

Rogue Fencing Coaching Clinic

April 30 and May 1, 2022

Paul Sise, John Krauss and Bruce Gillman, - presenters

Skill Level - Advanced Moniteur/Prevot Developmental

Goals - 1) Ensure coaches are aware of the safety, ethical, and professional requirements inherent to being a fencing coach. 2) Give coaches the tools to be able to create an endless variety of group class and lesson material through the understanding of how to select skills and combine them in a variety of ways in order to suit the needs of beginner to advanced students, or a combination of both. 3) Teach coaches concepts and skills that are necessary to increase the tactical complexity and challenge of individual lessons in order to facilitate the development of higher level competitors.

Saturday Morning

Introductions and distribution of handouts.

Safety and Professionalism - Gillman (discussion)

-Safe Environment

- Room

- Equipment

- Coaches

 - Coaches must be knowledgeable of proper techniques

 - Train students properly to avoid overuse injuries, accidents, etc

- Students

 - Must follow safety rules

 - Be respectful of one another

-Risk Management

- Ensure Safety

- Act ethically

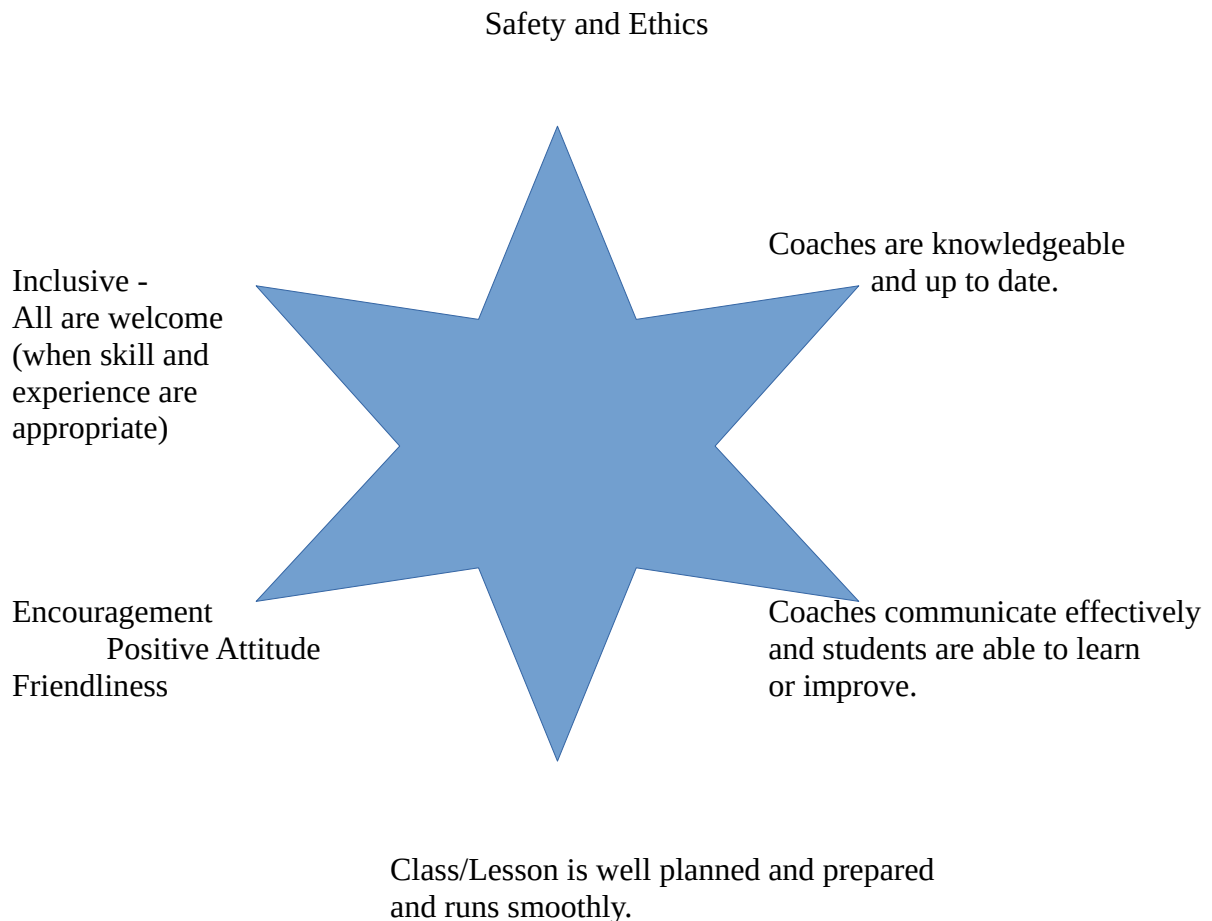
- Avoid all forms of harassment

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact

(For instance, use a foil to help guide legs into proper guard position.)

- Insurance

What is Professionalism? - What do your students expect of you?



10 minute break - coaches get dressed for giving lessons

Group Class/Individual Lesson Construction - Sise

Combining 2 drills into a 3rd

One way to develop drills (or a lesson) is to select two distinct actions and then combine them. This is good for starting easy and developing greater difficulty in the drill without making it overly complicated or hard to follow for the student. For instance:

Drill 1) Offense

Coach cues for 1 or more types of attack that are dependent on the skill of the student.

Easy version – simple direct attack when coach stops footwork and opens target

Hard version – coach cues for simple and compound attacks, attack into prep, etc

Drill 2) Defense

Coach attacks the student so that the student can perform various parry ripostes

Easy version – student makes parry 4 riposte direct

Hard version – student makes various parries, ripostes may be direct, indirect, or compound, hitting various sections of the torso.

Drill 3) Offense and Defense

Coach either cues for attacks or makes attacks, thereby combining the previous 2 drills.

Using a simple drill as a foundation to build complexity:

Or the first drill can be the foundation for the second and third. Less experienced fencers can stick with drills 1 and/or 2 while the more experienced fencers progress to the 3rd.

This drill gives the student something to do if the opponent is advancing, staying still, or retreating. A simpler version could reduce the actionable moments, ie, instead of advancing, staying still, or retreating it could be only one or two of those. Notice though in this example that version 1 of the drill is very much worthwhile practicing since it deals with distance and timing, but is fairly simplistic. Version 2 is more complicated, but if done slowly is still quite manageable. It can be reduced in difficulty by incorporating only 1 or 2 of the differences from version 1 instead of using all three. Version 3 has the potential to be very challenging for even experienced competitors.

Drill version 1)

Coach stays still while lowering blade – Student thrusts

Coach stops footwork and lowers blade – Student lunges

Coach retreats while lowering blade – student slowly pursues but does not attack

Drill version 2)

Coach advances while lowering blade or attacks – Student thrusts or parries and ripostes

Coach stops footwork and lowers blade or makes point in line – Student lunges or beats/takes the blade

Coach retreats while lowering blade – student slowly pursues but does not attack or makes feint attack if distance and timing are appropriate

Drill version 3)

Same as version 2 but now student leads footwork. Coach may make unforeseen actions such as parrying and riposting.

Lunch - 1 hour

Cueing with distance and direction changes - Krauss

Demonstrate the following cueing techniques and have the coaches **practice** them.

Distance

Student initiates attack when student enters distance.

Student follows when coach attempts to break distance.

Student either retreats or makes beat attack or counter attacks when coach enters distance.

Direction

Student attacks on coach changing from retreats to advances.

Student takes over the attack when coach changes from forward motion to retreats.

Repeat with Student leading footwork.

Afternoon Exam - Attending coaches take turns giving a short 5 minute lesson observed by the whole group using the material that was practiced during the day. The lesson must include 1) Three phases, either two options blocked and then combined as random/serial or one option that builds in difficulty. 2) At least one cue that is based on distance or direction. 3) Switches from coach led to student led footwork.

Sunday

Distance Stealing Footwork – Demonstration - Sise

Half advance – extension of the front leg from the knee.

Half retreat- extension of the rear leg from the knee.

(With these no distance is taken for given but the illusion of taking or giving distance is made.)

Forward check – half retreat, full advance

Backward check – half advance, full retreat

Exercise - Pair up - have one person lead footwork using distance stealing footwork techniques while the partner is limited to full advances and full retreats. Reverse rolls. Notice how the person doing full advances and retreats always seems to be a tempo behind.

False Cues - Krauss - Cues that resemble genuine cues but are done at the wrong time or distance and should therefore be ignored by the student.

Unforeseen Actions by the coach Krauss- An unexpected action made by the coach, often as a response to the student's action. For instance, if the student is attacking and expects to hit, the coach may parry. If the student is making a feint attack and expects the coach to parry 6, the coach makes parry 4 (or counterattacks) instead. Unforeseen actions by the coach are often used as ways of introducing new material or transitioning from one lesson technique to another, or are simply used to keep the student alert and engaged in the lesson.

5 minute break

Moving from Beginner to Competitive Difficulty lessons - Sise

This demonstration will provide examples of ways to smoothly build from a simple to complex lesson. We will discuss the benefits to the student with each modification of the lesson. After the demonstration each coach will practice short, 5 minute lessons teaching the student a simple direct attack, disengage attack, or a parry and riposte. Coaches will change partners in order to work with a variety of people and will be expected to give at least 4 lessons. This should provide coaches with a solid steppingstone to the teaching lesson, as well as give ideas for how to increase the level of an options lesson. These

skills should be shown in the Prevot and Master level practical exams. Note that the order that these skills are presented in are not strictly progressive. For instance, "unforeseen actions," used sparingly, may be introduced at almost any point in the lesson.

Varying distance and footwork

Changing lines

Direct to indirect actions

Tempo changes in footwork and bladework

Adding a preparation such as a beat or invitation

Modifying to second intention

Simple to compound actions

Unforeseen actions by coach (an unexpected parry or attack, etc)

False cues by coach

Student control of footwork

Student initiated bladework

Lunch - 1 hour

Organizing an Options Lesson toward Continuous Preparation & Immediate Tactical Action - John Krauss. Coaches practice giving this lesson after the demonstration.

Organizing an Options Lesson toward Continuous Preparation & Immediate Tactical Action

Organize the progression of the lesson (s):

1. Warm-up each action separately (Block)
2. Chain 2 actions together with transition (Serial)
3. Chain 3 actions together with transitions (Serial)
4. Add variables to shape and change conditions in order to introduce foreseen and unforeseen elements.
5. Add student preparations
6. (Random) Vary cues and conditions for any combination of actions in random order.

Sample Variables:

- Mobility (before/between/after)
- Actions defeated (by distance/parrys/ evasion, counter-offense)
- Preparations (handwork/footwork/ distance)
- Student led distance and initiation
- Student chooses order of chained actions (Serial)
- Student's strongest actions

Circles = Tactical actions

T = Transitions between actions

Common actions Foil - Attack/Riposte/Counter-riposte (Right of Way)
per weapon: Saber - Attack/Riposte/Counter-riposte (Right of Way) & Stop-cut
 Epee - Attack/Riposte/Counter-attack and also Counter-Riposte

Tactical Action vs. Technique

Tactical Action: Action the fencer wants to use to touch (Attack, Riposte, Counter-riposte, Counter-attack)

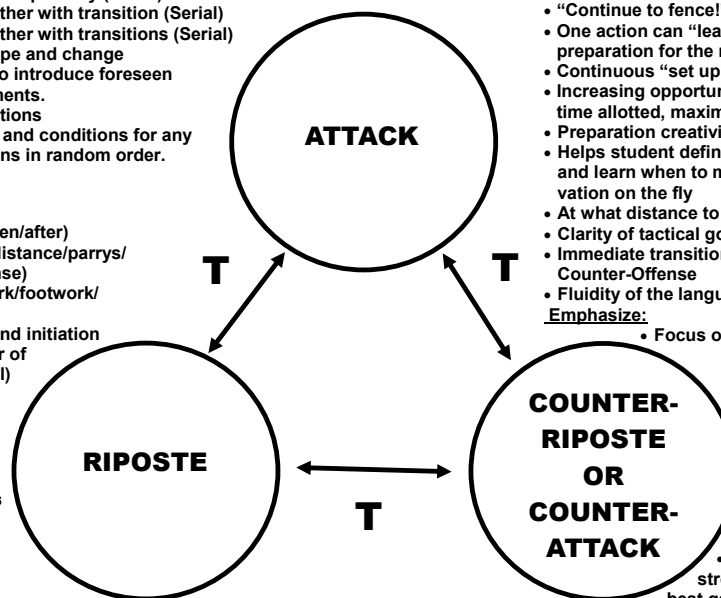
Technique: One of the many ways an action can be executed (Beat Attack, Feint Deceive, Indirect Riposte, Counter-time Riposte etc.)

What does it teach:

- Transitions between tactical actions:
- "Continue to fence!"
 - One action can "lead to" or become the preparation for the next action
 - Continuous "set up" preparation to actions
 - Increasing opportunities to make touches with time allotted, maximizing tactical opportunity
 - Preparation creativity and immediacy
 - Helps student define the success of an action and learn when to move forward tactically, observation on the fly
 - At what distance to make tactical changes
 - Clarity of tactical goal with a back-up
 - Immediate transition between offense/Defense/ Counter-Offense
 - Fluidity of the language of fencing

Emphasize:

- Focus on setting up action vs. over-focusing on which technique. What is the difference?
- Learning how one action can lead to the next (transition) tactically and also logically. Ask student questions about their perceptions. "What could you do here?"
- Work with the student's strongest actions to build their best game and teach them how to use their best actions together seamlessly.
- Help student define whether their initial action was successful without deliberating, in order to move ahead tactically.



Afternoon Exam - Attending coaches take turns giving short 5 minute lessons observed by the whole group to demonstrate material that was practiced that day. Each lesson must include 1) A distance stealing footwork technique 2) Any three of the modifications listed under "Moving from beginner to competitive lessons and 3) At least one of the technical-tactical transitions demonstrated by Maitre Krauss. It is strongly recommended that the lesson be written out and practiced before being demonstrated to the group.

End of Clinic - USFCA members go online and fill out clinic evaluation forms. Be sure to leave a comment. Krauss and Sise confirm visually that each person fills out the form. Non-members fill out paper forms provided.

Maitre Krauss hands out certificates of attendance.