

USFA National
Junior Elite
Training Camp
UDC-1986

EPEE
TRAINING MANUAL

USFA - National Training Committee, 1986

APPENDIX A

PREPARATORY FOOTWORK EXERCISES

FOOTWORK

A. PREPARATORY EXERCISES FOR THE POSITION OF ON GUARD (CENTERING)

1. From Basic Position - Heels Up and Down
2. From Basic Position -
 - a. Step forward approximately 1 1/2 foot lengths (land on the ball of the lead foot first)
 - b. Heels up and down
 - c. Heels up
 - d. On guard (lower heels as knees bend)
 - e. Simultaneously extend knees and lift heels
 - f. Heels down (knees remain extended)
 - g. Return to basic position
3. From Basic Position
 - a. Raise and lower front toe
 - b. Raise toe and assume on guard position in one motion (land on lead heel first, lower toe as knees bend)
 - c. Return to basic position (lifting the toe first and landing on the heel)

B. PREPARATORY EXERCISES FOR ARM MOVEMENTS (SEQUENCING)

1. From Basic Position -
 - a. Extend weapon arm (shoulder height, palm up)
 - b. Extend back arm (shoulder height, palm up)
 - c. Bend weapon arm (by lowering elbow)
 - d. Raise back forearm (from elbow to 90 degrees)
 - e. Extend weapon arm (shoulder height, palm up)
 - f. Lower back forearm (shoulder height)
 - g. Simultaneously recover both arms to the basic position (palms down)
2. From Basic Position
 - a. Extend weapon arm (shoulder height, palm up)

- b. Extend back arm (shoulder height, palm up)
- c. Assume the on guard position (with arms and legs simultaneously)
- d. Extend weapon arm (shoulder height, palm up)
- e. Lower back hand (shoulder height)
- f. Assume basic position

C. INDEPENDENT FOOT MOVEMENTS

1. From Basic Position

- a. Front toe up and down
- b. Back toe up and down
- c. Back heel up and down
- d. Simultaneously front toe and back heel up and down

2. From Basic Position

- a. Squat position and up (bend knees, feet flat and extend knees)
- b. Squat position
- c. Front feet forward (straighten the leg, land on the heel)
- d. Return to squat position
- e. Back foot backward (straighten the leg, foot flat)
- f. Return to squat position
- g. Return to basic position

3. From Basic Position

- a. Assume on guard position
- b. Front toe up and down
- c. Back heel up and down
- d. Simultaneously front toe and back heel up and down
- e. Return to basic position

4. From Basic Position

- a. Assume on guard position

- b. Front foot forward (raise front toe, straighten the leg, land on the heel, keep toe up)
 - c. Return to on guard position (heels land first, then toe)
 - d. Back foot backward (straighten the leg - foot flat)
 - e. Return to on guard position
 - f. Return to basic position
5. From Basic Position
- a. Assume on guard position
 - b. Front foot to the right
 - c. Back foot to the right (returning to the on guard position)
 - d. Front foot to the left
 - e. Back foot to the left (returning to the on guard position)
 - f. Back foot to the right
 - g. Front foot to the right (returning to the on guard position)
 - h. Back foot to the left
 - i. Front foot to the left (returning to the on guard position)
 - j. Return to basic position
6. Directional Pivoting - (From a Basic Position Assume a Position of Attention)
- a. Moving left
 - 1). Raise left heel, raise right toe, pivoting to the left simultaneously on the left toe and right heel (toes touching)
 - 2). Raise left toe, raise right heel, pivoting to the left simultaneously on the left heel and right toe (heels touching)
 - b. Moving right
 - 1). Raise left toe, raise right heel, pivoting to

the right simultaneously on the left heel and right toe (toes touching)

2). Raise left heel, raise right toe, pivoting to the right simultaneously on the left toe and right heel (heels touching)

3). Return to basic position

D. CROSS OVER MOVEMENTS

(From basic position, assume on guard position)

1. Forward Cross Over

a. Move back foot forward (the back leg crosses forward in front of and perpendicular to the lead leg, ending with the same distance between the heels)

b. Move lead foot forward (the lead leg crosses forward behind and perpendicular to the back leg, ending with the same distance between the heels)

2. Backward Cross Over

a. Move lead foot backward (the lead leg crosses backward behind and perpendicular to the back leg, ending with the same distance between the heels)

b. Move back foot backward (then back leg crosses backward in front of and perpendicular to the lead leg, ending with the same distance between the heels)

3. Half Advance Forward Cross Over

Half advance, forward cross over (raise front toe, move lead foot forward, landing on the heel, knee slightly bent; transport the back foot as in (1.a.) and lead foot as in (1.b.))

4. Half Retreat Backward Cross Over

Half retreat, backward cross over (as the back foot moves backward, start to shift the CG backward, raise the lead toe, land the back foot on the toe and as the move finishes flatten the back foot; transport the lead foot as in (2.a.) and back foot as in (2.b.))

5. Forward Cross Over, Half Inverse Advance

Forward cross over, half inverse advance (same as in (1.a.) and (1.b.)); when (1.b.) finishes raise the back heel, move the back leg forward, land on the toe than heel)

NOTE: (1.b.) Should be a few inches longer than normal

6. Backward Cross Over, Half Inverse Retreat

Backward cross over, half inverse retreat (same as in (2.a.) and (2.b.)); when (2.b.) finishes, raise the lead toe up,

move the lead leg backward, land on the heel then toe)
NOTE: (2.b.) should be few inches longer than normal

7. Half Advance, Forward Cross Over, Half Inverse Advance

Same as (3), when (3) finishes, raise the back heel, move the back leg forward, land on the toe then heel)
NOTE: The end of (3) should be a few inches longer than normal

8. Half Retreat, Backward Cross Over, Half Inverse Retreat

Same as (4), when (4) finishes, raise the lead toe up, move the lead leg backward, land on the heel then toe (return to basic position)
NOTE: The end of (4) should be a few inches longer than normal

E. HALF - CROSS OVER MOVEMENTS

(From basic position - assume on guard position)

1. Forward half - cross over

a. Same as D. 1. a.

b. Recover to on guard position

2. Backward half - cross over

a. Same as D. 2. a.

b. Recover to on guard position

F. HALF ADVANCE AND HALF RETREAT

1. Half Advance

(From basic position - assume on guard position)

a. Move lead foot forward (raise lead toe, while moving the lead leg forward, transport the center of gravity slightly forward, land on the heel

b. Return to on guard position

2. Half Retreat

a. Move back foot backward (raise back heel, while moving the back leg backward, transport the center of gravity slightly backward, raise the lead toe and land on the toe then heel

b. Return to on guard position

G. COMBINATION OF D., E., AND F.

APPENDIX B

FENCING FOOTWORK TECHNIQUES

FENCING FOOTWORK

CONCEPT: FOOTWORK HELPS A FENCER ATTACK AND DEFEND AGAINST THE OPPONENT. THE PREPARATION AND COMPLETION OF CERTAIN ACTIONS AND THE MAINTENANCE AND REGULATION IS ACCOMPLISHED BY FOOTWORK.

Fencing footwork is divided into two groups: simple and compound.

The simple movements are:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1) Forward Cross Over | (Passe Avant) |
| 2) Backward Cross Over | (Passe Arriere) |
| 3) Half advance | (Demie Marche) |
| 4) Half retreat | (Demie Retraite) |
| 5) Advance | (Marche) |
| 6) Retreat | (Retraite) (Romper) |
| 7) Lunge | (Fente) |
| 8) On Guard/On Guard Forward | (Retour En Garde/En Garde
Avant) |
| 9) Jump forward | (Bond Avant) |
| 10) Jump backward | (Bond Arriere) |
| 11) Fleche | (Fleche) |
| 12) Appel | (Appel) |
| 13) Slide | (Pas Glisse) |
| 14) Bluff | (Feinte) |

The Composed Movements are:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) Double advance | (Double Marche) |
| 2) Double retreat | (Double Retraite) |
| 3) Advance - lunge | (Advance Fente) (Patinando) |
| 4) Jump forward lunge | (Balestra) |

The compound footwork consists of two or more simple movements. Theoretically, there can be more variations than mentioned above, but these are the most frequently used.

The Simple Foot Movements

CONCEPT: FOOT MOVEMENT CAN ONLY BE EXECUTED BY MOVING THE CENTER OF GRAVITY WHICH SHOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED SURREPTITIOUSLY. THE TRUNK SHOULD MOVE SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE LEGS. IT IS A MISTAKE FOR THE TRUNK TO EXECUTE A MOVEMENT BEFORE OR AFTER THE LEGS.

Foot movement from an on-guard position has many advantages. It provides:

- 1) better balance;
- 2) easier change of direction;
- 3) elimination of the up and down movement of the body's center of gravity;
- 4) simultaneous movement of trunk and legs.

In teaching footwork, any can be interrupted and broken down in order to enhance feeling for center of gravity. This is the preferred modern method.

TO UNDERSTAND, FEEL, AND LEARN THE COMMON TECHNICAL NORMS OF FENCING FOOTWORK, ONE SHOULD STRIVE FOR:

- a) uninterrupted fluid motion - "displacing" the center of gravity;
- b) a natural, erect position;
- c) parallel position of the shoulders to the floor during foot movements;
- d) simultaneous movement of the trunk with the legs;
- e) light, smooth change of direction;
- f) light, smooth footwork.

CONCEPT: THE CROSS STEP (PASSE AVANT) IS A VARIATION OF NATURAL WALKING FROM THE EN GARDE. IT IS NECESSARY TO FIND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE KNOWN AND NATURAL MOVEMENTS, TO UNKNOWN AND ARTIFICIAL FENCING ACTIONS.

If one learns the cross step early in training one can avoid frequent errors which accompany the rising and lowering of the center of gravity, poor trunk posture, etc.

1) Forward Cross Over (Passe Avant)

When the cross step advance is made from the on-guard, the back foot is placed before the front foot, then the front foot steps forward to the on-guard. The center of gravity must not rise. (Figure 8 on page 11.)

2) Backward Cross Over (Passe Arriere)

When the cross step retreat is performed from the on-guard, the front foot is placed behind the back heel, the rear foot moves backward to the on-guard. The center of gravity should not rise. (Figure 9 on page 11.)

CONCEPT: IN LEARNING THE ADVANCE AND RETREAT, IT IS IMPORTANT TO FIRST LEARN THE HALF-ADVANCE AND HALF-RETREAT.

3) The Half-Advance (Demie Marche)

It is made from the on-guard. The center of gravity moves simultaneously forward with the front leg. The back leg pushes forward to help move the center of gravity. (Figure 10 on page 11.)

4) The Half-Retreat (Demie Retraite)

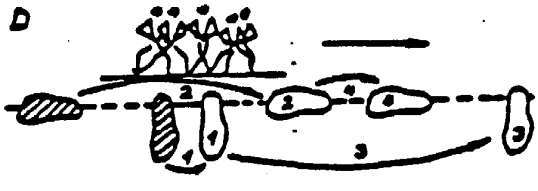
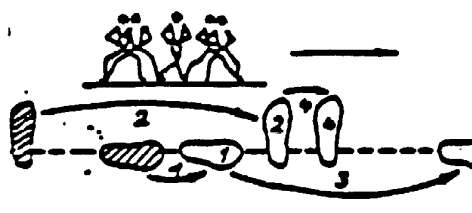
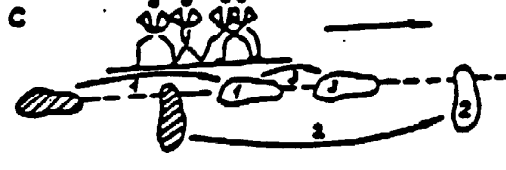
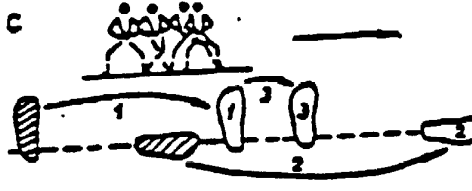
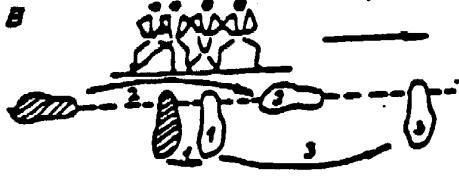
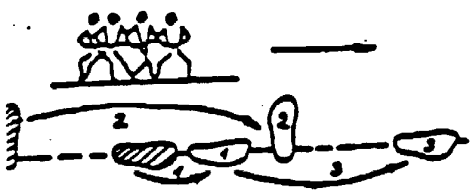
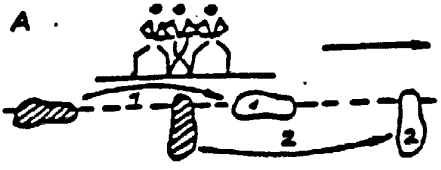
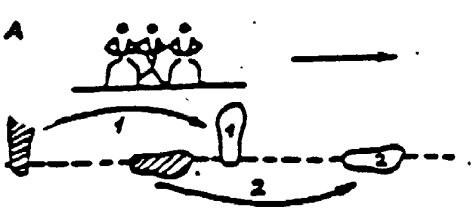
Learning to push the center of gravity is important to the proper execution of the retreat. It is performed from the on-guard. The rear leg moves backward simultaneously with backward displacement of the center of gravity. The front leg pushing back helps move the center of gravity. (Figure 10 on page 11.)

CONCEPT: INITIATION OF MOST FOOTWORK IS CHARACTERIZED BY A SLIGHT LIFTING OF THE TOE.

5) The Advance (Marche)

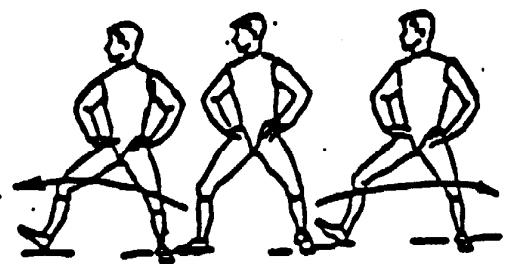
The advance is performed from the on-guard. Without fully extending the leg, the front foot moves forward one step. The movement is initiated with a slight raising of the toes. The heel should just clear the floor, neither touching nor raising it too high. The heel should land as the back leg pushes the center of gravity forward. The left foot should follow, covering the same distance as the leading foot. In the beginning it is not necessary to emphasize both feet landing together; more important is the immediate motion of the center of gravity. The trunk must move in a smooth, fluid motion and remain erect. At first the advances should be short. Long advances may cause gross changes in the position of the trunk and in one's center of gravity. After achieving correct and fluid motion, the student should start to accelerate the back foot. It can only be done if the front foot starts softly and slowly. (Figure 11 on page 11.)

Kogler's Technique

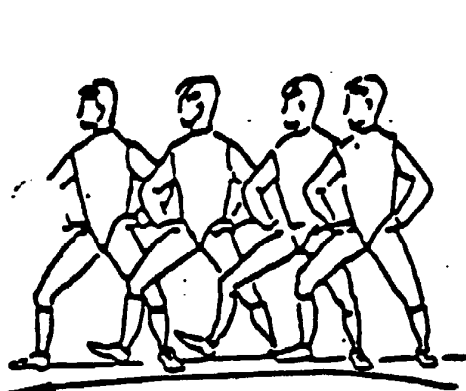


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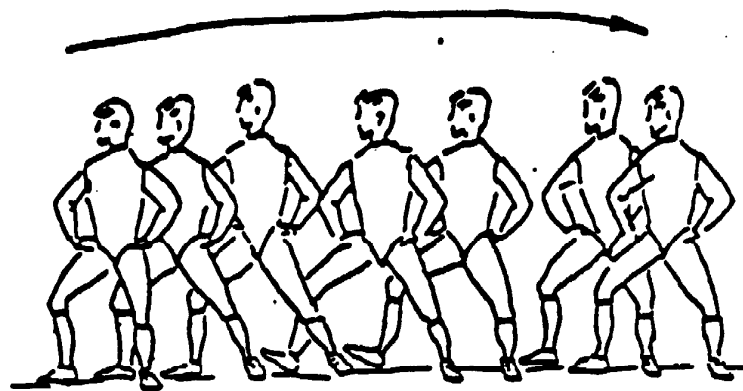
9.



10.



11.



12.

6) The Retreat (Retraite) (Romper)

It, too, is performed from the on-guard position. Without extending fully, the back leg moves backward one step. The front leg follows and covers the same distance as the trailing foot. The front leg pushes slightly to promote a fluid backward movement of the center of gravity. When performed correctly, it preserves contact and distance with the opponent. (Figure 12 on page 11.)

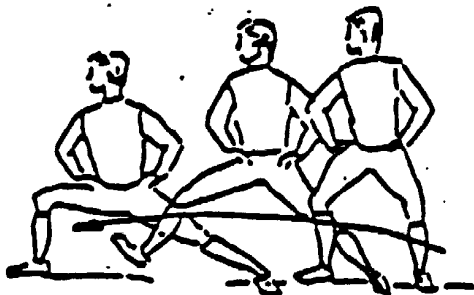
CONCEPT: FOOTWORK HAS TWO IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS:

- A) REGARDLESS OF THE LENGTH OF MOVEMENT, NEITHER OF THE LEGS SHOULD BE EXTENDED FULLY.
- B) THE REAR FOOT SHOULD FOLLOW THE LEAD FOOT WITHOUT INTERRUPTION.

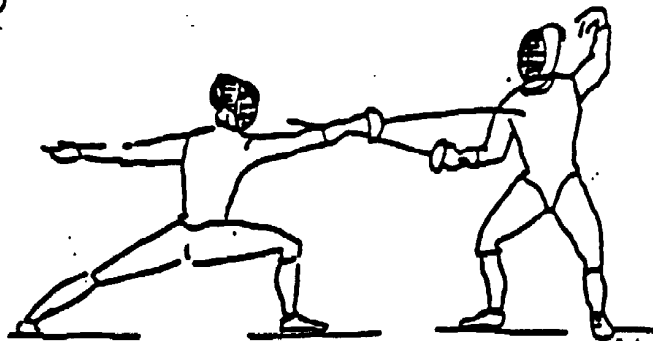
CONCEPT: FOOTWORK MUST ALWAYS BE RELAXED, NATURAL, ELASTIC, AND SUPPLE. ONE SHOULD AVOID HAVING THE CENTER OF GRAVITY MOVE IN A PARABOLIC FASHION.

7) The Lunge (Fente)

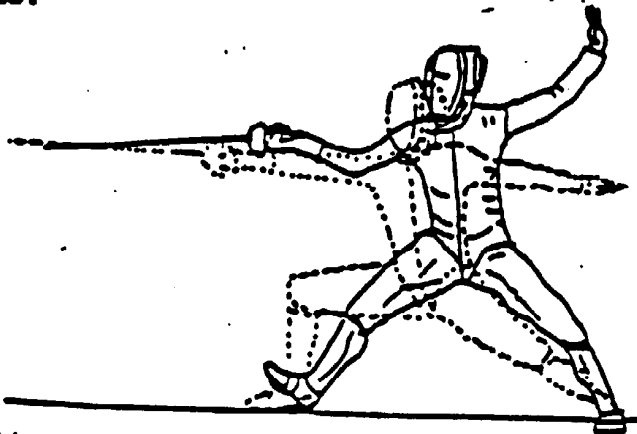
The lunge is one of the most important and complex foot movements. The front toes should rise and the foot should glide just barely above the floor. Simultaneously, the back leg should be rapidly extended. In this way the center of gravity is transported forward. The front heel should land first. The correct final position is as follows: trunk upright, front thigh parallel to the floor, front knee perpendicular to instep of front foot, back leg extended but relaxed, back foot flat on the floor. (Figures 13, 14, 14a)



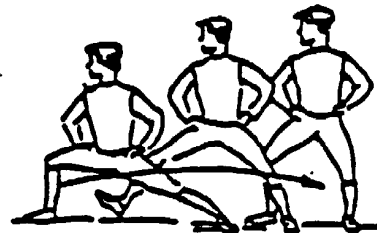
13.



14.



14a.



15.

When the lunge is performed with a weapon, the weapon arm is extended first, the shoulder relaxed, weapon in line with the arm, with point directed at the target. Near the completion of the back leg extension, the back arm should drop relaxed towards the back thigh, palm up. The front leg should arrive in its final position after the point strikes the target.

CONCEPT: WHEN PRACTICING THE LUNGE, THE POINT SHOULD HIT THE TARGET BEFORE THE FRONT FOOT HITS THE FLOOR.

CONCEPT: WHEN IN THE LUNGE, THE CENTER OF GRAVITY IS NOT EXACTLY IN THE BODY'S GEOMETRICAL CENTER: HOWEVER, THE FENCER SHOULD FEEL THAT HIS WEIGHT IS DISTRIBUTED EQUALLY ON BOTH FEET. THE DEPTH OF THE CENTER OF GRAVITY NATURALLY DEPENDS ON THE LENGTH OF THE LUNGE, SINCE IT IS ALWAYS LOWER IN THE LUNGE THAN IT IS IN THE ON-GUARD POSITION. THE CENTER OF GRAVITY SHOULD NOT BE LOWER THAN THE LINE WHICH CONNECTS THE RIGHT KNEE WITH THE LEFT ANKLE. THE BACK ARM SHOULD BE RELAXED AND PARALLEL WITH THE BACK LEG.

- 8) (Returning to the) On Guard/On Guard Forward (Retour En Garde/En Garde Avant)

In returning to the on-guard position from the lunge, the front leg pushes from the heel. By flexing the back leg sharply, the center of gravity is resumed to the on-guard position. The front foot returns to its original guard stance. (Figure 15 on page 12.)

Some coaches prefer their fencers to bend the weapon arm after returning to the guard position to cover the target area. Other coaches prefer fencers to bend the weapon arm first and then recover in order to emphasize relaxation of the shoulder. In either of these schools of thought, the center of gravity should move parallel to the floor without wavering.

- 9) The Jump Forward (Bond Avant)

In the jump forward, the front foreleg swings forward without elevating the knee. The toes remain straight. As the leading (front) leg descends, the back foot quickly moves forward a distance equal to that covered by the leading foot. Both feet should land simultaneously. The jump must be flat with the feet just grazing the floor--keeping the trunk vertical. The jump starts slowly but finishes with explosive speed.

10) The Jump Backward (Bond Arriere)

In the jump backward, the back foot moves backward one step. At the same time, the front foot makes a flat jump backward. Both feet land at approximately the same time.

11) Fleche (Fleche)

The fleche is a fast attack from a long distance in which the fencer propels himself forward by a leaping-running action that normally causes him to pass his opponent. The advantages of a fleche over an advance or a jump forward lunge are that it is one motion and it is difficult to counter-attack against it. The fleche is intended to surprise one's opponent.

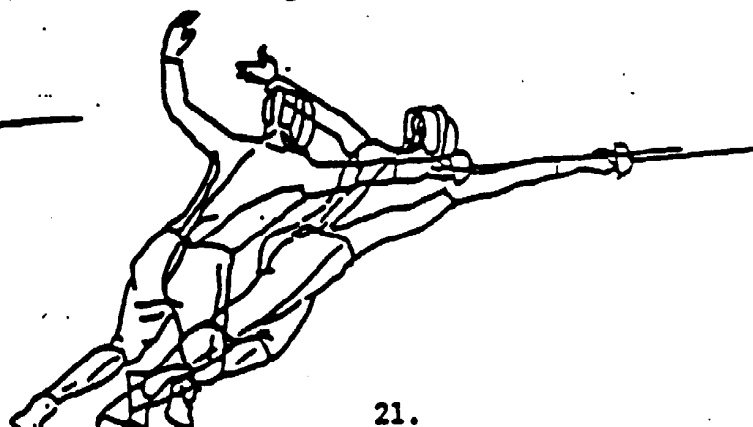
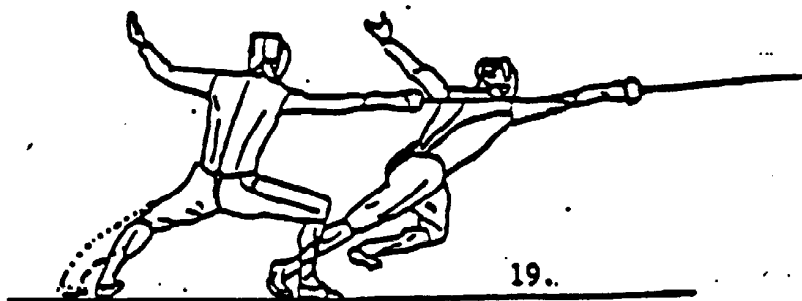
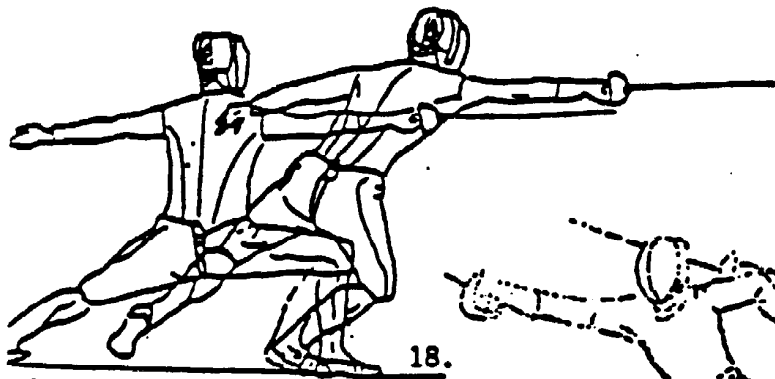
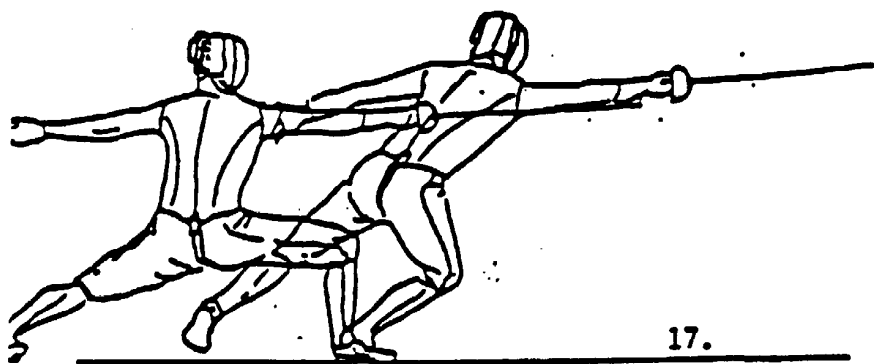
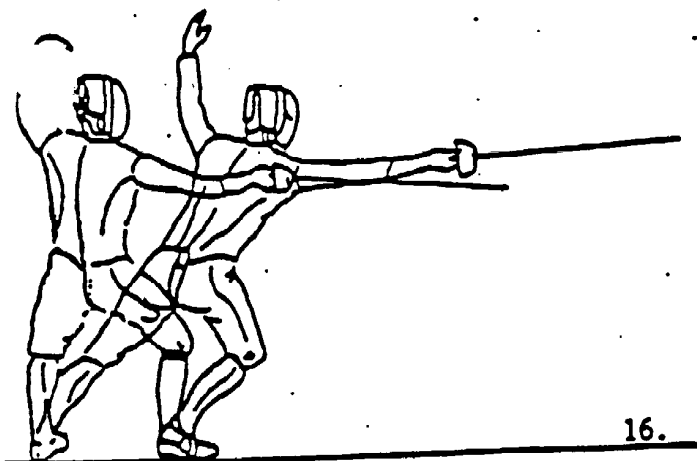
Unfortunately, after completing the fleche, it is very difficult to immediately initiate another action. That is why the fleche should be used with discretion and only after sufficient preparation.

The fleche resembles a "stretched out" cross step advance. (Passe Avant) When starting, the center of gravity is gradually moved to the front leg and the body moves forward until one's balance is lost. The back leg initiates the fleche, while the ball of the leading (front) foot provides the explosive impulse needed to drive the fencer towards the opponent. The back leg must execute a very long step forward as it crosses over the front leg. Upon landing, the fencer should retain his balance by running past his opponent, meanwhile avoiding body contact. (Figures 16-21 on page 14a.)

The hit should score before the back foot lands or at the same time that it lands. It is important that the pelvis and trunk move together. In the fleche, the back toes should be pointed forward, the shoulders remaining parallel to the floor. If the shoulder line changes, the back hip will tend to lift, causing the fleche to be shorter, higher, and slower.

12) The Appel (Appel)

From the on-guard position, the front toes are lifted; the foreleg swings slightly forward and then returns to the starting position. The entire sole of the front foot should hit the floor. The impact of the foot may be soft and soundless or hard and loud. The appel is a step with the leading foot intended to cause a distraction or reaction. It may also be used as a preparation to complete an aggressive action.



13) The Slide (Pas Glisse)

The slide starts as an advance. After the front foot lands, the center of gravity is shifted forward permitting the front foot to slide for a short distance. The movement ends when the delayed back foot lands. In performing the slide, the movement should be fluid and almost imperceptible.

14) The Bluff (Feinte)

This can be used for attack or defense. Bluffing may be defined as a false action intended to confuse one's opponent, to test their reactions, and to discover their intentions. It is often characterized by a sudden stop after starting an advance. The action ends in the on-guard position

COMPOSED FOOT MOVEMENTS:

1) The Double Advance (Double Marche)

To start the double advance, the front foot should step forward slowly. Then, the back foot, followed by a very slight pause, should accelerate smoothly to complete the first advance. To complete the second advance without loss of tempo, both soles should land on the floor at the same time.

2) The Double Retreat (Double Retraite)

To start the double retreat, the back foot should step backward slowly. Then, the front foot should accelerate smoothly to complete the first retreat. To complete the second retreat without loss of tempo, both soles should land on the floor almost at the same time.

CONCEPT: THE DOUBLE ADVANCE AND DOUBLE RETREAT PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN REGULATING THE DISTANCE.

3) The Advance-Lunge (Avance - Fente) (Patinando)

Successfully mastering the double-advance will make learning the advance-lunge much easier. The success of the advance-lunge depends on the fluid combination of the advance and the lunge, and is used to launch the attack from long distance. The action should gradually accelerate with the culmination of the advance being short and fast. With the completion of the advance, both feet should land at the same time. The lunge should explode immediately thereafter.

4) The Jump Forward-Lunge (Balestra)

The jump forward-lunge is executed with both feet skimming the floor and then both feet simultaneously regaining floor contact. During the jump, the torso remains vertical. The lunge should be launched immediately after the jump.

CONCEPT: EVEN THE MOST PERFECT FOOTWORK IS COMPOSED OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PHASES. THESE ACCOMPANY THE FOOTWORK NATURALLY AND CANNOT BE TOTALLY ELIMINATED BUT ONLY SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED.

To significantly reduce the problems that may accompany learning correct footwork techniques, the following recommendations are directed to the reader:

- a) Avoid prolonging the advance, retreat, or jump;
- b) The foot should be in the air as short a time as possible;
- c) The final movements should be completed without delay;
- d) The trunk and the legs should move in coordination with each other;
- e) The center of gravity should move parallel to the floor;
- f) Avoid telegraphing the action;
- g) While keeping fencing distance, the fencer should be able to change the rhythm of footwork;

CONCEPT: ONLY BY CHANGING THE RHYTHM OF THE FOOTWORK IS IT POSSIBLE TO TAKE OVER THE INITIATIVE AND GET THE RIGHT DISTANCE FOR AN ATTACK.

CONCEPT: WHILE KEEPING THE DISTANCE, EVEN DURING A SUDDEN CHANGE OF DIRECTION, A FENCER SHOULD MAINTAIN NATURAL UNITY, REQUIRED

CONCEPT: FOOTWORK CAN BE DONE IN FIRST OR SECOND INTENTION. IN SECOND INTENTION, THE FOOTWORK IS EXECUTED IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE FENCER CAN, AT A CERTAIN POINT, REFRAIN FROM COMPLETING THE FOOT MOVEMENT.

**APPENDIX C
(PARTS A-H)**

BLADEWORK EXERCISES

NATIONAL TRAINING MATERIALS FOR FENCING

NOTE FOR EPEE - UNLESS SPECIFICALLY STATED OTHERWISE, ON THE COACHES' SIGNAL THE PUPIL RETURNS ON-GUARD WITH THE WEAPON ARM LOOSELY EXTENDED.

PART A -] INTRODUCTION - PREPARATORY EXERCISES

Material covered:

Thrust
Parry
Parry-Thrust
Thrust-Parry
Thrust-Parry-Thrust

Exercises from LUNGE distance(middle distance)

C - Coach, P - Pupil

1. Thrust

C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge

2. Parry

C - Straight Thrust with Advance
P - Parry without Retreating

3. Parry-Thrust

C - Straight Thrust with Advance
P - Parry without Retreating
C - Opens Target with Retreat
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge

4. Thrust-Parry

C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Allows hit; Straight Thrust with Advance
P - Parries with Recovery Back

5. Thrust-Parry-Thrust

C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Allows Hit; Straight Thrust with Advance
P - Parries with Recovery Back
C - Opens Target with Retreat
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge

END OF PART A-1

PART A-2 INTRODUCTION - PREPARATORY EXERCISES (EPEE EMPHASIS)

Material covered:

Thrust
Thrust - counterattack
Thrust - counterattack - parry
Thrust - counterattack - parry - thrust
Thrust - counterattack - parry - thrust - counterattack

Exercises from LUNGE distance (middle distance)

C - Coach, P - Pupil

1. Thrust

C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge

2. Thrust - Counterattack

C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with lunge
C - Allows Hit, Steps forward with arm bent
P - Counterattack to the extended target with return on-guard

3. Thrust - Counterattack - Parry

C - Opens Target
P - Straight thrust with lunge
C - Allows hit, steps forward with bent arm
P - Counterattack to the extended target with return on-guard
C - Extends and threatens
P - Parry without retreating

4. Thrust - Counterattack - Parry - Thrust

C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Allows hit, steps forward with bent arm
P - Counterattack to the extended target with return on-guard
C - Extends and threatens
P - Parry without retreating
C - Opens target with retreat
P - Straight thrust with lunge

PART A-2 (continued)

5. Thrust - Counterattack - parry - thrust - counterattack

- C - Opens Target
- P - Straight thrust with lunge
- C - Allows Hit, steps forward with bent arm
- P - Counterattack to the extended target with return on-guard
- C - Extends and threatens
- P - Parry without retreating
- C - Opens Target with retreat
- P - Straight thrust with lunge
- C - Allows hit, steps forward with bent arm
- P - Counterattack to extended target with return on-guard

END OF PART A-2

NOTE FOR ALL EPEE EXERCISES: THRUSTS MAY BE MADE DIRECT (AS IN FOIL), IN OPPOSITION (OR OTHER PRISE DE FER), OR BY ANGLE THRUST. This series of exercises is designed to be applied with any of the above varieties of thrusts.

08/15/85

PART B: PRELIMINARY EXERCISES - NO MOVEMENT

Material Covered:

Parry - Direct Riposte Standing
Parry - Direct Riposte With Lunge
Straight Thrust
Straight Thrust/Parry in Lunge/Direct Counter
Riposte Remaining in the Lunge
Straight Thrust/Parry in Recovery Back/Direct Counter
Riposte Standing
Straight Thrust/Parry in Recovery Back/Direct Counter
Riposte With Lunge

The coach parries after every thrust to acquaint the pupil with the parry system. Thereafter, the coach "mixes in" parries, allowing the attack to hit sometimes and at others he parries and ripostes at random.

Preliminary Exercises:

Lunge distance. Coach does limited footwork. C - Coach, P - Pupil

1. C - Straight thrust with advance
P - Parry - Simple Riposte Standing
2. C - Straight Thrust with advance, then steps back
P - Parry - Direct Riposte with Lunge

Exercises from LUNGE distance (middle distance-coach stands still)

3. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
4. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Parry and Direct Riposte
P - Parry and Direct Counterriposte Remaining in Lunge
5. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Parry and Direct Riposte with Advance
P - During Recovery Back and Direct Counterriposte Standing
6. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Parry and Direct Riposte with Advance, then Step Back
P - Parry during Recovery Back and Direct Counterriposte with Lunge

08/15/85

VARIATIONS

- a. Repeat with movement by coach, lunge distance
- b. Repeat as above using Part C actions. The coach parries the final action of the Pupil, then repeats the above. Coach stands still in first sequence. Add movement after this.
- c. Repeat as above from advance-lunge distance. The coach parries the final action of the pupil, then repeats the above.

E N D O F P A R T B

PART C: PRELIMINARY EXERCISES - NO MOVEMENT

Material Covered:

Straight Thrust
Feint of Straight Thrust - Disengage
Feint of Straight Thrust - Counterdisengage

Exercises from LUNGE Distance (Middle Distance-Coach Stands Still)

C - Coach, P - Pupil

1. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
2. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust Feint
C - Attempts Lateral Parry
P - Disengage, Lunge
3. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust Feint
C - Attempts Circular Parry
P - Counterdisengage with Lunge
4. C - Opens Low Target
P - Straight Thrust Feint to Low Line
C - Attempts Semi-Circular Parry
P - Counterdisengage to High Line with Lunge
5. C - Opens High Target
P - Straight Thrust Feint to High Line
C - Attempts Semi-Circular Parry
P - Counterdisengage to Low Line with Lunge

Coach gives command to "recover" after each action.

NOTE: The beginner should not begin the lunge until after the extension in the feint. Higher level pupils may begin the lunge during the extension.

E N D O F P A R T C

08/15/85

PART D: PRELIMINARY EXERCISES IN MOVEMENT

Coach must move slowly so pupil recognizes distance factor. Give cues only when pupil has completed a step back or forward. The movement is to be considered simply as "transferring the lunge distance" to different places on the strip. THIS IS NOT COMBAT. It must be done slowly, smoothly, precisely. The cues must be given as pupil goes back at first; then as pupil comes forward while coach steps back. In beginning, actually come to a stop before giving the cue. Later, make the stop and the cue coincide. Repeat Part C with above movements. After pupil hits, hold pupil in lunge to check precision and then step forward. The pupil must automatically recover and regain proper lunge distance. This may require a small step(6") backward by the pupil upon recovery (if the lunge has brought the pupil closer to the coach).

E N D O F P A R T D

PART E: PRELIMINARY EXERCISES FROM BEYOND LUNGE DISTANCE
(ADVANCE-LUNGE)

Repeat Part C from advance/lunge distance. The coach stands still. The task of the pupil is to make the correct coordination of hand and foot and to execute the final attack action rapidly yet loosely. Coaches must insist on precision. Above all, the pupil must understand that the advance is a preparatory phase of the actual attack. This is vital to prepare the pupil for the various possibilities the opponent may make, e.g., a line, counter attack, attack on preparation, etc. -- all of which will be introduced later in the pupil's training. In saber, this is a most important area to focus on.

The entire process should be thought of as a simple transfer of the body from one spot to another closer to the opponent, i.e.: getting close enough to make a lunge. Only when the pupil has advanced without "leaning" to the coach, without stiffness in the arm, with perfect footwork, can the final action be allowed to begin. The presentation of any feint must be careful and meaningful.

08/15/85

When all of the above has been accomplished, simply repeat the exercises in Part C. The coach may make a small step backwards (6") as the lunge unfolds to help the pupil get used to hitting a moving target. The pupil will make a feint of a thrust in the advance. Higher level pupils may make an advance without feint, then straight thrust.

E N D O F P A R T E

PART F: PRELIMINARY EXERCISES FROM ADVANCE/LUNGE IN MOVEMENT

The coach has the task of demanding that the pupil respect the distance precisely. The coach will understand that when a pupil executes the lunge phase; there is a tendency upon recovery from the lunge for the pupil to "lose distance" by not stepping back enough. The pupil must regain the precise original advance/lunge distance with each recovery, as explained earlier.

As the coach and pupil move back and forth on the strip, the coach must constantly be alert to the correct distance and scold the pupil who does not keep it. The pupil must never allow the coach to "close in" or "get away". Also, the coach must not be too aggressive in the early phase of teaching. The exercises are properly done when the coach steps forward or backward slowly. The pupil learns the distance in this manner. Later, this can be done at a quicker pace. The exercise is properly done as follows:

1. Pushing the pupil back. The coach walks forward slowly one or several steps. The pupil keeps the distance. The coach and pupil stop. the instant the coach stops the pupil advances. The coach then reacts as in Part C.

2. Pulling the pupil forward. The pupil moves forward as coach moves back. Coach stops. Pupil immediately advances as above. Coach repeats exercises of Part C.

Coach: Remember to step back "as the lunge unfolds".

E N D O F P A R T F

08/15/85

**PART G: INTERMEDIATE EXERCISES INTRODUCING THE REMISE, REPRISE,
AND REDOUBLEMENT - NO MOVEMENT**

Materials Covered:

Straight Thrust
Straight Thrust/Parry in Lunge/Direct Counterriposte
Straight Thrust/Remise
Straight Thrust/Reprise
Straight Thrust/Redoublement

Exercises from LUNGE distance (middle distance)

C - Coach, P - Pupil

1. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
2. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Parry and Direct Riposte Standing
P - Parry and Direct Counterriposte REMAINING IN THE LUNGE
3. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Parry, No Riposte (Slight Release)
P - Remise Remaining in the Lunge
4. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Parry, Light Press
P - Reprise Remaining in the Lunge
5. C - Opens Target
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge
C - Parry, Retreats without Riposte*
P - Redoublement from Lunge

* Coach may press or not as desired so that the pupil will use direct or indirect blade work in the redoublement.

08/15/85

PART H: ADVANCED EXERCISES - ATTACK ON PREPARATION

Materials Covered

**Straight Thrust on Preparation
Derobement
Feint-in-Tempo (Compound Attack on Preparation)**

Exercises from outside lunge distance (advance lunge)

C - Coach, P - Pupil

1. C - Advances in Invitation - Any line
P - Straight Thrust with Lunge on the Front Foot Motion of the Coach
2. C - Advances Attempting Quarte Engagement
P - Derobement with Lunge
3. C - Advances Attempting Sixte Engagement
P - Derobement with Lunge
4. C - Advances in Invitation - Any line
P - Straight Thrust Feint
C - Attempted Lateral Parry
P - Disengage with Lunge

APPENDIX D

TACTICAL FOOTWORK

MEASURE AND DISTANCE

CONCEPT: THE DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO FENCERS MAY BE DESCRIBED AS:

- A. SHORT (ability to hit target by arm extension);
- B. MEDIUM (ability to hit target with a lunge);
- C. LONG (combined foot movements are needed to bring target within reach.)

For each attack and defense, a specific distance is required. This is frequently referred to as one's measure of distance, and is a prerequisite to successful action.

During the bout a fencer must perform two supposedly contradictory tasks. He must maintain a measure of distance favorable to his security, i.e., "keeping the distance"; and yet approach the opponent closely enough to hit the target, i.e., shorten the distance. These contradictory tasks necessitate complicated foot play.

CONCEPT: DISTANCE IS A LEARNED SKILL

1) Keeping the Distance

When practicing to keep the distance, students should be placed in pairs facing each other in the guard position. One student (A) should take the initiative and direct the foot exercises while the other student (B) keeps the distance. "A" should execute advances, retreats, and other simple foot actions correctly and slowly, alternating the movements. "B" should try to maintain perfect distance.

At first the students should be very close. Their front feet should be placed side-by-side. The students should now move on two parallel fencing lines. The weapon arm of "A" should be flexed with the palm up. "B" should place his palm on "A's". This position should permit "B" to feel "A's" initiation of movement.

Later, the students should keep the medium distance on one fighting line. Now "B" should try to perceive "A's" initiation visually. "A" and "B" holding an elastic cord between them can provide feedback to each other. The cord may become too slack or too tense.

Because this is an exercise and the objective is to learn how to keep the distance, "A" should execute the foot movements slowly with pauses between each movement. Later, the exercise should become more intricate. When "A" lunges, "B" retreats. When "A" recovers, "B" advances.

To vary the exercise, the instructor may use verbal commands, i.e., naming the movement with the final signal being the student's name. For example, the instructor commands: Advance, retreat, lunge--"A". "A" starts and "B" executes the reciprocal movements--retreat, advance, retreat.

In the following periods of practice after the students have mastered double-advance, double-retreat, and advance-lunge, "A" should increase the footwork variations. Employing different steps at varied rates of speed, "A" should alternate all known foot movements. The work of "B" now requires added skill in the use of more varied foot reactions.

As a method of practice, "keeping the distance" significantly increases the interest in footwork and lead the student to use the learned techniques in the bout.

2) Stealing the Tempo

In later periods of practice, the task should be to learn how to "steal" the tempo and to take the initiative of direction. The exercise should start with footwork already mastered. Only in the beginning should the instructor provide verbal instruction for the initiative of direction to "A". The fencers should use every skill of footwork they have learned. All decisions as to type and variety of footwork should be made by the fencers. The task is to practice footwork with varying rhythms. If the exercise is done perfectly, "B" should never be able to keep the distance. "A" and "B" should use the maximum range of rhythm change, speed and amplitude of movement, number and duration of short pauses, and change of direction. Fencers on offense should also use the bluff, double-advance, double-retreat, jump-forward, slide (glissement) and cross step (passe avant).

During the following training periods the students should practice without weapons. They should strive to acquire greater sensitivity of the foot movements, seeking opportunities to "catch" the tempo, detect a change of rhythm, and employ a method of stealing the distance. They should also sense the differences between their movements and those of their partner.

APPENDIX E

PREPARATORY BLADEWORK EXERCISES

PREPARATIONS OF ATTACKS - Preparations D'Attaque
PRELIMINARY EXERCISES

The students are in two lines facing each other. The back hand is on the hip, and the front is on-guard holding

- 1) The middle of student "A's" blade must touch the middle of student "B's" and then move back to the starting position.
- 2) Repeat the exercise, but after touching the blade, one student exerts pressure, then goes back to starting position. The other student repeats this.

The above is the quarte engagement. The same exercise done on the opposite side is the sixth engagement.

- 3) In a similar manner we can teach the octave and septime engagements.

PRELIMINARY BLADE & BEAT EXERCISES

In individual drills the instructor should practice the following with students:

- 1) The instructor's blade presses the students' (quarte press). The instructor commands: "Return my pressure and attack by Pressure/Straight thrust". The student executes.
- 2) The instructor presses the student's blade again (quarte pressure) and commands: "When my pressure weakens, press my blade back". The student executes (quarte press). The instructor commands: "When I press your blade again, go under my blade and thrust". The student has made a disengage attack. (Degagement).
- 3) The instructor beats the student's blade (quarte). It is a helping movement--a movement pattern to imitate. The instructor commands: "Imitate the movement--make the same beat". The student execute on the instructor's blade.
- 4) The same exercise but the instructor:
 - a. Beats the blade twice
 - b. The first beat is weak and the second strong
 - c. The first beat is strong and the second weak.
 - d. Then the beats are of equal strength
 - e. Then two beats with a longer pause between them.

According to the given "movement patterns" of the instructor, the student executes the exercises.

- 5) The instructor beats and extends (quarte beat, blade line). The instructor commands: "When I beat and give the blade line, beat, extend, and thrust with a lunge." The student executes (quarte beat and thrust with lunge).
- 6) The instructor beats and extends with advance or lunge (quarte beat-attack). The student makes a beat and thrust with arm extension. The instructor's remark: "This is a beat-parry riposte."
- 7) The instructor alternates between a high or low blade line or makes a quarte beat and blade line. The instructor commands: "When I give a high or low blade line without beating, do not respond. When I beat and give a blade line, beat and thrust with a lunge."
- 8) Same exercise as "7" except with foot movement. The instructor alternates advances and retreats and gives blade lines or beats with blade line. The student keeps the distance and to the high or low blade line makes no response. To the beat and blade line he makes a beat and thrust with lunge.
- 9) The instructor makes a small beat and follows it with a press on the student's blade (beat, press). The instructor commands: "Do the same".
- 10) The instructor makes a press and then a beat on the student's blade. The instructor commands: "Do the same".

PREPARATIONS OF ATTACKS - Preparations D'Attaque
PRELIMINARY EXERCISES

C = Coach, P = Pupil

- A. Engagement (Quarte, Sixte, Septime and Octave)
1. C - Engage, return to starting position
P - Engage, return to starting position
 2. C - Engage - press, return to starting position
P - Engage - press, return to starting position
- B. Blade Actions with Press and Beat (Quarte, Sixte, Septime and Octave)
1. C - Engage - Press
P - Return Press and thrust
 2. C - Engage - Press
P - Returns press when coach's press weakens
C - Returns press when pupil's press weakens
P - Go under (disengage) and thrust (with or without lunge)
 3. C - Beat
P - Return beat
 4. a. C - Double beat
P - Return Double beat
 - b. C - Double beat (first weak, second strong)
P - Return double beat (first weak, second strong)
 - c. C - Double beat (first strong, second weak)
P - Return double beat (first strong, second weak)
 - d. C - Double beat (two strong or two weak)
P - Return double beat (two strong or two weak)
 - e. C - Double beat (longer pause between them)
P - Return double beat (follow the tempo of the coach)
 5. C - Beat and extend
P - Return beat, thrust with lunge
 6. C - Beat and extend with advance or lunge
P - Beat and extend (without lunge)
 7. a. C - High line extension
P - No Response
 - b. C - Low line extension
P - No Response
 - c. C - Beat and extend
P - Return beat, thrust with lunge

PREPARATIONS OF ATTACKS
Preparations D'Attaque

8. Same as in 7 a. b. & c. but from movement (footwork)
9. C - Beat - Press
P - Return beat - press
10. C - Engage - press - beat
P - Return Engagement - press - beat

The instructor should, if necessary, demonstrate and explain some basic exercises for shortening the distances to make the practice more easily understood. Examples:

- a) With a slow rhythm, the student should force his opponent to move. After a retreat the student should suddenly attack with a cross-step (passe avant), advance-lunge.
- b) With a slow rhythm, the student should force his opponent to move forward and backward. After an advance, instead of a retreat, he should attack with a jump forward lunge.
- c) After a slow advance, the student should attack with an accelerated jump forward lunge or fleche
- d) After a slow advance, the student should retreat once and, when the opponent starts to advance, the student should lunge in tempo.
- e) After a double-advance or jump forward advance, the student should retreat; then, with a jump forward fleche, attack.
- f) After a slow advance, the student should pause, then fleche.
- g) After a quick advance, or jump forward , the student should stop for a moment, make a slow advance, then fleche.
- h) The student should let the opponent take the initiative but keep the distance. After one advance by the opponent, the student should not retreat but lunge.
- i) The student, making one or two fast advances, stops; the opponent also stops. The student makes two or three fast advances and stops; again, the opponent does the same number of retreats and stops. Since the aggressor initiates the advance first and with each pause has gained a short distance, he should then start his real attack. Note: a shorter fencer must know that, to attack, he must be closer than usual to his opponent and, to defend, he must be farther away.

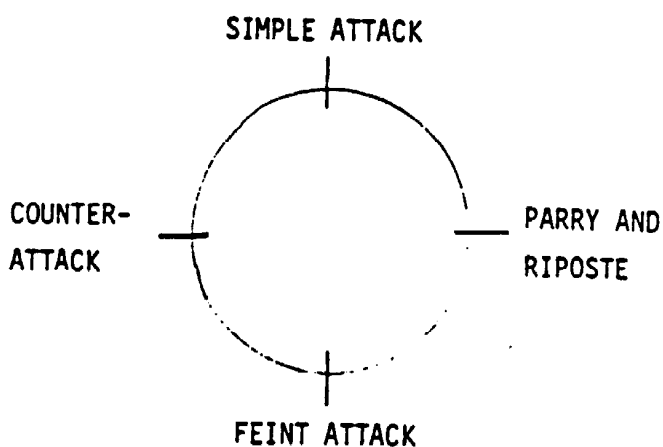
DEVISING A STRATEGY

1. Never underestimate an opponent; encourage him to underestimate you.
2. Make your opponent fence his weakest game:
 - Opponents strong in their attacks should be attacked.
 - Good defenders should be enticed to attack.
 - Opponents who cannot handle themselves well in close quarters should be led into infighting situations.
3. If a particular strategy or move works, do not abandon it until the opponent proves that he has an appropriate countermove that works. Do not simply abandon your move because you think your opponent might know what you are doing until he is able to actually prevent it from working.
 - Converse: do not persist in a strategy that is not working even if you know its cause. The bout is not a time to correct technique.
 - Do not persist in a strategy which the director will not award to you, right or wrong!
4. When fencing a technically superior fencer, do not fall into his repertoire; use unusual strategy and take larger risks instead. Use unorthodox reactions and movements to frustrate him (Anti-game). For example, if you think it is the perfect moment to attack, don't, run away instead. If you think you need to make a retreat and parry riposte, don't, attack instead (e.g. on his beat, you extend and lunge).
5. Against a weaker opponent, take little risk and stick to basic tactics and technique without expending yourself physically. Rely more on mental concentration. Remember that it is often easier to make simple attacks against poor opponents than to wait, trying to parry riposte a wild, uncontrolled attack.
6. Fencers that confuse the bout with fast or slow tempo should be handled with simple, controlled movements. Do not fall into the opponent's tempo.
7. Opponents with strong attacks should be disturbed in their preparation. This can be accomplished by:
 - Changing the rhythm, distance, and direction
 - False attacks with beats, binds, etc.
 - True and false counterattacks
8. Once you have given your original intention away, either replace it with another or use it as camouflage for the next maneuver.
9. After an attack that fails, move in or out quickly. Don't stay around to see what happens.
10. Always be in a state of movement, even when stationary. Never plant yourself.

TACTICAL DEVELOPMENT
THE APPLICATION OF THE TACTICAL WHEEL

1. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE
 - B - ... RETREAT
 - A - ... ADVANCE
 - B - ADVANCE
 - A - SIMPLE ATTACK

2. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE
 - B - ... RETREAT
 - A - ... ADVANCE
 - B - ADVANCE (SHORT)
 - A - SIMPLE ATTACK
 - B - PARRY AND RIPOSTE



3. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE
 - B - ... RETREAT
 - A - ... ADVANCE
 - B - ADVANCE (SHORT)
 - A - FEINT OF SIMPLE ATTACK
 - B - ATTEMPTED PARRY
 - A - DECEIVE AND COMPLETE ATTACK

4. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE
 - B - ... RETREAT
 - A - ... ADVANCE
 - B - ADVANCE (SHORT)
 - A - FEINT OF SIMPLE ATTACK
 - B - COUNTERATTACK (SIMPLE ATTACK ON PREPARATION)

5. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE
 - SAME AS #1

OPPONENT'S TENDENCIES

1. Stiff Arm
2. Loose arm
3. Extended on Guard of weapon arm
4. Close on Guard of weapon arm
5. Low Point in On Guard
6. High Point in On Guard
7. Invitation in low lines (on guard in 7 or 8)
8. Invitation in High lines (on guard in high 4 or 6)
9. Nervous fast point movements
10. Slow relaxed point movements
11. Large blade movements
12. Small blade movements
13. Uses mostly lateral parries
14. Uses mostly counter parries
15. Sometimes uses semicircular parries
16. Weak in the low line
17. Strong in the low line
18. Uses traps (closes distance on defense)
19. Usually retreats with parries
20. Usually holds ground with parries
21. Likes direct ripostes
22. Uses habitual disengage riposte
23. Mixes direct, indirect and compound ripostes
24. Closes distance quickly
25. Patient, slow distance control
26. Uses false attacks
27. Most attacks are for real
28. Likes to get close for simple attacks
29. Likes to use 2 part attacks (1-2 or double)
30. Likes to develop attacks over a long distance
31. Varies attack tempo and type frequently
32. Likes to use offensive second intention
33. Likes to use defensive second intention
34. Likes to counter attack
35. Likes to use opposition
36. Uses pris d'fer on preparation
37. Uses "finta in tempo" on preparation
38. Likes to derobe attempted beats
39. Uses point in line frequently
 - a. out of distance
 - b. near or in distance
40. Appears off balance forward
41. Appears off balance backward
42. Appears confident and experienced
43. Appears nervous and uncomfortable
44. Appears to know the rules
45. Is a good sport
46. Is a bad sport
47. Has good footwork
48. has predictable footwork
49. Has balance in lunge
50. Cannot recover well from lunge
51. Likes to fleche
52. Seldom if ever fleches

TACTICS

Tactics are the art of conducting a bout through the rational application of the various combat processes to defeat the opponent.

I. Principles of high-level tactics

A. Knowledge of the rules of the weapon is important to:

1. Understand and observe them so as not to be punished by the director for exceeding or breaking them;
2. Be able to comment to the director that the opponent is not observing them;
3. Judiciously contest errors by the director; and
4. Not allow the opponent the advantage of habitually violating them.

B. Possession of technique as perfect and varied as possible.

1. The technical execution of the processes must be automatic to the point that it distracts minimally from thinking about strategy.
 - a. Bout and competitive experience are important to understand the styles and characteristics of opponents' games and to recognize individual peculiarities.
 - b. In a bout which opposes two fencers who are equal in technical proficiency, physical and mental abilities, and strength of will, the winner will generally be the better strategist.
 - c. On the other hand, both a tactically appropriate process which is technically badly executed, and a process perfectly executed but applied inopportunately, generally will be unsuccessful.

C. Qualities of adaptation so the fencer can apply his technical and tactical processes judiciously. This is applied through:

1. Observation before and during the bout;
2. The range of technical means and the varied tactical processes at the fencer's disposal.

II. Tactics in Perspective:

A. Tactics and technique are not distinct. In considering that tactics are the art of utilizing technique, there is a relationship between technical means and tactical thinking:

1. Mediocre technique usually accompanies simple tactics.
2. A rich technique generally creates complex tactics.
3. A fencer's tactical thinking must not exceed the limits of his technical capabilities.
4. Despite the correlation between tactics and technique, the fencer cannot deviate his attention from tactics and transfer it to technique. He must be absorbed solely by the choice of means and of the opportune moment to complete them.

B. High physical and mental qualities The bout imposes an elevated level of stress on the nervous system. The opponents fight by physical and mental means. This process of struggle is associated with various emotions: inhibition, fear, anger, satisfaction, anxiety, etc., which create a high general level of excitement. This influences technique and tactics. The two major concerns are

1. to attack and touch
2. to defend oneself without being touched.

C. Strong will to win and great coolness. The first quality is inherent in every fencer; the second is above all conditioned by experience and competition.

D. Physical and mental preparation. This will be dealt with separately.

E. Observation of the official. Observation during preceding bouts allows one to get an idea of how the official handles himself and how he applies the rules and conventions.

1. The fencer has his own understanding of the rules, which directly influences his manner of fencing. There may therefore sometimes be a discrepancy which puts the fencer at a disadvantage, since the official is the sole master of the decisions.
2. It takes a great adaptive capability, which not everyone has, to adapt oneself to the director and to modify one's tactical approach. This can lead to a personality clash. The fencer has to struggle against

the opponent, against himself, and against the official.

3. On the other hand, in certain circumstances it is possible to profit from the shortcomings of the official. One senses this - in whether the official's analysis is certain or not, in his application or sanctions, in how he restarts the bout, whether the "halt" is fast or slow, in the "fence" as soon as the opponent is in position, etc.

III. Bases of tactics

A. General

1. The object of every bout is to be the first to score a predetermined number of touches while attempting not to be touched or to be touched less often. Most of the time the opponents are at a big distance. As a result, each time one tries to take control of the distance there is naturally a period of preparatory approaching. The major problem of bouting is carefully to prepare this approaching toward an opponent (who is preferably not active), so that he is not in a position to

- a. counterattack successfully
- b. attack on the preparation
- c. parry and riposte
- d. avoid the attack with a simple retreat.

B. Taking control of the distance with a good chance of success stresses certain qualities:

1. Intuition and the sense of observation which allow prediction by certain indices of how the opponent handles himself

2. The sense of decision which allows decisive action at the opportune moment.

C. One sees therefore that the fencer, during the bout, must

1. Think tactically correctly;
2. Think concretely; and
3. Realize his thoughts through corresponding actions.

IV. Tactical sense consists of a certain number of elements:

A. Observation

1. Before the bout

a. One should look for certain specific things which will allow the establishment of a line of management of the bout. These basic assumptions are collected in the course of previous competitions by noted or filmed information, as well as during previous bouts in the same competition.

b. Observation of the opponent allows the determination of his general combat characteristics and to identify

1. the actions most particular to him

2. the processes that he employs with the greatest success, and

3. what those are that are used against him with positive results.

c. By obtaining a more or less accurate view of his opponent, the fencer should be able to establish a line of management of the combat that he will impose to win.

2. During the bout

a. One should refer back to the pre-established plan. The processes must be mobile and modifiable so as to adapt themselves to new situations and to create new objectives.

b. It is also necessary to reassess the physical and mental state of the opponent. This should allow timely modification of the plan of combat chosen in order to effect the actions which are most certain to lead to victory.

B. The plan of assault

1. consists of those particular things one can do to oppose one's strengths to the opponent's weaknesses. In certain cases, on the other hand, it will be necessary to exploit one's own strong points without regard to the opponent's weaknesses. One should undertake actions with a view toward causing the opponent to make a mistake that the plan can use.

2. The principle factors of tactics are

- a. Inducing the opponent to make a mistake;
- b. Discernment of his intentions.

3. One achieves them by giving a false impression of the state of the possibilities and intentions one actually possesses. This is accomplished by imitative situations and an overall comportment that does not correspond to the actual state of things.

4. Discernment of the opponent's intentions with a view toward determining which actions to use.

- a. Each fencer strains to discern and predict the intentions of the other, pitting his mental processes against the actions of his opponent.

- b. In many cases discernment is possible only after specific situations which lead the opponent to commit an error involuntarily. The fencer can then undertake and impose an action, knowing with certainty which processes are impossible on the opponent in these situations.

C. Execution must become automatic.

1. It is too much to bear in mind all of these elements in a systematic manner during the bout, as often the bout unfolds in a manner too complex or too rapid.

2. Therefore, each such plan must be practiced until its execution is second nature in competition.

V. The various processes of combat.

A. The processes of combat are divided into four principal categories according to their tactical objectives:

1. Preparations: They are principally to prepare, above all, the success of the offensive, sometimes of the defensive, or more often of the counter-offensive.

2. Offense: Its objective is to touch.

3. Defensive: Its objective is to avoid the offensive

- a. with the weapon, or

- b. by using movements or other means to make it fail to land.

4. Counter-offensive: Its objective is to touch in anticipation of the offensive so that it takes the tempo

or nullifies its initiative.

B. Conduct of tactics during the bout

1. Preparatory actions: These actions play the primary role in tactics. Their task is to "take the measure" of the opponent; to judge him. The processes employed are many and varied and allow one to recognize:

- a. possibilities
- b. the opponent's mental condition
- c. the opponent's tactical compartment.

2. This exploration may be directed at the following points:

- a. How does the opponent react to a hard and unexpected attack? This can be explored as early as the beginning of the bout, without preparation, to disclose the defense mechanisms to which he has a predilection by use of a hard false attack.
- b. What attacks does he use and how does he execute them? This depends on one's ability to break tempo quickly and from a big distance at the very last instant, due to good footwork and a very good sense of distance, so as to allow the opponent the opportunity to commit himself absolutely to the offensive, without allowing oneself to be touched.
- c. How does his state of inattention or absence of prudence manifest itself? The extent to which he reacts is assessed by preparations on his weapon, in conjunction with false attacks; by feints (with the weapon and body) combined with stamping the foot; sometimes by slow actions. This also requires great powers of observation and a keen sense of analysis.

3. Subduing the opponent's will.

- a. This deals with taking the initiative from the opponent, to limit him to a passive role so as to lead the bout in one's own favor.
- b. One blunts the opponent's will by giving him the feeling of defeat, essentially by leading the bout dynamically and by one's technical-tactical superiority which defeats his first tentative efforts to touch.

c. In modern competitions where there are many bouts and long days, one must dominate mentally. It is also important to dominate by one's physical qualities. These two factors are tightly related by good physical condition and psychological preparation. Realistically, even if one can dominate one's opponents mentally throughout a few bouts without great physical condition, it is no longer possible to win an important competition without very serious preparation.

d. To dominate the bout is to use the processes which aim to give the opponent the impression of a constant threat due to the perpetual offensive character that one gives oneself. It is difficult for an opponent who is under constant pressure to find the strength and tempo necessary to pass from a passive or defensive situation to an offensive frame of mind.

e. On the other hand, the leader of the game can easily choose moments for recuperation; that is, he need not be permanently on the offensive. There is a difference in the comportment of the fencer who is the sole master of how and when he expends his efforts.

4. Deception as to one's own intentions and actions

a. The essential goal is, above all, the giving of a false impression of one's tactical intentions and a false appearance of one's physical and psychological state at the moment.

b. The concealment of the attack usually begins with appropriate actions designed to reduce the alertness of the opponent. That can translate into more or less slow movements, bordering on negligence, so as to give the opponent the impression of momentary security. The opponent can in this situation prepare to attack; the fencer chooses this opportunity to suddenly take the attack, catching the opponent on the wrong foot and in the wrong tempo.

c. Deception has as its goal to fix the opponent's attention on the wrong thing while provoking reactions opposed to those that the fencer wants to do himself. It therefore allows one to gain time to develop the offensive.

d. One can mask one's intention to attack by actions which lead the opponent to assume that one wants to defend oneself or avoid the offensive. This can also provoke a situation favorable to a

hit or a counterattack.

e. Preparatory actions which permit these deceptions are all known to fencers, but it is the way they are used which matters most. Each fencer uses them differently and combines them as he chooses, according to the type of opponent he faces.

f. Note that it is difficult consistently to give a false impression of one's physical and mental state.

5. Getting the opponent to carry out induced actions

a. A dominated fencer loses the initiative; however, he can retain his will completely. In this case, the fencer who leads the game should reduce the pressure and sometimes let the opponent think he is the master of the situation. It is this false conformance with the opponent's belief that he is leading the game that leads him to execute induced actions.

b. The fencer who provokes the opponent to make him execute actions of this kind always has the advantage. He is a tempo ahead; he can anticipate and interpret the actions with more certainty and calm.

c. Tactical preparations are the false images which cover one's premeditation and conceal one's true intentions. The most significant actions are those which prepare actions such as countertime, counter-offensive, an intentional retreat which allows an attack on the march, a false attack which precedes a counter-riposte or remise...

6. Making oneself the master of the strip

a. The dimensions of the strip engender conditions which can lead to certain tactics. Situations may be favorable or unfavorable from round to round, but it is the fencer who has superiority on the offensive who is generally master of the strip.

b. This mastery should be part of a general tactical plan without becoming a principal goal.

c. At a certain point in the bout these tactics are rewarding, since most fencers driven to their rear limits defend themselves less well, or are obliged to go to the offensive or the counteroffensive under precipitous, poorly prepared conditions.

d. One therefore sees the advantage this aspect of tactics can have. One can generally make oneself master of the strip by combining feints with small movements forward and backward, reinforced by stamping, to gain control of the distance without the opponent being aware of it. False attacks, body feints, etc, are part of the game, but the fencer must always be on his guard for an attack on the preparation, sometimes in desperation.

7. Hampering the opponent's feel for the distance:
Making it difficult for the opponent to begin his attack:

a. To make oneself master of the strip and to hamper the opponent's sense of distance require good footwork. This consists of a varied combination of all movements, so that the opponent can never get himself perfectly balanced or comfortable.

b. To that should be added the movements of the armed hand. The fencer should use movements of his weapon (feints, beats, withdrawals, etc.) to cause error to not only the opponent's feeling of the distance but also to hamper the opponent in his choice of attacks and of the precise moment to carry it out.

c. The fencer who uses this combination of footwork and weapon work with confidence can use it as a blueprint to weaken his opponent's vigilance. This will accustom the opponent to these incessant movements, cause him to cease to react and by itself facilitate the execution of an attack.

8. Examples of bout situations:

Tactics must be based upon knowledge inculcated by the fencing master and completed by personal experience in bouting and competition. But it is important to be aware of the most important theoretical aspects of the different situations in which a fencer may find himself.

a. In training and in competition, after being hit, one must immediately analyze the actions which have prevailed, to see if there is a relationship between one's own actions and those of the opponent. If so, that proves a deliberate intention on the part of the opponent (as opposed to a "blind" or "lucky" touch).

b. After having made or tried to make a hit, draw a conclusion as to whether it was a success or failure, and why.

- c. In training, against each opponent, the fencer must always try to win using as many different possibilities as possible.
- d. In competition, exploit successful actions as long as possible. One must not repeat them immediately: wait until the opponent forgets, or vary the preparation leading to that action.
- e. Against an opponent who is technically superior, one must try to win on tactics.
- f. An involuntary movement should always be followed by a different one; that is, one must change one's reactions after one has been surprised into a reaction by an unexpected action.
- g. When an opponent has strong attacks one must force him to be defensive, and vice versa.
- h. A small fencer facing a big one must close distance using good footwork coordinated with handwork.
- i. Against an opponent whose game is based on a good defense, the fencer must use attacks or false attacks which will trigger the opponent's habitual ripostes.
- j. Against an opponent who is ill at ease at short distance, one must constantly control him by playing with domination of the distance.
- k. Against an opponent adept at counter-time (second intention) one must use composed attacks, or a restrained counter-offensive which allows one to use the opponent's game while preparing a better defense.
- l. Against an opponent with a game which is disorderly but pressing one must fall back on simple actions without relying on responding to the opponent's actions.

THE OFFENSIVE

by Maitre Rob Handleman

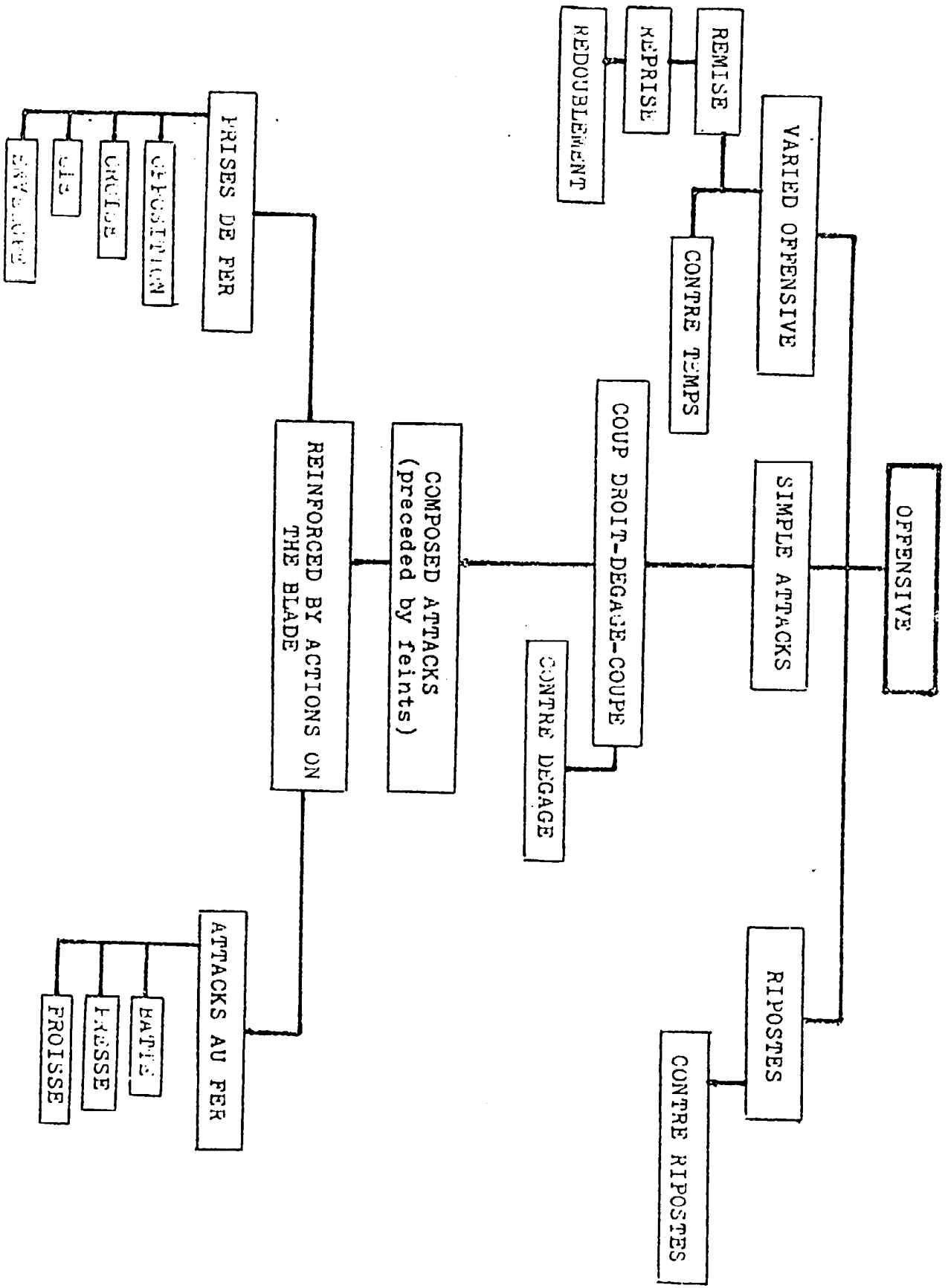
The offensive consists of a combination of actions meant to touch (hit) the adversary.

- A. The attack (the initial offensive action) it can be:
 1. simple (direct, indirect)
 2. composed (preceded by feints)
 3. reinforced by actions on the blade (attack on the blade, blade takes)
 4. delivered after preparation, on the preparation, or without preparation.
- B. The riposte (the offensive action delivered after the parry) can be
 1. immediate
 2. lost time (a temps perdu)
 3. standing still
 4. with varied footwork
 5. simple (direct or indirect)
 6. composed (one or more feints)
 7. preceded by actions on the blade.
- C. The counter riposte (the offensive action that follows the parry of a riposte).
- D. Varied offensive actions (offensive actions after an attack, a riposte, counter riposte or counter attack). They consist of:
 1. reprise, the term redoublement is actually doubly employed with a certain form of reprise that has been preceded by a parry.
 2. remise
 3. contre temps

These varied offensive actions can be executed after an action meant to hit or intentionally done after a simulated (fase) action. In the latter case they are called actions of the second intention.

Illustration #2*

*illustration done by Maitre Alex Beguinot



THE DEFENSE

by Maitre Rob Handelman

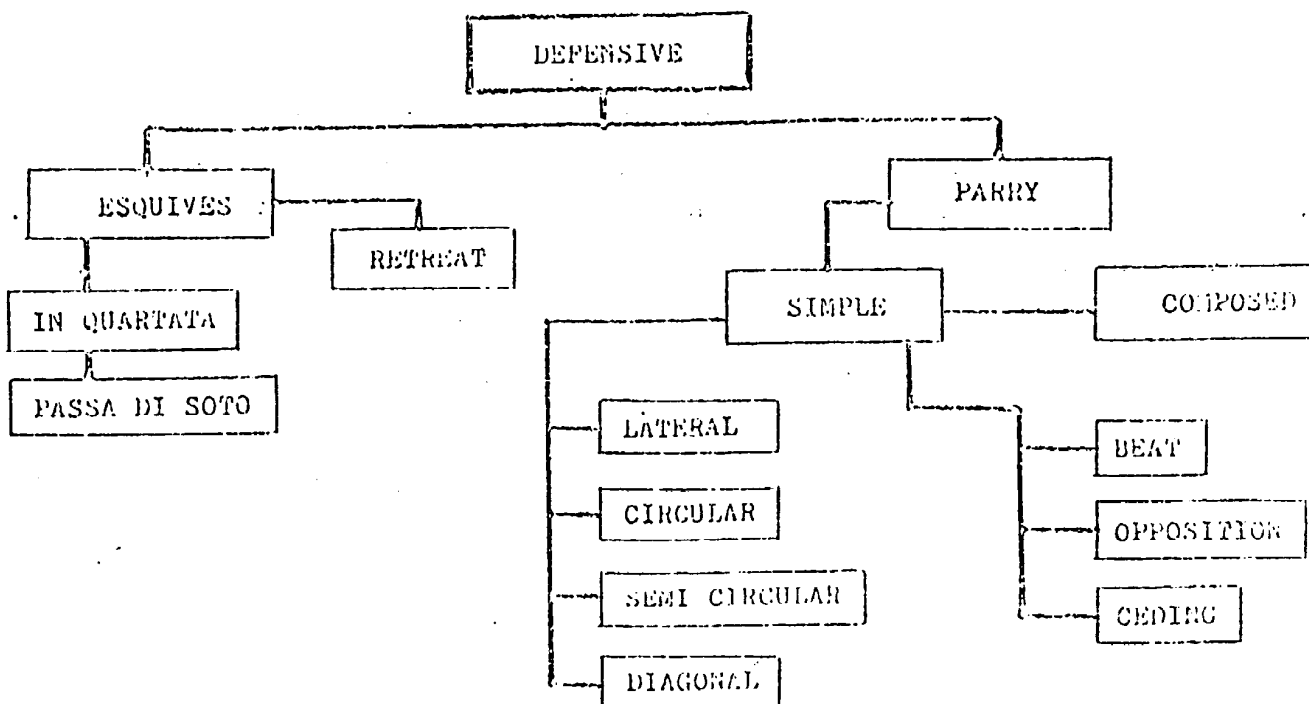
The defense consists of a combination of actions designed to push away, with the blade, the opponent's offense or to avoid being hit.

A. The parry (the action designed to push away with the blade the adversary's blade) can be:

1. simple: lateral, semi-circular, diagonal
2. composed: (compound) succession of deceived parries
3. done with a beat (tac), opposition, or ceding (yielding) parry
4. executed standing still, in a lunge, or coordinated with varied footwork

B. L'esquive (various body displacements and the retreat).

Illustration #3:



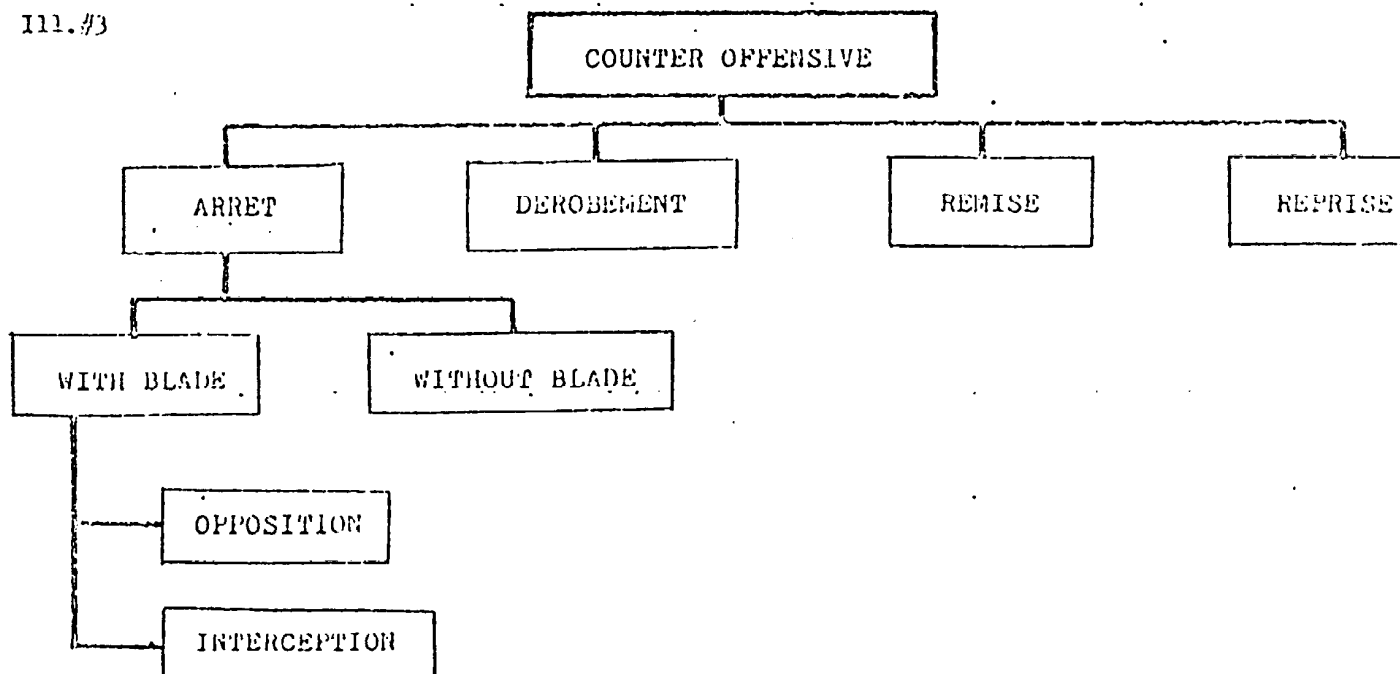
THE COUNTER OFFENSIVE
by Maitre Rob Handtman

The counter-offensive consists of the ensemble of actions carried out on the opponent's offensive. It has priority over the offensive when it gains a fencing time. A time (tempo) is the duration of the execution of one simple offensive action.

- A. Arret (stop)
 - 1. without blade
 - 2. with blade (opposition or interception)
- B. Derobement executed on the adversary's offensive can be preceded or accompanied by an action on the blade.
- C. The remise (counter offensive action executed on a riposte or counter riposte)

Illustration #1*

*illustrations done by Maitre Alex Beguinet



THE PREPARATION

by Maitre Rob Handleman

The two opponents start out of distance (4 Meters) so one or the other must advance. The gain (or loss) of ground is often accompanied by body movements and blade actions. These are the various preparations.

They may be done singly or in combination:

A. Body Movements

1. footwork: forward, backward, lateral
2. movement of the foot on the ground: appel (stamping of foot), glissement (slide)
3. inclinations of the trunk.

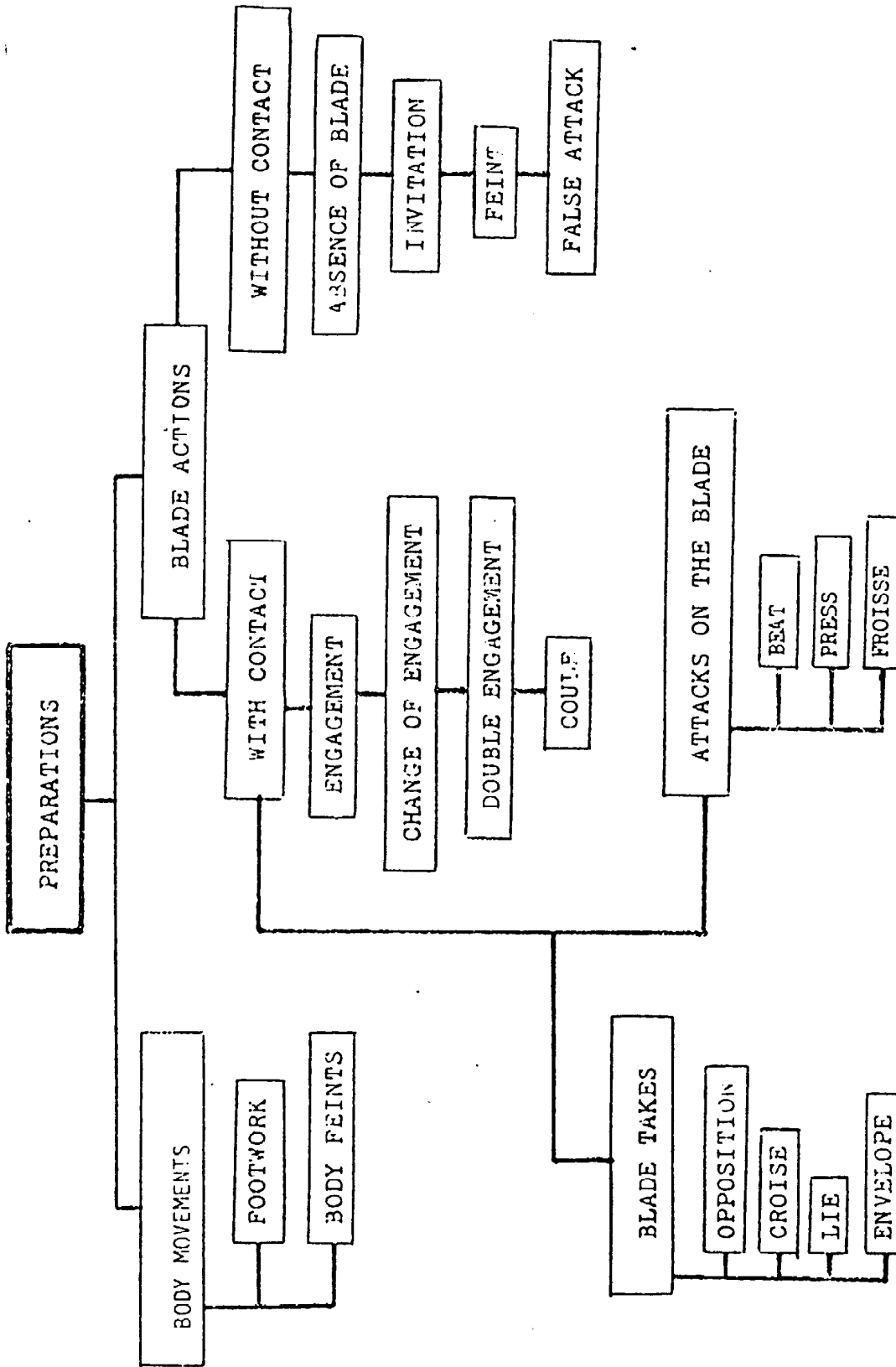
B. Blade Actions

1. with contact of the adversary's blade: engagement, change of engagement, attacks on the blade, taking of the blade, coule (glide).
2. without contact of the adversary's blade: feint, absence of blade, invitation, false attack.

These manoeuvres to close and launch an offensive are called preparations of the attack, but they also open the possibility for a defensive reaction (parry or retreat), an offensive reaction (attack on the preparation) or a counter offensive reaction (counter attack).

Illustration #1 *

*illustration done by Maitre Alex Beguinet



A Basic Weight Training Program for Fencers
By Paul Soter

This article will outline a basic weight training program designed to fit into the schedule of a busy fencer. It does not purport to be the best or most complete weight training program for fencers. Rather, it is designed to be practical and yield the maximum benefit for the minimum time invested.

Fencers do not need to work with heavy weights. We do not need muscle bulk or a tremendous amount of upper body strength. The heaviest weapon, the epee, only weighs about a pound. Of course, the opponent can weigh over 200 pounds, and circumstances arise in which it is useful to be able to out-muscle him or her. Nonetheless, a fencer's weight program should be primarily aimed at developing explosive strength and the capacity for numerous fast repetitions of actions involving a relatively light weight.

The recommended program uses a Universal weight machine. The first step in a weight training program is establishing your maximum capacity on each exercise. This is done by simply determining the heaviest weight you can lift once. You should then work at 60%-70% of this capacity. Capacity should be reevaluated every four to six weeks. However, at some point, your ideal training weights will probably stabilize. It is preferable to work with a lighter weight at a faster speed than a heavier weight. When in doubt, use the lighter weight. Each lift should be done smoothly, both up and down; throwing the weights or letting them crash down accomplishes little.

The workout itself consists of three sets of 10-12 repetitions of each exercise. If there is no rest between exercises, you will also get an aerobic workout, thereby gaining the added benefit of a cardiovascular training session. In the workout, alternate upper and lower body exercises. Except when you have just increased your load, you should not feel tight or fatigued at the end of the workout. This is important: if you feel as though you have had a heavy weight workout, the inevitable result will be tight muscles and decreased relaxation while fencing. Therefore, although the weight workout can be done at any time, ideally, it should not be done immediately before fencing.

The following are the exercises in this program:

Upper Body: Bench press, military press, lateral pull.

Middle Body: Knee raises to chest while hanging from parallel bar.

Lower Body: Leg press, knee extenders, hamstring curl
(also develops lower back), toe raisers.

The weight workout should be done every other day, or three times a week.

A fencer should always taper a weight program before a major competition. No weight increases should begin any later than 3-4 weeks before a competition, and you should have at least 4-5 days' complete rest from weight training before a major competition. Remember, your purpose in weight training is to improve your fencing. Resist the temptation to compete with the serious weightlifters and the dilettantes who are just trying to develop cosmetically bulging muscles.

While this program may not seem heavy, you will be surprised at the difference, especially over time, you will feel in your strength and speed.

The West German Formula
A Report on the National Women's Epee Coaches Clinic

In November the USFA held a National Women's Epee Coaches Clinic in Colorado Springs with two guest coaches from West Germany: Walter Steegmueller and Manfred Beckmann. These coaches spent four days with twelve U.S. coaches and twelve of the top women epeeists in this country. During that time they presented the West German system of coaching epee which was developed by Emil Beck in Tauberbischofsheim ("TBB"). West Germany won 11 medals at the 1984 Olympics and 7 at the 1988 Olympics, several of which were in epee. Following is a summary of the material presented at this clinic and used by the country most dominate in the world in epee.

Foundation of the Formula

According to the information Walter and Manfred presented at this clinic, Emil Beck and his coaching staff spent many long hours reviewing and recording statistical data from video tapes of world class fencing, i.e. Olympics, World Championships, and World Cup competitions. The West German system of coaching has in part been developed from the results of the data collected from studying these videos. although specifics of this research were not given a couple of things were mentioned which came from this study and were directly incorporated into the coaching method.

For example, they found that 80% of all epee points are scored to the body and the remaining 20% are scored on the hand or leg. Apparently, seven footwork patterns were also identified which are most commonly used to score in bouts. These include, but do not preclude: standing, step forward, step forward lunge, jump forward lunge, step back, step back lunge, step back fleche. These footwork patterns are used in every lesson in a very systematic way. This will be discussed in more detail later in this report.

It is our impression that a sequence of lessons was developed based partially on this research. This sequence involves four levels of lessons. In the first and second level the lessons are primarily a prescribed set of actions. The third level is dedicated to coupe actions and follows suit with the first two levels. The fourth level is called the fighting lesson. It is during the fourth level that the coach attempts to simulate bouting situations and emphasize tactical actions. In addition, all epee fencers will receive one epee lesson a week which focuses only on foil actions. During this type of lesson only touches scored to the body using foil actions are practiced.

During the first two to three years, fencers are given lessons in a highly automatic and predictable way. The student always knows exactly what is going to happen in the next lesson. In this way the fencer has the opportunity to visualize and mentally practice beforehand. After a fencer has attained proficient technical ability, the coach will move on to the third and fourth level of lessons. It is also at this point that the coach will begin to introduce tactics.

Coaches dress in full protection from head to toe and students are required to dress in full FIE approved uniforms as well. The TBB teaching technique calls for the coach to act as an adversary would when the student makes technical or tactical mistakes. By donning proper equipment, injury is prevented when the coach scores a hit on the student who makes a mistake. Safety has evidently become a major concern in West Germany; therefore, many clubs will not allow fencers to participate in a lesson or bouting without an FIE uniform.

Hand Position and Parries

The premise of this system is based on what is easiest to learn and what are the most efficient biomechanical movements to use. The TBB system teaches only one hand position for all parries except prime. This is thought to be very simple for fencers to learn, thereby minimizing the difficulty of the learning process. Students are taught to keep their hand in supination with the thumb at ten o'clock (sixth position). All parries are executed with the hand in supination (except prime), the position of four does not call for a rolling of the wrist, nor does the sixth require an extreme outer rotation. The weapon hand is put in a relaxed position which is relatively easy to learn.

Primarily four parries are taught: eight, six, four, and seven in that order. Prime is also taught, but the main emphasis is on those just mentioned. Seconde is never introduced. Keeping in line with the premise of this system, the seconde is considered inefficient. The path of the blade and the forced rotation of the elbow caused by the wrist turning toward pronation is a longer distance to travel than that of the eighth position. The motion of seconde, biomechanically, is a longer way to meet the opposing blade as well as a longer way back to the riposte. In addition, the seconde introduces a new hand position and this contradicts the TBB philosophy of "simple to learn".

The Lessons

As mentioned earlier, there are four levels of lessons: Each lesson has four parts and within each part are three to four series of actions. Every series of actions are performed in all

four lines and with the seven footwork patterns. For example, a student may take a lesson from the first level and work only on beat, parry, and opposition in eight. The next week this student may receive a lesson using the exact same series of actions but must perform using only beat, parry, and opposition in six. It is important to remember that the very first parry German fencers learn is the parry eight. The four levels are identified as the following:

1. Direct
2. Second intention
3. Coupe
4. Mixture (fighting lesson)

There are seven footwork patterns always used in the order presented below. These are further divided into offensive and defensive footwork:

Offensive

1. Standing
2. Step Forward
3. Step Forward Lunge
4. Jump Forward Lunge

Defensive

5. Step Back (with parry), riposte
6. Step Back Lunge, riposte
7. Step Back Fleche, riposte

To incorporate these footwork patterns into the lesson it is important to understand how they are used. The footwork itself is fairly easy to comprehend, however, there are a few rules you should be aware of.

1. The student should always hold the opponent's (coach's) blade in the appropriate line when stepping forward for a step forward lunge. The coach also has the option of having the student hold the blade during a jump forward.
2. Whenever a student performs an attach, he or she is not supposed to step back or recover for the next remise or retake. If the student is performing a jump lunge and a remise is called for as the next action, then the fencer must hit the first target on the jump and the remise target on the lunge. In all other cases the fencer should beat in the appropriate line, thrust, and then jump lunge. Needless to say, the student must always extend the arm before moving forward after the beat.

3. For the step back footwork, the student should retreat with or before the parry, never on the riposte. The fencer should also take another step backwards if a remise is called for in the lesson plan. The step back lunge also requires that a fencer not retreat or recover for a retake. When the lesson plan calls for step back or step back lunge to the leg or toe, the fencer should lunge backwards to score these touches.
4. The fleche is usually taught preceded by a step back, but this is not set in stone and the coaches often use step forward fleche as well. A coach should not teach students to fleche for the toe. Whatever target the lesson is calling for first should be the student's first objective when fleching and if possible a remise to the body should also be included.

As it is in all things, none of the guidelines set down by the West German system are unbreakable rules. These are exceptions to many rules and as one goes through these actions many adaptations can be made if they make good fencing sense. So, if any of the readers decide to try this out, remember to combine this information with your own common sense and make adjustments where necessary.

Figure 1

I.	<u>Attack</u>	<u>Remise</u>	<u>Retake</u> (Absicherung)
a.	Top ¹	---	8 bind to body ²
b.	Under ³	---	8 bind from high line to low line ⁴ , touch to body
c.	Thigh	---	Bind from 6 to 1, touch to body
d.	Toe ⁵	---	6 bind to body
II.	a. Top	Under	6 croise to toe
	b. Top	Leg	Parry high line (6 or 4) to body
	c. Top	Toe	Bind (6 or 4) to body
III.	a. Under	Top	8 bind to body
	b. Under	---	6 bind to body
	c. Under	Leg	Beat/parry (4 or 6) and feint disengage with bind to body
	d. Under	Toe	6 bind to body

¹Top - Target is the top of the hand.

²Bind to Body - Choice of bind parries is up to the coach and may be done in any line which is appropriate to the situation.

³Under - Target is under the hand.

⁴Bind from high line to low line. Any bind transferring the blade from high line to low line and which is appropriate to the situation.

⁵Toe - The toe is the designated target.

IV. During the fourth series of actions only foil type actions are performed. For example:

1. Beat, touch direct to body
2. Beat, feint, disengage, touch to body
3. Beat, glide, touch to body

Figure 1 shows the sequence of actions in the first level of lessons. The coach should eventually be able to take the student through this entire sequence using one line (i.e. beat or parry eight) in ten to fifteen minutes. In this short time, all seven footwork combinations will be incorporated for each series of actions. As was quickly found out during the National Women's Epee Coaches Clinic, it takes many lessons before a student can perform the entire sequence without error within fifteen minutes.

In the first level, first part, first series the student working in eight will beat eight, hit the top of the wrist, and then use eight bind to hit the body. This series is performed standing, stepping forward, step forward lunge, jump lunge, stepping back, step back lunge, and step back fleche. The following is an example of how the first series of part one, first level goes using the line of eight and all seven footwork patterns:

1. Standing, beat 8, hit top of the wrist. Still standing (no movement) bind 8 to the body.
2. Beat 8, step forward, hit the top of the wrist. With no retreat, bind 8 to the body.
3. Engage in 8, hold the blade while stepping forward, lunge and hit the top of the wrist. Stay in the lunge, bind 8 to the body.
4. Beat 8, jump lunge, hit top of wrist (it is optional to hold the parry 8 on the jump - coach's choice). Stay in the lunge, bind 8 to the body.
5. Step back, beat 8, hit top of wrist. Retreat, bind 8 to body.
6. Step back, beat 8, lunge, hit top of wrist. Remaining in lunge, bind 8 to body.
7. Step back, beat 8, fleche to top of wrist, remise to body as passing.

As the series of actions of level one progress other lines and parries are utilized. If the focus a lesson is in eight then

all of the first actions will be executed with a beat or parry eight. However, as the lesson progresses down, the list of actions other lines of defense are incorporated. Following is a summary of the sequence of actions used in Level One in the line of eight as presented at the National Women's Epee Coaching Clinic:

- I.
 - a. Beat 8 (top) - 8 bind (body)
 - b. Beat 8 (under) - 6 convert to 7 bind (body)
 - c. Eight bind (leg) - 6 convert to prime (body)
 - d. Eight bind (toe) - 6 bind (body)

- II.
 - a. Beat 8 (top) - remise (under) - 6 croise (toe)
 - b. Beat 8 (top) - remise (leg) - 4 or 6 bind (body)
 - c. Beat 8 (top) - remise (toe) - 6 or 4 bind (body)

- III.
 - a. Beat 8 (under) - remise (top) - 6 or 4 bind (body)
 - b. Beat 8 (under) - 6 or 4 bind (body)
 - c. Beat/parry 8 disengage (under) - remise (leg) - Beat 6 or 4, feint disengage with bind to (body)

- IV. Foil actions to the body. Example:
 - a. Beat 8
 - b. Beat 8, feint deceive
 - c. Beat 8, disengage
 - d. Beat 8, 1-2

Figure 2

I.	<u>Attack</u>	<u>Attack</u>	<u>Remise</u>	<u>Retake</u>	<u>Retake</u>
	1. Top (advance ⁸)	Top (lunge ⁶)	---	8 bind to body	Yes ⁷
	2. Top	Under	---	High line transfer to low line	---
	3. Top	Leg	---	6 transfer to 1 to body	---
	4. Top	Toe	---	6 or 4 bind to body	Yes
II.	1. Top	---	Under	6 croise to toe	6 bind to body
	2. Top	---	Leg	Beat, feint-disengage with bind to body	Yes
	3. Top	---	Toe	Beat feint disengage with bind to body	Yes
III.	1. Disengage under	---	Top	8 bind to body	8 bind to body
	2. Disengage under	---	---	6 bind to body	6 bind to body
	3. Disengage under	---	Leg	Yes	Yes
	4. Disengage under	---	Toe	Yes	Yes

IV. Foil actions to the body. Examples:

1. Beat direct to body
2. Beat direct to body, counter parry riposte with circle parry
3. Beat direct to body, counter parry, feint disengage or 1-2 riposte
4. Beat feint disengage

⁶In part one all actions in the first column are executed with an advance, actions in the second column are executed with a lunge.

⁷Yes - Actions should be performed in these columns, but are created to suit the situation.

⁸In part one all actions in the first column are executed with an advance, actions in the second column are executed with a lunge.

After reviewing the second level of lessons (Fig. 2), it becomes apparent that this series of actions follows very closely to those in the first level. The main difference is in the addition of actions to the beginning and end of each series. In the first part the attack is done twice and the retake is also usually performed twice. In the second and third part only one attack is executed, however, the retake is always executed twice.

Whenever it is possible to add the same attack twice it should be done and following this same rule an action on the blade should also be added wherever it makes sense. For example, it does not make sense for a fencer to do a second action on the blade after he or she has stepped in with a prime since this action usually draws a halt for corps-a-corps. The second blade take does not always have to be the same as the first take. The coach and student must determine what action would be most logical in a particular situation.

The third level of lessons introduces the coupe and the lessons follow the same formula as Levels One and Two. It was suggested that the easiest way for a student to learn the coupe is to start from a position which is the longest way to the target. In other words, it is easier to learn the motion of the coupe by beginning in a low line and finishing in high line. The path of the coupeing blade from an engagement in eight is a longer distance than that from an engagement in the high line. In addition, the student needs to gain wrist strength to perform an effective coupe and starting from the low line facilitates the development of strength necessary to coupe from the high lines.

Once the coach feels that the student has gained sufficient technical ability the fourth level of lessons is introduced. At this level there is no formula to follow. The student and coach begin to work on tactics by setting up situations which the fencer may encounter in a bout. Often the coach will study a particular opponent and imitate that fencer as a lesson. The student must then work out an effective strategy to counter the actions of that opponent.

As an example, the student may want to set up a situation where she can use a beat six. To set this up, the fencer may invite the coach to her sixth line by stepping in and showing the target on that side. When the coach counterattacks, the fencer will beat six and riposte. At this point the coach must think of the next move and will feint to the student's sixth line, avoid the beat and attack to the leg. It now becomes the student's turn to counter the coach's new tactics. So, the pupil will invite the counterattack again, but instead of attempting a beat six, she may go straight to the coach's target when the coach attempts to feint.

It is at the fourth level that giving and taking lessons becomes highly creative for both student and coach. Both participants must be trying to out think each other and be one step ahead of the other in their tactical maneuvers.

Although, the first three levels of lessons are basically derived from a prescribed set of actions it is always up to the coach to put these actions together in a way which makes sense. While figuring out what retake or remise would be best in a given situation the coach is using a creative and logical process of thinking. If something in these lessons doesn't make sense then don't use it; make instead an alternative series of actions which fit together in a logical manner.

National Women's Epee Clinic

For four days, November 18-21, 1988, the United States Fencing Association had the privilege of hosting two West German coaches at a National Women's Epee coaching clinic at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. The results were invaluable to everyone who attended. Consequently, we felt it in the interest of the USFA and its member coaches and competitors to consolidate our notes and provide an edited video tape to anyone who is interested. We hope by this means to be able to share the material presented and thus elevate the level of coaching and women's epee fencing nationwide.

The two gentlemen who presented the basics of the Emil Beck style fencing system are both certificated fencing coaches in West Germany and were themselves competitors in Tauberbischofsheim at the time when this tiny city emerged as the most successful fencing club in the world. Thus, they have seen the "Baukasten-system" from both sides of the fence. They are Walter Steegmueller, currently a coach at the world famous center for epee fencing in Heidenheim, and Manfred Beckmann, currently a coach in Laupheim and 1980 Olympic team member as well as twice silver medalist at the world Championships. In short, these guys are world class.

The clinic was organized by Paul Soter, Vincent Bradford and Peter Burchard. The original idea was to bring the highest level coaches together with the same number of highly ranked competitors. This way we would all be familiar with epee basics and could get right to work on understanding and implementing the German system. Due to expense and schedule conflicts, not everyone invited could attend, but we ended up with a good group who worked very well together and accomplished a great deal in the relatively short time we had to work.

The American coaches were Vincent Bradford of Austin, Texas; Peter Burchard of Oakland, California; Mark Holbrow of New Hope, Pennsylvania; Janusz Bednarski of Denver, Colorado; Ed Richards of Los Angeles, California; Ted Katzoff of Culver City, California; Marietta Towry of El Paso, Texas, and Zoran Tulum of Stanford, California. The fencers were Marlene Adrian of Champaign, Illinois; Anne Klinger of Warrenton, Oregon; Jane Littman of Columbia, South Carolina; Kathy McClellan of Marblehead, Massachusetts; Sharon Chaplinski of Ringoes, New Jersey; Leith Askins of San Francisco, California; Lisa Erdos of San Francisco, California; Alison Reid of Stanford, California; Xandy Robinson of Redondo Beach, California; Chanel-France Summers of Los Angeles, California; and Sherry Woodruff of Denver, Colorado. Also in attendance were the entire Cherris family of Denver, including their new baby(!), and Josh Harris of Denver, Colorado.

The format of the clinic was such that we worked intensely giving and taking lessons Friday afternoon, all day Saturday, all day Sunday and Monday morning. There was fencing in the evening and on Saturday we viewed a videotape of the Men's Epee individual final in Seoul and analyzed the bouts together.

Walter and Manfred used a blackboard to show us the theory of their system, and we all took copious notes. Then we would break up into student/master groups and immediately apply the material introduced. It worked very well and I dare say we all became quite familiar with the concepts involved and the specific movements.

Some of the interesting facts that came to light were sobering. Manfred estimated that he had taken 10,000 lessons in his life and that a West German athlete training for the world Championships or Olympics takes six lessons daily, six days a week for about four months before. At other times, a normal lesson schedule might be 2-4 lessons a day. There is a system which can be easily followed once grasped and does not require that the same coach give the student lessons all the time. Each coach at Heidenheim, for instance, has about 30 fencers of diverse ages for whom he is responsible, but it is not uncommon for him to give lessons to students other than those specifically assigned to him. This seems to promote comradely feelings among all the coaches and fencers and helps eliminate ego problems which so cripple fencing in this country.

Walter claimed that this rigorous schedule of daily training is followed by all despite work conflicts, etc. They come to the club before work, during lunch and after work, or school. There is also a program where the athletes who make various World Teams are allowed to train full time and they continue to be paid and have their jobs waiting for them after the competition is over. Don't forget that West Germany, like most countries, has government support for their amateur sports. One glaring exception to this is the good old U.S. of A., as everyone is acutely aware.

As Walter said, one must live fencing every day. If we hope to do well internationally, this is the type of commitment we need to make. I believe that epee is the quickest way to the top. I can point to Switzerland and Sweden as two countries who put virtually all of their efforts into epee and who have enjoyed success. Judging by the way our women finish in world-level competitions, I think the USA has a great opportunity to jump right in as a world power in women's epee more than in any other weapon. It behooves us to listen to experts from the West German program and exploit their offerings to the utmost.

Emil Beck's program is based on conditioned responses within a relatively narrow range of actions. He claims in his book that he has taken the most common actions in international fencing and built a system to deal with them. Because the ideal in athletic performance is smooth, flowing motion without restrictive intellectual processes during the action, it is necessary to condition the athlete as to the correct response to any given situation. The athlete must instantly recognize situations and respond immediately. The lesson should try to simulate combat. The student should be in complete fencing uniform and the coach should actually try to hit the student whenever possible. The system is designed to build in muscle memory through high repetitions. Speed and accuracy are at a premium but perfect form is not stressed. One is initially taught form but later the personal style which evolves is not discouraged. The fact that no forward move is allowed without first taking the blade and extending the arm instills the instinct to move the hand before the body and always have the point precede any jeopardizing of one's own target. The emphasis on being able to perform any movement with lunge, patinando, ballestra and fleche and the taking of the opponent's blade in all actions seems to promote an active and dynamic game based on athletic conditioning and power. The system recognizes only four parries. They are all done from the same hand position. This is a 3/4 position with a right-hander's thumb at approximately 2 o'clock if the guard is a clock face. The four parries are octave, sixte, quarte and what they call "quinte" but which most resembles septime. They also use prime but only as a continuation of circular sixte. They progress vertically from high to low. They use the four targets: top of the hand, bottom of the hand, thigh and foot. They do, however, stress that 80% of the touches in international competition are to the body and hence end each lesson with a foil-like segment preceded by the chosen beat or engagement of that particular lesson and straight thrust to the chest.

Each hand action is used with all the footwork possible including standing still, advance, advance lunge (patinando), jump lunge (ballestra), retreat, retreat lunge, retreat fleche and advance fleche. This promotes the understanding that any action can be used as an attack, a parry riposte, or a counterattack. This also promotes changing directions and complete familiarity with the actions presented.

The system uses an action on the blade at the end of each movement. It is an additional hit from the end of each action from the position one finds oneself in, i.e., lunge or on guard. This is called the "Absicherung". The best translation I can come up with is "safety measure", but its function is that of an insurance policy. It is a bind or glide to the body which is automatic and provides a sure touch at the end with control of the opponent's blade. Please see Vincent Bradford's report for the specifics.

The German game seems to have its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it instills self confidence, power, speed and accuracy to a number of targets with multiple hit on each action. All of these can be seen as extremely helpful. What it lacks is fencing with absence of blade, avoiding the opponent's engagements, and finesse. As with most things I think we as Americans should take what we can use and integrate it into our own systems. Herr Steegmueller and Herr Beckmann both told us to do exactly that. They are not of the opinion that theirs is the only valid system and this makes their presentation doubly valuable.

Addressing the question of strategy they provided a sentence by the world renowned Russian coach Arkadiev: "Be active, act unexpectedly, decisively, and fast, suppress the opponent's initiative, promote the opponent's misconception of one's own capabilities and intentions, force the opponent to make ill advised actions, make him do what is least developed in him and exploit that which suits your game the best."

APPENDIX F

TACTICS

DEVISING A STRATEGY, TACTICAL DEVELOPMENT, AND OPPONENT'S
TENDENCIES

3) Where to Focus the Vision

The fovea centralis (center vision) should always be directed to the opponent's eyes or mask. The peripheral vision must encompass the opponent's entire body, including the feet. In this way, the fencer is able to check and to maintain the distance.

The gaining of correct distance for attack or defense depends on the ability to "feel the distance." To do so involves such factors as visual acuity, ability to concentrate, and the technical level of the fencer.

4) Ways of Shortening the Distance

A fencer may gain favorable distance by a surprising change of rhythm making it difficult for the opponent to defend himself. A fencer should be able to achieve the required distance by employing a variety of movements. There are several methods for shortening the distance:

- a) "Stealing" the distance. The opponent is made to move in a changing rhythm. By blade preparation and blade action the opponent's attention is drawn away from the foot play. Then softly, imperceptibly, the left foot is brought close to the right and a lunge is executed. This tactic is used most often in foil where the basic distance is shorter.
- b) Using the slide (glissement). The preparation is similar to 4a above. After an advance, a slow imperceptible slide should be made with an invitation. The distance should be shortened by the slide as the invitation is presented. The blade should be removed from the opponent's fovea centralis (center vision). During this action, the fencer should be prepared for a possible counter attack. The invitation should last until the finish of the slide. In this way the blade is still in motion and the fencer should be able to parry any counter attack from a stable on-guard position.
- c) Accelerating the foot movement. It is the most usual method of shortening the distance. The idea is to force the opponent backward and then to accelerate the attack, i.e., after a slow beginning, the final movement is then accelerated. For example:

slow advance, jump forward lunge or
 slow advance, half-advance-fleche; or
 slow advance, advance-lunge; or
 accelerated advances-fleches.

- d) Pressing (pushing) and drawing the opponent. Through the use of varied foot movements, the opponent is forced backward or allowed to move forward. The student should, by changing the rhythm of the footwork, shorten the distance. For example:

"Deluding" the opponent. Often it is sufficient (mainly in foil) to execute a half-advance with a sharp lowering of the center of gravity to force the opponent to take a full retreat. The right foot should return and the center of gravity replace to the guard position level. When the opponent starts his advance, the fencer should attack in tempo. An emphatic lowering of the center of gravity and then raising the center of gravity provokes the reaction of a full retreat. This causes a change of distance and the opponent may be surprised by an attack in tempo.

CONCEPT: THE SPEED AND RHYTHM OF THE FORWARD "PUSHING" (PRESSING) MOVEMENT MAY BE VARIED, BUT THE BACKWARD ("DRAWING") MOVEMENT SHOULD ALWAYS BE SLOW. DURING THIS SLOW MOVEMENT, IT IS POSSIBLE TO CHANGE LONGITUDINAL DIRECTION AT ANY TIME AND START THE ATTACK.

This sample is similar to the "deluding" principle above, except that a full advance pushes the opponent backward. Here, the speed, rhythm and distance of the advance may be varied, but the retreat should be slow. Distance is often gained with the forward movement of the opponent.

Against the opponent who efficiently maintains the distance, the double-advance is used for "gaining the distance." In executing the double-advance, the left foot accelerates with the first advance while the speed of the second advance depends on the opponent's reaction.

- e) After forcing the opponent to retreat by executing a fast jump forward, without pausing, the fencer should execute a slow, long advance to shorten the distance. With such a decelerated movement, it is possible to parry almost any counter attack by the opponent.
- f) If the opponent retains the initiative and is moving forward, he can be surprised, if, instead of retreating, the fencer lunges (usually with a feint).

APPLIED TACTICAL FOOTWORK EXERCISES

The following is a list of the footwork patterns that fencer A will use in the footwork exercises that are designed to help you apply basic tactics. You should be familiar with them before attempting to do the exercises.

1. Following an advance, execute a strong simple attack with lunge (fleche)
2. Advance; half retreat or pause; simple attack with lunge (fleche)
3. False attack with half lunge; return on-guard (back); simple attack with lunge (fleche)
4. Double advance - quick retreats; double advance; pause; simple attack with lunge (fleche)
5. False attack with half-lunge....; Change the false attack into a simple attack with advance lunge just as the front foot lands in the half-lunge (advance-fleche)
6. False attack with half lunge....; in the half-lunge, recover the weapon arm; simple attack by redoublement (fleche). BE SURE THE ARM STARTS FIRST.

TACTICAL FOOTWORK EXERCISES

1. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE

- B - LEADS FOOTWORK
- A - FOLLOWS B
- B - ... RETREAT
- A - ... ADVANCE
- B - ADVANCE
- A - SIMPLE ATTACK WITH LUNGE (FLECHE) AS B BEGINS ADVANCE

2. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE

- A - LEADS FOOTWORK WITH A UNIFORM RHYTHM AND TEMPO SETTING A PATTERN
- B - FOLLOWS A
- A - ... ADVANCE
- B - ... RETREAT
- A - HALF RETREAT (SHORT) OR ONLY PAUSE WHEN B IS VERY EASILY CAUGHT IN THE PATTERN
- B - ADVANCE
- A - SIMPLE ATTACK WITH LUNGE (FLECHE) AS B BEGINS ADVANCE

3. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE

- A - LEADS FOOTWORK AND MAKES FALSE ATTACKS WITH HALF-LUNGES
- B - FOLLOWS A AND RETREATS ON A'S FALSE ATTACKS
- A - FALSE ATTACK WITH HALF-LUNGE
- B - RETREAT
- A - RETURN ON-GUARD (BACK) WHILE B IS STILL RETREATING
- B - ADVANCE TO REGAIN THE ORIGINAL DISTANCE
- A - SIMPLE ATTACK WITH LUNGE (FLECHE) AS B BEGINS ADVANCE

4. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE

- A - LEADS FOOTWORK INCORPORATING DOUBLE ADVANCES FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY RETREATS (OPEN DISTANCE QUICKLY AND LONG)
- B - FOLLOWS A AND TRYS TO REGAIN THE DISTANCE QUICKLY WHEN A CHANGES DIRECTION
- A - ... DOUBLE ADVANCE
- B - ... DOUBLE RETREAT

4. (CONTINUED)

A - HOLDS GROUND

B - ADVANCE

A - SIMPLE ATTACK WITH LUNGE (FLECHE) AS B BEGINS ADVANCE

5. FROM LONG DISTANCE

A - LEADS FOOTWORK AND MAKES FALSE ATTACKS WITH HALF-LUNGES

B - FOLLOWS A, BUT AFTER RETREATING AGAINST ONE OR TWO FALSE ATTACKS,
DECIDES TO HOLD GROUND

A - ... FALSE ATTACK WITH HALF LUNGE

B - ... HOLDS GROUND

A - DURING THE HALF-LUNGE PERCEIVES B'S DECISION NOT TO RETREAT, CONVERT
THE HALF-LUNGE TO AN ADVANCE-LUNGE SIMPLE ATTACK (PATINANDO TEMPO)

6. FROM MIDDLE DISTANCE

A - LEADS FOOTWORK AND MAKES FALSE ATTACKS WITH HALF-LUNGES

B - FOLLOWS A AND RETREATS ON A'S FALSE ATTACKS

A - ... FALSE ATTACK WITH HALF-LUNGE, REMAIN IN LUNGE AND RECOVER
ARM ONLY

B - ADVANCE

A - SIMPLE ATTACK BY REDOUBLEMENT (FLECHE) AS B BEGINS ADVANCE