



NORTHWEST
FENCING CENTER

MEMBER HANDBOOK

Updated 8/15/2019

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ABOUT NWFC

OUR MISSION

The Northwest Fencing Center is committed to expanding awareness of the sport of fencing and providing high quality, affordable instruction to every athlete who walks through our doors. We offer a safe and supportive environment in which our members can achieve their fencing goals.

ABOUT US

The Northwest Fencing Center is a National Training Center for the United States Fencing Association. Our facility includes 15 fencing strips, a raised final strip, armory, conditioning room, weight room, restrooms with showers, kitchenette, and visitors' viewing area. NWFC offers regular fencing classes and provides a venue for tournaments, regional training sessions, elite international fencing camps, corporate team building events, and birthday parties. Most importantly, we provide an environment in which fencers can achieve their athletic, recreational, and personal goals.

NONPROFIT

NWFC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Donations allow us to keep class fees affordable, support our athletes at national and international competitions, provide scholarships, keep our facilities up-to-date, and do community outreach for fencers and coaches.

Ways to participate include:

Fred Meyer Community Rewards & AmazonSmile

Salle Auriol Fencing doing business as NWFC has registered with Fred Meyer Community Rewards and AmazonSmile, so that every time you use your rewards card at Fred Meyer or shop on AmazonSmile, a portion of your purchase will benefit NWFC. Just remember to link your rewards cards to NWFC and select NWFC as your nonprofit organization when you shop at AmazonSmile. If you need help in doing this, NWFC can help you.

- for **Fred Meyer**, go to www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards, then select "Link your Rewards Card now." Sign in and then type in 82489.
- for **AmazonSmile** go to www.smileamazon.com, sign in, then choose Salle Auriol Fencing Club in Beaverton.

Employer matching

Some employers will match a donation. Some even match volunteer hours with a monetary donation. Please check to see if yours is one of them. The front desk can help with coordinating the match with the employer.

Personal donations

If you would like to make an online donation, [click here](#) or email us at front.desk@nwfencing.org. You can also contact us at 503-2772237 or at the front desk to discuss your donation in person.

All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Areas of support include

NWFC NEXT (Capital Campaign) - [Click here for details](#)

- Major club expansion to create a larger, state-of-the-art facility to train more fencers.
- Design a multi-purposed layout to host additional local, US Fencing and FIE-sanctioned events
- New front entrance with more exposure, existing bathrooms to combine into locker rooms, larger spectator areas for tournaments and an outdoor multi-purpose covered area.
- Over 30 training strips.
- 16 competition strips – 4 pods of 4 as required for National and International competitions.
- Dividable floor area for separated classes.
- Spectator area will increase three-fold.

Scholarships, Grants

NWFC offers scholarships for tuition assistance, generally classes and camps, but may include membership fees. NWFC offers these scholarships in the interest of promoting its nonprofit purposes and objectives, which include, but are not limited to, affordable programs of supervised and qualified instruction with trained coaches in the sport of fencing. The NWFC Scholarship Fund is available to all members regardless of age, race, or gender.

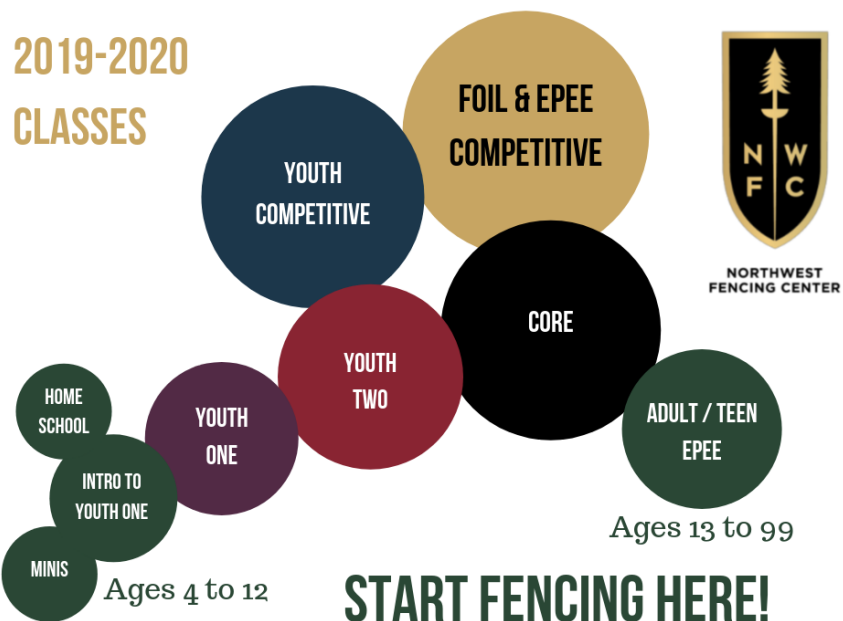
NWFC acknowledges the increasing costs of the sport as fencers grow to be more nationally and internationally competitive. The NWFC grant program is available to off-set costs of national and international tournament travel. See the website for details.

Reduced pricing options are also available for students who qualify for the Federal Free/Reduced Lunch programs and meet the federal income eligibility guidelines.

BRIEF HISTORY

The Northwest Fencing Center was founded in the early seventies under the name of Salle Auriol. At the time, Leon and Yves Auriol would travel from Seattle each week to coach the small Portland club. Operating out of various school gyms and community centers, three of its members backed a permanent facility and Yves Auriol moved to Portland as our first head coach. As the club expanded, it moved to a larger venue. Between 1978 and 2000, Northwest Fencing Center held practices at Sunset Athletic Club. In 2000, the Northwest Fencing Center moved to its current location, where community members and volunteers helped to turn the space into one of the best training facilities in the country. 2017 saw the launch of “NWFC NEXT,” a major expansion program. Today, the Northwest Fencing Center consists of over two hundred members.

CLASSES <https://nwfencing.org/welcome-northwest-fencing-center/classes/>



YOUTH: AGES 4-13

MINI FENCERS (Ages 4-6) No prior experience needed

Introduction to fencing and PE for young kids. The class includes many developmental exercises aimed toward coordination agility, and reaction, along with fencing instruction, appropriate gear, and rules adjusted for the younger age.

Coaches Vince Camillo and Daniel Volkman

HOMESCHOOL (Ages 7-12) No prior experience needed

Basic fencing skills for kids with physical education and social game time.

Coaches Cody Mattern and Daniel Volkman

Camp fee discount of 25% extended to any fencer enrolled in class the same month as camp. Camp discounts apply only to Priority and Regular Registrations and may not be combined with any other promotion/member discounts.

INTRO TO YOUTH ONE (Prerequisite for all new fencers age 4-13)

This one-time class is the place to start for all new youth fencers. It covers the basics of fencing technique and parents are encouraged to follow along and learn too! No reservation or equipment needed – just wear a t-shirt, athletic pants, shoes and bring a water bottle. The fencer is then ready to join the Youth One class immediately following.

YOUTH ONE (Ages 7-12) Must complete Intro to Youth One

Beginning fencing classes include warm up games, skill development, coordination, and agility development. Weekday classes are mixed while Saturdays offer an opportunity to split into separate boy or girl sub-classes.

Coaches Vince Camillo, Daniel Volkman, Michael McTigue, Gregory Mitberg

Camp fee discount of 25% extended to any fencer enrolled in class the same month as camp. Camp discounts apply only to Priority and Regular Registrations and may not be combined with any other promotion/member discounts.

YOUTH TWO (Ages 7-14) Completion of Youth One Testing and coach recommendation

For fencers to further develop their skills in organized bouting and drills.

Coaches Simon Abram, Vince Camillo, Michael McTigue, Gregory Mitberg, Justin Volgler

Tuition discount available for fencers using their own tournament-ready equipment (mask, glove, plastron, jacket, knickers, lame, chest plate, body cord, mask cord, weapon) instead of club gear.

Camp fee discount of 25% extended to any fencer enrolled in class the same month as camp. Camp discounts apply only to Priority & Regular Registrations and may not be combined with any other promotion/member discounts.

ADULT/TEEN: AGES 13+

CORE = CCompetitive + REcreation (Ages 13+) Complete Youth Two or Adult/Teen Epee, Coach Recommendation, Full Equipment/Gear

Perfect for recreational fencers and those preparing for regional or national competitions, ready to learn advanced technical skills while working with the Comp program.

Coaches Simon Abram, Cody Mattern, Vince Camillo, Michael McTigue

ADULT/TEEN EPEE (Ages 13+) No prior experience needed

Beginning and recreational epee fencing skills instruction for adults and teens.

Coach Michael McTigue

COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS

YOUTH COMPETITIVE (Ages 7-14) Requires Coach Invitation and Full Equipment/Gear

*****Annual Commitment*****

Advanced youth class for fencers competing at the regional, national or international levels. Unlimited classes, permanent weekly lesson time (4 lessons per month), two camps

Coaches Simon Abram, Cody Mattern, Vince Camillo, Michael McTigue, Gregory Mitberg, Justin Volgler

Extra lessons, after the four monthly program lessons, are discounted to \$30. Extra camps, after the first two are discounted by 50%. Camp discounts apply only to Priority & Regular Registrations and may not be combined with any other promotion.

FOIL COMPETITIVE (AGES 12+) Requires Coach Invitation and Full Equipment/Gear

*****Annual Commitment*****

Most advanced class for fencers competing at the regional, national, or international levels. Unlimited classes, permanent weekly lesson time (4 lessons per month), two camps.

Coaches Simon Abram, Vince Camillo, Cody Mattern

Extra lessons, after the four monthly program lessons, are discounted to \$30. Extra camps, after the first two are discounted by 50%. Camp discounts apply only to Priority & Regular Registrations and may not be combined with any other promotion.

EPEE COMPETITIVE (Ages 12+) Requires Coach Invitation and Full Equipment/Gear

*****Annual Commitment*****

Most advanced class for fencers competing at the regional, national, or international levels. Unlimited classes, permanent weekly lesson time (4 lessons per month), two camps.

Coaches Cody Mattern, Michael McTigue, Simon Abram

Extra lessons, after the four monthly program lessons, are discounted to \$30. Extra camps, after the first two are discounted by 50%. Camp discounts apply only to Priority & Regular Registrations and may not be combined with any other promotion.

*****ANNUAL COMMITMENT REQUIRED*****

These year-long training programs are central in our efforts to produce competitive fencers for regional, national and international competitions, and require substantial NWFC resources. In partnership, NWFC requires the following family and fencer commitments:

- ***All competitive fencers are expected to energetically participate in classes, tournaments, camps, and club events.***
- ***All fencers invited to these programs are expected to adhere to our Code of Conduct and be stellar representatives of NWFC when traveling to fencing events.***
- ***Fencers agree to communicate early with coaches with any issues or concerns about training, injuries, and class environment to benefit everyone in the annual programs.***
- ***Each fencer may take a one-month break from training (and program fees) each calendar year. This allows each family to take a break month during the season but allows the center to maintain its commitments year-round. To receive program discounts (private lessons, camps, etc.) the fencer must be enrolled during months discounts are given.***
- ***Medical situations: If a fencer is injured and will miss out on training for 60 days or more, they can request a waiver of monthly payment. The long-term absence requires formal written directive by a qualified medical professional stating the injury and the recuperation process of 60 days or more, and must be submitted to the Executive Director. If a Medical Waiver is granted, fencers cannot receive discounts for lessons or camps during the period in which no monthly payment is made.***
- ***Any other early withdraw from this program prior to the end of the season requires any balance due to be paid in full.***

ACTIVITIES BEYOND CLASSES

OPEN BOUTING

Open Bouting Floor Times

Monday - Thursday 3:00-8:00 PM

Friday 3:00 - 9:00 PM

Saturday 9:00 - Noon, 1-5

Open Bouting Member Fees

\$15 daily (waived if enrolled in class or same day lesson)

\$75 monthly unlimited (pre-registration required)

Open Bouting Guest Fees

With your own equipment: \$20 daily

Using club equipment: \$25 daily

PRIVATE LESSONS

Learning to fence is like learning to play a musical instrument. A student isn't going to figure out how to play the piano competently or learn it efficiently without private instruction. Fencing is the same, in fact fencing is like being able to improvise on a musical instrument without sheet music. The time spent one on one with a coach is some of the most valuable time a fencer will spend. The coach will guide their learning and help them discover who they are as a fencer (possibly even as a person!).

Who can take lessons?

The biggest mistake is the assumption, "The fencer isn't good enough yet for private lessons." What is often actually being said is, "I want to wait to see if they are fully engaged before we commit." There's nothing like feeling a sense of accomplishment for developing engagement, and a student will become more accomplished much more quickly with the custom-tailored instruction of a consistent one-on-one lesson schedule.

What is a permanent lesson?

Prior to the beginning of the season, all Competitive Class students (Youth, Foil and Epee) meet with their coaches to decide on a set weekly time for their lesson.

What are lesson cancellation policies?

Lessons must be cancelled by midnight the night prior to the lesson or the lesson will be charged to the account. If a fencer has a permanent lesson slot not cancelled by midnight the night before twice in a one-month period, the permanent lesson slot will be forfeited.

How to sign up for lessons?

Private lessons are by appointment only, and must be made online. Lessons are for NWFC Membership only, if you have any questions please stop by the front desk or email: front.desk@nwfencing.org.

Fencer Evaluations/Coach Meetings: Twice a year (mid-season and post-season) fencers schedule time with their coach to review progress, set training and competition goals, and map out future plans.

CAMPS

International Foil and Epee Winter Camp

5 days of instruction, organized bouting, line drills and exercises to improve tactical awareness. Many of our graduates come home to participate in this fun camp over Winter Break.

Beginning Youth Summer Camp

Learn to fence or practice your skills with a NWFC coach.

Each 5 day camp will include warm up games, footwork, agility and coordination development, fencing instruction and bouting.

Beginners are welcome. All equipment and protective gear is provided.

Intermediate Youth Summer Camp

Geared toward students in our Youth Two Classes.

The camps' emphasis will be on bouting and tactical decision making. Fencing activities include: organized bouting, technical and tactical drills video review feedback, footwork and conditioning.

International Foil and Epee Summer Camps

Train for 5 days with fencers and coaches from around the world. Athletes will participate in a variety of training activities - group drills, organized bouting, individual feedback, private lessons. Camps include entry into the War of the Roses tournament so fencers can show off their new skills and compete against new friends.

Pre Nationals Camp - The week preceding Summer Nationals and July Challenge

Prepare for Summer Nationals with NWFC! Five full days of training emphasizing bouting and tactical awareness.

Adult Camp - Fall and Spring

Three day training camps for adults 21 years of age and over.

EVENTS

Stab Your Friends

Experience the rush of fencing for one night! This super-fun and free event is for all ages and is open to the public. Bring your friends and family to learn about fencing and try their luck on the strip. Instruction and protective gear provided.

Game Nights

Family and friends are invited to share pizza and to play fencing games, board games, and card games.

Armory Clinics

See Front Desk for clinic dates. Learn the basics of armoring with the NWFC staff. Instruction will include identification of problems, body cord repair, tip repair and equipment maintenance. Fencers and parents encouraged to attend.

Potlucks, Parent Meetings, Social Outings, Picnics, NWFC Alumni Reunion Nights, and FUNdraisers happen throughout the year. Watch for emails and get to know the NWFC family!

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP TYPES, COSTS AND BENEFITS

NWFC is a non-profit fencing membership training facility. Anyone utilizing the Northwest Fencing Center facilities more than two days in a calendar month (excluding fencers attending a multi-day camp, clinic, or coaching academy) is required to register as a NWFC member. Membership fees assist the club to provide affordable fencing programs for athletes of all ages.

Annual membership fees are valid for a single fencing season (September 1 - August 31) and prorated when joining after October 1. Member registration begins by enrolling online at the NWFC MEMBER PORTAL. The front desk will process your membership and confirm class enrollment, skill level, and appropriate fees. Please review the current list of benefits and requirements, all subject to change at any time. Memberships are non-transferable and non-refundable.

All NWFC members must maintain a valid membership with USA Fencing Association. Full information here:

<https://www.usafencing.org/membership>

RESIDENT MEMBERSHIPS

TRIAL - New Fencers: Minis, Homeschool, Youth One or Adult/Teen Epee (3 Months)

Valid for one or two new fencers within the same family, living in the same residence, and enrolled in beginning classes: Mini Fencers, Homeschool, Youth One or Adult/Teen Epee. NWFC will submit registration for a non-competitive membership with USA Fencing. At the completion of three full calendar months, continuing fencers must transfer to an appropriate membership category.

JUNIOR - Ages 4-18

Valid for one fencer age 4-18. A Parent/Guardian must register the student and assume responsibility for all fees and requirements during membership under full NWFC rules for this membership category. Upon each member's 18th birthday, they shall transition to the appropriate Individual membership.

INDIVIDUAL - Ages 18+

Valid for one fencer age 18 or older.

FAMILY - 2+ Fencers

Valid for two or more fencers within the same family living in the same residence on a permanent basis. Dependent children under the age of 18 may be included with this membership. A Parent/Guardian must register the student and assume responsibility for all fees and requirements during membership under full NWFC rules for this membership category. Upon each member's 18th birthday, they shall transition to an Individual membership.

YOUNG ADULT - Alumni Ages 18-23 (Multi-year membership)

Valid for one fencer age 18 to 23 who has been active at NWFC for the two previous seasons. This special membership is valid for up to five years from the fencer's 18th birthday until the end of season in which they turn age 23.

NON-RESIDENT MEMBERSHIPS

For fencers who live in excess of 100 miles from NWFC.

GUEST (Up to 30 days)

Valid for short-term visiting fencers once per year. All class, open bouting, camp/clinic and private lesson fees apply. Coach sponsorship or approval required.

ASSOCIATE INDIVIDUAL*

ASSOCIATE FAMILY - 2+ Fencers*

Associate memberships are valid for athletes who are dedicated to training long-term but unable to attend classes on a regular basis. Associate members will train with our coaches and athletes periodically throughout the fencing season. Participants at this member level must be sponsored and approved by an NWFC Lead Coach.

** Unique Associate Membership requirements/restrictions:*

All training (classes, open bouting, camp/clinic, private lessons, etc.) fees apply.

Athlete must list NWFC as primary or secondary club.

Non-resident (live in excess of 100 miles from NWFC).

Coach sponsorship or approval required.

Not eligible for Grants or Scholarships.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Valid USA Fencing Membership - Register online with USA Fencing and update your NWFC member account with your USFA membership number.

NWFC members must list Northwest Fencing Center as their primary club with USA Fencing Association, except Associate Members and Young Adult members fencing in college, who may list NWFC as secondary.

Must live within 100 miles of NWFC, with the exception of Associate and Young Adult - Alumni members.

Billing

Monthly Statements are emailed the 25th each month. Tuition and all other unpaid account charges are due and auto-paid on the first of each month.

Auto-payment

On the first of each month, the balance due for all previous month's charges, current tuition, and camp fees are auto-paid utilizing your pre-selected method of payment. Failed auto-payments will have five days to pay the balance due before incurring a \$15 late fee. Accounts not paid in full by the 15th of each month may be placed on suspension. Please contact the Executive Director to discuss repayment options.

ACH Rebates

Accounts auto-paid through the member system using ACH (checking account) on the first of each month will receive a rebate equal to 1.5% of such payment applied to their account.

Returned Check Fees

Returned payments will incur a fee of \$25 and will forfeit any related ACH rebate credit(s). If unpaid by the fifteenth of the month, account may be placed on suspension.

Late Fees & Account Suspension

Accounts not paid by the fifth of each month incur a \$15 late fee. Accounts not paid in full by the fifteenth may be placed on suspension. Please contact the Executive Director to discuss repayment options.

Signed Waivers, Permissions and Policies

All waivers, permissions, and policies must be electronically signed online as a part of the registration process, and whenever updated by the organization.

MEMBERSHIP TERMINATION

Voluntary Resignation

A Member may resign from NWFC by giving fifteen (15) days advance written notice after all club charges are paid in full. Annual membership fees are not refundable.

Involuntary Termination

a) NWFC reserves the right at any time to terminate the membership of any Member for failure to comply with the Rules and Regulations adopted by NWFC or for conduct NWFC determines improper or harmful to the best interest of the NWFC. A terminated Member will remain liable for all dues and other debt incurred prior to

termination. The membership of any Member which is thirty (30) days in arrears in his/her account to NWFC, at the option of NWFC, may be terminated by NWFC without notice.

b) NWFC reserves the right at any time with or without cause to terminate the membership of any Member pursuant to the request of or direction of United States Fencing Association. The membership shall automatically terminate upon notification to the member by NWFC. Such notice shall be in writing, by either mailing, email or hand delivering the notice of termination to the Member.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All fencers must review and sign the NWFC Code of Conduct. Its content is as follows:

Northwest Fencing Center (NWFC) is open to anyone with an interest in promoting or engaging in the Olympic sport of fencing. Membership and participation at NWFC is a privilege, not a right, with obligations. NWFC expects all members, non-member participants, guests, coaches, and staff to follow these Rules and Code of Conduct.

Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship, like physical safety, is another priority of the NWFC. All fencing encounters are to be conducted in a respectful and courteous manner regardless of whether the encounter takes place during open bouting, at a tournament or during class. All participants are expected to salute their opponent and the referee, if any, before and after each encounter, and to shake hands with their opponent after each bout, in a sportsmanlike manner.

Scoring/Referees

In non-refereed bouts, discussions of priority and valid touches are to be resolved quickly and amicably between the participants, or thrown out. In non-electric bouting, fencers are expected to acknowledge touches against them. In refereed bouts, the decision belongs solely to the referees and that decision is final unless, at a tournament, it is a question appropriate for the bout committee. Fencers and guests are expected to treat all referees with respect, regardless of the outcome of any particular call or encounter.

No Discrimination

All participants and guests of NWFC are to treat all other participants, guests, staff and instructors at all times and in all respects in a manner free of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Payments

Participants are expected to pay promptly when due, all guest fees, membership dues, tournament fees, travel costs, equipment costs and any other amounts owed to the NWFC. If payments are in arrears by two months, member's privileges may be suspended until payment is made.

Physical Safety

Physical safety is the highest priority at the NWFC. All participants are expected to exercise control of their actions and demeanor while fencing or otherwise participating at the NWFC. All participants are expected to exercise good judgment as to the degree of force in fencing that is reasonable and appropriate to the age, size, and experience level of their opponents.

COMMUNICATION AND ONLINE RESOURCES

Northwest Fencing Center has multiple methods of outreach and communication to its membership as well as the greater fencing community.

Once registered, families should be receiving the club newsletter (The “News Fleche”) as well as any pertinent mailings about upcoming club events, weather closures, registration deadlines, etc.

NWFC COMMUNICATION

Website: www.nwfencing.org

Our homepage. Has useful information on classes, upcoming events, and tournament results. Also pictures and articles of what's going on around the club.

Front Desk: front.desk@nwfencing.org

503-277-2237

Facebook: **Northwest Fencing Center**
This is the “official” club page

NWFC Troupe

This is the “unofficial” club page but is a great community page for letting people know if a lesson spot is open, posting travel plans, results, live feeds of bouts, team dinner plans, equipment sales, weird fencing memes, tournament information, etc.

Instagram: nwfencing

Twitter: @nwfencing

YouTube: NWFCvideos

Photos: share@NWfencing.org

Have great fencing photos? Send them in for use in our social media outreach!

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Ask FRED

Information and Registration for local Fencing Tournaments and Camps/Clinics. <https://askfred.net>

Oregon Fencing

Oregon Division homepage. News on everything involving Oregon fencing.

<http://www.usfa-or.org>

USA Fencing

USFA official homepage. Renew your USFA membership, register for North American Cups(NAC), and find clinics and camps. <https://www.usafencing.org>

USFA membership Please register online with U.S. Fencing and update your member account with the USFA number. <http://www.usafencing.org/membership>

Current USFA athlete handbook. It has just about everything pertinent to fencing competitively in the USA.

<http://www.usafencing.org/athlete-handbook>

The differences between each weapon. <https://fie.org/new-to-fencing/weapons>

USA fencing on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/USAFencing>

FIE - International Fencing Federation (“Fédération Internationale d'Escrime”)

FIE official homepage: <http://fie.org/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/FIEvideo>

An introduction to the history of the sport: <https://fie.org/fie/history>

ORGANIZATION

COACHING

Head Coach & Lead Foil Coach: Simon Abram simon@nwfencing.org

Lead Epee Coach: Cody Mattern cody@nwfencing.org

Assistant Foil Coach : Vince Camillo vince@nwfencing.org

Assistant Epee Coach : Michael McTigue michael@nwfencing.org

Coaching Assistants: Daniel Volkman and Gregory Mitberg

ADMINISTRATION

Executive Director: Larry Crepeaux larry@nwfencing.org

Membership Services: Lika Vogler front.desk@nwfencing.org

Communications & Events Coordinator: Erin Hambleton erin@nwfencing.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD) <https://nwfencing.org/board-of-directors/>

As a non-profit organization, NWFC depends on volunteers who help and serve in many different roles. The NWFC Board of Directors are elected volunteers who provide leadership and oversight to help NWFC pursue its mission. We thank all current and past board members for their dedication and service.

VOLUNTEERING AT NWFC

NWFC is an awesome place to fence, connect, and serve!

Did you know that as a non-profit organization, we absolutely depend on our volunteers to fulfill our mission? As a member (or friend or family member!), you can dive deeper into belonging by volunteering your time and talents. As an added benefit, you are helping to keep club costs affordable, AND you will get to hang out with your fencing family. Every hour spent volunteering frees up our amazing coaches and management team to focus on coaching, programming, facilities, fund-raising, publicity, and operations. YOU can make a big difference!

When you volunteer at NWFC you will learn more about fencing, meet other members of the community, help develop the sport of fencing, and gain a sense of investment in the club. We encourage all members of the NWFC community to volunteer, whether they are athletes, parents, or friends.

How can I volunteer at NWFC?

Check the volunteer page on our website often and watch for special announcements in the club emails. you can also stop by the Front Desk and check out the Volunteer Computer - current opportunities are listed by date and you can sign up right there! We have many opportunities for adults and youth - fencers and non-fencers alike.

If you have special skills or talents that you would like to share, please let us know!

Volunteer Hours & Matching

We utilize TEAMUP for volunteer scheduling to keep organized and so the club can properly acknowledge your contribution. Hours tracking is also very important middle/high school volunteers and adults whose companies match donations of time. Our volunteers are vital to the success of the club.

Some employers will match volunteer hours with a direct donation to the club. Please check if your employer will match volunteer hours and be sure to note this when you sign-up. We will send you an email reminder to log your hours with your employer.

Thank you

NWFC would not be the club it is today without the many hours of service performed by an army of volunteers. If you have any questions, please stop by the Front Desk or contact us at front.desk@nwfencing.org or 503-277-2237.

FACILITIES

Our facilities are in a state of transition as we move through the 3 phases of our NWFC NEXT campaign. To take a look at our ongoing evolution, check out the specifics at [NWFC Next](#)

MAIN FLOOR

- **Cubbies** for fencing bags - the only place to keep fencing equipment - please keep bags off of the floor.
- **Bathrooms and Showers** (left, past fencing cubbies and kitchenette)
- **Drinking Fountain** (left, past fencing cubbies, across from bathrooms)
- **Kitchenette** w/microwave (left, past the fencing cubbies) - please clean up after yourself
- **Lost and Found** - room to right of front door
- **Front Desk (Reception & Pro Shop)** - on the right, across from the Yellow Pod

- **Quiet room/Conference Room** - this room, adjacent to the Front Desk, is for quiet homework or meetings. During camps and tournaments, it's the staging area for lunches and referees.
- **Conditioning/Training Equipment** - Located to the left of the Yellow and Green Pods
- **Lockers** - Located to the left of the Green Pod. Lockers can be rented for an annual fee: see Front Desk for information.

SECOND FLOOR

- **Viewing area** - up the stairs between the reception desk and the lost and found room. This area is perfect for homework, eating, socializing, foosball, and watching fencing!

ARMORY

The armory is located past the lobby, to the right, down the hall, just outside the coaches' offices. It is open at all times to all members for the purpose of working on/repairing their weapons and equipment. Please keep in mind that a member's class time is not an appropriate time to fix a weapon. Please check your weapon(s) ahead of time and have them ready to go for class.

Armory Clinics

- In an armory clinic you will learn the basics of armoring with the NWFC staff. Instruction will include identification of problems, body cord repair, tip repair and equipment maintenance.

Armory Services

- NWFC stocks most necessary components for making foil and epee weapons and can special order components which are not regularly stocked.
- NWFC offers a complete range of weapon repair services.
- Under normal circumstances, armory services should take 1 - 3 days. Plan extra time before major tournaments (SYC, NAC, etc.). ***A lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on the Armory's part.***

Weapon Repair

If you have a weapon or body cord which is not functioning correctly, you can use the armory to do your own repairs (before or after class) or consult a teammate or coach who can troubleshoot the problem with you. In order to have a repair done by NWFC, place the weapon/body cord in an open slot or box on the Armory wall. Mark your name on the repair board opposite the corresponding number and include a short description of the issue. It is perfectly executable to write "Broken" or "Fix please" in the description; you do not need to do the trouble-shooting. The components will be tested completely by the armorer and issues repaired. Changes will be made to your club account and billed at the end of the month. If the fencer has a locker, the repaired equipment will be placed inside said locker when finished. In all other cases, it can be picked up from the front desk.

New Weapons

- NWFC can make a new weapon to your specification. Coaches can help in deciding which components to combine in order to build a weapon which will best suit the fencer.
- Ask for an order form from the front desk and fill it in with your weapon specifications before returning it to the front desk.

Weapon Copies

If you would like a weapon replicated, ask for an order form from the front desk. Indicate on the order form that you would like your weapon copied and place weapon, along with the form in the Armory in the rack. Mark your name on the board opposite the appropriate number.

GEARING UP

WHAT GEAR SHOULD YOU BUY AND WHEN

When you start fencing you will be able to use NWFC gear. As you progress through the classes you will probably want to have your own pieces starting with a mask and glove. You can see the front desk for help selecting and purchasing gear.

NWFC does not provide gear for competitions, so you will need to purchase all of your own gear before starting to compete.

NWFC carries everything your fencer needs, except shoes. Talk to the front desk about ordering equipment if there is a specific item they don't carry; they can also help you with fit and brand selection.

Gear

In general order of purchase (you don't need to buy everything at once!):

- **glove** (left or right handed) - can start with a cheaper glove - NWFC has a variety of brands and sizes to try. Or you can try them at vendor tables at competitions, every fencer has a personal choice - keep in mind that some gloves can wear out faster than others.
- **mask** - (foil or epee)
- **body cords and mask cords** - (foil or epee) - get a quality body cord: it's annoying for them to break frequently - especially when competing. Eventually your fencer will want to have three or four of each cord.
- **shoes** - can start with indoor soccer or volleyball shoes, fencing shoes will need to be purchased at a major competition or ordered online.
- **socks** - soccer socks are fine to start with. Fencing socks will have more shin protection. NWFC-branded socks are a great way to identify our fencers at tournaments.
- **jacket** (left or right handed), **underarm protector** (left or right handed), **chest protector** (mandatory for women)
- **knickers** (pocket for left or right handed)
- **lame** (foilists only) (left or right handed)

Weapons

You can buy weapons already assembled for you to use immediately. NWFC front desk can help. You can also pick them up at competitions that have vendors in attendance. And you can order them online.

It is recommended that you have 2 working weapons to start, but will end up with 3-4 (or more) working weapons for more advanced competitions - keep in mind, if something breaks without a back-up you will not be able to compete unless you can buy a replacement or borrow from another fencer.

Epee fencer's travel tool kit: allen wrench, grub screw driver x 2, testing weight, testing light box, testing shims, spare parts (springs, tips, screws), paper towels, pliers, sewing kit (needle, thread, scissors)

Foil fencer's tool kit: allen wrench, extra tip tape, sewing kit

Extra items: extra shoelaces, socks, etc. Some fencers even carry extra jackets (zippers have broken during competition).

WHERE CAN YOU BUY GEAR

NWFC

NWFC front desk has a full pro shop and helpful people behind the front desk! Also - the club holds Gear Swaps throughout the year giving fencers a chance to buy and sell used equipment.

SYC and NAC competitions

Large competitions often have big vendors at the venue for purchase of fencing gear. Competitions are a great place to comparison shop for price and fit.

Online companies

Absolute Fencing <http://www.absolutefencinggear.com/shopping/>

Blue Gauntlet <http://www.blue-gauntlet.com/>

Leon Paul <https://www.leonpaulusa.com/>

Victory Fencing <https://www.victoryfencinggear.com/>

HOW DO YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR GEAR

- Unload fencing bag after practice and after tournaments
- Don't let the blades stay against wet clothing, they will rust
- Keep clothing from sitting wet - wash clothing with ordinary detergent - hang dry
- Usually can wash the glove - air dry
- Mask washing - take all the parts out that you can
- There are lots of online tips about mask care

Keep weapons in working order: (Armory clinics - see "facilities" section)

- Check tip - keep smooth not gritty - check frequently
- Check for loose screws - check more often if screws are falling out
- Know how to straighten your blade - (for competitions don't straighten on the piste, straighten on carpet off to the side)
- Keep tape in good shape (foilists), replace as needed

HOW DO YOU TRAVEL WITH YOUR FENCING GEAR

- Fencing bags - use a bag that maintains a rigid shape; wheels are important!
- Hard case golf bags if you will be travelling a ton - but these don't fit in some car trunks
- Store your blades in PVC pipes
- On the way TO tournaments, many fencers carry mask, shoes, whites in carry-on baggage, rather than checked luggage. If you get to a tournament and your fencing bag has gone missing, it is easier to replace or borrow a few blades instead of the whole ensemble.

STENCILING INSTRUCTIONS

Competitors need their name on their jacket (epee) or lame (foil) for national events. For international events, they need "USA" as well. If you have something that needs stencilling, ask at the front desk; Bob and Suzanne

Marx provide stencilling services. If you buy a jacket or lame at a large event, you can have it stencilled there as well at the Marx Enterprises table.

TOURNAMENT CHECKLIST FOR PACKING

- USFA card (with age verification, or with valid birth certificate, driver's license, or Passport)
- USFA or tournament confirmation, printed
- Foil Weapons (Minimum 2 working. Must pass weight test.)
- Epee Weapons (Minimum 2 working. Must pass weight & shim test.)
- Foil body cords (Minimum 2 working.)
- Epee body cords (Minimum 2 working.)
- Jacket*
- Lame*
- Mask
- Plastron
- Glove
- Chest protector or athletic cup
- Knickers
- Long white socks (Must reach to bottom of knickers)
- Sharpie or permanent marker
- Tool Kit (Screwdrivers, pommel wrench, spare screws and springs, small magnet, finger tape, test box & epee weight)
- Ponytail holders for long hair
- Band-aids, finger tape
- Other medical items (inhalers) (must have original prescription containers)
- Phone, charger cords, portable battery
- Towel
- Water bottle
- Sports drinks
- Food
- Change of clothing
- Airline tickets
- Cash/credit card
- Directions to venue
- Hotel information
- Plastic bag to hold wet clothes after competition

* (Name must be stencilled on the back for national competitions. Stencil can be imprinted by Marx Enterprises - see the front desk for info.)

TYPES OF TOURNAMENTS

What tournaments are right for you? In general, tournaments are divided into Youth events, Cadet/Junior, Senior, and Veteran. For the purposes of this handbook, we use ages but the final determination of events you may compete are dictated by your birth year, please refer to the USFA AGE/CLASSIFICATION ELIGIBILITY DOC below. |

Youth events are broken down into Y14 (14 and under), Y12 (12 and under), and Y10 (10 and under). Fencers are welcome to fence UP an age level, but they cannot fence down. For example, a 12-year old can compete in Y12 AND Y14 events, but is “aged out of” Y10 events.

Cadet/Junior events are for fencers who are 13 and older. Cadet is 13 to under-17, and Junior is 13 to under-20. These events change from under-17 to under-16, and under-20 to under-19 after the February Junior Olympics.

Senior events are for everyone who is 13 and older.

Veteran events are broken down into Vet 40 (40-49), Vet 50 (50-59), Vet 60, etc. Those events are generally found at national competitions and some regional events.

Local tournaments can be found on www.askfred.net. All national tournaments are found on the USA Fencing website USA Fencing/Events

Check the registration information to see if your fencer meets age qualifications prior to planning your tournament schedule!

CLUB TOURNAMENTS (A competitive membership with US Fencing is required for all events.)

Pacific Northwest Cups

Five Club Tournaments designed to build fencers confidence by giving them tournament experience to prepare for regional events. Events held are: Foil Y1 , Foil Y14, Epee Y12, and Epee E and under. These tournaments also encourage sportsmanship and fair play for youth fencers. You do not need to pre-qualify to participate in this event.

Friday Night Fights

Open events for fencers age 13 and older. You do not need to pre-qualify to participate in this event.

State Games of Oregon

Hosted by the Oregon Division, the State Games are held every June, and include every weapon for both Youth and Open events

REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS

Regional Youth Circuit (RYC)

The RYC tournaments are held throughout the season for fencers in the Y10, Y12, and Y14 age categories. Fencers can earn Regional Points. Fencers do not need to pre-qualify to participate in these events, but results can qualify you for SYCs & National Events.

Regional Junior and Cadet Circuit (RJCC)

The Regional Junior/Cadet Circuit (RJCC) is designed to promote and develop strong regional tournaments for Junior and Cadet aged fencers who seek competitive opportunities beyond the local level but below the NAC levels of competition.

Fencers only earn points at RJCCs within their home region (Regions are assigned based on Division affiliation). Portland is in Region 1. Only a fencer's two best results count towards the point total. These points may qualify Cadet and Junior fencers to the USA Fencing Junior Olympics and July Challenge.

Regional Open Circuit (ROC)

The Regional Open Circuit (ROC) is designed to promote and develop strong regional tournaments for the Open/Division I-A fencer who seeks competitive opportunities beyond the local and division levels but below the NAC Division I level. Other competitive opportunities in the ROC tournaments are provided for Veteran (40 & Older) and Division II (C, D, E or U) fencers. Fencers do not need to pre-qualify for these tournaments, but results can qualify you for higher-level events.

Super Youth Circuit (SYC)

SYCs are a group of events throughout the country for youth fencers in the Y10, Y12, and Y14 age categories. They provide an opportunity for young athletes to experience elite competition, earn National Points, and prepare for future national events.

Super Junior and Cadet Circuit (SJCC)

SJCC Tournaments are currently held only twice per season and provide fencers the opportunity to experience elite competition, earn National Points and prepare for the Junior Olympics and July Challenge.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

North American Cup (NAC)

NACs are held all over the country, generally once a month, throughout the season. Each NAC typically fences a different combination age groups. For example, the March will feature events for Y10, Y12, Y14, and Div 3 fencers. Check the schedule to see which events take place at each NAC. Talk to your coach about your interest in travelling to competitions, and which ones would be best suited for you. NACs are one place to qualify for events such as Junior Olympics and Summer Nationals.

Junior Olympics

This is the national championship for Cadet and Junior level fencers, and the technical end of the fencing year for these two age groups. Fencers need to qualify with points earned through NACs, RJCCs, or in regional qualifying tournaments. Talk to your coach or visit the USA Fencing Athlete Handbook <https://www.usafencing.org/athlete-handbook> to learn more about qualifying paths.

Summer Nationals and July Challenge

This is the largest national tournament of the year and features events in all weapons and all age groups. Different events require different qualification paths; some events don't require qualification. Talk to your coach about what events are appropriate, and visit the USA Fencing Athlete Handbook <https://www.usafencing.org/athlete-handbook> to learn more about qualifying paths

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

World Cups, Pan American Games, Grand Prix, International Fencing Federation Competitions

For international fencing opportunities for the most competitive fencers, discuss with your coaches...

AGE/CLASSIFICATION ELIGIBILITY

This chart can be found on the USA Fencing website at: <https://www.usafencing.org/age-classification-eligibility>
This chart changes every year, so make sure the correct season is in the title.

Visit the Member Hub on our website <https://nwfencing.org/schedule-of-events-2/> for the Season Fencing Event Guide

TOURNAMENT ADVICE

REGISTERING

So you've decided to participate in a tournament! In all cases, you will need to have an active USFA Competitive Membership, which can be purchased through the USA Fencing website <https://www.usafencing.org/membership> Please be sure to register your club (Northwest Fencing Center, Beaverton, OR) to be properly seeded at events.

Regional and National tournament registration is all managed through USA Fencing <https://member.usafencing.org/search/tournaments>

All local tournaments are found on www.askfred.net. Looking at the dates, you can select your tournament, register your fencer, and pay whatever fees are associated with the tournament.

To make the most out of a tournament, consider signing up for your correct age group, as well as the next age group up. If you are making the effort to travel to a tournament, it's always great to do more than just one event.

HOW TOURNAMENTS ARE GENERALLY RUN

There are two rounds to a typical fencing tournament: Pools and Direct Elimination (DE).

Pools

- Fencers are divided into groups of seven (give or take) called "pools."
- In each pool, all the fencers will take turns fencing each other, fencing three-minute five-touch bouts.
- Once all the pools are completed, all the fencers in the tournament will be ranked from top to bottom.
- With this ranking, a DE bracket is created.

Direct Eliminations

- This bracket is the guideline for the Direct Elimination (DE) round.
- Fencers will fence their opponents for a 10- or 15-touch bout (depending on the age group). The bout is broken into two or three sections of three minutes each. The bout is over when time is up or when one fencer reaches 15 (or 10, depending on the age) touches.
- The winner moves on in the bracket. The loser is done for the day.
- The loser, however, should stick around and watch the person who just defeated them, to hopefully learn what works against that fencer and to support teammates still competing.
- In the vast majority of local, national, and international tournaments, ribbons or medals are awarded for the **top eight finishers**, so stick around, even if your fencer is eliminated before the last bout.

*Note, our club will often have a link to "Live Results" that will show the pools, the fencers, the bracket, the scores. Look at our Facebook page for a link to our local events. National events will also provide a link to a Live Results page as well.

WHAT TO EXPECT AND HOW TO BEHAVE

Local tournaments

- Referees at local tournaments may be older fencers, coaches, and/or seasoned referees. Please respect their calls and understand they are doing their best.
- Even if this is a local tournament, your fencer may be nervous! Make sure they are well-fed and well-hydrated!
- Fencers can be supportive of their teammates, but if two teammates are competing, they should not cheer for one vs. another. And they cannot coach their teammates if they are competing against another NWFC fencer. If a NWFC fencer is competing against a fencer from another club, feel free to cheer.
- That said, some fencers do not appreciate their own parents cheering. Take the lead from your young fencer - ask them what kind of support they would like.
- Please welcome guests who are unfamiliar with NWFC, and help them find what they might need (vending machine, wifi password, restrooms). Be a good host! Our club has a reputation for being quite friendly and warm; let's keep it that way.

Travel tournaments

- When you arrive at a venue, get your equipment checked first. All competitors have their equipment checked and tagged prior to competition. Do NOT leave this until the last minute.
- NWFC always has a "Nest" at these events. Look at the NWFC Troupe page (the informal Facebook page) for a post about where it is. Or look for our large banner with the NWFC logo. The Nest is where fencers store their bags, hang out before and after competition, celebrate, eat, sulk, meet up with friends.
- Warm up by yourself or with your teammates. But prior to competing, be sure to fence three bouts with people you don't know.
- When you find out where your pool or your DE is, write your pool or DE location on the fencer list in the Nest. This is so the coaches know where to find you!
- Speaking of coaches, they often arrive at the venue before 8:00 am, and are sometimes there until after 10:00 pm. It is important that we keep them fed, watered, and caffeinated. It is super nice for people to offer to pick up lunch and bring it to them in the venue, as they don't have time to go get it themselves. Just ask the coaches, late morning, if anyone has offered to get them lunch, and if not - please offer to do so. Healthy options are always best; convention center food can get tiresome. They are GREATLY appreciative for the support. Same goes for coffee. All coaches generally need a mid-morning caffeine boost, and another in the afternoon.
- Team dinners are a great way to enjoy the NWFC family when everyone is in a new city. Motivated parents will try to communicate with everyone at the tournament to ascertain interest in going to a group dinner, and will try to make a reservation for the group. Watch the NWFC Troupe Facebook page.
- It's good to share cell numbers with parents and fencers, so people can easily find each other in the venue.
- During events, coaches do the best they can to support all the fencers. They do not prioritize higher-ranked fencers over less competitive fencers. They will prioritize supporting fencers in DE bouts over

fencers in pool bouts (if there are multiple events going on at the same time). But know that sometimes one coach has to work with potentially eight fencers spread across a big convention center hall.

- NWFC has a great reputation for skilled fencers, but more importantly, for polite fencers. Let's keep it that way. Support your teammates, but be extremely respectful of your competitors. Do not throw equipment. Do not be rude or argue calls. If you do question a call, do so politely.
- When you are eliminated, take your gear back to the Nest, do what it takes to regroup, then go cheer on your teammates who are still competing. They may not have a coach and would likely appreciate some team support.
- Stay at the venue until the last NWFC teammate in your event is out or on the medal stand.
- Perhaps most importantly, do not be afraid to ask any "seasoned" parents for advice or information. No question is too basic; we were all new fencers or fencing parents at some point!

FENCING IN COLLEGE

WAYS TO FENCE IN COLLEGE

- Local private club (not affiliated with the college/university - like NWFC)
- College/University club (officially recognized club activity with the school, usually part of the US Association of Collegiate Fencing Clubs, competes against other club teams)
- NCAA team

CLUB FENCING CHARACTERISTICS

- Varying levels of university support
- Sometimes self-coached, sometimes a local coach comes in
- No storage or athlete support (trainers, etc)
- More flexible time/schedule
- Opportunity to enjoy fencing without the year-round commitment
- Some clubs have long-standing traditions and competitive teams
- United States Association of Collegiate Fencing Clubs: <http://www.usacfc.org/>

NCAA FENCING

- For the most part, schools are Div 1 and Div 3 (with just a few exceptions)
- The main differences between the two are school size and availability of athletic scholarships. Div 1 are bigger schools and have money (though VERY few fencers actually earn athletic scholarships – what a myth!)
- Some Div 3 programs are more competitive than Div 1 programs, depending on how much money the university gives to the programs.
- All the NCAA schools compete together, in their region, so if you go to a Div 3 school, you'll still have the opportunity to see your pals at a Div 1 school! Especially if you go to school in the northeast where there are many intercollegiate tournaments hosted by one college or another.
- NCAA schools have varying degrees of dedicated fencing facilities. Some share with other sports, some have fencing-only facilities.
- NCAA schools have dedicated training equipment for the school athletes, and trainers, and in some cases, physical therapists.
- List of NCAA fencing schools: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_NCAA_fencing_schools
- Register for the NCAA: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>
- NCAA Guide for College Bound Athletes (includes good page of definitions): <http://www.ncaapublications.com/productdownloads/CBSA17.pdf>
- Check to see if your core HS courses qualify for NCAA: <https://web3.ncaa.org/hsportal/exec/hsAction?hsActionSubmit=searchHighSchool>
- What is NCAA fencing like in Div 3? <http://nationalfencingclubrankings.com/characteristics-freshmen-fencers-ncaa-division-iii-schools-2016-2017/>

MY KID DOESN'T HAVE A GREAT RATING, CAN HE/SHE STILL FENCE IN COLLEGE?

- Likely, depending on the school.
- The major powerhouse schools will not have many or any spots for low rated or unrated walk-on fencers.
- Club teams may only take their best fencers to competitions.
- All teams, club and NCAA, have whole-club tournaments that everyone can attend. There are more of these in the northeast because of the concentration of fencing schools there.
- The smaller or less competitive (in fencing) schools welcome fencers who are passionate about the sport and bring a lot of experience to the table.
- Refer to the Div 3 article above: 40% of fencers on Div 3 teams join the team with ZERO experience.

WHAT DO I DO AND WHEN DO I DO IT?

- SOPHOMORE: Register with the NCAA and build your college resume. Have a conference with your NWFC coach to discuss your goals and to get possible school recommendations from them.
- JUNIOR: Have a list of potential schools picked out early in the year so you can visit during the season and possibly tag on to NAC's. Complete an athlete recruiting questionnaire (using your already prepared resume). Email coaches directly as well and include your fencing resume. Per NCAA RULES, college coaches cannot reach out to you until July between your Junior and Senior year. Prior contact and college visits will be initiated by you and multiple emails may be necessary.
- SENIOR: Put a nice bow on your hopefully great academic transcript. Recruited athletes and athletes planning on walking on to teams will have different paths to the application process. Discuss this process with your coach and/or college counselor.

WHAT SHOULD MY FENCING RESUME INCLUDE IN ADDITION TO THE BASICS?

- Academic Test Scores
- Fencing Results and Ratings
- Coaches you've studied under (and ask for reference letters but ask well in advance!)
- Special notes and/or fencing experiences
- Handy resource... College coaches will ask for a summary of results. You can look yours up on the US Fencing website. Click the link below, select your weapon, region, and type in your name. When a list of names comes up, click yours and it should download a summary.
<https://member.usfencing.org/search/regionalPointsList>

USA FENCING PROGRAMS

ALL AMERICA TEAM

<https://www.usafencing.org/all-american-team>

Will recognize the success of the best high school fencers in the nation.

ALL ACADEMIC TEAM

http://www.usfencing.org/news_article/show/204844?referrer_id=669372-usa

Encouraging a high level of academic achievement in our young athletes is as important as encouraging their athletic achievement. Motivation for this achievement, while intrinsically driven, can be enhanced through recognition by USA Fencing.

SCHOLARSHIPS

<http://www.usafencing.org/athletes-scholarships>

- Absolute Fencing Gear All-Academic Team
- Connor Porter Memorial Scholarship
- Wang Memorial Scholarship

SPIRIT OF SPORT

<http://www.usafencing.org/page/show/2956476-fencing-spirit-of-sport>

Sharing the story of a fencer who exemplifies the true meaning of sport.

SAFE SPORT

<http://www.usafencing.org/safe-sport>

USA Fencing is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for athletes' physical, emotional and social development, and to ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct. For further information about what USFA is doing about this, please see the link above.

INJURY PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

RISK AND TYPES OF INJURY

Fencing is a fantastic sport, exercising and challenging both the body and mind simultaneously. It is a lifelong sport, which can be enjoyed by the young and the old. Wheelchair fencing opens up the sport even to those who can't otherwise move up and down the fencing strip. Because it is a "combat" sport in which we use "weapons", it would be natural to assume that injuries are common or severe. All sports have some risk of injury, but the reality is that fencing is one of the safest of sports, with injury rates far lower than gymnastics, soccer, basketball, or football. This is in great part due to high quality protective clothing and equipment. Additionally, the forward-and-back nature of a sport practiced on a strip instead of an open field means that many of the twisting injuries or impacts of other sports are avoided. Having a "weapon" in one's hand hopefully inspires a sense of safety and responsibility in the athlete, and the coaches and staff at NWFC work hard to teach and enforce safe practices at all times.

Despite all that attention to safety, injuries can still occur, but are fortunately uncommon and usually minor. P.A. Harmer* studied the incidence of injury in USFA national competitions over a five year period. Out of 78,223 fencers in that time period, there were only 184 injuries that resulted in withdrawal from a competition. Of those injuries, 52% were sprains or strains and 3% were ligament tears or ruptures. 12% were contusions (bruises), 7.6% dislocations, 4% fractures, and 3% were punctures or cuts, only two of which were serious. There have not been any reported fatalities in the history of competition fencing in the United States.

Most injuries are to the lower extremities (63%), including thigh strains to the hamstrings and quadriceps, and ankle and knee sprains. This emphasizes the importance of good technique in footwork and lunges. Low back sprains and finger injuries can also occur. Overuse injuries, such as blisters of the hands and feet or tendonitis around the knee and elbow are also not uncommon.

CONDITIONING AND INJURY PREVENTION

How as athletes can we prepare our bodies to excel at our sport while minimizing the risk of injury? It sounds a bit silly to say, but primarily you prepare your body for fencing by fencing. By fencing regularly, you build the muscles that the sport requires through their repeated use. Every sport has an optimal balance of aerobic and anaerobic conditioning for the demands of the sport, and your body finds that balance as you spend more time doing the sport. Additional exercises can be helpful, however, in augmenting strength and power of fencing actions and to avoid muscle imbalance that could arise from always fencing with the dominant side forward.

There is an excellent review of current recommendations on fencing conditioning called "Strength and Conditioning for Fencing" by Turner, et al. from the London Sport Institute**, and it is worth a read if you want to know the science behind their recommendations. They looked at what fencing demands of the body. Bouting represents only 13% of an athlete's time at a competition. Actual active fight time is only 5% of the time at a competition. During a bout, there is on average about as much time spent resting as there is time spent being active, varying a little bit between the weapons. Despite that small time spent in activity, a fencer will still cover an average of almost a half kilometer of distance and change directions around 200 times in a single 15 touch direct elimination bout. Fencing is much more anaerobic than aerobic.

What that means is that long distance aerobic conditioning such as running really doesn't prepare your body well for fencing, and to some degree may be counter-productive. Shorter, higher-intensity exercises such as shuttle relays done with normal fencing footwork can be much more productive than running by emphasizing power, quickness, and change of direction while reinforcing good footwork technique. Shuttle relays can also be done with the non-dominant foot forward to oppose development of muscle imbalance. Doing repeated relays at high intensity with short periods of rest in-between at a 1:1 (epee) or 1:3 (foil) ratio of relay to rest can simulate the intensity of a bout.

The sport of fencing doesn't really require maximizing peak strength, it requires quick strength. You don't get a touch by hitting your opponent hard, you get one by hitting them first (i.e. quickly). Quick strength can be built with plyometric exercises and Olympic-style weight lifting. Such exercises should be done with good technique, and it may help to consult with your coach or a trainer as you get started. Core strengthening exercises can also help to maintain balance and proper positioning.

Stretching before exercise used to be recommended as a way to reduce injury, until recent studies suggested that "static" stretches, in which you hold a muscle in one position for a prolonged period, may temporarily *decrease* muscle strength and *increase* the risk of injury. Further research now suggests that light static stretching before exercise isn't actually harmful, but it likely doesn't help to prevent injuries. It is preferable to do low-intensity "dynamic" stretches prior to exercise, in which you move gently and steadily through the normal positions of your sport, without holding or bouncing the stretch. This should be followed by a few minutes of low-intensity controlled bouting before fencing at full intensity. "Static" stretches, holding a muscle in one position for 30-60 seconds, are most effective at increasing your overall flexibility when you do them *after* athletic activity, once your muscles are already warmed-up.

The Sword Masters web site from New Zealand has good exercise sheets for dynamic warm-up stretches and static cool-down stretches. They are crudely drawn but demonstrate how to do several basic stretches.

<http://www.swordmaster.co.nz/resources.html>

FIRST AID AND TREATMENT OF INJURIES

Please let the coaches or NWFC staff know about any injuries so that they can help direct you to proper treatment. NWFC has a first-aid box behind the front desk with band-aids, gauze, ACE wraps, and wound cleaning supplies, as well as some simple splints. Please ask someone at the desk if you need access to these supplies. There are ice packs available in the freezer as well. During national level tournaments there will be a physician or athletic trainer available with additional supplies. There is an AED or "automated external defibrillator" mounted on the wall to the left of the front desk in case of a cardiac emergency. Instructions for use are on the device. Please be sure to call 9-1-1 as a first step in any emergency of that severity.

CUTS AND SCRATCHES

Clean with soap and water. Bandages are available in the first aid box. Deeper cuts with significant bleeding or any numbness should be evaluated by a healthcare professional.

BRUISES

Ice packs are available in the freezer. Keep a cloth barrier between the ice pack and the skin and don't use an ice pack for more than 15-20 minutes at a time to avoid damaging the skin. Parents of young fencers may want to advise school teachers why their child frequently has bruises up and down one arm and leg.

SPRAINS AND STRAINS

A sprain is a stretch or tear of a ligament, the tissue that holds the bones together at a joint. A strain is a stretch or tear to a muscle or tendon. Most sprains and strains are minor and will heal quickly with rest, ice, and support for the joint if needed with an ACE wrap, taping, or a neoprene sleeve or brace. As symptoms improve, light stretches in a painless range can help restore flexibility.

More severe or "Grade 3" sprains and strains usually have more obvious or immediate swelling, bruising, and loss of function like difficulty bearing-weight. They are often associated with a "pop" being felt or heard. These should be initially treated as minor sprains, but should also be evaluated by a physician to rule-out additional injuries that might need advanced treatment. Actual dislocations should be stabilized and evaluated immediately at an urgent care center or emergency department.

Risk for sprains and strains can be minimized by following the conditioning and stretching guidelines above plus attention to good technique and proper equipment, like shoes with good traction and ankle support.

PATELLAR TENDONITIS OR INSTABILITY

As opposed to an acute injury, chronic stress on a ligament or muscle can create a tendonitis, which is inflammation of a tendon, usually where it inserts on the bone. This is especially common around the front of the knee in fencing, due to the strong repetitive forces on this area during lunging. Proper lunging technique is essential to minimize these stresses, making sure that the front knee doesn't flex more than 90 degrees. Adolescents and teenagers are especially susceptible to this problem due to extra tightness of the muscle and ligaments during growth spurts. Treatment is as above for sprains and strains, with a greater emphasis on rest and light stretches and usually a longer recovery period.

Instability of the patella or kneecap can be common in young women or those with high flexibility. In this condition, the knee cap tends to shift toward the outer side of the knee due to tightness of the tissues on that side and weakness of the tissues to the inner side of the knee. This is best addressed with strengthening of the quadriceps or muscle, called "VMO" strengthening. Neoprene sleeves with a support just to the outside of the knee cap can help. If the kneecap is dislocating to the side or popping frequently, then it should be evaluated by a physician.

FENCER'S ELBOW

Pain or fatigue in the muscles of the outer elbow and forearm is called "fencer's elbow". This can be because of wear-and-tear on the tendon attachments at the outer elbow (also known as tennis elbow or lateral epicondylitis), compression of a nerve running through the forearm muscles (also known as radial tunnel syndrome), or simply fatigue of the muscles themselves. This is more common in older fencers from accumulated strain and in new fencers as their endurance is still building.

Decreasing intensity or duration of activity during a symptom flare can be helpful, but keeping up some degree of usage helps to maintain the strength and flexibility of the muscle. Evaluating and adjusting your grip on the weapon can help. Massage of the sore muscles helps, as does light but not aggressive stretching. “Eccentric” strengthening, in which the muscle is gently stretched while it is contracting can help. This involves a towel-wringing motion, flexing the wrist while maintaining a firm grip and holding the elbow extended. A “counterforce” strap may help during fencing if the pain is primarily at the bone at the outer elbow. If the pain is more muscular, then the strap may worsen it. This condition usually resolves with time, but it can take several months.

References:

*Harmer P. Incidence and Characteristics of Time-loss Injuries in Competitive Fencing: A Prospective, 5-year Study of National Competitions. *Clin J Sports Med* 18: 137–142, 200

**Turner A. Strength and Conditioning for Fencing. *Strength and Conditioning J* 35: 1-9

BASIC INTRODUCTION TO THE SPORT OF FENCING

Fencing is a sport in which two competitors fight using 'rapier-style' swords, called the foil, the épée, and the saber; winning points are made through the contact with an opponent. Fencing was one of the first sports to be played in the Olympics. Based on the traditional skills of swordsmanship, the modern sport arose at the end of the 19th century, with the Italian school having modified the historical European martial art of classical fencing, and the French school later refining the Italian system. There are three forms of modern fencing, each uses a different kind of weapon and has different rules, this way the sport itself is divided into three competitive scenes: foil, épée, and saber. Most competitive fencers choose to specialize in one weapon only

-- all the information above and regarding the weaponry is from Wikipedia:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fencing>

BASIC INTRO TO THE WEAPONS

A **foil** is one of the three weapons used in the sport of fencing, all of which are metal. It is flexible, rectangular in cross section, and weighs under a pound. As with the épée, points are only scored by contact with the tip, which in electrically scored tournaments is capped with a spring-loaded button to signal a touch. A foil fencer's uniform features the lamé, a vest, electrically wired to record hits in such cases. It is the most commonly used weapon in competition.

The modern **épée** derives from the 19th-century *Épée de Combat* (itself a derivative of the French small sword), and is the largest and heaviest of the three weapons used in sport fencing. *Épée* is French for "sword". As a thrusting weapon the épée is similar to a foil (compared to a sabre), but has a stiffer blade which is triangular in cross-section with a V-shaped groove called a fuller, has a larger bell guard, and is heavier. The technique however, is somewhat different, as there are no rules regarding priority and right of way. In addition, the entire body is a valid target area.

The **saber** is one of the three weapons of modern fencing, and is alternatively spelled *saber* in American English. The sabre differs from the other modern fencing weapons, the épée and foil, in that it is possible to score with the edge of the blade; for this reason, sabreur movements and attacks are very fast. For the other two weapons, valid touches are only scored using the point of the blade. Like the foil, but unlike the épée, sabre uses the convention of right-of-way to determine who acquires the touch.

Books

- American Fencer by Tim Morehouse
- The complete guide to fencing
- Fencing: Skills, Tactics, Training (Crowood Sports Guides)
- Fencing: Techniques of Foil, Epee and Sabre

NWFC HISTORY

SALLE AURIOL'S LEGACY AND NORTHWEST FENCING CENTER'S HISTORY

Northwest Fencing Center ("NWFC"), officially known as The Salle Auriol Fencing Club, is recognized in the US, and indeed in many countries of the world, for the quality of its coaches, its world-class facility, and its fencers. In fact, Portland today is recognized as one of the best places to fence in all of the US and, increasingly, individuals and teams from around the world come to Portland to train. Paradoxically, NWFC's history, and its impact on the world of fencing is not well known. Our story, like that of many, is not unique. Our story begins in the 1960s.

1960s

Colleen Olney began fencing in the mid-1960s when she took up the sport for rehabilitation of her wrist following a car accident. Her rehabilitation turned into a life-long passion.

At the time she started fencing, there were only a handful of fencers in the area. She and other fencers knew of a fencing master in Seattle by the name of Leon Auriol. Leon was a native of France and earned his fencing master's degree from the Institut National du Sport in Paris, France in 1962. He came to America in 1963 and began teaching in Seattle later that year. The local fencers were fortunate enough to have Leon make the drive to Portland to give lessons at various schools and community centers in the area.

Leon was coming to Portland on a regular basis in 1967. He had one requirement that the Portland community of fencers guarantee him at least eight lessons. In order to guarantee the eight lessons, Colleen sometimes made her sons, Michael and Robert Marx, fence. While the Portland fencers tried to convince Leon to move to Portland, he preferred to live in Seattle, but he told the group that his brother, Yves Auriol, might be interested in working with the group if they could get a permanent location. Yves earned his fencing master's degree from the Institut National du Sport in 1968.

1970s

Leon sponsored his brother's immigration from France in 1971. Before coming to the United States, Yves was a professional rugby player in France.

By 1972, with the backing of Colleen, Rocky Beach, and Rosemary Lown, Portland was home to a new fencing school, Salle Auriol School of Fencing ("Salle Auriol"), located in the old Elks Temple at 614 SW 11th Avenue, Portland, Oregon, and fencing master. The Elks Temple later became the Governor Hotel and was placed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Under Yves' tutelage, the fencers began training more vigorously and to compete more. Yves was the right master for the job, running not only the athletes ragged with a strict technical training regimen, but parents also had to participate in conditioning classes as well, often hauling bags of sand up and down the stairwell of the Elks Temple. Results were not far behind.

In 1975, the local governing body for the sport of fencing, with the assistance of Salle Auriol and others in the area, hosted the Junior Olympic Championships at Portland State University. In 1977, they also hosted the national fencing championships at the Portland Hilton.

The notable achievements during this period included 12 national champions and 22 world team members.

Salle Auriol subsequently moved from the Elks Temple to space near the Arthur Murray Dance Studio on Park Avenue in downtown Portland. The site is now the Westin Hotel.

In 1979, Salle Auriol moved to the Cornell Court Club at 13939 NW Cornell Road, now known as the Sunset Athletic Club. This athletic club is where Salle Auriol began a long-term relationship with Chuck Richards and the Oregon Sports Academy and the Oregon Sports Trust who you will learn more about later in this article.

1980s

Assisting Yves at the Cornell Court Club was Alex Beguinet, another native of France. Alex received his fencing master's degree from the National Sports Institute in Paris in 1976. Alex left Salle Auriol in 1980 and eventually went to work for Duke University in 1985.

During this period, the club was also the host of the fencers participating in the "Portland Project" where national caliber athletes from across the United States were brought together to train with Yves. To support this project, the U. S. Fencing Center Foundation ("USFCF") was formed. The initial directors were Sharon Krogh, Doris Posedel, Chuck Richards, Colleen Olney, Bernard McGovern, Betty Santelli, and Fred Thorsen. Suzanne Brown, who later became Suzanne Marx, and Derek A. Holeman were both in the employ and service of the foundation. After the Portland Project had run its course, the foundation continued on to provide essential support for many of the local fencers at Salle Auriol, the Division, and other regional and national fencers.

In 1985, Yves left Portland to pursue a coaching position at the University of Notre Dame. This was also when Salle Auriol officially became The Salle Auriol Fencing Club ("SAFC"), a nonprofit corporation. The incorporators were Susan Badders, Suzanne Marx, and Michael McGowan. The initial board of directors were Robert Marx, Anne Klinger, Dana Via, JoAnne Deazley, and Susan Badders.

After Yves' departure, Leon again commuted to Portland to teach two days a week and to assist SAFC in the search for a new fencing master. SAFC hired Regis Mantzer, another native of France, as its head coach in 1986. Regis received his fencing master's degree from the Ecole Nationale de Maitre D'Armes in Dinard, France in 1986.

Some, but not all the achievements in the 1980s, included 14 national champions, 29 world team members, and 11 Olympians.

1990s

In May 1993, Une Touche de Portland, Inc. (“UTDP”) was incorporated by Steven D. Adler. His daughter fenced with Colleen at OES. She also fenced for SAFC. The initial directors were Pascal Gerard, Mike Bevers, Aurelia Hunt, Manuel de la Malena, and Regis Mantzer. All but one of these directors had fenced for SAFC. UTDP was set up as a public benefit corporation and qualified amateur sports organization.

Regis left Portland to go back to France in mid-1995. In October of that same year, Ken Lattin, Kristin Kralicek, and Suzanne Marx took over the management of UTDP. UTDP sought to continue the work started by the Portland Project and subsequently the USFCF, which ceased when the USFCF became the Oregon Fencing Alliance. To carry out its purpose, UTDP sponsored weekly training sessions, camps, and tournaments at Salle Auriol. Two of the tournaments it sponsored were the Une Touche Open and the Columbia International. It also awarded grants to individuals vying for international teams and to SAFC as well as other regional nonprofit organizations such as St. Andrew Nativity School, St. Mary’s Home for Boys, the Oregon Division, etc. UTDP was also responsible for raising funds and procuring services and materials for the construction of the current Northwest Fencing Center facility.

Gia Abachidze, originally from the Republic of Georgia in the former Soviet Union, was hired as head coach in 1996. Gia received his fencing master’s degree from the Georgian State Physical Training Institute in 1984.

With the guidance of Chuck Richards, SAFC began in 1997 to plan for its move to its present location in Beaverton, Oregon. If we learned anything from Colleen, it was if we have the will, we will find the way. We owe not only Chuck Richards a great deal of thanks for the facility we have today, but owe a debt of gratitude to many others, including but not limited to, Roger and Lyn Garcia, Robert and Suzanne Marx, Twin Oaks Autoworks Mgmt. Inc., Gia Abachidze, Michael Marx, Anna Angelova, Viktor Antanassov, the Oregon Sports Trust, UTDP, William G. Gilmore Steel Foundation, Czopek & Erdenberg, Dupont Flooring Systems, Rodda Paint, and Steve Patzlaff, past members, members and the board of directors at the time, and their families and friends. The construction of the actual facility began in February 1999. No one was too young to wield a hammer or lend a hand. Everyone rolled up their sleeves and went to work. Gia even had the new facility blessed.

SAFC adopted the alias “Northwest Fencing Center” in 1999 to promote the facility. This was also the year that Michael Marx came back to Portland to serve as a director and head coach of SAFC. He earned his fencing master’s degree in Poland in 1993.

The athletic achievements in the 1990s included, but are not limited, to 18 national champions, 14 world team members, 4 Olympians, and 3 World Champions.

2000s

The official inauguration of the Northwest Fencing Center (“NWFC”) took place in early 2000. Don Alperstein, the president of the United States Fencing Association and many of our former coaches came to the inauguration to celebrate all that SAFC and its sponsors, patrons, and members had accomplished. Many other fencing clubs began constructing similar facilities after NWFC established its own state of the art facility.

Gia and his family left NWFC to accept a position at Ohio State University in 2001. It was at this time that Michael changed the business model on how SAFC operated. More emphasis was placed on group instruction by age and aptitude. An adult class and homeschool classes were added. Individual lessons continued to be offered.

Michael remained with NWFC until 2008, when he accepted a position as a full-time assistant coach at Duke University.

Sebastien Dos Santos joined NWFC in 2008. Sebastien was another Frenchman with considerable experience with pentathlon and a long tradition in fencing. Sebastien earned his fencing master's degree from Federation Francaise d'Escrime et Ministere de la Jeunesse et des Sports in 2000.

Assisting Michael and Sebastien was Simon Abram, also a native of France. Simon received his fencing master's degree from the same federation as Sebastien in 2006. Simon was only 21 years old when he earned his fencing master's degree in France. Simon coached in Aix-en-Provence before coming to NWFC. Simon and Sebastien are cousins and their families have a long tradition in fencing.

UTDP merged with SAFC in 2009. UTDP not only brought over its assets and its exemptions from tax under IRC 501(c)(3) and IRC 501(j), it also brought over some of its officers, two of its tournaments, the Une Touche Open and the Columbia International, and its grant program. Two of UTDP's officers currently serve on the NWFC Grant Committee, along with other individuals and a NWFC board member.

NWFC's notable achievements in the 2000s included 25 national champions, 33 world team members, 3 Olympians, and 1 World Champion.

During this decade, NWFC also achieved the designation as a national training center by the national governing body for the sport.

2010s

In 2011, NWFC hired Christophe Duclos, another Frenchman, as head coach. Christophe holds a Sports Doctorate (Ph.D) in fencing awarded in 2005, as well as the first and second level diplomas awarded by the French National Fencing Formation Center, respectively, in 2000 and 2003.

In 2012, NWFC hired Cody Mattern to be the epee program director at NWFC. Cody earned his fencing master's credentials in 2013 from the United States Fencing Coaches Association.

In 2013, NWFC celebrated its 40th anniversary with a tour of the Governor Hotel, a wine social at Jake's Grill, a French Dinner at the Oregon Sports Office West, and lunch at NWFC. It was wonderful to reconnect with our former fencing masters, alumni, and current members and their families.

Some of NWFC's accomplishments thus far include 11 national champions, 12 world team members, 2 world champions, and 1 Olympian.

Looking forward, the NWFC continues to support both the sport of fencing and athletes. Current efforts include deepening relationships with clubs and fencers abroad. NWFC has established a wheelchair program and is expanding its outreach programs. Due to the growth of fencing and our success, NWFC continues to work on expansion of its services and facilities and hosting larger tournaments. NWFC is like the little engine that could. We chug along and achieve great things.

(August 10, 2015 - Updated October 4, 2017)

Note: Suzanne and Robert Marx and Raoul Rodriguez co-authored this article. The Marxes were the young students in the 1960-70s and did their best to recollect the information contained in this article. If you have anything to add or change, please contact Robert or Suzanne at Suzmarx1@comcast.net. Furthermore, in an attempt to limit this article to the background of the fencing club, the authors opted to limit the references to the coaches to those that were hired as fencing masters. There were many assistant coaches and individuals who helped mentor and teach along the way. Our omission is not intended as a slight in any way. We are grateful for their efforts and kinship. NWFC would not be what it is today without their help and the help of its members, past and present, those that volunteered and continue to volunteer, and our contributors and sponsors. NWFC has had numerous accomplishments, not all of which are mentioned in this article. Be sure to look at the banners in the main hall to see all the fine accomplishments of our fencers and coaches.