

Fencing for the ages

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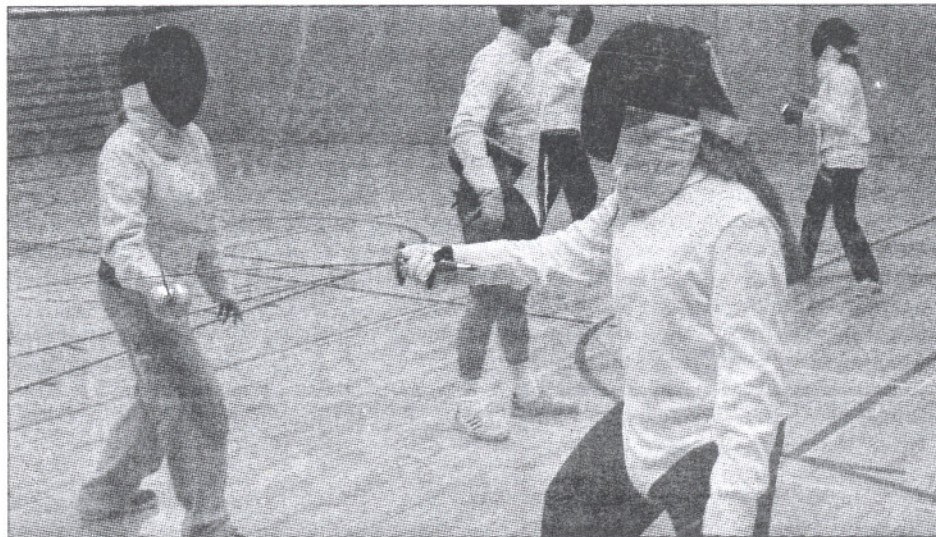
Sword-slinging adventures available on campus

By JESSICA GALLIOT

Students looking for a new sport this winter can try fencing. A lesser known sport in Newfoundland, fencing is a welcomed change from the routine trek to the gym.

Theodore Norvell runs MUN's Fencing Club. Norvell has run the club since September 2002, and has 25 years of fencing experience. "Personally, I think it's a beautiful sport; a sport of distance, timing, and perception," he said. "[Fencing is] a very close sport. People are very close together, so you have to move quickly, but [you] also have to be controlled. The techniques are difficult at first, but they come [naturally]. It's a sport that you continue to learn as long as you're alive."

The class starts with the usual warm-ups, then



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"Fencing is like chess at 100 miles per hour" and is also one of many different sports available for MUN students.

proceeds to laps around the gym, stretch, and then footwork. For the footwork exercises, everyone lines up and proceeds to have a game of follow-the-leader, as Norvell changes pace and

style of footwork. The proper fencing stance is with knees bent, with your feet at shoulder-width apart, while on a 90 degree angle. After footwork, the group split for instruction and drills.

Fencing is certainly a different sport. A friend once said it's like chess at 100 miles per hour. For every move you make towards your opponent, you must be prepared for their reaction. The game is very quick. The first person to reach five points wins.

There are three types of fencing. *Epée* fencing involves the entire body as a target, and the tip of the sword is used. *Saber* fencing has the fencing arm and above the belly button area as a target, and it uses the side of a bigger sword. The third type of fencing is *foil*, which involves only the torso area, with the tip of the sword. The Fencing Club at MUN only teaches foil at the moment. Right now, only Memorial and Herdman Collegiate in Corner Brook offer fencing.

Fencing is a truly unique experience – something completely outside the realm of ordinary sports. "[Fencing is] a sport that really grows on you, and you can be passionate about [it]," said Norvell.

The group meets 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm on Tuesdays for beginners, and on Wednesdays for intermediate groups. Membership fees are \$60, and upon membership, all lessons and equipment rental is free.