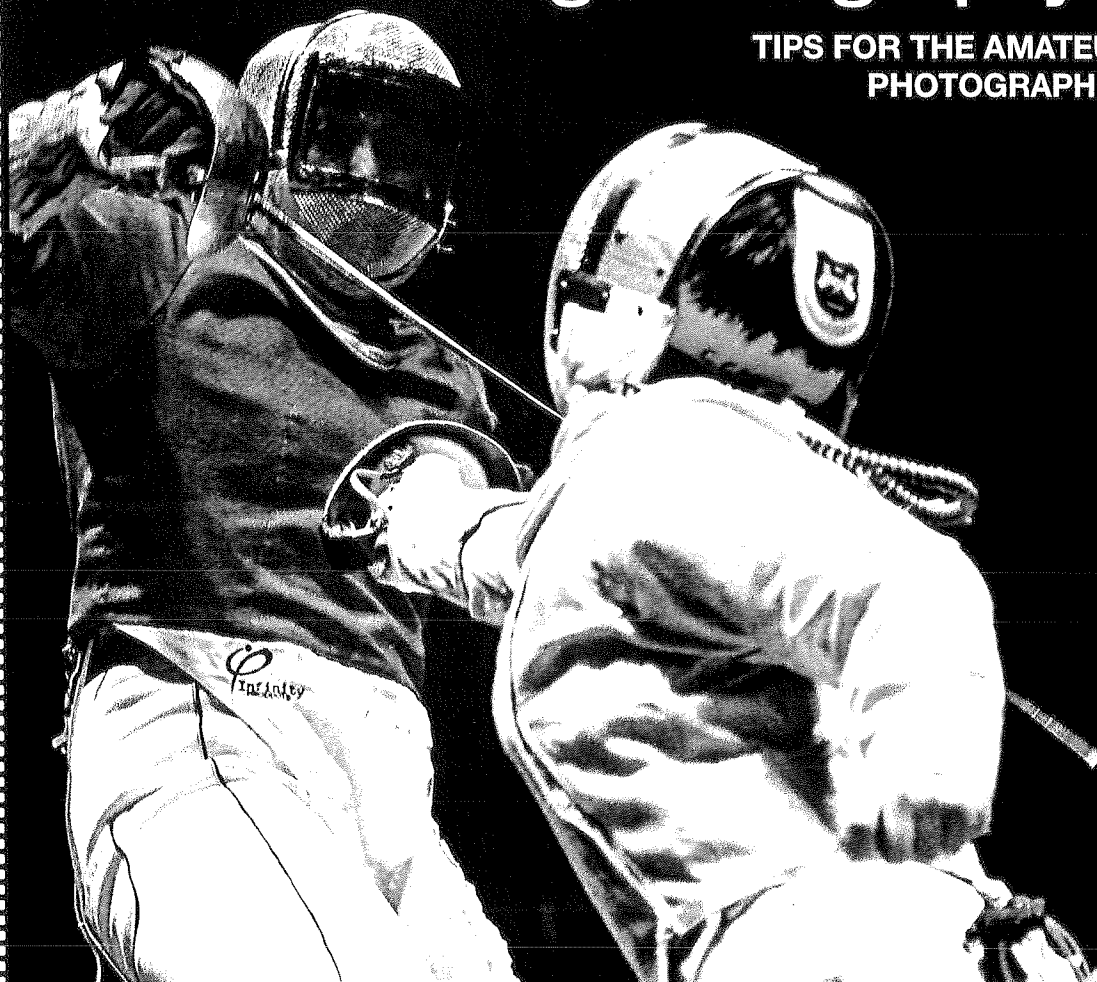


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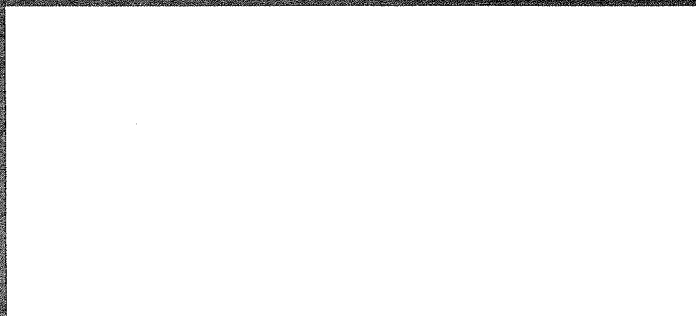
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- World Veterans Championships
- Athlete Q&A with Hanna Thompson
- Fencing History: Breaking the Color Barrier





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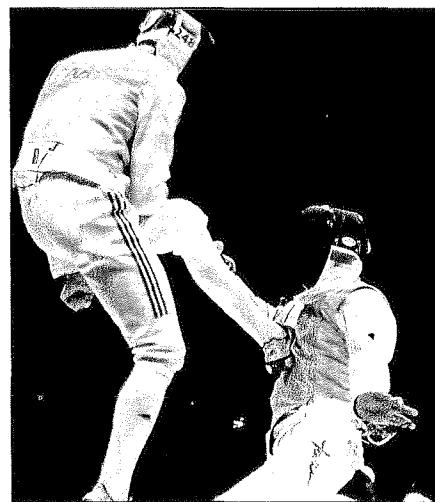
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On the cover:

Serge Timacheff of FencingPhotos.com captures the drama of infighting with this shot. Timacheff offers his photography tips on page 22.

The UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION Member Services Directory

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

The United States Fencing Association

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In this Issue

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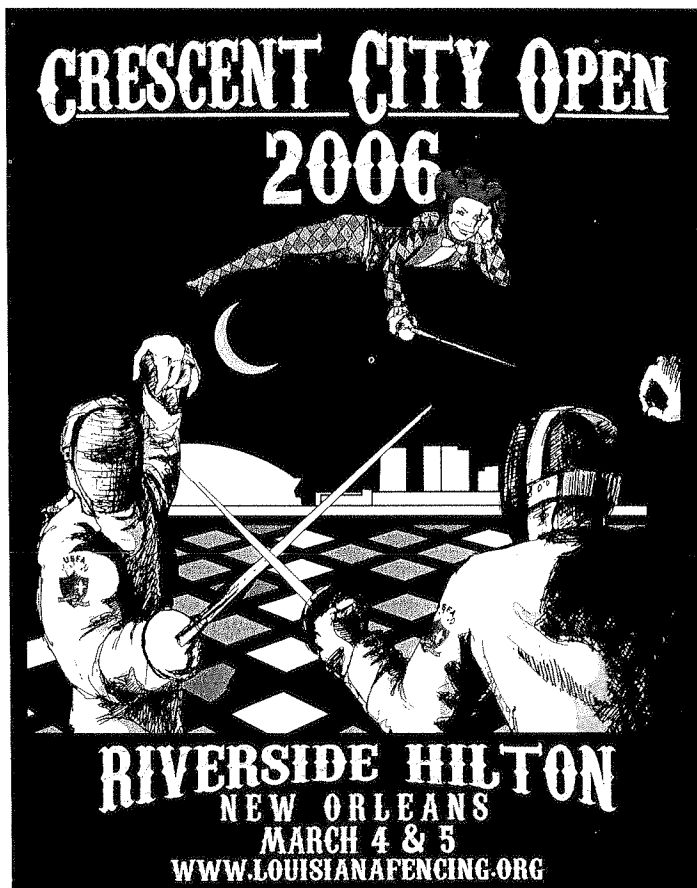
We have enlisted the services of Princes Rashid as our "Official Artist" & Panoramic Visions as our "Official Photographer".

We are in the process of securing the services of Karen Fulk "Quick-Draw-Karen" as our Official Caricaturist to attend the 2005 Summer Nationals

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Recently we purchased an Official Awards Stand for use at our National Tournaments. We believe it to be the only professionally constructed fencing awards stand in the world. We must apologize for ordering a 7 person stand which called for 8th place to stand on the ground. After viewing the faces of our young athletes we realized our error and ordered an 8th Place, which should arrive shortly.

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FLYER BEWARE

I thought the readers of this magazine should know about the experience of my daughter this summer. Even though she has traveled with her standard fencing bag on a number of flights on assorted airlines in the past, including Air Tran, on her return flight from Atlanta this summer the airline charged her \$65 for an "oversized" bag.

Their regulations say that a bag is oversized if it exceeds 62 inches when you add up the three dimensions (that is, length + width + height). There are exceptions for particular sporting equipment, but not for fencing equipment.

The person who checked her in was rather insistent upon the \$65 and quite curt. My daughter paid, just so she could get checked in, then talked to the Air Tran person at the gate. He claimed that the regulation is largely—but not always—unenforced.

We asked for a refund from Air Tran, saying that their policy irrationally discriminates against fencers and is arbitrarily applied. For instance, another fencer checking in at a different Air Tran line was not charged and my daughter had not been charged on three previous Air Tran flights. The only time she encountered this problem was when she was on her own. We only received back a recitation of what the policy is and that they endeavor to politely and consistently follow their rules. I wrote again saying that this was no answer and still could receive neither a refund nor an

explanation of their rule and its spotty enforcement.

Thus, I would advise you all not to fly Air Tran due to their seemingly low prices, since the price in actuality may end up being higher. The entire transaction has left such a bad taste in my mouth that my family is not going to fly Air Tran even when no fencing bag is involved. Please spread the word to all fencers you know.

Diane Rose
Bethesda, Maryland

CHANGING THE RULES

In some areas of life, it is not possible to tell which came first, the chicken or the egg, but in sport, there is no question. The action which makes the sport came first, and the rules and rules interpretations came later. In my view, where there is a question regarding what should be emphasized, the substance of sport or the rules, it is the substance of the sport which should prevail. Of course, there is an alternative view, one in which adherence to authority and rules prevails, a state of affairs where policing is paramount. In the sport of fencing, the question of what to emphasize about the sport is of crucial importance.

René Roch, President of the FIE, stated in his letter to the membership in the June 2005 issue of *Escrimé Magazine*: ". . . all the sports are competing with each other as we will be assessed by the IOC after each Olympic Games, and only the sports obtaining over 50% of the votes will remain in the Olympic program. Therefore, we must reappraise our situation and take the media's and the IOC's observations into consideration."

As with any sport, there must be rules. On the other hand, if the rules lead to questionable results, either the rules should change or the interpretations of the rules should change. In our modern age dominated by mass media, the penalty for questionable results is unpopularity, and the penalty

for unpopularity is banishment from the Olympic Games. Approximately, forty percent of the USFA budget is tied to the participation of fencing in the Olympic Games because it comes by way of grant money from the U. S. Olympic Committee which derives the money primarily from television revenue. Being unpopular is a great danger to the sport of fencing, a greater danger than most referees realize. Mr. Roch seems to realize it though. Further, he is advocating video replay to second guess the decisions of referees and bring more objectivity to scoring in the sport of fencing.

As such, the future of fencing does not lie in continuation of archaic rules if this means that a television viewer or video replay analyst could not readily discern why an infraction is called by a referee. The hyper-technical body position penalties in fencing are a hindrance, not a benefit to the sport.

Mr. Kolombatovich, in his editorial entitled "Enforce The Rules," took aim at an editorial I wrote for this magazine, and asked, "Where, Dr. Streb, is the rules book you would have referees follow? What is a 'slight' offense? How hard must a [foil or saber] fencer hit the opponent to receive a warning?" Here is my answer: With the same level of force currently required to receive a yellow card for body contact in epee fencing. Is that a call beyond the ability of fencing officials to make? I think not. Are foil and saber fencers so much more frail than epee fencers that they will be hospitalized by such force? I think not.

On the other hand, if as Mr. Kolombatovich suggests, fencing officials are incapable of reasonable use of discretion, the proper approach is to change the rules. Thus, referees may obediently follow a new and better set of directives, and everything will be copasetic, at least until the next controversy. I do agree though that it is easier to teach strict compliance with the rules than to teach discretion, and to the extent that Mr. Kolombatovich may be concerned with referee train-

continued on page 37

Help Wanted

The USFA is seeking an individual to fulfill a volunteer position of Ombudsman. This is a newly established position designed to promote impartial dispute resolution within the organization.

What is an Ombudsman? The Ombudsman is an objective and confidential party who exists to help all members of the USFA community to solve problems that range from clarifying confusion about policy to mediating sensitive interpersonal issues to handling instances of harassment, competitive dishonesty, and discrimination.

The individual who assumes the position of Ombudsman must be objective, neutral, independent, trustworthy to maintain confidentiality, and just. This individual will hear and investigate complaints objectively including impartial attention to all perspectives of an issue. S/he will act independently and avoid conflicts of interest, external control, and the appearance of being compromised.

The office of Ombudsman is readily accessible to all members of the USFA—paid staff, volunteer staff, referees, coaches, athletes, and parents - promoting timely solutions to problems.

The USFA is seeking candidates who have the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing to a diverse group of people. Interpersonal and problem solving skill sets are a must. The candidate should be able to demonstrate an ability to articulate and follow USFA rules and policies and have a thorough knowledge of the USFA, its procedures and governing documents. Experience in some discipline of mediation would be desirable.

The USFA is accepting resumes and letters of application for this position. Please address your cover letter to Sherry Posthumus, 6940 Elwood Road, San Jose, CA 95120.

Fencing in Cyberspace

Fencing is catching up with new media technology. A pair of new ventures debuted at the 2005 World Championships in Leipzig.

One, World Championship Sports Network (WCSN), provided Internet video streaming of the Championships plus on-demand archived footage and broadcast highlights. The network covers a growing variety of global sports, including track and field, gymnastics, skiing and volleyball. The entire package of events which will be shown from October 9-15

was priced at \$9.95; the Championships footage will be available at www.wcsn.com.

The other venture, www.fencingchannel.tv, the official FIE broadcasting station, featured interviews, daily highlights for free viewing, DVDs for purchase after the Championships through various online distributors, and even podcasts.

Tiomkin and Dupree Establish World Record

On May 20, 2005, U.S. Olympians Jon Tiomkin and Jed Dupree established the World Record for the longest fencing bout ever, to raise funds for the United States Fencing Association's Elite Athlete Program.

The two fencers took a five minute rest after each hour of fencing. The five-hour-long bout took place in New York City, at New York University and ended with Tiomkin victorious at 209-208.

There was no word from the fencers on whether or not they achieved world-record cramps in the glutes.

Dupree and Tiomkin were part of the U.S. men's foil team which shocked the fencing world at the 2004 Olympics by upsetting the German team in the quarterfinals, finishing fourth and missing the bronze medal by only a few touches.



A tired Tiomkin and disheveled Dupree smile after their World Record bout.

CORRECTION: In the last issue of *American Fencing*, we misspelled author and Clubs and Divisions guru Buzz Hurst's name. We apologize heartily for the error.

Help for Fencers Hit by Katrina

As it did so many others, Hurricane Katrina took its toll on the fencing community on the Gulf Coast. Clubs have been destroyed, equipment swept out to the Gulf, and fencers have evacuated to points far and wide.

The Ark-La-Miss division of the USFA created a web page for fencers to report in with their news; check out <http://www.almdiv.org> for listings on who's safe, who's still not reported in, and a few stories about some scary Katrina experiences.

The Ark-La-Miss page also reflects the outpouring of aid coming from the fencing community. Clubs and fencers from as far away as Ohio have pitched in offering housing, fencing space and equipment donations. Steep discounts are available from various generous vendors.

If your club, business or community would like to lend a hand, contact magnetfencing@sport.rr.com to be listed on their webpage.



Eugene Hamori, coach of the New Orleans Fencing Academy, 1956 gold-medalist from Hungary, and two-time U.S. National Champion, poses by storm damage in New Orleans.

USFA Fundraising Effort Kicks Off

It's long been common knowledge that U.S. fencers have a hard road to march, competing against what amount to professional fencers in Europe and Asia. Few U.S. fencing athletes have sponsorships, and the sport itself has few resources with which to promote itself and grow.

This fall, the USFA has taken a new tack to try and raise funds: a major marketing push to benefit athlete programs, promote the sport, and aid the growth of fencing nationwide.

The relaunch of USFencing.org was a big first step in that direction. The site was recreated by Red Star Design, a New York web design firm helmed by 2004 U.S. Fencing Olympian Dan Kellner and his partner, Colin Ferm. Yet more functionality is in the works for that site.

Beyond the web, Circone + Associates, a Columbus marketing firm with expertise in branding and experience in non-profit fundraising, was chosen through a competitive bid process to lead the marketing effort.

Working in conjunction with USFA staff, the Marketing Committee, and other resources and experts worldwide, Circone + Associates is charged with finding corporate sponsors and marketing revenue for the USFA's programs and athletes.

"It's been a long time coming," says Executive Director Michael Massik. "We recognized that we are well beyond the point in our growth where we needed professional help with marketing. We want to do our best to help our athletes continue the successes of the last quadrennial and we believe this is the best way to attack the funding issue to accomplish our goals." ★

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Making Time

Fencing With Family Values · Christine Bevilacqua

A friend recently asked me, “How do you manage it all? A house full of kids (six altogether), chauffeuring to sports and music, a husband who travels, and now you’re driving an hour away to do fencing?” She was looking at me like I was nuts. I had been spending all of my Saturday mornings and some Wednesday evenings taking group foil instruction for almost a year. I just smiled and explained that once I fell in love with fencing, it was something for which I was determined to make time.

Her question was a good one, though. We all have lives full of responsibilities and commitments, but what is it about fencing that makes it worth it to me and other busy middle-aged parents to take time away from our families? Why do I look forward to the frustration, sweat, and bruises week after week? I think the answer to why I love to fence is very much the same reason why I can manage to fit it into my hectic life: it is the satisfaction I get from continuing to challenge myself.

Working my way through college, moving to California, giving birth to 3 daughters in 5 years, it seems I thrive on challenge. Once the treadmill and aerobics classes became a bore, I craved a new pursuit that would not only test my body, but my mind as well. I just couldn’t take another morning of jumping to the music of Britney Spears while being screamed at by a too-perky instructor. The gym has its purpose, but for the most part, you can leave your brain at home. I wanted a sport where my brain was required equipment. I certainly found it in fencing.

Most people would agree that it’s healthy for parents to take up an activity that they can call their own. But at the same time that personal endeavor can be a great teaching tool for kids. My kids first observed the fearlessness of mom trying something new, even a bit obscure. Then they could see my commitment, and hear about my struggles, successes, and enjoyment of continuing to learn about fencing. These are the types of values we have always tried to teach by involving the family in swim team, Taekwondo, camping, and music lessons. However, instead of just tell-

ing them they “have to” do those things, or lecturing them on why it is good to challenge oneself, now I am demonstrating that it is a part of any journey in life, regardless of one’s age.

This fearlessness I have about trying new things has also led to some interesting situations on the strip. Never one to turn down a bout, I have found myself paired up with some highly skilled fencers. Gracious though they were, I still had my posterior handed to me quite promptly. Of course I try to learn a little from every bout, and losing is a great way to learn. I also occasionally muster up the courage to try a new move taught to us in class, only to realize

it’s one of those maneuvers you have to do a thousand times before it actually works. Again, learning from losing. But attitude is everything, and I always try to leave the strip with a smile.

I hope to compete in some local tournaments in the near future. I have actually learned a lot at our kids’ competitions that I hope will help me keep things in perspective. For example, just about every young swimmer gets disqualified on their first few races, due to the strict rules about form. Sure it’s a disappointment, but they remember what not to

do the next time. They may go through many seasons of crowded, long meets before coming in first or second, but they compete against their own best times, and become familiar with the process of competition. So, though I’m on the strip to win, I may have to recall my own words to the kids: just do your best and don’t worry about it!

The drive to learn more, do more, and be more is something that defines me as a wife, mother, friend, and fencer. All of these roles take dedication and time. My husband has a simple saying that we have drilled into our kids from a very young age: “If you think you can’t, you can’t. If you think you can, you can.” Whether our children decide to take this philosophy into the swimming pool, the classroom, or the fencing strip (one can hope!), I know that by pursuing my passion, I am doing my part by clearing a path for them to follow. It is a challenging path, but the only one that I think is worth taking. ☆



Christine Bevilacqua and her family

Physiologistics

Injury Time and Masks · Peter Harmer, Ph.D, ATC

Q I have asthma and sometimes have to use my inhaler during a bout. However, a referee has told me I can't get an injury time because asthma is not an injury. Is this correct?

A The short answer is "yes," but it is a slightly more complicated situation than that. The rule governing what constitutes an appropriate "condition" for allowing injury time is caught between trying to provide necessary care for the well-being of the athletes and limiting opportunities for those who would manipulate the rules to gain an unearned advantage in a bout. As you are probably aware, the rules (t.33) provide for a single, 10 minute (maximum) injury "time-out" for each new injury during a bout as the result of an *accident* occurring during the bout (Note that this applies only to each *new* injury—the rule also states that "during the remainder of the *same day*, a fencer cannot be allowed a further break unless as a result of a different injury"). All injuries need to be certified by the relevant medical staff (for example, members of the USFA sports medicine staff at NACs, JOs, summer nationals, etc, or the FIE Medical Commission delegate at World Championships) before injury time is allowed and it is a red card for each "interruption of bout for claimed injury not confirmed by doctor" (t. 117, t.120).

The most straightforward interpretation of the rule is that only injuries resulting from accidents are eligible for injury time. These, by consensus, are traumatic musculoskeletal-type problems (sprains, strains, contusions, fractures, lacerations, etc). Physiological problems, such as asthma, hyperthermia, muscle spasm (cramping), or nausea, do not fall under this rule. Cramping, in particular, was the focus

of instituting this rule as some fencers would claim a cramp to gain a little breathing room or receive advice during a close bout from a coach or teammate who came to the strip "to treat" the problem. Following several complex situations at international competitions during the past few years, the FIE Medical Commission revisited the question of whether cramping was a legitimate reason for injury time at its meeting in June 2005, and, for a variety of reasons, decided not to recom-

All injuries must be certified by the relevant medical staff.

mend any change to the current rule. Thus, cramping is not the basis for an injury time during a bout as it is not the result of an accident. The same logic applies to other non-traumatic problems. The fencer must continue or withdraw.

However, the well-being of the participants is always paramount, and the smooth running of a bout is the responsibility of the individual referee. It is always appropriate for a referee to call for medical assistance for a participant in distress but it is not required that the referee permit treatment time for such things as using an inhaler or dealing with hyperthermia. Although there is a considerable variation in how referees view these situations it appears that most are somewhat pragmatic and flexible. To what extent this is acceptable is up to the Fencing Officials representative to determine or the fencer's opponent (if he/she wished to file a protest). From the perspective of the medical staff, the fencer's health is always the first priority and withdrawing from a bout is always preferable to risking a

serious health problem. Unfortunately, that does not always coincide with the fencer's wishes. However, if the circumstances warrant, the medical staff can require a participant to be withdrawn. If you have a potentially recurring problem, such as asthma or diabetes, the best option, of course, is to be consistent with your treatment and be prepared for the limitations in using your medication that may occur at competitions. It is also be advisable to talk with your physician about the specific physiological demands and treatment restrictions connected with fencing competitions to determine whether there is a more suitable long-term approach you can use.

MASKS NEED TO STAY ON TO BE EFFECTIVE!

There has been a disturbing trend noted recently by members of the FIE Medical Commission and local medical staff related to the correct use of masks. Two particular problems are evident: a) some fencers, particularly children, are wearing masks that are too big for them with the consequence that the masks move around and/or fall off while fencing. This is obviously an extremely unsafe practice and careful adherence to correct sizing for masks cannot be emphasized strongly enough; and b) even with correctly fitted masks many fencers are not using the back strap appropriately (i.e., it is either not attached in the case of Velcro straps, or the strap is too loose to be effective in the case of sewn-in straps). The potential for significant and catastrophic injury from a mask falling off during a bout is very high (and we have recorded several, fortunately very near, misses). Make sure you, your children and/or your student have well-fitting masks and that they are worn properly. ★

Quantified Intuition

Organize Your Tactical Thinking · Jason Rogers

Through 10 years of fencing experience from my hometown club to the Olympic Games, I have come to believe that an athlete's ability to make the right decisions under the stress of competition is the key to excellence. Traditional athletic skills—such as speed, strength, and technique—that are thought to be the foundation of a great fencer remain exactly that, only a foundation. The fencer who cannot truly understand how to put these skills to good use can never reach full potential because he/she lacks the holistic thinking that is characteristic of a champion athlete.

As a general framework, fencers usually rely only on their vast supply of memories to choose a particular strategy or action, consequently relying on their unique, intuitive feeling at the moment when a decision is necessary. Although intuition and trust in one's instincts are critical skills in and of themselves, this approach has a number of limitations. For example:

- 1) Memories can be extremely selective, thereby leading to a poor recollection of how effective a certain action really was when it was put to use.
- 2) Self doubt resulting from the stress of competition can lead the fencer to distrust his/her intuition.
- 3) Fear may cause the fencer to resort to a "safety action" – one that has worked in the past, regardless of whether or not it is right for the given circumstances.
- 4) The intense physiological demands of fencing reduce blood supply to the brain and limit the ability to thoroughly think through situations, potentially resulting in poor decision making.

From what I can see, a fencer can aid the decision making process by

finding a way to numerically organize tactical thinking. A class in Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making at The Ohio State University (where I am a student) provided me the opportunity to do this using a statistical model. From the many fencing actions that I might use, I created a short list of 6 actions:

- 1) Attack in Preparation: An effort to hit the other fencer in preparation in the middle zone.
- 2) Indirect Attack: When a fencer is able to recognize that the opponent is going back and extends his/her attack to compensate.
- 3) Long Attack: Before the touch, the fencer commits to doing a long attack before having any feedback from the other fencer.
- 4) Parry Riposte: A fencer goes for parry in the middle zone.
- 5) Distance Riposte: An attempt to make the opponent fall short before making the riposte.
- 6) Counter Attack: The fencer makes the decision to go back beforehand and attempts to hit the other fencer in preparation.

Note: These are extremely simplified for the sake of brevity, but most actions outside of these basic 6 (with the exception of #2) would be considered reactionary; that is, they would not be planned before the touch.

In order to judge when each of these 6 actions would be the most effective, I then chose a set of 6 attributes that I felt best reflected a given action's efficacy. These are:

- 1) Technique: How well one executes the action according to the way he/she has been taught by his/her coach.
- 2) Reliability: How confident one is

that when he/she does the action the same way a number of times that it will succeed.

- 3) Recognizability: How easy it is for the director to recognize that the fencer has done an action that is worthy of scoring the touch.
- 4) Psychological Effect on the Opponent: How much the action makes an opponent feel uncomfortable or question his/her strategy.
- 5) Psychological Effect on You: How an action makes the fencer performing it feel, especially in regards to confidence in his/her own strategy.
- 6) Predictability: How surprised an opponent would be if a fencer did a certain action; perhaps better said, how much an action reflects the overall pattern of actions used in the past.

At this point, I used the statistical model to integrate the information above, but the application of the math proved to be quite tedious, and as such, I will not describe it here. However, what this project essentially allowed me to do was compare my intangible intuition with actual, tangible numbers. From this, I was able to see more clearly which actions had a greater potential for success in those difficult situations that every fencer encounters.

In summary, because you have neither the time nor the ability to sort through all of the possibilities for each stressful situation, it is essential to do it ahead of time. In a sense, you are creating a sort of "mental shortcut" to the best actions, thereby "quantifying" intuition and allowing you to increase the odds of accessing the best information in the heat of the moment to make the right choice. If the reader has any interest in seeing the complete project, I can be contacted at: Jrog1200@aol.com. ★

A Colorless "League"

Crossing the Color Barrier · Andy Shaw

At the founding of the USFA (called the Amateur Fencers' League of America from 1891-1981), the Executive Committee was formed with two members from each of five clubs in New York City.

To become a member of the "League," a man (women could not join) had to be proposed by one member and seconded by another. The League was not going to allow professionals to prejudice their national championships. The League was populated by the "right people" in New York society.

The first people of color in American fencing fenced in New Orleans, Louisiana.

A man known as Black Austin was a free Negro fencing master in New Orleans in the 1800's. Robert Severin, a mulatto fencing master, also taught in New Orleans, as did Basile Croquere, another mulatto fencing master, "the most remarkable colored swordsman of Louisiana" wrote Stuart O. Landry in his *Duelling In Old New Orleans*, c. 1950. But New Orleans was the exception as it refused to join the League until 1940 and its Fencers' Federation of New Orleans held international tournaments open to professionals and amateurs from all over the world with *no* entry fee.

But our fencing association had no people of color for many years.

Here is an excerpt from *Riposte* Magazine, the fencing magazine prior to *American Fencing* (1949):

American Fencing Potentialities.

It is estimated that there are between 100,000 and 150,000 fencers in the United States. There are approximately 131,000,000 people in the United States which means that only 1/10 of 1% or 1 person in 1,000 knows anything about fencing. According to the latest A.F.L.A. records, 1 person in 109,000 is sufficiently interested in organized fencing to join the League.

The fencer is still an American sports curiosity. We can no longer look upon 131,000,000 Americans as being potential fencers. We should immediately delete our rural population and limit ourselves to 62,800,000 total white urban population. To be on the safe side we

will further limit this to the 93 cities having a population of 100,000 or more. Here we find 33,000,000 total white population. We'll cut this by 50% to eliminate all those too young, or too old, the halt, the blind, and the urban Americans whose only exercise is in reading the sports section of the newspaper. This finally leaves us 16,500,000 as a potential market. If half of these would try the sport we could hold the interest of 10% of them. That would give us 825,000 fencers with 1% or 8,250 becoming members of the A.F.L.A.

**The first
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American
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New Orleans,
Louisiana.**

It was written by Dernelle Every, Olympian, U.S. national champion, and eighth president of the AFLA/USFA 1945-48.

Violet Barker, a black hairdresser from Harlem, learned to fence from Al Hern at the Harlem YMCA as a part of his WPA settlement house program in the 1940's.

At the time, the WPA had a city wide championships at the season's end.

The League officials never imagined that a black fencer could win. Violet entered the tournament and won. Her prize was a membership card to the AFLA, thus becoming the first black member in the history of our organization.

Some weeks later, she showed up for an AFLA sponsored tournament and was met at the door by an AFLA representative. He proceeded to rip up her membership

card and sent her away. Violet went home and was never seen in fencing circles again.

Her coach, Al Hern, threatened a suit against the League. His club on 14th Street was pejoratively nicknamed "the Abyssinian School of Fencing" by certain AFLA members.

Racial lawsuits were increasingly in the news creating bad press for other organizations and the courts were beginning to go against these men's clubs, forcing them to change their policies.

Hern began the lawsuit but lost his plaintiff. Violet refused to testify.

Then, in 1949, the Columbia University fencing team withdrew from AFLA competitions to avoid discrimination against the team's two black members at a meet taking place at, again, the Athletic Club.

Excerpts from December 1, 1949, *New York Herald Tribune*:

Columbia Fencers Quit League Over Racial Discrimination

Action Taken After A.F.L.A. Advised That Negroes Be Withdrawn From Meet

Columbia University's varsity fencing team announced yesterday that it has withdrawn from all competition in meets of the Amateur Fencers League of America in order to avoid discrimination against the team's two Negro members...

"Gentlemen, it is time that we recognize that fencing has changed from the aristocratic sport that it was to the democratic sport that it is."

Mr. Velarde, Columbia's coach, said that his assistant, Mr. De Koff, had been approached by members of the A.F.L.A.'s metropolitan bout committee and advised to avoid an "embarrassing situation" by withdrawing Columbia's Negro foilsmen from competition last Nov. 20 at the New York Athletic Club.

Dr. Daniel Bukantz, interviewed for this article, was the chairman of the Met Division and remembers hearing from Warren Dow that "some indignity might occur if Columbia's Negroes show up at the meet."

At least the incidents sparked changes. The AFLA was split on whether to admit other races and religions into the League. After the incident with Violet Barker and the Metropolitan Division of the AFLA, one board member said, "I think we're all in agreement that if we

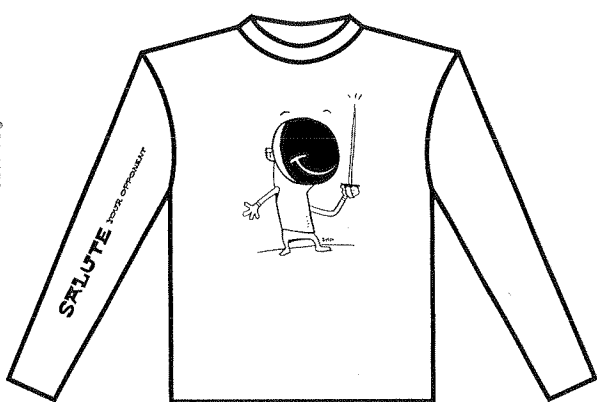
start letting [Negroes] in now, the League will be finished."

Fortunately, not everyone agreed. The president of the League (Miguel Angel deCapriles) eloquently stated the following: "Gentlemen, it is time that we recognize that fencing has changed from the aristocratic sport that it was to the democratic sport that it is."

This article is intended as a look back at our organization's past, and not as an assault on any particular fencers or leaders. The leaders represented the views of the majority of the constituents of the time who were not bold enough to reveal their opinions. Our time faces similar injustices and prejudices but they may be less obvious to us right now. Let us keep striving. ★


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BG rem. elec. Sabre Mask 1000n	84	\$ 71.40
ACG elec. Sabre Mask 1000 n	92	\$ 78.20
Uhlmann 3-W Mask 350n	123	\$ 104.55
Allstar 3-W Mask 350n	127	\$ 107.95

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BG Back-Zip Practice Jacket	33	\$ 28.05
BG Front-Zip C/N Jacket	46	\$ 39.10
SG 350n Nylon Jacket	59	\$ 50.15
BG Heavy Nylon Jacket	69	\$ 58.65

Gloves	Price	15%off
BG washable Practice Glove	10	\$ 8.50
BG washable 3-W Glove	12	\$ 10.20
BG leather 3-W Glove	17	\$ 14.45
ACG washable 3-W Glove	20	\$ 17.00
BG elec. Sabre Glove	25	\$ 21.25
BG elec. Sabre glove-Stainless	32	\$ 27.20
BG elec. Sabre Cuff	13	\$ 11.05
SG Sabre Cuff -Stainless	19	\$ 16.15

Bags	Price	15%off
BG Beginner bag	20	\$ 17.00
BG Piggy-Back Bag	38	\$ 32.30
BG Deluxe Bag	38	\$ 32.30
BG Team Bag - one pocket	40	\$ 34.00
BG Super Tean Bag - 2 pockets	65	\$ 55.25
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Practice Weapons	Price	*Pistol grip +\$3
BG prac. Foil, Fr. Grip	21	\$ 17.85
SG prac. Foil, Fr. grip	24	\$ 20.40
PR prac. Foil, Fr. Grip	29	\$ 24.65
BG prac. Epee, Fr. Grip	33	\$ 28.05
SG prac. Epee, Fr. grip	38	\$ 32.30
BG prac. Sabre	36	\$ 30.60
SG prac. Sabre	41	\$ 34.85

Lames	Price	15%off
BG Foil Lamé	63	\$ 53.55
SG Foil Lamé - Stainless	109	\$ 92.65
Uhlmann Foil Lamé	134	\$ 113.90
Allstar Foil Lamé	140	\$ 119.00
BG Sabre Lamé	87	\$ 73.95
SG Sabre Lamé - Stainless	159	\$ 135.15
Uhlmann Sabre Lamé	228	\$ 193.80
Allstar Sabre Lamé	238	\$ 202.30

Body Cords (F, S, or E)	Price	15%off
BG Body Cord	12	\$ 10.20
SG Body Cord	14	\$ 11.90
Mr.Chen EZ Foil Body Cord	20	\$ 17.00
Uhlmann Body Cord	30	\$ 25.50
Allstar Body Cord	30	\$ 25.50
Prieur Body Cord	22	\$ 18.70
BG Sabre Mask Cord	7	\$ 5.95

Electric Weapons	Price	*Pistol grip +\$ 3
BG elec. Foil, Fr. Grip	37	\$ 31.45
SG elec. Foil, Fr. Grip	40	\$ 34.00
STM elec. Foil, Fr Grip	45	\$ 38.25
BG elec. Epee, Fr. Grip	44	\$ 37.40
SG elec. Epee, Fr. Grip	49	\$ 41.65
STM elec. Epee, Fr. Grip	53	\$ 45.05
BG elec. Sabre	45	\$ 38.25
SG elec. Sabre	47	\$ 39.95
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The Death of a Mindset

Fencing's Biggest Change in the Last 25 years · Jeff Bukantz

Over the years, there have been major tangible changes to our sport.

Some happened nearly a half a century ago, such as the creation of electric epee and foil.

Some have happened recently, such as the changes to the blockage and contact times, which rewarded out-of-time quick counterattacks and remises. This flew in the face of the basic concepts of right-of-way, and was the birth of "wrong of way."

Others have happened somewhere in between, such as the long overdue inclusion of women's epee and women's saber. (For those who responded with this as the no. 1 change, I'll get you the USFA souvenirs.)

These are all changes that had a specific date of birth, although the gestation period may have lasted for many years.

However, in this column we will deal with the biggest change in the last quarter of a century, which deals with the death of a mindset.

In order to realize the magnitude of this mindset death, however, we need to go back to its birth.

As a youngster and second generation fencer, I was lucky enough to attend both the 1968 Mexico City and the 1972 Munich Olympic Games. While my father Dan was refereeing, I was able to get a feel for the styles of that era. To the best of my recollection, the techniques employed were what we would refer to today as "classical."

Due to working as a summer camp counselor in 1976, I was unable to attend the Montreal Games. And, it was at these Games where a new and untraditional style was born. This new style led to a mindset that substantially

changed foil fencing and foil refereeing for nearly a quarter of a century.

A young and energetic Italian foilist named Fabio Dal Zotto took Montreal by storm. He employed the bombastic technique of basically running at his opponents with (gasp) his arm pulled way back. Both his opponents and the referees were flummoxed by Dal Zotto's unconventional 'attack.' It was so effective that his almost one-dimensional, pseudo-attack game led him straight to the Olympic gold medal.

While Dal Zotto's tactic fooled his opponents on that day, the unintended effect was that it fooled a generation of foil referees for the next two decades.

The bent-arm attack in foil proved to be like a cockroach; no matter how many times the FIE stomped on it, it just wouldn't die.

It got to the point where the window in foil was so wide that the benefit of the doubt usually went to the forward-moving, albeit not correctly attacking, bent-arm culprit. Most referees just began to regularly view what was either preparation or invitation as a correct attack. Not only wasn't it a textbook attack, it wasn't an attack at all. However, for all intents and purposes, it got most of the calls.

While I personally utilized this tactic successfully and extensively during the 1980-1995 timeframe, one American foilist perfected it and elevated it to an art form. My New York Fencers Club teammate Jack Tichacek was one of the strongest and smartest fencers on the circuit. In addition to having a well-rounded game which kept him in the top five for a decade, Jack became even tougher because of his preparation/invitation 'attack.' Actually, I always said that Jack didn't attack in sec-

ond intention (invitation), but rather dark ulterior motive.

To his enormous credit, Jack successfully bamboozled an entire generation of our best foil directors (not yet called refs) except for Emik Kaidanov. To make matters worse for us and even better for him, Jack then bamboozled an entire generation of FOC Assignors into not letting Kaidanov officiate his bouts. I told you he was smart.

The sad reality is the problem was not caused by Dal Zotto, Tichacek, or any fencers. Rather, it was a problem caused by a generation of referees, myself included, who adopted a far too-liberal view of what constituted an attack.

As I said, once the "Bent-Arm Express" had left the station, it was nearly impossible to stop. Having attended many FIE referee seminars since 1982, I can tell you that the FIE Arbitrage people tried extremely hard to derail the out-of-control train. At these pre-tournament referee meetings, we would be told, over and over again, what constituted a proper attack. We were put on notice to call it correctly or risk not being put in the position to call it incorrectly in the future.

So, this is what would happen. In the early rounds, when no FIE muckety-mucks were watching, most referees reverted back to giving the bent-arm actions the priority. If a ref was assigned to the final, however, an amazing transformation would often take place. With the FIE big-wigs seated a few feet behind the ref, where you could almost feel them breathing on your behind, the refs would miraculously clean up their act.

continued on page 38

Candid Camcorder

Videotaping Fencing Benefits Fencers and Parents • Monica Kao

You've probably seen this parent. He's on the perimeter of a strip at a competitive tournament yelling, "Distance! Move your feet!" His instructions get louder as the bout continues. If his fencer loses, he spits out a tirade against the "bad" refereeing and maybe even berates the fencer. Like most parents, you condemn this stereotypical behavior. But maybe you also watch with a bit of anxiety, because you fear that with a little less control over your own impulses, that could be you. It's not always easy watching your son or daughter fence. With every touch your stomach does a flip-flop, and being in charge of the water bottle just isn't enough to consume your nervous energy. One way to manage your emotions and maybe assist your child in becoming a better fencer is to videotape.

The first thing videotaping your fencer will do is make you aware of what you are saying during the bout. The camera microphone is usually located close to you, the operator, so it can pick up a bare whisper. Imagine your son or daughter's indignation when playing back a tape and hearing your lack of confidence, a comment you thought was inaudible. Chances are, you'll record the wrong words once, see your fencer's reaction, and then remember to never talk into the camera during a bout again.

The camera will also put emotional distance between you and what's happening on the strip. While you are shooting, you will be watching the bout through the viewfinder, not unlike the so-called "fourth wall," that imaginary wall at the front of a stage or film screen through which the audience sees the action. The fourth wall should remove you from the heat of the battle.

Finally, videotaping will give you something to concentrate on, in addition to your fencer's performance.

If tension while watching your fencer doesn't concern you, consider videotaping for the educational value. At the very least, your athlete can look at a tape to form an idea of what went right and what went wrong. A more advanced fencer can obtain immediate feedback by rewinding the tape in the camera and analyzing it during the time between the pools and the direct eliminations. Get the coach involved and videotape can be a high level training tool.

With every touch your stomach does a flip-flop, and being in charge of the water bottle just isn't enough to consume your nervous energy.

Two years ago, foilist Gabe Sinkin took a year off from New York University to train with his coach Nat Goodhart in an attempt to make the 2004 Olympic team. That year, not only did he analyze tapes from his tournaments, but also from his daily lessons and practice. "A lot of times when you are fencing, you might do something and it feels a certain way, but your coach will give you instruction to try it another way. Sometimes, you can't make an image of what they want. You can't picture it. You can't feel the difference," he says. "So you tape it and you put it in slow-mo and see exactly what you need and what you are doing that is correct or incorrect. It makes it much easier to visualize the action that you are working on."

Gabe wholeheartedly recommends fencers and coaches work with videotape. "If I had been able to see myself years ago, when my coach was yelling at me to bend my knees, and I thought I was doing it," he says, "I'm sure I would have progressed much faster."

Videotaping fencing is not very difficult. Before the bout, jockey for a location alongside the strip, closer to the end than to the referee. At this angle, you should be able to see most of the strip.

You should also come no closer than about four feet from the strip, and try to stay close to the end lines. Never, ever get between the referee and the fencers, or you'll interfere with the bout.

Follow the action, keeping your lens wide and zooming in only if the fencing is stalled at the opposite end of the strip. With a little practice, you'll be able to watch the scoring lights with your peripheral vision at the same time you're keeping track of the action in your viewfinder. Keeping the scoring lights and the referee (when making their call) in the picture as much as possible is critical for helping your fencer recap the bout later.

While some people use a tripod, most can hold a camera steady for a five-touch bout. A fifteen-touch bout going the full nine minutes will include two breaks, so you can rest your arms. Being able to tape without a tripod is practically a necessity at a crowded national tournament, such as Junior Olympics.

You can videotape your fencer with just about any camcorder, although the compact miniDV and DVD cameras of today give much better results than the VHS cameras of a few years ago. If you're in the market for a new camera, make sure it is comfortable to hold and easy to use. Research the Internet to find one in your price range that performs well in low-light conditions, because fencing venues are usually surprisingly dark. And look for a camera with a USB or fire wire port so you can upload that amazing touch to your computer to share with others. ★



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Epee Troubleshooting

Helpful tips for your tip · Joe Byrnes

The subject of this column is for epee fencers, and, actually, only a few unlucky ones among them. Foil and saber people can pass on, or read with the smug satisfaction that it couldn't happen to you.

It is a rare enough occurrence, to be sure, but I have had some to cope with in my time, and interestingly enough, I have had two cases reported to me in just the last couple of months. The problem relates to the application of the test shim to the epee tip, specifically the larger shim to the total gap.

All epeeists are familiar with the very common problem of the travel having gone off-spec; that's what the thin shim ultimately tests, and it happens all the time. Blessed indeed is the epee fencer who doesn't get zapped by that gremlin at least once in a competition. If you rarely experience that grief, you are doing something right (or whoever sets up and maintains your epees is).

If, however, right up front, the 1.5 mm shim won't fit into the gap at the tip, something is wrong. Start with some questions: did it ever fit in? Is this a new epee, one you have never presented to a referee before? If it passed at the last bout, on another strip, these are the possibilities: the shim on this strip is a hair or so thicker than the last (that can happen), or maybe your tip is separating and "lengthening." What do I mean by that? Look at it. There will be a thin insulating ring, tightly fitted just behind the front. Has it separated, just a teensy bit maybe, from the main body behind it? Pressing it back into place would restore the proper gap, but that is a sloppy fix and a bad idea. When the tip is pulling apart like that, it is pulling the contact spring away from where you carefully adjusted it: you may not be able to score touch-

es; ouch. That epee would need to be temporarily retired, either to change the tip, or to put a tiny, I said tiny, drop of glue onto that insulating ring, close it up, and let it dry. Another possibility arises in the two slots in which the epee tip screws slide. Has one of them, or heaven forbid both of them, been whanged during a blade action and the slot changed from a kind of

Blessed is the
epee fencer who
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elongated "O" to something more like an "8"? If these problems aren't the case, or if your epee is new, then you presumably have a right-from-the-factory dimensional quirk.

The quickest—well, relatively quick—repair might be exchanging the tip for another. Normal plus/minus tolerances of parts may be enough to account for the variation. Of course, this approach assumes that you have at least a modest assortment of replacement tips, new or old, that can be swapped in. If this isn't the case, and more than one shim still flunks your epee, you definitely have a dimensional problem. What to do? Consider: you are sailing a boat down a river and come to a bridge; you can't get under it. Raise the bridge? Lower the water? Start taking the boat apart? Hard choices, all.

Once you have established that

the gap is physically too small (as I said, it's a rare case, but you do find it), you need to work some metal off, up at the end of the barrel. The first thing to occur to you might be to remove metal from the whole 360 degree circumference of the end of the barrel. That will do it, but calls for patience, time, and care to keep the end flat, and nice and level. The only tool you need is a good mill bastard file, however, and that's relatively easy to find. But I didn't say from the very end of the barrel. The preferable approach, in my experience, calls for a specialized tiny file. It will be a miniature version of what is called a "rattail" in larger sizes. It's round, tapered, and will have to be less than 2 mm in diameter over the operating range, since that's the width of the epee screw slots.

Alternating the sides, file a bit—at the top, "forward," end of the slots, naturally—and check the tip's fit, frequently. This is a pain, since you have to reassemble the whole point to check the gap properly, each time, and then take it apart again and file some more. Probably very little metal will have to be removed, so go easy. Remember to clean out any metal filings from the barrel before you reassemble. And don't be surprised to find that the travel adjustment has been thrown off by your salvage operation.

Miniature files of the sort needed, and it's the same sort of file you would use if you had to smooth out one of those "8"-shaped slots mentioned above, can be found at specialist hobby shops, for example, if your friendly local hardware store thinks you're crazy, asking for something that small. Those with web access can find on-line: WWW.MICROMARK.COM. It's a wonderful source for all sorts of small tools, a regular techie's heaven. ★

The Big Decision

Part One: Thinking About Opening Your Own School • Meghan Gardner

Many instructors have pondered this idea... it all started with an innocent "What if...?" They did a quick calculation in their mind, adding up rent, utilities, equipment, insurance (hopefully), and oh yeah, a little something for advertising. They do the math and they figure (tuition x students) – (expenses + salary) = tidy little profit. I know, I did the same thing about a decade ago.

Well, if you are thinking about taking the big plunge, let me spare you innumerable headaches by helping you research some numbers. Here is an idea of some of your expenses you will need to consider:

Rent

This varies depending on your location. As tempting as it is to purchase warehouse space in an industrial area, this will absolutely impact your chances of success. We'll talk more about this in a future column. Also, how much space do you need? Don't just think about strips. You need an office space, viewing area, changing rooms, rest rooms, retail area and equipment storage. Other considerations that are sometimes added onto rent:

- Garbage and Snow Removal (the latter being significant in some regions like New England).
- Rent for Common Areas: Most landlords require you share the rent for common space like shared restrooms, building lobbies, halls, etc.
- Property Taxes: Yeah, they get you here too.
- Building repairs: Most landlords pass this cost on to you.
- Build Out: Need a couple of walls to split your dressing rooms from the fencing area? If you don't pay for it yourself (hiring someone the building inspector will approve

of) then this cost will be built into your rent.

Utilities and Services

If you want to keep your students in the summer, be prepared to cool that massive space you just rented (another reason to stay away from warehouse space). Heat isn't as big of an issue. Fencers like it cool when they work up a sweat. But you do need to keep the office, changing rooms and viewing area warm. Don't forget water and sewage bills. Another consideration is Common Area Utilities. Not only does the landlord get your for rent here, but utilities to warm and cool it.

Payroll Processing

Don't do this one yourself. For a nominal fee you can outsource your payroll tax deductions and save yourself big headaches (and possible penalties).

Bank Service Fees

Online Banking is worth whatever you pay. There are also Merchant Fees if you accept credit cards and finance/interest charges if you use a credit line or small business loan to open your school (highly recommended).

Legal and Accounting Fees

You'll need a solid risk agreement—even if you are insured. Most insurers won't touch you without one. As well, if you plan on incorporating (highly recommended to keep your personal assets protected from possible lawsuits) then you'll have significant up front legal fees here. And unless you have a degree in accounting, let a professional handle it for you.

Taxes

Along with property and payroll, you have income tax, sales tax, use

tax, corporate tax, city taxes (depending on location) and I wouldn't be surprised if you got hit with a dueling tax (just kidding).

Phone and High Speed Internet Connection

You'll need to have some way for people to get in touch with you. And since accepting credit cards is a must nowadays, the internet will allow you to process your fees immediately.

Insurance

Not just for liability anymore. You can also expect Workman's Comp, Unemployment Insurance, Unemployment Health Insurance (depending on the state), Product Liability Insurance (in case little Johnny stabs his brother with a foil Mom bought from you), Contents insurance (if your place burns down) and any other insurance you may desire for yourself like Health Insurance.

Equipment and Maintenance

Unfortunately, it isn't as simple as buying a bunch of flooring, lighting, lender gear (for those who don't want to buy their fencing equipment up front), furniture, fax/printer/copier, computers, file cabinets, desks, scoring machines, etc. up front. You also have to buy new ones when they break or fix them.

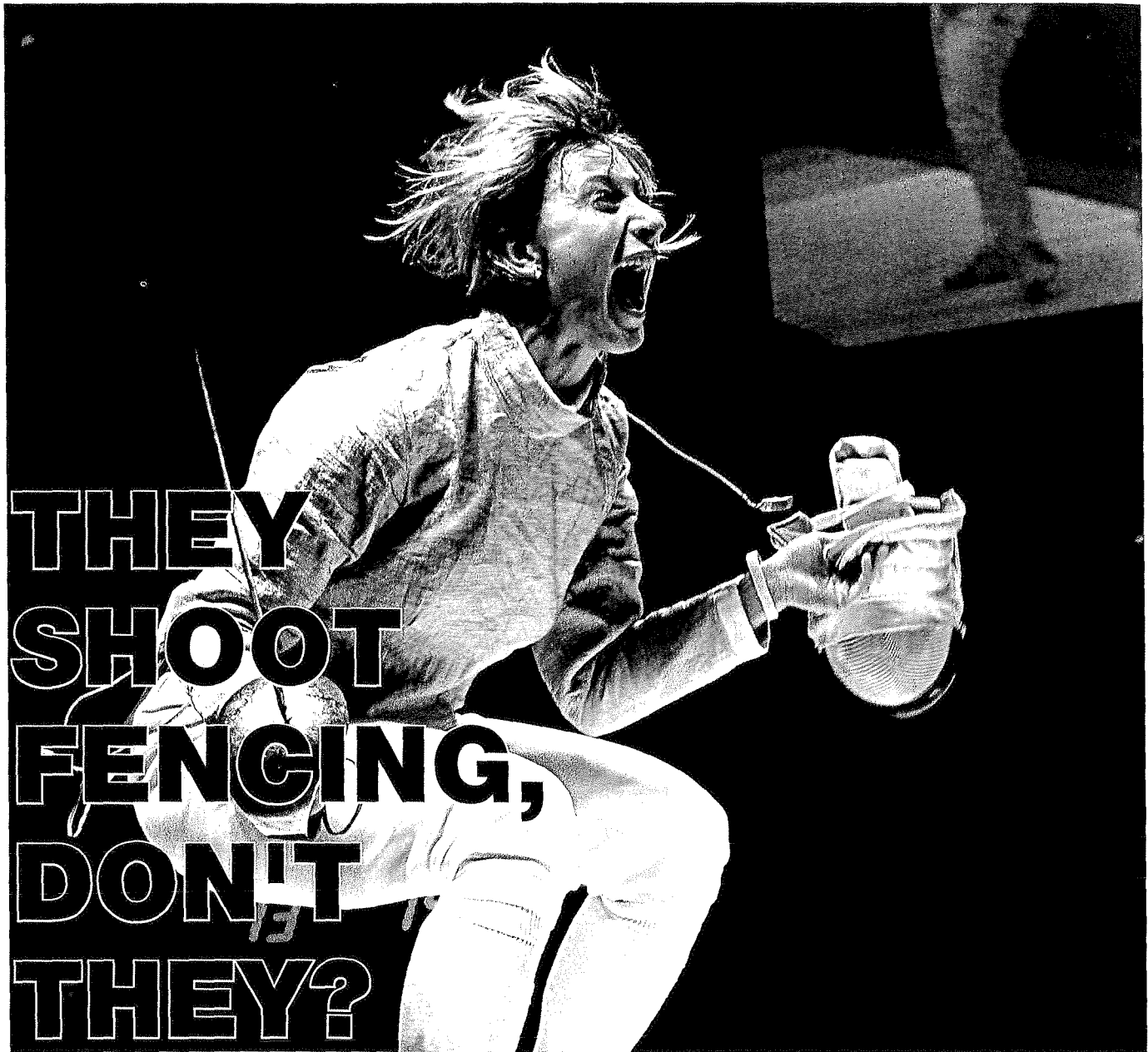
Laundry

You can do this yourself... but it gets tiresome very quickly. And stinky fencing jackets and gloves don't bring in new students.

General Expenses

Office paper, copies, paper towels, toilet paper, cleaner, toner, folders, hand outs, and-whatever-else-you-can-find-at-Staples.

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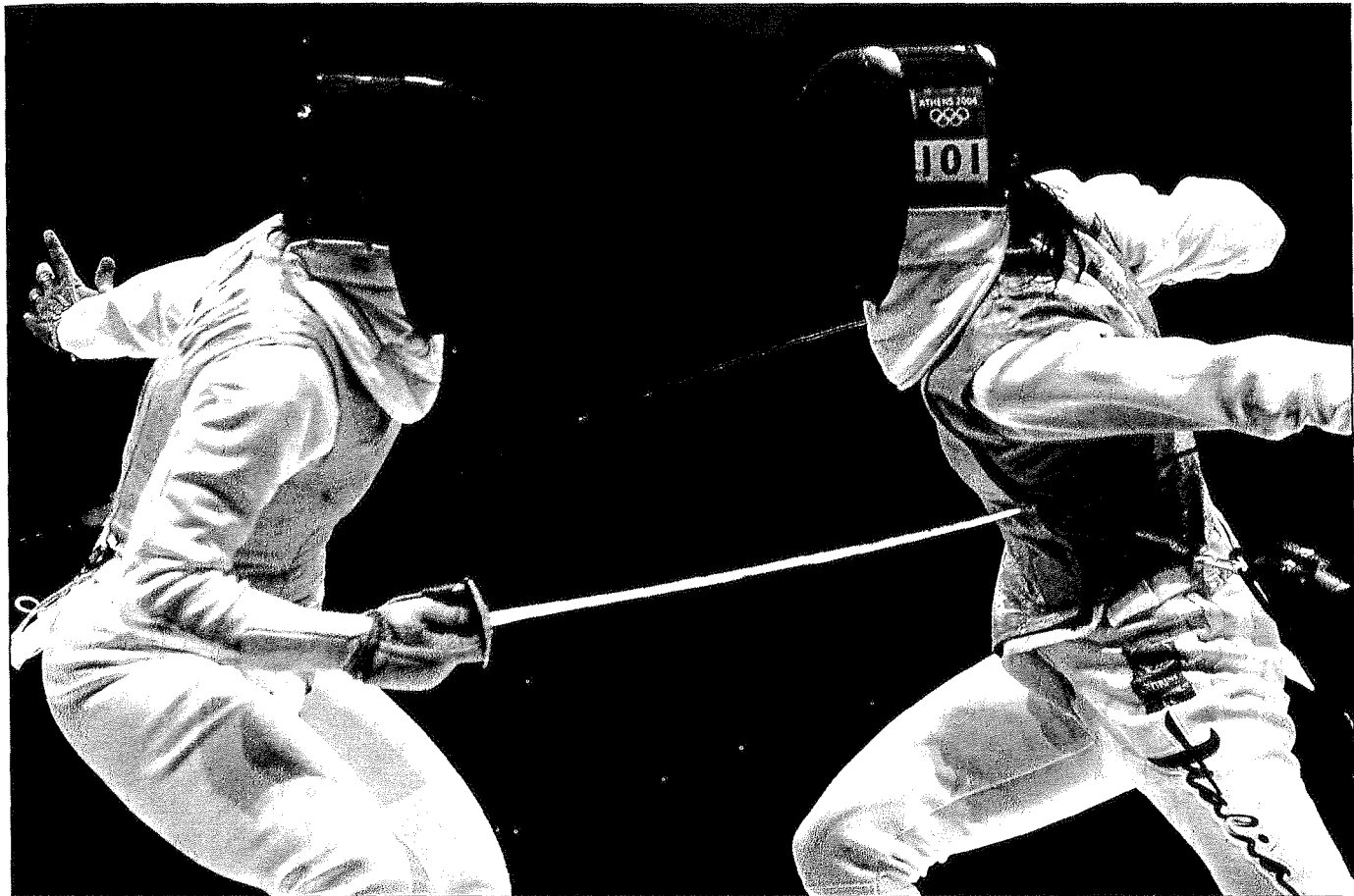


The Art—and Practice— of Taking Great Digital Fencing Photographs

written and photographed
by Serge Timacheff

When I say I've taken a lot of bad fencing photographs, I mean a LOT. Thousands, without a doubt. And I know I'm not alone.

Getting to the point where I could consistently take really good fencing photos took practice, both as a fencer and a photographer. Like fencing, becoming a good photographer takes commitment, practice, training, and real-world experience. And, just like adapting to various fencers on the strip, to shoot fencing photos you have to adapt to infinite combinations of styles, weapons, venues, and actions.



Opposite: Victories, when the stakes are high, frequently make for good shots, and you want to be ready for them with your camera set for the person's face—not their white uniform. Above: When composing a photo, a tight shot is often good. As you can see in these images, arms and legs aren't completely shown—and aren't necessary.

Sports photography is a percentages game, and I always try to get a higher percentage of good shots than what I shot at the last event. For an average day at a world championship event, I'll shoot about 1500 to 1800 photos; of these, typically 100 or so are usable, 25 are professionally acceptable, and perhaps three are great. Perhaps two or three shots out of nine days of a world championship are fantastic shots.

Taking an action photo is different from a portrait shot, and a sports emotion image is different from an establishment photograph. Many people, especially with the highly automated features on digital cameras today, simply point-and-shoot at whatever they think might look good—and then are surprised when the results aren't as good as what they thought they saw through the viewfinder.

Perhaps you've given fencing photography a try and discovered it's not that easy. I've taken more than a half-million photographs of fencing in the last three years alone, and I still learn new things—and make mistakes that drive me crazy—at every event. As the FIE photographer, I am often asked how to shoot

fencing – even by other professionals. It's not all about equipment – certainly, that's part of the equation, but definitely not all of it. Consider the following seven key factors to produce the best-possible fencing images with your camera:

1. Position Matters.

Where you stand in relation to the fencers is important. It's hard to shoot at a 90-degree angle to the center of the piste, and you may find referee directly in your line-of-sight. Position yourself as close as possible to the action. Look for interesting perspectives – atop a chair or at floor-level, for example.

Try to get at an angle of 30 to 45 degrees to the strip's center, which gives the best perspective and depth to see both fencers. If you're directly behind them, they'll get out of focus when they move, and you might get the back of a fencer instead of a good action shot. If you're perpendicular to the strip and your camera has any shutter lag, you may get the edge of the fencers when they move. At the 30-45 angle, you've got more focal

range and a better chance of catching the action. Focusing on the bell of the opposing fencer's weapon is a good way to track and get the best images.

2. I Can't See!

Lighting in fencing halls is abysmal for photographers. Not only dim and spotty, sodium/mercury lights wreak havoc on a camera's "white balance." Without light, your camera has to shoot "slowly" to get good exposures—which won't yield a "stop-action" style.

I test the lighting before I shoot. In Cuba at the 2003 World Championships the lighting was so bad in the preliminary hall that the FIE allowed photographers to shoot using flashes. But using a flash (which rarely produces good images, anyway) isn't an option for fencing tournaments—it's not allowed, and can distract and momentarily blind fencers. Worse yet, an angry coach might blame you for a fencer losing a touch!

Note: If your camera has an automatic "pop-up" flash, disable it when shooting fencing.

For poor lighting, use your camera's highest ISO setting to shoot at a speed necessary to take action shots. Then set it to the widest aperture (F/stop) and fastest-possible shutter speed without the image being too dark.

White balance (which gets the "whites white" and the colors correct based upon the type of light in which you are shooting) is best set manually, also. An "automatic" white balance may slow-down shots when trying to optimize speed. Set white balance for fluorescent lights or a plain light bulb (Tungsten), take test shots, review, and adjust accordingly.

3. The Venue.

How do I take photos where all you see is the fencers against a dark background? It's the venue. I originally developed my technique by taking high-contrast, dramatic photos at Duel in the Desert in Las Vegas, where they dim the audience lights and shine spotlights on the fencers. This is often the way finals take place at world fencing events.

But most salles and even Nationals don't light this way, even for a finals piste. You might get lucky with a finals strip where the background is dark, but that still doesn't help on strips

elsewhere in the venue. Mostly, you'll shoot on poorly lighted strips lacking attractive backgrounds. For these situations, I default to tight, "narrow depth-of-field" shots—meaning the background is blurry and focusing on an area limited to the fencers and nothing else. This way, the background is less distracting and unattractive. To do this, manually set your camera (if possible) to as wide an aperture as possible, and shoot at a faster shutter speed.

4. Compose Your Shot!

Have an idea of a subject and composition to produce a photo that's interesting and memorable. Just snapping photos of the "scene" isn't enough; each image must have a purpose.

There are several theories to study about composition, such as the "rule of thirds." And "tight" shots are more obviously "composed" because much of the subject occupies the image. Trying to capture too much of a general scene can produce a "busy" quality without a discernable subject or purpose.

A concentrating fencer, blades crossed in engagement, or a deep lunge can good subjects. Work on composing specific actions until you get

it right. Successful photography is about practicing the same shot over and over—and being able to replicate the technique.

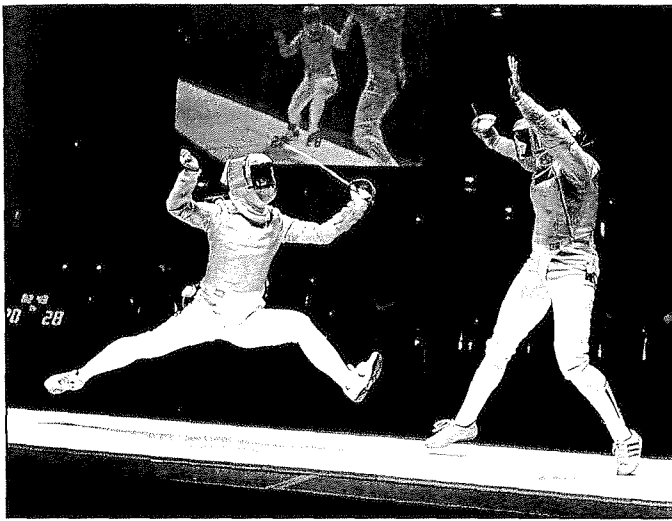
Don't worry about getting entire fencers into the shot. Go for close-ups, and if you cut-off someone's legs, it's OK. In busy venues, it's important to compose based on fencing action and individuals, not entire scenes.

5. Equipment, Big & Small.

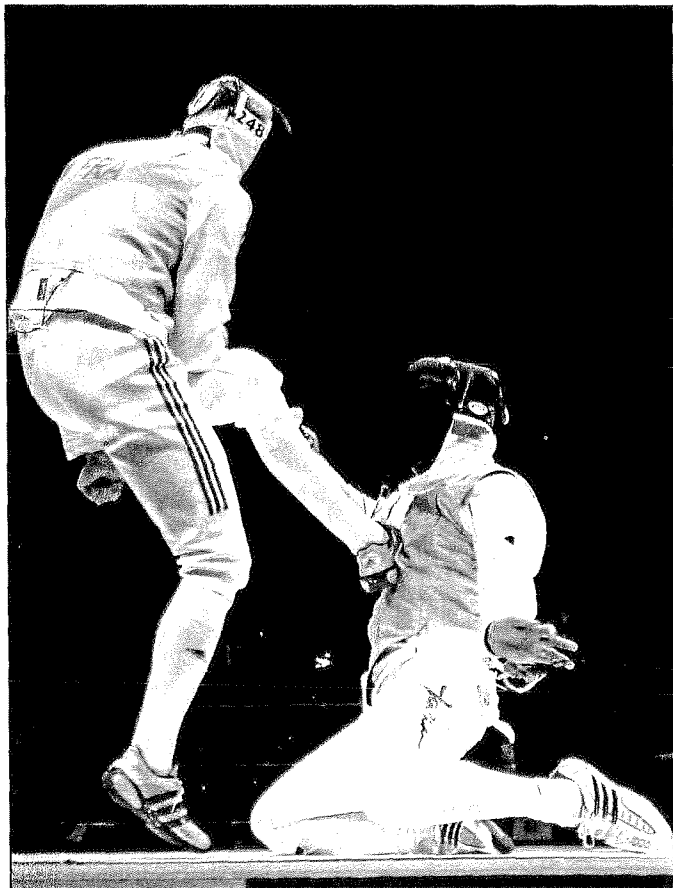
Equipment makes a difference in capturing good fencing image. I shoot a Canon 1D Mark II with "fast" (wide aperture) lenses, the standard of most sports photographers. I can shoot 8.5 shots a second, up to 40 shots in a row, with no shutter lag at more than eight megapixels. So there's no discernable shutter lag, the aperture is wide-enough to let in lots of light no matter the zoom length. Plus, the ISO goes up to 3200 and the image sensor in the camera is extremely high-quality.



Being able to get close to Soren Thompson infighting with Pavel Kolobkov means taking a deep close-up at narrow depth-of-field.



Stop-action shots are easier to get if your camera has no or limited shutter lag—and if you take control of the settings. The image above was shot with my camera set manually.



Being in the right place at the right time, and being ready for it, counts for a lot. This shot of a fencer pushing away another Olympian with his foot, makes for great action even without any weapons being shown!

But you may not want to lug gear around, or pay \$12,000 for a camera and lenses. So what do you do?

Camera settings are the most important part of getting the most out of your equipment, no matter the cost. For any camera—from point-and-shoot to semi-pro SLRs like the Nikon D-100 or Canon Rebel—the trick is to set it as manually as possible.

Photos will always be better if you do the thinking, not the camera! When set to automatic functioning for shutter speed, aperture, white balance, and ISO, a camera has to “think” about every photo – significantly slowing how long it takes to shoot.

For most venues, begin by setting ISO as high as possible. Some cameras won’t go higher than 400 or 800. If your camera goes higher, don’t go beyond ISO 1600 or you’ll get “noisy” (grainy) shots. This optimizes the sensitivity to light so you can take faster shots. Don’t just use the “sports” preset.

Next, set white balance (see #2) so you have the best colors and whites for venue lighting. Only use automatic white balance in mixed light, such as sunlight and indoor lights.

Now set your camera to either “M” (for manual) or “A” for the “aperture priority.” Set your aperture as wide as possible. The larger the aperture, the smaller the number (F/2.8 is wide and F/16 is small). This lets in more light so you can shoot a faster shutter speed. Be aware that a large aperture also means you will have narrower depth-of-field – meaning just what you focus on will be in focus, not the entire “scene.”

While the best lighting, taking photos of moving fencers this way will be challenging for keeping focused—you’ll have to practice to ensure sharp images. Automatic focuses are rarely fast on cameras, so you may try manually focusing, or choosing one spot where you can stay focused.

Shoot as fast a shutter speed as possible, but slow enough to still get a well-lighted image. Test several speeds and see what happens before you take shots that count. If you can shoot on full-manual, all the better.

If the light is varied, you might try shooting semi-automatically using aperture-priority at a wide setting; your camera won’t be as fast but will adapt to various lighting.

Exposures change based upon how “tight” a shot you take. A close-up of a fencer’s face will be darker shot and require a slower shutter speed than an action shot of white-suited fencers reflecting lots of light. When I take a photo of a fencer ripping his mask off and screaming a gold-medal victory yell, I have to reset my camera to be ready for his face, not his uniform.

6. Fencer, Know Thyself.

Being a fencer makes a difference in my ability to anticipate and see the action. As an epeeist and sometimes-foilist, it took the most time to figure out how to shoot saber. I worked to understand what made for good action, and when and how things were happening. Understanding the sport is an essential part of being able to capture the best images.

If you're not a fencer, learn what happens when and what fencers think is cool versus what's not. For example, most shots of fencers at-distance, standing en garde, isn't very interesting.

Learning to anticipate the action is essential to taking good shots with any camera, even with a rippingly fast camera. Shoot only when the fencers engage in their action, and chances are you won't get much because it'll be over too quickly (well, OK, maybe in epee...). You'll need to begin shooting before they engage, and see things the fencers see—the twitch of a foot, a feint you know will lead to an attack—and you're still going to take lots of shots where you'll miss the action or that perfect touch.

Anticipation and setting your camera manually, are the best ways to avert "shutter lag," that tendency of digital cameras to snap photos several moments later than you wanted. If you know your camera, and you've optimized the setting as much as possible, then you need to hone your timing. Depress the shutter if you think for a split-second that an attack is imminent—don't wait until the fencers begin their encounter. Will you waste shots? Absolutely. Will you get some great shots? Yes!

Get yourself a large, fast flash card that holds many images, and start practicing! A bonus: If you're a fencer, learning this method will also help you know your opponent all the better when you're on the strip, and you'll find yourself seeing an attack before it happens...

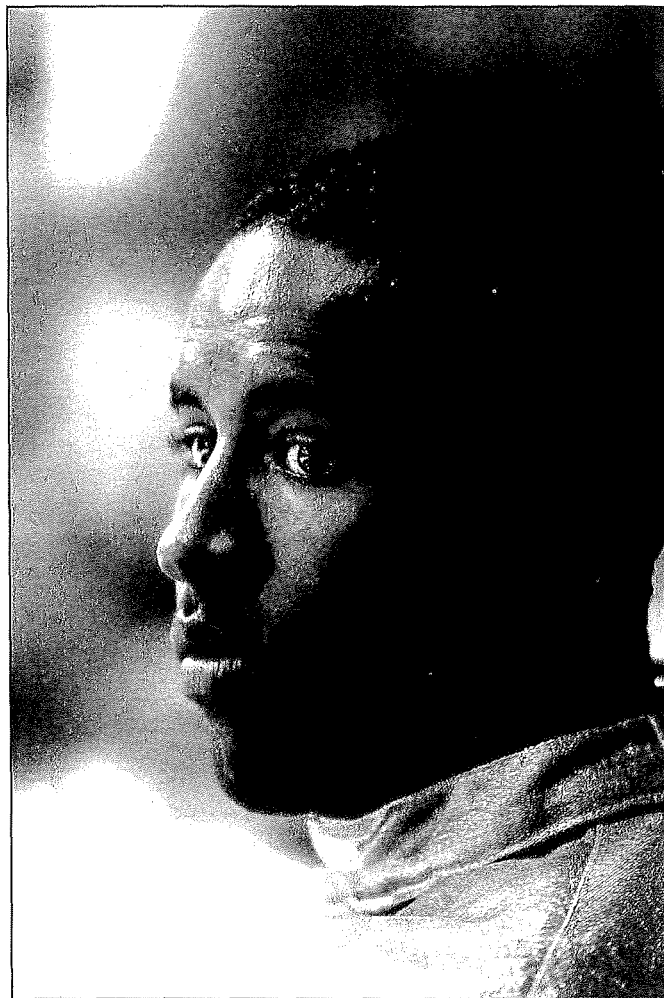
7. Planning Your Shots.

Taking a photo of a focused fencer before a bout? Want a good action shot? Want to shoot a fencer screaming? Any of these require different positioning, settings, and anticipation.

Think about how you can tell a story, from the bout's beginning to the end—whether it's a world champion or your ten-year-old at her first RYC. This means knowing your camera, being able to change settings on-the-fly, all the while understanding and focusing on what you're shooting—don't be so immersed in your camera's controls or looking at your last shot in the LCD that you miss what's happening!

Fencers look impersonal in masks and uniforms, and it's important to humanize the sport with faces and emotions. This, combined with interesting action and well-composed shots makes for a visual story that has a beginning, a peak, and an end. But each image requires that you manage and set your camera so it captures each shot optimally. Relying on automatic settings, while occasionally effective, will fail to produce consistently good results. That's where you must take the reins and control the action—every bit as much as the fencer needs to do the same to win.

I've been fortunate in fencing to see some great action and worked hard to be ready for it, such as catching Jonathan Tiomkin in Athens jumping higher than anyone had seen a fencer reach. But for every "Jumping Jonathan" shot, there are hours spent sitting on concrete floors shooting, downloading, selecting, and editing images. I haven't covered the "post-pixel"



Emotion can be a simple portrait, such as this one of Keeth Smart, taken at very narrow depth-of-field.

stages of digital photography, meaning the myriad details of what to do with a photo once on the computer and working with it in Photoshop and other software. That's an equally important part of photography "workflow."

But it's always better to begin with a well-composed, well-lit photo. This makes time in the digital darkroom easier, faster, and more fun. I never assume I can "fix" images later in Photoshop; instead, I test a venue before I start shooting the big and important action—something you can also do at any venue. Know the limitations as well as the capabilities of your camera, and of yourself to shoot what you want and know will be memorable images.

Finally, enjoy the time shooting. It brings you closer to the sport, the athletes, and perhaps even your family. I'd gladly trade my experience shooting fencers at the Olympics for the time I've spent with—and the photos I've taken of—my son at Nationals. ★

2005 World Veteran Championships

Team USA Leads the Medal Count
by Peter Harmer, Ph.D, ATC

With a full team attending under the able leadership of captain Paul Levy, team USA took full advantage of “sleeping close to home” and a large contingent of supporters for the 2005 World Veteran Championships in Tampa, September 2-4, to lead the medal count with a record 14 medals—highlighted by two World Championships! Although 196 participants was a smaller field than in Austria in 2004, the quality of the competition can be judged by the fact that 11 of the 21 countries represented medaled, with the gold medals being spread across eight different nations. Although Germany edged the United States in World Championship titles (three to two) the United States with 14 medals dominated overall.

The real story of domination is to be found in the weapon comparisons. Mirroring the results for other USFA teams, from cadets through the Olympic Games, the U.S. saber fencers accounted for eight of the total number of medals for the team, including the two World Championships, while foil produced one silver and two bronze and epee had three bronze. There seems little doubt that when the competition returns to Europe next year, the USA will continue to be a force to be reckoned with.

The men’s 50+ saber team set the standard on the first day of competition by producing three medal performances, and some excellent individual results. Joe Streb promoted first from pools and beat teammate Alex Kovacs 10-6 in the top eight to earn a well-deserved bronze medal before falling to eventual gold medalist Richard Cohen (GBR) 10-2. On the other side of the table, Ed Korfanty and Steve Mormando met in the top four



The 2005 United States Veterans Team. Photo courtesy Chuck Allen.

with Ed going into the final against Cohen. Cohen was not to be denied his second straight title and he took the gold 10-5. With the United States taking silver, both bronzes, and seventh, the competition was in full swing.

Unfortunately, the women’s 50+ foil did not fare as well. Although all U.S. representatives, as well as Agota Balot of Atlantic FC representing her native Austria, promoted from the pools, they were all in the same side of the table. Judith Offerle and Nadi Nazarova met in the 16, with Judith moving on with a 10-4 victory. Unfortunately, she came up short against Yumiko Tanaka (JPN) who had bested Agota and multiple Veteran World Champion Marja-Liisa Someroja (FIN) earlier and would go on to the silver medal. Clare Halsted (GBR) proved to be the U.S.’s nemesis on the top half of the bracket beating Karen Johnson 10-5, and then Carolyn Gresham-Fiegel 10-6.

Final placings were Gresham-Fiegel fifth, Offerle seventh, Nazarova tenth, and Johnson eleventh.

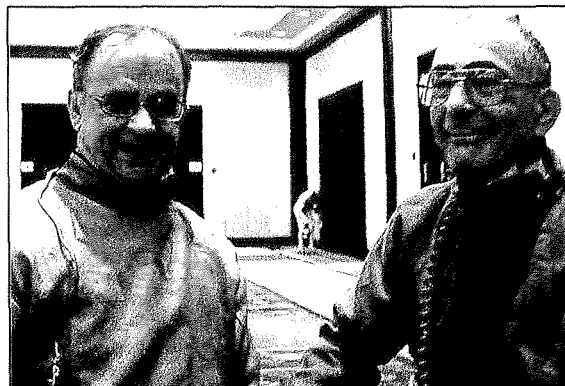
The men's 60+ foil also had its share of frustrations. Jim Adams missed the cut by one touch and the remaining team members ended up in the same side of the table. Joe Elliot, in the first of his two events, beat Wezsacker (GER) 10-8, but then lost a tough bout to eventual silver medalist Guy Mercier (FRA) 4-3. Don Benge and Ray Sexton (in the first of his three events!) met in the 16, with Ray taking a close fight 10-9. In the eight, Ray got past Frank Mill (GBR) before Mercier also ended his run. However, the bronze for Ray was an excellent step forward from his 2004 result.

The final event of Day One was the inaugural women's 60+ saber. This was the first year the vet women's saber events were sanctioned as an official Championships. The ten pioneers from four countries completed a full ten-person pool for seeding and then a direct elimination of eight. Diane Reckling (also in the first of three events) missed the cut while Terry Abrahams (the third of the three-event participants for the USA) fell to eventual gold medalist Brigitt Greunke (GER) 10-2, and Sherry Green lost to Brigitte Martin (FRA) 10-4. However, Lou Felty took advantage of her opportunities to beat Tachibana (JPN) 10-6 and Martin 10-8, before falling to Greunke to receive the silver.

Saturday began with men's 50+ epee, the largest field in the Championship. Close calls and tough losses abounded. Jesse Green missed the cut by one touch. Charlie Alexander fell to silver medalist Lars Scharpff (SWE) 10-9, in the eight after getting by Marsiliani (ITA) 10-9, and Luders (GER) 10-8. Scharpff also pulled out the close win over John Moreau 9-8 in the round of four after John had been on a tear, including a 10-4 win over 1987 World Champion and last year's Veteran silver

medalist Volker Fischer (GER). Peter Harmer of NWFC (yes, that's me), fencing for Australia, lost to two-time Veteran World Champion Ralph Johnson (GBR) 6-5, and Bob Cochrane could not quite overcome third seed and 2004 bronze medalist Fantoni (ITA) and lost 8-10. The great story was Arnaldo Sisson (BRA) who promoted with the lowest seed to take third. As your coach tells you—it is not over until it's over!

The women's 50+ epee was equally rife with strife. Mari-



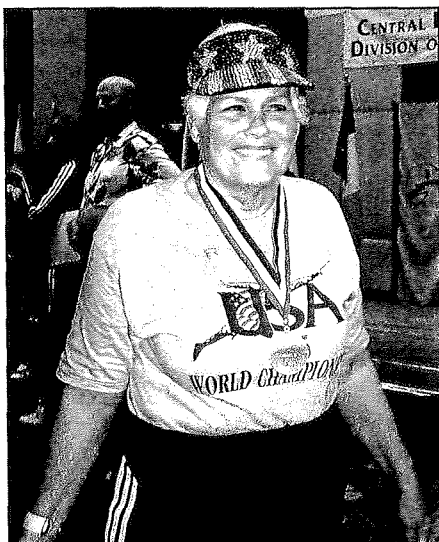
Bill Hall and Canadian sabrist Martin Fine. Photo courtesy Chuck Allen.

anne Bosco had a disappointing competition after her fifth place in 2004 by missing the cut. Agota Balot (AUT) had a better day and finished tenth after losing to silver medalist Brigitt Naegele (GER) 10-7. Again, the U.S. fencers had the misfortune of competing against each other with Diane Kallus getting past Karen Johnson 10-4 to take the bronze after a tough bout with Someroja (FIN), 10-7, who returned to the champion's podium for the fifth time after being shut out in 2004. Someroja could

Nations Cup, 2005 World Veteran Championships

	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
U.S.A.	2	4	8	14
Germany	3	3	4	10
Great Britain	2	1	4	7
France	1	1	4	6
Japan		1	2	3
Italy	1		1	2
Sweden	1	1		2
Finland	1			1
Norway	1			1
Russia		1		1
Brazil			1	1

be counted as fortunate as she escaped with a 10-9 win over Anna Telles in the top eight.



Silver medalist in Saber Lou Felty. Photo courtesy Chuck Allen.

The women's 60+ foil was highlighted by a bronze for Pat Bedrosian, putting her in a good frame of mind as she prepared for her second event on Sunday. Unfortunately, Pat's progress was at the expense of teammate Bettie Graham 10-4, but her end came at the hands of Greunke (GER), 10-3, who captured her second title of these

Championships. Diane Reckling could not get past Norrie (GBR), 10-6, and Terry Abrahams was caught by a tough Shinki (JPN) 10-7.

Day Two closed with the men's 60+ saber and the first World Champion for the U.S. team in this competition. Larry Pinkus, taking full advantage of being the "baby" of the group, proved golden as he systematically cut through the field: over Fine (CAN) 10-4, Urban (CAN) 10-5, Chaboisseau (FRA) 10-2, and finally Nettingsmeyer (GER), the 2004 World Champion, 10-8. However, the excitement was not all in the winner's circle. After promoting first from pools, Ray Sexton easily went past Raveling (GER) 10-1, before making up a seven-touch deficit on Chaboisseau, only to fall frustratingly short in the end 10-9, to finish fifth. Multiple world championship medalist Bill Hall had a difficult day and also went down to Chaboisseau 10-5, early on. David Lee lost a close bout to Urban 10-8 in the 16.

The women's 60+ epee opened the final day of the Championships and proved to be a mixed blessing for U.S. fencers. Terry Abrahams, who was not only competing in her third event in three days but who had been doing yeoman's service as coordinator for all social activities for the Championships, unfor-

"Humor, Strength, Beauty"

Women's saber fencer Paula Straka received a diagnosis of breast cancer one month before the World Veteran Championships and was unable to compete due to her illness. Her friend Lisa Campi penned this tribute.

So many people in this day and age have had this moment. The moment when you find out a friend has cancer.

The din of the fencing sounds deadened, the white of the fencers on the strips blurred. I stood there rooted for a moment, unsure of what I had heard. "Paula has breast cancer."

We all breathed a little easier in that her daughter had just transferred to a Philadelphia school. Her kids are a big source of support for her, she is a fantastic mom. Her son would be starting college this year, and locally too. She would have plenty of support. Now it was the fencing community's turn.

"She's strong; if anyone can handle it, it is Paula." It was practically the first thing everyone said about her at the club. "You're tough!" "You're strong," "Soon, I will know a breast cancer survivor." Those were the messages on the cards pouring in. I suppose that is how fencers respond to adversity.

The most special message came from Dick Johnson, our 81-year-old fencer: "You tell Paula that I am a survivor."

She showed me the adorable letter that one of her

veteran-50 world teammates had sent her: they would all be wearing the pink bands at the vet worlds to honor her. The timing of her diagnosis devastated her in that she was unable to fence there. She was actually quite embarrassed to make the vet-50 team, because people would know she was fifty (and a hot fifty at that!).

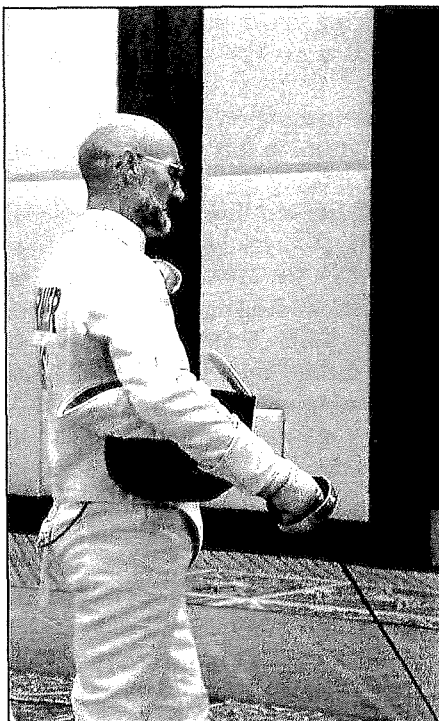
Paula's great quote: "It has been a great summer. The only downside was the cancer. But other than that, it has been a really great summer."

She is not an annoyingly perky person. She simply likes to laugh and enjoy life. Cancer was simply another obstacle in life. She has raised her two children on her own for the last 12 years. Her little family has been through rough financial battles, and other molehills. This mountain of cancer was just like packing to go to college. It is something that needs to get done. Then the rest of life can begin. Don't get me wrong, she was scared, but her friends would chip in and calm her fears.

As a fencer, she is relentless, always working hard for a touch. We knew that she would walk into chemo the same way she walks onto the fencing strip, with grace and confidence.

And on those days where she feels discouraged, she is strong enough to let her friends and family help her. Some people need to always be strong and never show vulnerability, but Paula understands the balance, that getting a helping hand or support is also a show of strength.

Humor, strength, beauty—that is Paula. ★



Peter Harmer, fencing for Australia. Photo courtesy Chuck Allen.

Unfortunately did not promote from pools. Pat Bedrosian, in a repeat of the foil competition, again handily got past Shinki (JPN) 8-4, as did Nadine Obermiller with Tachibana (JPN) 10-1. However, in the top eight, Nadine met Greunke (GER), who was looking for a third gold of these Championships, and lost 10-7. Pat also stalled in the eight, going down to Martin (FRA) 10-5. At the top of the bracket, Lisa Dobloug of DCFC, competing

for Norway, was intent on improving on her second-place finish in 2004, and proceeded methodically through the field. Unfortunately, the first step was Diane Reckling, who was also closing out three events in three days, over whom Lisa prevailed 10-5. From there, Lisa was the bane of the German team, passing Wohlfahrt 10-0, and Greunenke 10-5, and finally prevailing over Mehrle 10-9, for the title.

If Lisa was the monkey on the back of the German team, Aftandilov (RUS) played the same role to the U.S. team in the men's 60+ epee. The fact that, yet again, all of the U.S. fenc-

ers were in the same half of the table did not help. Arnie Messing emerged with the win 10-8 over Kaz Campe in the 16 to face Aftandilov who had gotten past Ray Sexton 10-8. Aftandilov then squeaked past Arnie 7-6, and finally Joe Elliott, 7-5, to go into the championship match with Lapouge (FRA). Joe's third place was the start of another medal-fest day for the United States.

Not to be outdone, the men's 50+ foil team placed three in the top eight, with Joe Biebel returning to medal form and taking the silver in a tight final match with first-seed Galvan (ITA) 10-7. Earlier in the DE, Heik Hambrazumian fell to multiple World Championship medalist Nakajima (JPN) 10-8, while Joe Streb bested Hinoshita (JPN) 9-8. Tom Lutton also made it into the final with an easy win over Shapira (FRA) 10-3. Unfortunately, Joe could not get past DeBartomolme (ITA) 10-6. Tom fell in a controversial heart-breaker to Ide (JPN) 10-9, to finish seventh.

Lest anyone think the last was least, the inaugural women's 50+ saber event proved to be a wonderful closing for the U.S. team, providing the second World Championship title and the first trifecta! Jane Eyre was relentless in her march to the top spot on the podium beating Saito (JPN) 10-2, teammate Jean Strumillo 10-4, and finally teammate Delia Turner 10-7. Delia had clear wins against teammate Doty Nicolau 10-2, in the final eight, and Bornemisza (GBR) 10-3 to reach the gold medal bout. To take the bronze, Jean dominated Yamada (JPN) 10-2, and hung tough for a 10-9 victory over Walls (GBR). Team U.S.A. —1, 2, 3 and 7. Not much else to say.

Although the official competition was over, the fencing was not finished. Following on the excellent ad hoc organizing of a team competition in Krems in 2004, Larry Pinkus went all out to support a similar venture in Tampa. Despite some misstarts regarding formats and times, a seven-team (USA, GER, FRA, ITA, GBR, JPN, SWE) epee competition was held to great acclaim (perhaps because of the \$200 prize money put up by an anonymous donor and plaques for the members of the winning teams provided by Paul Levy). After some excellent bouts, the USA (Bob Cochrane, Charlie Alexander, and Jesse Green) emerged victorious, defeating France and then Germany to take top place. In the spirit of fencing everywhere, the team donated the prize money to Hurricane Katrina relief.

The World Veterans Championship continues to grow in size and quality and as the competition returns to Europe for 2006 (Bath, England) you can expect more outstanding performances from a continually strengthening team USA. ★



Delia Turner takes second in the Women's 50+ saber competition. Photo courtesy Chuck Allen.

Women's 50+ saber winners Turner, Eyre, & Strumillo on the medals stand. Photo courtesy Chuck Allen.



The 2005 United States Collegiate Club Fencing Championships

A Personal Perspective

By Bruce Capin, USACFC President

April 2 and 3, 2005, marked the Third Annual USACFC Championships, more commonly referred to as the "collegiate club nationals." Michigan State University hosted the event that drew 450 college fencers from 25 schools, many of whom enjoyed varsity programs in the past that were cut by athletic departments.

In reflecting back on the weekend of competition, there are many things I observed that made the event special for me as a coach and officer of the organization.

It is true that most of the student athletes fencing were not international team members. They had neither the experience, nor in many cases the training opportunities others are afforded (sometimes those that have abundant resources and opportunities forget how fortunate they are). But that did not stop a single one of them from putting every ounce of energy into each bout. The desire to excel in athletic competition has less to do with how high your skills are, and more to do with your will to succeed (I believe).

I do not mean to downgrade the quality of the event. On the contrary, it might surprise people had they watched the three-way barrage in the women's individual foil final that included the NIWFA Champion, Emily Hannenberg from Army with Kate Duisenberre of UNH, and a German exchange student from Indiana University. I had never seen her before, but I recognized the World Cup decals on her mask.

Rob Bralow (Northwestern) won the men's individual epee in a pool that included 3 "A" ranked fencers. I did not realize Bralow had medaled in the Junior Pan Am Games. Yet as I saw him win the final bout and lift up his mask, completely exhausted, I noticed in his face how much this victory meant for him. I guess it is personal.

The men's team event was tied at the end of the day. Northwestern and Army had a fence off among its best fencer in each weapon to determine an overall men's champion. Northwestern won the battle (this time). As always, win or lose, the cadets were gentlemen.

I saw kids jumping up and down, hugging each other as

they saw their names appear on the list of finalists in individual events or noticed their squad medalled in an event. The only thing better perhaps (so Jon Moss commented) was awarding medals to some of those fencers, and seeing how this event can help make the student-athlete a better person. I know that at the academies, sport makes better officers, and that is the main goal of participation. I think there is some

wisdom in this philosophy that I should adopt with my fencers at the University of Florida.

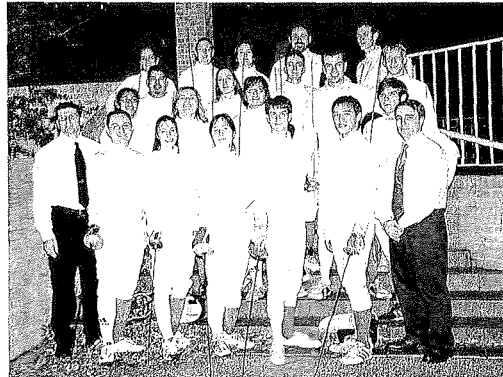
I watched volunteers and referees work tirelessly from early morning to late in the evening. I constantly remind everyone that without them there would be no event. They don't have to be here. Treat them well.

I saw coaches consol their kids, embrace their kids in moments of triumph that come around for any of us all too seldom, and last too briefly. I saw all the intensity and passion for the sport, but with a perspective that maintained fencing is a game that teaches us lessons in life. The value

is in the lesson more than the result. The lesson is long lasting. The medal is not. Over time I have learned about the greater picture. And, I respect the kid who has not fenced a year give their best, whatever that may be. It doesn't require courage to compete when you do well. It doesn't take much to continue when you're winning. It takes courage to keep going when it's not going the way you want. Not the same courage as fighting cancer or escaping poverty. But the skill we develop in the sport can lend us the strength to deal with serious matters like the ones I just mentioned.

I cannot wait until 2006 when the championships come to Clemson, another school with a rich history in fencing whose program was dropped, but is now experiencing a renaissance. It will give me another chance to take a step back and listen to the teams cheer for their fencers, to watch the "club" fencer with the will to win or lose and continue with grace. On one weekend each year I can witness, and be a part of all that is the glory of sport.

Life is good. ☆



University of Texas 2005 USACFC fencing team. Photo courtesy Paul Schimelman.



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2005 World University Games Results · Contributed by Jeff Bukantz; Team Captain

After some internal discussions about whether the USFA should send a team due to concerns about security, the decision was finally made to go to Izmir, Turkey.

The team, which consisted of four fencers each from Women's Epee and Men's Epee, arrived at Dulles Airport on August 5th for USOC staging and departed for Turkey on the evening of the 6th. We arrived in Izmir, after connecting in Munich, on the afternoon of the 7th. Unfortunately, we had to wait forever for our temporary credentials, and didn't get into our rooms until close to 6:00 PM.

The team was met by Coach Gago Demirchian, who had arrived earlier that day from a camp in Kiev.

The village was spectacularly set on a steep hill overlooking the city and the bay. We lived in an apartment which was about halfway up the hill facing the training track and the dining hall. Incredibly, athletes were on that track from the crack of dawn until midnight every day.

The fencing hall was at the Kulturpark complex in the center city, which included rhythmic gymnastics and taekwondo. Shuttle buses left every ten minutes in either direction, and the ride was about 20-25 minutes.

The fencing facility was one of the best and most expansive I've seen, and included many practice strips.

MEN'S EPEE INDIVIDUAL

Our team consisted of Soren Thompson (sixth seed), Ben Solomon (22nd), Christian Rivera (28th), and Kip Cox (41st).

There were 85 fencers and 13 pools in the first round. Thompson went 5-1, +14, to earn the eighth seed going into the tableau. He drew a bye into the 64, where he beat teammate Rivera 15-3. Soren then lost in the 32 to eventual bronze-medalist Chumak of Ukraine, 15-9.

Solomon went 4-2, +3, and was seeded 28th into the tableau. He drew a bye into the 64, and lost a tough 15-12 bout to Osharov of Ukraine.

Rivera went 2-4, -6, and got the 57th seed. That, of course, was unlucky, as after a bye to the 64, it matched him up with Olympian and teammate Thompson. Rivera also had a loaded pool which consisted of Olympians Fischer, Khvorost, Tourchine, and Seif.

Cox went 3-1, +1 and got the 23rd seed. He had a five man pool and one fencer no-showed. After a bye into the 64, Kip lost 15-12 to Bajgoric of Canda.

While the results were disappointing, it must be noted that the field was loaded. While Thompson was the big hope based on his back-to-back finals in Athens and Havana, he unfortunately ran into an eventual medalist in the 32.

Gold: Marik (Austria)

Silver: Dong (China)
Bronze: Fischer (Switzerland)
Bronze: Chumak (Ukraine)

MEN'S EPEE TEAM

The team was seeded eighth out of 20 teams, and after a bye in the 32, drew ninth-seeded Italy in the 16.

Italy steadily built a lead of 15-11 after three bouts. The fourth bout of the day was, unfortunately, our highlight, as Solomon out-hit Falcini 8-5 to bring us to 19-20. The momentum couldn't be sustained, as Italy came right back to win the next two bouts by 5-3 and 5-1 to give them a 30-23 lead.

Cox subbed in for Rivera and contributed a nice 5-4 effort, but the Italians closed us out at 45-35.

Cox was 5-4 (+1); Solomon was 14-16 (-2); Thompson was 10-15 (-5); and Rivera was 5-10 (-5).

Gold: Ukraine
Silver: France
Bronze: Russia

WOMEN'S EPEE INDIVIDUAL

Our team consisted of Maya Lawrence, Lindsay Campbell, Kerry Walton, and Amy Orlando.

There were 70 fencers in ten pools in the first round. Orlando went 4-2 (+7) to gain the 20th seed. In the 64, Amy resoundingly beat Sjogren of Sweden 15-5. She then lost a hard fought bout to Wollinsky of Germany, 15-10 in the 32.

Walton went 2-4 (-3). In the 64, Kerry was beaten 15-10 by Dmowska of Poland.

Lawrence went 1-5 (-7) in the pools and was eliminated. Campbell went 1-5 (-11) in the pools and was eliminated.

Gold: Aleksejeva (Estonia)
Silver: Li (China)
Bronze: Embrich (Estonia)
Bronze: Cygan (Poland)

WOMEN'S EPEE TEAM

We were seeded 13th out of 16 teams. Unfortunately, we drew eventual gold-medalist Ukraine.

We trailed 15-10 after the first round when Lawrence, who really came to life in this match, out hit Partala 7-5 to bring us to 17-20. However, Ukraine scored back-to-back 5-1 wins to basically ice the match.

Walton came in for Orlando in the third round and had

a spirited 7-7 bout with Partala, but we couldn't close the gap and lost 45-31.

For the match, Walton was 7-7 (0); Lawrence was 14-15 (-1); Campbell was 7-13 (-6); and Orlando was 3-10 (-7).

Gold : Ukraine
Silver: Russia
Bronze: China

The 24th Annual Leon Auriol Open Results · Seattle, WA, September 24-25, 2005

OPEN MIXED EPEE, 67 COMPETITORS, AN A2/B3 EVENT

1. Conner, Josh - UO - University of Oregon
2. Ranes, Evan - Fencing Academy of Nevada
- 3T Habib, Farooq - LaSalle Fencing Club
- 3T Lake, Adam - University of Oregon
- 5 Salas, Eugenio - Washington Fencing Academy
- 6 Exum, Travis - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 7 Ballenger, Jeremy - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 8 Edelman, Alex - Salle Auriol Seattle

OPEN MIXED FOIL, 63 COMPETITORS, A B2 EVENT

1. Filner, Aaron - Salle Auriol Seattle
2. DeSmet, Ariel - Northwest Fencing Center
- 3T Gukov, Alex - LaSalle Fencing Club
- 3T Stackhouse, Andre RCFC - Rain City Fencing Center
- 5 Unger, Floyd - Rain City Fencing Center
- 6 Patterson, Devynn - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 7 Tidrick, George - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 8 Haidl, Kevin - LaSalle Fencing Club

OPEN MIXED SABER, 18 COMPETITORS, A B1 EVENT

1. Kandlik, Aaron - Beaches Saber Club
2. Krasnich, Mikhail - Dynamo Fencing Club
- 3T Yung, Wang - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 3T Lundborg, Mark - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 5 Meek, Joseph - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 6 Grover, David - Sumner Fencing Club
- 7 Wright, Rocky - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 8 Sasaki, Peet - Salle Auriol Seattle

OPEN WOMEN'S EPEE, 21 COMPETITORS, AN A1 EVENT

1. Krol, Magda - Vanguard Fencing Club
2. Burt, Lacey - Northwest Fencing Center
- 3T Elliott, Suzanne - Unattached
- 3T D'Agostino, Emily - Northwest Fencing Center
- 5 Lynch, Katherine - Northwest Fencing Center
- 6 Correll, Carol - Vanguard Fencing Club
- 7 Abbe, Cory - Northwest Fencing Center
- 8 Wu, Grace - Northwest Fencing Center

OPEN WOMEN'S FOIL, 33 COMPETITORS, A C2 EVENT

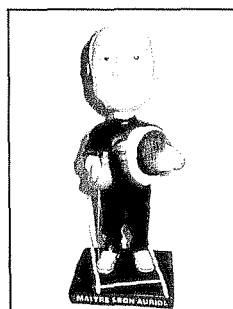
1. Grant, Jennifer - Northwest Fencing Center
2. Smith, Anna - Capitol City Fencer's Club
- 3T Granholm, Carolyn - LaSalle Fencing Club
- 3T Patterson, Devynn - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 5 Patterson, Morgan - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 6 Dreeland, Elizabeth - Salle Diablo
- 7 Asher, Sophie - Rain City Fencing Center
- 8 Wilson, Briana - Northwest Fencing Center

OPEN WOMEN'S SABER, 6 COMPETITORS, AN E1 EVENT

1. King, Robin - Salle Auriol Seattle
2. Slaton, Emma - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 3T Knouff, Olivia - Salle Diablo
- 3T Hill, Carolyn - Metro Tacoma Fencing Club/Blue Steel
- 5 Cooper, Madeline - Salle Auriol Seattle
- 6 Grover, Ellen - Sumner Fencing Club

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Left in the Dark

Southpaw Hanna Thompson on fencing other lefthanders

Q I'm a lefty, and I have a hard time fencing against other lefties. Do you have any advice?

A Yes, it's true, even lefties have a hard time with other lefthanders. Especially fencing another leftie who I feel is a higher level, I still get nervous. So I try to take my time more. It's a lot easier maybe to relate to the fencer, but it's harder to fence them at the same time. It's harder to counterattack against lefties. It feels like there's more target area for them to hit—and there is. When a left-hander lines up against a right-hander, there's less target facing each other. I know they're probably going to counterattack more often, so I try to take the blade or start really slow.

It all works both ways—the thing to remember when fencing another left-hander is that if

you realize your own weaknesses, you realize they potentially have the same weaknesses, and the playing field is at least even.

For example, I think most lefties—regardless of skill level, if two lefties are fencing, and they're going to do one parry, it's going to be four. So when I'm attacking, I go around four and aim for shoulder or chest, I almost never go for the flank.

And vice versa, especially with lefties I concentrate on parrying circle six.

I used to flick to the chest more with the old boxes but not so much any more. I don't like to flick much anyway but against lefties, it's almost never.

Hanna Thompson, the 2005 Women's Foil National Champion, has been a member of four Senior World Championship teams, including the 2005 team. She earned a bronze medal at the most recent senior World Cup in Havana, Cuba this June. Thompson is also a four-time NCAA All-American at the Ohio State University and finished third in 2002 and 2004. ★

The thing to remember when fencing another left-hander is that they may have the same weaknesses as you.

drill

This foil drill for is two southpaws to work on together.

Begin with with blades down. Keep a slightly longer distance than is customary for leftie-righty bouts.

A attacks or provokes, B will retreat and attempt to counterattack. Fencer A has two choices: to engage B's blade in 6, then double disengage, or to beat 4, single disengage. In either case, A should finish to 6, high on the shoulder.

Drill provided by Thompson's coach Gia Abashidze, OSU assistant varsity coach—and daddy to Sophia, born September 12, 2005, so congratulate him when you see him!

Stro Memorial Fencing Cruise

In honor of the late Michael D'Asaro Sr. we are finally going to have the Stro Memorial on the Cruise Ship Paradise. Sailing from Long Beach, CA to Baja Mexico.

When: Fri. March 3 thru Mon. March 6. The fencing will take place Sunday March 5.		Cost:	
		Inside Cabin	
		Up to 2 people	\$361 pp
		3 & 4 people	\$271 pp
Registration closes:			
Mixed Epee -	10:00am	Ocean View	
Mixed Foil -	12:00pm	Up to 2 people	\$411 pp
Mixed Sabre -	2:00pm	3 & 4 people	\$281 pp
		Reg:	\$35
		Entry:	\$25 per event

ACT NOW!!! Limited number of cabins available! First come first served! For more information or to secure a space, contact Michael D'Asaro at mdasaro@yahoo.com or call (310) 714-5407. Please check the www.thefencingdude.com/stromemorial website for regular updates and changes

\$150 per person deposit due by Nov. 16;
remainder to be paid by Dec. 15.

Competition CLASSIFIEDS

THE PACIFIC COAST SECTION announces its 2005-2006 Junior sectional circuit events:

- Oct. 29-30—Los Angeles Invitational, North Hills, CA, Cadet and Junior (all weapons)
Nov. 19-20—Phoenix Junior Challenge, Mesa, AZ, Youth 12 (foil), Youth 14, Cadet and Junior (all weapons)
Jan. 7—Beverly Hills Invitational, Culver City, CA, Cadet and Junior (foil)
Jan. 14-15—South Coast Youth Invitational, Santa Ana, CA, Youth 12 and 14 (all weapons)
Feb. 12—Beverly Hills Invitational, Culver City, CA, Cadet and Junior (epee)
May 6-7—Inland Empire Junior Invitational, Upland, CA, Cadet and Junior (all weapons)
May 21—Beverly Hills Invitational, Culver City CA, Cadet and Junior (sabre)

Check out www.pcsfencing.com for information and pre-registration.

USA SPORTS would like to contact athletes and their parents who are nationally or world ranked with relatives born in Mexico, up to the fourth generation, to invite them to the National Junior Olympics in Mexico in April 2005. USA Sports will cover expenses including airfare, hotels and meals. contact Arturo Mata, 956-778-2228 cell, 956-969-4716 home, 956-702-8358 fax, 916 East Washington, Weslaco, TX, 78596.

THE 2006 ARNOLD FENCING CLASSIC, held in conjunction with the Arnold Schwarzenegger Fitness Challenge, will be held in Columbus, Ohio, March 4-5. This year's Arnold Fencing Classic will be expanded to include a Regional Youth Circuit competition, a Men's Epee Open, and the International Saber Invitational. Fence with Olympians in front of thousands on the big stage, have a chance to meet the Governor! For registration and more details about the unique tournament format please visit www.arnoldfencingclassic.com or www.royalarts.org or contact Julia Richey at 614-329-0211.

Coaching CLASSIFIEDS

WORK WANTED. Italian Fencing Master, current coach of the University of Verona Fencing Team; graduate of National Academy of Fencing in Naples, seeking teaching position in scholastic or club fencing in the U.S. Contact Carmino Galanto, tel. 045-522084, address Via A. Scarlatti, 1/A, 37131 - Verona, Italy.

ECOLE NATIONALE DES MAITRES D'ARMES, professional fencing teacher at cercle d'escrime de Tours and Laval and experienced international competitor seeks position in U.S. For complete C.V. please contact Jean-Christophe Guibert, telephone 02.99.30.18.49, 06.24.62.49.73, E-mail jchristguibert@yahoo.fr.

COACH WANTED. Established, private NJ club seeks experienced foil coach for advanced fencers. Send resume to elfin-2@lycos.com or by mail to PO Box 696, Somerville, NJ 08876.

SEEKING COACH. A committed team of parent partner/owners and a highly motivated group of youth fencers are seeking a full time coach to establish a competitive program in St. Louis, MO. Must have experience in setting up and managing a junior competitive program with at least 3 years of coaching experience, preferably in three weapons. Will consider one/two weapons as well. Will offer a guaranteed base salary with an excellent bonus structure and an opportunity for ownership in the club. Email your resume, credentials, and a complete list of your and your students' achievements to: stlcc1887@yahoo.com; Timothy George 3962 Affirmed Dr., Florissant, MO. 63034-3412

PART-TIME SABER COACH WANTED. Minimum 5 years competitive or coaching experience required, must speak English language; must be self motivated and enjoy working with kids

ages 7-18. Send resume and inquiries to OregonFencing@aol.com or mail to Oregon Fencing Alliance, 4840 SW Western Ave. Suite #80, Beaverton, Or 97005

SEEKING SABER COACH. Must be energetic & personable for an up and coming program. Please send resume to include picture, education, experience as a fencer, coaching experience in which weapons, your students' achievements, marital status, contact information, telephone number and address to: The 5 Star Fencing School, 16387 Groce Lane, Hempstead, Texas, 77445.

PART-TIME FOIL COACH WANTED. Must be energetic and able to give structured lessons to kids 7-14 year olds. Candidate should have minimum 3 years competitive experience or coaching experience. Send resume or inquires to Peekskill Fencing Center at Sky Movement Studio, 925 South Street, Peekskill, NY 10566 or eekoloops@excite.com.

SEEKING COACH for New Jersey school's fencing team. Position pays \$1,600 a year. Please contact Eric Linger, ewalkeric@aol.com, (908) 272-3883 (H), or (908) 510-2802.

Got a big competition coming up? Looking for a coach? Looking for a job? Send free classified listings to: Cindy Bent Findlay, USFencingMedia@earthlink.net, fax 614.340.7299. Make sure to include contact information; American Fencing will not act as an intermediary for advertisers and does not research backgrounds or legitimacy of either coaching candidates or advertising employers or clubs.

Winter magazine deadlines for all classified ads is November 1, 2005. Winter issue will be published in mid December.

LETTERS

continued from page 6

ing issues, his position is understandable. I also agree there is no reason for fencers, coaches, or referees to intentionally ignore rules or for fencers or coaches to engage in the black art of penalty bating which is too often practiced certain other sports, like soccer. However, it remains my contention that people prefer to watch fencing rather than penalties and that fencers prefer to have bouts determined by fencing actions rather than by penalties, but I could be wrong.

Joseph S. Streb, Ph.D., J.D.
Columbus, Ohio

REMEMBERING WILLIAM GOERING

Just before leaving to fence on the USA saber team at the 2005 World Veterans Fencing Championships, I read Bob Block's appreciation of Bill Goering in American Fencing. Bill was passionate about fencing, and went out of his way to help people. I knew him for over thirty years, and he always seemed to be there at important moments in my fencing life.

I really got to know Bill in the early 1990s when the new USFA President, Michel Mamlouk, appointed me, Bill and some very well known fencing people, to a Strategic Planning Commission. Our task was to develop a Strategic Plan for the USFA. Over the next year Bill hosted several meetings in Detroit. Despite my relatively junior status on such a panel, Bill was very supportive and respectful of my ideas.

In 1999 Bill and I were members of the USA sabre team at the first Veteran's (sabre) World Championships in Hungary. I had a good day and ended up fencing Richard Cohen of Great Britain (who has since won two World Championships in 50+ saber) in the round of 8. I was certainly not favored, but I remember Bill's confident and calm voice rooting me on in that bout, which I managed to win 10-7. Winning the Bronze medal meant a lot, and Bill was there for me. He was also there in 2003 to knock me out of a Veterans NAC and thereby kill my chances of making the 50+ team. Over breakfast the next morning he was concerned that I was discour-

aged and might give up fencing (not a chance!). He felt that I had many more teams in me. I made the 50+ team in 2004, but Bill had to drop out because of his illness. During the subsequent year he told me several times that "the team needs you."

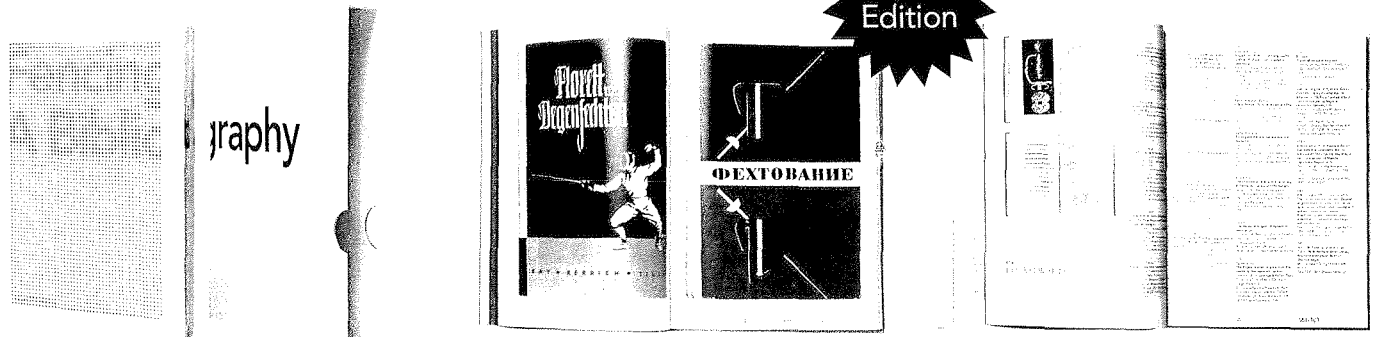
So I found myself on the 60+ saber team in Tampa when, during the Opening Ceremonies, our Captain, Paul Levy, asked for a moment of silence in Bill's honor. I knew that Bill had come close (two Bronze medals), but had never won the Veterans World Championship. Before the final bout against two-time defending world champion, Wolf Nettingsmeyer of Germany, I was sitting at the end of the strip and thought of winning the world championship for Bill.

[At the end of the bout, with the score 9-8], two lights were on, but the referee gave me the touch and World Championship. After saluting everyone, I walked to the end of the strip, looked up, and pointed my saber towards the ceiling in a tribute to Bill.

Larry Pinkus
Kensington, Md.

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Rules/REFEREES

continued from page 15

Although calling it correctly shouldn't have taken any courage, the fact remains that it did. Fencers, coaches, and captains went crazy, as the calls they were used to getting all day would now go against them. While there were a handful of referees who generally called it properly, they were in the extreme minority.

The bottom line is that many refs took the path of least resistance and didn't risk upsetting the rotten apple cart, especially when they weren't being observed by the FIE brass. In defense of the refs, the bent-arm attack became an accepted practice, and the refs went with the times. Then again, it ultimately was the referees' fault that it became an accepted practice in the first place.

Quite frankly, I never thought the window would close. It was just taken for granted that foil was the anti-saber, where a proper and ultra-tight window was enforced. Believe me, it was no fun being yelled at and ridiculed by the saber coaches/referees, who correctly gave the foil refs tons of grief for giving the bent-arm brigade an unfair edge.

That should have done the trick, as saber coaches are even scarier than the FIE watchdogs.

Whatever the reason, the mindset

finally began to change around the turn of the century. (Always wanted to say that...)

Why did it finally change? Who was responsible for the change?

While it is impossible to know the exact reason or time the "Bent-Arm Express" reversed course, or who the engineer was at the time, I asked one of the top conductors of that era for his opinion.

Greg Massialas, an FIE A-rated foil ref during this timeframe, offered his response without hesitation:

"In my opinion, Chaba Palaghy's role as Chair of FIE Arbitrage turned the tide. His assigning of several *saber referees* in some foil matches at the World Championships in 1991 got things going.

(Hmmm, maybe those ever-critical saber refs/coaches were actually right.)

The change was especially spurred on by the 1992 (Olympic) Women's Foil gold medal bout between Trillini and Wang. In one touch sudden death, the action was completely reversed (Wang clearly won with an attack into Trillini's bent-arm preparation, but Trillini got the call). After the 1992 Olympics, the tide had changed and we were on track.

We started having seminars, watching the slow motion replays and saw how insane things had become. *I specifically remember at one of these seminars in Olympia, how the tide was changing and many of the top foil referees felt that things needed to get "a little more like saber".*

By the 1993 & 1994 Worlds things were pretty set and by the 1996 Olympics, we were on this track."

When I conveyed Greg's opinion to Chaba, he agreed with Greg's assessment, but added what he believed to be the single most important aspect that led to the changing of the mindset:

Even the world's best foil refs finally understood that they wouldn't get the big assignments, let alone get invited, if they didn't start calling it correctly.

And that, according to the former Chair of FIE Arbitrage, was what ultimately changed the mindset of the referees and finally derailed the "Bent-Arm Express."

At the end of the day, the foil refs had to fear for their jobs before they made up their minds to close the window and finally return to making calls that properly rewarded the 'old school' and 'classical' correct attacks. ★

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ClubTIPS

continued from page 19

Advertising and Marketing

This one can eat your budget alive. Everything from web hosting and Search Engine Placement to ads in the local paper and school t-shirts. You may also have to hire a professional ad designer unless you have some experience in this area yourself. But please don't do it if you are a novice—it's as good as throwing your money away. Future columns here will help you out if you really have no other choice. Figure to spend a good 20 percent of your estimated revenue (not profit!) on advertising and marketing.

These are just some of the upfront and recurring costs you can expect when starting and running your own fencing school. Make a spreadsheet and list each of them. Then do some research and plug in your numbers. Take the time beforehand to know what you are getting into... so really know if that "tidy little profit" you estimated is actually realistic.

In the meantime, if you have specific questions, you can email me at meghan@guardup.com. ★

THANK YOU

U.S. Fencing would like to thank the generous fencers, families and vendors around the country who have opened their salles, their homes, and their pocketbooks to help victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

We extend a special tribute to the following vendors who have donated fencing equipment and offered discounts to those who have lost their equipment to the storms:

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**For
Dedicated
Coaches!**

Sam NEMECEK

18, Western Michigan Fencing Academy



TheSTATS

Event: Women's Foil
Birthdate: June 10, 1987 (Grand Rapids, Mich.)
Hometown: Alto, Mich.
Height: 5' 3"
Weight: 120 pounds
High School: Caledonia High School, '05
College: Northwestern University, '09
Club: Western Michigan Fencing Academy
Coach: Mike Nemecek—Sam's father

Sam Nemecek has had a quick rise to the top. In 2003, she finished the season ranked #21 in the Cadet Women's Foil standings. By the end of 2004, she was ranked third ... and fourth in the Junior standings, and earned two bronzes at the Junior Olympics that year. This season, she reached her first Senior Worlds team and is ranked 17th in the world Under-20.

How I Started Fencing:

My parents started fencing the year I was born, so I have been around it my whole life. I only fenced on and off until I was about 10, but I didn't start really fencing competitively until I was about 11.

Who inspires you?

I have two heroes—Ann Marsh and Mike Cho. I

CareerHIGHLIGHTS

- Bronze, Junior Women's Foil and Cadet Women's Foil, 2004 Junior Olympics
- Silver, North American Cup, Overland Park, Kansas, Jan. 2005
- 6th, Junior "A" World Cup, Lyon, France, Feb. 2005

wrote my first report on Ann when I was in fourth grade. She is an amazing person. And my whole fencing life, Mike Cho has been there to cheer me on. Not just me, but the whole Michigan Division. He is glue that holds the foil fencers together. I have learned to see fencing's "bigger picture" because of Mike Cho.

Now who inspires me the most has to be my dad. He puts hours and hours of time and energy into his coaching to make sure that I have all the tools I need when I go out there on the strip. I am where I am because of him.

Favorite bout to this point and why:

I have many favorites, but one that comes to mind is the bout I lost to Angelova at Palm Springs to get into the final four. She beat me 15-5 and put me into the losers bracket at the 32, but when I saw her again, at the eight, I lost 15-13. I was adapting so well that day. It was great.

Least favorite bout to this point and why:

Any tied bout that I win on a bad call, even though there could have been calls either way during the bout. Winning on a bad call makes it feel like a shallow victory. ★



Leon Paul USA



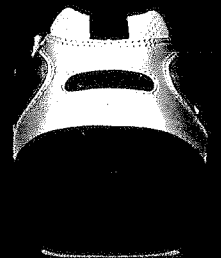
We are pleased to announce that US armorer and fencing instructor, Bill Murphy, will be taking over the operation of Leon Paul USA. Bill brings a wealth of experience to Leon Paul USA having served as the fencing sports equipment coordinator at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, as a staff armorer at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and as the US Team armorer at the 2004 Athens Paralympic Games. Leon Paul USA now offers the following services:

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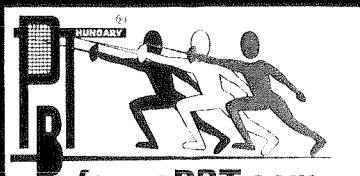
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