of Mike's bouts directed in French so that he could understand what was being said more easily...It seems that the Hungarian word for "Ready" is pronounced very much like the french "Allez", which means "Play" in fencing circles...As a result, "Mike" admits that he was able to score several touches by making straight head-cuts on the command "Allez"...The Hungarians had interpreted it as their word for "Ready" and were being hit while they listened for the command of "play" which never came-----

The Open Foils Championship of the Bay Region was held at the Funke Fencing Academy in San Francisco. After four hours of preliminary rounds, seven men reached the finals. Two left-handers, Alfred Snyder of the Olympic Club, and Oliver Bowen of Stanford University, tied for first place. Snyder defeated Bowen 5-3 in the fence-off. The third place medal was won by De Forest Rodecape of the Olympic Club. These three men also qualified for the Pacific Coast Championships in April.-----

The Bay Region's Open Epee Championship was also held at the Funke Fencing Academy, and four men from the Olympic Club tied for first. The results of the fence-off gave John L. Thompson first, Robert Dasmann second, Ferard Leicester third, and De Forest Rodecape fourth.

(Continued on page 5)

HUFFMAN RETAINS 3-WEAPON TITLE.

Dr. John R. Huffman, of the New York A.C., made fencing history when for the third consecutive time, and the 5th in 7 years, he won the Three-Weapon Championship by scoring his third consecutive victory in the finals over Jose R. de Capriles. The score was 8-6. Huffman got off to a brilliant 4-1 advantage in the foil through a series of spectacular attacks. Then his accurate point to the wrist gained an upset victory in epee 3-2; so that, at the beginning of the sabre, Huffman's favorite weapon, he needed but a single point for victory.

For several exciting minutes it seemed as if Jose de Capriles would perform the impossible. Staging a desperate rally, with the coolness of a fighter who refuses to concede defeat, Jose scored three times with fast counter-attacks in opposition. Then suddenly Huffman lunged, de Capriles stop-cutted to the arm, the judges were none too certain as to what had happened, and finally decided in favor of Huffman. The action was much debated afterward, but there is no doubt that John Huffman still is the champion all-around fencer of this country.

Huffman defeated Miguel de Capriles, champion in 1933 and 1934, in the semi-final bracket for the third consecutive time, and this year "Johnny" had an easy time, winning 8-4 largely by virtue of a 4-1 lead in foil. But Huffman had to fight a battle royal with "Chips" Cantor in the quarter-final, trailing 3-2 at the end of the foil, and winning 8-6 only after a stubborn and decisive encounter in the sabre.

Jose de Capriles reached the final by defeating Leo Nunes 8-6 in what was easily the toughest match of the tournament. The N.Y.A.C. veteran, Huffman's only rival for the all-time three-weapon supremacy, fought with his customary technical and tactical skill, and lost only because his physical energies were drained in two long drawn-out matches. In the quarter final, Hugh Alessandrone had beaten him 3-2 in foil and epee and had scored the first touch in sabre to lead 7-4, when Nunes, rallying in true championship style, scored four successive sabre hits to pull the match out of the fire by 8-7

(Continued on page 3)

A MESSAGE FROM MR. PAUL ANSPACH

Mr. Anspach, re-elected president of the International Fencing Federation, sends the following statement from Brussels:

" At the outset of the new commission that the Congress of Berlin has conferred upon me, it is extremely pleasing to me to present to the fencers of the whole world the wish that I have for the realization of all their hopes and to express to them, anew, my very deep gratitude for the testimony of sympathy and confidence that they have never ceased to express to me. Upon my part, I assure them of all my devotion and of the realization of the task that they have imposed upon me. I promise them that I will consecrate all my efforts to the task. I heartily wish that the relations of comradeship which unite the fencers of all countries and which constitute the charm of our relations may develop more and more and that the F.I.E. will continue to be a large family closely and completely united by the realization of our common ideal."

The address was sent to the President of the Amateur Fencers League of America, Mr. Harold Van Buskirk, and was translated for us by our Foreign Correspondent, Mr. George Breed.

HUFFMAN RETAINS TITLE
(Continued)

The other quarter-finalists were Nickolas Muray, a perennial top-notch in this tournament, and Norman Armitage another star who made his first appearance in four years in the Three Weapon competition. Muray lost to Jose de Capriles 8-5 and Armitage lost to Miguel de Capriles by 8-2. Except for the recent rise of Cantor and Alessandroni, the leaders in the field have not changed much for eight years. There were twenty-five entries.

M.A.deC.

INTERNATIONAL OPEN TOURNAMENT IN
NEW ORLEANS.

The Fencers' Federation of New Orleans, an organization independent of the A.F.L.A. has announced an International Open Meet, to be held at New Orleans on March 11, 12, and 13, and annually thereafter, under its auspices. Invitations have been extended to all fencers in the United States, Canada, Central and South America, whether amateur or professional. The competition will be held in foil, epee, and sabre for men, and in foil only for women, and the international fencing rules will be observed. There is no entry fee for contestants, who are expected to pay their own expenses, although the Federation will attempt to entertain them and make them comfortable and satisfied. Entries must be mailed to Mr. Orest A. Meykar, Marshall-of-Arms of the Federation, at 528 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, before March 10th, 1937.

The A.F.L.A. has received a formal invitation which is extended through THE RIPOSTE to all members. A.F.L.A. members are reminded, however, that the national and international rules prohibit them from participating in open tournaments with professionals, except when the meet has been sanctioned by the recognized national body. The A.F.L.A. is the only national body recognized by the Amateur Athletic Union, the F.I.E., and the American Olympic Committee. THE RIPOSTE, however, has been given to understand that the A.F.L.A. is sympathetic toward the development of fencing in New Orleans, and that there will be no difficulty for any member of the League in obtaining the proper permission from the Board of Governors.

Advance reports indicate that the New Orleans Federation is highly regarded locally, and therefore it is to be hoped that fencers throughout the country will make an effort to take part in the Tournament. Outstanding fencers in New Orleans are Albert S. Anderson, Joseph Lienhard, and Thomas Kemp, champions in foil, epee and sabre respectively; James Janssen and Mackie Trolles. Mr. N. Emile Baumgarten is in charge of the International event.

ALESSANDRONI WINS METROPOLITAN FOIL

Hugh Alessandrone, National Champion, won the Metropolitan Foil title by defeating Hugo Castello, Intercollegiate champion, 5-3 in a fence-off after both had won 4 bouts in the final. During the regular pool, Castello had beaten Alessandrone 5-3, but had lost to Huffman by a like score. "Jeb" Barmack again showed surprising strength in his comeback to competition, when he nosed out Huffman for the third place medal. J. de Capriles and Lubell completed the final pool. Warren Dow, last year's champion, did not defend as he has not yet fully recovered from a recent ankle injury.

Alessandrone's fine technique stood him in good stead through the long and tedious competition at the Salle Vince. Seven preliminary strips, which could be run off only three at a time because of the lack of space, and two long semi-final pools prolonged the meet far into the night. It was 2:15 when the first-place fence-off was held, and while most of the fencers bogged down toward the end, Alessandrone managed to maintain a steady pace throughout the evening. Though defeated by Cornel Wilde in the preliminary and by Norman Lewis in the semi-final, the national champion led all the pools in which he competed and was never in real trouble.

Huffman's beautiful style held for eight consecutive victories, including the first two bouts of the final, and then in the early morning hours, he suffered defeats in his last three engagements. The ability of Castello, Barmack, and Lubell, to qualify for the final round ahead of such seasoned campaigners as Nunes and Every is partly attributed to their physical stamina and their rising fencing skill. Castello has won a silver and bronze medal in the two senior events in which he has competed.

The competition was far too long, and the scarcity of approved officials was keenly felt. To make matters worse, those present were too close to the fencers, with the result that Dornell Every suffered a painful accident when Barmack's flying blade hit his eye.

MRS. FUNKE WINS SECOND SANTELLI MEET.

Mrs. Dolly Funke, of the Greco Fencing Academy, won her first major victory when she led a round-robin of 11 contestants in the second competition for the Santelli trophy. By her triumph, Mrs. Funke tied Miss Madeline Dalton, winner of the first meet, for the point leadership, at 14. Miss Maria Cerra, who finished second to Mrs. Funke, is in third place with 11 points, while Miss Dorothy Grimmelman, with two fourth places, follows with 10 points. Two competitions remain to be fenced.

Mrs. Funke fenced with rare skill and judgement. She scored 9 victories, all by clear margins, and lost only once, 5-4 to Miss Dalton in a bitter duel. Miss Dalton and Miss Cerra won 8 bouts each, but Miss Cerra took third place on touches.

Miss Grimmelman's fourth place was won with 7 victories; Miss Anita Zarzoli was fifth with 6 victories; Miss Addie Bassi was sixth with 5 wins; and Miss Dorothy Hafner won 7th place on touches from Miss Barbara Cochrane. The last three places, which did not count in the point score, went to Miss Anna Stoll, Miss Mary Ann Harris, and Miss Beryl Petchesky. Miss Mildred Stewart, Intercollegiate Champion, did not compete because she had recently suffered a foot injury.

While the Santelli trophy tournament is limited only to Juniors, the only ranking fencers of the country who are ineligible to compete are Mrs. de Tuscan, Miss Lloyd, Miss Locke, and Miss Giggolz, so that Mrs. Funke's victory is really to be considered an outstanding accomplishment. Always among the leaders in important events, and a fine stylist, Mrs. Funke had never previously attained the top placement in a major event. The round-robin plan of competition adopted for these events gives a natural advantage to the polished fencing style of Mrs. Funke, and her victory should encourage the younger fencers to devote the requisite time and effort to the acquisition of a similar technical proficiency.

WOMEN'S JUNIOR FOIL PRELIMINARIES

The Metropolitan qualifying round for the finals of the Women's Junior Foil Championship was a great disappointment this year. It is true that the only outstanding junior who failed to make an appearance was Miss Mildred Stewart who had suffered a foot injury, but the number of entries was unusually small. Fifteen girls were listed - the minimum number which would allow six girls to qualify for the finals on February 15th.

Three strips of five each, with two girls qualifying, was all that was necessary to decide the places. Miss Maria Cerra, and Miss Madeline Dalton qualified for the Salle Vince; Miss Carol Alessandrini for the Fencers Club; Miss Dorothy Grimmelman for N.Y.U.; Mrs. Dolly Funke for the Greco Fencing Academy; and Miss Barbara Cochran for the Salle Santelli. In most cases the girls qualified easily, outclassing the other entries on their strips. Miss Dalton, however, had a very narrow squeeze, as she barely displaced Miss Anita Zarzoli of Hunter College. Both girls were tied in bouts won, and Miss Dalton qualified with a 2-touch margin.

SANTELLI-GRECO TEAM WINS CLUB MATCH

The Santelli-Greco composite team, composed of Mrs. de Tuscan, Miss Cochran and Mrs. Funke, defeated the Salle Vince trio of Miss Lloyd, Miss Cerra and Miss Dalton to win the Inter-club match held at the Salle Santelli.

Five teams competed, one of which was from New Jersey composed of three girls who made their debut in metropolitan competition and gave a very good account of themselves. They defeated the N.Y.U. second team and bowed to the Salle Santelli in the semi-final after putting up a spirited fight against the more seasoned trio.

Mrs. de Tuscan starred for the winners, but Miss Lloyd was the outstanding performer of the day. The bout between these two girls provided the excitement of the match, with Miss Marion Lloyd holding the upper hand.

SHORT NOTES FROM ALL OVER (Continued)

The open sabre championship of the San Francisco Bay division was won by Ferard Leicester of the Olympic Club after trying for first place with his clubmate, De Forest Rodecape. Third place went to Harry Mortimer, also of the Olympic Club. S. Morrill, Leo A. Gadd, and L. von Beroldingen, all of the Funke Fencing Academy, placed in that order for the next three positions.-----

The foil team championship of the same division was won by the Olympic Club with Ferard Leicester, De Forest Rodecape and Harry Mortimer on the team. The winning trio defeated the University of California 7-2, the Funke Fencing Academy 9-0 and a composite team 7-2.---

In the women's prep foil championship, Miss Alice Sera of Alameda won first place by making a clean sweep of her bouts. Second place went to Roberta Fritz of the Funke Fencing Academy. Miss Fritz is only 16 years old and one of the most promising fencers on the Coast. Miss Barbara Shoemate placed third only two touches ahead of her team mate Harriet Helm.---

The epee team championship of the Bay Division was won by the Olympic club, in a very close competition, from the Funke Fencing Academy. The score was 5-4. The deciding bout, after both teams were tied at 4-all, was between Ferard Leicester and Harold Rives, with Leicester winning 3-1.-----

"Jim" W. Hutchinson, Chairman of the New Jersey Division which has proved very active this year, showed up at the last Board of Governors' Meeting in the role of a good-will representative. As a good Rotarian does, "Jim" proudly extolled the virtues of the New Jersey Division and pointed to its marked increase in membership and its dutiful correspondence with the Secretary of the League...Could it be that New Jersey is angling for the coveted trophy given each year to the division which has been most active and cooperative in the League?

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XIII. DIRECTING The Right of Way (3)

In my opinion, there is no single action which is susceptible of more general mis-understanding in its relation to the theory of the right of way than the stop-thrust. Generally the difficulty arises out of the fact that most fencers and directors have a tendency to regard any forward action of the attacker as a correct attack, and any movement after the parry as a correct riposte. Consequently, they regard any counter-action which breaks the order or sequence of the phrase *d'armes* as invariably wrong. This is an erroneous view which has been thoroughly exploded both in theory and practice in international contests. Let us look at the rules.

The stop-thrust is defined internationally as a simple counter-attack which arrives clearly before the final thrust of the attack. Most frequently it is made against advancing attacks (*patinando* or *ballestra*), when the attacker exposes an open line. Under such circumstances, if the stop-thrust arrives on the "march", it must be ahead of the final movement of the attack, and sufficiently "in time" to overcome the attacker's advantage of the right of way. But obviously, if A, the attacker, does not expose an open line, a stop-thrust by B cannot be executed.

Somewhat the same principle applies to actions which are fundamentally similar to the stop-thrust, such as the "remise" and "redoublement of attack" after the opponent's parry.

Conventionally, as we have seen, when B parries A's attack, he acquires the right of riposte--that is, his riposte has the right of way. But the rules say that the riposte must be made "immediately, without indecision or delay". And unless the riposte is correctly and rapidly executed it does not have the right of way as against a simple counter-attack.

For example, the most common fault of beginners in executing a riposte in *quarte* is to bring the hand back to the middle of the body or clear over to *sixte* before starting the forward motion of the riposte. Consequently, they "open the

line" in *quarte* after the parry while the opponent's blade is threatening that particular portion of the target. If, as the line is opened, the attacker "remises" (that is, continued the attack immediately by straight thrust), the attacker is right, and must be given the touch even if the riposte lands. In effect, B is executing a delayed riposte (two tempos) and A is scoring with a *remise* on the first tempo, even though objectively there may almost simultaneous hits on the movements.

Another frequent fault is to "hold" the parry, which is another phase of delaying the riposte, and which indicates that B is unsure of the parry. In that case, A is entitled to "redouble" (either in the same line or in another) In other words, A has the right of way-- his action is anew attack entitled to the privileges of any other attack.

Summarizing briefly, the *remise* is a counter-attack against the riposte and is valid on the same principle that a stop-thrust would be valid against an attack. The redoublement of attack is valid against the fencer who holds the parry, as a new attack started at that moment.

The same principles govern counter-attacks against the counter-riposte, and redoublements against the counter-riposte, when the attacker A has avoided the riposte and fails to counter riposte correctly and immediately.

A strict observance of the rules in this connection on the part of the director is essential to the development of the sport up to the levels of European fencers. An understanding and firm application of the principles which have been discussed in this article must place a premium on a faster tempo in the bout, and upon decisive actions on the part of both fencers.

Slow tempo on the attack, delayed ripostes, and counter-attacks have their important place in the tactics of the bout. They are like a baseball pitcher's change of pace. But if they are to be effective, they must be a change of pace rather than a substitute for a fast, decisive, normal tempo of competition.



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