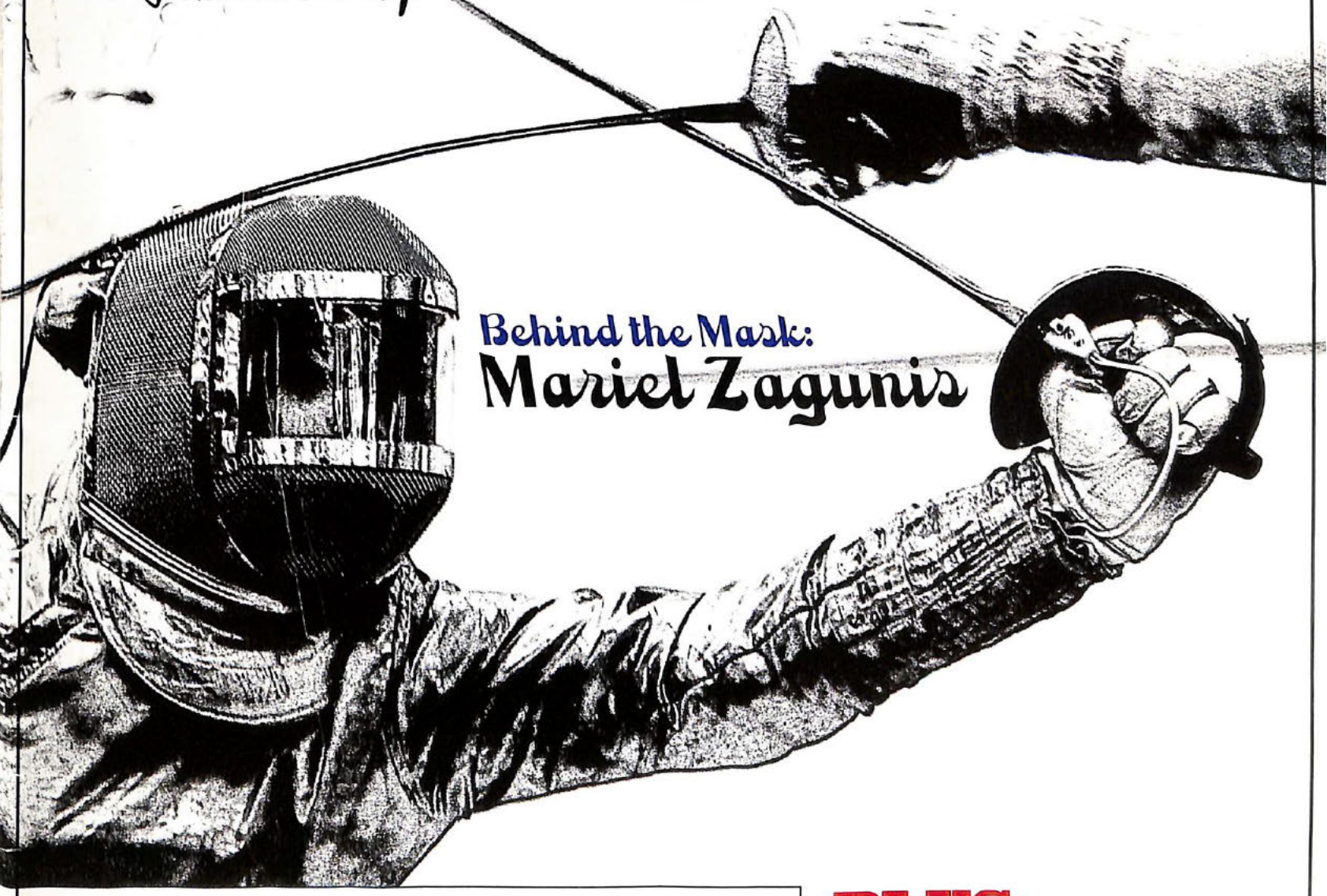
AMERICAN FENCING

FALL 2010
Volume 60, *Number 3*

International Fencing, Brooklyn Style
New York World Cup



Behind the Mask: Mariel Zagunis

PLUS:

The Devil's Sword

&

Singapore Sabers

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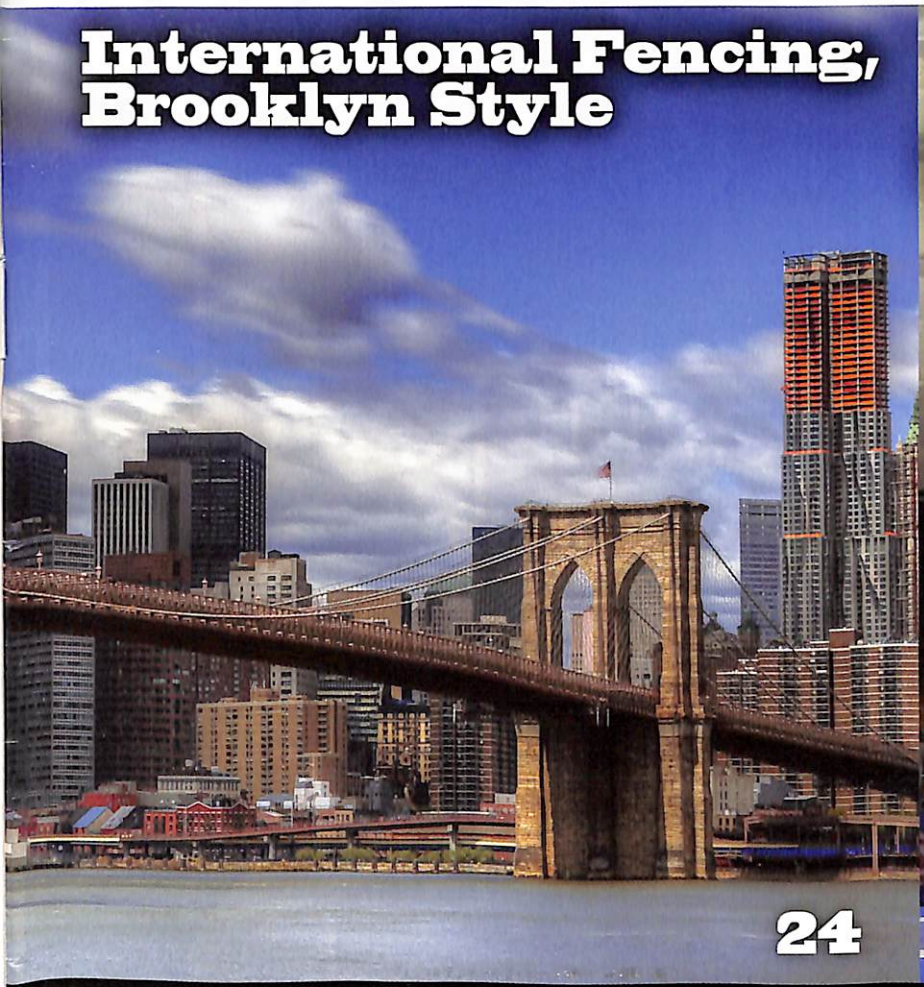
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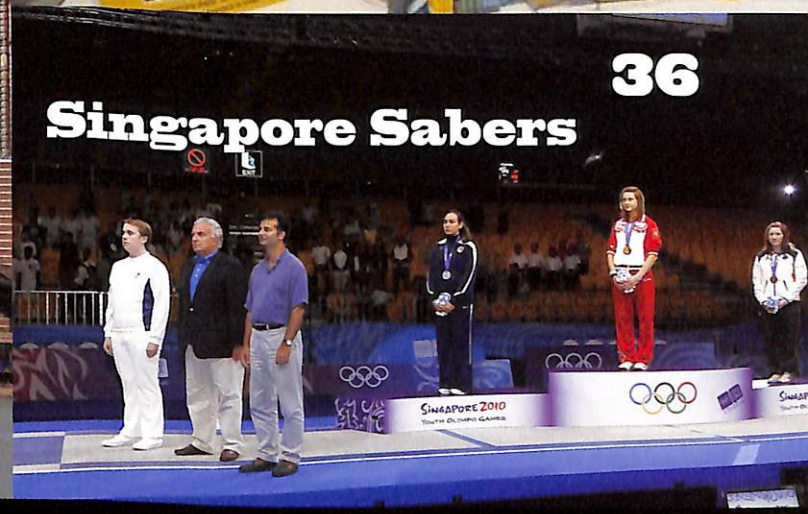
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MARIEL ZAGUNIS LANDING A TOUCH AT THE NEW YORK WORLD CUP

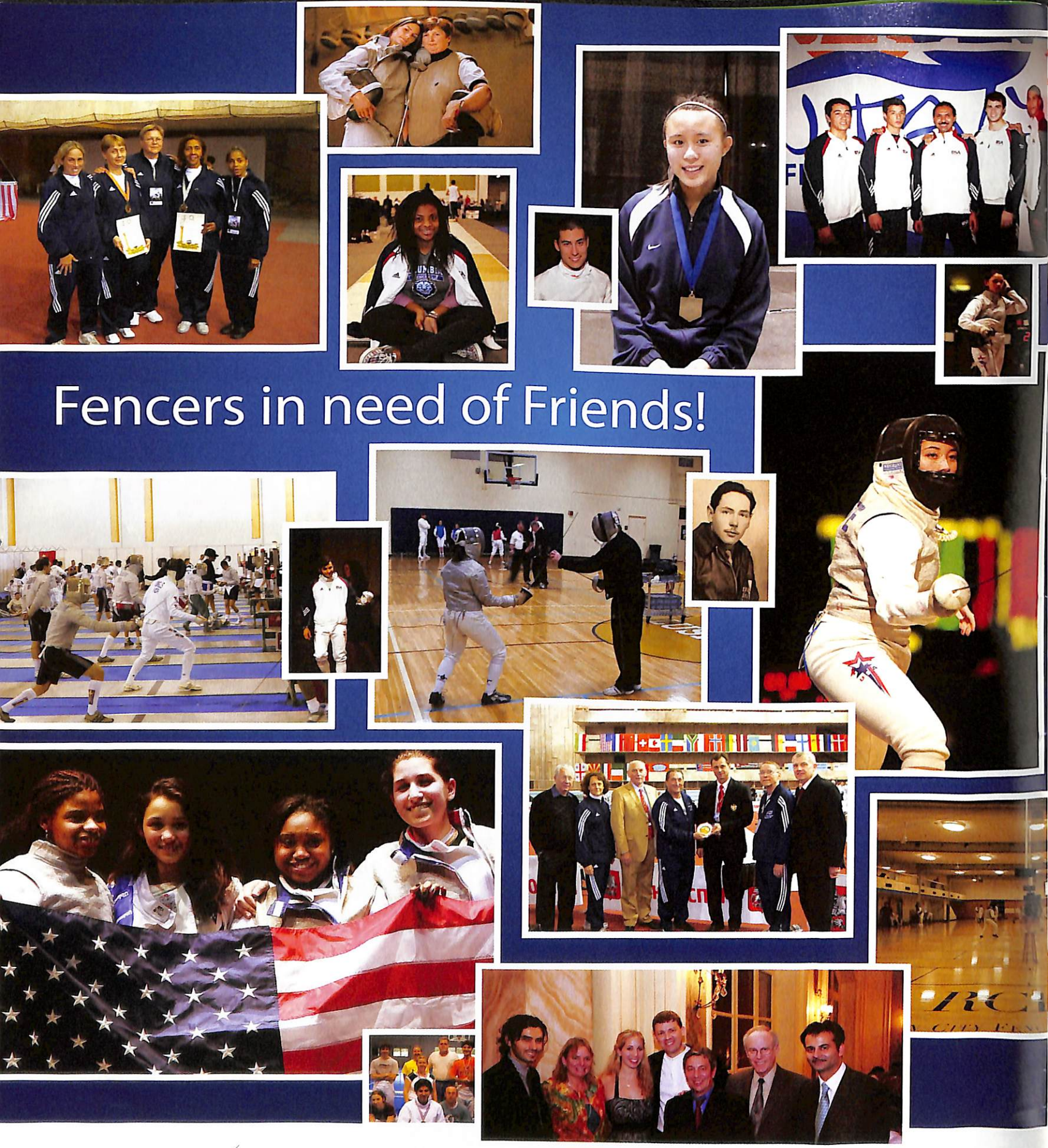
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Moving Forward



Since I took over as Executive Director a couple of months ago I am extremely pleased to report that we're headed in the right direction. Positive changes have been made or are being developed which will benefit all members and which will set us on the path to replicable long-term success.

First, we're getting our finances cleaned up as well as putting processes in place that will ensure that we never again have the financial difficulties with which we have struggled in the recent past. You can see the budget approved by the Board of Directors at their September meeting on the USA Fencing website (go to Resources, Documents, Financial). Each line item has a specific person assigned as the owner. That owner will receive a budget report every month. The owner will then need to indicate if everything is on pace for the full year or if there are variances required. If variances are required those will be presented to the Board for decisions about where to make adjustments. This will ensure that we will have a positive balance sheet (also posted on the USA Fencing website) early in the next quadrennial.

Part of getting our finances cleaned up involves making those long overdue payments to officials at our National Tournaments. As indicated in the last magazine, we are on pace to pay our volunteers amounts accrued through April 2010 before the end of October. Unfortunately, we will then build up debts again through the rest of this season, paying them during the same period next year. We anticipate being able to become current and stay current during the 2012/2013 season.

Second, our athletes continue to turn in excellent performances and to win medals all over the world. At the recently completed Pan American Zonal Championships in San Juan, Costa Rica, the United States finished atop the medal count standings, with six gold medals, two silver medals and seven bronze medals. Particular congratulations to our individual gold medal winners, Mariel Zagunis (WS) and Lee Kiefer (WF) as well as to our gold medal teams in men's and women's foil and men's and women's saber. Next up are the Veteran World Championships in Croatia from September 28th through October 3rd and the World Championships in Paris from November 4th through the 13th.

Our able-bodied athletes will be joined in Paris by our Wheelchair World Championships team who will also compete from November 4th through the 12th. Rosters of both the able-bodied and wheelchair teams may be found on the USFencing.org website. Please join me in congratulating all of them and in rooting them on to success.

In addition to our success at the senior level, our younger athletes give us confidence that our success will continue for years to come. They won three of the 25 medals won by the United States at the first Youth Olympic Games in Singapore. This event was open to athletes of ages 17 and younger. Please join me in congratulating Celina Merza (WS) and Alexander Massiales (MF), both of whom won individual silver medals, and their teammates Will Spear (MS) and Katherine Holmes (WE), who joined them on the Americas I team to take the bronze medal. Joining them in Singapore was Mona Shaito (WF), who reached the quarterfinal in the individual event and competed on the Americas II team with athletes from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Cuba and El Salvador.

Finally, when I accepted this role, I said that one thing I could do was to help ensure that we got better at basic "blocking and tackling." This means taking care of basics in a consistent and replicable way. We will either update or create standard processes for all of our repeated tasks and will update those processes as necessary. We will make sure to establish clear goals for each member of the National Office team and, in addition to being accountable to the Board and membership, will hold ourselves accountable for accomplishing them.

I am truly excited about our future and believe that by working together we can build an organization that will support all fencers in the United States, from the person who walks into a club for their first lesson to that club's owner to the coach who gives the introductory lesson to the elite athlete who competes on the next Olympic Team. Please join me in that optimism.

I welcome your suggestions on moving us forward at g.dilworth@usfencing.org.

Greg Dilworth
Executive Director, USA Fencing



NEW LOGO

In the quest for an updated and fresh brand, USA Fencing went through multiple agencies and designs in searching for, in part, a new logo in the past year. Earlier this summer, a new, circular logo was selected that was meant to mesh with those of other sports and the U.S. Olympic Committee's own branding efforts.

Many members voiced their adamant opinions towards the circular logo that was unveiled. Whether it said "Epee, Foil, Saber" or "Honor, Integrity, Agility" was not the main issue. It was the overall design - the lack of strength and grace - that was its true downfall.

Because of the outcry of negativity, USA Fencing decided to return to the last version of the logo, but with some slight modifications. Via the USFencing.org website, the membership was invited to vote for the best logo.

In a close race, the above version was selected, winning 38 percent of member votes. Judging by the comments, most members seem to understand the need for an updated, stylized version, calling it "clean and crisp" and "simpler and more elegant."

"We feel it's very important to listen and respond to the will our membership." said Rob Weekes, Director of Marketing for USA Fencing. "Clearly, the new logo design was not embraced; and the vast majority of voters wanted to stick with a freshened version of the existing design."

Regardless of the exact modifications to the logo, members are resoundingly happy that the old logo is back, the circular version is gone and their voice has been heard. *-AF*

AMERICAN FENCING

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In This Issue

Jeff Bukantz, author of Rules and Referees, was a member of the FIE Rules Commission and has been captain of multiple U.S. international teams, including the 2006 World Championships team and the 2004 and 2008 Olympic Games teams.

Kirsten Crouse, who wrote this issue's Parent's Corner, can be found pit-crewing for her two young fencers in Conroe, Texas at the Woodlands Fencing Foundation and writing about her family's fencing experiences as "TxFencingMom." She is an advocate for youth fencing and enjoys talking to other parents about youth fencing issues and about the perfect margarita.

Mary Griffith performed as a copy editor with grace and diligence for this issue once again. Griffith has volunteered as a member of USA Fencing's national tournament staff since 2000. She is the author of three books on homeschooling, the parent of two grown homeschooled daughters (both fencers, of course), and lives in California. She is currently working on a murder mystery set at a Summer Nationals, and blogs about fencing and writing at www.marygriff.com.

Dr. John Heil is the chair of Sport Science for USA Fencing, and the author of the Psychology of Sport Injury (available at fencing.net). He is with Psychological Health Roanoke in Roanoke, Va., and can be reached at jheil@psychhealthroanoke.com.

Buzz Hurst has been a leader of initiatives on clubs and divisions for almost two decades, having formed the committee for clubs, divisions and sections in 1988, serving as its chair for eight years, and then as Vice President of the USFA. Most recently, Hurst worked on updating the USFA's highly successful guide for division officers. Hurst, a Maitre d'Armes, also coaches at the Cabrillo Academy of the Sword in San Diego.

Ted Li (Tech Talk) is a member of the USFA's Technical Commission. He was the Head Site Armourer for three Olympic Games (1984, 1996, 2000) for Pan-American Games, Universiade, Senior, Junior, and Veterans World championships, as well as NCAA national championships and countless USFA North American Cups. He is a proud student of Joe Byrnes and Dan Dechaine, and has been armouring for more than 30 years.

Kevin Mar, who wrote the Mariel Zagunis profile in this issue, is the co-founder of the Washington Fencing Academy and has served as co-vice chair for the Western Washington Division for the last eight years. He has been fencing for more than 13 years.

Carla Mae Richards is one of the great personalities in U.S. fencing history. She served as the USFA's first executive director from 1983 to 1994, and was a major force behind the USFA's transformation from an amateur group into the organization it is today. Richards lent a huge hand in helping to copy edit the magazine for this issue and also wrote the Junior Olympics/Junior World Championships report for this issue.

Kathryn Schifferle (Product Review) is the former President and CEO of Multi-Image Network, a multimedia company which provided digital video management tools for the telecommunications industry for over 19 years. Currently she teaches Marketing and Management at California State University, Chico, and also develops online courses in Entrepreneurship for Butte College.

Andy Shaw, the official USA Fencing Historian, coaches at the Fairfield Avenue School of Fencing in Shreveport, La., and maintains the excellent Museum of American Fencing there as well. You can learn reams about American fencing history at www.museumofamericanfencing.com.

Jeremy Summers is a chiropractic physician and certified athletic trainer in practice in California. He is a former nationally-ranked saber fencer and multiple times a member of the Junior National team.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT



Summer Nationals meetings ushered in a new chapter in our history. Most significantly, in Atlanta at our various meetings, the new bylaws were adopted and members of our new smaller board were elected:

Brad Baker
Bill Becker
David Blake
Aaron Clements
Wes Glon
Alan Kuver
Paula Reed
Laurie Schiller

David Herr and Terry Kwan were named to continue as independent directors and the Athlete Council has designated Mario Rodriguez, Soren Thompson and Alex Wood as athlete Board members.

In addition, as Greg Dilworth agreed to serve as Interim Executive Director, he could no longer serve as our treasurer; Sunil Sabharwal was elected to that post on an interim basis and will serve on the Board as well.

Brief biographical information about each of our Board members is available on the USA Fencing website.

At its annual meeting in September, the Board took up a number of organizational tasks, such as naming a nominating committee to present candidates for board membership next year, reviewing our budget and financial status and fulfilling other requirements of the new bylaws. In addition, the Board began the process of evaluating and revising its processes and procedures to ensure that it is functioning as effectively and efficiently as possible in its policy-making and oversight roles. As before, the minutes of the meeting will be posted on our website.

In preparation for the September meeting and those to come, I've been reading about various board models and practices. Board members, according to one source, need the following to accomplish their tasks: solid information, integrity, involvement in the mission of the organization and to be independent as they consider the issues that come before them. I am confident that our new structure and members will make it possible to meet those criteria and that both will serve our organization well. I look forward to lively and productive board meetings and to the continuing growth and development of our organization and our sport.

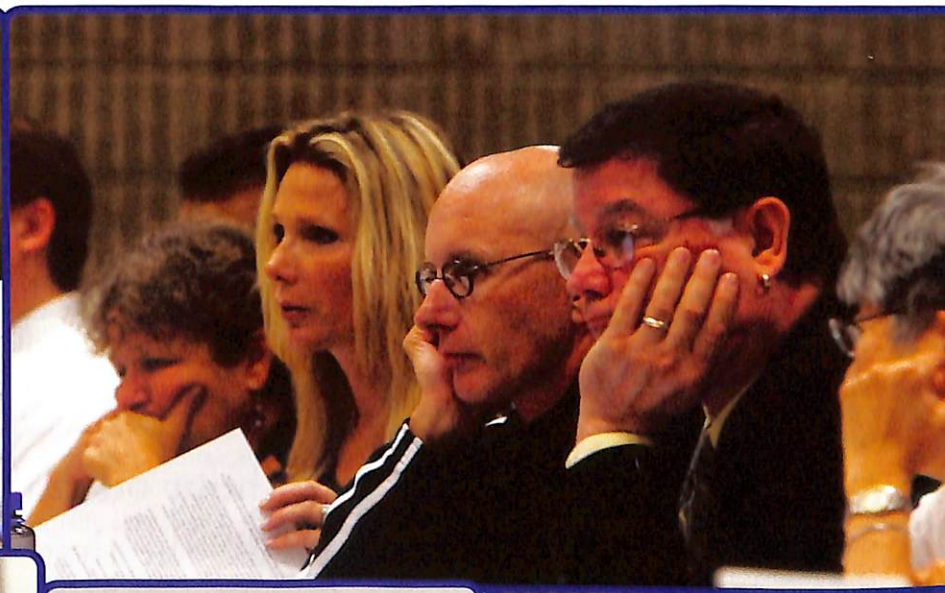
Kalle Weeks
President, USA Fencing

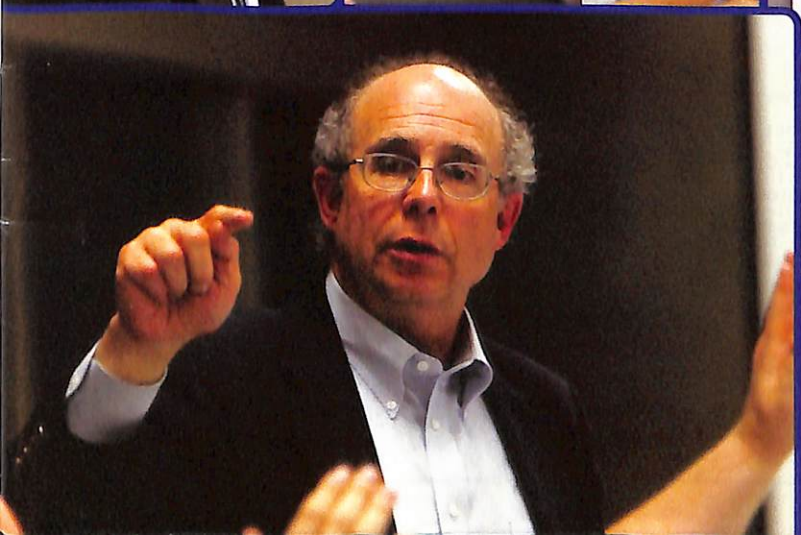
Kalle Weeks

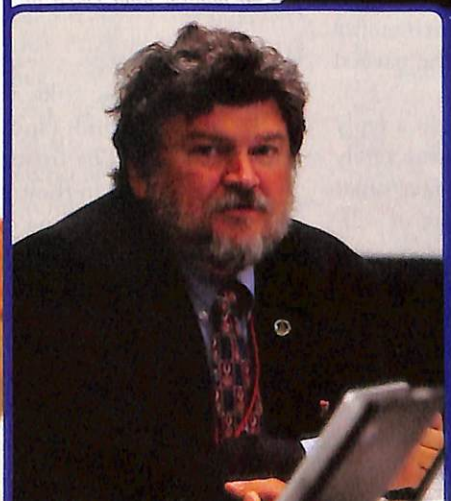
Photos by Serge Timacheff





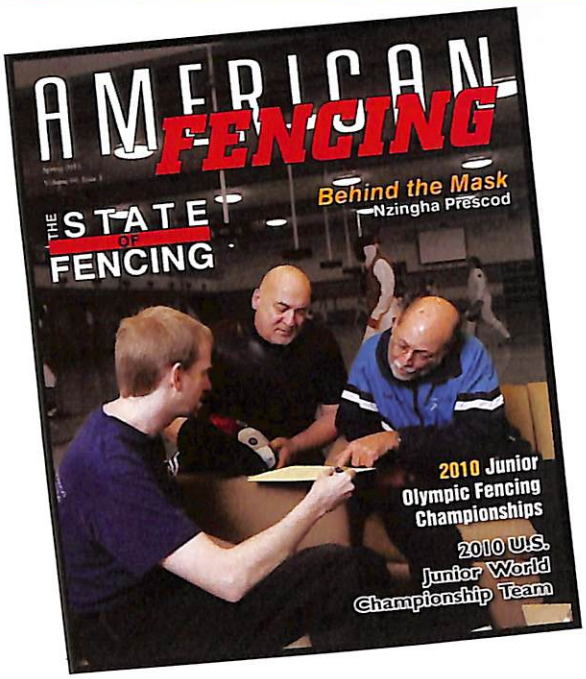








Verbatim



Dear AF,

Regarding my letter in the last issue, please note that the final paragraph is an editorial error; the paragraph belongs to another letter.

Regarding the response to my letter, Mr. Bukantz, by turning to the dictionary for a broad definition of combat sport, proved my point: he sees fencing as a mere game. In choosing to turn a blind eye to the distinction between the formal duel (the basis of modern fencing) and open warfare (a practice in which only victory matters, and at almost any cost), he ignores the spirit of fencing and its origins.

Such obfuscation and "sea lawyer" argument do nothing to promote fencing. We need to remember that fencing is not simply another sport: its historical origins and aspirations to a sense of honor are a vital part of its appeal.

Regarding the editor's note that only critics of Mr. Bukantz's article had written letters, few supporters are likely to without strong encouragement. The admission of behavior that many of us consider dishonorable carries a stain: a fencer willing to resort to such tactics to win on the strip is not likely to be trusted off the strip.

Regarding Mr. Bukantz's assertion in a reply to another letter that the remise was rarely used in a duel, the remise was in fact often used, both instinctively from a sense of self-preservation, as well as deliberately when tempo permitted. Indeed, in the 17th and 18th centuries it was quite common, and fencers were taught to use the unarmed hand to assist in closing the inside lines in order to prevent it. Similarly, fencers making remises often used the unarmed hand as an added measure of defense.

Sincerely,
Benerson Little
Huntsville, Ala.

Dear AF,

Please let poor Jeff Bukantz know someone is on his side regarding his article "Cheating, Gamesmanship, or Just a Tactical Use of the Rules to Gain an Advantage?" When talking about a sport dealing so much with sometimes unorthodox tactics, I find it surprising that so many people had a problem with this.

Let me preface all this by saying that I myself would not use any of the tactics discussed there or indeed anything similar. I would be upset if I lost a bout or even a point to someone who did something shady...but I would suck it up. They didn't break any rules. There's nothing I can do about it. Move on. Get the next point.

Additionally, where do you draw the line? Let's discuss a scenario fairly common in my circle: I'm practicing with a friend when I attack, resulting in a near miss. Just as the attack would have landed, someone on the next strip gets a touch. I look up at the light to see if the touch was mine or a double. The point is indeed a single. For my opponent. After I stopped fencing. Is this cheating? Let he who is without oddball touch cast the first stone.

In the instances where it was applicable, these people knew the risks of getting a card. If they want to take those risks, that's fine with me. In the others, I think (and I'd like to reiterate here that I would be frustrated if it happened to me) the people in these examples should be commended for thinking outside the box.

> "Let he who is without oddball touch cast the first stone."

Matt Perry
Louisville, Ky.

Dear AF,

I am writing regarding the letters American Fencing received about Jeff Bukantz's article "Cheating, Gamesmanship, or Just Tactical Use of the Rules to Gain an Advantage" that you published. There was mention of the "spirit" of the law as if that was completely different from the "letter" of the law. To some degree there is a difference, but usually not that much.

It would be impossible for any set of rules/laws to cover all situations. (What would attorneys do if it were otherwise?) In fencing, an absurd example would be a fencer complaining about being issued a black card for taking a pistol and shooting the opponent. Very obviously, shooting an opponent is not specifically mentioned in the rules, but all would agree that the shooter did not observe our sport's traditional customs of courtesy and integrity. It is most probable that the authors of the letters that were published felt somewhat similarly about some of the examples given in Jeff Bukantz's article as they did about my absurd example.

I shall not comment on the article; I feel it speaks for itself. Instead I will simply provide the "letter" of the law so that each person will be able to know if what was in the article was advocating cheating, gamesmanship, or just tactical use of the rules to gain an advantage. What follows is not my opinion; it is the rules we are to follow.

1. Persons subject to these rules

t.81 The regulations laid down in this Part apply to all persons who take part in or attend a fencing competition, including the spectators. Hereinafter, all these persons are described as "fencers."

2. Maintenance of order and discipline

t.82 Fencers must observe strictly and faithfully the Rules and the Statutes of the FIE (USFA), the particular rules for the competition in which they are engaged, the traditional customs of courtesy and integrity and the instructions of the officials. In particular they will subscribe, in an orderly, disciplined and sporting manner " The competitors (a) Pledge of honor

t.84 By the mere fact of entering a fencing competition, the fencers pledge their honor to observe the regulations and the decisions of the judges, to be respectful towards the members of the jury and to scrupulously obey the orders and injunctions of the Referee (cf. t.114, t.116, t.120).

CHAPTER 6. REFEREEING AND JUDGING OF TOUCHES

t.34 By accepting a position as referee or judge, the person so designated pledges his honor to respect the rules and to cause them to be respected, and to carry out his duties with the strictest impartiality and absolute concentration.

Sincerely,
George Kolombatovich
New York, N.Y.

Dear AF,

I have not written a letter to American Fencing before, as I have not necessarily felt the need to. But when I read all the responses slamming Jeff Bukantz' Spring '10 article, "Cheating, Gamesmanship, or Just Tactical Use of the Rules to gain an Advantage," I was so disturbed that I started typing up a this letter without any delay.

Fencing is a combative sport, and I believe that bouts should be won using any means possible, aside from cheating. Using the rules to one's advantage is something everyone in any sport has the right to do. There is absolutely nothing ethically wrong with doing this. I for one thought that the account of the teenager that had the presence of mind to hold his tongue when he knew he was missing a tip was absolutely amazing. So many fencers would have automatically stopped fencing without even thinking what consequences would occur from this.

Competitive fencing today is not a mortal exercise. Bloodletting is not what we aspire to do (well, not what most of us aspire to do) in a bout. As a result, the fencing today should not be compared in any way to the fencing of the eighteenth century with all of its strict sense of what is "honorable" and "dishonorable."

Now I do believe that there is a line one can cross. I don't think that anyone should lie about a touch if asked by the ref, or anyone else for that matter. But as to the matter of knowingly fencing without a tip, there is nothing against that in the rules and it was a brilliant move by that fencer.

Sincerely
Austin Black
Ft. Worth, Texas

> "Using the rules to one's advantage is something everyone in any sport has the right to do."

Dear AF,

Upon reading Jeff Bukantz's article several issues ago, my initial response was the same as many of the outraged letter-writers. But then I asked myself the question: how does this differ from what goes on in other sports. In basketball, for instance, no one expresses moral outrage when a player commits an intentional foul against the opposing team's poorest foul-shooter. Indeed, this tactic is generally accepted as merely a part of the game. Likewise, no one claims that a soccer player who deflects an otherwise-certain goal with his hands is a moral reprobate. Yes, the player is kicked out of the game and his team must play the rest of the game with only ten players. Yet this is considered a reasonable trade-off under the right circumstances. Likewise, people do not chastise a football team that is winning and that runs down the clock at the end of the game, even when doing so results in a penalty. The list goes on.

So why is fencing any different? First of all, we claim the moral high ground, due in large part to the sense of honor that runs through the history of our sport. Certainly football, basketball and soccer do not have anything approaching the traditions of chivalry, gallantry, and gentlemanly conduct with which fencing is blessed. Indeed, I know of no other sport that does. Second, and more important, these attributes are among the most important reasons why so many of us were initially attracted to the sport and why we love it. Like litigating attorneys practicing at the highest level, most fencers whom I know "strive mightily, yet eat and drink as friends." They have "no friends on the strip," yet will give you the shirt off their back once they are off the strip. These fencers are bound together in a kind of fraternity/sorority - a bonding that is unique among the sports with which I'm familiar. Yet like other kinds of tight bonding, it cannot exist - much less thrive - where its members do not trust each other. And to my mind, rule-breaking kills such trust.

This lack of trust is the reason I ultimately concluded that Mr. Bukantz's attitude about the rules, while perhaps acceptable in other sports, has no place in fencing. The cost is simply too high.

Sincerely,
Roland M. Frye, Jr.
Alexandria, Va

Dear AF,

In Jeff Bukantz' Article "Cheating, Gamesmanship or Just Tactical Use of the Rules to Gain an Advantage" some of the things could, in some people's opinions, be classified as "cheating." Yes, in my opinion too, some of the things he had described (such as the 1981 NAC finals where he grounded himself to prevent the last touch) should rightfully so be called cheating.

As for some of the other stories, I believe was to all extant a tactical use of the rules. I can't say that I myself will now go out and look for situations where I would use this knowledge, but feel that I now can look for it and be prepared for it if it ever happens to come my way. I feel it is up to the fencers that are fencing at that time to hopefully act accordingly to any "dishonorable behavior."

However I feel that the tactics displayed in the 2007 World Championship were just that: Tactics. In taking advantage of the passivity rules, Boisse's opponent didn't HAVE to take a step back and not attack. His opponent chose to do this, without thinking that it might be a trap (tricking an opponent to fall into a trap such as this is the same as tricking them into leaving open a target area, am I right?). Isn't that what we already do? We trick our opponent into leaving a target area open so we can score a touch. But the word "trick" may seem a little dirty of a word for this sport. How about calling it "playfully forcing"?

Keep up the great articles!

Zach Moeller
Old Town, Maine









Photo by András Hasz, Hungary

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Dear AF,

I would like to respond to Jeff Bukantz's column in the Spring 2010 edition of American Fencing. Mr. Bukantz describes many incidences of "bending" the rules of fencing and asks the question, "Is it cheating, gamesmanship, or tactics?" I have to admit that some of the situations were very innovative.

Before fencers can answer the question they must decide what fencing means in their life. After all, fencing is not life. It is a game. If one of my students took a gold medal at the Olympic Games our local paper would publish a story right below high school football. In a week people would be tired of hearing the story. So why bother? It is the drive for excellence that makes good athletes work so hard. It is the thrill that tells you that you are the best in spite of opponents trying to stop you. The last touch is the real thrill; the medal is an anti-climax to show your friends.

So, why does it matter what you do as long as it is legal? Self respect has to be part of the equation even if you do not want to consider morals. If you fall in front of a store you could probably sue and get some money, but should you? I heard a story about one of our champion fencers. I will not give the name because I have not had the story confirmed. It seems this fencer was fencing in a long epee event at Nationals. There was a tie for first and the score went to 4-4 (before DEs). Our champion made a toe shot, the light went on and the bout was won. However, this person said that he hit the floor and the bout continued. He won anyway. The question is why did he do it? Legally he won. I think we all know the answer.

Fencing is a wonderful sport and one learns a lot of life's lessons by fencing. If it does not teach you character, you have missed a lot.

Charles Bosco
Salle D'Armes Bosco
Harvest, Ala.

Dear AF,

My name is James Williams. I enjoyed reading Jeff Bukantz's most recent article on rules and classifying cheating. I thought it was a fun read and enjoyed the anecdotes.

Thanks,
James Williams
San Francisco, Calif.

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 Editor@AmericanFencing.com.

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- The fabulous 2010 Holiday Gift Guide
- World Veteran Championships coverage

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USA FENCING HALL OF FAME 2010





Photos by Serge Timacheff

The USA Fencing Hall of Fame's 2010 inductees were announced with pomp and circumstance at the 2010 Summer National Championships in Atlanta on July 10. This year's class included some legends whose names have undeservedly faded from recent memory, as well as some who continue to make history even today.

The roster includes:
Hugh Alessandroni
Ella Hatten
Aldo Nadi
Robert Blum
Joseph Elliott
Father Lawrence Calhoun
Yuri Gelman

Below are very brief biographies. You can read much more about these luminaries at usfencinghalloffame.com.

Era I – Early America to 1935

Hugh Vincent Alessandroni

Born in 1908, Hugh Alessandroni learned to fence at Columbia University under the Hall of Fame coach, James Murray. After earning a degree in chemical engineering and qualifying for two US Olympic teams, he led a team of engineers who invented the first electrical epee scoring device used in Olympic history (1936).

At the 1932 Olympics, Hugh Alessandroni was a member of the highly successful U.S. foil team which defeated France. Alessandroni and his U.S. teammates won the Olympic bronze medal that year. This medal brought the United States great publicity and respect throughout the world. He went on to win the US Men's Foil championship in 1934 and 1936. In 1936, Hugh was a member of the Berlin Olympic Games team which tied for fifth place. Representing the New York Fencers Club, he won seven team national championships, six with the foil and one three-weapon title.

Ella Hattan

Ella May Hattan, undefeated fencing and fighting champion, was born Jan. 8, 1860. One of 11 children from a poor southern Ohio family, Ella Hattan went on stage at the age of 15. She wasn't much of an actress but audiences found her gorgeous. In her early twenties she became a pupil of the legendary Danish master-at-arms Col. Thomas Hoyer Monstery, who renamed her Jaguarine (she made it "Jaguarina" in 1888) and gave her a gaudy Spanish gypsy past. In 1886, she became the toast of San Francisco, challenging men to broadsword combat on horseback. Fighting captains and barons and sergeants left over from European wars, plus the U.S. Cavalry champ just back from the Indian wars, she never lost a single bout, ultimately becoming perhaps history's wealthiest female athlete. She also received a flood of newspaper publicity across the United States. There was a doomed move to back her for the first American Olympic team in 1896 (women fencers were kept out of the Olympics until 1924), but she always was well before her time. In 1900, after 14 years of barnstorming and an unconfirmed list of victories against men on horseback and afoot, she issued a final challenge, basically, to meet anybody, anywhere, with any weapon, for a winner-take-all purse. After a year of no takers, she retired to Broadway musical comedy and then oblivion.

Aldo Nadi

Aldo Nadi (1899-1965) is possibly the greatest fencer who ever lived. His elder brother Nedo may have harvested six Olympic gold medals (five in one Games, in 1920) from just two Olympics, but he too gained gold in Antwerp (1920), and after he turned professional, at the age of 22, he won 56 international contests in the next seven years, defeating everyone he encountered. "The best man with all three weapons," was the verdict of Roger Ducret, the 1920 Olympic foil champion.

Why induct an Italian, however gifted, into the American hall of fame? Because of what he contributed to American fencing. From 1935 to 1943 Nadi taught in New York, initially in two large rooms on the third floor of the Savoy Plaza Hotel. In the mid-1940s he moved to Los Angeles, teaching at his salle on La Cienega Boulevard, turning out champions at all levels of American fencing.

He wrote a highly regarded treatise on foil (1943) and a posthumously-published autobiography (1995), one of the most readable books on fencing ever published. His influence on fencing in the U.S. was considerable, over a stretch of more than 30 years.

Era II – 1936 - 1975

Robert Blum

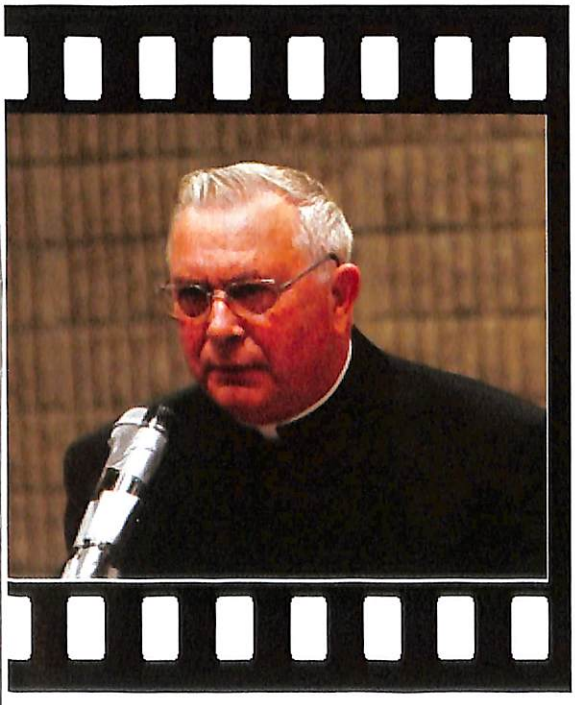
Robert Max Blum occupies a special place in American fencing. Beginning his successful competitive career as an All-American fencer at Trinity College, Bob went on to capture national or international points in five different decades, became the first of only two Americans in history to make the World Championship individual men's saber finals (1958) (equaled later only by Peter Westbrook), competed on two US Olympic Teams (1964 Tokyo and 1968 Mexico City), and officiated at four Olympic Games (1964, 1968, 1976, 1984), earning him a place in US saber fencing history. But what sets him above and apart from so many others has been Bob's breadth of achievement. While balancing a remarkable half-century legal career, government service spanning six decades (which continues to this day, at age 80, as one of Andrew Cuomo's New York State Assistant Attorneys General), family life as an active father of four accomplished children and husband to one of our country's leading social welfare advocates, Bob remarkably established himself as a dangerous and yet much-loved-and-admired sabreur, competing at, captaining teams that attended, and

officiating for, countless international events from the mid-1950s through the end of the 1980s. Bob was, and remains, a principled, loving and fun-loving alumnus of the US fencing establishment. Even in his autumn years, his family reports that he lives, breathes and dreams fencing.

Joseph Elliott

Originally from Tyler, Texas, Joe Elliott has accomplished much in his 50-plus years in fencing. He was two times US National Epee Champion (1965, 1970) and a two-time US National finalist in foil. He took first in Foil in the Mexico LA REFORMA in 1973 and was a team member of Mexican Pre-Olympics '65 and World Games in Moscow '66 and Cuba '69. Forty years later, he has been the US Veterans' Foil and Epee champion and has been a member of the US World Veterans' Team every year since 2001. This champion has been winning for over fifty years and has given much of his time to fencing in other ways, including as chair of the Southern California Division, organizer of the first NAC in California and fund raiser to help kids fence. Speaking of his competitive success, here's how Joe puts it: "I was last in the '63 Epee Nationals and I was first in the '65 Nationals. Throw in a couple of hundred local medals and there you have it! Fencing is FIGHTING and IT'S FUN."

"Fencing is FIGHTING and IT'S FUN!"



Era 3 – 1976 to Present

Father Lawrence Calhoun

Father Calhoun was responsible for the founding of fencing's Junior Olympic competition, one of the largest and most prestigious domestic events every year. Calhoun has coached fencers who have been members of six NCAA Championship teams, produced 13 All-Americans, eight Junior World Championship team members, three Senior World team members, and one Olympian. He has given tirelessly to US Fencing, chairing three USFA divisions and coaching at schools in three states. He is an Honorary Member of Masque De Fer in Lyons, France and recently became a Fellow of the U.S.Fencing Coaches Association.

Dr. Ralph Zimmermann, former Vice President of the USFA, said in 1997, "The Junior Olympics is the single most important achievement in the entire history of our organization… the program has become the cornerstone of our national efforts to both achieve results and provide healthy athletic competition for our youth."

Yury Gelman

Upon receiving a Masters degree in both Physical Education and Fencing from the Kiev Institute of Physical Education, Yury worked with the Ukrainian National Saber Team before emigrating to the United States in 1991.

Since then, Yuri Gelman has changed the course of US saber fencing, helping to elevate it to the top of the world stage.

Gelman has coached athletes to three Olympic teams (2000, 2004, and 2008). As the 2008 Olympic Men's Saber Coach, he personally guided U.S. athletes to the Olympic silver medal in the team event. Gelman has coached enough World Championships team members, junior and senior, that it's simply difficult to count them. His students have won gold, silver and bronze at Cadet and Junior World Championships and many medals in junior and senior World Cups include winning in individual and team Grand Prixs. He has prepared members of Cadet, Junior and Senior National team every year since 1995.

Gelman has been a fencing coach for 28 years. He was with Fencers Club in New York for many years, and now coaches at Manhattan Fencing Center, which he founded.

- Andy Shaw



2010 Pan American Championships

The U.S. fencing team left Costa Rica and the 2010 Pan American Championships draped in accomplishments and medals. The United States finished atop the medal standings, with six gold, two silver and seven bronze medals.

The U.S. men's and women's foil and saber teams all took home gold medals, and the men's and women's epee teams both won bronze.

Individually, U.S. fencers shone just as brightly. Lee Kiefer (Lexington, Ky.) and Doris Willette (Lafayette, Calif.) won gold and bronze, respectively, in the women's foil event. Mariel Zagunis (Beaverton, Ore.) won the women's saber event, and saberists Ibtihaj Muhammad (Maplewood, N.J.) and Dagmara Wozniak (Avenel, N.J.) both won bronze.

Kelley Hurley (San Antonio, Texas) bested sister Courtney in the women's epee semifinals and went on to earn the silver while Courtney took a bronze.

Canada finished second with ten total medals, including six silver. Cuba amassed seven medals, including four first-place finishes.

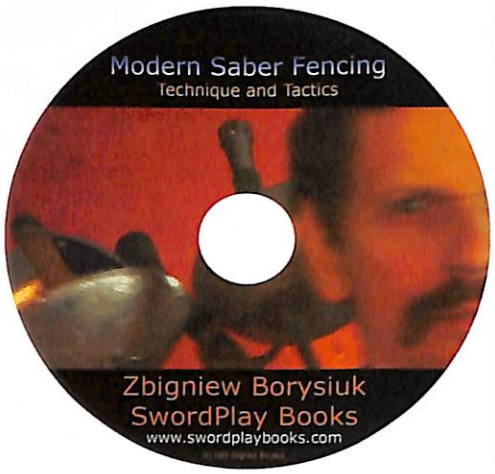
The Pan American Championships serve as an individual and team qualifying tournament for the 2011 Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico. Up-to-date results can be found at http://FIE.ch/.

You can read more about the Pan American Championships and see complete team rosters and results through Nicholas Olivier's excellent reportage at www.USFencing.org.

-AF

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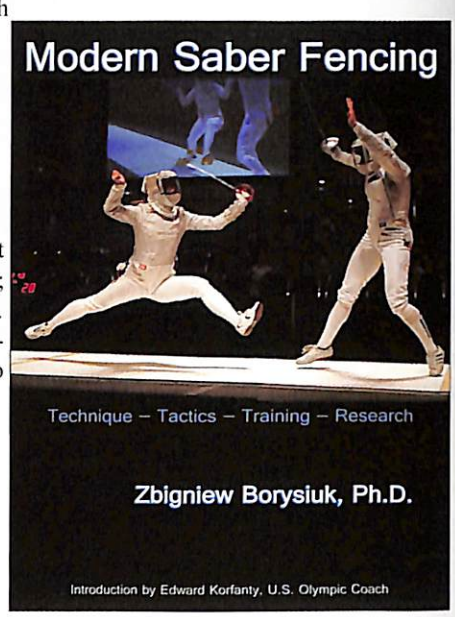
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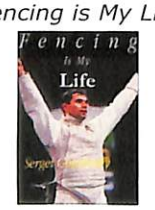
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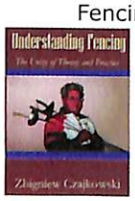
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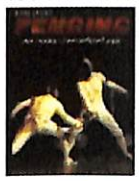
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Barb Lynch Passes Away

On August 25 the US fencing community lost one of its best advocates and most dedicated workers. Barb Lynch, after four years of fighting, finally succumbed to ovarian cancer. She passed away in the company of family and friends. Barb left us knowing she was loved and supported and in the manner that matched the grace in which she lived.

Barb started fencing at Morris Hills High School and continued as a college club fencer at Purdue University. Her volunteer resume began after her return to New Jersey from college, where she successfully served as the New Jersey division chair for more than 10 years. She coached Morris Hills High school for 21 years and received countless coaching awards during that tenure.

Her legendary organizational skills led her appointed as bout committee chair for many, many national fencing tournaments and Junior Olympic Championships. Based on that excellence, her variety of experience in fencing (both as coach and fencer) and being a voting board member, Barb was nominated and served as USFA Vice President from 2000-2004. Because of her long-standing contributions to the sport, she was honored with a lifetime membership to the USFA.

Her generosity of spirit, the time she made for others and her willingness to get involved will always be such a positive example for all who knew her. When you remember Barb, remember her smile, her diplomacy, her kindness and her humor. Remember her as the person you would strive to be like; the person who could make you smile with sarcasm; the person who could organize anything.

This December the fourth annual Barb Lynch Regional Youth Circuit will occur. It is a fencing event in her honor that utilizes an entirely volunteer staff with all proceeds going to Ovarian Cancer charities.

To honor Barb, in lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the Teal Ribbon Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation (www.trocrf.org).

The Teal Ribbon Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation, Inc. (TROCRF) is organized exclusively for charitable & scientific purposes. Their goal is to raise funds to advance ovarian cancer research towards a cure; advocating for early diagnostic treatment programs and to improve the lives of ovarian cancer survivors.

-Lisa Campi



Fencing Masters NYC to Take Place in November

At the Hammerstein Ballroom event in Manhattan on November 17, a contingent of some of the world's best fencers will face off to benefit the sport they love.

The event is the brainchild of organizer and 2008 Olympic silver medalist Tim Morehouse. New York events company WCMG has been working with Morehouse to put it all together. Fencing Masters NYC is designed as an evening full of entertainment, fine dining, and of course, dramatic duels between some of the best fencers in the world.

Several Olympic medalists are tentatively committed to compete, including Aldo Montano, Nicolas Lopez of France, Olga Kharlan of Ukraine and Jaime Marti of Spain, as well as US fencers Mariel Zagunis – and of course Morehouse himself.

Other events surrounding the gala include a fencing expo held earlier in the day on the 17th with stations set up with opportunities to try fencing, play fencing games and learn more about the sport, plus a children's section.

There is even an opportunity to face off with these legends of the sport. Area fencing clubs are hosting Fencing Masters NYC qualifying tournaments throughout when. Event winners will be invited to fence at the Club Champions Tournament to be held during the expo portion of the day. The winner of the Club Champions event will qualify to fence in the main event against either Aldo Montano or Nicolas Lopez and also receive a $1,000 training grant. All qualifier entrants will receive a ticket to the main event with their entry fee.

Morehouse says his hope is to draw people to the event in hopes of creating exposure and financial support that will benefit USA fencers striving for Olympic glory. A portion of proceeds will go to London 2012 hopefuls.

The gala event may be broadcast on television, although as of press time details were not available. For tickets and more information, see www.fencingmastersnyc.com – see you in New York!

-AF

Requesting Club News

American Fencing is now soliciting club news. If your fencing club has information of general interest for the national community, including moves, coaching changes, notes about special achievements of members or similar information, please send it in to editor@americanfencing.com!

High resolution photos should be included when available. Keep items brief, to one paragraph when possible. USA Fencing has more than 600 member clubs, so it may not be possible to run every item. Please note that Coaching Help Wanted and Competition adverts will still be run in the (still free) Classifieds section. -AF

American Fencing's History

1895-2010

By Andy Shaw

On April 23, 1891, a number of prominent fencers seceded from the Amateur Athletic Union and met at the New York Athletic Club where they formed a new association called the Amateur Fencers' League of America. A constitution and by-laws were presented and adopted, and officers were elected:

"President, Dr. Graeme M. Hammond; Vice-President, Dr. Bernard F. O'Connor; Secretary and Treasurer, Scott O'Connor. The Executive Committee will be composed of Rudolph O. Haubold, Charles Tatham, Edward Blanchy, William Heintz and the regular officers." The initiation fee was $1 and the annual dues $1. To become a member, one had to be proposed and seconded by a member of the League.

Within one year, the AFLA had 238 members and two divisions: New England and Nebraska, with a growing number of members from Rhode Island (mostly Newport). The Metropolitan New York area was the "capital" of the League and did not become a division until 1939! In the beginning, the secretary sent newsletters to the membership. But many attempts at having a strong national periodical failed.

The Swordsman, "the Official Organ of the Amateur Fencers' League of America," was the earliest fencing periodical in our history (circa 1895-1904) Published by Edward Breck (a member of the Breck family that developed successful shampoos), Mr. Breck was a top competitive fencer in Boston, member of the Boston Fencing Club, the Boston Athletic Association and the author of a popular fencing book under the Spalding Athletic Library label.

Many years passed and many new divisions had formed before a new national periodical was attempted.

In its inaugural issue, Francis Barnard O'Connor, President of the AFLA, had these words for the January 1932 issue of SWORD & RACQUET magazine:

> ***"For several years it has been the ambition of the Board of Governors to promote or help to promote the publication of a periodical devoted to the interests of fencing. This hope seems now about to be realized through the enterprise of Lewis B. Funke and Irving T. Marsh, editors of SWORD and RACQUET, and in this respect we welcome the partnership of our neighbors, the devotees of squash racquets and squash tennis. May we frequently have the opportunity of joining with these good friends to our mutual advantage.***
>
> ***"I have been asked to say a word expressive of the manner in which fencers near and far will greet this first issue of SWORD and RACQUET. I am delighted to respond to that request. It has been my experience that there is no group of sportsmen or sportswomen anywhere more devoted to their game or more willing to support a conscientious effort aimed to promote their game than the followers of the art of fence, as it has been called. That effort, I am sure, Mr. Funke and Mr. Marsh mean to put forth. We wish them the best of luck and all possible success."***

Swords and racquets didn't get along well even though many wonderful pieces were written on behalf of our sport. The next attempt to launch a national periodical was The Riposte.

It was promoted as "America's oldest magazine of Fencing, published six times yearly at 114 Washington Place, New York, N.Y., by and for fencers in America." Hall of Famer Jose de Capriles and William A. Perry III were the co-founders. The editor, Dernell Every, was a four-time Olympian and Hall of Famer. The advisor, Warren A. Dow, was also an Olympian and Hall of Famer. The associate editors were Donald F. Barnes, Miguel A. de Capriles, and Mitchell Burroughs. The magazine was founded in 1935; the first issue was presented at the New York Fencers Club on December 19, 1935. It had three pages and no cover, was mimeographed poorly and was stapled in one corner. The January, 1937 issue saw the Riposte's first cover. In 1940 the magazine had the following purchase price: trial subscription....$1. For six issues, $2. It ended during World War II.

In the 1940s came another attempt called The Amateur Swordsman. In one issue in 1948, in which C. P. Geres did an interview piece on George Santelli called, "On Guard, On Stage! An interview with George Santelli, American Olympic Coach and choreographer for Broadway's Swordplay."

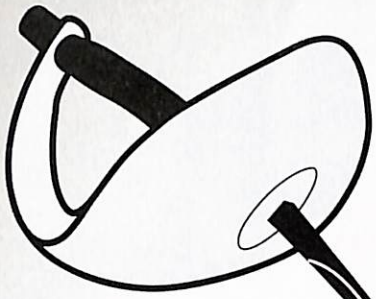
Finally, in November of 1949, W.L. Osborn published the first issue of American Fencing, "the Official Organ of the Amateur Fencers League of America." The editor was Joe deCapriles with contributing editors Mike deCapriles, Dernell Every, Joseph Fiems, Howard Hayden, Tracy Jaeckel, Francis Honeycutt, Fred Linkmeyer, Harold Van Buskirk and Alvar Hermanson.

Since then, the magazine has never looked back. The first four-color cover came in the early 1990s. Full color on the interior was introduced not so very long ago, in 2003. Editors have come and gone, as producing the quarterly publication has been a volunteer job until 2004 and writers are still unpaid.

Sword and Pen: American Fencing's Editors

*Joe deCapriles 1949 - 1969**
**Joe deCapriles dies Feb, 1969*
William Latzko May, 1969
Ralph Goldstein 1969 - 1976
Harriet King 1977 - 1978
Emily Johnson 1979
Mary Huddleson 1980 - 1986
Albie Axelrod 1987 - 1989
Bruce Milligan 1990 - 1992
Candi MacConaugha 1992 - 1999
Mike Sullivan, Interim Editor Summer 2000
Meg Galipault 2001 - 2004
Cindy Bent Findlay (copy editor 2002) 2004 - present





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IN THE TRENCHES

By Edwin (Buzz) Hurst

CHECK YOUR BYLAWS

Unless you live in a place where news only reaches your village by canoe, you will be aware by now that the former bylaws of the USFA have been completely replaced by a set that almost totally reorganizes the structure of our federation. When originally proposed, this restructuring included the elimination of Divisions & Sections, but in what may be arguably the old Board of Directors' finest hour, they rejected that idea out of hand. However, I'm sure that this is going to raise the question in some minds as to whether, in the absence of the applicable sections of the USFA Bylaws, there is anything governing how Divisions & Sections are going to be run. But of course there is, messieurs et mesdames: your individual sets of bylaws. After the Board made its decision, a paragraph was inserted into the new rules that states flatly that Divisions & Sections will continue as they were constituted under the old organization. That means that your Division or Section Bylaws rule.

I flatter myself that through a combination of the ***Division Operating Guide*** and this column, most of our Divisions have updated their bylaws to pattern them fairly closely after the sample provided in the ***Guide***. If you have, then you are not going to experience much of a flutter at the local level. On the other hand, if you have deviated wildly from them, or you don't really have any, then (to put it in technical terms) you can probably kiss your collective derrieres goodbye. If you do not know why this would be so, then nothing I say in this column is going to help. It is possible that there are Divisions out there that are composed entirely of people so downright amenable that they would have unnerved Dr. Seuss, but my own time in this job leads me to think that it is more likely that, by December, those without viable bylaws will be experiencing turmoil that will make the French Revolution look like a day at the beach. And if one of you in that situation contacts me for advice, don't be surprised if all I can tell you to do is to call in an air strike.

So what is the author's message, class? *Check your bylaws*, and if they are non-existent (or existent but off-the-wall) do everything you collectively can to fix the situation as soon as possible.

Now, on to a topic I used to think that I would only go near after I had translated *The Iliad* into Inuit. I mean, every time I sit down in front of my computer it still sneers, but yes, let's talk about the Division website.

I am pretty certain that every Division & Section in the USFA now has a website, but some of them are down, and more are badly out of date. The advantages of having a website over the old U.S. mail approach is the ability to get information out fast, and thus to make additions or deletions to the tournament schedule as the season progresses. The website also should act as an easily accessible repository of pertinent Division information.

One of the problems that often crops up in the local cyberworld is the number of people who overestimate their computer expertise; it is not unusual that someone will volunteer to be the Division webmaster who really is not very adept at the old keyboard. Perhaps more invidious is the person who does know the field, says he'll do the job, and then wanders off into the weeds while the website gets increasingly discombobulated (sometimes they'll be so far out in the meadow that even repeatedly cooing "Spiderman" or "Gandalf" won't bring them in). I would say that finding a webmaster who can do the job with both ability and rigor has become one of the most important tasks that face a Chair.

So, let's say you landed a good one…what should be on the site?

1. The Division tournament schedule
2. The names of the Division officers and their contact information
3. The names of the other members of the Executive Committee (it is optional whether their contact info needs to be up there)
4. A copy of the Division Bylaws. This is very important, because every member of every Division should have ready access to their local bylaws.
5. Any official Division policies and procedures
6. The minutes of previous Executive Committee meetings
7. The names and contact information for local USFA Registered Clubs is always a good idea
8. Important notices or announcements
9. Anything else you want to throw in that you think is relevant or helpful.

It is imperative that the website be kept current. If it is allowed to lapse, it soon loses credibility with the membership and they stop going to it. Then, when you have to get an important announcement out, and time is of the essence, you discover that your village's canoe is without a paddle.

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2010 Cadet Women's Epee, Junior & Cadet World Championships, Baku, Azerbaijan. Photo: S. Timacheff

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RULES & REFEREES

Fencing Rules in Need of Change

By Jeff Bukantz

The Fencing Officials Commission's Code of Ethics states the following:
Referees must offer their judgment to appropriate Officials Commissions concerning rules that do not accomplish their intended goal.

The fencing rules book is a veritable tour de force, as it attempts to cover every possible infraction and convention. As the sport evolved in the areas of circumventing the rules, using the rules to an advantage, and trying to gain an edge within the area of right-of-way, the rules book generally kept pace.

As a member of the FIE Rules Commission from 2000-2008 and the FOC from 1993-2008, I can assure you that both entities take the rules very seriously. However, I can also say that the FIE Rules Commission on which I served was responsible for errors in judgment. Sometimes, the Commission just didn't envision a quirk in the rules and never corrected it.

In some cases, the hands of the FIE Rules Commission were tied, as decisions were basically dictated by the then president, who ignored the Rules Commission and the FIE Congress by utilizing his Executive Committee.

I've compiled a short list of fencing rules which I personally feel are in need of change. This opinion is mine alone, reached through 35 years of experience with what I feel are rules gaffes.

NO BREAK AFTER 8 TOUCHES IN A DE BOUT IN FOIL AND EPEE

Of course, this is the rule in saber, as most bouts end in the first period. It makes sense, as it allows for at least one break for coaching and changing strategies. So, as some epee and foil bouts end in the first period, as well, why shouldn't the same break in the action be guaranteed to those fencers?

Recommendation to the FIE and the FOC: In order to guarantee at least one break within a foil or epee DE bout, mandate a break after 8 touches have been scored by one fencer during the first period. This rule should be consistent among all three weapons.

One foot off the side behind extension of end line

Imagine you are a left-hander and your rear foot drifts off the right side of the strip. Now, envision the entire strip, starting at the offensive end. The rear foot goes off the right side at any time during the entire length of the 14 meters, and it is OFF the strip. Got it?

Now, you have retreated to where your front toe is on the end line and your back foot drifts off the right side of the strip (if the line were extended). Well, that should be a ground penalty, your opponent should advance a meter which pushed you off the end, and a point awarded. It is simple, right?

WRONG! According to a quirk in the rules, technically there is no extension of the plane of the end line. Therefore, the foot which has been off the strip for 14 meters is now incredibly not off! Think about it: At the moment where going off the side is most important, as a point is at hand, the fencer whose foot is off gains an unfair advantage.

Recommendation to the FIE and the FOC: Extend the plane of the end line in order to correct this egregious loophole.

The Falling rule

According to the rules, no touch may be scored while falling. It has been determined that a fall is an infraction, no different than any other simple infraction.The falling fencer's touch is annulled and a Group 1 card is given. No problem here. However, a fencer who executes the same fall (infraction) but fails to score a touch is not penalized.

So, the fencer who is good enough to score is penalized for committing the falling infraction. In direct contrast, the fencer who was NOT good enough to score while committing the exact same falling infraction is not penalized. This is illogical and needs to be consistent.

Recommendation to the FIE and the FOC: A fencer who commits the falling infraction should be penalized with a Group 1 offense, regardless of scoring or not.

The Salute

No matter the level of competition, the potential animus between fencers or teams, and the prize at stake, the salute epitomizes that fencing is a gentleman's sport.

However, there needs to be reasonable flexibility as to the immediacy of that salute. The most exciting moment in Olympic fencing, where our sport has a chance to be showcased is when the winning touch is scored and the SPONTANEOUS celebration erupts.

If a fencing clip is to be featured on any sports show, it will be that medal-winning moment of unbridled exultation.

But, no! Instead, the referees and side judges are instructed to act as crossing guards and prevent the special moment while making sure the fencers go back to to their en garde lines and salute!

Incredible, the salute provides for the ultimate buzz-kill instead of the most exciting moment of the entire competition.

Recommendation to the FIE and the FOC: First and foremost, allow for a completely spontaneous moment to celebrate BEFORE the fencers have to salute.

Reversal of the Rear Shoulder

The unintended consequence of allowing the reversal of the rear shoulder was a new generation of fencers who systematically covered target.

Very few fencers are able to reverse the shoulder without covering. Many referees, lulled into a mindset that the reversal somehow legally superseded covering, simply don't call the covering.

The bottom line is that a rule should never have been changed because the referees don't properly or consistently enforce it. Instead, change the referees if they don't do their job!

Recommendation to the FIE and the FOC: As long as reversing the rear shoulder is legal, make sure the referees properly and consistently enforce the covering rule.

The Triple Whammy in Saber

Fencer A already has a yellow card. On a subsequent action, Fencer A attacks and scores while crossing over (fleching) and opponent Fencer B scores on the counterattack.

Fencer A's is touch is annulled, as the rules do not allow a fencer to score WHILE committing an infraction. In addition, Fencer A receives a red card for the second offense. So, Fencer B is the rightful beneficiary of two points, the annulled touch and the penalty point. This is exactly the same as all other rules. It is fair and proportional.

However, here comes the only time in our sport where two lights are scored in a right-of-way weapon and the fencer without the right-of-way gets the point! Yes, in addition to the annulment and the penalty, Fencer B also gets a point for the ill-timed and unearned counterattack.

Does Fencer A also have to pack Fencer B's bag at the end of the competition and pay for his dinner? C'mon, this triple whammy is ridiculous and an over-penalization for the simple offense of crossing over.

Recommendation to the FIE and the FOC: In the case of the saber crossover, the out-of-time counterattack should not count unless it is the single light registered.

In a future issue, I will cover other rules or conventions in need of change. Among them are: non-combativity, the blockage time, the contact time, and the rule still in the FIE rules book but wrongly eliminated from the USFA rules book…the dreaded coaching rule. (Do you know that this rule almost cost the United States an Olympic silver medal in Beijing?)

Are there other rules in need of change?

AF

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POSTCARDs from the Strip

By Ann Leslie Jones



Ann Leslie Jones, Marian Catholic senior Sandra Denton, and coach Sr. Dorothy Marie Solak

My 25th college reunion was approaching and, as usual, the committee posed a question for our individual pages in the class record book: "What is the biggest surprise about life in your forties?" I sat down to compose my thoughts and the answer came to me immediately: rediscovering fencing.

I chose my college, in part, because it had a fencing team. The time I spent fencing at Wellesley under coach Laurie Katz was a high point of my experience there. After college, owning no equipment but a pair of fencing shoes, I returned home to Englewood, New Jersey, which was, at that time, home to the Santelli factory and, I assume, salle d'armes. Not having the money to outfit myself to fence independently, I was never able to work up the nerve to walk through their door. Two years later, following my graduation from Columbia University's School of Library Service, I moved to Chicago to begin my first job as a professional librarian.

That winter, I had one more brush with fencing when I signed up for a class at a local adult education center. The instructor's manner and style were different from my beloved coach, which made me uncomfortable. The other students were all beginning fencers, and I kept to myself, not wanting to act like a know-it-all. When the class ended, I walked away discouraged, convinced that my fencing career was over.

Fast forward 22 years: I am married and the mother of a 13 year old daughter when I get a call from a parent at Marian Catholic High School which has just started a fencing team. He had learned from a mutual friend that I had been a fencer and invited me to come work out with the team. They had equipment and I had nothing to lose. My daughter was going to be attending the school in two short years, and I felt that she would enjoy the sport as much as I did.

At the end of the very first practice I attended, I looked at the fencers around the gym lobby. One of the freshmen had brought her light sabers along and was happily dueling herself in a corner. I took a deep breath and exhaled… I was home!

I soon learned just how much Laurie had taught me and how much that experience meant to me. From attending one practice a week and accompanying the team to a few tournaments during our first year, I advanced in our second year to organizing all of the practices and attending all of the tournaments, now accompanied by my daughter, who was able to practice with the team as an 8th grader and get a taste of high school life. Many of her closest friends are fencers and, although she put some distance between herself and her foilist mother by choosing to fence epee, we enjoy fencing together and I will miss her on the team when she goes off to college next fall.

After two years as a volunteer coach, a position opened up in the school library. Although my library experience is in other areas, the fact that I had worked with their students encouraged the administration to take a chance on me. This year will be my fourth as the assistant librarian and fencing coach along with Sr. Dorothy Marie Solak (who fenced at U of Michigan in the 70s') and two faithful volunteers, Peter Lowther and fellow fencing parent Dale Block, who taught himself armory skills and saber to ensure our growth into a full fledged fencing program.

As I tell prospective fencers and their parents, fencers have one big thing in common -- we enjoy being different. The result is that we have a diverse group of kids on the team, who are tolerant of each other's eccentricities and comfortable being themselves. Many would not be involved in athletic competition if we did not have a fencing team, a fact that the school administration appreciates and which ensures their support, even though we still have club status.

I love introducing new fencers to the sport and watching them develop as competitors. Most of our fencers reach a point by the end of their second year where they are able to beat me. After all, they get more opportunities to fence than I do, and against some stiff competition! This makes my relationship with the varsity fencers collegial and gives me a chance to help them develop their leadership skills along with their fencing.

I love being able to hang out with fencers again and wish I could thank Laurie for all she taught me. Unfortunately, she developed ALS after moving from the Boston area to Ithaca, New York for her husband's job, and died in 1996. Still, every so often, I run into a coach or referee who knew her, and I feel as if every achievement of my fencers reflects back on her and on all my Wellesley teammates -- if you're reading this, you know who you are!

Fencing got me back into shape physically and gave me an introduction to Marian that helped me get a job I absolutely love. Most of my prior library experience was in research libraries, both academic and independent, and was certainly rewarding. However, after three years I find that I prefer making a difference in this setting, where I get to touch the future.

AF



International Fencing, Brooklyn Style



By Nicholas Olivier

Standing in the lobby, you would never guess a world-class fencing tournament was taking place just down the corridor in the grand ballroom at the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge. A modest stand-up banner outside of the venue alerted passersby that a Federation International d'Escrime's World Cup was in town from June 18-20. The Fencers Club of New York and U.S. Fencing Association (USFA) played host to 367 of the top fencers in the world representing over 20 countries across three disciplines: men's saber, women's saber and women's foil. The citizens of Brooklyn walked the streets outside without the slightest of clues.

Smack dab during the middle of the FIFA World Cup of soccer, I was surprised to find out that I would be attending a different type of Coupe du Monde. I boarded a flight from San Antonio, Texas to LaGuardia Airport as the newest member of the USFA communications staff.

A journalism major in college, I'd rubbed shoulders with other Olympic sports before. I served as a U.S. Olympic Committee intern during school and also volunteered as a press officer during the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver, where I worked primarily with the alpine ski team in Whistler, B.C. I recently began working through the USOC for both USA Fencing and USA Canoe/Kayak as a press officer.

My indoctrination into the fascinating world of fencing would be one of immersion, a trial of fire as it were. I had some understanding of the sport and the national governing body from my time as a media relations intern with the U.S. Olympic Committee. I had once donned the official garb and weaponry to spar with my fellow interns at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. I was familiar with the big names in American fencing from the weekly Olympic Sports Scene e-newsletter I helped produce.

However, I could not point out an epee from a foil. I thought a riposte had something to do with blogging. Yet here I was, covering fencing in Brooklyn.

It didn't take long for me to realize the importance of this event and the significance of its location. The FIE World Cup circuit drew the top fencers from around the world, all trying to earn points towards a higher FIE world ranking and a more favorable draw at the World Championships in November in Paris.

New York City had not hosted an international fencing competition since 2004, though the city has a rich fencing heritage. The city produced four Olympic silver medal-winning fencers at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. The inspiring Peter Westbrook Foundation helps underserved New York City youth discover fencing. Numerous foundation fencers have become Olympians but all of them have found a better life.

I had heard of U.S. Olympians Mariel Zagunis and Tim Morehouse. I knew that they were the current face of American fencing. I did not know that the U.S. had so many other fencers in the top 30 in their respective disciplines. Almost 90 Americans were slated to compete in New York. I was not surprised to see Zagunis, the two-time reigning Olympic gold medalist in women's saber, ranked No. 1 in the world. I was surprised to see American teenagers Nzingha Prescod and Ambika Singh

International Fencing, Brooklyn Style

Photos by Amy Timacheff





enter the tournament ranked Nos. 20 and 24, respectively, in women's foil. Now all I needed to do was find their profile photos on usfencing.org so that I would recognize their faces in case I shared an elevator with one of them.

Turns out it wasn't just the best in American fencers making the trip to the big city. The Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge resembled a United Nations assembly, with fencers from all over Europe and Asia in attendance. Countries with thriving fencing communities, such as Italy, France, Canada and Korea, all sent large teams. Nations not commonly associated with the sport, such as Chile, Venezuela and Senegal, were represented. Olympians and Olympic medalists were everywhere. Italian saber fencers Luigi Tarantino and Aldo Montano boast a combined six Olympic medals over four Olympic Games. Two-time Olympians Aleksandra Socha of Poland and Leonore Perrus of France appeared poised to challenge Zagunis' throne atop the women's saber rankings. Although not competing, Olympic silver medalists and Brooklyn-natives Keeth and Erinn Smart were on hand to provide on-site commentary during the semifinal and final rounds of the tournament. The sporting event was a "who's who" of the international fencing scene.

I was taken aback by the excitement of it all.



The hotel restaurant became quite animated as fencers-turned-soccer fans sat down to watch the USA-Slovenia World Cup match unfold. Members of the area fencing community showed up by the hundreds to watch the top-notch display of athleticism in the ballroom. Adolescent American fencers ran from strip to strip, watching their Olympic role models. A local mother pointed out all the European champion coaches and fencers to her 14-year-old daughter. Fencers cheered on their teammates as coaches patrolled the playing area. Opponents were amazingly cordial to each other before, during and after a bout.

"I think most importantly, all of our kids are here watching us and I think it was really important to show them, they're looking at us as their role models, like 'how good can I be?' And us showing them we can beat fencers










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International Fencing, Brooklyn Style

Photos by Amy Timacheff

from all over the world and so can they," Tim Morehouse said. "I thought that was the most important part of the day for U.S. fencing."

Mariel Zagunis' dominance would continue as she defeated Reka Benko of Hungary 15-13 in the women's saber final. Morehouse and Ibtihaj Muhammad surprised no one with their quarterfinal finishes in men's and women's saber, respectively. But it was the performances of three teenage American fencers that piqued my interest. It won't be the last time we hear the names Daryl Homer, Nzingha Prescod and Lee Kiefer.

Homer joined Morehouse in the men's saber quarterfinals, losing to eventual NYC World Cup champion Aldo Montano, 15-7. Originally from the Virgin Islands, Homer moved to the Bronx at age five and now the 19-year-old fencer finds himself squarely in contention for the World Championships later this year.

"The sky's the limit for [Homer], he should make the next Olympic team," Three time Olympian Keeth Smart said. "He definitely could be better than I was, better than Peter Westbrook. He could go down as one of the all-time great saber fencers if he keeps working hard."

Kiefer celebrated her 16th birthday by reaching the "Sweet 16" five days later. Kiefer fell to eventual NYC World Cup champion Hyun Hee Nam of Korea, 15-8. A veteran by comparison, the 17-year-old Prescod also qualified for the round of 16, losing to third-seeded Katja Waechter of Germany, 15-12.

"This is a good finish for Nzingha and Lee,

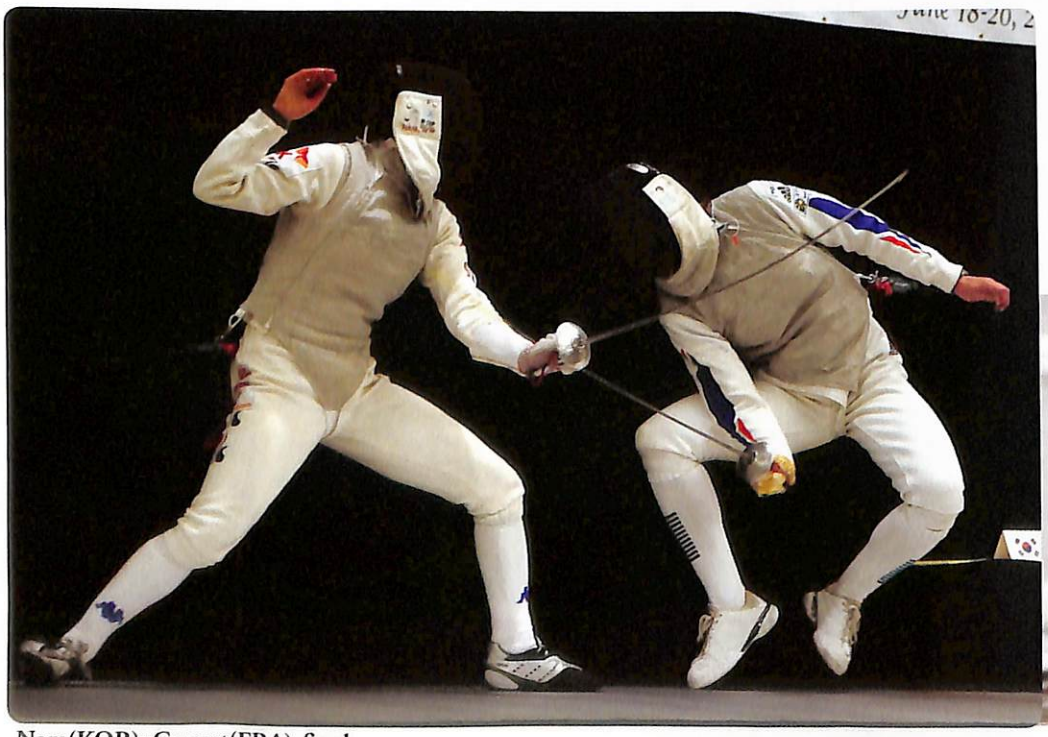


this has actually been building all season for both of them," said Mike Peterson, USFA Women's Foil Coach. "They are [part of] a young group, a young team, and throughout the course of the season, there have been a few ups and downs, and this is a nice end to the season. It puts them in a good spot psychologically. It shows them they have the capacity to compete at the highest level internationally."

I couldn't believe how engrossed I had become with the spectacle. I was eagerly tracking the progress of each American, not only because it was my job, but also because I emotionally invested in their performance. It was inspiring to see teenagers competing in their home country on the world's stage with their friends and family backing them up. Homer, Prescod and Kiefer displayed elite athleticism, composure under stress and immense potential. I can't wait to follow these three Americans at the World Championships and beyond. U.S. Fencing appears to be in good shape heading towards the London 2012 Olympic Games.

With the Big Apple as the backdrop, the world's greatest fencers put on a big show. The Brooklyn Bridge connects the boroughs of Brooklyn and Manhattan. But on the weekend of June 18-20, the iconic bridge connected New York City with the world. I returned to Texas with an incredible respect for the sport of fencing and a renewed desire to tell the stories of the U.S. Fencing Association and its world-class fencers.

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"What if?..."

Mariel Zagunis

Behind the Mask - By Kevin Mar

You should do whatever you can do so you don't have to ask yourself 'what if?'" This was insightful sage advice from Mariel Zagunis, the only individual Olympic Gold medalist in the history of women's saber. AF caught up with the 2009 World Champion before she trekked to Costa Rica for zonal qualifiers at the Pan American Games, where she added two to her ever-increasing gold collection, from both the individual and team events.

Mariel, are you OK? You sound a little winded.

Well, I just got done with my cross-training coach a moment ago.

Your cross-training coach?

Yeah, four times a week I work on conditioning, endurance, strength building, and speed work outs in addition to my normal lessons.

Sounds intense!

Yep, it's a long session, but it has really helped my game. Fencers by nature are asymmetrical so this helps even my body out. I've always done sports throughout my life so it gives me something else to do besides fencing.

What other sports did you do?

I did tennis, ping-pong, and basketball and I watch all sports, especially college football. I watch Notre Dame, but I'll admit I also root for the OSU Beavers!

Gotta root for the team that you watched when you grew up!

Yep! I've also played soccer since I was five years old and played up to the varsity level in high school. In high school though, I knew I had to either do soccer or fencing, so I chose fencing. Deep down, I knew it would come to that at some point in time though.

So how does it make you feel that you are USA Fencing's first professional fencer? Do you like that potential label?

Well, I hadn't thought of it like that, but I guess I am! Hmm… I do like that title! This opens up other possibilities for other fencers down the road! I still do clinics and speeches to help supplement my income, but getting the stipend from the USOC for being the world number one fencer certainly helps!



Photos by Amy and Serge Timacheff

Having Leon Paul as a sponsor must also help.

No kidding! They are a great sponsor. They helped me create my own signature blade and they been great for extra support throughout the years.

Let's go back and do a history lesson for a moment; back to April 26, 2004. What was going through your head during that time?

Ahh… Do we have to?... Well, that was Summer Nationals in Atlanta. I had just lost to Sada Jacobson. If I had beat her, Sada, her sister Emily, and I would all be going to the Olympics. If I lost, then the Jacobson sisters would be going and I would not. Well, I ended up losing and not making the team.

I bet that was very challenging.

Yeah, it was hard getting photos taken with the announced Olympic team with me in the picture and also out of the picture. They were able to go to dinner and team banquets that they were invited to, but I wasn't able to go to because I wasn't on the team. I was the world alternate, but not officially on the team. That means that if anyone in the event goes down for whatever reason, then I would be the replacement in the event.

So you must be very grateful that Jacqueline Esimaje of Nigeria was unable to go then?

Yeah, because Nigeria didn't send her and there wasn't another person in the African zonal who qualified, I was able to go in her place.

So what were you thinking after the Atlanta Summer Nationals in 2004?

Well, I was upset and I didn't really want to train any more, but [coach] Ed [Korfanty] kept on insisting that I keep on training. Things would have been very different if I hadn't been training for that six week period in between Atlanta and finding out I made the team.

Aren't you happy that you did?

Yep! I just kept thinking how crazy that it would be watching the Olympics from home when I would have been ranked #4 going into the Olympics. That is crazy!

How did you find out that you made the team?

I was coming back from Tauberbischofsheim, Germany where I had just won my first Senior World Cup and I found out while I was on the Portland Airport shuttle bus. My Mom yelled across the bus, "Mariel, you made the Olympic team!" 40 extra people got to share in my excitement in making the team!

So what event has stood out for you?

I guess I would have to say the 2009 World Championships. During that season I had won six of the nine world cups and then I finally won what Ed has called my "missing jewel in the crown": The World Championships. That was a fantastic season!

Any final remarks?

Have a solid foundation. It is much easier to learn something correctly than have to relearn it later on. Have fun fencing! This is a great social sport! I also want to say thanks to Ed, the reason for my success, and to my family and support system! I have a website, www.marielzagunis.com too, and you can also join me on my official Facebook Fan Page.

Well, here is to success in Paris, London, and maybe even Rio?

Totally!

AF

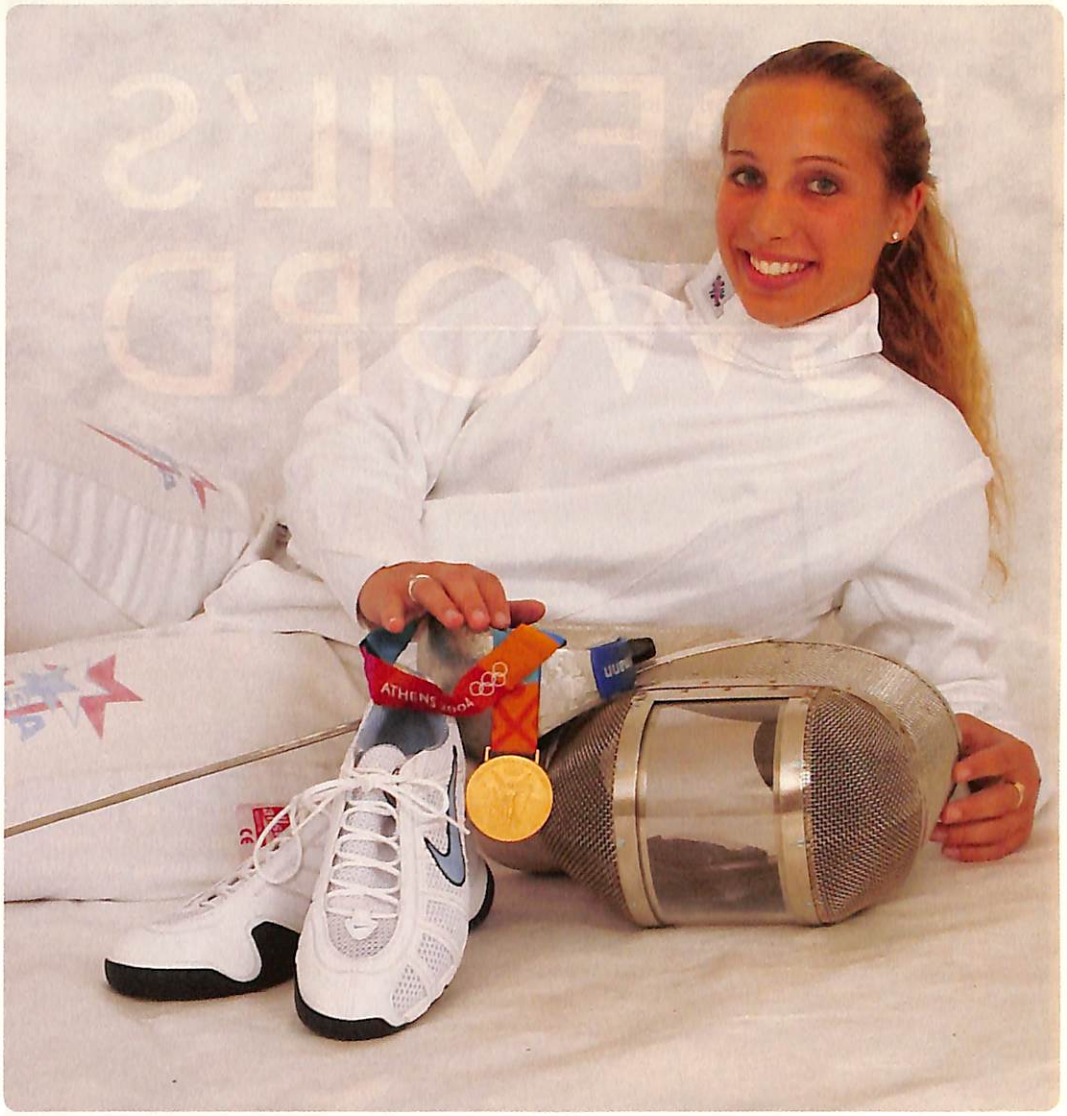












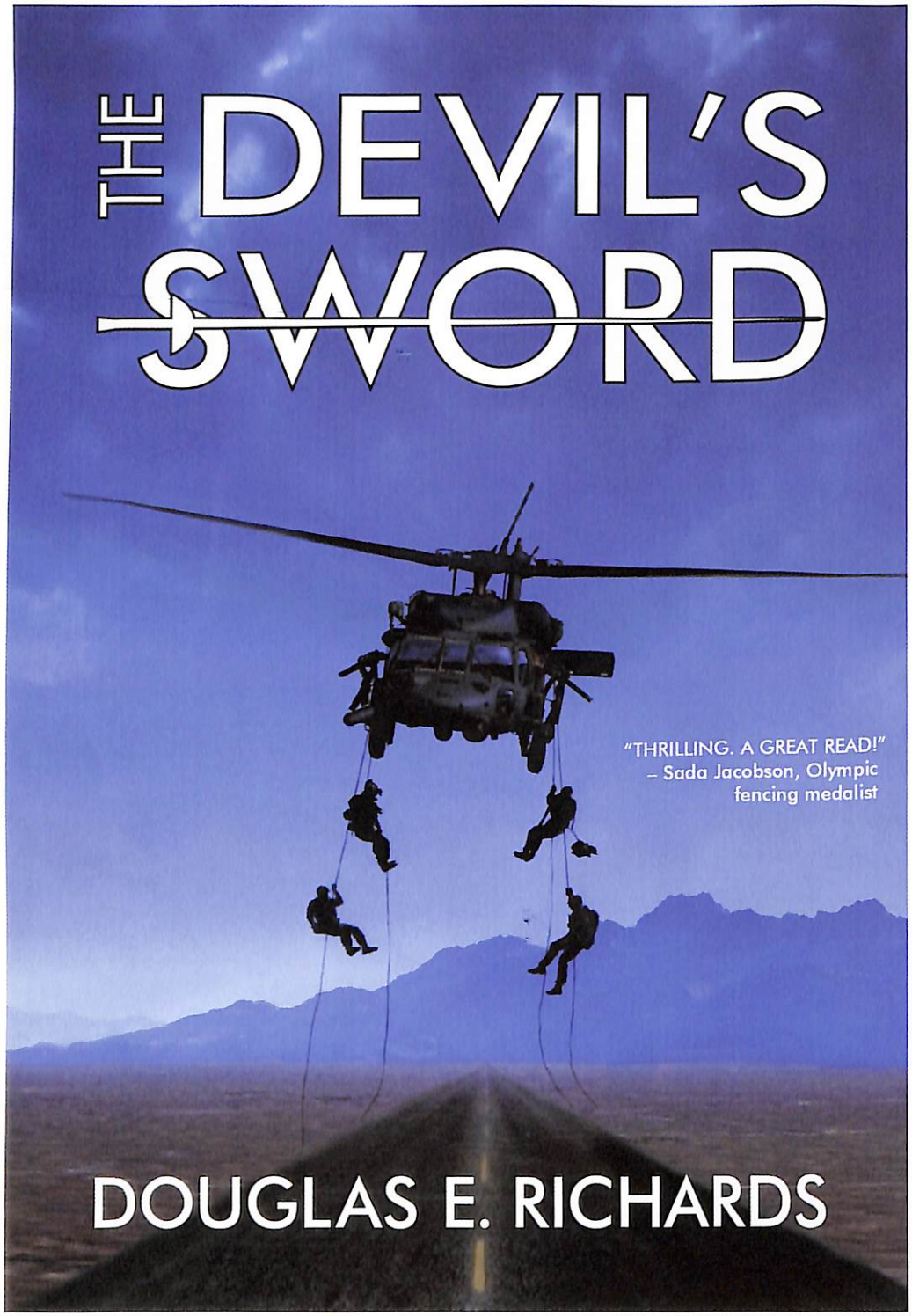


Quick Facts

Club: Oregon Fencing Alliance
Coach: Ed Korfanty
School: Notre Dame University
Current Location: Beaverton, Ore.
Best Results: 2004, 2008 Olympic Gold, and 2009 World Champion
Greatest accomplishment: 2008 Olympic Gold (It's hard to repeat)
Favorite Fencing Item: Leon Paul's Zagunis Saber Blade and Nike Ballestras
Jock or geek: Jock

Training Regime

Morning Lesson (35-45 min) 5/wk
Cross-training with a trainer (4/wk) – speed, agility, conditioning
Evening practice 5/wk
Morning practice (light) 2-3/wk



Read an excerpt from
The Devil's Sword,
a mainstream fencing thriller for kids and adults
By Douglas E. Richards
An American Fencing Magazine exclusive

A fencing tournament turns deadly! Can three young fencers thwart a plan to bring America to its knees?

Douglas E. Richards is the author of The Prometheus Project series, fast-paced science fiction thrillers that have been showered with praise by kids and adults alike. The series has been endorsed by the California Department of Education and has received glowing reviews in such publications as Asimov's Science Fiction magazine, School Library Journal, Teaching Pre K-8 magazine, Odyssey Magazine, and Kirkus. Earlier this year, Richards was a special guest at San Diego Comic-Con International, along with such notables as Stan Lee, Ray Bradbury, and Rick Riordan.

Now, Richards has tackled a new adventure topic: fencing! In The Devil's Sword, three young fencers become pawns in a plan to steal the most dangerous weapon ever made – a plan that revolves around a fencing competition at an Air Force Base.

"For most of my life, I knew absolutely nothing about fencing. But when my 12-year-old son took up the sport, I quickly fell in love with it. It was insanely fun to watch, and I marveled at the speed, endurance, athleticism, and intelligence required. Who knew? I became immersed in the world of tournaments," Richards says.

"I fell in love with the fencing community as well: the brightest and nicest group of people one could ever hope to meet, and ever generous at helping Newbies learn the ropes. This was a fascinating secret world that only the tiniest minority ever had the chance to experience, and I felt certain that many more people would fall in love with the sport if only they were exposed to it. I became determined to write a mainstream thriller that both kids and adults would love, fencers and non-fencers alike, one in which a fencing tournament would take center stage so I could share some of this amazing world I was so lucky to have discovered.

Richards says he struggled for more than six months to nail down the plot, refusing to write the novel until he was absolutely thrilled with every aspect it. The result is The Devil's Sword.

Now, in an exclusive preview, American Fencing presents the first two chapters of The Devil's Sword before it is even released to the public. We hope our young readers will enjoy the story.

CHAPTER ONE

"If someone comes at you with a sword, run if you can. Kung Fu doesn't always work."
– Bruce Lee, Martial Arts Expert, Actor

Kevin Taylor drove the tip of his sword into Ben Chang's chest with a ferocious lunge. He moved with the blinding quickness of a striking cobra, and his attack took Ben completely by surprise, impaling him before he could even begin to react.

Kevin shook his fist triumphantly. Yesssss he thought excitedly to himself. He loved stabbing people.

"The attack is from my left," announced the referee. "Attack arrives. Touch for Taylor. Taylor leads seven touches to four."

Ben Chang groaned miserably. His friend had set a trap for him and he had walked straight into it.

Kevin Taylor's white, padded, outer clothing was soaked in sweat, and he was breathing hard now, even between points. A black, steel-mesh helmet enveloped his entire head like an enormous dragonfly eye that had erupted from his shoulders. He pulled the heavy mask off, wiped sweat from his eyes with the back of his gloved right hand, and replaced the mask. Once again, his face vanished behind the tight black mesh.

"On guard!" said the referee. "Fencer's ready. Fence!"

A crowd of about twenty spectators stood along one side of the fencing strip; a metal pathway laid out on the floor like a gleaming silver sidewalk, six feet wide and forty-six feet long. The two boys moved toward each other from their on guard lines, located about seven feet from the middle of the strip on either side. Several in the small crowd rooted loudly for one or the other of the two battling fourteen-year olds. The boys paid no attention. They were so focused on reacting to every movement of the other's sword an alien spaceship could have landed next to them and they wouldn't have noticed.

Kevin and Ben raced up and down the long metal strip, lunging, retreating and crossing swords. They never faced each other full on, but rather were turned sideways in the stance used by swordfighters throughout history to expose as little of their bodies to the enemy's blade as possible. The front foot of each fencer was extended forward and pointed toward the other while the back foot of each was well behind them, at a ninety-degree angle to their lead foot. Their knees were bent and they stayed balanced, ready to accelerate explosively into an attack or rocket themselves backwards in retreat with equal agility.

Kevin began an attack that was blocked; the boys' blades crashing against each other with an unmistakable metal clang. The instant Ben pushed Kevin's blade aside he went in for the kill, but Kevin spun away from his friend's thrust and flicked his sword at Ben like a whip. Instead of striking Ben's torso, the tip of Kevin's blade hit his friend's arm. Ben winced in pain. Even though the material covering his arm was thick, the sword-turned-whip bit into his flesh and he felt a sharp sting that was in no hurry to go away.

"Halt!" shouted the referee as Ben tried to rub the pain from his arm. "The initial attack is from my left," he announced. "The attack is parried. Riposte from my right is 'no'. Counterattack from my left is off target. No touch. Score remains seven touches to four." The fencers quickly returned to the ready position. "Fencer's ready," said the referee. "Fence!"

During the brief break in the action, Kevin had glanced at the electronic scoring display on the wall. Five seconds were left in the three-minute period. Ben had noticed this as well, and neither boy initiated any further attacks while they waited for the glowing red numbers on the display to tick down to zero.

"The second period is over," announced the ref. "There will be a one minute break followed by the third and final period."

Kevin pulled off his helmet and retreated to his end of the strip. He shot a quick glance at Rachel Felder, a fifteen-year-old girl who was close friends with both combatants, and nodded. Rachel was a fantastic fencer in her own right.

One more period to go, thought Kevin. Just three more minutes. The gold medal was so close he could almost taste it! He vowed to fence for the next three minutes as if his life depended on it.

He had no way of knowing, of course, that in just six weeks time his life really would depend on his fencing abilities — as would the lives of others very close to him.

CHAPTER TWO

"In war, there is no second prize for runner-up."
– Gen. Omar Bradley, Field Com. (WW II)

John Anderson landed the small helicopter at the edge of an oval clearing in the vast woods, beside a similar chopper. Night was just falling. Other than the two men he had come to meet he doubted there was another human for twenty miles. John was a high-ranking member of an American Black Operations group, a shadowy organization whose very existence was denied by the military. He took a deep breath and stepped from the helicopter into the clearing.

"What took you so long, my friend," bellowed Diego Martinez from twenty yards away, standing at the opposite edge of the large clearing. John had never met the man in person but his deep voice was unmistakable. And while he couldn't see Diego clearly in the twilight, he could tell he was tall, thin and clean cut. Diego had once been a member of an elite unit in the Cuban army before he had teamed up with Klaus, the shorter, more muscular German standing next to him. Both men were in their thirties, extremely fit, and experts at disguise. And while English was not a first language for either of them, both spoke it perfectly; only their accents revealing their origins.

In a single, fluid motion, John turned, pulled a submachine gun from the floor of the helicopter, and came up firing, spraying both men with bullets. Fifteen rounds exploded from the barrel of the submachine gun each second, accompanied by billowing smoke and a thunderous sound that reverberated throughout the forest — as instantly recognizable as it was deafening. Small animals of every kind fled through the underbrush, and bark flew through the air as stray bullets imbedded themselves in surrounding trees.

John continued firing long past the time at which both men were surely dead. Despite the distance, they never had a chance. They had been cut down without making a single move to escape.

John rushed forward to inspect his work, but he knew what he would find. They would each have so many holes in them they would look more like bloody Swiss cheese than men.

He was ten yards away when his heart skipped a beat. Something was very wrong! After two more steps he realized what it was — his targets had not been human! Instead, they had been manikins, made up to look exactly like Diego and Klaus.

John's stomach dropped in horror and he wheeled around just as a bullet tore through his forearm, shattering bone and sending his gun flying.

John screamed in agony.

They had fooled him completely! The manikins had been convincing from a distance and in the weak light. Diego must have used a microphone to transmit his voice from the dummy, enhancing the illusion. John ripped material from his shirt and clumsily attempted to tie it around his wounded right arm, his teeth clenched in pain.

Diego lowered the assault rifle he had used to pierce John's arm and he and Klaus approached the Black Ops agent. Diego's eyes were cold, gray, and unblinking — like those of a snake trying to hypnotize its prey. "John . . . John . . . John," he said slowly, shaking his head. "Why do I get the feeling you were trying to double-cross us?"

"We can't help but be disappointed," added Klaus, his massive biceps stretching the thin material of the black t-shirt he was wearing. "We've been paying you a small fortune for information, and just when you finally know something big you turn on us."

Without warning Diego slammed the butt of his rifle into John's wounded arm, sending him reeling. He became so dizzy from the pain he fell to his knees.

"But don't worry," said Diego with a cruel smile. "You'll have plenty of chance to make it up to us."

The woods were eerily silent. John shot a quick glance to the sky in the direction from which he had arrived.

Rapid though it was, Klaus caught the movement of John's eyes. "Expecting company?" he said mockingly. "Well I'm afraid there's been a change of plans. Your back-up crew had to cancel," he finished, quite pleased with himself.

John's eyes widened in panic. "But how?" he said in disbelief. "How could you know I would try to kill you? How could you know about my back-up plan? That's impossible!"

"Haven't you heard," said the tall Cuban smugly. "We're the best there is."

Diego leaned forward menacingly. "Now tell us about the weapon called The Devil's Sword."

The Devil's Sword will be published in November, but is available for preordering at Amazon.com, B&N.com, and Borders.com in both paperback and E-book formats.

Singapore Sabers

A Diary from the Youth Olympic Games



Photos by Serge Timacheff

By Celina Merza

With with Nicholas Olivier and C.B. Findlay

The Youth Olympic Games, held in venues across the island nation of Singapore August 14-26, was a competition of both accomplishment and inspiration for five young American fencers. The total of three medals was only a part of the story. The chance for athletes between the ages of 14 to 18 to experience an Olympic-like event wrote most of the rest.

The Youth Olympic Games, held by the International Olympic Committee, gave 3,600 athletes from 26 sports and 205 countries an inspirational, Olympic-like experience.

Head fencing coach Sergey Isayenko led the U.S. delegation into competition at the International Convention Centre in Singapore. Team USA includes Katharine Holmes (Washington, D.C.) in epee, Alexander Massialas (San Francisco, Calif.) in foil, Celina Merza (Wayne, N.J.) in saber, Mona Shaito (Garland, Texas) in foil and Will Spear (Wyantskill, N.Y.) in saber.

Team USA met with great success, winning two silver medals and Team America I, a hybrid US-Canada mixed weapon team, earned the bronze.

One young athlete, Celina Merza, took up both pen and sword, and completed a diary of her unique experience for American Fencing, which continues below.

For complete results from the first Youth Olympic Games, you can visit www.singapore2010.sg.

Monday, August 9

By the time I arrived at JFK airport, there were already 20 kids there. A U.S. Olympic Committee worker greeted us (me and my family) as soon as we entered the airport and escorted us to the first class kiosk for check-in. We breezed right through. I'm liking this!

My parents felt better once they saw the USOC workers and I kissed them goodbye. My lil' sis was getting emotional but I told her to help herself to anything in my room. I think that helped! My family is flying to Singapore tomorrow. I thought I would be a little more uneasy but I'm not. This is the first trip I am taking with a bunch of people I don't know, but it's like I do. Male saberist Will Spear is on my flight. He's pretty much the only other athlete I know. Well, him and our team coach Sergey Isayenko.

It looks like a bunch of very friendly people, and the USOC staff are great! The journey begins...

Wednesday, August 11

We arrived in Singapore at 6:30 this morning... FINALLY. That was the longest flight of my life!

The Ukrainian team was on our flight. I sat next to a U.S. track and field athlete named Sarah. She helped pass the hours. I really hit it off with her. Every few hours, we would get up, along with other U.S.







athletes, and stand in the back of the plane, helping our legs regain circulation and socializing. I don't think any of us have ever experienced such a long trip.

Okay, I'm here at the Youth Olympic Village and I'm lost! All the buildings look the same and I swear, I am walking through a maze. The athlete village is HUGE. We found where the digital media center is and the dining hall. My walk from the room to the dining hall is 15 minutes, and it is very, very hot. The U.S. fencers are eating every meal together, and actually doing everything together. It is very hard to get through this day. We all need a nap, but we are not allowed to take one so we could adjust to Singapore time.

I am rooming with a fellow U.S. fencer, epeeist Katharine Holmes. I can't wait to get to bed! After this, European travels will be a piece of cake.

Saturday, August 14

Opening Ceremony day started as usual. Up early, ate breakfast with the team, off to the bus for practice at the venue.

I received a picture on my phone of my coach and my Dad at the opening ceremony. They must have been there hours early; it was funny. My club coach had an American flag bandana wrapped around his head and my Dad had an American flag sticker on his face. They were holding up an American flag, very patriotic, LOL!

We ate dinner and went off to get ready for the ceremony. Everyone had the same outfit on, red polo shirt and khaki shorts. We looked good! GO USA! There were so many of us. We took some pictures again and headed off for an exciting evening.

The ceremony was amazing. There were SO many people all around, much more than I thought. The stage was set by water and it was beautiful, the colors and the choreography. I had no idea it was going to be so big, so great! There were fireworks going off all over and lights from tall buildings; it was like the city itself was celebrating. Everything was coming to life. The lights and everything about it were truly spectacular. We couldn't see the lighting of the torch because we left early, but my Mom assured me she taped everything. I can't wait to watch it when I get home. She said everyone was commenting on how beautiful it was. Thank you, Singapore!

Monday, August 16

I woke up today, ready to take on the world! I went to bed later than I usually would because our bus picked us up about 8:30pm from the venue, then an hour ride to the venue, dinner. Then I packed up my gear and called my coach for a pre-tournament pep talk. I still felt good. I am pumped for this competition.

I have a seven-person pool, with many tough girls. Of course, what can I expect from the Youth Olympics? It's not easy to get to this point! We all worked really hard to get here. Pool play starts at 9:30am.

In pools, I finished with five wins and one loss. My loss was to Ukranian Alina Komaschuk. It was my own mistake. I lost 4-5 and I lost a point because I crossed the line while backing up on defense. Agh... less than an inch but an inch too much! I was so agitated with myself. I love fencing her, she's one of the best in the world. I was SO close. My indicator was really good and every fencer suffered at least one loss, so I ended up first after pools. The top three of us have a bye and we have to wait for the round of 16 to be completed. I'm fencing Egyptian Mennatalla Yasser Ahmed for a place in the semifinals. She's good, I watched her at Worlds. Again, she would have to be good to make it this far.

I won 15-4! I felt good, using all my energy I had building up while waiting for my turn. My timing was right on attacks and defense.

Nailed it. I felt good. NOW I have over four hours to kill before I fence again. I want to keep going but we have to wait until 4:30pm for the semifinals. I would fly if I could!

I left the venue for a bit and grabbed a snack with my parents and Coach Oleg and Irina. I laid down on a bench for a bit and I almost fell asleep! I need to stay awake but I still have hours to kill. I asked my coach to warm me up an hour before I need to start up again. Mentally and physically, I want to finish this. I feel good but not so energetic anymore. Maybe warm-ups will help, I hope.

I won!!! Anja Musch of Germany, 15-10. I was dominating in the beginning but I started losing my legs after the second half. Anyway, I made it and now for the finals, I need to fence Russian Yana Egoryan. I fenced her in Konin, Poland, in a 2009 Cadet World Cup and beat her to get to the finals. She is tough; I would expect her to be one of the medalists today. I have about two hours to wait again and I'm tired. I'm going to the food court to eat dinner because my legs are feeling weak and I'm starting to feel drained. I'm fencing at 7pm... this is dragging on forever. I secured a medal, and that was my goal. Now I need to last through just one more. I'm feeling like chicken and rice because I can't have just snacks anymore... I'm starving.

I lost, 15-8. My mind knew what to do but my body wasn't moving. I was drained. I was happy I secured a medal. Maybe I pumped myself up too much and put all my energy in the beginning. My attacks were sloppy and I would set up an action but not finish. I know exactly what was going wrong but I couldn't fix it. Coach Sergey was really happy with silver, so were my parents and personal coach (I could see them waving the American flag in the stands).

I need to go back to the village and figure out what happened and then get ready for the Mixed Team event on Wednesday. I train to fence more than 10 consecutive 15-touch bouts at the end of footwork and drills. Between conditioning and fencing, I train more than three hours a day, six days a week. I had a lot fewer bouts to fence today. Maybe it was mental, I don't know. This is a learning experience. I want to enjoy my silver medal for now and analyze when I get back to the States. My future is in the Olympics. This is me... this is where I belong. This definitely was the BEST experience of my life!





Tuesday, August 17

This is our last day- the Mixed Team event. We are all a little bummed that Mona Shaito is fencing on the "America 2" team instead of "America 1" with the rest of the U.S. fencers. We have two Canadians and four Americans on our team.

Our first match was with "Europe 3" and we won. The score was 30-28, if I remember correctly. We made it into the top four, and we are up against "Europe 1." Each of us pretty much suffered a loss against a member of "Europe 1," so this is going to be very tough.

We lost 30-25, putting us in the bronze medal match. We will now face "Asia-Oceania 1". They lost to "Europe 2." "Europe 1" and "Europe 2" will face each other in the gold medal match. We want this medal!

We won!!! "America 1" has the bronze. We are all very happy.

Competition is now over and we can relax. I am going out with my family and personal coach for dinner and they are driving me back to the village at 10pm. Finally, a couple of hours with my family before they leave for the U.S. It feels nice to relax after the competition and maybe we could sleep in tomorrow! I met up with my teammates later that night and we went out for some ice cream. Splurge in celebration!



Wednesday, August 18

Today was the first day we had no practice, no competition, no schedule to follow. I think this is the first time I am waking up to a day of nothing in a very long time! I slept in until close to noon, and I couldn't get enough sleep. This was a great feeling. I love training, I love fencing, but I needed this.

We spent the day visiting booths within the village and playing pool and just lounging around. I am getting more familiariar with the village now. I didn't even know where the laundry facility was. We had been leaving early morning and returning late every day since we arrived. So other than the dining hall and the game room, I was clueless!

We are going on an Island Adventure tomorrow. I can't wait to see Singapore. I hear it is beautiful. Now I want to see what it is all about!

Monday, August 23

Today, we woke up early and took a bus and two subways to get to the beach about an hour away. We were going to ride bikes along the beach. We biked up trails, but then lost the trail and ended up traveling through the forest. We were exhausted! My legs were jello- melting jello. This had to be a continuation of Adventure Island, a true adventure, LOL.

We swam at the beach and later grabbed ice cream. Even though we were wiped out from the biking adventure, it was a great day out. I could laugh about it now that I am in my room on my bed. Now that I've been sitting, I'm not so sure I could stand! We'll ALL be knocked out tonight.

Thursday, August 26

I woke up this morning trying to decide whether I should go see the volleyball game or do some much-needed laundry. Laundry won, unfortunately. I was in for a long flight home, only to turn around and leave again the following morning for a weeklong training camp in Colorado. So laundry was a necessity. How convenient when Moms are around!

When we reached the Closing Ceremony, there were as many people as there were for the Opening Ceremony. So many people! China was introduced as being the next host country for the summer Youth Games and we were congratulated for being the first ever participants in the Youth Olympics. We were all called up on stage and there was music and dancing, everyone was clapping. So happy!

Before I knew it, the closing of the flame was announced. I felt my racing heart slow down and my smile fade. We all just became quiet as we watched the flame go out. A couple of my teammates screamed, "no, don't do it!" We all felt the same. Was it over? I glanced over at everyone and some were tearing up, some were hugging. How could everything turn around so quickly? I usually have control over my emotions, but this was hard to control. I tried to lighten the mood, but I feel my throat closing up.

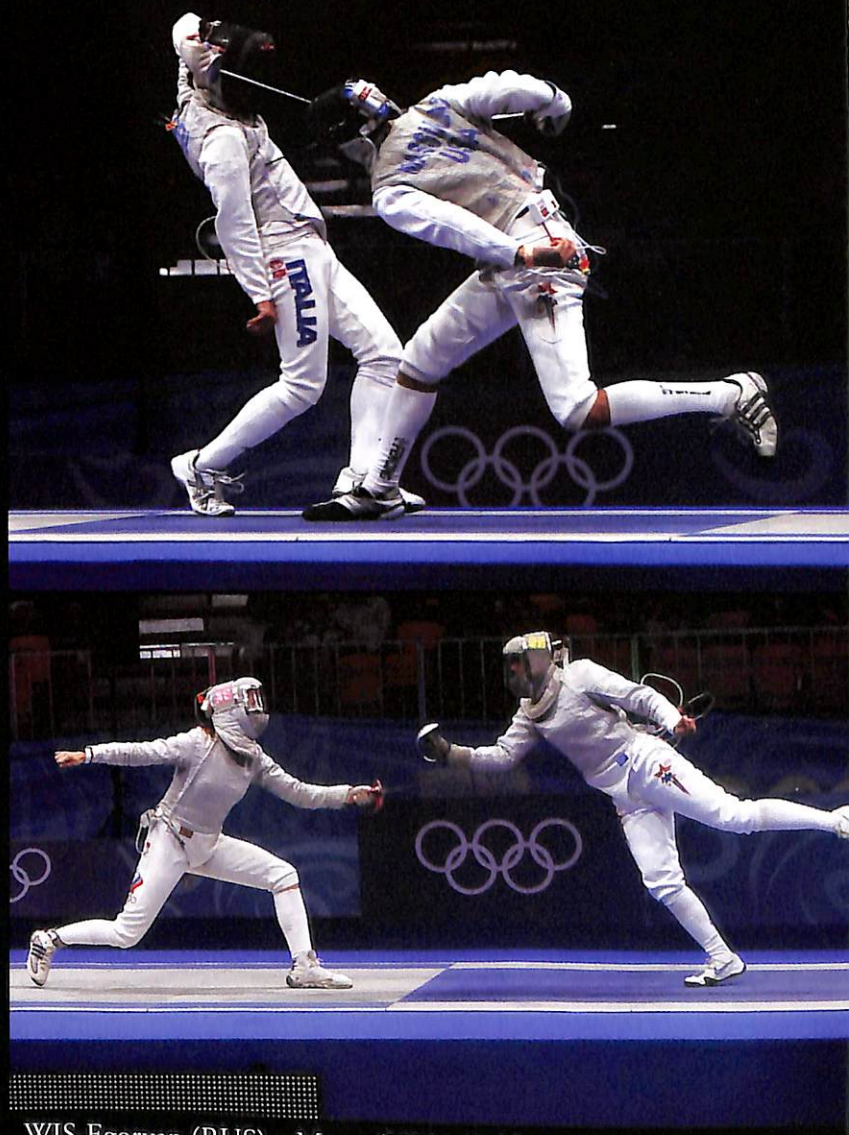
We stayed up most of the night, trying to spend as much time with each other as possible. Some of my teammates, I will see on occasion at tournaments. But friends that did archery, track, or are from different countries, when would we ever see them again? We started saying, "see you in 2012," making each other smile.

Friday, August 27

On the flight home, the closer my plane was getting to JFK, the more I just wanted to break the door down, jump out, and run and hug my family, who would be standing in the airport waiting for me. How bittersweet? I never exactly knew the meaning until now. I missed my family, my home, my bed... but at the same time, the best experience of my life was coming to an end as I board the plane. I may never see these other athletes again. It's amazing how much we related to each other. Our lifestyles, the demands, the discipline, the competition, the training, the dedication... it was like we all knew what each other was going through and like we knew each other from years before. I hugged some Team USA members goodbye and wiped away my tears as I ran to my Mom. I hugged her stronger than ever before and truly couldn't let go. My sister was standing with flowers and balloons, starting at me with her big brown eyes. My Dad and Uncle, all so happy.

Thank you USOC for all you did. Thank you Singapore, everyone was amazingly nice. Thank you US Fencing. Thank you family for your support. Thanks for letting me share my Youth Olympic experience.

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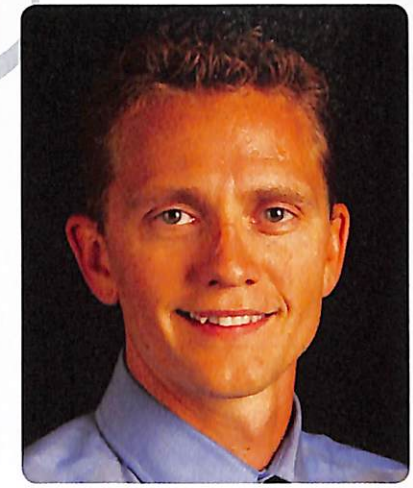


WIS-Egoryan (RUS) v Merza (USA)-Gold

SPORTS MEDICINE Q&A

With Jeremy Summers, DC, ATC

Q: Why do I have back pain as a fencer? Can this be resolved and if so, how?



A: In our June 2010 AF article we discussed the diagnosis, treatment, and management of low back pain (LBP) with regard to its numerous causes, especially muscular imbalance. The importance of understanding fencing biomechanics and its predisposition to muscular imbalance is crucial for the management and prevention of LBP.

The fencing community should be familiar with fencing biomechanics 101. It all starts with what normal human biomechanics are. Walking makes humans unique and is a relative neutral, relaxed, and energy-efficient mode of transportation. The "en garde" position in fencing is only unique, that is, until we train our bodies to adapt to these positions. The fencer moves up and down the strip with their legs at 90 degree angles. The knees, hips, and bilateral ankles are flexed to varying degrees as well as the spine. As fencers train within these abnormal postures their bodies respond by causing muscle imbalances. Eventually a "weak link" in the chain results in pain.

For the understanding of muscular imbalances we turn to the late Vladimir Janda's work, which is having systemic and vast implications in the clinical setting of treatment and prevention of injuries. His work was based on a functional approach to musculoskeletal pain syndromes and involves the interdependence of the central nervous (CNS) and musculoskeletal systems. These pain syndromes are known as "upper cross" and "lower cross." Muscle imbalance develops mainly between the prime movers that are prone to develop "tightness" or shortness, and stabilizers, and synergistic groups that are prone to develop "inhibition" or weakness. The law of reciprocal inhibition is a simple concept that must be understood. It basically states that if the muscle is to contract or shorten (e.g. biceps), then the CNS must inhibit the opposite (i.e. triceps) in order for the motion to occur. This means, if a muscle is tight and overworked it is inhibiting another, which leads to instability, compensation, and pain. Tight or short muscles are the hip flexors, erector spinae, quadrates lumborum, and the piriformis. Inhibited or weak muscles are the gluteus maximus, abdominal wall, and gluteus medius and minimus.

Lower cross syndrome (LCS) is characterized by muscle imbalances described above and results in an anterior tilt of the pelvis, increased flexion of the hips, and a compensatory hyperlordosis (increase curve) in the low back. The "En Garde" position actually activates the tight and shortened musculature predisposing them to more tightness and overload. This tends to over-stress both hip joints as well as the lower back. In a fencing position the hips are in a flexed and overworked position during all fencing movements and are inhibiting the gluteus maximus. The low back erector spinae are inhibiting the abdominal wall because they are tight trying to retain an upright posture regardless of hip flexion and constant activation of spinal flexion, extension, and rotation during training. Despite LCS, fencers also over activate other muscles at the hips a.k.a. the piriformis. This muscle is responsible for outward rotation of the hips that is inhibiting the inward rotators.

Muscular imbalance can be treated and actually prevented with dedication and practice. It is recommended that you seek out a healthcare practitioner that is familiar with Janda's approach to muscular imbalances. Fencers in general usually have LCS as described above as well as muscular imbalances that differ and are asymmetric from one leg to another due to the demands of the front leg and back leg. To address LCS we will always stretch or inhibit before strengthening. Once the tight muscles are addressed then facilitation and training the "weak link" can proceed. However, there is one exception to the rule and that is if there is not a tight muscle to begin with, then do not stretch it.

In the treatment of LCS, first, inhibit the short hip flexors and quadriceps with a sprinter stretch and quad stretch, the piriformis in a figure four stretch, and the erector spinae in a yoga spinal twist stretch. Secondly, facilitation of the gluteus maximus with one leg bridges, the abdominal wall with slow trunk curl-ups, planks, side planks, and the gluteus medius with a basketball defensive slide and side to side single leg jumps. Hip asymmetry is a predominate cause of LBP among fencer's and should be addressed. Hip external (ER) vs. internal rotation (IR) should be close to equal in range of rotation with slightly higher ER when lying supine with the knee flexed to 90 degrees. In this position hip mobilization with a distractive and internally rotated force is very valuable for opening and releasing the hip capsule.

Most importantly, despite correcting all these muscular imbalances we must further address and correct spinal stabilization patterns with the following core stabilization exercises. The exercises are: abdominal bracing (should be performed with all exercises listed), plank, side plank, bird dog, bridges, single leg bridges, dead bug, cable wood chops, two handed twist with cables, as well as healthcare practitioner supervised respiratory training. If you are experiencing pain during these exercises, stop and consult your sport medicine practitioner or doctor for more information.

AF



SPORTS SCIENCE

With Dr. John Heil



REMARKABLE FEATS OF PAIN TOLERANCE

Expectations regarding pain tolerance are imbedded in the culture of sport, not only influencing performance but also defining character as an athlete. While sport is rich in the lore and legend of pain, scientific answers to the most compelling questions have remained elusive. A psychological model follows which offers insight into the means by which athletes are able to tolerate extreme pain during competition.

Expectation that Pain Can and Will be Tolerated

The expectation that athletes will tolerate pain related to performance and injury permeates sport. The time-honored nature of these expectations is reflected in the legend of the ancient warrior, Pheidippides. This Greek soldier allegedly ran from the site of a battle on the Plains of Marathon to the city of Athens to announce a critical victory over an invasion force -- then collapsed and died. His efforts today are honored in the Marathon which extends the 26 miles and 385 yards he covered in his run. However, the "no pain, no gain" philosophy has its pitfalls, which render it more of a riddle than a mandate. Those who interpret it too literally will suffer needlessly.

Positive Interpretation of the Pain Experience

In many training and competitive situations, pain is interpreted positively. For example, in endurance sports, (e.g., running, swimming, rowing, cycling) pain is directly interpreted as a positive sign of effort. Pain provides a potent source of energy, even as it triggers fear and distress. Athletes implicitly understand that to tolerate pain (including its physical and emotional consequences) is to develop mental toughness, which is in turn a key to successful competitive performance.

Intense Goal Focus

The importance of goal setting is deeply rooted in coaching theory and practice, and is ingrained in the athlete through repeated training over years. This helps the athlete remain committed to performance and provides a point of focus, which centers the athlete's thought process on the next action. Countless repetitions in training automate sport skills, making them reflexive and facilitating their execution under extreme stress. Goal orientation is typically strongest during competition. Goals are most compelling when they are within reach, creating a psychological pull to the finish line.

Absorbed in the Moment

A predominant focus on sport-related perceptual inputs, (i.e., the sights, sounds and "feel" of competition) is enhanced by the great importance the athlete places on competitive success. Absorption in the sport experience fosters keen concentration and creates a sense of comfort with high intensity. The athlete is thus enabled to hold sport at the center of his or her attention, pushing pain (and other distractions) out of immediate awareness. This ability relies in a practical way on skills in attention control, even as it rests existentially on a simple love of the game. Learning to live in the moment is essential to reaching the "zone," the ideal performing state that drives excellence in sport and in life.

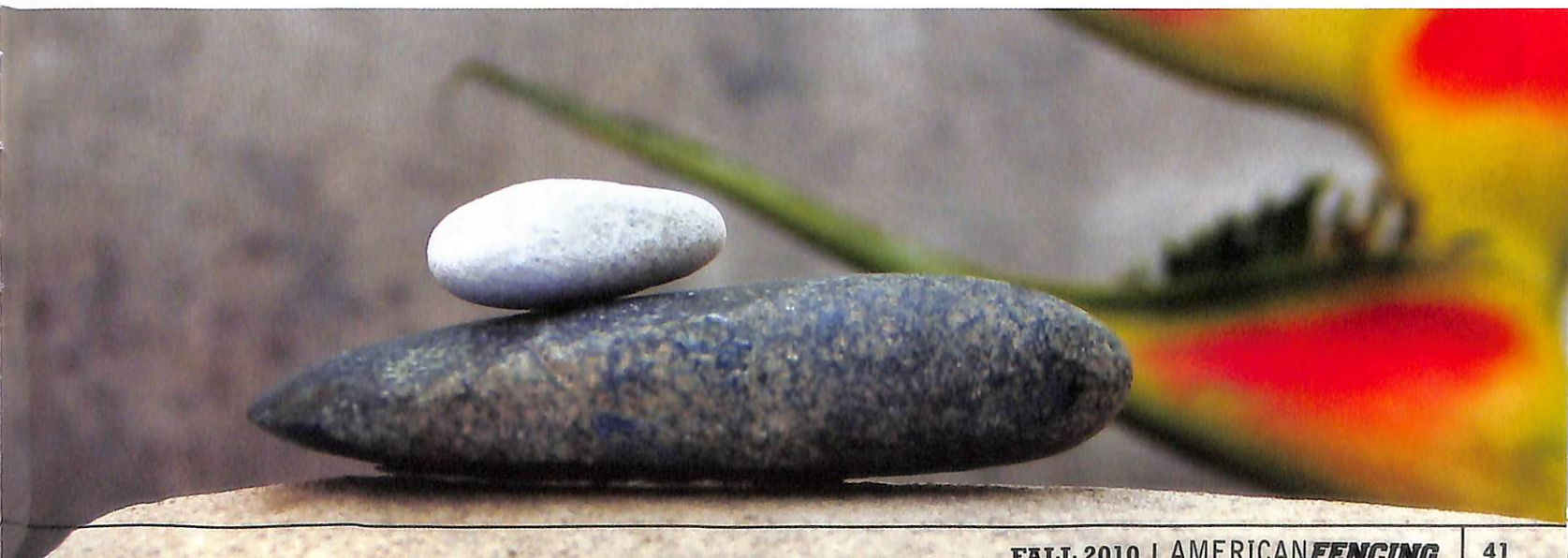
Survival Context

Many examples of remarkable pain tolerance are seen in survival situations, that is, in life-threatening conditions encountered by soldiers in combat, fire fighters and police in line of duty actions, and athletes in extreme wilderness environments. The function of pain is transformed when the threat of danger to life supersedes the distress of injury. While sport is seldom a true life-or-death situation, the personal investment in success and the personal cost of failure can be tremendous. In some competitions (e.g., Olympic trials), the athlete's survival at sport as an athlete is dependent upon a successful outcome, and so offers access to the primal instinct to survive.

Limited Duration

Most notable feats of pain tolerance are of relatively brief duration. It has been said, "The hero is the one who stays brave for a few seconds longer." Concentration is more easily sustained and pain control more easily attained when there is an end in sight. In sport competition, the athlete is able to look ahead to a time when the event will be over and pain will cease. In contrast, the outcome (both success and failure) of competition endures indefinitely.

AF



THE POINT

ATHLETE Q&A WITH OLYMPIAN ANN MARSH

Q: "College is really hard. I love fencing, but I can't figure out how to keep up with it, and my life will be changing so much after I graduate. How can I balance fencing and school -- and life?"



A: Of course, education and school should always be the priority. In college, I did decide to "retire" or "give up" on international success. I went to the '92 Olympics and when I came home, I basically just decided that it was impossible to do well internationally while living in the US. However, a week or two later my teammate and housemate stayed up late with me, discussing all the different facets of the argument and I guess at that point I decided that it was possible for a US fencer to have international success and I started training again.

Then, after the '96 Olympics, I practiced "lightly" for a year and then decided to stop. I was back after one year off. I thought I would be too busy in medical school to train and also I wanted to dedicate myself to medical school. It really isn't that exciting or necessary. I think people need to realize that while they may do many different things in life, there are not that many that give you that same excitement that fencing does. In addition, once you are at the top of the ranks of fencing, when you do anything else seriously, you will realize how really good you were in fencing and how long it takes to do anything else as well.

College is difficult, but my experience was that most people use a lot of time that they could be fencing or studying doing other activities. Often these are social activities, but then again going to practice and tournaments counts as socialization too.

So my suggestion for succeeding in fencing and college (or medical school) concurrently is organization. First the fencer needs to decide what goals they have for the month, season, life. They then need to decide what they need to do to meet these goals. The point being, each fencer does not need to have a full practice everyday. Some days might just focus on footwork and a lesson or running, while other days might focus on bouting. Also, the fencer needs to determine what they need to do in each of their classes to grasp the material and get a good grade and how much time they want to devote to the accessory material in each class that is not really necessary.

I used flashcards while traveling to practice via subway. In early rounds and during air travel, I read my textbooks and took notes. Competitions have a lot of downtime that can be used to advantage.

Fencers should also keep in mind that fencing can be their outlet to release tension, and schedule studying blocks and fencing training in blocks. Studies clearly show that studying for hours at a stretch is not as useful as in short spurts. The mind remembers the first and last topics studied the best. So while it may seem a luxury to sit down and study for eight hours in a row, that is not the best way to retain material.

Ann Marsh is one of the U.S.'s most accomplished fencers and holds many firsts. A three-time Olympian ('92, '96, and '00), Marsh placed 7th individually in '96, the highest finish for a U.S. women's foilist in 40 years. She was also the first U.S. fencer ever to be ranked in the top 8 in the F.I.E. World Cup standings. Marsh is also an emergency room physician, and attended medical school while training for the '00 Olympic Games. She currently lives in Michigan with husband Anatolie and her two children, Adeline and Lucas. Lucas was born this summer. Congrats, Ann! AF

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



GEOFFREY TOURETTE

He may be small, but he be mighty. This young man from Cupertino already holds a fistful of gold from Youth competitions around the country.

Geoffrey Tourette fences with a grace and patience beyond his years. That might be because it's been a dream of his to fence at least since he was a preschooler in France, where he was born.

"We used to go to a theatre, and next to it was a fencing club with a sign that said 'kids eight and up can fence here,'" says Geoffrey. "We moved to the U.S. and I turned six here and we found a club for kids six and up, and I had to start right away!"

Start he did, and now he's hard to stop. Geoffrey won three of the 2010 season's four Super Youth NACs this year in the Y-10 age group. How long does he want to fence? "Forever!" he says, throwing his arms up in the air with a smile. AF

STATS & FACTS

Hometown: Cupertino California
Birthdate: : April 1, 1999 (Nice, France)
Club: California Fencing Academy
Coached by: Aleksei Murugin and Dan Tibett

Highlights:

* **Gold, Y-12 Boy's Foil, Virginia Beach NAC**
* **Gold, Y-10 Boy's Foil, 2010 Summer National Championships**
* **6th, Y-12 Boy's Foil, 2010 Summer National Championships**
* **Bronze, Y-12 Boy's Foil and Silver, Y-10, NAC Portland, Ore.**
* **2010's top Youth-10 Foil point holder**

PARENTS CORNER



By Kirsten Crouse

So, Summer Nationals are over.....
Time to decompress.
Let's see: Margarita - ***check.***
Relaxing by the lake - ***check.***
2010/11 SYC tournament schedule - ***check.***
Askfred - ***check.***
Laptop - ***check.***
"Houston, we are good to go."

It is more than a little weird for us the first week or so after Summer Nationals.

Our club takes the remainder of July off, so there is no fencing practice. What on earth will we do with ourselves?

We do have a mountain of travel laundry to go through, uhhhgghh. And I have to remember how to cook dinner for everyone after a week of hotel living. Don't even get me started on not having the beds magically made after a day out.

Sigh...as I write, only 324 days until the next Summer Nationals.

We have been home for less than a week and are ready to hit the strip again.

Our non-fencing friends think we are somewhat over the top. What is the big deal about Nationals and tournaments in general anyway?

Well, the actual competing is an intense element, but it is partly just a means to an end. For us working together as a family, a new season, a new tournament is a multi-faceted fun way to spend the weekends together. In fact, out of boredom from "relaxing," we found a local level tournament 4 1/2 hours away.

Our family's fencing decompression procedure is a process of bridging the end of one fencing season with a critical review to planning for the start of a new one.

First we all sit down together over dinner and evaluate the finished season. Our 10-year-old and 7-year-old have equal participation. What went well, what did not? Would we do it again, what would we do different had we known? Do we still want to continue?

Winning a medal or not isn't even relevant. It is about how well we worked together as a team so we could all do our parts to our best ability. Though it is our son(s) out on the strip, it takes all of us as a family to make it possible. We then review our long term and short term goals that we had made earlier in the season. How close did we come? Were they realistic goals for that year? What were our big successes?

Now we look at the upcoming year. We discuss both long term and short term goals for the new season and how realistic they are. What are the new priorities? What do the boys want to personally achieve? What work needs to be done over the year to reach those goals? What problem solving needs to be put on a list? Who is taking ownership of what? Stuff like that.

The interesting thing is that while the boys do want to win gold (who doesn't), they focus more on what it is going to take to beat kids X, Y and Z , or just make past the second, third, or fourth round of direct eliminations in a big tournament.

Next, we move on to the planning stage.

What tournament is when and where? Which ones do we want to go to and which do we need to go to? Can we afford to get there? Will we need time off from work and school?

Are we in a "kitchen sink" year or a "tech" year?

A "kitchen sink" year is when we really step up the practice and training level to achieve a specific goal. A "tech" year is a low-key season. Everyone does their absolute very best, but we don't worry too much about the results. The focus is strictly on improving technique.

As my sons age up to Y-10, Y-12 or Y-14, their first season will be a 'tech' year. Do your best, but no pressure. This personal philosophy also applies to individual tournaments. Some tournaments are just "techies" and others are "kitchen sinks."

This outlook has genuinely helped in managing expectations, stress on the strip, and having a more constructive view of losses.

My husband and I then rock-paper-scissors in a death match for any tournaments that have cool things close by when only one of us can attend. He totally scored Niagara Falls at the Rochester SYC last year; I got Virginia Beach on the beach.

By going through this process together as a family team, we get to reminisce and share the experiences we all had at different tournaments. Generally we wind up laughing at our mishaps ... like when the transmission went out on my rental car on the highway doing 70mph ... yikes – that was a bucket of fun! But also, we relive how amazing Niagara Falls was for my son, the fighter jets flying in formation like crazy at Virginia Beach, the places we saw on the way to Atlanta, and which places had the best margaritas. Additionally we remember the new friends that were made and friendships that were strengthened.

Since the boys participate directly in the planning of the next season, they do not feel forced to do tournaments or resentful of what is required to achieve their goals. They have a say and a sense of control along with seeing firsthand what it really takes for our family to even be able to go to a tournament. For our family, tournament participation has a steep price of top grades and a strong commitment to practice and some seriously creative budgeting of time and finances.

On another note, I have found this to be one of the most effective ways to teach our boys and practice realistic goal setting, goal achieving and deferred gratification skill-sets. We regard tournaments as serious fencing with an adventure on the side. That's a win-win in our book. By all of us working hard now toward our goals over this year, we will be in Portland and Reno fencing hard, seeing our friends and living like rock stars.

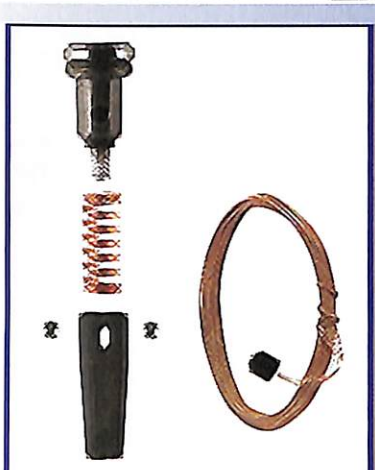
And now, laundry or lake – hmm...

AF



By Ted Li

Re-Wiring Foil Blades







Materials Needed:

* Old hacksaw blade, Dremel tool with thin cut-off disc, or knife blade to remove old wire
* Triangular needle file
* New foil wire appropriate for the foil point (e.g., French or German)
* Foil point setter
* Thin cyanoacrylate glue
* Bending jig

1 Clean the Blade – Remove all the old tip tape. Unscrew the complete point, and pull as much wire out of the groove as possible. Then clean the blade groove of all bits of old wire, glue and tape by using an old hacksaw blade, a Dremel tool with thin cut-off disc, or knife. Some people soak the blade in acetone to dissolve the old glue. If the blade is new, all oil and grease also must be chemically removed.

2 Prepare the Groove – using a triangular file, open the groove at the tip end of the blade so the wire will pass easily into the blade groove without damaging its insulation

3 Disassemble the Point – be sure not to lose the parts (tip, pressure spring, tip screws). Using a magnetized screwdriver, disassemble the point over a white towel to help minimize the loss of parts.

4 Push out the old contact and insulating cap using a heavy straight pin.

5 Straighten the Wire – unwrap the new wire and straighten any kinks that it might have.

6 Insert the Wire into the Barrel – only insert 2" of the wire through the front of the barrel, making sure that the wire lies in the blade groove, before screwing the barrel onto the blade. If the wire gets caught or cut, you will still be able to use the wire; if you have pulled the wire completely through the barrel before tightening it, and it gets cut, you will have to buy a new wire. Some people, to minimize future problems with the barrel loosening, use a drop of medium strength thread locker (e.g., Locktite®) on the barrel threads.

7 Tighten the Barrel – using appropriate wrenches, tighten the barrel onto the blade, making sure that the wire can slide easily back and forth through the barrel. Over-tightening the barrel will cause it to split.

8 Seat the Contact in the Barrel – gently pull the wire through the barrel until the contact sits flush with the front of the barrel. Then with a foil point setter, gently push the contact into the barrel while simultaneously pulling gently on the wire to keep it straight. Keeping the wire straight minimizes the chances of a kink developing which will later cause an unwanted short. Be sure the contact and its insulating cup are firmly seated at the bottom of the barrel.

9 Optional Step – some people reassemble the point at this point if there is a fear of losing the point's parts, but if you are using a cyanoacrylate glue (e.g., Krazy Glue), reassembling the tip is best left until later.

10 Laying the Wire – lay the wire in the blade groove and down the tang. Putting minimal tension on the wire – just enough to keep the wire straight – and then wrap the excess wire back over itself, using the tang threads to hold the wire in place while gluing.

11 Tension the Wire – using a gluing jig, tension the blade so there is about an 8" bow in it. This will also keep the wire to the bottom of the blade groove.

11 Glue the Wire – while holding the tang of the blade upward, place one drop of a thin cyanoacrylate glue ¼" below the blade's forte-tang junction. You can watch the cyanoacrylate "wick" its way along the wire. After 15 seconds, reverse the position of the blade so the tip is upward and repeat the process. As the first part of the blade is going to be covered by tip tape, you can avoid having the cyanoacrylate wick into your point by placing the first drop ½" below the barrel. Continue to glue the wire, one drop at a time, until the entire wire has been covered. Using a tissue, rapidly wipe the blade groove to remove any excess cyanoacrylate and to hasten the setting time (usually less than a minute).

12 Check the Gluing Job – remove the gluing jig, and "reverse bend the blade," so that the blade groove is on the inside of curve. Any unglued portions of the wire will reveal themselves by popping out of the blade groove. If necessary, re-insert the blade into the gluing jig, and re-glue those spots using a minimum of glue. Remember, the thinner the layer of cyanoacrylate glue used, the better it holds. Again, rapidly wiping the re-glued area with a tissue will hasten its curing time.

13 Install "Spaghetti" Insulation – using a file, knife, or sandpaper remove the insulation from the tang end of the wire, leaving 2" to 3" of the wire's insulation closest to the tang intact. Remember, many wires (especially the German) have a clear coat of insulation beneath the cloth wrapping, and it must be removed to achieve an electrical connection. Insert the end of the un-insulated wire through 4" of "spaghetti" tubing and move it to the forte-tang juncture.

14 Reassemble the Point - if you haven't done so already. Be sure that the pressure spring is properly seated in the insulating cup. You might consider inserting a new pressure spring at this point.

15 Tape the Point.

You're done!! Wiring epee blades is essentially the same process, except you have to be careful not to cross the wires in the blade groove, and, due to the design of many epee blades, you may have to hold the wires to the bottom of the blade groove when you glue the wires at the tang end. AF



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NIKE *Ballestra*

PRODUCT REVIEW

By Kathryn Schifferle

I have never found a "fencing shoe" that really worked for me. My feet are wide and most fencing shoes are very narrow. I switched to buying either volleyball shoes, or indoor track shoes, which are delightfully lightweight. So, it was with great trepidation that I tackled this product review. How could I evaluate a high profile fencing shoe such as the Nike Ballestra, when my feet are so abnormal?

Because of my foot shape, I never know what size will fit me. Converting a men's to women's size makes it even trickier. When the first pair arrived, a men's size 7, I was surprised to see that it was a size too long. The 6 however fit like a glove, both length and width.



How and why had this amazing design come about? Nike designed these shoes for the Beijing Olympic fencing teams. Their designers watched fencing and talked to high level competitive fencers to learn what was important. Nike footwear designers determined that the dynamic footwork, the 7-times-bodyweight impact of the lunge on the front foot, and the incredible drag on the back foot all needed special accommodation. They rounded out the heel and added a gas-filled Nike Air Zoom insert and 10 mm of Poron (a high-tech urethane) to absorb the angled impact and accommodate the rolling motion. They also used a special synthetic on the side of the shoe to increase durability and recessed the laces to prevent abrasion. Finally, they used one of the most durable types of rubber available around the perimeter of the sole, so that it would hold up to the "cheese grater" effect of metal strips.

My footwork is more stable than it has ever been, because the low-profile Ballestra fencing shoe really helps with stability and balance by keeping my foot closer to the piste. My lunges are more accurate, because the reinforced sock liner, which is incorporated into the shoe, keeps my foot from sliding forward. The shoe feels good, and as Nike says on its web site, "the flatter the sole, the stronger the strike."

I am not an Olympic fencer, and have only had the shoes for a week, so I will have to take their word on durability. However, I can vouch for the comfort of the breathable mesh and that it is incredibly light (only 275 grams, 57 grams lighter than the next lightest).

To add one more bonus, I love the look. I have the silver grey one. It is me.

The Nike Air Ballestra is available through Leon Paul, the official uniform sponsor of the US Fencing Team. The Nike Air Ballestra fencing shoe can be ordered at www.leonpaulusa.com and other fencing vendors.

AF

Triplette Seamstresses

When you get your clothing from TCA, you not only get a great value, but you also support American workers. Your uniform is sewn by experienced professional local seamstresses working in their homes. The ladies work at their own pace, and the convenience of working at home allows them to set up their workstations in their own way so they can concentrate on making the highest quality uniforms in the world.



Skilled American Professionals

TCA Protects the Environment

Our cottage industry production method is carbon efficient. Our seamstresses work at home and do not have to waste gasoline driving to a factory. There is no factory to eat carbon in the form of air conditioning, heat or lights, not to mention the energy saved by not building the factory in the first place.











TCA Buys American Raw Materials

TCA invented and patented ultralight lames. Ultralight material is produced in the USA. All of our cotton, stretch material, lame lining, D rings, and thread is domestically produced. Not only is it the right ethical thing to do, but it also gives us good control of the quality of our materials and products.



TCA Pays Well

The money saved from energy conservation allows TCA to pay our seamstresses more than local factories, and far more than a third world sweat shop would remotely consider to be fair pay.

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PRODUCT PREVIEWS



Wii: DECA SPORTS 3

The first REAL Wii fencing game? **DECA SPORTS 3** will feature sport fencing, on a strip, with forward and backward movement, parries and thrusts and ten-touch bouts – and online play too! Nine other cool sports will also be featured. Wii Motion Plus required. $29.99, available for the Wii in wide release starting Oct. 25. Check out www.decasports3.com for more information.

Title Nine: Om Top

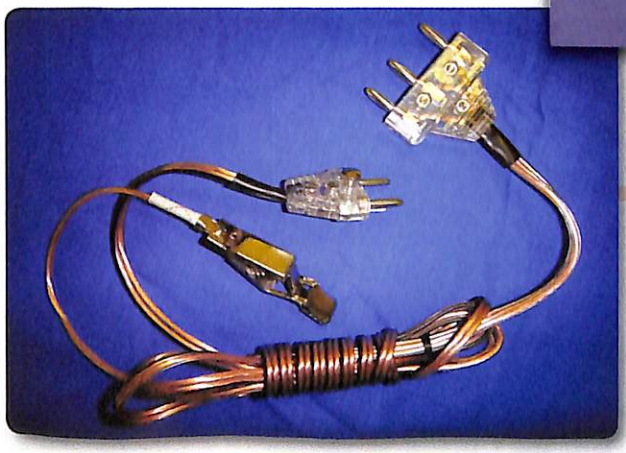


Title Nine has THE coolest in women's activewear, including killer tops to keep you cool and comfy under that ballistic nylon jacket. Let the **Om Top** help you find balance in an unbalanced world. The perfect blend of soft cotton and stretchy spandex leaves you free to breathe and move. Full shelf bra for support. Burnout racerback panel. $45, Available from Title Nine, **www.titlenine.com, 800-609-0092. 800.256.4646**



Allstar: FMA21

New from Allstar – talk about swank, this machine has it all. The FIE-approved, three-weapon **FMA21** features touch screen (or remote) controls, name, photo and national flag of the fencer in connection with certain result management systems (like Ophardt), even the number of remaining video reviews available for use with video refereeing systems. It also has a number of communications options including USB updates and Ethernet



Absolute Dura-Clear Bodycord

The first 200 of these **Absolute Dura-Clear bodycords** sold out in three days at Sumemr Nationals. This all-new, completely transparent bodycord (yes, even the plugs) is cool looking, well-built, and makes it easy to see and fix the wire. Available in 2-Prong and Epee, $22, Absolute Fencing Gear, www.absolutefencinggear.com, 732-868-9003.

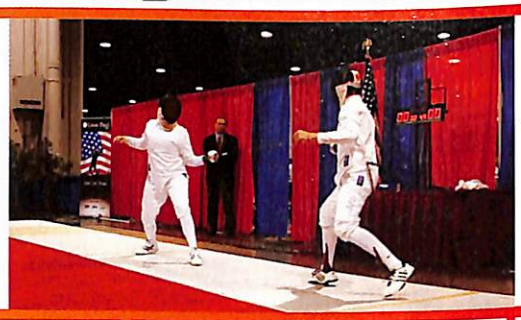
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2010 SUMMER NATIONALS CHAMPIONS · Congratulations!







Photos by Shawn Brooks

Division I Men's Epee
Kelsey, Weston Seth (Colorado)

Division I Men's Foil
Massialas, Alexander
(North. Calif.)

Division I Men's Saber
Morehouse, Tim (Metro NYC)

Division I Women's Foil
Lu, Margaret (Conn.)

Division I Women's Epee
Hurley, Courtney (So. Texas)

Division I Women's Saber
Jacobson, Emily (Georgia)

Division IA Men's Saber
Spear, Jeff (Metro NYC)

Division IA Men's Epee
Nollner, Dylan (Utah/S. Ida)

Division IA Men's Foil
Jan, Stephen (Metro NYC)

Division IA Women's Epee
Vie, Natalie Ju (Arizona)

Division IA Women's Foil
Beck, Rachel (Arizona)

Division IA Women's Saber
Dell'Aquila, Tiffany (So. Calif.)

Division II Men's Epee
Giles, Daniel (Oregon)

Division II Men's Foil
Siclare, Lukas (New Jersey)

Division II Men's Saber
Gerrity, Tommy (Long Island)

Division II Women's Epee
Shahidi, Lidea K (New England)

Division II Women's Foil
Slagle, Mariah (Utah/S. Ida)

Division II Women's Saber
Johnson, Lena (Georgia)

Division III Men's Epee
Chiang, Alex (Georgia)

Division III Men's Foil
New, Redford (Oregon)

Division III Men's Saber
Yui, Dylan (Capitol)

Division III Women's Epee
Floyd, Megan (Phila.)

Division III Women's Foil
Kapon, Sarit (New Jersey)

Division III Women's Saber
Joshi, Shriya (S. Jersey)

Under-19 Men's Epee
Raynis, Michael (So. Calif.)

Under-19 Men's Foil
Caldwell, Turner B (No. Calif.)

Under-19 Men's Saber
Bak, Adrian (New Jersey)

Under-19 Women's Epee
Van Brummen, Anna Catherine
(Gulfcoast Texas)

Under-19 Women's Foil
Prescod, Nzingha (Metro NYC)

Under-19 Women's Saber
Osier, Lian (Oregon)

Under-16 Men's Epee
Eldeib, Andrew (Virginia)

Under-16 Men's Foil
Bravo, Nobuo Ueda (No. Calif.)

Under-16 Men's Saber
Herczak, Andrew (New Jersey)

Under-16 Women's Epee
Van Brummen Anna Catherine
(Gulfcoast Texas)

Under-16 Women's Foil
Lu, Margaret (Conn.)

Under-16 Women's Saber
Powers, Skyla (Georgia)

Veterans 40-49 Men's Epee
Iliev, Velizar K (So. Texas)

Veterans 40-49 Men's Foil
Chernomashen, Alan
(Gateway Fla.)

Veterans 40-49 Men's Saber
Czaja Waldek Z (No. Texas)

Veterans 40-49 Women's Epee
Marx, Leslie (N. Carolina)

Veterans 40-49 Women's Foil
Ferguson, Diane (Virginia)

Veterans 40-49 Women's Saber
Enochs, Liz (No. Calif.)

Veterans 50-59 Men's Epee
Dragonetti, Walter (No. Ohio)

Veterans 50-59 Men's Foil
Kaihatsu, Ed (Illinois)

Veterans 50-59 Men's Saber
Runyun, Joshua (San Diego)

Veterans 50-59 Women's Epee
Verhave, Michelle (West-Rock.)

Veterans 50-59 Women's Foil
Starks-Faulkner, Jennette
(Conn.)

Veterans 50-59 Women's Saber
Eyre, Jane (S. Jersey)

Veterans 60-69 Men's Epee
Tyson, Julian (New England)

Veterans 60-69 Men's Foil
Sexton III, Ray (So. Texas)

Veterans 60-69 Men's Saber
Apostol, Paul (New Jersey)

Veterans 60-69 Women's Epee
Bedrosian, Patricia (So. Calif.)

Veterans 60-69 Women's Foil
Rosenfeld, Madelon
(Metro NYC)

Veteran 70+ Men's Epee
Adams, James (Capitol)

Veteran 70+ Men's Foil
Adams, James (Capitol)

Veteran 70+ Men's Saber
Adams, James (Capitol)

Veteran 70+ Women's Epee
Abrahams, Terry (Central Fla.)

Veteran 70+ Women's Foil
Abrahams, Terry (Central Fla.)

Veteran 70+ Women's Saber
Felty, Louisa (Kentucky)

Wheelchair Men's Epee
Rodgers, John Scott (Virginia)

Wheelchair Men's Foil
Calhoun, Mark (Georgia)

Wheelchair Men's Saber
Rodgriguez, Mario (So. Calif.)

Wheelchair Women's Epee
Bouwkamp, Catherine (Indiana)

Wheelchair Women's Foil
Bouwkamp, Catherine (Indiana)

Wheelchair Women's Saber
Bouwkamp, Catherine (Indiana)

Youth-14 Men's Epee
McGrath, Matthew (Arizona)

Youth-14 Men's Foil
Emge, Spicer (So. Calif.)

Youth-14 Men's Saber
Pak, Peter (Long Island) Valley)



Photo by Serge Timacheff

2010 Summer Nationals Champions

Youth-14 Women's Epee
Radanovich, Jessie (Mt. Valley)

Youth-14 Women's Foil
Seidl, Cassidy (Western Wash.)

Youth-14 Women's Saber
Zhao, Erica (No. Texas)

Under-19 Men's Epee Team
Empire United Fencing

Under-19 Men's Foil Team
Empire United Fencing

Under-19 Men's Saber Team
Manhattan Fencing Center

Under-19 Women's Epee Team
Alliance Fencing Academy

Under-19 Women's Foil Team
Empire United Fencing

Under-19 Women's Saber Team
Oregon Fencing Alliance

Senior Men's Epee Team
New York Athletic Club (team 3)

Senior Men's Foil Team
Fencing Academy of Westchester

Senior Men's Saber Team
Peter Westbrook Foundation

Senior Women's Epee Team
New York Athletic Club (Team 3)

Senior Women's Foil Team
Peter Westbrook Foundation

Senior Women's Saber Team
Manhattan Fencing Center

Veteran Men's Foil Team
East Side Story
(Rockville Fencing Academy)

Veteran Men's Saber Team
Some Old Guys (Unattached)

Veteran Women's Epee Team
Boston Fencing Club

The following are the gold medalists in the Youth events held at Summer Nationals in Atlanta:

Youth-10 Boys Epee
Wilson, Nicolas
(Gulfcoast Texas)

Youth-10 Boys Foil
Tourette, Geoffrey
(Central Calif.)

Youth-10 Boys Saber
Cai, Erwin (Georgia)

Youth-10 Girls Epee
Stewart Tatijana (Utah/S. Ida.)

Youth-10 Girls Foil
Kang, Bella (Central Calif.)

Youth-10 Girls Saber
Barnett, Mary (Orange Cst.)

Youth-12 Boys Epee
Yoo, Justin Hun (So. Calif.)

Youth-12 Boys Foil
Gou, Jarred (No. Calif.)

Youth-12 Boys Saber
Liang, Calvin (San Diego)

Youth-12 Girls Epee
Kehl, Madeline (So. Calif.)

Youth-12 Girls Foil
Vaiani, Nicole (New Jersey)

Youth-12 Girls Saber
Hee, Malia (Oregon)

AF



CLASSIFIEDS

Competition Classifieds

Advertise your largest, regional competitions here for free! Send a classified-style listing to editor@AmericanFencing.com by November 5th for publication in the Winter issue.

COACH CLASSIFIEDS:

Work Wanted

Alexey Karpov, 45 years old, 25 years of epee coaching experience. Has coached five champions of All-Russia fencing championships. Took part as a coach in training camp of Russia National team for 1996 Olympic Games. Has been a coach of Singapore National team for three years and has prepared champions of both individual and team events in South East Asia Fencing Federation in 2006. Please contact karpovsin@gmail.com.

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.

Coach Wanted

Dallas Fencers Club in Dallas, Texas seeking part time epee coach for developing epee program. Private lessons and some group classes, children and adults. Needs good communication skills and enjoy working with children. Send resume to dallasfencers.com or contact Coach Waldek Czaja at 214-629-5358.
First posted Spring '10

FASJ and Mr. Ma Fencing Center are looking for quality foil and sabre coaches. Please email your resume and contact information to: fasj1@yahoo.com. An assistant epee and foil coach are also needed at UPenn. Please contact Andy Ma at: Andyma@upenn.edu.
Renewed Summer '10

Seeking Coach: Oregon Fencing Alliance in Portland, OR has an opportunity for a sabre coach to work alongside Ed Korfanty and his World and Olympic Champions. This is a part time position teaching Beginners the sport of fencing. Individual needs good communication skills and must enjoy working with young kids. Send resume and contact OFA Director of Programs: CZagunis@aol.com//503.880.3512
Renewed Summer '10

Intermediate/Advanced Foil and Saber Coach Wanted for growing three-weapon fencing club in Albuquerque. Must speak some English. Students age 8 years to adult, group classes and individual lessons. Some relating to parents expected. Must be able to armor. Base 20-25 hours/week, extra hours possible. Occasional paid travel. Three-month trial offered, travel allowance for moving. Contact Toby Tolley at Duke City Fencing, (505)872-0048.
Renewed Fall '09

Salle for Sale

Fairfax Fencers club, and facilities (2700 sq. ft.). Current location Chantilly, Va. for over 6 years see www.fxfencers.com. See loopnet.com for comparable prices. Current owner and head coach relocating next three years or so. Email tomj@fxfencers.com.
Renewed Summer '10

Fencing club in North Jersey for sale. 5000 sf. The price is reasonable. Email to Lee Xu at: xulifu989@gmail.com if interested.
First posted Fall '10

Got a big competition coming up? Looking for a coach? Looking for a job? Send FREE classified listings to:

Cindy Bent Findlay, editor@americanfencing.com. 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.

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Winter magazine deadlines for all classified ads is November 5, 2010.



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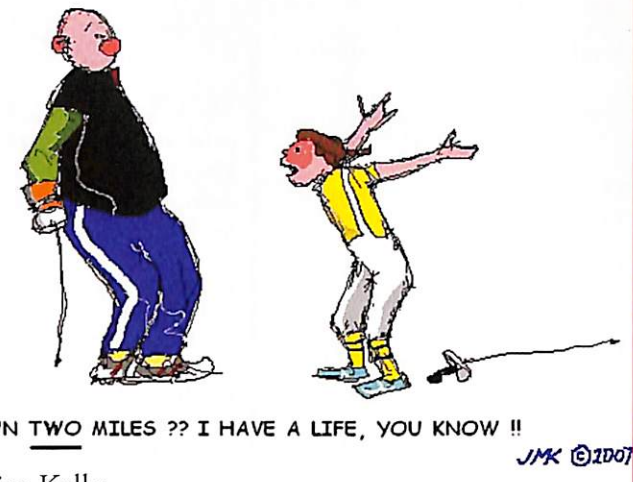
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- Has coached all Three Weapons at International and Olympic Levels
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"Cross" Training



By Jim Kelly

CALENDAR

Upcoming Events:

North American Cup A (Div. I, Div. II, Vet., WChr.)
Cincinnati, Ohio
Oct. 15 – 18, 2010

2010 World Senior Fencing Championships
Paris, France
Nov. 6-13, 2010

2010 Wheelchair World Championships
Paris, France
Nov. 6-13, 2010

North American Cup B (Under-20, Under-17, Youth-14)
Milwaukee, Wisc.
Nov. 19 – 22, 2010

North American Cup "December" (Div. I, Open Team)
Atlanta, Ga.
December 18 – 20, 2010

North American Cup C (Div. 1, Under-20, Under 17)
Dallas, Texas
Jan. 14 – 17, 2010

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