

The Fencing Instructor-Teacher

Surely you will agree that it is a great feeling to see these students stand before you, their faces full of curiosity and eyes wide open with anticipation.

The responsibility for their fencing education now lies in your hands. But each of these students is different from each other. There are the hard working ones, the talented ones and the not so talented ones, the precocious ones and the late bloomers.

Each student is an individual with his or her individual background and development history, with hopes and desires, with an existential orientation and needs.

All of them are worthy of our attention, care and our concern

What the fencing instructor must have

The more a fencing instructor is able to relate to his students, empathises with them, is accessible to them and inspires them, the more effective he will be.

He has to encourage them and listen to them, sympathise with them, praise and comfort them. In short, he needs to understand them.

He also has to be able to put the breaks on a hothead or issue a reprimand. But he always does so respectfully.

- 1 incentive, praise, encouragement for everyone
- 2 solutions to their problems
- 3 the ability to convey the fun and joy of the sport
- 4 technical knowledge and organizational skills
- 5 skill in dealing with children
- 6 good communication with parents

The basics of fencing

The basic fencing education is the same for all newcomers, regardless of whether your student wants to fence on a competitive level if it turns out that he or she is particularly talented or not.

During this first part of fencing education the goal is to create a multilateral foundation of motor qualification, and to experience various types of movement.

The students should enjoy practicing and should learn the basics of fencing through a variety of methods. The percentage of actual fencing during this basic education is approximately 40% so it is for a purpose if your students do other sporting activities during fencing classes.

The fencing exam marks the end of the basic education. This is when your student earns their fencing certificate and with it the right to participate in official fencing tournaments.

The principles of fencing training

During the next step, you will see a systematic increase in performance as your student becomes faster and stronger, affecting his technique and tactics, and participates in regular bouts.

Be helpful, but with prudence

Don't expect more of your student than he or she can do, or is willing to do at the moment.

Don't make comparisons with students of the same age. Physical development still varies a lot at this age. Take your cue from your students and praise their progress.

Your student will thank you

It is your intention to facilitate long term systematic and age-appropriate training based on these recommendations. Excess ambition even during the basic fencing education can be damaging.

You made a great choice to teach fencing. Fencing distinguishes itself by its variety of movements, demands a high degree of dexterity and promotes concentration, critical thinking and quick decision-making.

Your students are part of a group training together and also fencing against each other. The students are integrated into the group and at the same time are challenged by it. They learn to assert themselves and to deal with success and failure in minor tournaments. All of these skills are cultivated by fencing. Your students will be able to apply them in other areas of life such as school, or later in their professional lives.

Please support your students in fencing, and help develop his or her enthusiasm for practice, learning and athletic competition.

With your help and willingness to teach, your students will understand the sport of fencing more easily and learn more quickly.

Good luck.

Frank Koksis, 27-OCT-04