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# ENGINEERS IN SPORTS

By JACK CASHELL, '37

**W**ITH the competent fencer slowly but surely replacing the husky football hero in the hearts of susceptible co-eds, we have decided to devote this entire article to a limited description of the sport. As the captain of our team is an engineer and is the subject of this interview, we turned to him for the fundamentals of the sport.

Over in the mine engineering department, Charles Schwab, one of the toughest sabre men in this section of the country, holds forth. Charley learned the fundamentals of fencing in his freshman physical education class, and during the past four years has developed, until he is undoubtedly one of the best sabre men to show in these parts in recent years.

After watching Schwab in action, I wish to state flatly, firmly, loudly, and unequivocally that alchemists

will be creating gold from second-hand canary cages before any Big Ten sabre man beats Charley in a fair match.

In fact, I want to go even further and say that alchemists will be creating gold from just the doors of used bird cages, before many amateurs can last long enough against Schwab in an important tournament, to make it worth their while to pack more than one pair of socks in their over-night bag.

If you ever hear a student on this campus boast that he can beat this 21-year old senior in a sabre match, you can bet your last shilling that their threats are about as empty as a leaky rain barrel on the Sahara.

Last year Charley placed second in Big Ten eliminations and was invited to attend the final eliminations for the 1936 Olympic team, held in New York City.

Schwab came to Ohio State from Canal Winchester and since then has been continuously electrifying spectators by his sensational style of attack. Charley has a strong, surging attack, and even though his sabre usually moves faster than the eye, every one of his touches is evidenced by the sharp report of his flashing blade against some unprotected portion of his opponent's body.

Charley graduates in June, 1938, and intends to work in one of the larger metal mines.

He kindly consented to give a sketchy explanation of the seemingly insane antics of the judges and participants in a fencing match.

If you are anything like your previously uninformed reporter, you have often wondered just what the procedure was, as well as what it is the judges talk about.

To trace a fictitious bout through—the director holds his blade over the center line of the mat (3 x 40 ft.) or (6 x 40 ft.) and says "En garde." The contestants cross weapons over the director's blade, and at his command to step back, they both step back a few paces and then step forward to fence at the command "play." The bout continues until one of the judges witnesses a touch, and then the bout is stopped until the touch is agreed upon by the other judges, whereupon it is continued until a certain number of touches are recorded against a man.

In foils and sabres 5 touches are required to win a bout, unless the score goes to four each, and in this case the man recording 6 touches first, wins the bout. In a match there are 17 bouts, 9 foil, 4 sabre, and 4 epee.

In foil bouts touches are registered by touching the opponent, with the point of the foil, only, on his torso—only vital parts being considered, as foils are not heavy enough to inflict a serious injury in the arms or legs.

Sabre bouts are by far the most spectacular of the three, as touches are made by hitting the opponent with the point, cutting edge, or the first 8 inches of the back of the blade. An opponent may be touched on any part of the body but the legs, as a sabre is capable of inflicting serious injury on any other part of the body.

The epee bouts furnish probably the dullest enter-

tainment of the group. The entire body is considered vital, touches being counted when the *pointe d'arrêt* touches any part of the body. The end is rouged and a touch is apparent by the red mark the point leaves on the white suit of the fencer.

In a match the attacker lunges at the attacked, the attacked parries and follows up by a *repoiste*, or repulse, to the attacker, who parries and sets up a *remise*, or counter-attack.

In order to launch a *remise* a man must parry the *repoiste* before he has the right of way. The attacker always has the right of way, or the right to have his touch recognized first, unless the attack misses, then the *repoiste* has the right of way.

Perhaps you have seen an attacker apparently go berserk and run down the mat, slashing at his opponent as he goes. This is known as a *fêche* or running attack, and is considered rather dangerous for the uninitiated to try as the attacker must protect the back as well as the front and side of his body as he passes his opponent.

Sometimes the two participants will parry thrusts, and in so doing, one will force the other's blade to the mat and their bodies will come into contact. This is known as *corps-a-corps*. However a touch is awarded the opponent if the attacker rushes the defender and brings his body into play to guard with or to parry the other's *repoiste*.

As far as fouls are concerned, a direct foul stops the bout but a parried foul doesn't. By a parried foul we mean a foul that was made by a defender charging the attacker's thrust into a foul by parrying it.

Foil matches are limited to 10 minutes of actual fencing time and epee matches are limited to 15 minutes.

In this sport one probably finds more courtesy shown by both opponents than in any other sport. If a participant wishes to stop the bout to straighten his blade or for any other reason he taps the mat twice with his feet.

We wish to thank Charley for his interesting explanation of the sport, and if his career doesn't make it impossible he will probably be listed on the 1940 Olympic team.