

## **SABRE TRAINING 1**

### **ON GUARD AND FOOTWORK**

The on guard position in sabre is similar to foil, but the shoulders and trunk are turned more towards the opponent.

The weapon arm is placed closer to the trunk, but still kept clear of the hip. The shoulder should remain entirely relaxed.

The principles employed here are that the fencer gives no early indication of an intention to attack and if attacked, can readily defend.

This can be referred to as the OFFENSIVE-DEFENSIVE position. For ease of reference, we will simply refer to this as an on guard position.

The defensive box is often characterized by a two-dimensional shape formed by the defensive positions of Tierce, Quarte and Quinte, which form its sides.

The true defensive box takes the form of a pyramid on its sides, with the top removed.

Because of the fencing measure, sabre is fenced with almost total absence of blade.

Footwork is difficult to illustrate. The coach or teacher can demonstrate these much better.

### **CONTROL OF THE SABRE**

Grip the handle 10mm behind the guard, the thumb on top and the first phalanx on the index finger at the bottom. Allow the other fingers to bend freely around the handle. The little finger folds in against the heel of the hand.

Hold the weapon in a relaxed manner. Holding too firmly can cause tiredness in the hand and can result in stiffness of the fingers, the muscles of the hand and shoulder. The grip can be firm or loose, depending on the fencing action employed.

### **SIMPLE ATTACKS**

The simple attack, direct or indirect, is correctly executed when straightening of the arm, the point or cut threatening the valid target, precedes the initiation of

the lunge. Direct simple attacks take the shortest route to the sabre valid target. Indirect simple attacks comprise one blade movement that passes over or under the opposing blade, bringing about a change in line or returning to the original line.

In sabre, simple attacks can be delivered with the point, cut or through cut. Cuts can be delivered with the forward edge of the blade, or the first third of the back-edge nearest the point, or with the side of the blade (through cut).

A simple attack is an attack into a known line, which must be done from a realistic distance and realistic blade presentation.

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