

Criteria for the Organization of Technical Training in World Fencing Academies

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Foreword

Dear Colleagues,

The effort to categorize fencing Maîtres leads to the recognition of professional character and uniform regulation of the organization of instruction, as is possible within the various national fencing environments. In addition I would like to note that this project is the fruit of the invaluable collaboration of the Members of the Coaching Commission, as well as the suggestions received from the various National Academies. With their organization, they helped me to construct a document which could, in the near future, become a "method" which would be used for the A.A.I., by way of the F.I.E., to spread throughout the world the teaching of fencing in an organized way, and according to clear and uniform levels. In addition, I would like to convey to you all my willingness to make changes to this document and to enrich it with proposals which will emerge, I am certain, during our training course, and in particular when we work through the details of each part of the project devoted to one of the specific levels. I will begin by explaining the four levels of instruction. However, it is true that the initial level of the Animateur¹ is without any doubt complementary to that of Moniteur¹, and in addition it is significant because it represents a simple way to refer to all those in this profession who are in the middle of their fencing lives, especially the young fencers; the Animateurs are selected by the Maîtres in the fencing halls primarily from the pupils who express an intention to teach the youngest. It is thus important that those who are chosen be adults since they are entrusted with the care of children and therefore must be the best possible people to manage them. The other three levels (Moniteur, Prévôt, and Maître) ¹ are the most numerous in most of the organizational charts of fencing academies around the world. In my project, in keeping with the general will, the role of the Prévôt is more developed, taking into account that his competency is right below that of the Maître, as is the Prévôt's capacities to manage a fencing hall, even if his teaching level, for lack of experience, is not yet at the Maître's point. It is for this reason that the skills required in the test to become Prévôt are very similar to those of the Maître d'Armes. This last level, which in certain countries is certified by the government, will require a thesis defense like that for a bachelor's diploma. For this period, an individual will complete his or her course of fencing studies through periods of qualified training courses, research, specific briefs, and all that constitutes the didactic curriculum vitae of which I will outline. In my general project, I managed to count 600 hours over the entire course to become a Maître. This figure corresponds, more or less, to the 5 years required to obtain a bachelor's diploma. It is clearly intended to have equivalency under the "Eurocoach" program, and to profit from all the facilities and all the advantages envisaged by the European Community. Obviously the duration of studies can be varied according to individual national fencing conditions; however, they must be codified by a fencing Booklet of Maître Training which will be updated for, and evaluated by, the A.A.N. in such a way that the curriculum vitae and the accreditations obtained by each teacher are quite clear, with an official recording of the course of studies and tests performed. This booklet will

thus become the calling card of each Maître to work in the world of fencing. It is obviously extremely important that the F.I.E. assists us in supporting the project so that on each diploma, as well as under the A.A.N. and the A.A.I., there are those in the F.I.E. who will serve in the organization chart for the expanding of our sport. Presentation of the Organizational Training Levels

Before going into the details regarding the various levels, it should be specified that for all that relates to the definitions pertaining to fencing theory or its specific rules, the notes and the designs of examinations, I absolutely do not want to be categorical because I respect the various philosophies of the National Masterly Schools². Therefore I have restricted the scope of this document to general principles, addressing in particular the principal and most current fencing wisdom, as well as qualifying times and methods of training. With that in mind, each National Academy can establish a mastery design according to its requirements and means. It is significant that in the Booklet of Maître Training are recorded all successful examination results (three sample evaluation notes: pass, good, excellent), and the certification of apprenticeship completed during training. Certain candidates, with diplomas in E.P.S.3, or ex-fencers of competitive levels, may be allowed to begin training at the second or third level. In certain situations, it may be possible in the first three levels to pass the examination for only one weapon, because of the great number of pupils and the continuous and specific teacher requests for given weapons. In this brief, the project is generalized with the three weapons because, in my opinion, the diploma for the position of Maître must address all subjects pertaining to fencing. In the event of failure, there will have to be a 6-month interval before the candidate may again take the examination of the same level. Each candidate has the freedom to take courses and examinations in the academy of his choice.

1st Level of Instruction (Animateur)

Definition: The Animateur is an assistant to the higher levels in a fencing club and, after completing their training, can work autonomously with schools, community centres, and recreational centres. The Animateur provides instructions to entertain the youngest children (7-10 year) with activities providing an understanding of the basic preparatory physical actions of fencing. The Animateur works collectively with groups, as well as with individuals.

Abilities: To gather together a group of pupils and organize activities according to the resources available, to express in simple terms in order to hold attention and to be sympathetic. To instruct newcomers on life in their club, traditions of fencing in their countries, rules, and the most important competitions. To convey to the young pupils self sufficiency, to inform regarding the proper clothing of the fencing hall, and the safety rules which one must follow from the beginning of fencing practice. To gain the confidence of the group, to lay out a program alternating between activities that are playful and activities that are specifically for maintaining interest and participation.

Admission Requirements: A minimum of 18 years of age. To be in possession of a Federal Fencing License. To have taken multimedia aptitude courses for teaching sports (30 hours), and to have received a certificate of completion that demonstrates the candidate's ability to teach a group of pupils about basic motor function and fencing apprenticeship appropriate to their age.

Duration of Training: Theory and elementary fencing education (20 hours). Fencing practice with general components and components specific to each weapon (40 hours). Apprenticeship in a fencing hall or primary school or recreational centers (30 hours). Enrollment in the course for a minimum of six months.

Examination Location - Commission - Evaluation Criteria: These are to set on the local, regional level, by the responsible federal organization.

Examination Program: 1st Level

Theoretical Component: A) Definitions, terminology, fencing instruction of the fundamental aspects and the basics of the three weapons. B) Rules of fencing (the fundamentals, basic rules) particularly related to the actions for the very young. C) Organization of related fencing activities, and individual and team competitions in the form of a game. D) Organization and demonstration of elementary fencing collectives. E) Extracurricular: general and specific components, the same as in the training courses.

Practical Component: A) The correct demonstration of the fencing movements of attack and defense in the fundamental component that concerns the position. B) Collective fencing lessons for improving the fundamentals (the same as in the form of a game), aptitude tests, exercises for two.

Specific Aspects of Training: 1st Level

Theoretical Component: Fencing terminology, organization, functioning, the manner of holding the three weapons. Weapon hand position, valid targets in all three weapons, fundamental positions and movements of the legs. Positions and movements of the weapon hand. Fundamental attacks, principle exercises with the blade. The defensive. To perceive the counter-attack. The notion of timing, speed, and distance (20 hours).

Practical Component - Related to All Three Weapons: Basic movements for placement of the fencer (preparatory positioning, the salute, the on-guard, the lunge, return to on-guard, placement on the piste), executed individually or collectively, in twos, by precision exercises and competitions supported with executive verification (10 hours).

Foil: Weapon hand position. Work with weapon blade (engagements and change of engagements, beats, pressure). Parries with the blade (direct, circular, semi-circular, diagonal, opposition). Simple and compound ripostes (with or without blade contact). Perceiving the counter-attack (20 hours).

Epee and Sabre: Correct demonstration for the pupils of: the manner of holding the weapon, the principle differences while given a touch, the diversity of targets, and competition rules (5 hours + 5 hours).

Apprenticeship Education: During training, the candidate should acquire the experiences available from: fencing societies, primary schools, community centres, recreational centers or other organizations for children where he can maintain a specific connection with the sport of fencing (30 hours).

2nd Level of Instruction (Moniteur)

Definition: This is the first real level for a trained personnel appointed to work in the fencing hall. He follows the technical objectives set up by his superiors and, with his teaching experience, progresses towards being able to independently administrate the youngest pupils in the practice of basic fencing.

Abilities: To continue the activity of an Animateur in a concrete manner. To be able to follow a training schedule, taking examples from his superiors, for improving the technical qualities of the group that has been assigned to him. To distinguish very clearly the educational differences of the three weapons. To be capable of running a collective class for beginners no matter their ages.

Admission Requirements: To be in possession of the title of Animateur for at least 12 months.

Duration of Training: Theory of fencing with analysis of the themes of each weapon (30 hours). Fencing practice with a common partner, with specifics for each weapon. (60 hours). Developing an extracurricular relationship with an athletic centre to assure the continuity of study and pedagogical teaching (30 hours). Educational experiences in a fencing hall (6 months). Adjournment seminar (60 hours). The above courses should take place over a minimum of twelve months.

Examination Location - Commission - Evaluation Criteria: These are to set on the local, regional, or interregional level, by the responsible federal organization.

Examination Program: 2nd Level

Theoretical Component: A) Theory, techniques, instruction of fencing common to the three weapons. B) Theory, techniques, instruction specific to each weapon. C) Knowledge of the fencing rules. D) Extracurricular: general and specific components, the same as in the training courses.

Practical Component: A) three lessons in the three weapons, passed with a fencing Maître, correctly demonstrating the principle actions of fencing. B) Three lessons in the three weapons given to a pupil, demonstrating: knowledge of the fundamentals and basics of attack actions, of defense, of the counterattack, to know how to correctly give the blade to the pupil, the appropriate choice of distance, and the time of execution. C) Know to preside over a fencing bout for the youngest categories, and to organize a simple fencing tournament in a pool or direct elimination. D) Be able to prepare a collective course for a fundamental position. E) Be able to conduct a simple session of quality fundamental fencing.

Specific Aspects of Training: 2nd Level

Theoretical Component:

Foil: Knowledge of the specific conventional aspects of the weapon. Basic attacks by opposition to the position of the opponent's weapon arm. The compound attacks. The defense with the blade by opposition to the opponent's attack, and the types of ripostes (simple, compound). Study of counter-time and attacks of the second intention (10 hours)

Sabre: Position of the weapon arm while given different touches. The targets and where to achieve the different hits of attack, of defense, and of counterattack. The fundamental attacks of opposition to the position of the opponent's weapon arm. Compound attacks and auxiliary attacks. The defense with the blade by opposition to the opponent's attacks, and the types of the ripostes. The time-hit of counterattack and its applications. Study of simultaneous actions, counter-time and attacks of the second intention. (10 hours)

Epee: Settling to on-guard and placement on the piste. The cover and movement of the weapon arm. Attack with and without contact of the blade. The counterattack. Study of counter-time and attack of the second intention. (10 hours)

Practical Component: In relation to all three weapons: the candidate should be essentially training to direct an individual lesson of the fundamental, principal actions of attack, defense, and counterattack. Know correctly to give the blade to the pupil for execution of a hit. To know the exact distance and the right timing. Know properly to give orders according to the type of lesson (prepared, mute with different executions on the changes of position) (30 hours)

Foil: Movement of the legs in all situations (with tactical insertions). Working with the blade for improving sensitivity with the weapon Attacks: simple and compound. Different types of parries and ripostes. Time-hit of counterattack. Counter-time tests. (10 hours)

Sabre: Movement of the legs in all situations (with tactical insertions). Giving hits with exercises for suppleness of the weapon arm. Anticipation of the weapon arm in coordination with the execution of hits. Different types of parries and ripostes. The counterattack. The test of simultaneous attacks and counter-time (10 hours).

Epee: Footwork in all the situations (with tactical insertions). Protection of the weapon arm. Giving hits and slapping. Angular hits, oppositions, remises. Defense with the blade and distance. Counterattacking with the stop-hit. Tests of counter-time and the attack of the second intention. (10 hours)

Extracurricular: Analysis of fencing movements. Emergency care and first-aid (related to fencing). Psychological and physical preparation for competing in combative sports. Training plans. General aspects of managing a fencing hall. Knowledge of fencing history (30 hours). 3rd Level of Instruction (Prévôt)

Definition:

Starting of this level, one truly enters into the fencing Moniteur profession. The Prévôt is a fencing teacher with total self-management in the fencing hall, who, in the absence of the fencing Maître, can replace the Maître without any technical or pedagogical problems.

Abilities: In-depth knowledge of the instruction and practice of fencing. Knowing how to provide for the individual and collective needs of all the pupils of the fencing club where he works. To plan the education of a group of pupils entrusted to him by the fencing Maître, and to aid their preparation for competition. To know how to accompany the fencers of the club to competitions of different technical levels.

Admission Requirements: To be in possession of the title of Moniteur for at least 18 months.

Duration of Training: Theory of fencing with analysis of the themes, techniques and tactics relative to the three weapons (60 hours). Fencing practice to improve the manner of giving lessons (individuals, groups) with a thorough treatment of competitive tactics (90 hours). Extracurricular activities (general and specific components), developed at an athletic training centre to assure the continuity of scientific study and pedagogical teaching (30 hours). Educational experiences in a fencing hall (minimum 12 months). Adjournment seminars (90 hours). Enrollment in the above course should take place over a minimum of eighteen months.

Examination Location - Commission - Evaluation Criteria: In addition to what has been mentioned for the preceding levels, it is advisable that the examination take place under the auspices of a national organization with a commissioner recognized by the A.A.I. and F.I.E.

Examination Program: 3rd Level

Theoretical Component: A) A very good knowledge of fencing theory, of the instruction of competitive tactics for the general and specific components of all three weapons. B) A written test concerning the functioning of the fencing hall and the management and planning of fencing activities. C) A very thorough knowledge of the F.I.E. rules and of their application in the organization of a tournament. D) Extracurricular activities (general and specific components, the same as in the training courses). E) Knowledge of fencing history.

Practical Component: A) A fencing lesson for each weapon given to a pupil who has a minimum of three years competitive experience, firmly demonstrating the use of sound instruction in the progression of actions, and with tactical insertions on fencing strategies. B) Demonstrate the conduct of collective exercises (with two, in several positions) to prepare a performance to promote fencing. C) Practical knowledge of fencing history.

Specific Aspects of Training: 3rd Level

Theoretical Component:

Foil - Sabre- Epee: Deepen the principles already acquired in the preceding levels. Study of strategies and statistics of competition. The modern fencing competition and the different applications of theory. Outline the theory of different types of lessons or exercises for two in order to improve the fencers' techniques and tactics (60 hours).

Practical Component:

Foil: Exercises to improve instruction practice. The teaching of the modern fencing hits (whips, oppositions on the blade, angular hits). Study of different types of lessons (pre-competition warm-up, precision, mechanical, specific, tactical). The written study of foil, and practical application of the rules (30 hours).

Sabre: Exercises to improve practice instruction, particularly to promote the quick and agile use of the sabre. Tactical work on distances with exercises in different situations on the piste. Study of the different types of lessons (pre-competition warm-up, precision, mechanical, specific, tactical) (30 hours).

Epee: Exercises to improve practice instruction through the progression of hits. The protection of the weapon arm and absence of the passive phase in the consecutive execution of hits. Study of the different types of lesson (pre-competition warm-up, precision, mechanical, specific, tactical) (30 hours).

Group Courses - Schools - Sessions - Fencing History: Training courses and educational experiences developed under the direction of a fencing Maître (30 hours).

Extracurricular: Tactics and strategies in combative sports. The mental approach to competition. The role of the coach in the athletic structure (juridical, economic, and administrative considerations). Thorough acquisition and consolidation of knowledge of fencing history and sports for the handicapped, with an emphasis on fencing. Knowledge of principle fencing terms in the French language (30 hours).

4th Level of Instruction (Maître d'Armes)

Definition: The Maître's diploma is the point of arrival for the training course after the lower levels. The Maître is the point of reference for all technical, didactic, and competitive issues in a

fencing hall.

Abilities: Planning of all the fencing activity (promotional, recreational, competitive, handicapped, historical) in the fencing hall where he works. Coordinates the competitive activity by programming fencer training and fencer participation in competitions. Organizes demonstrations of all levels and of different types, with a flawless knowledge of refereeing and management of tournaments.

Admission Requirements: A Prévôt title for at least 24 months. Federal fencing license. Certificate from an athletic training centre on subjects of a general character (pedagogy and education, training theory, physiology, emergency care, first-aid) and specific to fencing (combative sports, fencer training, the role of the coach in management, juridical studies, administration of an athletic society). Certificate of tournament referee and Director of tournament at the national level. Teaching certificate for historical fencing. Teaching certificate for handicapped fencing.

Duration of Training: Perfect knowledge of theory and terminology of fencing (60 hours). Absolute Maîtrship of conducting different types of lessons with an individual or group in all three weapons (60 hours). Participation in the update seminars at the national and international level in three weapons, or specifically for each weapon (120 hours). Educational experience with a fencing hall (a minimum 18 months). Participation in the following certification courses: extracurricular activities (20 hours), historical fencing (20 hours), fencing for the handicapped (20 hours). Enrollment in the above course should take place over a minimum of 24 months.

Examination Location - Commission - Evaluation Criteria: National commission Maîtrey is recognized under the guidelines of the A.A.I., F.I.E. With the issue of the diploma with an official seal of the A.A.I. and F.I.E. should be a description of the evaluations obtained at each level, a curriculum of all studies completed, all work experiences, all instructional apprenticeships, with certificates, all seminars participated in, all competitions (even as a fencer or as a referee), and all other concerns of the Maîtrey career.

Examination Program: 4th Level

Theoretical Component: Since the evaluation is a rigorous curriculum of study, it will have the support of a thesis on a subject chosen by the candidate and by his chairman, a member of the examination commission. The candidate must demonstrate professional character and a thorough knowledge of fencing in general, along with its specifics requirements.

Practical Component: Three lessons (one for each weapon) given to fencers of advanced competitive level, with an analysis of technical and tactical types; to each lesson is presented different objectives to attain by a coherent instruction of action. During the development, the candidate must be certain to demonstrate in his conduction of the exercises, an absolute Maîtrship of weapons, and a professional character while executing fencing actions with a pupil.

Specific Aspects of Training: 4th Level

During the 24th month of training, the candidate continues, beyond the acquisition of the certificates already mentioned, to update his skills; his apprenticeship should be at the same time continue to pursue fencing concerns in order to reach its objectives.

Theoretical Component: Perfect knowledge of fencing theory, of the appropriate terminology of each action, perfect knowledge of the F.I.E. competition rules, with appropriate terminology and Maîtrey of fencing technical vocabulary, accompanied by fluent expression in the French language.

Practical Component: To refine the instruction of all three weapons. Acquisition of a work method. Adapting to any pupil in the lesson, whatsoever. Extending the knowledge of the different types of lesson (with the right hand or the left hand) and the different kinds of lesson (prepared, mute, with change of type: of tactic, of distance, of rhythm, of speed).

Training Organization Chart