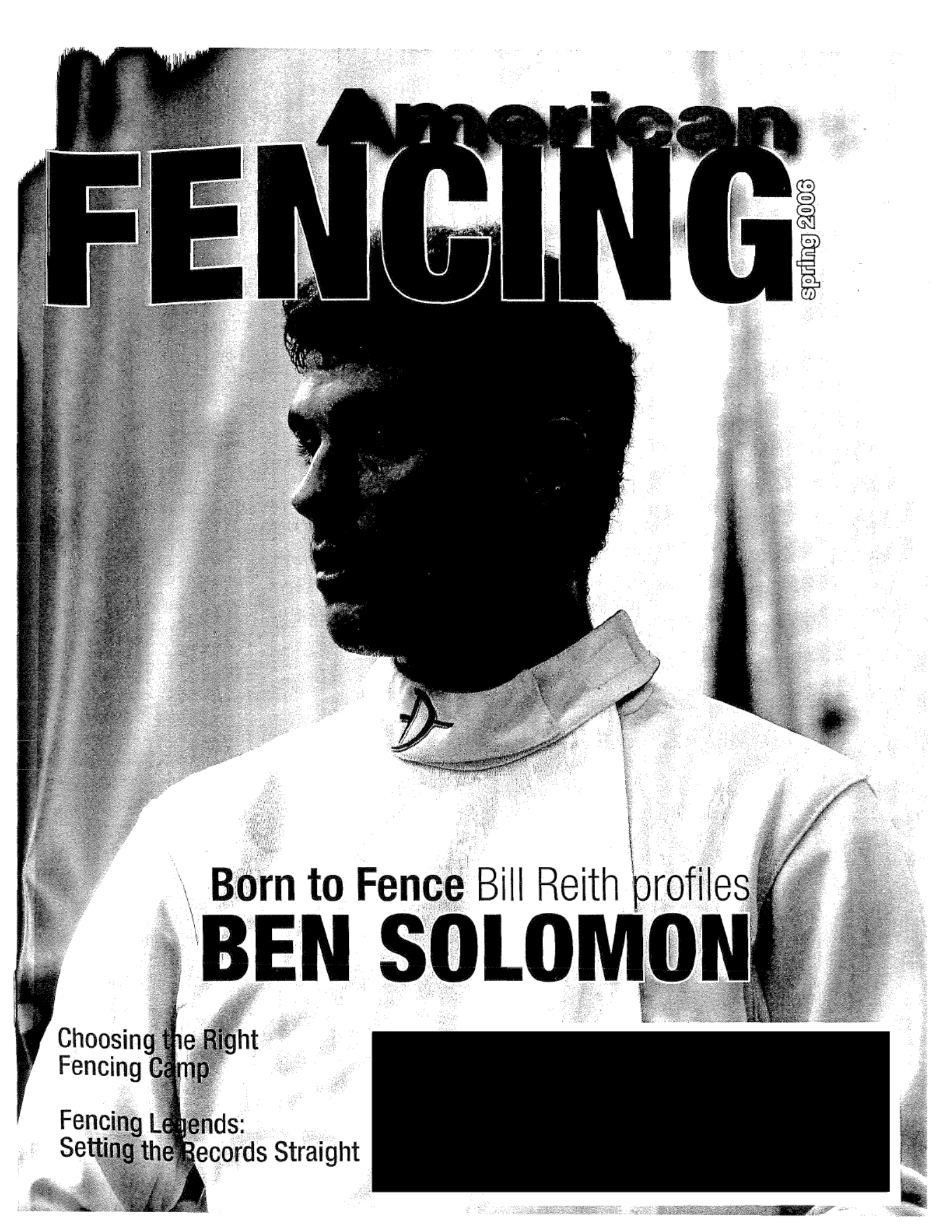




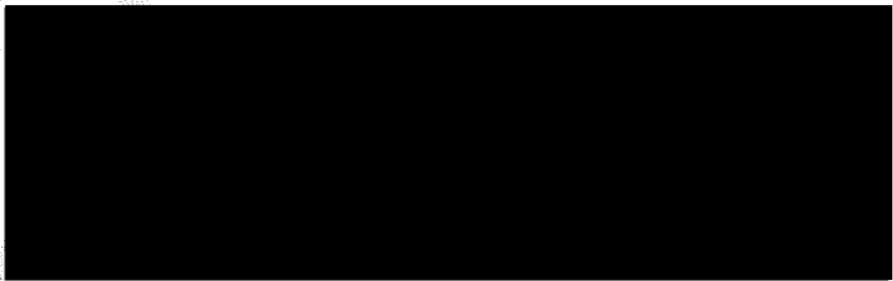
American FENCING

spring 2006

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BEN SOLOMON

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On the cover:

Cover story fencer Ben Solomon at a recent World Cup in Kuwait. Photo by Serge Timacheff, FencingPhotos.com.

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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Nancy Anderson

President, United States Fencing Association

The United States Fencing Association is alive and well and, as a matter of fact, is the healthiest it has ever been. It is my pleasure to report that membership continues to expand at a phenomenal rate; tournaments are creating challenging problems with unexpected increases in entry fields at all levels from the Divisions through the NACs; the youth programs and regional youth tournaments are gaining in popularity every month; and US fencers continue to upend their foreign counterparts winning medals at World Cup and other international competitions.

The winds of change can be expected to continue as growth stimulates change—growth brings on unexpected challenges, but challenges that allow an organization to regroup and analyze its evolving mission. Many changes have occurred over the last 20 years, in particular in the last eight years.

The USFA has grown by leaps and bounds such that 8 full time staff focus on the corporate business of the sport of fencing. The staff implements the policies of the Board and works with the membership and the volunteer force—the officers, the committees, and all those working the national tournaments—to ensure that the operations are as effective as possible.

There will always be those who critique a business organization from a different perspective and fervently believe there are better ways to conduct business. The USFA membership elects the officers of the organization; it is their task to support and enhance the efforts of those officers. The people who are actively engaged in the operations of such an organization use the tools and vision at their disposal to continue successful plans and implement constructive new ideas and recommendations. Thus it is with this administration.

Where are we today?

AT HOME

- Membership in the USFA is at an all-time high.
- In the past two years, the referee base has grown by almost 50 percent; coach membership in the USFA has tripled.
- The number of fencing-related businesses has doubled in just the past four years as evidenced by the space occupied by vendors at the national championships.
- Coaches can obtain more benefits from the USFA, e.g., insurance coverage. National coaches are receiving compensation for the time spent with the national weapon programs.
- On-line registration has been a request (a demand?) of the membership for some 10 years; final stages are being tested for implementation in the 2006-2007 season.
- Task groups have been formed to evaluate where US fencing is today, what are its needs, and how to best accommodate the needs of all the facets of its mission and corresponding goals.
- The USFA has an excellent financial base with staff working closely with the administration assuring that the organization is operating in the black.
- A goal of the organization for years has finally come into fruition: we have professional marketing and fundraising efforts in place with a plan for visibility and financial growth that will go forward for decades.

IN THE WORLD

- The number of US medals at Junior World Cup and international Cadet competitions this season has set a record for our country. The Senior World Cup circuit is just getting underway

and we have already had stellar performances.

- Three of the weapons are in the top World Cup team standings.
- 4 US fencers are in the top 8 of the FIE World Junior standings.
- There is significant greater depth in all the weapons as demonstrated by the number of athletes participating in World Cup and international competitions.

The 2008 Olympics in Beijing are 2.5 years away. Though it sounds like a long time, it will pass quickly. In order to place US fencing in an optimum position in Beijing, Bob Largman, team manager of the last two Olympic Fencing teams, and Michael Mas-sik, Executive Director, traveled with the USOC on a survey trip to Beijing. During that trip they made excellent inroads with the fencing manager and were able to establish a solid communication link. In preparing for the Games, this type of liaison can only help US fencers, not just in accommodations but in casting the positive environment that allows the athletes to compete at their best.

At the upcoming World Junior and Cadet Championships in Korea, the FIE will meet with the representatives of all federations to discuss what team events are to be included at the 2008 Olympics within the limits set by the IOC. US fencing representatives will be working with other federations to find a meaningful solution for 2008.

In conclusion, one can see that the USFA is a very healthy, dynamic, multi-faceted organization and that the sport is doing extremely well with more fencers, more coaches, and greater international recognition. Everyone has some role in its success, from the local clubs through the national tournaments. Thank you all and we look to amiable cooperation with all segments of our fencing world. ★

Readers' LETTERS

Please note that letters must be limited to 400 words or less or they will not be published. Opinions expressed in Letters are not the position of American Fencing or the U.S. Fencing Association. American Fencing reserves the right to edit letters for space and clarity. Please include your name and hometown when submitting letters to USFencingMedia@earthlink.net.

RESULTS PLEASE

In your pages, I often read about the ongoing effort to make fencing a more recognized sport by the general public. People argue that rules or weapons need to be changed to be television friendly, that it is overlooked in the Olympics coverage, and on.

Being one to look in the mirror for the source of my problems, I criticize other fencers for not sticking around to see the finals of their own competitions, and make a personal effort to stay and cheer for my champion. It is a sad thing to have a gold medal bout with only three people involved. If we don't watch our own sport, why should we expect anybody else to be interested?

I appreciate what the organization does to promote this sport. But one thing the USFA could do is be way more prompt on posting the results from big tournaments; true fans like to stay on top of their champions' performance. It is frustrating to have several competitors from our club, and many from our division at Nationals, but not be able to cheer or cry along with them.

You can read about last night's baseball game in this morning's paper. You can read minute by minute updates of the Tour de France off the web.

If the USFA doesn't feed the fan base, who will?

Paul C. Mattor
Hollis, Maine

GROWING UP FENCING

Thank you to Monica Kao. Ms. Kao's article, "Growing Up Fencing," was not only timely in our house, but accurate, as well. Inspiring points were made to describe a few of the benefits of fencing when the intrinsic values that fencing reinforces are practiced on and off the strip.

My own father and I were just discussing this recently as he approved of my son's involvement in competitive fencing. My son and I are both fencers. Being involved in a sport that is, well, let's say not exactly "mainstream," has provided additional tangible benefits to my son, while it rekindled many in me.

Ms. Kao accurately describes that self-reliance and confidence are built in fencing. Self esteem is also cultivated when an athlete takes responsibility for the outcome of a bout. It's easy to have self esteem in abundance when we win a bout. But to increase self esteem when you're beaten

is a life skill that has benefits well beyond the fencing strip. We do this by recognizing what we need to improve upon, while congratulating and admiring our opponent for the victory. Most often, the victor will respond by explaining what tactics were working against him, reinforcing what we are doing right. Self esteem spirals upward for both.

Another benefit comes when we learn to take criticism from coaches and more experienced fencers, without it wrecking our psychological wellbeing. Criticism can come from anywhere in life. Fencing teaches us how to recognize that when a coach, a boss, or a parent criticizes an action, it is only the action that is being criticized, not the person. Of course delivery can have an effect on how we might feel about criticism. But we further learn how to control our own reactions, and find the "nugget" we need to perform better on the next attempt.

Fencing also promotes friendships beyond our own community, especially if we compete regionally and nationally. Perhaps after a long career in competitive fencing, we might even enjoy lifelong friendships all over the world. Broader experiences, exposure to other cultures and locations, help us realize, understand, and embrace the diversity of our world. Thereby, we improve how we interact with all people throughout our lives.

Thank you again for a fine article.

Doug Crockett
Overland Park, Kansas

THE NEED FOR SPEED

I was pleased to read Mr. Menser's letter from the winter 2006 issue of American Fencing. I and others who gathered to watch the saber Olympics last year were disappointed by the theatrics and poor display of technique. The absolutely offensive lack of sportsmanship from most of the competitors, including our own, was obvious. Olympians should know better. What disheartened us even more was the absence of "game."

Competitors repeatedly charged one another with as much speed as possible in a desperate hope to touch first. Over and over again, the referee was unable to make a call. This is not fencing! One may blame the new blockage times. Mr. Bukantz has placed a valid argument.

However, just as the flick has not become extinct, neither should good technique. Sabre, in the opinion of some, is the best hope for fencing to become televised. Unfortunately, watching two competitors simply run at each other and sweep their blades once or twice is ... well ... boring.

I do not pretend that I could defeat these Olympians in a bout, as I lack the youth and the athleticism. But I am a better fencer. Thank you.

Jason R. Seachrist
Winter Garden, Florida

Fencing Expands

LONG ISLAND, NY—It seems that fencing is maturing as a sport—literally.

Veteran fencing, or fencing among folks aged 50 and over, is growing slowly but steadily around the country and the world. Women's saber was recently added to the slate of events at the official FIE World Veteran Championships. The number of vets fencing in national events is growing slowly. And non-USFA senior competitions are also popping up all over.

The Long Island Senior Games (LISG) is one such competition, having added fencing to the list of 40 sports in 2003. LISG organizer Eleanor Scott says the Games approached the Fencing Club of Long Island hoping to add a great lifelong sport to their roster.

"We are trying to show seniors that there are many opportunities to keep your body active and healthy. We had a great turnout, and the people running it are just super, so supportive. It's so exciting to see the fencing," she says.

All 50 states sport Senior Games or Senior Olympic competitions, but few feature fencing. Some state games, such as the Empire State Games of New York, feature Masters divisions in fencing, as well.

Many within the USFA consider the North American Cup to be the pinnacle of competition, but the field can be stiff (no pun intended) at the state level, as well. Last year Michael Cohen of Dix Hills, NY defeated Richard Cohen (2005 Veteran Men's Saber World Champion) for the gold in the Empire State Games.



Michael Cohen, Dennis Fagan, Steven Starer, Lisa Tranquada, James Simpson, and Robert Moore.

The 2006 LISG will hold its fourth year of fencing competition at the Fencing Club of Long Island in Deer Park on Thursday, June 1, starting at 6 p.m. While the competition itself is mixed, award categories are split into five-year age brackets, starting at 50-54.

"Last year we had close to a dozen mixed entries in each

weapon from the New York metropolitan area. In the past we have had registered entries from 50 years old all the way up to 84, and still fencing," says James Simpson, organizer of the fencing competition and also a competitor.

There is no geographical restriction on the participants in the LISG and no limit to the number of events one can participate in for one entry fee of \$35. Those interested in competing should see www.longislandseniorgames.org or contact Mildred Wilcox at 631-261-9114 for an entry form. Entries are due by May 13; pre-registration is required. Those 80 and older can register for free.



Left to right: Carter, Penn coach David Micahnik, and O'Loughlin. Photo courtesy Penn Athletics.

Penn Athletics Hall Of Fame

USFA stars Jane Hall Carter and Chris O'Loughlin were inducted into the Penn Athletics Hall of Fame on November 5, 2005. Penn Athletics describe the pair as "two of the most well-established fencers in the illustrious history of Penn fencing."

Carter, a foilist, was a three-time All-American as a Quaker. In her freshman year, she was named first-team All-America while helping the Red and Blue win the NCAA National Championship. She went on to be named second-team All-America in 1988 and 1989, as well as All-Ivy League in 1986, 1988 and 1989.

After graduating from Penn in 1989, Carter was a member of the U.S. National Team from 1990 to 1996. She was a member of the gold-medal foil team at the 1991 Pan-American Games. She was also a member of the 1990, 1991 and 1993 U.S. World Championship teams and the 1989 World University Games team.

Today, Carter works in clinical research for MetaWorks, Inc. She is also a member of the board of directors for the USFA.

During the late 1980s, Chris O'Loughlin was equally

as impressive in men's epee. A four-time All-America and All-Ivy selection, O'Loughlin captured an individual NCAA national championship in 1986. In addition to his NCAA title as a freshman, he also won the Intercollegiate Fencing Association's (IFA) Eastern Championship that year.

Like Carter, O'Loughlin continued his fencing career after graduating. He was a member of the U.S. Olympic Team at the 1992 Games in Barcelona, and was first alternate for the 1996 Games in Atlanta. O'Loughlin was a member of the bronze medal-winning team at the 1991 Pan-American Games, and he won a silver at the 1989 Maccabiah Games.

Even 17 years after graduating from Penn, O'Loughlin is still active in fencing. He was the Div. I national champion in 2000, and a member of the six-time national champion New York Athletic Club team. He has been the men's epee athlete's representative to the United States Fencing Association since 1997, and has been the NYAC Fencing Committee chairman since 2002. Most recently, O'Loughlin served as a committee member for the New York City 2012 Olympics bid.

O'Loughlin is married to Colleen Clinton; they live in New York City.



Cadets at a World Cup in Germany in February: Steve Kubik, Miles Chamley-Watson, Dorian Cohen, Michael El-Saleh, Nick Crebs, Carrington Harris, Ben Parkins, Ariel Desmet, Reggie Bentley, Mauro Hamza, and Leszek Stawicki. Photo courtesy Wendell Kubik.

Jacobson Named Finalist for Atlanta's Amateur Athlete of the Year

ATLANTA, GA—2004 Olympic bronze medalist Sada Jacobson (Dunwoody, Ga.) was named a finalist in the category of Amateur Athlete of the Year at the inaugural Atlanta Sports Awards in February, 2006.

The event, created by the Atlanta Sports Council and presented by Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar, will honor the most accomplished athletes and teams at all levels from throughout the metro Atlanta community.

The Atlanta Sports Awards will honor 10 award recipients who distinguish themselves

In conjunction with partner Applebee's restaurants, the nomination process for the awards was open to the public

Nominations were taken exclusively at the 37 metro Atlanta Applebee's restaurants for six of the awards from Nov. 7 through Dec. 31. Award finalists were then chosen by the 75-member Voting Academy who represent a cross-section of the metro Atlanta sports community. The winners will be named at the Atlanta Sports Awards Feb. 27.

"The award finalists for the inaugural Atlanta Sports Awards are the personification of what is so great about Atlanta's competitive and compassionate spirit," said William Pate, Atlanta Sports Council chairman.

Other Amateur finalists included Olympic swimmer Amanda Weir and cross country athlete John Tuttle.

Award winners will receive the "ASA" Trophy, a specially designed work by Herff Jones – makers of the Heisman Memorial Trophy and the Naismith Trophy.

World Cup Blitz

U.S. fencers have been sweeping across the globe with the force of a nor'easter.

Juniors and cadets have been reaching finals at almost half of all World Cup competitions they attend. They've won a whopping 37 medals as of this writing, and the season is not yet over.

With the 2006 Junior and Cadet World Championships just around the corner (chronologically, not literally—they're in Korea this year), five juniors are in the top ten of the World Cup standings. Emily Cross (Fencers Club) is the third-highest ranked junior women's foil fencer in the world. Rebecca Ward (Oregon Fencing Alliance), Dagmara Wozniak (Fencers Club) and Caroline Vloka (Fencers Club) are ranked 4th, 6th, and 7th respectively in Junior Women's Saber, and Kurt Getz (Fenc. Academy of Westchester) is ranked 7th in the world in Junior Men's Foil.

U.S. seniors are not being left behind. 2004 Olympic Gold Medallist Mariel Zagunis (Oregon Fencing Alliance) earned the silver at a world cup in Orleans, France on Feb. 4, and Oregon Fencing Alliance teammate Rebecca Ward earned a bronze. Zagunis is now ranked 5th in the world and Ward 9th—and Sada Jacobson (2004 O.G. Bronze medallist from Nellya Fencers) is ranked 2nd.

Fencers Club foilist and 2004 Olympian Jed Dupree also earned Senior World Cup bronze, at the Senior A in Madrid, Spain on the same weekend. Olympic teammate and clubmate Dan Kellner placed 8th at that competition.

And at a Senior Team World Cup in Kuwait City, Kuwait,

continued on page 40

Fencing as Mastery

Focusing on the Journey • Steve Diehl

When we first approached our son about taking up fencing, his eyes boggled. Both my wife and I grew up playing, and even coached, a good number of the white bread American sports. Between us, we had football, basketball, baseball, swimming, and running, covered. Problem was, our eight-year-old son showed absolutely no interest in any of them. Like many boys his age, he was passionate about medieval knights and sword play. Then came the techno-appeal of *Star Wars*' Jedis. Light swords and sabers took his fascination to another level. He must have thought we'd lost our minds when we suggested he consider dueling with actual weapons. It was like saying, "Wouldn't you like to go play in the busy street?" or, "Why don't you jump off more bridges like your friend, Billy." He was hooked from get-go.

Three years, many long tournaments, and a few medals later, he is an avid amateur fencer. From not knowing a remise from a riposte, we are working to keep up with his progress, still struggling to find parallels from our own athletic experience that might be of value to him. But we have also seen a valuable quality in fencing—the commitment to mastery.

Fencing is a mastery sport. In his book, *Mastery: The Keys to Success and Long-term Fulfillment*¹, George Leonard bewails the absence of the concept of mastery in American culture. The quick fix is in—winning the lottery...discovery of hidden talent on shows like American Idol—feeding our misconceptions about success. The end is the only value, and it had better arrive with generous helpings of fame and press coverage. We prefer to wait, like hidden gems, until a god plucks us from a slagheap of obscurity. Until then, we lay in the slagheap.

I recently introduced my son to my favorite sports movie—OK, I'll admit it, my favorite movie *period*—*Rocky I*. Playwrights have long known that watching someone do actual work in drama is more tedious than, well—doing actual work. Bill Conti's famous "Rocky Theme" provided the rich musical background for the boxer's training scenes. The combination of this tune with scenes of Rocky's workouts became a cliché for aspiring athletes in the seventies. But in the film, the hero only trains hard for five to six weeks before his big meeting with Apollo Creed, after being plucked from the pages of a volume of obscure Philadelphia pugilists—and that only because of a timely injury to the scheduled challenger and his marketable moniker—the

Italian Stallion. In the climactic final fight scene, Rocky goes the distance, proving to himself that he "weren't just another bum from the neighborhood." Working daily to prove that to himself didn't occur to the character prior to his chance selection by Apollo's entourage. Nevertheless, we ate it up! Rocky went on to win the Oscar for Best Picture in 1976. We Americans prefer our opportunities to be thrust upon us by the hand of Fate.

It is passivity like this—leading to "dabbling" and "hacking"—that Leonard abhors. The alternative he proposes is the time-honored value of mastery. In contrast to the American obsession with ends and awards, mastery focuses on the journey, the process. Practice is not a means; it is the end. Leonard lays out five keys to mastery:

1. Instruction: Leonard advises careful selection of a respectful master teacher, including observation of an instructional session.

2. Practice: A common denominator among masters is that they treasure practice. "You settle into it as if into your favorite

easy chair, unaware of time and the turbulence of the world. It will still be there for you tomorrow. It will never go away."

3. Surrender: Not only must the master surrender to a trusted teacher, but to the demands of the discipline. It sometimes means surrendering a hard-won proficiency, taking one's game apart in order to reconstruct a better one.

4. Intentionality: Intentionality means envisioning a move, a technique, a strategy, in order to achieve it.

5. The Edge: One does not become a master who can challenge the given properties of an art or sport—to explore the edge of the envelope—until one has mastered time-honored fundamentals through concentrated practice. As Leonard puts it, "Before you can even consider playing this edge, there must be many years of instruction, practice, surrender, and intentionality. And afterwards? More training, more time on the plateau; the never-ending path again."

The allure of knighthood drew my son to fencing. I am thankful for the opportunity for him not only to explore that fantasy, but to learn the forgotten value of mastery that is the key to success and fulfillment in any arena. ★

¹Leonard, George. *Mastery: The Keys to Success and Long-Term Fulfillment*. New York: Penguin Group, 1991.



Steve and Caleb Diehl at Fencing Nationals, Sacramento 2005 (in Utah Fencing t-shirts)

Sudden Impact

Turning Injury into Advantage · Dr. John Heil

Q Why does it seem that often an athlete's performance improves after a sudden injury?

A The question comes from FIE photographer, Serge Timacheff. It asks why, on occasion, an injured athlete's performance will dramatically improve after an injury time out. Though this is the exception to the rule, it does happen often enough to garner attention. Essentially, this is a variation of the question of how momentum can shift in sport. But a positive momentum shift usually begins with a good action or series of actions. How is it that injury, a negative event, can trigger a change to the positive? There is no clear, straightforward answer to this question, but there are some points to explore about the nature of injury and the mind of the athlete.

The first and most obvious factor to consider is whether it is possible for the athlete to continue. There are injuries that are too serious or too physically limiting to allow this to happen. But there are surprises—sometimes athletes are remarkably creative, modifying their game enough to keep going, even though at first it doesn't seem possible. It goes without saying that having the services of a high quality athletic trainer is of tremendous value in situations like this.

At its most fundamental, an injury is an unanticipated interruption in play. It is a time out, and a surprise. Time alone can create a shift in momentum. Often this works against the injured athlete who can find it exceptionally difficult to get going after cooling down. But time is an opportunity. For the athlete who has been performing poorly, a minor injury can be a chance to calm down and refocus. Surprise can be an opportu-

nity, as well. The athlete who copes effectively with surprise and uses the rest period sensibly, has the opportunity to gain an advantage over the opponent, whether injured or not.

It is well known that sometimes athletes perform poorly when putting too much pressure on themselves. When a minor injury occurs, athletes may lower their expectations and thus reduce the psychological pressure. If this enables the fencer to settle down and compete without being distracted by worry, it could lead to improved performance. Of course, this can very easily backfire, becoming an excuse for not fencing well.

As in all competitive situations, the mindset of the athlete is of critical importance. There are 3 general types of responses to injury: helplessness, anger and determination. With helplessness comes withdrawal, as the athlete seeks safety and protection. For the athlete to continue to compete with this mind set (whether injured or not) is a set up for failure. Responding with anger carries a mixed benefit. At its most fundamental, anger is a potent force driving a change in mindset. On the positive side, anger provides energy and can be extraordinarily motivating. An angry fencer can be intimidating. However, the angry athlete is impulsive and prone to poor decision making—and as a consequence can be easily outsmarted. The impulsive, injured athlete is also at risk for worsening the existing injury. Anger requires a two-step transition as the initial surge of energy is modulated by intelligence and self-control. Determination, which is a mix of resourcefulness and resilience, defines the ideal mindset. Resourcefulness is a sort of sport intelligence, which enables the athlete to compensate for the injury and make creative adjustments in tac-

tics. Resilience is an emotional form of flexibility, the capacity to take a positive mind set in the face of adversity and regain composure when it has been disrupted. It is obvious that the injury time out is not when these abilities are developed. They are there as a result of hard work, and a reflection of the way the player approaches the game day-in and day-out. It should be no surprise then that the athlete who is most likely to rebound well from an injury is the one who is mentally tough.

The "wild card" factor in injury is the underlying biological processes. Pain and injury trigger the body's survival mechanism, driving a pervasive set of neurological, hormonal and psychological changes. These forces are potent enough to override whatever is the athlete's state of mind and body at the moment. Needless to say these forces can be quite disrupting. But the athlete who can harness the survival response is able to bring a whole new approach to competing.

It is well understood that playing in the "zone" is linked to outstanding performance, but that getting into the "zone" is a challenge of its own. Many of the qualities of the "zone" - like intensity, focus and persistence - are closely linked to the human survival response. When in a survival mindset, these qualities become more accessible, giving the athlete a chance to zero in on the "zone." But there is a catch. Injury can also trigger fear and vulnerability, which can drive the athlete into a state of helplessness.

While there is no definitive answer to the question of remarkable recovery from injury, it appears that: For the mentally tough athlete in the midst of the turmoil of competition, injury can offer an opportunity (although a risky one) to find the way to the "zone." ★

It Takes Two

The Fencer-Coach Relationship · Steven Hesky

Fencing begins with the relationship between the fencer and the coach. Regardless of the trophies won or skills developed, having a good working relationship with a coach is a separate but essential achievement for the competitive fencer. A good coaching relationship provides the foundation for learning new skills as well as for tolerating the stress of competition.

As with any relationship between a teacher and a student, there are requirements of both participants. The coach has to be willing and able to teach; the fencer has to be receptive and willing to learn. Both must be willing to put in the time and energy required: in a word, they both need to be motivated. Positive chemistry between them makes even challenging experiences fun.

A serious fencer-coach relationship shares similarities with the relationship between a child and a parent. For instance, if the relationship is going to thrive, the coach has to care about the fencer as a person, and the fencer has to be willing to become emotionally dependent upon the coach. It is a giving relationship on both sides. Also, in the coach-fencer relationship there are predictable stages in development, each with its own challenges and opportunities. And each stage in the relationship corresponds to developments in the fencer's level of skill.

Although the stages initially occur in a natural sequence, once the fencer has developed to a certain level, the coach and fencer may be working on several stages of development simultaneously. Of course, the experienced fencer may fence well without a coach. In fact, the capacity to fence without a coach is a sign of progress. The experienced fencer has assimilated and digested enough from prior coaches to prepare to fence and to fence well

without a current coach. Lessons from the past are now part of the fiber of the fencer. However, if the fencer wants to improve further, he or she may need to develop a good relationship with a coach again.

The cutting edge of the fencer's development is always inextricably tied to the fencer-coach relationship. Without a good relationship to the coach, the fencer is less able to tolerate the stresses of competition, or to continue to grow stronger as an athlete. At the same time, a poor relationship between the fencer and coach may inhibit progress or lead a fencer to give up competing altogether.

Stage One—Trusts, Hope, Dependency, and Merger. At first, in the hope of benefiting from the coach's teaching and support, the fencer merges with the coach's way of seeing fencing, training, and the fencer. This merger is not automatic; it requires trust in the coach. "Coach" becomes the name of a particular person, and "Coach says" becomes a phrase with numinous power.

Once this level of trust and partnership is achieved, the fencer can use the relationship as a stable foundation for fully throwing himself or herself into the training and competition. The fencer cedes some of the need for strategic thinking to the coach and can focus upon doing what "Coach" expects. This division of labor creates a powerful merger of the coach's wisdom and the fencer's heart, talent, and effort.

Stage Two—Assimilation, Separation, and Individuality. As the fencer continues to engage in training and competing, he or she begins to adapt and to grow from the lessons and experiences undergone and discussed with the coach. The seeds planted during

merger with the coach begin to germinate and blossom into a unique fencer with his or her own style and personality. The student develops an identity as a fencer. His or her strengths, weaknesses, and style of training and competing become visible to the fencer. With this newly formed identity, the fencer meets the coach in a new way. Both dialogue and conflict become possible. Ideally, the coach supports the fencer's individuality and tolerates the occasional rebellion or oppositional stance, for it is here that the fencer's fierceness and toughness on the strip also begins to show itself.

Stage Three—Self-Coaching and On-Going Collaboration. As the fencer's individuality is forged through experience and the coach's lessons he or she progresses to the point of becoming a coach—if only for himself or herself. But if the fencer wants to continue to grow stronger, dependency upon the coach is still an essential ingredient. The fencer, now an experienced athlete capable of self-coaching, chooses to remain dependent upon a coach in order to maximize his or her potential. The trusted coach continues to provide support, vision, and wisdom derived from experience and care. If the fencer is fortunate, he or she may continue to have such a relationship throughout his or her competitive career.

Conclusion. The requirements for developing a successful coaching relationship are psychological requirements, not physical. The impediments to forming a good coaching relationship are also psychological. Overcoming impediments to developing a good working relationship with a coach is an essential ingredient in a successful career; it is an achievement itself; and the positive impact of the relationship may last a lifetime. ★

Who's BABY RUTH?*

Setting the Records Straight · Andy Shaw

Who hit more home runs in one year? Was it Babe Ruth or Roger Maris or Barry Bonds or Hank Aaron? But who has the most career home runs? Which running back has the most career yards gained?

These questions are discussed and analyzed constantly by fans and journalists alike. Soccer fans, ice hockey fans, golfers and a gaggle of other athletic supporters are well aware of who has set the bar...but our sport is unique in its lack of knowledge and lack of interest in the record setting performances of the past by men like

sweater...Skip Shurtz was national champion in foil and epee by the age of 23." My students enjoy learning about our fencing greats and their record-setting performances. Here are some of the facts that you would know if you lived with U.S. in the northwestern corner of Louisiana.

I have not attempted to look into every category for which there is a record; this article is to celebrate forgotten American stars fencing on the American stage. I have listed some interesting topics for your perusal and enjoyment.

ship was held 38 times between 1927 and 1950.

In addition, Mr. Nunes won 22 U.S. National Team Gold Medals for a total of 40 U.S. Gold Medals.



California Champs! US Epee and Foil champ Skip Shurtz pictured here with Jan Romary and Maxine Mitchell.

baseball's George Herman Ruth.

Just go to one of our Junior Olympics and watch the few legendary aging fencing giants walk around almost anonymously through the throngs of parents and fencers trying to squeeze past them to rush to their respective strips or to get a deal on equipment at a crowded vendor. "Look! That's Paul Pesthy," I quickly yelled to my fencers from Shreveport.

"And there's George Masin." "And you see that guy sitting in the green

6 times U.S. National Epee Champion
2 times U.S. Outdoor* National Epee Champion
3 times U.S. National Saber Champion
1 time U.S. Outdoor* National Saber Champion
5 times U.S. Three-Weapon* Champion

*20 U.S. National Outdoor Epee Championships were held from 1920-41; 15 U.S. Outdoor National Saber Championships were held 1927-41; The individual 3-weapon champion-



Leo Nunes (left) with his coach, Papa Nadi, in Leghorn, Italy.

Most Elected AFLA/USFA President

Dr. Graeme Hammond was the first president of the "League" and continued to be re-elected from 1891 to 1925, for a total span of 34 years.

Most Individual U.S. National Titles (All Weapons)

Leo G. Nunes: 18
1 time U.S. National Foil Champion

Longest U.S. National Championship Bout on Record

One hour and thirty-two minutes between Colonel Henry Breckinridge and Leo Nunes in Epee.

Worst Fencing Lesson

In 1892, Dr. C. C. Terry, a surgeon, was taking a lesson from Professor Castaldi at the Newport, Rhode Island YMCA. Castaldi stabbed the doctor twice in the face through two different masks during the lesson. One of the blows was fatal. If you know of a worse lesson, please email me at andy_lsc@msn.com.

Fastest Bout on Record

Maurice Kamhi wins bout in Metropolitan Division in 1967 in 12 seconds on the clock.

*In 2003, Hanna Thompson won an NCAA dual meet bout in 6 seconds.

Most Amazing Individual Victory at U.S. Nationals

Leo G. Nunes wins U.S. National

Epee Championships untouched in 1928.

Most Amazing Team Victory at U.S. Nationals

In 1956 Maxine Mitchell and Jan York Romary (representing a California Composite team) fenced the U.S. National Women's Foil Team event without a third competitor. (All Women's Foil bouts were fenced for 4 touches until 1976 and women's target area did not extend below the waist until 1960.)

Forfeiting three bouts each round, the two women went undefeated to win the U.S. Women's Foil Team Crown. Their victory so upset the New York contingent that a rule was inserted for the future to require 3 members to compete.



Norman Armitage at his final Olympic appearance.

Most U.S. National Saber Titles

- Most Indoor U.S. National Saber Titles—Peter Westbrook, 13
- Most Outdoor U.S. National Saber Titles—Norman Armitage, 10
- Most combined U.S. National Saber Titles—Norman Armitage, 17

Most U.S. National Foil Titles (both sexes)

- Janice Lee York Romary, 10
- Helene Mayer won 9 U.S. National Championships (8 indoor, 1 outdoor)
- Michael Marx won 8 U.S. National Championships
- Joseph Levis won 8 (6 indoor & 2

outdoor) U.S. National Championships

- Adeline Gehrig4 titles in a row and then retired)
- Helena Mroczkowska Dow, Maxine Mitchell, Harriet King, Caitlin Kelly Bilodeaux, and Felicia Zimmermann: 4 titles
- Florence Schoonmaker, Jana Angelakis, Erinn Smart, Iris Zimmermann: 3 titles

Most U.S. National Epee* Titles—Men's

Note: "Out" refers to outdoor championships held 1920-1941.

- Leo George Nunes - 1917 (1-touch), 1922 (1-touch), out 1921 (1-touch), 1924 (1-touch), out 1925 (1-touch), 1926 (1-touch), 1928 (1-touch), 1932 (3-touch): 8 Titles
- Gustave Marinius Heiss - out 1932 (3-touch), 1933 (3-touch), 1934 (3-touch), 1936 (3-touch), out 1940 (3-touch), 1941 (1-touch): 6 Titles
- Jose Raoul deCapriles -out 1935 (3-touch), out 1937 (3-touch), 1938 (3-touch), out 1941 (1-touch), 1951 (3-touch): 5 Titles
- Paul Karoly Pesthy - 1964, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1983 (all 5-touch bouts): 5 Titles

*The term "Epee" was officially first used by the A.F.L.A. in 1915. All U.S. National Championships from 1888 - 1914 used the term "Dueling Swords."

Most U.S. National Epee* Titles—Women's (all five-touch)

- Vincent Hayden Bradford: 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986: 4 titles
- Donna Lee Stone: 1987, 1990, 1994: 3 titles

Biggest Surprise

- 1921, New York is shut out of Men's Foil Medals.
- Washington D.C. takes 1-2-3 in Men's Foil in a three-way tie. Major Francis Webster Honeycutt wins on indicators and Major Henry Breckinridge and Major Harold Marvin Raynor in a dead tie in indicators.

Breckinridge concedes second place to Raynor.

Women's Foil Team Record

1930, '31, '32, '33, '34, '35, '36, '37, '38, '39: Salle Vince. Joseph Vince was considered by many women to be the first U.S. Coach to take women's fencing seriously.

All ten times the consecutive Foil Team Champions were led by Marion Lloyd, Dorothy Brown Locke, Maria Cerra.

Greatest Single Season Performance by a Male Fencer

Charles George Bothner wins all three Men's Individual U.S. National Titles (Foil, Dueling Sword, Saber) in 1897. It was done in 1897 and never again. Mr. Bothner was a piano maker in New York City.

Greatest Single Season U.S. Performance by a Female Fencer

Vincent Bradford wins both Women's Individual National Titles (Foil, Epee) in 1984. It was never done again.

The Only National Champion Ever in a Weapon

Frank L. Slazenger (founder of the famous sporting goods company) won the only two United States Single Sticks National Championships ever held, in 1900 and again in 1901.

Olympic Games Qualifying Record

Norman Armitage qualified for the most Olympic Fencing teams in American history: 1928, 1932, 1936, 1940 (team selected but Olympics cancelled), 1944 Olympics cancelled, 1948, 1952, 1956. Norman graduated from Columbia University. ★

**The Baby Ruth candy bar was named for the daughter of U.S. President Grover Cleveland.....Ruth Cleveland died at a very young age and was the only baby known to have lived in the White House. She was known across the world as "Baby Ruth."*

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Application of the Rules

Over-Aggressive Passivity Calls · Jeff Bukantz



Recent columns have focused on the changes to the contact time in foil and the blockage time in foil and saber. My sincerest apologies to the epee fencers, as I haven't served up any red meat for you.

Finally, here's something for you to chew on.

In 2001, there was a gold medal men's epee team match at the World Championships between favorite Hungary and Estonia. The Estonians, who had upset the French to reach the final match, crafted a plan to try to keep the score as low as possible in the six bouts not fenced by their star, Kaido Kabermaa. Essentially, they determined that Kabermaa could outscore the three Hungarians, which was their best chance to win the match.

So, the other fencers—I believe, Loit and Vaht—would employ a strategy akin to the University of North Carolina basketball team's "four corners offense," which is utilized to kill time without trying to score.

After the referee's command of "Fence," the Estonians would actually retreat to their end line and assume a completely passive stance. At this point, the onus was put on the stronger Hungarians to go after them.

Under normal circumstances, the stronger team would take the bait and go after the passive fencer. They would be cognizant of the fact that keeping the score low could only benefit the weaker team, and it would be strategic suicide to play the passive game with them.

For reasons only the Hungarian Team Captain can explain, they decided to go passive, as well.

The Hungarian fencer, instead of going after the Estonian, also retreated to his end line and assumed a passive position.

Now, we had two fencers on opposite ends of the strip with their arms

and weapons basically hanging at their sides. This was an extremely rare occurrence, but it was magnified because it took place in the World Championships.

While this must have been torture to watch for the spectators, there was a much bigger problem: This team match was being televised live throughout Europe on Eurosport (Europe's ESPN of sorts).

This was, in no uncertain terms, an

It is inevitable that new leaks will be sprung when a new rule is put into effect; the new "passivity rule" epitomizes this.

unmitigated disaster for the FIE and our sport. In a time when we're more concerned about becoming television-friendly than anything, and have made very questionable changes in the timing and blockage in order to accomplish that goal, we got caught with our pants down on live television.

It was a bore-fest. It was a tragic moment for fencing. FIE President Rene Roch was understandably aghast. And, something had to be done in order to prevent this from ever happening again.

Hence, the birth of the passivity rule.

While the FIE made some on-the-spot decisions to stop the Hungary-Estonia farce, the FIE Rules Commission was tasked to come up with some hard and fast rule to deal with blatant passivity.

As a member of that Commission, I can tell you that this single issue dominated our subsequent meeting. Unfortunately, when an egregious action

occurs, such as the mutual passivity in the dreaded match, knee-jerk reactions often result in flawed new rule.

No matter how much brainpower goes into crafting new legislation, it is inevitable that new leaks will be sprung when the new rule is put into effect. The passivity rule epitomized this.

When the initial new rule was crafted and passed, there was one small problem: The rule covered individual bouts but not team matches! It was a slight oversight, as the whole mess occurred during a team match. Ha.

Well, that was naturally corrected right away. But, there was another aspect that caused plenty of confusion. This dealt with the last minute, and whether it was sudden-death or fenced out completely. Believe it or not, this rule was misapplied at the 2003 Worlds in Havana.

OK, these were normal growing pains for new rules. Eventually, they all get worked out with a little experience.

But, the most important aspect of the passivity rule has not been worked out. Not at all. Not even close.

That aspect is in the application of the rule. At this stage of the game, the referees are all over the map. There is no consistency whatsoever.

Normally, when you have newer rules, it is the cadre of less-experienced referees who over-compensate in their enforcement. The same goes for the disproportionate percentage of the wrong passivity calls. Nothing earth-shattering in that statement, as these refs will make the most mistakes in general.

However, with regard to the passivity rule, it is not limited to the inexperienced. Having attended many events since the passivity rule was put

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Virtual Fencing

Online Resources for Parents • Monica Kao

It's not difficult to identify the skills and rules of most youth sports. Parents often can coach children with the same advice they heard as kids, to keep an eye on the ball. Referee calls may start out unfamiliar, but with the help of other parents on the sidelines, the rules soon become common knowledge. But fencing is different. Fencing's culture is not very well known in American schools and communities, and so parents have to make an effort to learn about it. Nothing can replace watching fencing, trying it out for yourself, or getting involved in your child's club or division for learning about fencing. But don't overlook the computer as an additional source of information. Next time you have a few extra minutes at your desk, log onto these websites:

The United States Fencing Association Website— www.usfa.org

If your fencer is not attending national or international tournaments, you may think this website has little to offer. The homepage can overwhelm a new fencer or parent with its facts and figures of the latest deadlines, confirmed entries, results and links to forms and schedules. Think of the website as a newspaper, with reporting on what's new and imminent on the homepage and the in-depth stories on fencing on the inside. Every parent new to the sport should read the "Information For Parents" article found at the bottom left-hand side of the home page for an explanation of the rules, a description of the weapons, and advice on what to bring to a tournament. Trying to figure out refereeing? Consult the hand signal chart in the "Fencing: A Modern Sport" article under the "New to Fencing"

category at the top right-hand corner. Your athlete has just been injured in a qualifying tournament and had to withdraw, and the coach tells you to petition the USFA. Well, what does that mean? A clarification is in the Athlete Handbook located in the "Athletes & Coaches" category. Also under "Athletes and Coaches," clicking on "Find a Club" will send you to a map of the US linked to division websites and information about clubs. "Fencing in College" can link you to the NCAA website and the sites of college fencing teams and clubs. The sites listed under "Equipment Vendors" let you compare brands and prices of equipment. All the information that a fencer must know in order to fence in the USFA is on this website.

The Regional Youth Circuit Website—www.usfaryc.org

Your young fencer is hooked; her hopes are set on becoming a competitive fencer. This is the site that will start her on that goal. The regional youth circuit is a series of tournaments for youth 10-, 12-, and 14-year-olds, giving them tournament experience not too far from home and a qualifying path for national competitions. Like the larger, national tournaments, the super youth circuit tournaments award national points. Regional and super youth circuit information, schedules and entry forms are all posted on this site.

Fencing.net—www.fencing.net

The subtitle to this website reads, "Your guide to fencing." To that, I would add, "from the fencer's perspective." On this site you'll find training drills, armoring tips, and product reviews written by fencers, coaches, and experts. The discussion forums are open-ended conversations on personal techniques,

opinions, politics, rumors, and just about any other fencing concern.

The website's creator and administrator Craig Harkins describes the contributors to the site as a community. "No one person could make a site with all this information. There is a core of experts who have stuck with this site, but it is the fencing community that makes this site what it is." All of the forum's topics have been indexed, so a parent can enter a topic on the search function to see what fencers have already said about it. If the subject hasn't been discussed, Harkins suggests parents start a new topic, "Usually within a couple of hours there are answers and suggestions on the board." Harkins says some parents are regular contributors to the forum, writing about what a parent needs to know before going to a tournament, how to approach a referee, and how to give your child support and space at a tournament.

Often the forum advice goes above and beyond the official word. High school students have expressed concerns to the forum about college fencing. Temple University Assistant Fencing Coach Brad Baker is a regular contributor. He gave them comprehensive answers on NCAA programs, regulations, and scholarships. College students contributed their personal experiences. A few years ago, a raging debate on how certain actions in foil should be called by a referee consumed the forum. The chair of the Fencing Officials Commission (FOC), Bill Oliver wrote in a detailed interpretation of the rule in question and an explanation of how the FOC calls the action.

For the fencing parent, feeling lonely among the basketball, soccer, and softball parents, here's your community. ★



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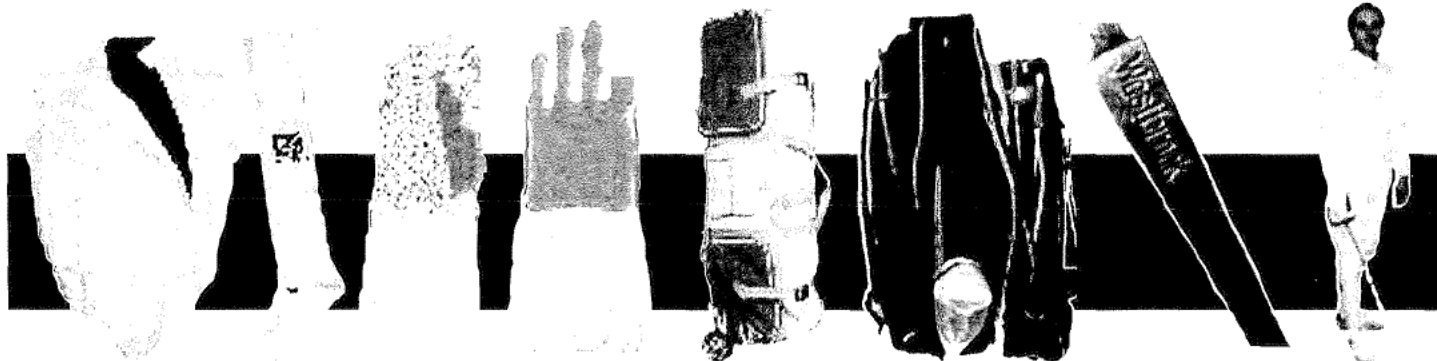
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Fixing A Hole—The Right Way

Repair Tips for Bibs • Joe Byrnes

The fencer was glaring at me as though I had just done him dirt. Well, I suppose I had, for it was at the inspection table, and I was pointing to a rather substantial hole in the bib of his mask. That's a no-no at any competition.

I am always surprised by the people who come up and hand in things for inspection when a quick glance would show that there's an obvious problem. This is not quite the same as, though perhaps close to, the attitude of a certain experienced internationalist of some years ago, who was reluctant to get his gear together and hand it over for preliminary check and maintenance before its formal submission for the FIE inspection: "just toss it on the counter; then fix what they don't like and throw back at you." That struck me as a decidedly cavalier attitude, but the guy belonged to a particular corner of the fencing world—experienced old-timers will know what I mean.

The fellow with the offending bib expressed puzzlement and confusion, and little-boy helplessness (he was not a little boy): what was he supposed to do? Get it fixed. The hole was one that could be carefully darned. Darning does need to be done carefully, of course, so that a jagged lump is not created that could still serve to catch and pull on the mask.

The problem with a hole in a bib is twofold (no, that's not a pun). Once the surface of the bib has been penetrated, a blade entering the gap will have less to work through, and will effectively be steered to apply its maximum force in a tight area. What might even be worse, the blade may grab the bib and twist the fencer's head around in an ugly snapping motion. I doubt if one's neck would automatically be broken, but I would

not bet against the possibility of that happening.

Fencers sometimes think that slapping a bit of good ol' duct tape over such a gap would be a suitable safeguard. Believe me, it isn't. Quite apart from the disgusting glue that is going to get all over your bib before you do a decent repair, tape just isn't a suitable fix, even for a day. What you need is darning or patching, using substantial thread, or (this is a favorite fencing repair kit item) dental floss. It doesn't need to be the waxed type, or chlorophyll-doped, but suit yourself.

So far, we are talking about foil and epee bibs, which lend themselves to simple darning. The conductive surface of a saber bib is another case. It

tape just isn't a suitable fix, even for a day

may have been penetrated and need darning for safety, but then it will also need electrical maintenance; in any case, it is far more likely to be seriously abraded on the surface, so that the necessary conductivity is lost. Patching with electrically conductive cloth is the simplest approach. Such patches, whether stitched on or held by some sort of glue ("hot glue" from a gun works well), need to have at least one edge rolled under to make appropriate conductive contact—otherwise you can have a dead patch and the last state of that mask will be worse than the first.

There are conductive paints that have had a vogue at one time or another. There was one based on copper, intended for circuit board repair, and much experimented with many years ago: it didn't last, was expensive and looked terrible. Another, based on nickel, worked a bit better, but didn't look any better: it turned black in a short time, and although it was still conductive, made the mask (or whatever) look horrible and very suspect. At present, if you can find a fencing supplier who carries it, a kind of "silver paint"—the Germans call it "Leitsilber"—does work, and is fairly unobtrusive. However, it is swingingly expensive, and why not? It's pure silver metal, ground up fine in a glue-and-solvent medium that can be painted onto (small) spots. If you have to do a big area, it is not cost-effective.

Another problem with saber masks arises from the frequent loss of the rivets that hold the bib at the cheek area, or, in stronger designs, hold down the metal pieces which reinforce the cheek areas. Since in saber, people are perpetually and enthusiastically banging away at just those spots, those rivets do get broken. They can be replaced by quick pop-rivets, or a bit more elaborately, which is how I prefer to do it, with small bolts (steel, round head, 6-32, 1/2") and washers on the outside, and hex cap nuts (either metal or nylon) on the inside. The pop rivet leaves a shaggy interior and might cut the wearer, the cap nut is smooth and will not; that is the ground of my preference.

It could be the subject of another discussion, but it is also a good idea to give some occasional attention to keeping your mask—and bib, especially—clean, and if not simon pure, at least not downright septic and stinky. Your choice: after all, it's your nose that's in it. ★

Demographics

Part Three: How to Find the Perfect Students • Meghan Gardner

In previous articles, I discussed elements regarding opening your own school, various expenses and, in particular, the array of conditions to consider when renting your own space. Now let's take a look at the second most important aspect of your business (we'll talk about the first most important in the next article): Your students.

Obviously, the best way to open your Salle doors is with a pre-established body of students. This can be accomplished by setting up your own classes through recreation departments, the local YMCA, health clubs and other organizations that are willing to hire you for a short term. It is best to make sure you let your intentions known to these organizations so that there are no hard feelings when you split off. Since you offer a unique service that they likely do not already have, most will be willing to work with you. Then, when you have a strong student count, you can close out your contract term and ask your students to consider joining you at your new school.

If you play your cards right, you may even negotiate with the recreation department to continue advertising your classes but then the recreation students attend classes at your Salle and the rec department gets to keep a portion of the fee. This is a win-win situation where the rec department gets money for advertising your classes – but none of the headaches of scheduling space for you to operate.

When deciding where to start your classes (and ultimately open your school), take a good long look at the demographics of the town. Keep in mind that the demographics are not fail-safe. There are always students outside of known demographics that would take your classes... and people

inside your exact demographics who would never even consider touching a foil (believe it or not, they do exist). But demographics are a good way to plan the lowest risk and highest chance of yield.

What we have found is that fencers tend to be a very particular demo-

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graphic. Please remember, if you are reading this and you say to yourself “this doesn't sound like me and I'm an avid fencer” that this doesn't invalidate the idea that most people who fence or who are interested in fencing tend to have these qualities. So with that in mind, here are some of the attributes of prospective fencing students:

1. The average fencer holds above average academic grades—particularly in the areas of math and science.
2. Fencers tend to be exceptionally methodical and detail oriented. They like measurable results and they enjoy examining/debating supporting data.
3. On the other side of the coin, fencers often have an active imagination. They tend to like fantasy and science-fiction or historical fiction.
4. For many people who start fencing, this is their only sport. Most are not into team sports where an entire team is performing at once... they prefer the one-on-one focus of a fencing bout. If they pursue other physical activities, they tend to be drawn to other “war sports” like archery, martial arts and marksmanship or less widely known activities like juggling, horsemanship and renaissance dance.
5. The degree to which fencers tend to be technologically oriented is impressive. They surf the internet with ease, love the latest tech-gadget, often are employed or a student in the technology industry (or an industry that relies heavily on technology) and a surprising number have built their own computers.
6. Another strong field for fencers is medicine. Doctors, psychologists and surgeons like the deductive nature of sport fencing.
7. Children who are drawn to fencing also tend to be extremely tech-savvy. They often like to participate in online gaming, video games and table top games. These can even be the primary source of socialization. Children who fence tend to have at least one parent employed in the technology industry.
8. And above all, fencers desire mental stimulation in their physical exercise. They like games of strategy more than games of chance.

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Building a Competitive Fencer's Club

Commitment and Profits • Mauro Hamza

Salle Mauro has operated successfully for eight years, producing generation after generation of competitive fencers in all three weapons. In this article we'll share a few things we've done to develop a competitive club.

First, our coaches have a great deal of personal involvement with students. We look upon ourselves as friends and mentors, our involvement following them through years of formative development.

Competing at high levels requires a higher degree of time and financial investment for the fencer and puts pressure on the coaches to ensure the continued success and participation of the student. Most fencers/parents aren't ready for the commitment required for highly competitive fencing and this must be slowly and carefully developed over the years.

But the way we have structured Salle Mauro from day one built expectations of our members and people seeking out our club that our mission is a serious one—to train competitive fencers. Profit takes a back seat to this mission.

So as our fencers bring home medals from competitions, parents and children who are seeking to compete seriously in sport are the ones who come to us—and the cycle continues.

Club Floor Plan/Strip Layout

At Salle Mauro, experience has taught us that certain space considerations help increase training focus and organization. First, there should be a separate space for parents away from fencing area. The separating

fencers are competing to ensure serious practice.

We have competition strips and many smaller practice strips—16 in all. In a perfect world we'd employ only maximum-sized FIE competition strips, but as it stands we often have space difficulties during peak fencing

hours. The practice strips ensure that during time of high membership load, very few people are forced to stand around waiting for strips.

Equipment

The purchase of competitive equipment is encouraged as soon as the fencers begin serious bouts. The substantial initial equipment investment helps ensure finicky students "stick" with the sport long enough to get into the routine. Make sure you have club affiliation material

on hand, like t-shirts and patches that help create a sense of team spirit and unity.

Organization/Routine

Coaches take an active role in organizing and managing every aspect of practice. Initially, this is quite time consuming. However, after establishing a routine, our advanced students help oversee activities thereby freeing us up to focus on personal lessons.

Personal lessons should be emphasized as early as possible. They



A feeling of family is part of the glue that holds any club together. Parents and students of Salle Mauro at National Championships in 2005.

should be clearly marked and communicated to parents. Not only can parents and visitors be distracting to students, but separating them helps the kids to mentally separate themselves from a more comfortable home environment to the competitive fencing arena where they must rely only on themselves.

Fencers need enough space to be organized by weapon and skill level and assigned certain designated areas in which to work. During free fencing time, our coaches give lessons near to the strips on which their

provide a solid foundation for future development and are a key factor in future success. This takes lots of time and resources. Salle Mauro has seven coaches, three of them full-time professionals. The medal count for Salle Mauro keeps going up—mainly due to the quality of our coaches and the dedication of our fencers.

Membership

Salle Mauro's membership structure is built around the competitive mission. Fencers join an escalating series of programs—beginner, intermediate, Competitive, silver, and finally gold elite. Gold elite membership is by invitation of the coaches only. Membership in the top groups becomes an aspiration, a goal to work towards.

Lessons are built into the program fees. Fees go up as the fencer progresses to the next group, but only because the number of sessions and lessons included go up as well. We feel charging for individual lessons does not build team spirit.

If you put people into a program, they feel much more like they belong to something. Everyone else in program has a goal to achieve, and this unites them. This leads not only to stronger results but also very strong membership retention numbers. Group unity is a great recruitment tool, too. Everyone wants to put their kids in successful programs with a good family environment, and that's what we're doing.

Community

We think of our club as a community and try to get everyone involved and feeling like they are part of the club's success. A community-based club operates more smoothly and provides an invaluable source of resources and word-of-mouth advertising.

Speaking of word of mouth, this is our strongest recruitment tool. When kids bring home medals from Junior Olympics and National competitions, we make sure the

experienced fencers a sense of fulfillment and pride.

We are proud to have such committed athletes and parents. Without them, we could not have achieved the results we did.

Group unity is a great recruitment tool

The club has a sizeable number of youth and adult recreational and fitness-motivated

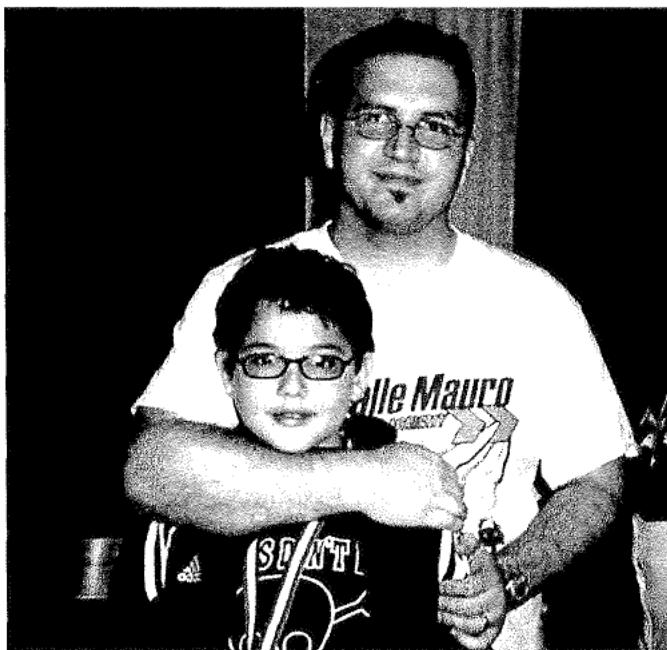
fencers, but it is perhaps best known nationally for its competitive programs.

The club is frankly not a huge money maker. For example, we recently resigned our lease. We wanted to move to bigger facility which would cost much more money, but we didn't have the revenue. We decided to stay two more years. It took several years, starting in 1995, for the club to become large enough to support itself.

This is because we do not have growth and profit as the main goal, though the club does make enough money to survive on its own, without outside input. To run the club as a money maker, in my mind, have to sacrifice coaching. That

said, our next step in the growth of the club will be to seek private sponsors, to reduce the cost of travel, training and competition for our members.

Salle Mauro members have been winning and placing in events ranging from local youth club tournaments on up through regional, national, and even elite World Cup competitions. Two of our members recently made the 2006 Junior and Cadet World Championships team (Benjamin Parkins and Neely Brandfield-Harvey); Rebecca Rea was named a first alternate. Our club feels justifiably proud of the accomplishments of our fencers and look forward to continued success at all levels in 2006. ★



Salle Mauro Saber Coach Oliver Diaz and his student David Filteau at the 2005 Summer Nationals; David took 6th place in his event.

news gets put into their school newspapers, and this brings members. We have never advertised Salle Mauro.

Communication

Communication is key. Make sure your members stay informed and you understand their needs and concerns.

Results of fencers should be well documented within the club so that everyone can share in the club's success. At Salle Mauro, we post the results on our walls and send out an email newsletter detailing their success about every two weeks. This gives new fencers aspirations and

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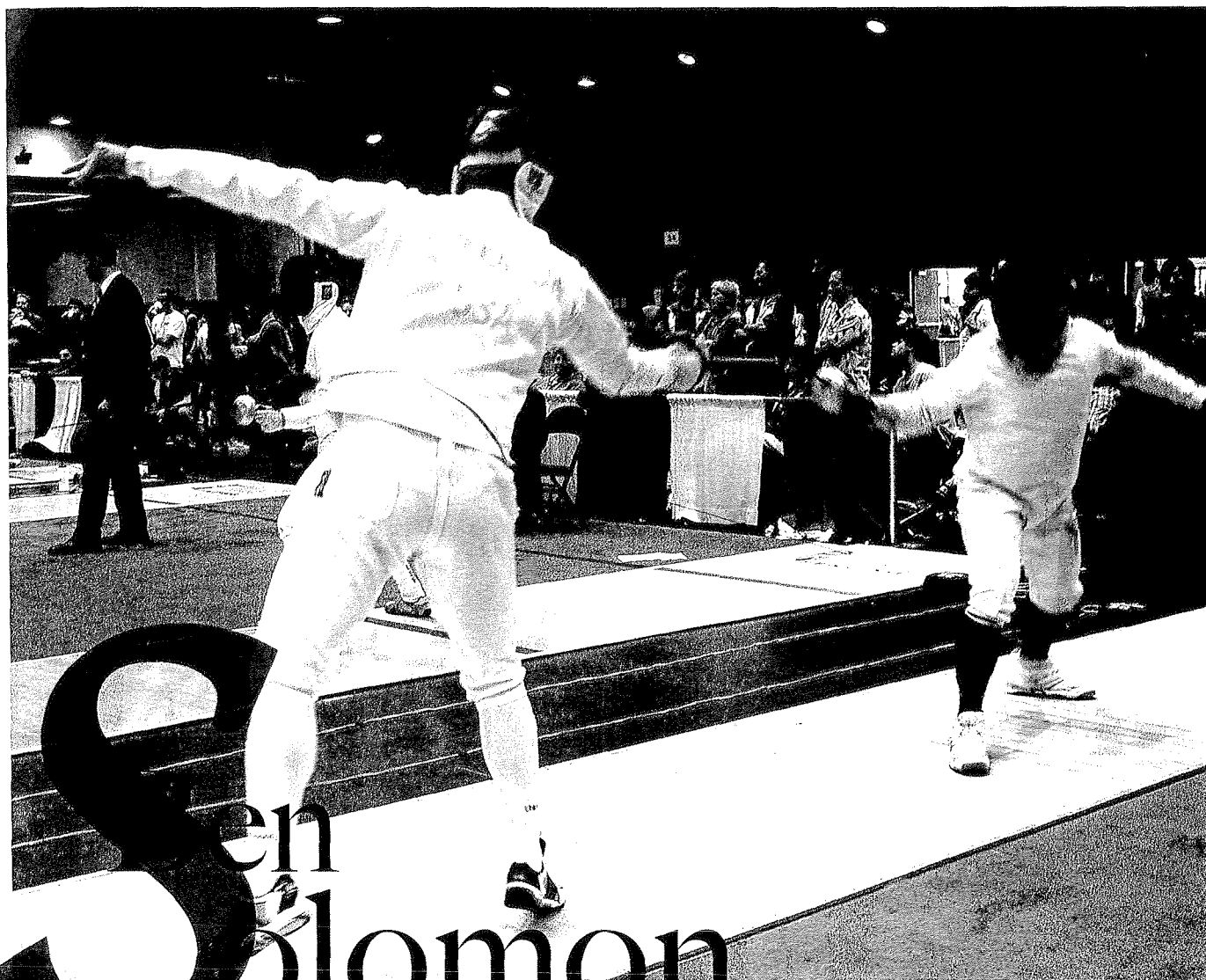


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Ben Solomon

by William Reith · photos by Panoramic Visions Photography & FencingPhotos.com

On December 14, 1995, Alan Achkar wrote a story in the *Plain Dealer* Metro section entitled, "Boy was born to fence." This title captured the essence of Cleveland native Ben Solomon at the early stages of his fencing career.

Compare that title with Ben's success now and future successes and goals, and one can derive the true meaning of the term "Champion". Not only has Ben had to overcome the opponents he faces on the fencing strip, but he has battled back from injuries and medical ailments to reach his next goal of becoming National Epee Champion.

Ben's outlook on winning and losing, training hard, listening to your coach, and making sure you are having fun along

the way, provide a strong insight to the character and make-up of this remarkable young man.

One of Ben's finest qualities is that of a teammate, and team leader. In high school he undertook the task, of developing and training his own West Geauga High School Fencing Club, going on to win the State High School Championships in their first season, even when only men's and women's foil results counted.

Ben's quest for the 2004 Olympic Team faded quickly, as seismoiditis of his left foot affected his fencing and training for about two years leading up to those Games. If he trained hard, he could not fence well due to the pain and condition of his foot. If he laid-off the training to accommodate the foot injury, his fencing on the strip did not hold up.

His condition of seismoiditis is painful swelling and irritation of the seismoid bone, in the ball of the left (rear) foot. Ben actually had two bones where there should be only one, or a fused bone.

When the problem was finally diagnosed, the first doctor told him, "Just take it easy, don't do too much and it will not give you any problem." Obviously, this was the wrong prognosis for a competitive athlete.

The second opinion was to have the bone removed, a very delicate and tricky operation. He had it done in August of 2003, while home from his first year at Princeton University. The recovery took longer than expected, and Ben lost almost all of the 2003-04 season, his push for the Olympic Team was put on hold.

With the foot surgery just behind him, Ben began training with three new and different coaches: Aladar Kogler, Michel Sebastiani and Marcos Lucchetti. Each coach taught a different game and Ben had to adjust to three new styles.

He switched grips from French to a pistol grip. Along with this came a tactical change to a foil type of second intention, with a lot of blade play. With the tactical switch and the compensation mode derived from the foot injury and surgery, Ben lost sight of his strong, balanced footwork, with direct attacks with absence of blade leading to second and third epee intentions. The simple timing hits which come from balance and confidence were put on hold with no rear foot to provide the impulsion.

Ben also suffers from exercised induced asthma. He uses an inhaler when things start to shut down. It always takes its toll somewhere during the bouts. Whether it matters or not is dependent on how well he is fencing, and what kind of shape he is in at the time.

Little known to the rest of the fencing world, Ben had one more huge medical condition to overcome: A-Fib, also known as *atrial fibrillation*, or heart arrhythmia.

Ben has won each National Youth Championship, Cadet,

and Junior Championship twice with all of these conditions dogging him all of the way.

His next challenge was to seek his first National Senior Epee Championship in 2005. Success there could help put him on both the World University Games Team to Izmir, Turkey, and the World Championship Team to Leipzig, Germany.

After falling apart at the 2005 NCAA Fencing Championships, when his heart went into serious A-Fib the evening of the first day of competition, it was time to do something about it. His A-Fib had been a now regular occurrence, and quite a problem affecting his performance and overall health.

Solomon had many episodes of A-Fib, many which required hospitalizations, including seven or eight cardioversions (electrical shocks to restore regular rhythm).

His father, Dr. Arthur Solomon, an emergency room physician at Hillcrest Hospital in Cleveland, called on his resources to pinpoint the problem, and have it corrected.

In May of 2005, it was decided Ben should undergo a cardiac ablation with Dr. David Callans at UPenn Hospitals. Cardiac ablation is a relatively new procedure in which a catheter is threaded into the heart, the misfiring area located, and the errant cells, from a blood vessel leading into the heart, are destroyed.

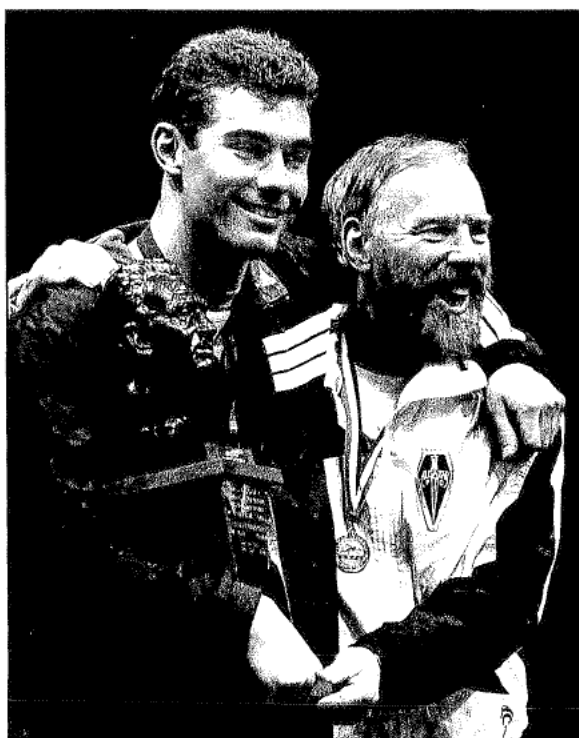
"The procedure was a huge decision because of some of the relative risks, largely due to the fact that this particular procedure has been done for only the last 5 years," says Solomon.

"In spite of the risks, we went ahead with the decision to have the procedure. I underwent a successful ablation with Dr. Callans. The experience was made easier by the whole family being there, including (Solomon's girlfriend) Jen Kunz."

With this simple procedure, Ben's black cloud was lifted, from both his mind and body. The illness which had been affecting his health and fencing performance for so many years was suddenly gone. Only time will tell if the procedure is a success, but judging from his first two competitions after the surgery, his fencing career is back on track and heading in the right direction.

On to Nationals...

With only a few weeks of training under his belt after recovering from the cardiac procedure, Ben set off on the next step



Ben Solomon with coach and author William Reith on winning the Junior Olympics in 2003. (Photo: Serge Timacheff, Fencing-Photos.com)

of his journey to the 2005 US National Epee Championship in Sacramento.

Things looked good from the start. His only loss occurred in the preliminary round to Zucker, 4-5.

Ben would not forget this. Ben dispatched all other opponents handily throughout the direct eliminations, until he faced Noah in the final match. With a 9-4 lead during the first time period, it looked like another rout, until Ben suffered an asthma attack, taking the sting out of his aggressive style of fencing.

The attack took its toll, as Zucker tied the score at 9-9, then proceeded to take a commanding lead of 12-10 at the end of the first period.

Direct elimination bouts go three, 3-minute periods, with a 1-minute coaching-break in between, similar to a boxing match. After the break, I knew that Ben would come back, as he recovers strong to start each new period. He did not disappoint, as he tied the score quickly, 12-12, attacking strong and direct.

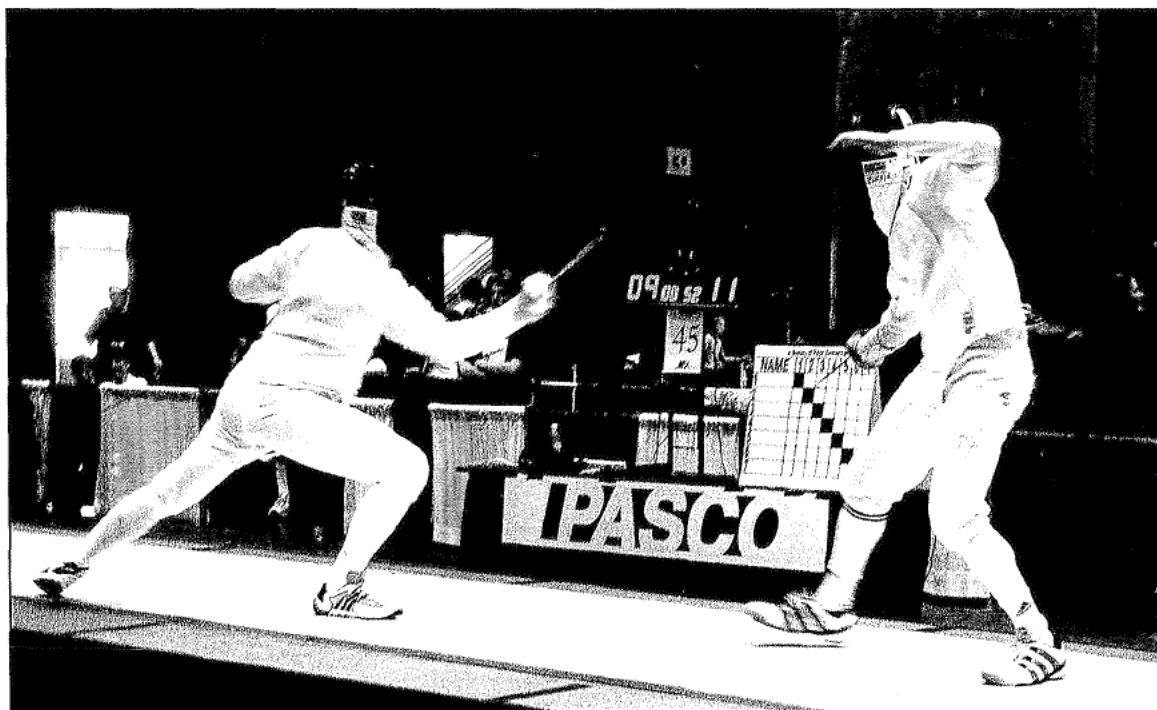
I knew that the next two touches would be doubles, taking the score to 14-14, La Belle. Facing a sudden death touch, or I should say, sudden victory touch, just as it should be in a National Championship, I calmly told myself the last touch would be Ben's. He would attack, as years of coaching had taught him when the touch was critical, and he did!

It looked like Afleet Alex at the Preakness coming off the final turn into the straightaway. Ben took two steps forward, stumbling almost to his knees. Zucker saw his opportunity, and launched a strong, "I have got you now!" counterattack. But with the months of blade-taking parries from Marcos Luchetti, his coach at Princeton, Ben took over roaring like a tiger, as if to say, "No, Noah, not this time"! Still recovering from the stumble, Ben took Parry Quarte, and made the perfect riposte to the shoulder, and the bout was over!!!! Scoreboard, 15-14, and Ben Solomon was National Champion.

It had taken almost two weeks of intense work on Ben's basics, footwork, balance, conditioning, and tactical vision to compensate for the time missed training and recovering from the heart procedure. His game was not perfect, but he found his good game in time and a majority of good fencing produced victory after victory.

He went on to Vancouver to place 3rd in the World Cup, and solidify his place on the Senior World Championship Team, competing Oct. 18-20 in Leipzig, Germany.

Most recently, in January 2006, Ben represented the U.S. team in Kuwait City, Kuwait, alongside Ben Bratton, Isaac Erbele, and Soren Thompson. The U.S. men placed 4th in a field of 21 teams. At the time of this writing, Ben is ranked



Solomon in the final bout against Noah Zucker at the 2005 National Championships. (Photo: Panoramic Visions)

second in the U.S., having placed second in the season's first North American Cup in December in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Ben's next challenge is to maintain his berth on the 2006 World Championships team and work towards the ultimate dream of fencing at the 2008 Olympic Games.

Helping to develop the U.S. Epee Team to finish in the final eight of the 2006-07 World Championships and Team Trials will be the surest and most direct route to the 2008 Olympic Games, both for himself, and the U.S. Team.

Whatever the results, just as he won his National Championship title, Ben will do it with style, grace and character, because that is *Ben Solomon!* ★

Fencing photos in this article courtesy of panoramic visions.com, (703)648-0957, and www.fencingphotos.com.



photos courtesy of Massialas Foundation International Camps, www.fencingUSA.com

In this issue, we feature some information from 2006 Olympic bronze medallist Sada Jacobson on finding a great training camp, plus an account of how elite athletes train for international competition. Camps are one of the most popular ways to jump start your training, meet and spar with great fencers from all around the country, and sometimes, travel the world as well. Camps are held by clubs all over the U.S.A. for all age groups and levels of proficiency, and an increasing number of clubs are putting together trips to train with athletes in Europe and Asia. The young athletes pictured above took part in a camp in China—and an impromptu training session on the Great Wall—organized by Massialas Foundation International Camps, www.fencingUSA.com.

Training the Team

Saber Team Holds Camp In New York

By Sada Jacobson

The New York Fencer's Club recently hosted the winter 2005 U.S. men's saber national team training camp, under the direction of national men's saber coach Yury Gelman. The invitational camp, a preparatory session for the 2006 competitive season, took place from December 26th to the 30th and drew top men's and women's saberists from around the country, including five members of the 2004 Athens Olympic team.

The week's focus was on intensive footwork, drilling, and tactical exercises intended to develop advanced strategic and technical skills. As such, there was somewhat less emphasis on traditional fencing camp fare of conditioning and cross-training.

Still, practices were intense and thorough, designed by Gelman to complement several team and individual competitions in the latter half of the week. The finale was a two-day marathon individual event in which competitors fenced multiple rounds of pools and fought for each place in the direct elimination tableau, won by 2004 Olympian and defending camp



Below: Sada Jacobson.
Photo: Jochen Faerber.

champion Jason Rogers, who triumphed over Paul Reyfman for the gold.

Assistant coach Sergey Isayenko was pleased with the performances of both fencers, noting that both Rogers' and Reyfman's results were backed up by solid top-8 performances at the Houston Division I NAC two weeks later. (In fact, seven of the eight finalists attended the camp).

Participants recall that the most memorable feature of the camp, however, was not so much the level of competition itself as the sense of camaraderie within the group, both in and out of practice. Fencers trained together, regardless of age, gender, or experience, and were encouraged to lead each other in warm-up and conditioning exercises. Daria Schneider, member of the 2004 cadet national team, said, "I

was constantly challenged and had the opportunity in the competition to fence against people I normally would not compete against."

Most of the athletes agree that these types of camps are critical if the United States wishes to solidify its growing presence in international fencing over the coming years. Camps provide the venue for top fencers to train without distraction, while up-and-comers develop new talent by training with the best. Although the majority of American elite fencers will only attend one or two camps in a year, European powerhouse teams meet for five or six, carefully placed before major competitions to maximize performance and team solidarity.

Rogers remarked, "It was great to be together—usually our national team is such a segmented community. We need

to make more use of these training opportunities so that we can advance on the international scene."

And this opportunity was obviously a good one. An impromptu team event pitting the junior men against the cadets was easily the most emotional, dramatic match of the week and a showcase for a promising young team. Neck and neck throughout the match, the juniors relied on age and experience, pulling out a narrow 45-43 victory over a spirited cadet team.

The final result, though, was not as remarkable as the exhibition of ability, dedication, and ambition by the newest generation of elite-level fencers. Hopefully, more national team camps like this one will help these fencers hone their raw talent to become the best in the world. ★

Finding a Training Camp

What to look for, what to expect · by Sada Jacobson

The strongest European fencing countries send their national team to between four and six camps each year. If you want to train like the pros or just have a great experience training with a new set of people, a fencing camp might be a good idea. There are many camps out there, so do your research before you commit. The following guidelines should help you narrow your search to find the camp that best meets your individual needs:

1. **Coaching:** This is one of the most important elements of a successful camp experience. Learn as much as you can about the coach(es) with whom you will be working. Find out about their training and certification, competitive and teaching experience, and students' results. Make sure their style, both personally and fencing-wise, is compatible with your own.

2. **Opponents:** Who's going to be there? Camps often advertise notable camp alumni—find out if these fencers are planning to attend again this year. Additionally, check with the organizers about expected age and experience ranges.

3. **Format:** Camps generally offer a wide range of different activities, including conditioning, cross-training, footwork, drilling, free-fencing, bouting, video analysis, strategy sessions, and more. Find out how practices will be structured, both daily and weekly, to ensure that you will be getting what you want and need at practices. Many camps conclude with competitions run by the camp organizers or are designed as preparation for outside events, like Summer Nationals. Participating in these can be a great way to gauge improvement.

4. **Location:** Camps are offered in a variety of cities and settings. You might want to be located on a college campus if you are a prospective student, in a large city if you want to take in some of the sights, or out in the middle of nowhere if you want to completely focus on fencing with no outside distractions.

5. **Accommodations:** This is going to be a very physically demanding period of time, so you need your rest. Make sure the accommodations are comfortable and affordable. While hotel or dorm rooms are often avail-

able, many camps offer homestays, where you are hosted by a local fencing family. You'll be living in close quarters with people you may or may not know very well, so opting for this can be the start of a wonderful, lasting relationship with a new group of people, or a total nightmare, for much the same reason.

6. **Timeframe:** Fencers training for a competitive circuit should pay attention to where camps fall in their schedule. Ideally, you want to peak for certain key competitions over the course of the year and the dates, duration, and intensity of a camp can either help or hinder this process. Think about what you want to accomplish and how a camp can assist you in this.

7. **Social setting and extracurricular activities:** Camps shouldn't just be about work, they should be fun, too! Many camps offer social events or activities like parties, sight-seeing, sporting events, etc.

8. **Cost:** Remember, this is an investment in your athletic career. Choose wisely, but be assured that a great camp is worth the cost.

Lose and Learn

Tim Morehouse on Fencing Stronger Fencers

Q A very good fencer at my club beats me 15-1 every night. What am I supposed to get out of fencing someone who is so much better than I am?

A Fencing stronger fencers, and even sometimes losing badly to them, can have its benefits, but it should only be one part of your general improvement plan. If the only person you are fencing against is someone who you are losing to 15-1 then the benefits will probably be negligible. If taken in the context of an overall plan that includes fencing a wide variety of levels, then when you do fence against someone strong, it can help provide you with a benchmark for where you are and also provide you with some direction in terms of areas for improvement.

I went through a long time at Fencer's Club where I would lose every bout at practice. I remember fencing Akhi Spencer-El and he'd beat me every single time, sometimes badly. He was the bar for excellence for me and so I wanted to learn as much as I could from him. Part of that included not just fencing him, but also watching how he fenced other high level and low-level fencers. Akhi was great in terms of being gracious enough to fence me and I probably wouldn't be where I am today if it hadn't been for the number of times he fenced me. Having a mindset of wanting to fence the best people is a good to have, but fencing a

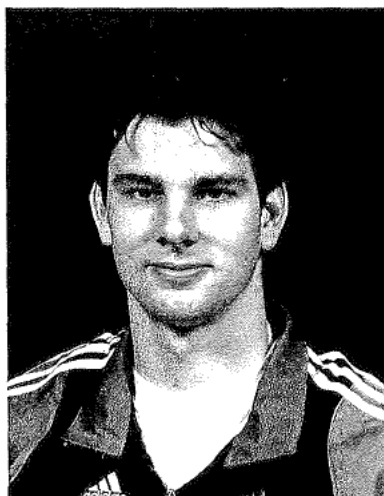
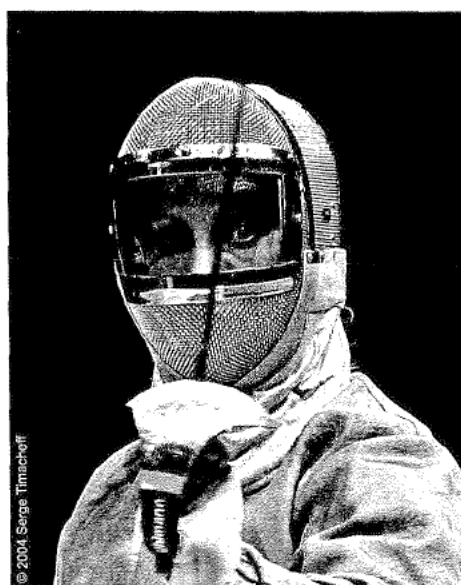


photo by Brentwood Imaging, Las Vegas, Nevada

variety of levels, taking lessons, doing foot-work and drills is the combination needed to improve.

Setting realistic short-term and long-term goals and constantly measuring yourself against your progress is also key to improving. Always try to figure where you are, and where you want to go. Practice is exactly that -- practice. It's not about winning every bout, but learning and working

on things. Pay attention to what good fencers are hitting you on. What a lot of good fencers will do is take advantage of your weakness areas and avoid your strong areas. If I can hit someone in preparation 15 times, I might do it until they make me change. If you can find patterns in where you are gaining and losing touches then it can give you an area to focus on in your game.



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Don't be afraid to ask and fence the best, even if they might not give you an answer or be rude sometimes. Not everyone will answer, but it can be good to actually ask stronger fencers, "What were you seeing, what am I doing? What could I do differently?" You're trying to gather as much knowledge as you can. I wouldn't be where I am now if I didn't go through years of losing to Keeth (Smart, two-time Olympian) and Akhi, and not letting it deter me.

Try to remember the bouts can be good for them, too. Some strong fencers have a hard time fencing lower- or intermediate- level people, because when someone is not responding to the cues they're throwing out, they don't know what to do. Fencing a variety of people is good for people on every level. Even now I still need to fence a whole variety of levels and the way I approach different levels at a competition is garnered from this experience. The way you utilize and learn from stronger fencers is a key area for improvement, but make sure you are maximizing those experiences. ★

Tim Morehouse was the silver medallist at the 2005 National Championships and a member of the gold-medal team from Fencer's Club at the 2004 National Championships. He is proudest of having the chance to compete and represent the U.S. on the Men's Saber National Team. He is a program director for Teach for America in New York City. Teach for America works in under-resourced schools to close the educational achievement gap in rural and inner city schools. If you'd like to learn more you can go to www.teachforamerica.org. Feel free to contact Tim at morehouse_tim@hotmail.com

drill

Fencer A is on the attack, Fencer B defends. Fencer A's goal is to finish without getting hit in preparation.

Step 1: Start with Fencer A attacking with a simple advance lunge; both know Fencer B is retreating once and trying to hit in preparation. Fencer A must finish the attack in correct time. Attacker A should finish straight to either the head or arm.

Step 2: A expands the distance and the attack to several advances before the lunge, B can do 1 to 3 steps back, attempting to hit in preparation at the time of his choosing; the attacker must still finish in time.

Step 3: A will open the attack up to anything between 1 and 8 steps. Defender (B) can either try to hit A in preparation, or pull the distance and cause A to finish short, then riposte.

If the pair is executing the drill correctly, in Step 1 A should score most of the time and B should not be very successful. The goal is to help the attacker finish their attack on time, so this should be happening most of the time.

Drill is courtesy of Yuri Gelman, Morehouse's coach at the Fencers Club in New York City and coach of the 2004 Men's Saber Olympic team.

Does your body cord make you see yellow?

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Esgrime d'Halloween · Regional Youth Circuit · Cyrano's Place, Rocky River, Ohio · October 29, 2005

Y-10 Mixed Foil

- 1 TROVATO, Gianfranco (THREE RIVERS F.C.)
- 2 HOLTON, Kiera (ROCHESTER F.C.)
- 3T TEMES, Alec (CYRANO'S PLACE)
- 3T WU, Benjamin (CYRANO'S PLACE)

Y-10 Mixed Epee

- 1 TEMES, Alec (CYRANO'S PLACE)
- 2 WU, Benjamin (CYRANO'S PLACE)
- 3 CHODZIN, Devon (CYRANO'S PLACE)

Y-12 Mixed Foil

- 1 ELKASSAS, Adam (DUBOIS F.C.)
- 2 HOLTON, Maeve (ROCHESTER F.C.)
- 3T TROVATO, Gianfranco (THREE RIVERS F.C.)
- 3T FINDLEY, David (THREE RIVERS F.C.)

Y-12 Mixed Epee

- 1 TEMES, Alec (CYRANO'S PLACE)
- 2 PECCHIO, Danny (ALCAZAR)
- 3T KREUL, Erik (HOOKED ON FENCING)
- 3T BOWMAN, Joshua (TIGER F.C.)

Y-12 Mixed Saber

- 1 LEVINE, Seth (PENN STATE F.C.)
- 2 MCKIBBEN, Justin (FENC. ALLIANCE OF OHIO)
- 3T WOLFE, Kaylee (CYRANO'S PLACE)
- 3T SCHULTZ, Benjamin (ROGUE F.C.)

Y-14 Mixed Foil

- 1 ELKASSAS, Adam (DUBOIS F.C.)
- 2 GRILL, Josh (THREE RIVERS F.C.)
- 3T JAGGER, Benjamin (THREE RIVERS F.C.)
- 3T JAMESSON, Philip (ROCHESTER F.C.)

Y-14 Mixed Epee

- 1 BUTTERFIELD, Liam (HOOKED ON FENCING)
- 2 ALBANO, Theodore (ALCAZAR)
- 3T ARLINGTON, Nicholas (HOOKED ON FENCING)
- 3T HARTUNG, Henry (TIGER F.C.)

Y-14 Mixed Saber

- 1 MCKIBBEN, Justin (FENC. ALLIANCE OF OHIO)
- 2 LEVINE, Seth (PENN STATE F.C.)
- 3 MOORE, Gillian (FENC. ALLIANCE OF OHIO)



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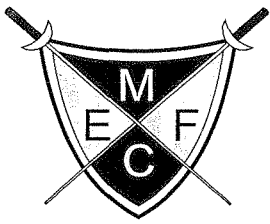
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June 13 - 16, 2006 4-days (Youth 10, Youth 12, Youth 14) \$295.

June 17 - 23, 2006 7-days (Cadet, Juniors, and Seniors) \$695.

OBJECTIVE: To advance the level of competitive Foil Fencers.

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- Anita and Agata Kantorska (Polish National Junior Women Foil, World Championship Finalists)

- Alex Kuznetsov (Former coach of US, Canada, Israel National Teams and Stanford Coach)

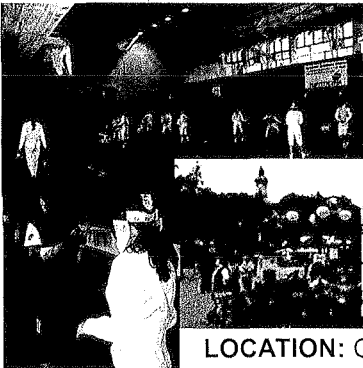
- Pawel Kantorski (Polish Junior National Team Coach) and Vitaliy Drujinin, Coach EMFC.

REGISTRATION/PAYMENT: Register by June 1, 2006. Number of places is limited & fill fast.

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International Summer Foil Camp in Poland

August 10 - 25, 2006 (Includes sightseeing in Dresden, Germany & Prague, Czech Republic)



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- Excellent student-instructor ratio, 18 metallic strips with new time scoring track field, basketball and volleyball fields, weight training, swimming pool

FENCERS: Competitive Cadet, Junior, and Senior fencers.

LOCATION: One of the most famous health mountain resorts with rejuvenating mineral-springs and a notable European tourism region. This quaint mountain town offers European charm and beauty.

ACCOMMODATION and BOARD: Fencers live on the sports school campus featuring comfortable double room accommodations and three hearty meals a day. All fencing and sports facilities are on site. Campus is located in the town center area.

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CompetitionCLASSIFIEDS

THE PACIFIC COAST SECTION announces its 2005-2006 Junior sectional circuit events: May 6-7 Inland Empire Junior Invitational, Upland, California, Cadet and Junior (all weapons) May 21 Beverly Hills Invitational, Culver City California, 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 13TH ANNUAL MR. MA CUP will be held at Cinnaminson High School, 1197 Riverton Road, Cinnaminson, NJ, on Saturday, June 3 and Sunday, June 4, 2006. Competitions will be held for all three weapons, men & women, with events in Y-10, Y-12, and Y-14 on Saturday and Open events on Sunday. The tournament is open to all USFA fencers. More than 500 fencers participated in 2005. In each event, trophies will be awarded to the top three finishers and medals to fourth through eighth place. For registration information and additional details about this tournament, please visit www.fencing.org.

fasj.com, call (856)424-5070, fax (856)424-5073, or email fasj1@yahoo.com.

THE NEW ENGLAND DIVISION will host the 18th annual Pomme de Terre on June 24 and 25, 2006 at Brandeis University, Waltham, MA. Events include all weapon individual opens, all weapon unclassified events and team events. This is a very large, well-attended tournament. For registration and entry details, event times, and additional information please visit: www.neusfa.org. Other contacts: Jeff Altbush at jeff@altbush.com or Linda Merritt at merritt55@verizon.net

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND May 27-28 2006 The Arizona Fencing Foundation in cooperation with the Arizona Fencing Division is pleased to announce that the Phoenix Cup 2006 is now on Askfred! Sign up now and come and join us for a fantastic weekend of fencing and fun! The Fencing Program will feature: 3 weapon open, 3 weapon junior, Women's Foil & Epee, Veteran Mixed Epee The Entertainment will feature: Dinner and Dance in the ballroom of the Marriott Hotel, Live Music, Buffet and Raffle. More info @ http://askfred.net/Events/moreInfo.php?tournament_id=1608. Preregistration @ http://askfred.net/Events/Prereg/prereg.php?tournament_id=1608. For mail-in form, for non fencers who would like to participate to our very popular Cabaret Dinner/Dance, or with other questions, contact Pia Douglas, (480)288-7834, www.phoenixcup.org.

CoachingCLASSIFIEDS

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 Princeton University is seeking a Head Coach to lead a championship caliber and values-based Men's and Women's Fencing program. The position will be available on or about July 1, 2006. Princeton Fencing has had a history of success under its current coach (who has announced his retirement effective the end of this season) as evidenced by 13 Ivy League titles, seven NCAA individual champions and 40 All-Americans since 1983. This national search is seeking a highly motivated individual who can capitalize on the athletic foundations already in place, leverage the educational excellence of the Univer-

sity, and build upon the facilities, traditions and history of its fencing program. Applications will be held with in strict confidentiality and a mutually agreeable starting date will be arranged that respects commitments to the selected individual's current coaching obligations. The selected candidate will have a baccalaureate or advanced degree, a successful background in coaching fencing, preferably at the collegiate level and competitive fencing experience, preferably at the collegiate and/or professional level. Good oral and written communication skills and demonstrated leadership skills and the ability to manage team dynamics are required. To apply, visit <http://jobs.princeton.edu> and post to requisition 0500639. Please complete an online application and submit a cover letter and resume. Princeton University is an equal opportunity affirmative action employer.

SEEKING FOIL & SABER COACH. Coaching and personal fencing experience required in both weapons. Must speak English language, be self-motivated, responsible and enjoy working with fencers of all ages and levels. Send resume to include education, experience as a fencer, coaching experience, achievements and contact information to: The Fencing Academy of South Jersey, P.O. Box 3637, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 or email fasj1@yahoo.com.

CoachingCLASSIFIEDS

LAURALTON HALL-FAIRFIELD PREP FENCING CLUB is a parent supported team competing at the High School level in Connecticut. This is our second season. Seeking an experienced fencer to coach the team. We have approximately twelve members, and a practice space in Stratford, CT. We seek someone who can coach up to five days a week within the window of 3:00 to 6:00PM each afternoon, from November 2005 to March 2006. Contact: James_Lynch@RD.com 914.244.5679

INSTRUCTOR SOUGHT for the Vail/Eagle Valley, Colorado area to begin January. Please contact: Judy Mosser, 970-524-8159.

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.

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 inquire 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.

Summer magazine deadlines for all classified ads is May 15, 2006. Summer issue will be published in mid June, 2006.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION AND AN APPLICATION PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITE AT:

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OR CONTACT COACH DAVE MICAHNIK, FENCING CAMP DIRECTOR:
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NEWS

continued from page 10

the U.S. Men's Epee Team of Isaac Erbele (D.C.F.C.), Ben Bratton (Westbrook), Ben Solomon (N.Y.A.C.) and Soren Thompson (N.Y.A.C.) placed fourth in a field of 21 teams. Also in January, the U.S. Men's Saber Team of Ivan Lee (Westbrook), Tim Morehouse (F.C.) and Keeth Smart (Westbrook) place 5th in Tunisia and the U.S. Olympic Men's Foil Team of Jed Dupree, Dan Kellner and Jon Tiomkin (also F.C.) took 6th in France. ★

Rules/REFEREES

continued from page 19

into effect, I have been astounded to see many internationally rated refs, including some who were invited to Athens, misapply this rule.

Let's take a step back to think about why the passivity rule was really needed. The Hungary-Estonia match was completely over the line. We had two fencers retreat to their respective end lines and assume a completely passive stance.

Sick, disgusting, disgraceful. And, certainly against the spirit of the sport.

Now, however, we have passivity being called when fencers are setting up a touch or going through what used to be a perfectly acceptable feeling out process. Furthermore, the fencer in the lead should have every right to lay back if he or she chooses. If anything, the onus should be on the trailing fencer to make things happen.

The objective of the passivity rule was to avoid the most obvious cases, as defined by the Hungary-Estonia farce. The objective was not to call this when fencers were making some attempt to fence, albeit in a tentative or defensive manner.

But, that is exactly what has hap-

pened. Hopefully, some sanity will be restored and passivity will only be called in the most obvious and severe instances.

In the meantime, though, the fencers will have to deal with the inconsistent application of this rule. And, this falls into the category of "fencing the referee." It is no different that adjusting to anything else a particular referee calls.

The smart fencers will adapt to the refs who are overly-aggressive in calling passivity. They will do so not by arguing and knocking their heads against the wall, but rather by fencing just 'aggressively passive' enough to prevent any referee from misapplying this rule. ★

ClubTIPS

continued from page 23

They like to "work the system" and figure out a way to conquer it.

With these attributes in mind, you can select your location and orient your marketing accordingly. Instead of using a costly "hand grenade" approach to advertisements (ie. placing pamphlets on windshields at the local mall), you can direct your

marketing dollars more surgically. Try creating a referral alliance with the local software outlet or game shop. Instead of advertising in the local paper, purchase a filtered mailing list which includes families within 5 miles of your school and who have made an online purchase in the past 6 months (note: purchase "Snail Mail" lists, not email lists).

When hunting for a good location for your school, consider how convenient it is to families as well as the local Business Park where software companies are headquartered.

The key here is to remember that at some point in their life, almost everyone thinks for a moment about what it would be like to know how to "sword fight." However, those who actually pursue the dream and those who manage to stick with it tend to be a specific type of personality. And within that personality type, there is a wide and diverse range. Who among us hasn't noticed the difference between the average saber fencer and foil fencer?

So use what you know about those people who have a fascination with sharp, pointy things. And focus on attracting these people who are far more likely to appreciate your instruction. Let the rest of them get their fix through the next Zorro movie. ★

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For more information and applications go to
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e-mail us at: info@nellyafencers.com

Lindsey KNAUER

16, Medford, New Jersey



Lindsey Knauer, this year's Under-17 Champion at the Junior Olympics in Hartford, Conn., will represent the U.S. for the second year in a row at the 2006 Junior and Cadet World Fencing Championships in April.

TheSTATS

Event: Foil

Birthdate: April 26, 1989 (Danbury, Connecticut)

Hometown: Medford, New Jersey

High School: Home Schooled; 2007

Club: Fencing Academy of South Jersey

Coach: Andy Ma

How I started fencing:

Friends invited me to try a class with them, which I did reluctantly because I wasn't familiar with the sport. I liked the class and practiced once a week for about a year before my first competition. After that first competition, I decided I wanted to train and seriously compete.

Hobbies:

I've played piano since I was five years old. Achievements: Earned Distinction and Merit Awards from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music for piano.

Good luck rituals:

I always pray and chew Eclipse gum before I fence.

Top four results:

- Bronze, Division I National Championships, 2005
- 6th, Cadet International, Jena, Germany, February, 2006

- Gold, Cadet Summer Nationals, 2005
- Bronze, Junior, JO's 2005

Favorite fencing movie:

Pirates of the Caribbean (as much for Johnny Depp as for the fencing scenes).

Fencing Hero/inspiration:

My sister, Beth, and my parents help to keep me motivated; they're a constant support to me whether I win or lose. Ron Berkowsky, a friend from my club, has inspired me to work hard.

Favorite bout:

My favorite bout was the one I won to secure my place on the Cadet Team in 2005. It was the deciding competition, so I had a lot of pressure on me.

Worst bout:

The bout I lost to get into the top 16 at (the 2005 Junior World Championships). I didn't overcome my nervousness and completely lost the bout psychologically. ☆

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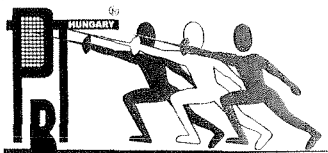
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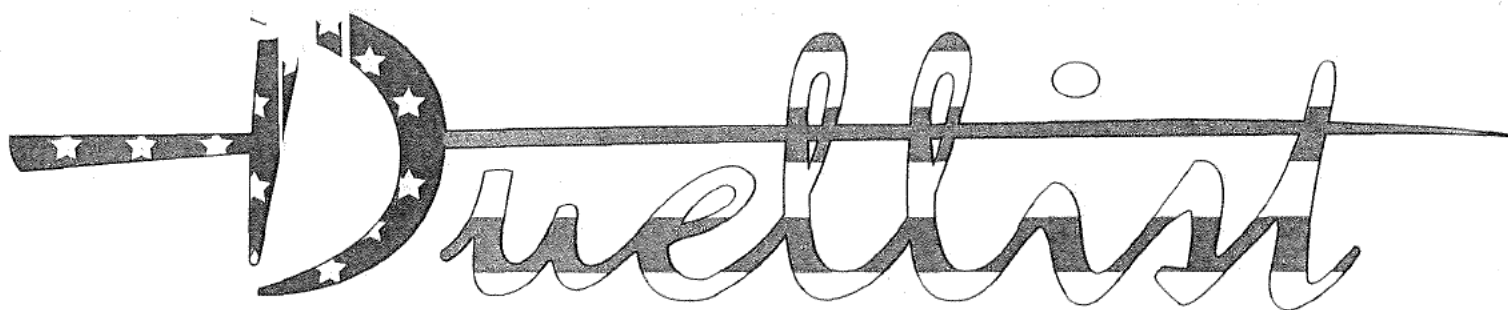
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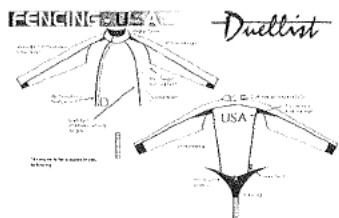


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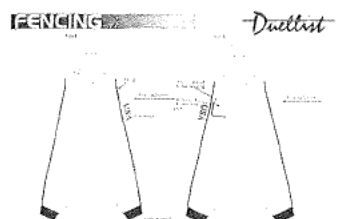
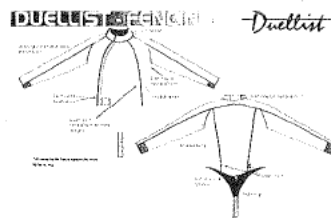
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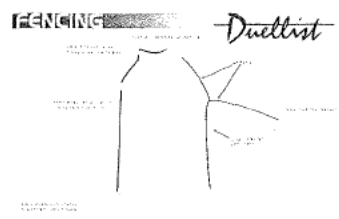
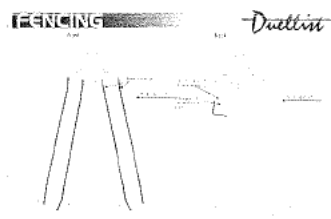
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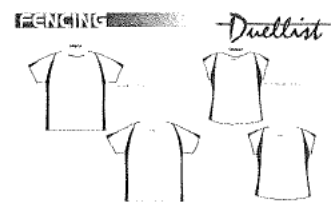
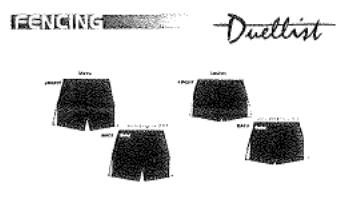
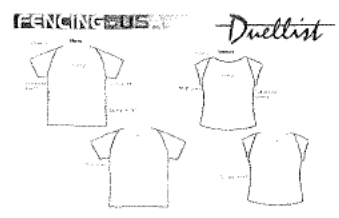
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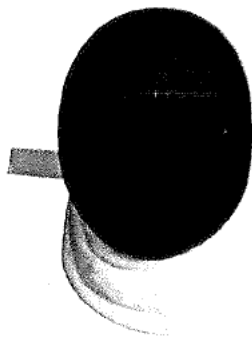
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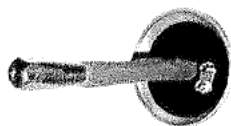
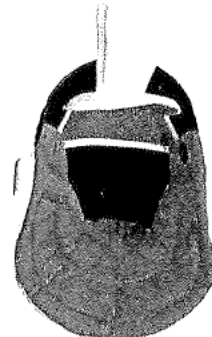
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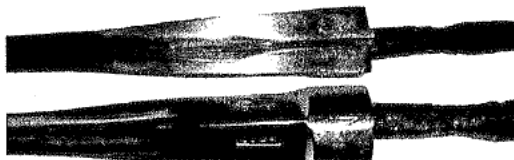


Econo Electric Foil Complete *French or Pistol Grip* \$29.00

A decent weapon for beginners just getting used to having a weapon in their hands while doing footwork. Its good for some light bouting and competition.

FIE Superior EPEE Blade \$45.00

Fencesmart's Superior blades is always an excellent choice. This blade is one of the more flexible blades we have carried. Quality for those on a budget.



Econo Sabre Complete \$40.00

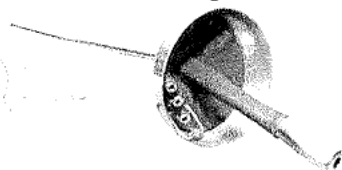
Econo weapon good for use in clubs. Great for overall training. And light competition fencing.

Electric Epee Complete

French or Pistol Grip

\$40.00

A complete electrical epee at an ultra-reasonable price. The electric epee is constructed with quality components with either french grip or pistol grip with sturdy guard and a blade. A strong, durable practice weapon. Can be used for taking lesson, drills or hitting targets.



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