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The RIPOSTE

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Joseph Vince

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A. F. L. A. 1939-1940 NATIONAL RANKINGS

The Amateur Fencers League of America has just published its Annual Rankings as determined from the fencing results of its members throughout the 1938-1939 fencing season. This annual list is of service for the seeding of entries in competitions this season and also shall stand as a permanent record of the relative results of A. F. L. A. members during the fencing season just terminated.

The A. F. L. A. follows only one inviolate rule in determining its ratings, that the National Senior Individual Champion in each weapon shall receive premier rating. Its remaining decisions are dependent upon a point system related to the number of competitions entered, the results in those competitions and also the relative strength of those competitions, which last is determined by the number of last season's ranking fencers competing. These computations are prepared by a special Ranking Committee chosen from fencers who attend competitions regularly and are most familiar with the competing fencers, their aptitudes and records. No ranking recommendation can be purely the result of mathematical computation. A fencer who entered all competitions and consistently average around sixth place to acquire a point score of, let us say, 50 points could not conceivably be rated higher than another fencer who entered four strong competitions and won two 4th places, one 3rd place and another 3rd place on points after tying for 2nd, but whose point score added up only to 45. These variations within a season's accumulated record must be subject to the critical opinion of the committee. The Ranking Committee's job is not an easy one.

The Ranking Committee submits its recommendations before the first meeting of the Board of Governors. Each place must be approved by the Board. Where rankings are questioned, the Committee presents the reasons for its decisions and a vote is taken after the necessary discussion. All decisions of the Board of Governors are final although the Board does temper this authority by permitting a review and re-vote of any decisions which meet objections. The Board of Governors has received few such objections in the past and has never felt these few objections sufficiently justified to warrant any change.

The list of Rankings renders a specific service to the sport. However, the Board of Governors realizes that the soundness and proof of its ratings diminish as you pass the first half of the list. The difference between an 8th and a 9th ranking may be infinitesimal. Hence the Board, feeling that its rankings carry an athletic honor to its receivers, prepares a complete list of 10 in each weapon but does not place much particular significance upon its relative placements beyond the first half of each list.

For purposes of comparison we have indicated the 1938-1939 rankings of persons appearing on the two lists in consecutive years. The 1938-1939 rankings are

indicated by the small bracketed figures following the names. Another interesting comparison may be made between this list and the 1940 American Olympic Fencing Committee ratings published in our July issue. Variations between these two lists are due to the fact that the A. F. L. A. ratings refer only to the last fencing season and are judged upon the results of all competitions whereas the Olympic Committee tabulations are based upon a four year period and the results of only certain stipulated Olympic trial competitions.

1939-1940 National Rankings

Foil

1. Dernel Every (8)
2. Warren A. Dow (4)
3. Jose R. de Capriles
4. Norman L. Lewis (1)
5. John R. Huffman (3)
6. Edward Carfagno (2)
7. Silvio Giolito
8. Lt. Richard Steere (10)
9. Nathaniel Lubell (9)
10. Hugh V. Alessandrini (5)

Sabre

1. Norman C. Armitage (1)
2. Jose R. de Capriles (5)
3. John R. Huffman (2)
4. Miguel A. de Capriles (3)
5. Ralph E. Marson (7)
6. Diaz Cetrulo
7. Peter Bruder
8. Nickolas Muray (9)
9. Ervin S. Acel (10)
10. Edward Carfagno (6)

Epee

1. Fred W. Siebert
2. Alfred Skrobisch
3. Loyal Tingley (1)
4. Jose R. de Capriles (5)
5. Robert Driscoll
6. Leo G. Nunes
7. Commdr. Leonard Doughty (8)
8. Pieter Mijer
9. Lt. Gustave M. Heiss (3)
10. Miguel A. de Capriles

Women's Foil

1. Miss Helena Mroczkowska (8)
2. Miss Mildred I. Stewart (4)
3. Mrs. Marion Lloyd Vince (6)
4. Mrs. Jarmila C. Vokral (3)
5. Miss Barbara L. Cochrane (5)
6. Miss Madeline Dalton (2)
7. Miss Maria Cerra (9)
8. Mrs. Lisel Oppenheim (10)
9. Miss Carol King
10. Mrs. Dolly Funke

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EDITORIAL

The new fencing season is about to start. Schools and colleges have just opened to pupils who will find themselves learning to fence for the first time. The fencing clubs and salle d'armes have taken on renewed activity with a certain proportion of new pupils. The Riposte wishes at this time to extend a word of welcome to all of these new fencers. May they find the pleasure in fencing that fencers have found for centuries past. May their desires for an expression of true sportsmanship and for the ability to excel athletically in man to man contest be gratified.

Unused muscles ache from the "on guard" and "lunge" positions. Wrists are lame from the counters of quarte and sixte. Feet are sore from the marches and lunges. Do you stop to wonder if the sport is worth its early season pains? Ask your fencing teacher, the older fencers or The Riposte. It is well worth it. A thousand times over. You have entered into FENCING, the King of Sports, and will be well repaid later for your aches and pains of the present.

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The Riposte depends upon letters of friends from all parts of the country for the fencing news of those parts. Perhaps your section does not receive news coverage. This can easily be corrected. Write us the news yourself or recommend some friend to us so that we may contact him and request his cooperation. We are always glad to print fencing news. Do not worry about its form. Submit the facts in as much detail as possible and our Staff will worry about re-writing it for publication.

Don't let your locality be ignored. See that it has a contributor who will keep us advised, thereby assuring publicity for your local fencers and giving the country at large a means of including you in the larger picture which makes up American fencing as we have come to know and appreciate it.

X X

The Editor Goes Roaming

Fencing in New Orleans, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Francisco and Portland

WHENEVER AN EDITOR gets hard up for something to write about he is as liable as not to pack his bag and start off on a trip to look for new experiences. He is recognizable by his notebook and his inquisitive look. This Editor went traveling but with little or no intention of having anything to do with fencing. He took neither weapons, equipment, fencing clothing nor notebook. He was on a business trip distinctly remote from fencing. There is, however, an old saying that blood is thicker than water and when that blood has been infected with the bite of the fencing bug its possessor becomes very thick.

My first stop was Asheville, N. C. With time to kill before an appointment, I wandered along the city's main thoroughfare. There was a sporting shop with a sign in its window—"All types of sporting equipment." I doubted it and the first thing I knew I was inside asking if they had fencing foils. Their lack of fencing equipment didn't surprise me, but there was surprise in the fact that such a thing had happened. Why inquire for fencing equipment in a place so far from home? There was a spare closet at home filled with equipment, enough to last a long time. My fencing blood and curiosity had drawn me into that store. It was only a taste of things to come, the many times I was to go out of my way to look up fencers and get into fencing discussions before this trip was ended.

That week-end found me but a few miles from New Orleans, a city whose colorful history and traditions intrigue every American. The temptation was too much. There were only three people there whose names I knew, two amateurs and one professional fencer. Arriving early in the evening, I left my luggage at a hotel and started off immediately down brilliant Canal Street to turn left into the quaint, quiet French Quarter looking for the fencing rooms of Orest Meykar on the Rue Royale. It was a balmy evening and the experience of seeing New Orleans for the first time was proving too delightful to take in a hurry. I sauntered to my destination only to find a card in his doorway under the crossed swords stating that he was conducting a fencing class at the New Orleans Athletic Club that evening. It was tough to leave the French Quarter with its narrow quiet streets, its overhanging balconies and its quaint street lamps so soon after finding it, but the fencing bug was in me and drove all saner thoughts from mind. And so off to the more cosmopolitan surroundings of the New Orleans Athletic Club to search for fencers.

They were not difficult to find even though the fencing room had just closed. They were in the salt water pool from which they splashed to greet me. They invited me to join them but their tans made me self-conscious of my city pallor and so I waited until they dressed only to have to be introduced again to what seemed to be five entirely different fellows. Orest Meykar and James Janssen then took me by car on a neck-craning tour of the city, particularly the older parts where every street, doorway and court

had its own history. We stopped for coffee au lait near the old French Market, took a walk out to the levee and then back to the Court of the Three Sisters to sit out under the trees, drink beer and talk fencing until the moon began to yawn. We separated with a fencing date for the next afternoon (Saturday) at the N. O. A. C.

Meykar managed to fit me out with a jacket, a left-handed foil, a right-handed glove turned inside out and very chic green canvas trousers. Meykar, Janssen, Paul Ferguson and I fenced around in turn and then we alternated at judging and directing bouts between some novices to check our methods. Meykar challenged me for a final bout and we put on what was probably the noisiest fencing bout ever seen in that city, calling into play every spectacular movement in the sport short of fencing up and down winding stairways. Even though the fencing may not have been a la Louis Rondelle, it did two things: it gave Meykar and me a lot of fun and it attracted nearly everyone at the Club to the fencing room where they lined up around the balcony to see a free show of a sport in which they probably had had little interest previously.

Meykar and Mr. and Mrs. Janssen saw to it that I had a personally guided tour of New Orleans during the rest of my stay there. We had to see the duelling ground behind the chapel, the duelling oaks in the Park, Fencing Masters' Row which is the street set aside in the past for the many *salle d'armes* in old New Orleans, Jackson Square and all the many old landmarks of this city with its romantic past.

Meykar himself is as colorful as the city. He is the acknowledged official fencing master of the city. Wherever he goes he is saluted as a personage by everyone from Mayor to resident. His life is Bohemian with three hobbies, his fencing, his Cavalry commission and his shark fishing. He is happy when he has a sword in hand, is on horseback or is battling a shark with hook and line from a boat not much larger than the shark itself. He has the fencing spirit of an amateur, professionalism having been acquired along the way. The tone of New Orleans and fencing go together with both Meykar and Janssen. It hits a peak at Mardi Gras time when they cannot resist dressing as Musketeers, wandering the streets, meeting at prearranged corners for the insult, the glove challenge and the duel on the spot. Other revellers may as likely as not find themselves chased down the street with a sharp sword.

Serious fencing does not predominate in New Orleans. There are fencing classes and A.F.L.A. competitions. One may learn the sport upon application, but no one goes out of his way to attract newcomers. If you want to fence you are made welcome and may join activities with the nucleus of fencing bugs that are already there. No one tries to push the sport down your throat. New Orleans is unhurried and so are the fencers, but so long as fencing bugs like Janssen, Ferguson and Thomas Kemp are there the sport will continue and those in it will have a good time in their own way.

My next fencing stop-off, or rather my next business call at a city where fencing was available was at St. Louis. My time there was limited. I phoned Alec Solomon only to learn that he was out of the city. I finally located Tracy Barnes who in turn had Alan Beck get in touch with me. The next thing I knew I was whisked off to Beck's home for dinner and from there to Barnes' for an evening of rocking chair fencing philosophy. Knowing them only by name but nevertheless knowing of Barnes as the Chairman of the St. Louis Division of the A.F.L.A. and of Beck as the Editor of "The Blade", I could well expect to find them real fencing bugs. I was not disappointed. We talked and talked as only fencers can until my midnight train reservation demanded that I break away.

St. Louis has an unusual problem. It has several active fencing clubs, a full schedule of competitions each season, a large group of enthusiastic amateurs, but no professional. The senior fencers all help by acting as amateur teachers to the younger enthusiasts. Actually this has tended to spoil the fencers there, for it is only natural to begrudge paying for something that has been given for nothing in the past. St. Louis has also suffered from several false alarms. In efforts to interest professionals in coming there they have encouraged them by offers and have made the necessary contacts at clubs and schools for their employment only to have the professionals change their plans unexpectedly and leave them holding the bag. This has happened so often that if they were to approach an athletic department once more they would be laughed at. This has been going on ever since Joseph Fiems left St. Louis later to become Clovis Deladrier's assistant at Annapolis. Dr. Tibor Nyilas spent last year in St. Louis acting as amateur coach to its several fencing groups, but he maintained his amateurism, has returned to New York City and will probably not return to St. Louis this season.

St. Louis is a likely spot for any professional. It has plenty of fencing and many schools and colleges that can be developed further. Anyone with thoughts in this direction must remember, however, that the land has been frequently plowed but never properly harvested. The land is slightly spoiled, as previously mentioned, but for anyone who realizes the situation and is willing to start from scratch with patience there is a definite harvest to be had in a field that would be all his own.

San Francisco was next on the list, but how could anyone pass the fencers of Salt Lake City without at least a stop-off and a "hello". Impossible. First to a hotel near the Temple and then for a search through the phone book for Guy di Carlo, the fencing professional there. No luck on that try and so I called Ted Westlake. He was very much at home for when I called three carloads of fencers were about to leave his house for a supper beach party on Great Salt Lake. I managed to get myself jammed into one of the cars amid the cases of beer and hampers of sandwiches. We arrived as the sun was setting behind the mountains which encircle the lake. Beach parties were in progress for miles each side of us and as the night progressed a full moon, dozens of

beach bonfires and a distant copper smelter supplied a variety of illumination. At about ten minute intervals the copper smelter would dump molten slag down the mountain side to light up everything in an orange glow. But we were talking about fencers weren't we.

It is hard to keep names straight at any party so I doubt if I can be blamed for not being too clear as to who was who at an evening party out of doors. I talked with many of the younger fencers but talk did not become very serious until the midnight snack at the Salt Lake Airport when Ted and Virginia Westlake, di Carlo and I got our heads together.

The fencing situation in Salt Lake City revolves around the University of Utah where di Carlo teaches the sport. It is very popular there with di Carlo reporting 385 pupils as having studied under him this past year. He has tied in a course of lectures with his fencing classes, courses in which examinations are given on the history of the sport, its rules, technique, etc. We even understand that complete memorizing of the A.F.L.A. Rulesbook was assigned to some of his classes. (Fencing Directors throughout the U. S. please note.) As interest increased and the University authorities began to take more and more notice of a sport that was attracting so many followers, di Carlo played his trump card. He went to the authorities and explained that fencing was a sport which required and developed coordination of mind and body, that it quickened the thought processes of its devotees, that it was a mental training in itself. Why should fencing not be placed under the Department of Psychology as a recognized course in the University and credits be awarded those who "passed" in the subject? The authorities thought it a good idea and so do we. Fencing is now a regular course at the University of Utah and the idea is mentioned here as a precedent that other professionals might endeavor to follow.

San Francisco was really next. I knew about 20 of the fencers in that city, having met them there a year ago at the National Championships. My early endeavor to contact friends this time, however, led to disappointment. Ferard Leicester and Bryan Smith were away on vacation, while Walter Westman and Alfred Snyder seemed impossible to locate. The telephone was not answered at the Funke Fencing Academy. I then tried Helene Mayer at Mills College only to be given her apartment phone number, which the University feared would do me no good at this time of year. They were wrong. Helene had just returned from her vacation within the half hour and answered me from amid the band boxes, suitcases and miscellaneous paraphernalia of a newly returned vacationist. One never heard such a shouted welcome as poured forth from her. Being a vital person and well rested from her vacation she had been just about to suffer the let-down that any vacationist feels when first coming back to the daily grind. Zowie, I immediately became the drowning man's straw. I was grabbed, given explicit orders for the evening, asked innumerable questions concerning the fencers back East, given no time to answer, introduced to her pet dog over the wire, and bid good-bye all within the long distance time limit. I left the phone booth feeling as though I had thrown an egg into an electric fan but knowing that I would

at least be seeing fencers for the remainder of my stay in San Francisco.

That evening, Helene and Constance Dean called for me at my hotel, picked up Johnny Potter at the University Club and then with Constance at the wheel proceeded to dive and zoom the perpendicular streets of San Francisco until we found the particular restaurant and night clubs that Helene approved. These were no strangers, met for the first time. I had first met Helene in Amsterdam in 1928 when she won the Olympic Women's Foil Championship, never dreaming then that she would become a five-times winner of our own American Women's Foil Championship in the next eleven years. Constance Dean had been in and out of New York at fairly frequent intervals. I had known Johnny since his Prep School days, had cheered him through his collegiate fencing successes and had been a clubmate of his when he was still in New York. They were filled with questions about all of the fencers they knew, demanded the gossip as well as the facts and pretty well exhausted my memory and imagination before the evening was over. Furthermore, I had to promise to meet them all at Funke's swell new fencing academy the next day for some exercise.

The next day I showed up as ordered. Constance and Helene had taken San Francisco apart during the day to beg, borrow or steal equipment for me, had dug Al Snyder and Walter Westman out of summer retirement to join the fencing. Erich Funke and Hans Halberstadt, Funke's new assistant, were also on hand. What a physical beating they gave me that late afternoon. Helene, Al and Halberstadt tore into me as if I had entered San Francisco with a challenge. I was made to assume the qualities of Tennyson's Brook, being asked to go on forever while these doughty fencers took alternate shots at me. It was fun while it lasted, although I was to regret the experience during the next several days. I thought that Helene was fencing very strongly and Al had certainly recovered from the slump he was in at the Nationals in May. My touches were few and embarrassingly far between.

Constance and Helene accompanied what was left of me to the ferry and dumped me aboard for Berkeley and the train northward.

Before leaving New York, I had received a letter from Jon Matthew Gusick stating that he was located in Portland, Oregon, teaching fencing at the Multnomah Athletic Club there. Portland was to be the center of my operations for several days, although my actual business calls were in three adjacent towns within a 30-mile radius of Portland. I contacted him during one of my passages through Portland and he asked if I would participate in a small informal exhibition for his pupils. He had only been in Portland for three months and his pupils were for the most part new to the sport. An exhibition would mean much to them and to him at this particular moment. Although still stiff from my too ambitious exercising in San Francisco, I nevertheless agreed to help.

The exhibition took place in the main gymnasium of the Multnomah Athletic Club. There were about 30 or 40 people in attendance and the exhibition consisted in Gusick and me doing alternate exercises

with explanations, fencing with and among several of his pupils, and a set-to between Gusick and myself. This had all been arranged on very short notice and it was hoped that the exhibition might be repeated later in the week for the other fencers of the city. The exercise had limbered me up some and another workout might complete the cure. It was therefore arranged that when I passed through Portland later in the week, an evening exhibition would be given.

The second exhibition was along the lines of the first. It was better attended with a considerable number of the families of the younger fencers on hand to see the sport. Gusick and I put on some swashbuckling bouts together interspersed with comments that seemed to amuse the spectators, causing them to demand encores. It was as interested, pleasing, and agreeable a group of spectators as I have ever seen. In fact, my memories of Portland will remain those of having been most courteously accepted by as fine a group of new enthusiasts as the sport could ask for. I met many of them personally but naturally had difficulty in remembering so many names. I particularly remember Mr. and Mrs. Don Naylor, Henry Des Georges, Harold Keller, David White, Mrs. Lenore Irvine and Ervin Jourdan. There were many others, some of whom I fenced with, but my memory for names at this distance and after this interval of time fails me.

Gusick is doing a real job in Portland. He has taken a city where fencing had become very lethargic, put new life into it, interested many new people in the sport and very possibly rehabilitated fencing throughout the entire Pacific Northwest. There are already tangible evidences of this claim for Portland has recently applied for a Divisional Charter from the A.F.L.A. A momentum that would lead to such a development was evident when I was in Portland and if the two exhibitions we gave added impetus to it then I feel well repaid for my sore muscles.

Before leaving the subject of Portland fencing I want to salute the new Mrs. Gusick, who was most kind to me and proved most patient through long fencing discussions and arguments which a year ago would have been Greek to her.

The return trip to New York City found me occupied with no fencing and no business but plenty of scenery. The stop-off between trains in Chicago was so short that I had no time even to make phone calls. A call to Frank Righeimer, Fred Siebert, Loyal Tingley or Alvar Hermanson would have found me enveloped once more in the sport, but it was necessary to leave these friends for another time.

In arriving back in New York and returning to the office I was greeted by the strangest remark anyone ever made to me. "You sure are looking fine. Must of made a vacation of it, taking it easy between appointments." Here I had made a fencing tour of the United States, felt I should apply to the A.F.L.A., I.C.F.A., A.A.U., E.I.F.C. and N.C.A.A. for their appointment as a Fencing Ambassador without Portfolio only to be told that I looked as if I had been vacationing. Maybe I had dreamt it all. Anyhow, it was a lot of fun and, if it were a dream, it was a pleasant one.

One Touch Epee - A Rebuttal

During the past fencing season there were two articles in *The Riposte* advocating the trial of one touch epee with the electric recording machine. In our May issue we also printed a letter, signed by eight important epee men, which disagreed with our opinions and stated why. Since then the Board of Governors has voted to make epee competitions for one touch in all official events for the year 1940-41. This move was prompted by a desire to encourage more of the younger fencers to enter open competitions thereby gaining more experience for themselves and enabling the field to expand.

We thought that the matter had been disposed of for the time being and were pleased that one touch epee was to be given another trial. However, at the first meeting of the new A.F.L.A. Board of Governors for the year 1940-41 several new members of the Board, displeased by the action of last year's Board, brought the same question up for revote in an effort to rescind that action and to fence for three touches again this year. Both sides of the argument have already been presented (see the April and May issues of *The Riposte*) and we do not think it is any longer necessary to rehash them here. However, in arguing for a revote, it was continually stressed that there were just as important fencers in favor of three touches as those favoring one touch. To that argument we submit this rebuttal.

Actually, five of the 1940-41 ranking fencers favor the three touch system and five favor the one touch system. Even though all ten were in favor of three touches, I still would not concede that this was a good argument. To me the ranking fencers are of the least importance to the League. The rank and

file of fencers throughout the country are much more important. It is their sport and even though they raise ten of their number to temporary glory on the basis of competitive results, it is still their sport and the honored ten still remain unimportant numerically. In the past four years more than forty per cent of the 1936 American Olympic Team has dropped out or become inactive in A.F.L.A. work for one reason or another. Despite the loss of these apparently important fencers the League has grown and fencing has spread more in this time than in any similar period. Hence, it is the rank and file of the fencers that make up the League and it is the rank and file of the fencers who are important, not the first ranking ten. It is for this reason that I advocate the trial of the one touch epee for a year to encourage the younger and less experienced fencers to enter competition.

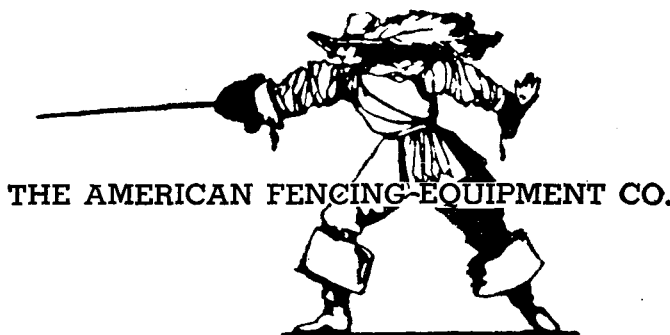
If any of the ranking ten feels that the one touch rule hurts his game then he does not belong in the ranking ten. It is fitting that rules should help young fencers until they can stand on their own feet; a ranking fencer should have such resourcefulness that he can fence and win with any rules so long as these rules are not changed in the middle of a competition. If he can't do this then he doesn't deserve a ranking.

The members of the Board of Governors should support the one touch epee rule for one year to see if such a trial will not show the way to revive epee, admittedly a most interesting weapon but also a phase of fencing which has been failing in recent years to attract its rightful proportion of devotees in this country.

W. D.

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124 AUGUR STREET

HAMDEN, CONN.

TEXAS

The Fencers Club of San Antonio was host to six Texas foil teams in an invitation tournament held in Olmos Park in San Antonio on April 27th. Individual competitions were also held in epee and saber under a direct elimination system while a round-robin foils contest was held for girls from S. M. U. and the Fencers Club of San Antonio. Charles Heard acted as Tournament Director.

Foil teams consisted of three men and one substitute. Team entries were received from Baylor University, Waco; University of Texas, Austin; Southern Methodist University, Dallas; San Antonio Y. M. C. A.; San Antonio Army Officers and a "B" team from the Fencers Club of San Antonio.

This, the largest invitation fencing meet of its kind ever held in Texas, was unfortunately delayed by a series of thunder showers. However, everyone was in good humor and sportsmanship prevailed. Although arrangements were obtained for the use of a building in another park, every fencer voted to continue the bouts as well as possible on the original grounds to give each man the same conditions. As each thunder shower ended there was a good-natured scramble for weapons, judges and score-keepers' pencils. The weather finally prevailed and forced a move to another city park at the termination of the foil team bouts. The parade of the fencers to the new location was probably the strangest armed march ever to pass through this old military city.

The picnic supper was served during the epee, sabre and girl's foil bouts. Fighting interest was at such a high level during these contests that the picnic resolved itself into shifts. A raised sandwich was an acceptable vote while the scorekeepers kept watch of contestants' plates as well as their scores.

Seven statuettes of silver and bronze, donated by local merchants, were awarded the separate winners. The members of the undefeated University of Texas foil team each received a bronze statue. A similar statue was presented to Lt. Salvator Manzo as captain of the second place Army Officers team. Miss Margaret Callan, Fencers Club, received a silver statue for first place in the women's foil contest, which place was won without the loss of a bout. Alvin Adelman of Baylor University and Hal Lattimore, also of Baylor, each received a silver statue for first places in the epee and sabre contests, respectively. A special award was given Lt. Morris F. Taber as the best Army fencer, while a special silver medal was presented to Charles Heard for his good work in promoting the sport in San Antonio.

Several Army fencers and members of the Fencers Club "A" team sacrificed their chances of competitive achievement to act as officials for the bouts. This sportsmanlike gesture not only made for keener competition among the lesser experienced fencers but also made for a smooth and efficient handling of the several contests. Quoting a local fencer, "The day was a grand success."

A Southwestern League Meet was held at the University of Texas, Austin, on May 9th, 10th and 11th. Baylor University, Texas A. & M., Southern Methodist University and the University of Texas participated. Lt. Salvator Manzo and Charles Heard acted as Directors. Details of the results have not been received.

The Remise

Our home telephone rang long and loud on August 30th, an evening in which the A. F. L. A. Rules Committee was up to its ears in another of its night long sessions. I returned very late to learn that a most excited "Chips" Cantor, known only to a very few people as Irving E. Cantor, had called to announce that he had just become the proud father of twin boys. Chips is one of our better sabre men, being ranked # 5 in 1937-1938, and although almost unintelligible at the time did want it known that two more sabremen were due to start training in a few years.

The news pleased us a great deal not only because Chips and Elizabeth have always been popular with all of the fencers but also because the new responsibility may possibly see Chips return to more active fencing than in the past two seasons. After all, he does have to keep ahead of his boys.



The Riposte artist presents a sketch of the present situation in the Cantor home with the two future members of the Fencers Club already showing their Dad a thing or two.

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Tracy Jaeckel, another of our ranking fencers (he was # 6 in epee last year), has been touched. His engagement to Joe Hann Randlov was announced in many New York society columns on September 18th. The popular Tracy fenced very little this last season, giving as an excuse the great amount of work necessary in moving the minks and sables to the new Jaeckels on upper Fifth Avenue. The sly Tracy was a 'courtin' instead.

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Fencers whose association with the sport extends beyond the past decade were shocked to read on September 22nd of the death of Major Francis Honeycutt, U. S. A., in an airplane disaster between Fort Bragg, N. C. and Jacksonville, Fla. Major Honeycutt was one of America's leading foilsmen in the early 20's and was a member of the 1920 American Olympic Fencing Team.

XX

For the past two seasons, word has passed around that the A. F. L. A. was preparing a new Rulesbook. For the last year, the old Rulesbook has been out of

print and requests for it have been met only by promises of the new book, when available. That hasn't been a very satisfying answer to a person in need of a book of rules, but under the circumstances it was the best that the A.F.L.A. Secretary could do.



No foolin'. The new book is now at the printers. It will be a whopper, and well worth the wait.

The new Rulesbook will, in our opinion, prove to be the most accurate, readable, complete, up-to-date, authoritative

book of its kind ever published anywhere. Its approximately 120 pages will present the advanced opinions of the F.I.E., the A.F.L.A., the I.C.F.A. and the N.C.A.A. Rules Committees. Proofs have been submitted to at least 50 of America's leading fencers, amateurs and professionals alike, and the results are a composite opinion of fencing today, an opinion that has proved surprisingly consistent despite the fact that fencers usually tend to disagree on many of the finer points of the sport.

The new Rulesbook is more than just a book of rules. It will have many new and added features including a historical sketch of the A.F.L.A., the Constitution and By-Laws of the League, a new section on rules concerning amateurism, another new section pertaining to exhibitions, new material concerning National and Sectional Championships, the Duties of Contestants, the Rules of Discipline, the Rules of Judging and a most valuable chapter containing a clear Definition of Fencing Terms. This is a book that no fencer, amateur or professional, can afford not to have in his library.

If you are a member of the A.F.L.A., you will receive a copy of this new Rulesbook as soon as it leaves the printer. If not a member, you would be doing yourself a service in sending Dr. Ervin Acel, Secretary of the A.F.L.A., 25 Beaver Street, New York City, fifty cents at once with the request that he place an order for you for a copy as soon as possible.

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The major part of the work on the preparation of the new Rulesbook was carried out by the A.F.L.A. Rules Committee. Many meetings, lasting long into the early morning hours, were held as suggestions for changes, clarifications and amplifications were received. This, however, was work which was concentrated into the last six months, after a year and a half had already been spent in the preparation of the original "copy". The primary work, the hardest of all, which entailed comparisons of all former Rulesbooks, translation of F.I.E. Rulesbooks, incorporation of new A.F.L.A. rules and rules of usage, systematizing of presentation as new features were incorporated, and the preparation of reams of type-written pages to make up the first draft, fell upon one man, Mike de Capriles, Chairman of the Rules Committee. He faced this as a necessary but thank-

less task. He spent hours, days and weeks at preparing a first draft which he knew would be cut, chopped, re-



hashed and even possibly destroyed. Nevertheless, he kept at his job, snooping through the books and files of the A.F.L.A., through all of the evidence available in order to present to his Committee the latest clues

and ideas he could find for its help in the task ahead. We don't think that this should remain a thankless task. We feel that the Rules Committee, the Board of Governors, the League and fencers everywhere are indebted to him for a piece of work that deserves considerable credit. We, therefore, wish to thank him personally in these columns for the endless hours of painstaking effort that we know he expended for the good of the sport.

XX

We have rarely gone out of our way to heap coals of fire on this one or pour encomiums upon that one for something that has occurred within the sport. We have preferred to follow a middle course of damning with faint praise or praising with faint damns. Nevertheless, an occasion does arise now and then where the middle course is not adequate. This happens to be one of them. We have already praised Mike for his work. As Chairman, it was part of his duty to do what he did. That he did it so well was the good fortune of the League. Any other Chairman might have worked just as hard and we hope might have done as well. What we do want to praise in him is the way in which he carried it through.

Whenever a man works at a task as long as Mike worked at this one, that task becomes pretty much a personal property. You work with it, think about it, have it in mind during all of your waking and sleeping hours. It becomes your brainchild, subject to the help and criticism of others but never entirely sacrificed to the whims of others than yourself. To be able to sit by while other scalp, hack and amputate your brainchild, in fact to enter into the mutilation yourself with enthusiasm requires an unselfishness and broadmindedness that few men possess. Mike de Capriles has it.

As a member of his Committee, we sat in upon many of the meetings which would have tortured any normal author into agony. We marveled at his ability to hear suggestions and then, after submitting his source or authority for the original, gladly make changes in words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs that the Committee felt would read better another way. Every suggestion was given a fair hearing and everyone concerned was pressed by the Chairman for any and every suggestion that would in any way make the Rulesbook a better job. As a consequence, you will find the new Rulesbook an unusually good job, thanks to a hard working Chairman who never let his own nor any of the cooperating Committees down.

While we are throwing bouquets we might just as well complete the job. Mike is the newly elected Secretary of the New York Metropolitan Committee, a job which ranks second only to that of the National Secretary in number of duties and amount of

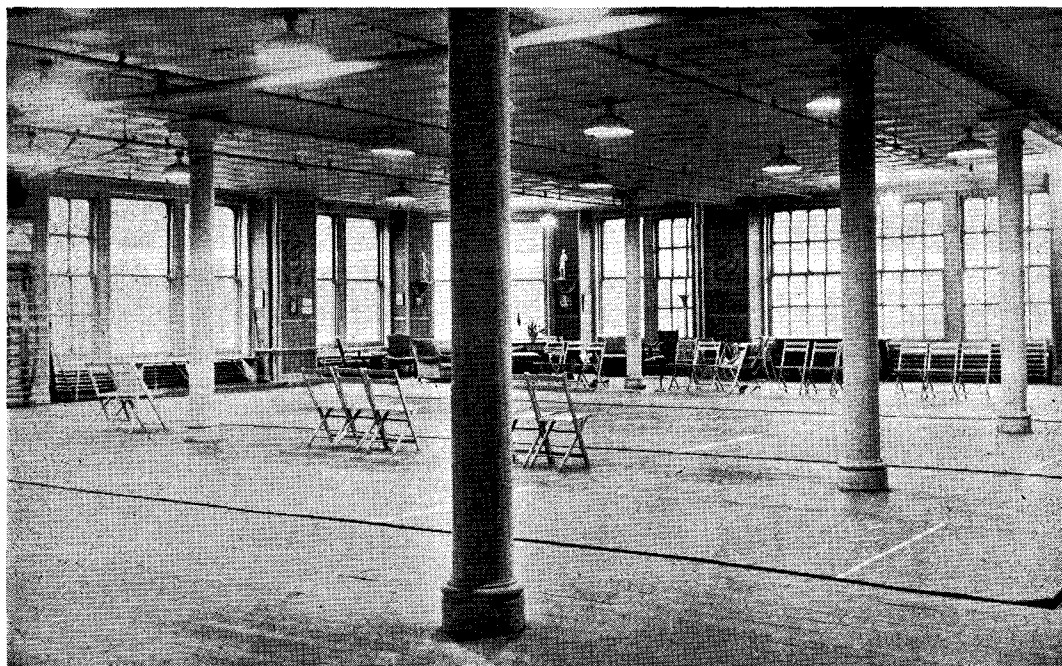
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work. He had already been elected Vice Chairman of that Committee, a position which exceeded that of Secretary in honorary standing, when difficulty arose in finding a man willing and able to accept the Secretaryship. Matters were pretty much at a standstill until Mike resigned as Vice Chairman and accepted the nomination and unanimous vote as Secretary. The Rulesbook is on the press and Mike deserves a rest, but at this writing he is again burning the midnight oil to get the Schedule of New York Competitions mailed to some 300 fencers who hardly realize the work necessary to keep their sport rolling for them.

X X

A NEW FENCING MASK

It is difficult for the modern fencer to conceive that it was not until the middle of the 19th century that fencing masks were used. Devotees of the "aristocrat of sports" stubbornly refused to wear any sort of protection for the face, as it was considered very ungentlemanly and unsportsmanlike to hit an opponent in the face! None the less, accidents did occur, and it was precious little consolation for a fencer with six inches of steel piercing his eye or entering his mouth to feel that his opponent was decidedly below him in the social scale.

Finally masks were universally adopted.

It must be acknowledged that all fencers are handicapped by reduced vision when wearing a mask, even in the best of lighting. It has been estimated that there is about 40% loss of light, and since a mask is an indispensable safety factor in a fencer's equipment, the only recourse so far has been to accept as unavoidable the loss of clear vision.

However, the inventive mind of America looks upon any obstacle to progress as merely a challenge which must be accepted, and now comes along what appears to be the solution of the problem of how to improve the fencer's vision.

Dr. Canute Hansen of the Department of Hygiene of City College has designed a mask which he terms the "Clear-Vision Fencing Mask" consisting of two eye pieces of non-shatterable glass set into the face of the standard type of mask. This has been given a thorough trial for a period extending over six months. I have used it both for lessons and bouts in foil and sabre and it has given every satisfaction. The improvement in vision is very marked, there being no loss of light as with the usual type of mask and over extended periods the eye-strain is very considerably reduced.

The visual area determined by the glass eyepieces is sufficient for all purposes, training, bouts and teaching, and the rapid movements of blades are very much easier to see than with the ordinary mask.

For foil and sabre play the non-shatterable glass in my opinion presents no hazards; no foil or sabre thrust, I am convinced, could have any effect on the glass.

During the months I have used the mask I have had no sense of insecurity, and in my opinion the "Clear Vision" type of mask should prove a valuable asset to a fencer's equipment saving much eyestrain and adding to the effectiveness of his fencing.

JAMES MONTAGUE,
Fencing Coach,
City College of New York.

GRECO OUTDOOR SABRE COMPETITION

The Annual Outdoor Sabre Competition, sponsored by Antonino Greco and scheduled each year by the New York Metropolitan Committee of the A. F. L. A., was held this year on September 8th at Jones Beach. Favored by ideal weather conditions and conducted under excellent arrangements, this competition attracted good attendance from the constantly shifting resort crowds.

Dr. Tibor Nyilas, former member of the Hungarian International Sabre Team, won first place decisively by sweeping all bouts in the nine-man Finals. Dr. James H. Flynn, All Eastern Intermediate Sabre Champion, George Worth, National Sabre Champion of Cuba and Leo Kellerman of the Yale Medical School tied for second place with five wins and three losses each. Flynn took second with 20 touches against, while Worth was third with 24 touches against, and Kellerman was fourth with 26 touches against. The three medallists all represented the Salle Santelli. The competition attracted 20 entrants.

Mr. Greco presented gold, silver and bronze medals to the first three place winners.

SANTELLI INVITATION TOURNAMENT

Miss Helena Mroczkowska, National Women's Foil Champion, made a clean sweep of her nine bouts in the Santelli Invitation Tournament for women held at the Court of Sports of the New York World's Fair. Miss Dorothy Grimmelmann took second place with six wins and three losses, while Miss Barbara Cochrane took third on touches over Miss Mary Ann Harris each with five wins and four losses. This contest, a round-robin of ten girls, was sponsored by the New York World's Fair under the supervision of the Salle Santelli. The Director of Athletics of the Fair presented each of the competing fencers with a World's Fair Certificate of Award, while George Santelli is donating medals to the winners of the first three places.

Miss Mroczkowska fenced unattached; Miss Grimmelmann, Miss Cochrane, Miss Harris, Miss Vera Field, and Miss Grace Acel represented the Salle Santelli; Miss Dorothy Kerfoot and Miss Elizabeth Aboulafia represented the Foils Club; Mrs. Gay Gerns represented the Salle Scafati, and Miss Beryl Petchesky represented the Waverly Fencing Club.

PHILADELPHIA

The Outdoor Philadelphia Open Championships were held on May 12th at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Ristine in Strafford, Pa. Perfect weather conditions attracted a large group of spectators.

There were nine competitors in the Sabre Championship in which Philip C. Shakespeare, Jr., of the Sword Club won first place over Charles E. Willous of the Salle Scafati of Newark, N. J., in a fence-off after tying for first with 7 victories and 1 loss apiece. Jay Stockhardt of the Philadelphia Fencers Club was third with 6 wins and 2 losses.

Richard F. Warren won all bouts to place first in the Epee Championship over the seven other entrants. George Ciancaglini of the Wilmington Y. M. C. A., took second place on touches over Eugene Botelho of Haverford College after tying with 4 victories and 3 losses apiece.

A. F. L. A. OFFICERS (Amended from last issue)

The following men will hold office in the Amateur Fencers League of America during the 1940-41 fencing season (September 1, 1940 - August 31, 1941).

Dr. John R. Huffman	- - - -	President
Richard F. Warren	- - -	1st Vice President
Ferard Leicester	- - -	2nd Vice President
Royall S. Snow	- - -	3rd Vice President
Leo G. Nunes	- - -	4th Vice President
George Cochrane	- - - -	Treasurer
Dr. Ervin Acel	- - - -	Secretary

It has been usual in the past to have only one Vice President although additional Vice Presidents have been elected in some years to act authoritatively for the League in particular situations. Examples of this was the election of 2nd and 3rd Vice Presidents from California when the Olympic Games were held in Los Angeles in 1932 and the election of a 2nd Vice President from Illinois when the Outdoor Championships were held at the Chicago World's Fair in 1933.

This year marks the introduction of a new plan of organization whereby Sectional Vice Presidents have been elected to act in authority under the Board of Governors over matters pertaining to the affairs of the four main fencing groups of the country. Richard F. Warren of Philadelphia, 1st Vice President, will represent the All-Eastern section. Ferard Leicester of San Francisco, 2nd Vice President, will represent the Pacific Coast section. Royall S. Snow of Columbus, Ohio, will represent the Mid-West Section, while Leo G. Nunes of New York City will represent the New York Metropolitan Committee and Non-Divisional members.

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NEW YORK METROPOLITAN COMMITTEE

The Metropolitan Committee for the season 1940-1941 as appointed by A. F. L. A. President John R. Huffman, together with its officers as elected by the committee itself will be:

Leo G. Nunes	- - - -	Chairman
Robert Driscoll	- - -	Vice Chairman
Miguel A. de Capriles	- - -	Secretary
George Cochrane	- - -	Treasurer
Marcel Brameral		Ralph E. Marson
Miss Madeline Dalton		Pieter Mijer
Philip Lubart		Joseph Rabb
		Walter White

It held its first meeting on September 24th during which results of the past season and plans for the new season were discussed. A Schedule of Events to include approximately 50 local competitions and a listing of National Events as well will be published and distributed in the first week of October, the first event being scheduled for October 15th. Among matters of importance decided was one entitling all A. F. L. A. members to use their membership cards as tickets of free admission to all competitions under the Committee's jurisdiction. A strenuous membership drive will be undertaken in the opening weeks of the season.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

The Board of Governors of the A. F. L. A. announced the award of a Professional Certificate of Merit to Mr. Elwyn E. Bugge of the San Francisco Olympic Club on September 5th.

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Oakland Fencing Club was formed in Oakland in early May. Membership in the club was recruited from present and former students of local colleges, universities and fencing academies. The club plans to meet every Friday evening at Lazear Auditorium and offers open house hospitality to any fencers visiting California. Organization of the club came about as the result of real increases in fencing interest throughout the Bay region. San Francisco State College, San Jose State College and several local junior colleges all established fencing as a regular sport within the last year. Oakland Evening High School also has a large fencing class.

There were four fencing competitions held on August 22nd at Festival Hall on Treasure Island, the site of the 1939 National Championships.

In the afternoon, a foil competition was held for boys under 16 years of age. Of the six boys who entered this limited competition, Gerald Biagini of the Young Italian Club was first, while Milton Iverson and Donald Devlin, both of the Olympic Club, were second and third respectively.

A women's novice foil team competition was held at five o'clock. Four teams were entered; two from the Funke Fencing Academy, one from the Young Italian Club and one from the Oakland Fencing Club. Mrs. Emily Romaine, Miss Marjorie Nevis and Miss Madeleine Lowell of the Funke Fencing Academy won the competition with three match victories and no losses, winning 21 bouts and losing 6. The Young Italian Club team made up of Miss Lydia Riedener, Miss Anna Giannini and Miss Nella Panelli was second with two matches won and one match lost.

Two competitions, a Divisional Three Weapon Individual Championship and a Women's Individual Open Summer Tournament, were conducted simultaneously in the evening. Alfred R. Snyder of the Olympic Club won the Championship over a field of 13 contestants. Ferard Leicester, also of the Olympic Club, was second, losing a close final match to Snyder, 7-8. There were 19 entries in the women's foil event which was won by Miss Helene Mayer. Miss Mayer was undefeated, having only one touch made against her while winning her seven bouts in the eight-girl Final Round. Miss Marcelle Woollen was second, losing only to Miss Mayer, while Miss Roberta Fritz was third with two losses. All three place winners were members of the newly formed San Francisco Fencers Club.

Fencing was continuous from 3 P. M. to 11 P. M. with a large crowd of spectators always on hand under the same ideal conditions as prevailed last year.

ILLINOIS

Alvar Hermanson opened a new Salle d'Armes at the University of Chicago on October 3rd.

The Army-Navy Club of Chicago conducted a fencing meet in all three weapons for the reserve officers of the Chicago area. The competitions were held at the Army-Navy Club with finals conducted at the monthly formal dance of the club on May 25th. Preliminaries on earlier dates were conducted in foil and sabre reducing entrants to two finalists in each weapon. The entire epee contest took place the final evening.

Ensign Clifford Groh defeated Floyd Traynham, Jr. in the foil Finals, 5-3. Groh also won the sabre competition by defeating Orval Lucier 5-3 in the final match. Captain Fred W. Siebert, newly crowned National Champion, won the one-touch epee competition, after a fence-off for first place with Floyd Traynham, Jr. There had been 5 entries with the finalists tied with three wins and one loss apiece.

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FLORIDA

The A. F. L. A. Division in Florida conducted six fencing competitions with the following first place winners all from Rollins College: Prep Foil, Frank Manuel; Open Foil, DeJay Shriner; Open Epee, Emanuel Ehrlich; Open Sabre, Emanuel Ehrlich; Women's Prep Foil, Miss Gloria Young, and Women's Open Foil, Miss Toy Skinner. The Division also sponsored an Interscholastic Invitation Tournament which was won by Leon Jackson of the Winter Park High School.

Next year's season, according to Secretary-Chairman Emanuel Ehrlich, will start earlier and will contain a more extensive schedule.

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KANSAS

The Kansas City Sportsmen's Fencing Tournament was held late in May in collaboration with the Kansas City Sportsmen's Exposition and Horse Show. It proved so successful that it is now planned to make it an annual affair.

The foil competition was won by Carlos de Janon of the University of Kansas with Haven Glassmire, also of the University of Kansas, second. Richard Stern of Kansas City and formerly of Yale University was third, while fourth and fifth places went to members of the St. John's Military School.

The epee competition was won by Richard Stern. Haven Glassmire was second, while William Belt and Carlos de Janon of the University of Kansas were third and fourth. Dr. Penay of Kansas City was fifth.

William Belt, Haven Glassmire and D. Francisco, all of the University of Kansas, took first, second and third respectively in the sabre competition.

In the women's foil, Miss Maxine Foth of Kansas City University was first, Miss C. Smith of Minneapolis was second, Miss Patricia Clifford of the Rapier Club of Kansas City was third, while Miss L. Polson of the University of Kansas was fourth.

The team trophy was won by the University of Kansas with the St. John's Military School placing second. The women's team trophy was won by the Rapier Club of Kansas City.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

An annual fencing tournament was held at Pierce Hall on May 22nd and 24th. Twelve medals, donated by Colonel Anthony Drexel Biddle were awarded on the 22nd to the first three place winners in men's foil, sabre and epee and in women's foil. The winners were as follows: Men's Foil, 1st, Lt. Richard Steere; 2nd, Young, and 3rd, Kniazez. Epee, 1st, Gerns; 2nd, Cavanaugh, and 3rd, S. C. Munson. Sabre, 1st, Young; 2nd, Col. E. E. Emerson, and 3rd, Kniazez. Women's Foil, 1st, Miss Aida Prencipe; 2nd, Miss Pratt, and 3rd, Miss Sally Alley. There were 11 entries in the women's foil.

On May 24th, an individual three weapon contest was held with the first three place winners awarded letter weight emblems by Ambassador Alfaro of Ecuador, President of the Washington Fencers Club. These emblems, commemorating South America's decisive battle for Independence won by swordsmen on Mount Pichincha on May 24th, 1822, were won by 1st, Kniazez; 2nd, A. Williams, and 3rd, Col. E. E. Emerson.

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NEW YORK STATE

Three fencers, Valerian Lada-Mocarski, Joseph M. Donovan and Ralph E. Marson, participating in military training in the Business and Professional Men's Special Course in the 1st Plattsburg 1940 Regiment, took opportunity by the horns and presented their military-minded companions with a fencing exhibition at the Plattsburg camp on August 1st. With Mr. Lada-Mocarski acting as Master of Ceremonies the exhibition was presented in military style with crispness and fast variety. A foil and sabre lesson was presented and bouts were conducted in all three weapons among the three exhibitors.

The exhibition was enthusiastically received by the regiment. Among the guests were General Hugh A. Drum, Commander of the 2nd Corps Area, Colonel James I. Muir, Commander of the 26th Infantry, Lt. Colonel Chamberlain, Major Blakeney, Major Jacobs, Major Buie and their wives and guests.

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INCORRECT ADDRESSES

The following subscribers' last copies of The Riposte were returned by the Post Office Department because of changes in their addresses. We are sending this issue again to the same addresses in the hope that some of them may be reached. Any subscriber knowing any of these fencers personally would be doing us a favor to ask them to drop us a postcard giving their present address so that we may contact them, send them their missing issues and continue the subscriptions.

Mr. Lawrence Bocci, Calif.
Mr. Harold A. Corbin, Calif.
Miss Katherine Embree, N. Y. C.
Miss Carol King, Chicago
Mr. Philip E. Lilienthal, N. Y. C.
Mr. Albert J. Paulson, Chicago.
Miss Cornelia Sanger, Calif.
Mr. Robert Sinetar, N. Y. C.
Mr. Charles E. Schwab, Texas.
Mr. Eugene Townsend, Fla.
Mr. James B. Welles, Jr., N. Y. C.