

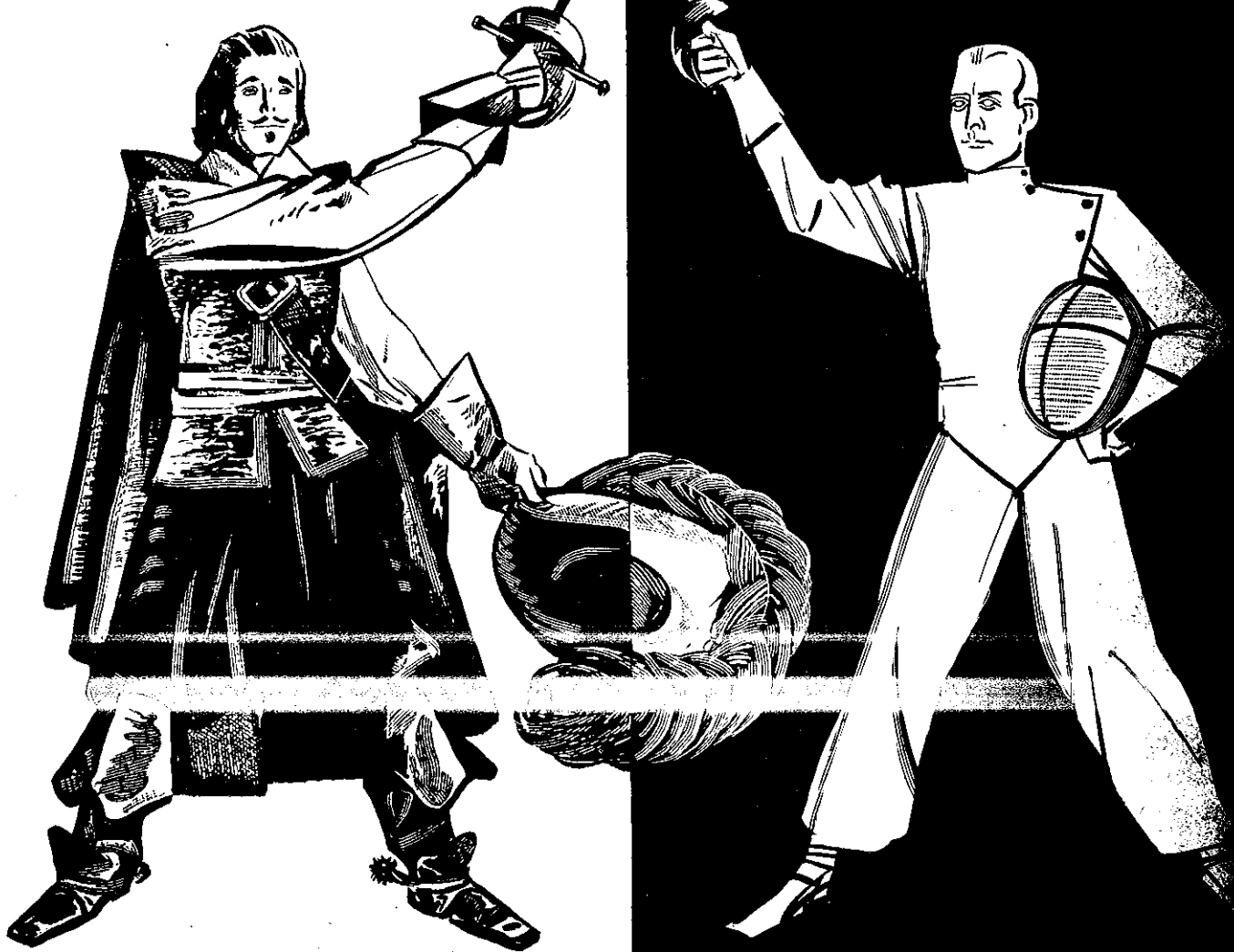
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The **RIPOSTE**

DECEMBER

VOL. 6

NO. 5



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AMERICA'S OLDEST MAGAZINE OF FENCING, PUBLISHED SIX TIMES YEARLY AT
114 WASHINGTON PLACE, NEW YORK, N. Y., BY AND FOR FENCERS IN AMERICA

JOSE R. DE CAPRILES AND WILLIAM A. PERRY, III, Co-Founders

DERNELL EVERY, Editor

DONALD F. BARNES, MIGUEL A. DE CAPRILES AND BURROUGHS MITCHELL, Associate Editors

WARREN A. DOW, Advisor

The Magazine Grows Up

SIX YEARS OF THE RIPOSTE

By Jose R. de Capriles

With William A. Perry, III, Jose de Capriles founded the *Riposte* in 1935. They have kept it alive and occasionally prospering for six years—longer than any other American fencing magazine. How it managed to survive and grow constructively is explained by the founder.

WELL, the brat is six years old this month and refuses to be called baby any more—it has begun to show signs of being an up-and-coming young man. In the course of its growth it has acquired a godfather and numerous aunts and uncles who are mighty proud of this youngster and feel that the hundreds

of friends it has made during its young life, friends who have been so instrumental in molding its character, would like to join us in our reminiscence of the past six years.

In November of 1935, Bill Perry and I felt that a news medium was sorely needed in fencing. We had watched others bring forth magazines on a grand scale. The latest attempt had been particularly impressive. It had been given everything money could buy—its cover was of glossy, multi-colored material, and the contents had the unmistakable symptoms of fine and expensive workmanship. Unfortunately, this one soon died of starvation. The parents had spent



The *Riposte*'s three "front pages." Left to right: the first issue, the 1937 cover, and the present one.



all their money on the appearance. Bill and I determined to profit by these observations and to bring our magazine into the fencing world the hard way. The fancy clothes were not to come until the baby had been well fed and seemed assured of a healthy life.

Then came December 19, 1935. I'll never forget that first night when we took the first *Riposte* to the Fencers Club and paraded it with that pride which only parents can feel. It had no cover, only three bright yellow pages, and the material was very poor mimeograph, held together by a staple at one corner. When we introduced our protege, we were greeted with amused praise and polite compliments.

Although we didn't achieve startling financial success with the first issue, we did succeed in getting the paper talked about (although all the comments were not complimentary) and the kid made his first public speech as follows:

"Fencers have long realized the need for a periodical devoted to fencing news and fencing features. Previous attempts to fill this need have been on a pretentious scale without permanent success. The *Riposte* is a modest effort. We prefer to expand and improve as your support and encouragement grows. Our enterprise is largely cooperative. Without your support we cannot survive. We would like your financial support, but we need as well your literary contributions . . . reports to the staff of interesting events in your clubs and divisions, juicy gossip notes that should make other fencers chuckle, and the like. We plan to cover the competitions with adequate comments, and eventually include the results of foreign meets. These will be of particular interest with the coming of the Olympics. We have hopes of including, at the proper time, first-hand news stories of the Olympic Games themselves. As the newspaper about fencers, by fencers, and for fencers, The *Riposte* asks your whole-hearted cooperation in a mutually enjoyable enterprise."

After that memorable first issue, we decided to publish every two weeks in the hope that the many people we knew would take a liking to our effort and become interested enough to contribute to its support.

Our second appearance brought enough dimes to cover the cost of the publishing and on our third time out, although we were still living far beyond our means, we discarded the bright yellow outfit and changed to a more conservative buff material. It was still of the cheapest quality, and we were still limited

to three pages, but by now the youngster had a full-fledged family. George Breed was our foreign secretary, Barbara Cochrane the circulation manager, and Mike de Capriles was technical adviser, which in those days meant that he wrote most of the stuff and acted as our father confessor.

Then came our first big moment. We had refused to accept subscriptions for fear of committing ourselves to a continued appearance. Suddenly Henrique Santos, on his way back to Peru, insisted on a year's subscription so that he might read what we were doing during his absence. He refused to believe that the magazine might fold.

And so we went along precariously for seven costly appearances until March of 1936 when our good friends Messrs. Castello, Santelli and Vince decided to help support the growing project by using it in their advertising. It was about this time that we started a series of articles on judging and directing by our technical adviser. The series was to run for over a year and a half, and was instrumental in furthering the interest of fencers throughout the country. It was our first attempt to contribute something constructive and the response was most gratifying. The series probably did more than any one thing to enable us to keep going during the first trying year.

The *Riposte's* First Cover

In keeping with our policy, we stayed just one step ahead of the poorhouse and spent all our money in improving the appearance of our pride and joy. In January of 1937 we presented the growing child with a belated birthday gift—its first cover. It was printed with an attractive design which some people considered a little too martial, but to us it was the most beautiful thing on the market. The inner pages were still cheap mimeograph, but now there were a lot more of them. On some appearances we reached as many as fifteen pages.

With the acquisition of the new cover fortune began to smile more broadly. Our advertisers increased, and in November of that year Aldo Nadi began his column "Aldo Nadi says," a commentary on fencers and fencing. The column was a bombshell. We were flooded with comments pro and con. Some praised Mr. Nadi as a sorely-needed critic to keep fencers and juries on their toes, and predicted that the presence of such an eminent fencer and outspoken critic would be a boon to the sport. Others reprimanded us for permitting anyone to tear our fencers and juries apart so mercilessly; for not censoring the uninhibited Mr. Nadi; for not curtailing his devastating frankness. Whatever view you take of Nadi and his column, there is no denying that everyone looked forward to the next issue—either with annoyed curiosity or pleasant anticipation—to see what he was going to say next. Our circulation increased considerably during these stormy times, and we were able to carry an open-letter page where the supporters and critics of Nadi could fight it out among themselves. Mr. Nadi finally decided to bow to his critics and we carried his last article in June 1938.

(Continued on page 16)

THE NEW NATIONAL RANKINGS

FORTY-THREE fencers were honored with "first ten" ranking for the 1940-41 season, as recommended by the ranking committee and approved by the Board of Governors of the A.F.L.A. at its September 10 meeting. The odd number was occasioned by the fact that in epee, sabre and women's foil, the No. 10 ranking was split between two fencers.

Of those ranked in 1941, 15 were unranked last year. Three new names appear in foil, three in sabre, and two in women's foil, while there was a wholesale turnover in epee with seven new names.

The rankings in each weapon are as follows (numbers in parenthesis indicate the fencer's rating in that weapon last year):

Foil

1. Dean Cetrulo, Salle Santelli (.....)
2. John R. Huffman, N.Y.A.C. (5)
3. Silvio Giolito, N.Y.A.C. (7)
4. Alfred Snyder, Olympic Club (.....)
5. Warren A. Dow, N.Y.A.C. (2)
6. Dornell Every, N.Y.A.C. (1)
7. Norman Lewis, Salle Santelli (4)
8. Nathaniel Lubell, Salle d'Armes Vince (9)
9. Jose R. de Capriles, Salle Santelli (3)
10. Arthur D. Tauber, New York University (.....)

The four participants in the four-way fence-off for first place in the nationals were ranked as they finished in that fence-off. Warren Dow, handicapped by illness during part of the season, slipped to fifth after having failed to reach the finals for the first time in many national championships. Dornell Every and Norman Lewis, the other national finalists, were ranked next, with three strong fencers who placed consistently high throughout the season filling the first ten.

Epee

1. Captain Gustave M. Heiss, U.S.A., Fencers Club (9)
2. Andrew Boyd, Los Angeles A.C. (.....)
3. Henrique Santos, N.Y.A.C. (.....)
4. Marvin Metzger, Columbia University (.....)
5. Jose R. de Capriles, Salle Santelli (4)
6. Kevis Kapner, Salle Santelli (.....)
7. Miguel A. de Capriles, Salle Santelli (10)
8. Edouard Guirola, Salle Santelli (.....)
9. Wallace Goldsmith, N.Y.A.C. (.....)
10. Pieter Mijer, Salle Santelli (8)
James H. Flynn, N.Y.A.C. (.....)

Again national championship form dominated the rankings. With Heiss, Metzger, Boyd and Santos, the first four in the title round, leading the rankings. Boyd, who also won the Pacific Coast championship, was ranked second, with Santos and Metzger following. Kapner and Goldsmith, the other contest-

ants in the title round, were ranked sixth and ninth, with the leaders in the Metropolitan division completing the first ten.

Sabre

1. Norman C. Armitage, Fencers Club (1)
2. John R. Huffman, N.Y.A.C. (3)
3. Miguel A. de Capriles, Salle Santelli (4)
4. Tibor Nyilas, Salle Santelli (.....)
5. Dean Cetrulo, Salle Santelli (6)
6. George V. Worth, Salle Santelli (.....)
7. Nickolas Muray, N.Y.A.C. (8)
8. Ralph Marson, N.Y.A.C. (5)
9. Jose R. de Capriles, Salle Santelli (2)
10. Ervin S. Acel, N.Y.A.C. (10)
James H. Flynn, N.Y.A.C. (.....)

The only new names in the familiar sabre list are those of Nyilas and Worth, Hungarian internationalists competing a full season in this country for the first time, and Dr. Flynn, who has been moving up the list steadily. The rest are those who have constantly reached the final round in sabre for many years.

Women's Foil

1. Helene Mayer, San Francisco Fencers Club (.....)
2. Helena Mroczkowska, Fencers Club (1)
3. Marion Lloyd Vince, Salle d'Armes Vince (3)
4. Maria Cerra, Salle d'Armes Vince (7)
5. Jarmila Vokral, Salle Herrmann (4)
6. Madeline Dalton, unattached (6)
7. Dolly Funke, Greco Fencing Academy (10)
8. Barbara Cochrane, Salle Santelli (5)
9. Paula Sweeney, Salle de Tuscan (.....)
10. Lisel Oppenheim, Boston (8)
Mildred I. Stewart, Fencers Club (2)

No new names crop up in the women's rankings this year, Helene Mayer, six times national champion, and Paula Sweeney, many times mid-west titleholder, again coming into prominence through their participation in the nationals.

* * *

Tribute was justly paid to Joe de Capriles by the ranking committee for, although law school examinations made it impossible for him to take part in any of the national individual finals, he was ranked in all three weapons. Ralph Marson, forced to withdraw from the sabre finals by an emergency operation, was also rightfully ranked. Sabre continued to be the weapon that followed form most closely and epee the most unpredictable.

Six fencers from outside the Metropolitan area received ranking—Snyder in foil, Boyd in epee, and Miss Mayer, Mrs. Vokral, Miss Sweeney and Mrs. Oppenheim in women's foil. This compares with eight in 1940.

THE RIPOSTE

America's Oldest Fencing Magazine

114 Washington Place - New York City

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12 Issues 2.00

THIS IS ISSUE # 64

Mailed on or about December 19, 1941

EDITORIAL

This issue marks another milestone in the limited but steady progress of our magazine. It is our Sixth Anniversary Number. Jose R. de Capriles, one of the founders, has submitted an article describing the start and early days of the magazine and it is probably appropriate for the Editor to give a few current statistics.

For instance, the month of November, just past, saw more new subscriptions received than in any month in the present Editor's memory. The subscription list is well distributed geographically including practically every State in the Union and most of the Protectorates. Our list of Army subscriptions is growing rapidly as our fencers have been going into the Service. It is no small task just to keep up with their changes in addresses.

We have received some favorable comments upon our decision to publish six issues a year to be available at a subscription rate of \$1.00. Naturally, for bookkeeping purposes we urge our subscribers to renew at the \$2.00 or 12 issue rate to avoid being plagued by the problem of billing one-sixth of our subscription list every issue. It is gratifying to see that at least half of our older subscribers renew by the longer route.

In a world confused and littered with the debris of war we are again conscious of the spirit of Christmas as it glows out upon us from home and store windows. Wars may come and go but Christmas has survived nearly 2,000 years. In five of those The Riposte has not failed to send its good wishes to its subscribers and in this its sixth Christmas season it again sends its heartiest wishes for a MERRY CHRISTMAS, A HAPPY NEW YEAR and A SUCCESSFUL SEASON.

The Remise

In the last issue we printed an article entitled "Ethics on the Fencing Strip" in which we collaborated with Mr. Guzman Rolando. This was not easy, for Mr. Rolando wrote his article in France in 1812. We did nothing more than modernize the article by converting his objections to apply to actual competitive conditions of the current day. It must be realized that when Rolando wrote his essay there were no actual fencing competitions as we know them today. There were exhibition bouts before spectators but no touches were called. Nevertheless, his analysis of some of the ungentlemanly actions of 1812 was so reminiscent of many of today's faults that it could not be overlooked. It just goes to show that fencing is a very human sport and that the faults of the human race do not change very much over the centuries.

XX

While sitting over our typewriter and trying to weave Mr. Rolando's thoughts into modern English we were reminded of many of our contemporaries and sometimes we were plagued with a feeling of uneasiness as Mr. Rolando's barbs struck directly home to this otherwise quite angelic writer. We nevertheless made it quite clear that we thought it primarily a New York City problem and only hoped that we were not giving other parts of the country any bad ideas. A week or two after publication we received a note from one of our friends in California praising the article and saying that it had described some of their fencers out there just short of naming them. Since I thought of us New Yorkers and he thought of Californians it is very probable that every reader had a local treat of head-nodding. I may have to exempt St. Louis readers from this for everyone who has been out there has always commented most favorably upon their sportsmanship. Otherwise, I regret to say that the article was more representative than I would like to think.

XX

The unusual source of the article was written up briefly for the October issue but much of The Remise for that issue was crowded out by the space demands of the national championships. We mention this fact now for we feel that we must give Mr. Rolando posthumous credit for a most interesting analysis of the baser nature of man that stands out so clearly when sword is in hand.

XX

As we approach the end of the calendar year and look back upon the twelve months that have skipped along in amazing speed we see a blur of swords and hear a symphonic combination of stomps, eh-las and parries. We have tried to present a record of the results of most of these. This is pure reporting of fencing results. There were other more serious happenings within our fencing family, for death must strike among any family as large as ours in much the same proportions as it strikes elsewhere. The cruelest blow of all was suffered by one of our lead-

(Continued on page 15)

BULLETINS FROM THE A. F. L. A.

A. F. L. A. Newsletter

The A. F. L. A. released its eighth annual Newsletter in October. This eight-page release contained the usual compact review of the A. F. L. A. year in which was a review of the Pan American Games, new trophies, national and intersectional championships, necrologies, national rankings, advice to divisional secretaries, report of the Metropolitan Division, electrical epee, Connecticut Trophy, Office for Civilian Defense Program, lists of approved directors and judges, divisional news, directories, etc. This publication is automatically distributed without charge to all members of the A. F. L. A. It may also be obtained without charge by any professional or non-member upon request.

We recommend this Newsletter as a valuable and handy directory of the past year's activities, and suggest that any fencer not having a copy write for one by addressing Dr. Ervin S. Accl, Secretary of the A. F. L. A., 25 Beaver Street, New York, N. Y.

National Training Program Includes Fencing

Under date of October 23, John DaGrosa, Director of Industrial Activities in the Department of Physical Fitness of the Office of Emergency Management, notified the Board of Governors of the A. F. L. A. of the establishment of a national physical training program by request of President Roosevelt. This program has been assigned to the Office of Civilian Defense. The objective of the Department of Physical Fitness, according to Mr. DaGrosa, is to coordinate and encourage all national agencies to participate in some form of physical recreation.

A Sports Board made up of national celebrities and leaders in the various branches of sports is to be set up to encourage and promote interest and activity in the various fields of sport throughout the nation. William J. Herrmann, Philadelphia professional, has been appointed to handle fencing. Mr. Herrmann in turn requested contact with the A. F. L. A. for its appointment of an amateur representative to work with him in this new undertaking. The A. F. L. A. immediately nominated Lt. Comdr. Richard F. Warren, U. S. N., as its representative.

In many ways this selection is excellent inasmuch as Lt. Comdr. Warren has always taken an active interest in fencing, has a long experience in the management of amateur fencing activities, is a vice president of the A. F. L. A. and is currently assigned by the Navy to duty at the Philadelphia Navy Yard where he is readily available to Mr. Herrmann for consultation.

Fencing in the Pan American Games

The Pan American Olympic Games are scheduled to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from November 21 to December 6, 1942. American participation in these Games is the responsibility of the United States of America Sports Federation, formerly the American Olympic Association. The Federation is made up of twenty-six games committees, each of which is responsible for advising the United States Pan American Games Committee on all matters having to do with its sport, including the determination of the place, time and method of holding the try-outs to select the team. Each committee must also nominate the coach, manager and members of the team and assume the responsibility for raising the funds necessary to defray the expenses of its team.

The 1942 Pan American Games Fencing Committee has thirteen members as follows:

Dr. John R. Huffman, <i>Chairman</i>	
Miguel A. de Capriles, <i>Secretary</i>	
Dr. Norman C. Armitage	Gustavus T. Kirby
Edward Carfagno	F. Barnard O'Connor
Robert Driscoll	Dr. Francis Riebel
Dernell Every	Leon M. Schoonmaker
Dr. Graeme M. Hammond	Lt. A. J. Stuart
Harold Van Buskirk	

It held its first meeting on November 18 at which it elected its own chairman and secretary and made preliminary plans for its year's activities. Except for the fact that between \$700 and \$800 will be required to finance every member of its team, the deliberations of the committee have been kept confidential. It is believed that an early release for publication will be made.

CONTENTS

Six Years of The Riposte	page 1
The New National Rankings	page 3
Editorial	page 4
The Remise	page 4
Bulletins from the A. F. L. A.	page 5
18 Characteristics of Fencers	page 6
Metropolitan Competition Results	page 8
The Scoring System	page 11
Countrywide Competitions	page 13
Ethics Off the Fencing Strip	page 15

18 CHARACTERISTICS OF FENCERS

By Dernel Every

This is the first of two articles that deal with the physical and mental makeup of the fencer. This part deals primarily with physical equipment; the second will take up mental qualities.

FENCERS have for a long time endeavored to classify themselves under some grouping method which would serve as a means of ready comparison. When you purchase a can of peas in Florida labeled "Super-Duper" you get the same quality, size and grade of peas that you would get in Kansas if you purchased another can so labeled. Peas have been scientifically classified, fencers have not. The novice or junior fencer in Florida may be quite different from the novice or junior in Kansas. This considerable variation in strength between two parts of the country has often been a matter of concern to the A.F.L.A. in the arrangement of their inter-sectional competitions.

At the present time there are several different ways of branding fencers to specify some particular difference between them. These rough classifications are (1) amateurs and professionals; (2) preps, novices, juniors, intermediates, seniors and veterans; (3) foils-men, sabremen and epeeists; and (4) students of the French, Italian, Spanish and Hungarian schools. Each of these particular methods treats of one or a few particular characteristics, but each is inadequate to give a fencer any idea of another fencer. Is there not some way to classify them? They say that fools rush in where angels fear to tread. We rushed in, stayed about six months and rushed right out again.

The fact that our investigations led to failure insofar as obtaining our objective does not mean that the entire study should be discarded as having no value. We are reminded of the chemistry student who spent an entire year in trying to show how one chemical could be combined with another. He worked long and hard, spoiled much equipment, caused many smells, used up a considerable quantity of gas, electricity and chemicals only to find out that the two would not stay in combination. This did not completely discourage him. He wrote a paper on his experiments so that it would be available to all other chemists and save them from repeating his unworkable experiments. This was a negative but nevertheless definite contribution to chemistry.

Our investigations led to somewhat similar discouraging results. We prepared our findings in a paper, presented it to other members of the staff with the result that they held their noses and refused to consider its use for the purpose intended. We did not give up any more easily than the chemist did. We felt that certain findings were of interest and although their use for a definite system of classi-

fication was out their listing and definition might be of interest to many of the fencers. We, therefore, present them with this lengthy preliminary apology.

Characteristics Required of a Fencer

We found that there were eighteen qualities or characteristics that a fencer should have. We were particularly interested in the fact that none of them was directly pertinent to any of the systems of classification mentioned above and in more or less arbitrary use at the present time. We list these characteristics in alphabetical order: change of pace, choice of time, competitive heart, concentration, coordination, courage, experience, form, memory, patience, rhythm, relaxation, smartness, speed, stamina, technique, training and timing. Some of these may impress you as being synonymous. We assure you that they are not and shall endeavor to prove our contention with later explanation.

One of the interesting things about this list is that ten of the characteristics are mental while only eight are physical. By mental we mean that they are the result of thought, headwork, analysis, mental conditioning or control. By physical we mean that they are natural to us before we learned to fence, constitutional, the result of pure exercise, body conditioning or type of physique. Fencing has always been considered a brainy sport. The very fact that a preponderance of its required qualities depends upon mental application should prove the justification for this consideration. To list eighteen characteristics is one thing; to have every reader interpret them the same is another. The word "timing" may mean one thing to the writer and another thing to the reader. For that reason we are listing our eighteen qualities in groups and will then attempt to explain the meaning of each, at least the meaning which the word conveys to us.

The Physical Qualities

Competitive Heart—This is the quality which keeps a fencer going even though his cause appears hopeless. It is the "never say die" spirit which finds a fencer striving even though the score is 4-0 against him. It is a natural quality which is either his or isn't his by birthright. It cannot be acquired by those who do not have it. A man having no competitive heart whatsoever would not even try to be a competitive fencer. Those who have a great deal of this quality go far through pure persistence, fight, intestinal fortitude, or any number of other names which are applied to it.

Coordination—The harmonious reaction of the appropriate muscles to the requirements of successive actions or new nerve stimuli. Some men are better coordinated naturally than others, but fencing can-

not fail to improve anyone's coordination through practice. It can become the result of muscle-learning or muscle-training which implies the repetition of a movement or series of movements until it becomes smoothed and improved. The results of good coordination are gracefulness, smoothness of action and speed; the results of the lack of coordination are awkwardness, stiffness and slowness.

Form—This is a learned physical characteristic. It is the way in which your fencing master teaches you to fence. You acquire your form from the teachings of your instructor and you attain it under his correction, modification and development. You may acquire good form or bad form from the good or careless teaching of your instructor and once established with muscle-learning it is difficult to change. The pupils of the same instructor may often be recognized through their similar form. Good form is a valuable ally in that it implies that the fencer accomplished the required movements with accuracy in the minimum of time and with the minimum of effort. It must not be confused with its similar mental characteristic, "technique."

Rhythm—This is difficult to explain, but it is the cadenced flow of movement dependent upon the tempo of the opponent. A good sense of rhythm as required of the trap-drummer or the tap dancer instinctively recognizes the use of the off-beat or break. Fencing is often a pulsation of movement between opponents wherein one's success depends upon purposely breaking "time" either through an increase of speed of movement or a hesitation. Fencers have often been compared to dancers. This is incorrect. Whereas dancers are expected to keep time to the music, the fencer must be above this and be able to distort the cadence of the moment to his advantage.

Speed—This is another natural gift. It is said that sprinters are born, and not made. Some fencers have naturally fast lunges or fast "hands." A certain amount of speed can be acquired through practice. It is so easily recognized as an advantage that it has perhaps been overemphasized, for speed alone is not enough. This has led to the extreme disappointment of many a speedy fencer after losing bouts to slower men.

Stamina—This is the natural resistance to fatigue. Without stamina, a fencer's success in any particular competition is shortlived. This is particularly true since every competition becomes harder as it advances through semi-finals and finals. Stamina can be improved through good training, proper diet and sufficient sleep, but natural stamina is a valuable quality which some men possess in greater amount than others.

Training—A physical conditioning wherein one recognizes that the body, like any machine, will work more efficiently if given proper care. One must undergo both physical training and fencing training. The first implies exercise, proper diet, eight hours

sleep and the non-use of alcohol or tobacco. All sports-minded Americans fully understand the meaning of training although few there are who obey its strictest demands in all particulars. Fencing training means the actual and regular exercise of fencing itself. One cannot train for a fencing match by playing tennis, swimming, or by any other substitute sport. One can retain the fencers' "touch" only by actual, frequent and regular fencing practice.

Timing—A frequently misused term, closely related to rhythm. When you hear someone say that this fencer or that fencer has a good sense of timing he probably means that he has a good choice of time. Timing is a non-thought quality, an instinctive ability to react to an opening, a reaction which frequently surprises its maker no less than its victim. Its best examples are found in the unintended stop thrust or time thrust. It is the fencer's sixth sense which makes him stop in middle attack only to find the opponent's point threatening a few inches away. It is the instinct which makes the fencer crouch to let a point pass overhead or turn to let it pass by without in either case being conscious of the action or the threat. Fencing improves timing but timing itself cannot be taught. Actually, it is probably a subconscious reaction time which ceases to function under conscious control.

Fencing and the War

As we go to press with this issue of *The Riposte*, the United States is at war. Compared with the incalculable questions that this fact brings to all citizens of this country, the questions that we might ask about the sport that this magazine represents seem incredibly small. Not enough time has passed since the declaration of war so that the country might be in any sense called adjusted to a war economy. We do not know what plans are being made for the nation's youth; we do not at this time know whether or not fencing will continue as a formal sport for the full season. We do not know whether it will be possible for the present editorial board to bring *The Riposte* to you on its announced schedule for the remainder of the season.

Until the plans of national leaders have been announced and put into action, it is difficult to answer the many questions that will doubtless be asked by friends of fencing. From now on we will try to keep our readers fully informed of any fencing activities which may be of national interest. In addition, we will do our best to keep the publication schedule going.

510 FENCERS ENTER FIRST 16 MEETS

Men's Foil

Hammond Prep Foil—The first competition of the 1941-42 season, the men's prep foil for the Dr. Graeme Hammond prizes, was won by Sydney Tall of the Long Island division, representing Long Island University, over a field of 15. The meet was held at the New York Athletic Club on October 14. Second place went to Nick Terracuso of the Greco Fencing Academy, and third to Arnold Kreiss of St. John's University. Tall was undefeated on the final strip.

Hammond Novice Foil—A field of 33 faced the issue in the Hammond novice foil at the N.Y.A.C. on October 21, and nine survived to fence off the final strip on October 23. The winner was Eliot Slone of the Foils Club, who captured six of his seven final bouts, with one unfenced. Evan Quinn of the Salle Santelli took second place over Andre Deladrier of St. John's on a count of touches.

Hammond Junior Foil—A five-way tie that took an extra evening of fencing to resolve featured the Hammond junior foil—limited to junior ranking fencers—which was scheduled to be held at the N.Y.A.C. on November 4 but actually ended a week later. The tie was among Arthur Tauber of New York University, Harry Boutsikaris of Seton Hall, Ted Green of the Saltus Club, Charles Steinhardt of the Fencers Club, and Archie Ignatow of the Salle Santelli. Boutsikaris, with a 4-0 lead over Steinhardt in his last bout of the final, had the title in his grasp but dropped the decision 5-4, tying up all five fencers. Tauber justified his No. 10 national ranking by sweeping through the fence-off without defeat, followed by Boutsikaris and Green.

Novice Foil Team, Every Trophy—An immense field of 22 teams jammed the Salle Santelli on November 9 for the honor of winning the first leg on the Dernel Every trophy for novice foil teams. Direct elimination left three teams surviving for a final round robin—the Santelli "A" squad of Evan Quinn, Douglas Gerard and Peter Tishman, the Saltus trio of Wilfrid Ritayik, Marcel Brammerel and Steve Stevens, and a Vince composite team of Neil Lazar, Robert Guillard and Herbert Spector. The Santelli group won the trophy with 5-4 victories over both their opponents. Evan Quinn provided the margin of safety for the winners, dropping only one bout in the long competition and, with the bout score tied at 4-4, coming through with 5-0 victories over both his Saltus and Vince opponents to give the Santelli team the trophy.

A. F. L. A. Senior Foil—Six senior and ranking foils-men got the early-season kinks out of their muscles in time to contest for A. F. L. A. medals in the senior foil competition at the Salle d'Armes Vince on November 18. Warren Dow of the New York Athletic Club, fencing with his customary precision, went

through the meet undefeated to take first honors. Second was Jose R. de Capriles of the Salle Santelli and third, Kurt Ettinger of the same club.

A. F. L. A. Prep Foil—Vincent Puente of Columbia swept all five of his final-round bouts and won the A. F. L. A. prep foils competition on November 24 at the Saltus Club. Nick Terracuso of the Greco Fencing Academy was second and Robert Jerome of Seton Hall third in the field of 24.

Epee

Cherny Novice Epee—Moving through a big field of 32 with but two defeats, Ralph Liederman of the Greco Fencing Academy won his junior spurs by taking the Cherny novice epee competition on November 2 at the Salle Santelli. Paul Costigan of St. John's University and Evan Quinn of the Salle Santelli captured the silver and bronze medals, respectively. The other six contestants in the nine-man final were closely bunched behind the winners, all taking at least one bout.

Novice Epee Team, J. de Capriles Trophy—A C. C. N. Y. composite team of James Strauch, Gerald Widoft and Hugh Salzberg survived a direct-elimination

No Broomsticks Yet

Development of a "made in America" foil blade and predicted development of a sabre blade has done much to relieve the minds of American fencers who were afraid that they were going to be fencing with broomsticks or pokers before long. But the situation in epee is still acute. As far as we know, no satisfactory epee has yet been developed by an American manufacturer.

Naturally, the new blades are not as perfect as the ones Americans have been accustomed to using. The foils are satisfactory, however, and if home industry succeeds in developing sabres and epees of equal calibre at a fair price, some of the pressure may be taken off the fencer.

competition to win the first leg on the Jose R. de Capriles trophy for novice epee teams at the Salle Santelli on November 15. Despite the fact that they faced stiff competition all the way through the seven-team competition, the City College epeeists downed N. Y. U. 5-2, Columbia 5-2 and the Salle Santelli "A" squad 5-2. The Santelli team of Evan Quinn, Archie Ignatow and Jack Gorlin, and the Columbia trio of Peter Conomikes, Andy Pickens and Louis Turner did not fence off for the runner-up spot.

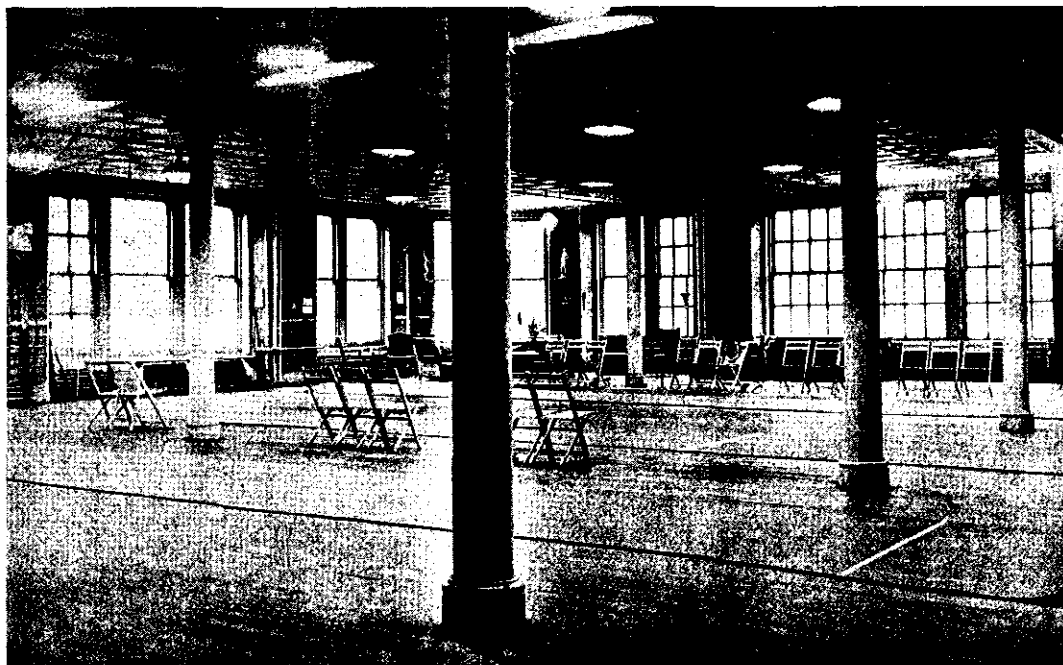
M. de Capriles Junior Epee—In a competition where upsets were the rule rather than the exception, Wallace H. Goldsmith, Jr., of the New York Athletic Club, justified his No. 10 national ranking and won the gold medal in the Miguel A. de Capriles junior

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epee competition at the Salle Santelli on November 22. Second was Sanford Rogers, Fencers Club, and third Norman Turley of the Salle Santelli. Fenced for one touch, the meet saw many of the favorites in the 38-man field eliminated in the preliminaries or semi-finals, and every contestant in the 12-man finals had at least three defeats charged against him.

Sabre

Hammond Novice Sabre—A near-record field of 29 entered the Hammond novice sabre competition at the N.Y.A.C. on October 21, many probably being influenced by the fact that the first prize was an actual sabre, something to fight for these days. After an extremely close evening of competition, the coveted prize was won by Sol Gorlin of New York University, who breezed through the six-man final without defeat. In second place was Andre Deladrier of St. John's University, with Joseph Goldzieher of the Salle Santelli in third spot. Gorlin was in top form, dropping only one bout of the 16 he fenced.

A. F. L. A. Novice Sabre—An even more impressive entry of 32 fought for the medals in the A. F. L. A. novice sabre at the Greco Fencing Academy on November 12. The fact that it was possible to run only two strips at a time caused the finals to be postponed to November 18, when Joseph Goldzieher of the Salle Santelli defeated Ralph Liederman of Greco, 5-4, in a fence-off to determine first place after each had gone through the eight-man final with five victories. Herbert Hor of Columbia took third place on touches after he had finished in a three-way deadlock with Andre Deladrier of St. John's and Al Sully of Seton Hall College.

Muray Junior Sabre—Harold Newton of the Greco Fencing Academy won the Nickolas Muray junior sabre competition over a field of 30 at the Salle Santelli on November 23. Newton defeated Leo Kellerman, unattached, in a fence-off after each had finished the final round with a record of five victories and two defeats. Andre Deladrier of St. John's captured third place on touches over Neil Lazar of the Salle Santelli and Bill Meyer of the Salle Santelli, receiving 20 touches to Lazar's 24 and Meyer's 27.

Women's Foil

Van Buskirk Prep, Women's Foil—Forging through fourteen bouts without defeat, Maria Kosich of the Salle Cherny spread-eagled a field of 24 to win the first women's competition of the Metropolitan season, the Van Buskirk prep, contested at the Fencers Club on October 17. Second and third places went to Katherine Charpentier of the Salle Santelli and Irene Nyski of Cooper Union, respectively.

Manrique Novice Women's Foil—Dominating the competition with but 30 touches scored against her in 17 bouts, Aida Condosta of the Salle Santelli won the Manrique novice foil from a crowd of 35 contestants on her home strips October 26. With only one loss in the finals, Henrietta Brackley of the Long

Island division was the runner-up, with Margaret Mackey of the Salle Cherny, third.

A. F. L. A. Prep, Women's Foil—Dorothy Piccininni of Hunter College fenced her way through a nine-girl final without defeat to win the A. F. L. A. gold medal in the second women's prep competition of the season at the Fencers Club on Nov. 7. Second place went to Mildred Mackey of New Jersey Teachers' College, while Mrs. Helen Watson of the Salle Santelli nosed out her daughter, Gloria Watson, for third place. Twenty-five fencers took part in the competition.

A. F. L. A. Novice, Women's Foil—It took seven hours to find a winner among the 62 entries in the second women's novice foil of the season, held at the Salle

The Honeycutt Trophy

A new trophy has been donated for the Metropolitan three-weapon team competition formerly known as the Allaire trophy match. The John Allaire Memorial Trophy, formerly contested for in this competition, will hereafter be awarded to the national individual foil champion. As a result of the generosity of F. Barnard O'Connor, former A. F. L. A. president, a new three-weapon trophy has been created to the memory of General Francis W. Honeycutt, individual foil champion in 1904 and captain of the American Olympic Team of 1920 at Antwerp, who lost his life in the line of duty in an airplane crash last year. The first competition for the new trophy will be held at the New York Athletic Club on January 18.

Santelli on November 16, but when the final results were tabulated, form followed perfectly. Henrietta Brackley of the Long Island division, representing Hofstra College, and Margaret Mackey of the Salle Cherny, who had finished second and third in the season's initial novice tournament, won the gold and silver medals respectively. Rosalind Blumberg of the Foils Club finished third in the nine-girl finals, after a count of touches with Augusta Strongman of the Staten Island Sword Club, Rhoda Kunstler of Brooklyn College, Patricia Costello of New York University and Maria Kosich of the Salle Cherny.

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The entry lists for the first 16 competitions of the season—six in men's foil, three in epee, three in sabre and four in women's foil—totaled 510 competitors. These were classified as follows: 164 in men's foil, 104 in epee, 93 in sabre and 149 in women's foil. The largest single number of competitors appeared for the men's novice foil team competition, when 66 fencers competed.

THE SCORING SYSTEM

By Miguel A. de Capriles

This is the sixth in a series of articles of comment on the new rules book by Mr. de Capriles, chairman of the A.F.L.A. and I.C.F.A. rules committees. Interpretive in nature, they are designed to assist directors, judges and fencers throughout the country in applying the newly revised code. Any questions or interpretations asked by readers will be discussed by the author in future issues.

IN MY preceding article on the subject of "Resolving Ties in Round Robin Events," I suggested that there was a good argument for the current system of "counting touches," as compared with the "percentage" system originated by the late Dr. Scott D. Breckinridge. I plan to present this argument here. However, in order to obtain proper perspective, it will be necessary to examine the theory of scoring in fencing competitions and the history of our present system.

Basic Viewpoints

If you will turn to our Rules Book (Article V, pp. 92-96), and particularly Rules 507 and 508, you will notice that we speak of touches being "won" by the contestant scoring them. On the score sheet (p. 93) we record, opposite a competitor's name, *the number of touches which he has scored*. This is the method which we adopted in the Intercollegiate Fencing Association under the leadership of Hugh V. Alessandrini as far back as 1935, and in the Amateur Fencers League of America in 1937. It is contrary to the otherwise world-wide international system which prevailed in the United States previously. The international system reverses the viewpoint on fencing touches. Under F.I.E. rules (and our own some years back), they speak of a fencer *being hit* (not of his opponent touching him), and they record on the score sheet, opposite his name, *the number of touches which he has received*. In this country we always speak of Fencer A winning his foil bout against Fencer B by 5 to 3. But abroad, it is just as frequently said that A defeated B by 3 to 5.

This difference in point of view is expressed also in the method of awarding touches by the Director. Under our present system, the Director calls the touch "for" the successful contestant, either by naming him or by reference to his position on the strip, e. g., "for the right" or "for the left." According to the international system, the Director calls the touch "against" the fencer who has been touched, so that when a Director says "touch left," he means that the fencer on his left has been validly hit.

To summarize: The American system looks upon a touch as a *successful offensive action* by the fencer who scores it. The international system regards a touch more as a *defensive fault* to be counted against.

the fencer who suffers it. Is this a purely academic "distinction without a difference"? Not quite. It is rather an expression of a basic theory of fencing, and in this respect, the international view is the more consistent. Let me show you why.

The Duel

While it is perhaps old-fashioned to discuss the rules of a modern sport by reference to the more or less romantic past, I think that much of the theory of fencing can be logically explained only in terms of the grim realities of the duel. Thus interpreted, I believe that the roots of scientific swordsmanship reach deep into the soil of human psychology.

Take, for example, the rules governing the "right of way." The correct attack against the defender's threatening point in line requires that the threat be first turned aside. Why? Because, if the weapons were deadly sharp, no attacker in his right senses would run the risk of impaling himself upon the defender's threatening point. Much as a duelist might wish to destroy his opponent, he would first take care not to kill himself.

Much the same type of analysis explains why the defender, against a properly executed attack, is required to turn aside the threatening blade by a parry before initiating a counter-offensive. *Self-preservation is the first rule of life.*

There is a famous story, perhaps a legend, that runs as follows: Some years ago, two of our better-known college coaches were engaged in a heated though friendly argument over the relative merits of the stop-thrust and the parry in modern dueling-sword contests. Louis Vauthier was propounding the fundamental correctness of the parry, while Bob Grasson was upholding the deadly effectiveness of the stop-thrust against a wild attacker. Vauthier said: "If you were actually in a duel with a 'wild attacker' you would still parry!" Grasson said: "I would stop him dead." Suddenly Vauthier made a violent threatening gesture with his hand directed at Grasson's face . . . and Grasson's arm automatically and swiftly blocked the menacing hand! Said Vauthier: "*You would parry!*"

By virtue of the same fundamental logic, the double touch is regarded as a basically faulty result in fencing. In the conventionalized weapons (foil and sabre), which are further removed from the ancestry of the duel, the double touch is scored *against the fencer who is at fault* in provoking the double touch. In the epee, which most closely follows the duel, the double touch counts *against both fencers*. If the bout is for a single touch, the rules of the F.I.E. and of the A.F.L.A. agree, each fencer is charged with a *full loss*. They are both symbolically "dead". If the bout is for several touches and, as a

result of a double touch, the score ends in a tie, both fencers likewise are charged with a *full defeat*.

When multiple touch epee first was tried in the F.I.E., the rule-makers provided that a tie bout be scored as a draw, i. e., the equivalent of half a victory for each contestant. This rule was in effect in the 1932 Olympic Games. But its fundamental clash with the basic theory of fencing caused the partial abandonment of the rule for the 1936 games, and a complete reversion to the theory of the full defeat in the rules that were to have governed the 1940 Olympic Games. In other words, we are clear today that, when an epee bout ends in 1-1, 2-2, or 3-3, *neither fencer has won anything*. They both lose, because both have been at fault, in a critical moment, in disregarding the rule of self-preservation.

Counting Touches "Against"

It is this fundamental principle of scientific fencing which throws *primary weight upon the defensive strength of a fencer* when ties are to be resolved in round-robin events. Granted that for purposes of

Healthy Nationals

The fact that the 1942 national championships will have a profound influence on the selection of teams for the 1942 Pan-American Olympics, to be held in Buenos Aires on November 21-December 6, should assure an entry list unparalleled since 1936. While details of fencing participation in the Pan-American games, discussed elsewhere in this issue, have not yet been fully worked out, the mere fact that the United States will definitely be represented by a team should bring out the fencers in full force.

the round-robin score, victories are counted so that the offensive ability of a fencer seems thereby to be recognized first, still one could just as easily say that the winners are those who suffer the least number of defeats in a given number of bouts. Then, if on the basis of bouts there is equality between two or more fencers, the more meritorious is the one with the better defense: Therefore the tie is resolved in favor of the fellow who has received the smallest total of touches. Only when the defensive strength of the fencers is equal is the tie resolved in favor of the better offense.

One could also argue, against the "percentage" method, that to count touches is easier than to calculate fractions, so that the possibilities of mathematical errors of computation are minimized. But this argument would apply equally well to the count of touches "for" a fencer as for the count of touches "against." I think the real basis of our system of resolving round-robin ties is the fundamental theoretical importance of the principle of self-preservation in the duel.

Anomalies in Our Present Rules

You may reasonably ask, then, why do we differ from the international system in scoring touches "for"

a fencer, instead of "against" him? Why not go back to the older and more logical rule? Why do the college rules still score a tie bout in epee as half a victory instead of a full loss for each contestant? Questions such as these came up at the various meetings of the Rules Committees, and some words of explanation about our peculiar rules are in order:

1. The change to calling touches "for" instead of "against" a fencer was designed to please the spectators. Alessandrini's sponsorship of the change was based on the belief that the public would be able to follow the progress of a bout more easily, since calling touches "against" was unfamiliar in a combat sport. In the Rules Committee, sentiment was so divided that no change was thought desirable. Warren Dow favored a change back to the international system, supporting his views on the theory that the public should be properly educated to our basic attitudes. Other members, however, felt the matter was of slight technical importance, and that the original reason for our present rule was sound.

2. The college rule on epee ties was favored by a majority of the I.C.F.A. Rules Committee. Since most of the competitions applying the College Rules were team matches and dual meets, it made little practical difference whether a tie was scored as a full defeat or as half a victory for each contestant. Perhaps also some of the college coaches feared there might be more of an opportunity for the dreaded "judges" to injure the relative positions of their teams in the championship tournament if epee ties, resulting from double touches, were scored as full defeats for both contestants. Coaches are hypersensitive in that respect.

Fencing as a Sport

On the other hand, perhaps these "anomalies" are not so strange after all. Although the international rules are unquestionably sounder from the viewpoint of the theory of the duel, fencing has long departed from a strict analogy to the duel and is getting farther away all the time. The best examples, of course, are the conventions of play which govern foil and sabre, but the same is true of the modern duelling sport. The epee game of today is *not* a sporting counterpart of the duel. The fencers cannot in their heart of hearts make themselves believe that they are engaged in deadly combat; they know, consciously or not, that the weapons are not sharp; and their method of play is consequently freer. The rules and the electrical equipment both eliminate the double touch when there is an appreciable time difference between the two hits, although in a duel such time difference might be too short to prevent injury to both fencers.

These are real differences. Fencing today is not only the modern science of swordsmanship, but it is also a sport and a spectacle. As a sport, its athletic qualities are unsurpassed; and, as a sport, it has only a minor place in its repertory for "safety-first" methods of fencing. The highly skillful precision of the old French school, emphasizing technical excel-

(Continued on page 16)

COUNTRYWIDE COMPETITIONS

Michigan Inaugurates Divisional Publication

An official publication of the Michigan division of the A.F.L.A. called "The Michigan Fencer" made its appearance at the start of the fall season. Edited by David Merriman with a staff of ten prominent members of the Michigan division, its first issues have provided extraordinarily complete coverage of the district's activities.

The first competition of the 1941-42 season was the Metropolitan outdoor championship, held at the Salle de Tuscan. Three events were decided: women's open foil, men's novice foil, and the open three-weapon.

Gerda Michels of the Salle de Tuscan, former mid-west champion, swept through the women's event undefeated, with Charlotte Finch, Jane Scott and Doreen Voiles finishing behind her in that order. The first men's novice outdoor foil competition ever held in Michigan drew a large field from throughout the state. Kenneth Bracken of the Grosse Point Sword Club won the title, with Sam Gorman runner-up and Frank Thomas of the Salle de Tuscan third.

In the three-weapon competition William Osis of the Grosse Point Club was the winner after a fence-off with Byron Krieger. Roland Rogers took the third place medal. Medals were presented to all winners at a colorful ceremony presided over by Miss Toni Favor and Richard Noyes, who were playing in the record-breaking "Life with Father" in Detroit.

The Michigan division has voted to give service stripes each year to the ten active fencers who in the opinion of the executive committee distinguish themselves through outstanding service for fencing in ways other than proficiency in the sport. The stripes are intended to become the outward recognition of sincerity and the value to organized fencing of the individuals who wear them.

The possibilities of an inter-divisional tournament between Michigan and Illinois were discussed at a recent meeting at which Floyd Traynham, president of the Illinois division, was a guest. This may supplement the inter-club and "league" tournaments that will play a large part in the Michigan season.

Five Events Held in Southern California

Eighty-five members, eight more than last year, entered the first five events sponsored by the Southern California division during October and November. In the first meet of the season, the women's prep foil held at the Faulkner School of Fencing on October 24, the winner was Camille Bayer of the Cavaliers, with Frankie Richards and Joy Swaney, both of the Faulkner School, second and third. There were eight entries.

The men's prep foil at the Hollywood Athletic Club on November 1, which attracted 15 entries, was won by Fred Martin of the Faulkner School, with Robert Maire, unattached, second, and Jack Crain

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of the Cavaliers, third. Jack Amendt of the Faulkner School won the novice foil on November 7 from a field of 27 at the Los Angeles Athletic Club. Al Carfagno of the home club was second and Carl Milletaire of the Hollywood A. C. third.

Competing on her home strips, Dierdre Gale of the Faulkner School won the women's novice foil on November 14, followed by Camille Bayer of the Cavaliers and Frankie Richards of the Faulkner School. Fourteen were entered.

Josef Lampl of the Los Angeles A. C. took the men's junior foil in a competition on November 21 at his home club. Among the 21 who entered, Carl Milletaire of the Hollywood A. C. was second and Simon Carfagno of the L. A. A. C. third.

Soiree Gala Opens St. Louis Season

The traditional Soiree Gala at the Fencing Center of St. Louis, attended by all fencers of the St. Louis metropolitan area as well as many invited guests, opened the division's season on November 8. Prospects for a top-flight year in the division are bright; many new fencers have enrolled, and the prep and novice classes, especially among the women, will be gratifyingly large. New teams are in the process of formation in many of the city's private and public schools, and in the nearby army cantonments.

Orest Meykar, New Orleans master in 1935-40 and since then a St. Louis professional, has been engaged to coach the team at Washington University. The sport has existed at the college since the Francis Gym was constructed for the Olympic games of 1904, and has been coached there by many able professionals. During the past year the Washington University team, coached by George Curtis, Jr., an amateur, attained third place in the National Collegiate championships.

With more than 20 college teams within 300 miles of St. Louis, and with only occasional contact between the squads, a central collegiate team meet is being planned by Coach Meykar for next March. The St. Louis A.F.L.A. division will furnish the jury and present a trophy to the winning team.

Northern California Women's Team Matches

Six teams entered the women's open foil team competition of the Northern California division, held throughout the month of October at the Funke Fencing Academy in San Francisco and Mills College in Oakland, as a series of 15 dual meets. The San Francisco Fencers Club, paced by National Champion Helene Mayer, won the medals with a total of five match victories and no defeats. Miss Mayer's teammates were Marcelle Woollen and Lura Morse. Second place went to the Young Italian Club trio of Lydia Riedener, Amelia Riedener and Norma Perotti with four wins and one defeat, with the Funke Fenc-

ing Academy firsts—Helen Sander, Emilie Romaine and Betty Jane Nevis—third. Other teams included Stanford University, Oakland Fencing Club and the Funke seconds.

In fifteen bouts throughout the course of the competition, Miss Mayer was undefeated and received but three touches. Emilie Romaine compiled the second best record with 11 victories and 29 touches received.

A triple tie featured the women's individual novice foil held at the University of California, Berkeley, on November 14. Roberta Hill of the San Francisco Fencers Club, Margie Nevis of the Funke Fencing Academy and Ruth Atkins of Stanford University were deadlocked with three victories and two losses apiece in the final round-robin after the 20 contestants had been narrowed down to six. Miss Hill defeated Miss Nevis 4-0 and Miss Atkins 4-1 in the fence-off to take first place, and Miss Nevis captured second by defeating Miss Atkins 4-3.

The second triple tie in three days occurred in the finals of the men's novice foil at the Olympic Club on November 17. This time Robert Shrader of the Oakland Fencing Club defeated Arthur Lane of the Funke Fencing Academy and Victor Vari of the Salle Visconti, both 5-4, in the fence-off, with Lane beating Vari 5-0 for second place. There were 22 competitors in the meet, and the three medalists finished the regular final pool with four wins and two losses apiece.

The Oakland Fencing Club team of Bernadette Fratessa, Hazel Hill and Dorothy Shrader won the women's novice team competition on November 21, emerging with a clean slate after matches with the San Francisco Fencers Club, the Funke Fencing Academy and the Mask and Foil Club, which finished in that order behind the winners. Miss Fratessa, undefeated in nine bouts, proved to be the mainstay for the winners.

Two new clubs are entering Northern California competitions this year. They are the Salle Visconti, a club formed from the members of the Young Italian Club, which has ceased to exist. Edward Visconti is the coach. The Mask and Foil Club is a new organization instructed by Erich Funke.

Mardi Gras Tourney To Be Resumed

The Mardi Gras tournament in New Orleans, which lapsed last year after five years of success, will be revived this year, it is announced by a committee in charge of the affairs consisting of James Janssen of New Orleans, Orest Meykar of St. Louis, and William Osis and Howard Hayden of Detroit. Tentative plans call for holding men's and women's foil events at the New Orleans Athletic Club on Sunday, February 15, and men's epee and sabre under the Duelling Oaks in City Park on the following day. No entry fees or formal registration are planned, and the competitions will be open to every amateur fencer.

Ethics Off the Fencing Strip

When you go out to Forest Hills for the national tennis championships, you don't yell as McNeill goes back to kill a lob, or whistle as Riggs sprints after a hard forehand drive. You wait until the point is over before you clap, and if one of the players flubs a shot, you don't clap at all.

If you travel to Winged Foot or Pebble Beach for the national open golf tournament, you certainly don't make noises when Craig Wood addresses his ball, and if you so much as shuffle your feet when Ralph Guldahl is putting, half the gallery will stare you down. You maintain a silence so acute that the ticking of your watch is likely to embarrass you.

Over the years these sports have built up a code of spectator ethics that is pretty generally adhered to. The fans are usually quick to reprove any breach of this code.

But somehow fencing, even though it had reached a high point in its development before the first Scotsman began to bat a gutta-percha pellet around the moors with a knotted club, has never evolved such a code of spectator ethics. True, audiences are usually polite in the dignified atmosphere of the national championships, but at other competitions—particularly team tournaments—they display a brand of sportsmanship that would make a rabid Brooklyn Dodger fan look fairly courtly. Nor is this attitude confined to spectators. Contestants who are not on the strip at the time can cause considerable hullabaloo—and often cause most of it. Some of our most polished fencers, who would never dream of disputing a jury's decision, suddenly turn into wild Indians as they root their teammates or clubmates to victory.

In the October Riposte, Dernel Every modernized a 19th century writer's ideas in an article entitled "Ethics on the Fencing Strip," which showed that the tricks of the trade in bouting had not changed much throughout the years. While we have no early point of reference here, it seems likely that as far as spectator ethics are concerned, conditions are getting worse rather than better.

It's hard to catalogue these vices, because inventive spectators and contestants seem capable of popping up with new and irritating ones at every competition, but here are a few of the sure-fire tricks that turn up without exception at every team meet, and often at individual matches as well:

A constant din of cheering, applause and shouts throughout a bout. There is nothing that throws a director and his judges off their stride as much as this raucous vice. The director's commands are often unheard and the jury's actions unattended. Put it down to team spirit if you like, but a sport like fencing that demands such close concentration in its execution and judging would be better served if most of the applause could be withheld until the point is decided and the bout completed.

Coaching from the sideline. Sometimes this takes the form of shouting directions, sometimes stepping up to the competitor and whispering in his ear. The good old adjective "unsportsmanlike" can certainly

be used here. It infuriates a man's opponent and seldom helps the one who is being coached, since it may disorganize a well-planned attack.

Applauding before a decision is made. Often during a phrase, both contestants will be hit. The supporters of one, seeing him score a hit, will burst into applause before the director has consulted the jury and before any decision has been announced. Too much pressure is put on a jury by this action. And the applauders may be made to look pretty silly by the decision.

Discussions of the judging within earshot of the jury. Too many times a spectator or inactive contestant will yell to the man on the strip, "Put it in where they can see it next time!" or "You can win even without those guys!", referring to the jury. While the director has the power to throw the offenders out for remarks like this, it's a measure that is seldom resorted to, and should not have to be. It's about the most unpleasant trick that a spectator can use to.

Wandering across the strip or in front of the judges. This is seldom a deliberate offense, but it's one which draws more than a normal share of curses. Fencers aiming toward another strip often get almost in the path of the action. Spectators looking for better seats manage to post themselves directly in front of judges. Many a fine point has been ruined by an abstention when the judge found himself behind a wall of non-combatants.

These are just a few of the exasperating little tricks—occasionally intentional but most often just heedless—which detract from the interest at a competition and sometimes throw a monkey-wrench into the judging.

It's easy to say, "Don't be stuffy about this. Do you want to take all the fun out of fencing? Let the boys yell. If there isn't any enthusiasm, there isn't any fun."

That's all true. It would be a pretty bad situation if the boys never yelled. Just let them yell at the right time, not when it's going to throw a competitor off his game or a judge off his stride. If a competition were ever fenced off in a doleful silence, the sport would be nearing its end. But fencing competitively is a job that demands intense concentration. If the tennis and golf gallery can wait until the kill is made or the putt sunk, the fencing enthusiasts ought to be able to restrain themselves somewhat until the point is over.

The Remise

(Continued from page 4)

ing fencers, Nickolas Muray, in the sudden death of his daughter, Arija, in September, from pneumonia. This 19-year-old girl had already shown considerable promise herself as a fencer in her first year of competition. It struck us all as a needless, unexplainable and cruel blow which left the fencers quiet wherever they gathered.

Stephen Vanderwal of Galveston was killed with his wife in an automobile accident over the Labor Day week-end. Mr. Vanderwal competed in the 1941 national championships in epee, foil and sabre and

reached the semi-finals in the epee on June 11.

Dr. Scott D. Breckinridge, brother of Colonel Henry Breckinridge, died in Lexington, Kentucky, on July 31. He was National Foil Champion in 1906 and again in 1914 and was a member of the National Championship Foil Team in 1914 and 1915. He was a member of the American Olympic Fencing Team in 1912. He began fencing as a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N. Y., where he won the Intercollegiate Individual Foil Championship after an undefeated season in dual college meets. After serving as a Colonel in the first World War he later retired from the Army and associated himself with the University of Kentucky at Lexington, Kentucky, where his continued interest in fencing caused him to give his spare time toward teaching the sport as an amateur. He had spent the past several years in preparing a book of instruction to be used as a guide for fencers at colleges throughout the United States who do not have the benefit of professional instruction. It is hoped that his book is sufficiently complete to permit of posthumous publication.

Valentino Argento, fencing master of the Sword Club of Philadelphia and former foil champion of Italy, died in Philadelphia on September 8, at the age of 40. He had won forty-five tournaments in nineteen years of competition and held the world's professional championship in 1930. He had taught at the Fencers Club in New York, the Baldwin School of Bryn Mawr, at Moravian College, and at Lehigh University. He had been engaged to instruct fencing this year at St. Timothy's College in Baltimore.

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The fencing season is scheduled to start each year on September 1st. Actually the season never starts so much as it eases in. Just as the robin is the actual harbinger of Spring so is the magazine cover the actual harbinger of the fencing season. We can now feel assured that the fencing season is here for the November 25th issue of "Pic" had a fencing girl on its cover. She is a comely blonde with large red hearts on each white cuff and another redundantly placed over the heart itself. Although probably a professional model and nice to look at we were pleased to realize that many of our girl fencers need not take a back seat to her in appearance. Her name was given as Mikey Maloy, a strange enough name to indicate that she may really be a fencer.

Six Years

(Continued from page 2)

For its second anniversary, we changed the design of the cover and increased the contents to an average of twenty pages. Although all the material save the cover was still rather cheap, our little urchin had come a long way. The family, too, had grown. We now had correspondents in the various divisions who sent in periodic reports of activities.

Then, in March of 1938 we took our biggest gamble with the paper's life. It was now making a monthly appearance, and its contents had increased to about twenty-five pages. We dressed the magazine up in the best possible material—printed, on good coated stock.

We had nursed it through its worst period—the growing pangs and awkward stage had been left behind—but trying days still confronted us. Though it had survived, it had grown so quickly that it was very anaemic and continued to need care. It was in the midst of these trying days that the three-year-old acquired its present editor. Just three years ago Bill Perry found himself too busy to devote much time to the invalid and I was made to realize the truth of the saying that "the law is a jealous mistress." My studies were to last for another three and a half years and the child needed constant care. Like a true friend and an unselfish devotee of fencing, Dernel Every undertook the task of supervising the magazine's growth and seeing that it didn't strain itself too much. He stepped into the breach with his eyes open, and his confidence in our protegee's destiny was justified; his untiring work soon brought the *Riposte* back to health. Under Dernel's skillful handling the magazine passed through adolescence into manhood with flying colors. Its development from that time has not been so apparent because there have been no radical changes in its form. But changes there have been, and the improvements have been in the material rather than mere outward appearance. Some people think it takes itself a little too seriously, but that is only natural in a youngster, and the rough edges will be smoothed in time. As it acquires that mellower outlook of middle age it will be able to adjust itself more completely to the fencing environment.

It is impossible to name all the people who have been such a wonderful help in bringing the *Riposte* to its sixth birthday. They all know how much the family to which they belong appreciates their efforts. However, in order to keep the record straight, we cannot close this review of the past six years without mentioning the constant and tireless assistance of Peggy Every, Helena Mroczkowska, Warren Dow, Donald Barnes, and Burroughs Mitchell.

The Scoring System

(Continued from page 12)

lence a *pied ferme*, has given way to a greater reliance upon agility of foot and faster tempo. Brilliant actions, featuring dash and speed, provide a genuinely enjoyable spectacle. Thus, fencing as a sport tends to place greater weight upon offensive skill, from the viewpoint of both the competitor and the spectator. The public, by and large, prefers to watch a contest which features aggressive combat rather than a defensive battle. Ready examples in baseball, football, boxing, and tennis will come to mind. Fencing as a combat sport falls in a similar classification.

Whether we should allow these considerations to overshadow the scientific background of swordsmanship, as exemplified by the tradition of the duel, is a difficult and puzzling question. There is no doubt that we must live in our own time rather than in the past. Yet we cannot disregard the long tradition of fencing as an art and a science, unless we are willing to risk the loss of our most distinctive heritage. Perhaps time alone will furnish the answer to our question.