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A Divine Kerfuffle
Dramaturg

History of Fencing

What is Fencing?

Fencing is an organized sport that uses a sword, (epee, foil, or sabre), to attack and to defend with set movements and set rules.

Fencing Origins

Fencing originates in Egypt about 3,000 years ago. It was used for war and for practice or competitive duels. It specifically took place in the temple of Medinat Habu near Luxor, built by Ramses the 3rd around 1190 BCE.

Fencing was also being practiced by Greeks, Romans, Babylonians, Persians, and the Germanic tribes. In Rome, fencing was a systematic art taught to gladiators. They began learning with a wooden sword, and as they advanced they actually used weapons that were heavier than what would be used in combat.

16th Century Fencing

In Italy during the 16th century, masters of fencing created three different styles. These styles are still being used today because they were crucial in the development of fencing. The masters that created these styles are Filippo Vadi, Achille Marozzo, and Ridolfo Capoferro. The three styles are the foil, the epee, and the sabre.

The Italians discovered they preferred the dexterous point rather than the edge of the sword. By the end of the 16th century, their new lighter weapon they created, which was simple, nimble, and controlled the fencing style, spread all across Europe.

17th Century Fencing

In the 17th Century, French classical fencing originated when King Louis XIV said French fencers must train in the rapier. They trained under the “belle Epee”, which was exclusive under this decree from the king.

In 1670, Ecole des Maitres d’Armes, the School of Swordsmanship, was founded in France. It was one of the first schools teaching skills for the military and skills in self-defense in Europe.

Towards the end of the century the dress for this sport changed. The court of Louis XIV in France changed the dress from doublet and hose, top boots, and cloaks to silk stockings, breeches, and broadened coats. The style was immediately accepted across Europe.



18th Century Fencing

The 18th Century brought the end of fencing used for dueling and wars. It unfortunately ended because of the rise of technology and new weapons. Fencing from then on was just a sport in the form of swordplay.

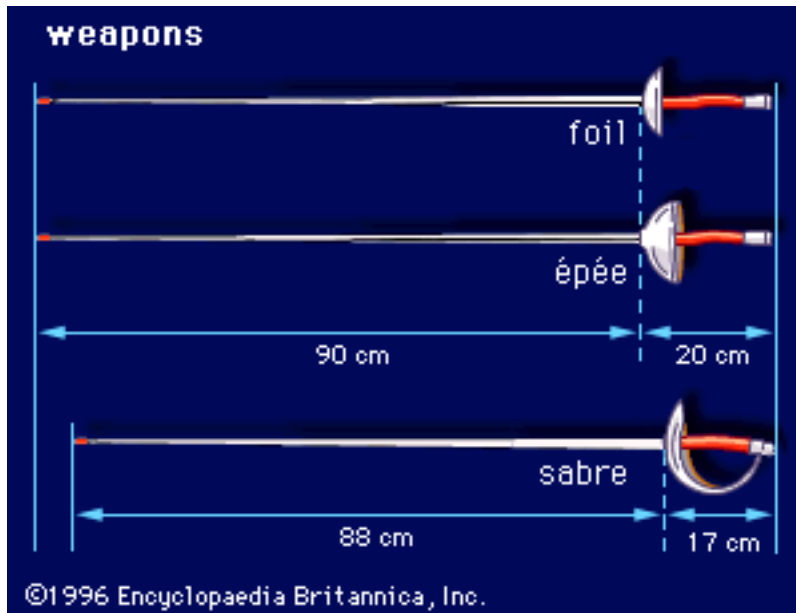


19th Century Fencing

Fencing increased in popularity as an organized sport throughout this century. Initial conventions were first held in the 1880's by the French, specifically Camille Prevost. The Amateur Fencers League of America was founded in 1891, the Amateur Fencers Association of Great Britain was founded in 1902, and the Federation Nationale des Societes d’Escrime et Salles d’Armes de France was founded in 1906. In the United States initial collegiate fencing teams and organizations were being established at the same time as these initial leagues. In 1894, the Intercollegiate Fencing Association held its first matches. This organization is now part of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

In 1896, Men's Fencing joined the Olympic Games. In 1900, the epee was added as an individual event, joining foil and sabre.

Weapons



Fencing YouTube Videos

<https://youtu.be/kTw05gC2T9Y?si=kBgEGfx-o-xUQych>

https://youtu.be/a8IdfA5fXJs?si=7tdx4txjTdYgf_TK

<https://youtu.be/yHyb80U5-fc?si=pRzGo3NNm6MgAW5i>

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