

Maestro Kaidanov was born and raised in the former Soviet Union. He holds a degree in Physical Education, Anatomy and Physiology and Sport of Fencing from the Pedagogical College in Kharkov (1962).

He emigrated to the United States in 1979, and became one of the most prominent fencing coaches in the country. After coaching at Salle D'Armes, McLean, VA. (1979-1982), he served as Head Fencing Coach at Penn State University from 1982 to 2013. During his tenure, Penn State won 12 NCAA fencing team titles, and captured second place 7 times. Many of the fencers he coached won Individual NCAA titles and ten of them went on to become Olympians.

In 1993, he was awarded a Diploma of Maitre d'Armes by the Academie of Armes Internationale. That same year, Maestro Kaidanov was appointed to the USFCA's Certification and Accreditation Board (CAB) where he served for several years.

In 1998, Maestro Kaidanov co-authored with Max Garrett and Gil Pezza a text book for coaches: Foil, Saber and Epee Fencing. The book was reprinted several times and, according to many responses, was a useful tool for fencing coaches. He played an instrumental role in the U.S. Coaches College at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs where he co-authored with the late Michael Dasaro the Saber Manual for the College.

Starting in 1985, Maestro Kaidanov joined the cadre of fencing coaches serving with the U.S. national fencing teams. In this capacity, he participated in several Senior and Junior World Championships, World University Games, Pan American Championships and Maccabiah Games. He was also a highly-ranked international referee and from 1987 to 2000 had officiated in many national events as well as World Cups, World Championships and Olympic Games. Several of his former students have become professional fencing coaches, such as (to name a few) Bruce Capin, Peter Barnett, his son Greg Kaidanov, Jeff Salmon, Geoffrey Russell, Andy Gearhart and more...

Starting in 2019, he collaborated with Gil Pezza (the current Chair of CAB) on two innovative strategic projects. The first project addressed the need to experiment with alternative formats for USFCA clinics, which are on the traditional Lecturer/Students models. To that end, together with Gil Pezza, he launched two pilot clinics in which both he and Gil Pezza acted as facilitators (rather than lecturers). These clinics were predicated on an interactive approach with creative problem-solving sessions with the aim of drawing on participants' knowledge and creativity. The overall goal of this new model for clinics is to inspire participants to think as a fencing coach.

With respect to the second strategic project, Maestro Kaidanov and Maestro Gil Pezza were tasked by the USFCA with the development of National Training Program (NTP) for each weapon by using a methodology predicated on a logical progression of certain fundamental abilities that are key to the development of fencers. The main purpose of the NTP is to provide a conceptual teaching path for the novice coaches to follow, with the goal of enabling them, over time, to create their own methodology of coaching. To that end, Maestro Kaidanov and Maestro Pezza collaborated on this task, working an average of five hours per day for over 14 months.

They developed the following work-products:

- Foil Methodology (Kaidanov)
- Epee Methodology (Pezza)
- Saber Methodology (Kaidanov)
- Preparatory Methodology (Gil Pezza)

These methodologies were tested and introduced at the two pilot clinics.

Maestro Kaidanov and Maestro Pezza are planning to release the Preparatory Methodology to the USFCA sometime later this month. The foil, saber and epee methodologies require abilities predicated on tempo, velocity/ acceleration and distance. To that end, the Preparatory Methodology is focused on the fundamental elements of fencing -as applied to footwork and the fencing arm. In this respect, the Preparatory Methodology is more aligned with the predominance of tactical footwork over technique in modern fencing. As aptly put in the language of fencing: *En escrime aujourd'hui le jeu de jambes est plus sophistiqué que les phrases d'armes (gil pezza -2019).*

To implement the innovative model for USFCA clinics and implement the National Training Program, it is important to provide continuity on CAB. Furthermore, the USFCA certifications levels need to be aligned with the progression of abilities in the National Training Program and more emphasis on preparatory footwork needs to be placed at the Assistant Moniteur and Moniteur levels. For these reasons, Maestro Kaidanov is submitting his candidacy to CAB and, respectfully, seeks the support of members during the upcoming USFCA elections.