

FUNDAMENTAL ÉPÉE STRATEGY: (Pronounced: "Éh-pay")

Be CALM: Keep Your Mind Calm & Confident, and Your Shoulders Relaxed.

Be FOCUSED: Total Focus on your Opponent and the Bout (Score & Time Remaining).

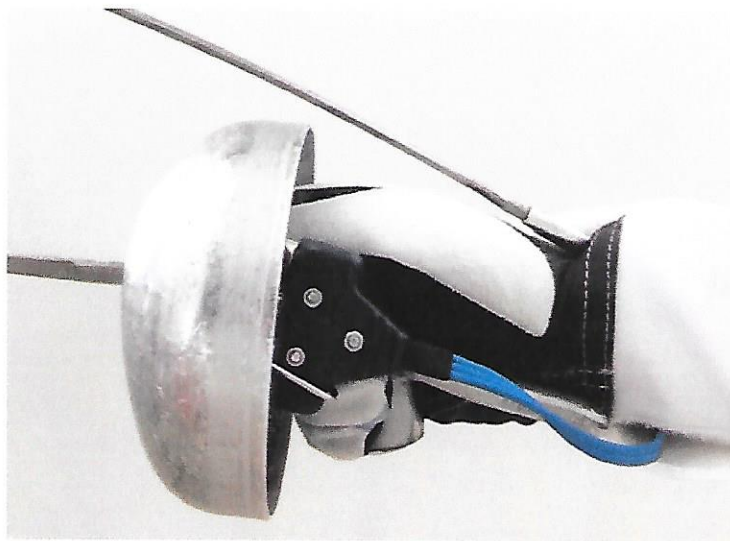
Be PATIENT: Observe - Learn - Wait for & Create Opportunities to Score.

Be SMART: Fence Smart - Get the Lead And Keep the Lead - Manage the Clock.

Be QUICK: Your Movements must be Quick - yet Smooth and Efficient.

Stay-In-Motion: Constant Subtle Forward/Rearward/Sideways Movement keeps you Ready to React, makes you a Moving Target and helps to Conceal your Intentions. You are using your Footwork & Bladework to Create an Advantage in Distance and/or Time. Control the Distance by "Pushing" or "Pulling" your opponent to Your Advantage.

Target the Hand: It is critical that you develop the Accuracy to score touches to your opponent's Hand and Arm. Doing this allows you to score When Attacked, and to score against Taller (Longer-Armed) opponents. Make Precise, Smooth & Confident touches.



Each Point Matters: Each time you line-up to fence, you should be thinking that you are fencing a 1-Point Bout. Ultimately, your goal should be to Win Every Action - Not allowing your opponent to score Any points. Be Patient - Fence 1 Point at a time.

Score First: In Épée, when a fencer scores a touch, the scoring box is designed to Block-Out the second fencer's touch - IF it does not arrive within 40 milliseconds (0.04 seconds). This is approximately the amount of time it takes to make one click of a button on a computer mouse. If you score that much quicker than your opponent, you will avoid a "Double-Touch" (A Point for Both fencers). Be Quick - Be First - Be Smooth.

Score With Evasion: Score while moving your Arm/Body out of your opponent's reach or the direction that their Épée Tip is traveling. They may eventually hit - but too late.

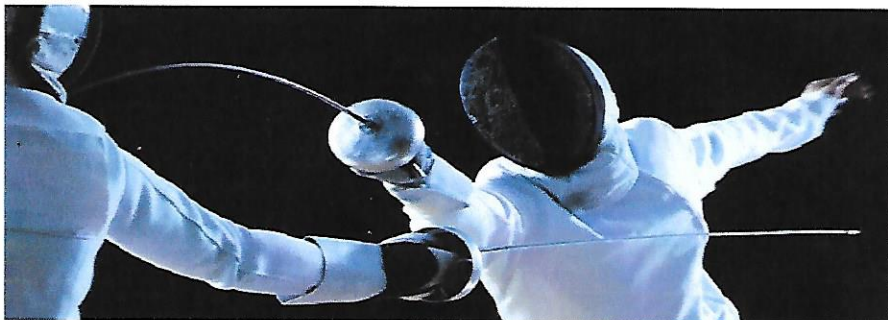
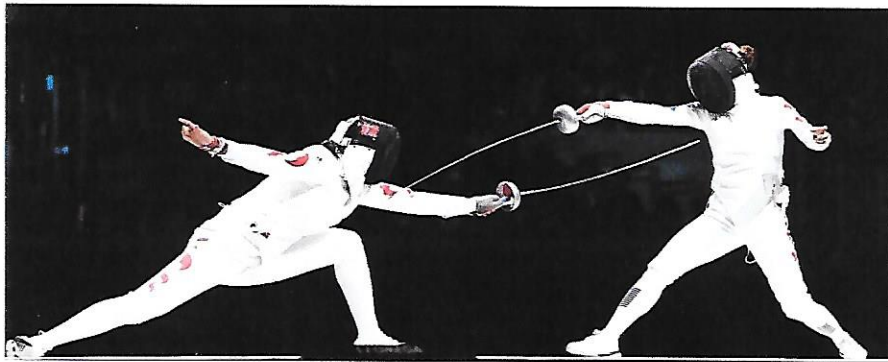
Score With Surprise or Mis-Direction: [Fencing is About **FINESSE** - NOT Force]

- Quickly Beat or Tap your opponent's blade (Create a Distraction) as you Extend or Lunge to their Hand/Arm/Body.
- Extend to the Hand - If they pull it back - Lunge to their Arm, Shoulder, Leg or Body.
- Invite/Bait your opponent to Attack - Then Counterattack to their Hand.
- Use Bladework/Footwork to cause your opponent to Hesitate - then Lunge to their Hand/Arm/Body (Attacking into their Preparations/Hesitations).

Score With Blade Control: Score while Pressing against your opponent's blade with your Blade & Guard AS you Extend/Lunge/Move Forward - Deflecting/Forcing your opponent's Épée Tip Away from you.

Every Opponent is Different: Adapt to Each opponent - Set-Up Your Attacks/Counter Attacks - Be Unpredictable. Be.....

CALM - FOCUSED - PATIENT - SMART - QUICK



"A.B.C.": [Always Be Counter-Attacking]

A Counter-Attack in general, is an Extension or Lunge that you make Just Before, As or Just After an Opponent Attacks you Or Attempts to Attack you:

Attack Into Your Opponent's Preparation/Hesitation: Extend or Lunge to your Opponent's Hand/Arm/Chest when they are delaying or hesitating to make their Attack. You may be able to cause this hesitation by - Keeping a bit more distance; Making Taps/Beats towards the end of your Opponent's blade; Making feints of Attacks.

Attack As Your Opponent Attacks: Maintain Focus on your Opponent's Hand, Arm or Shoulder and accurately extend and place your Épée Tip there to Intercept/Stop the Target as it is Moving Toward you. You can do this while Standing Still; As you Lean Back or while Moving Rearward during an Opponent's more aggressive Attack.

Attack As Your Opponent's Attack Fails: Attack immediately after an Opponent's Attack Fails - They will often be off-balance or too distracted to respond to your Counter-Attack. You may be able to Invite your Opponent to Attack - Then Cause them to miss by Evading their Épée Tip by Leaning/Hopping Back or Moving your Body sideways and then Attacking them as the Distance requires. [Be careful to avoid their Épée Tip].

*Remember that you only have to Score the Touch a "Mouse-Click" (0.04 of a second) Quicker than your Opponent to avoid a Double-Touch.

"Blade Control": [Defending Yourself by Controlling Your Opponent's Blade]

Parry & Riposte: While Counter-Attacking is the preferred Defense in Épée, the Parry is also an important tool. Parry: Trap your opponents Attacking Blade in the Right-Angle formed by your Guard and Blade - Pushing their Blade/Épée Tip Away from you - While bending your wrist to keep your Épée Tip pointing at your Opponent. Riposte: Maintain Control of your Opponent's Blade - Pressing Against/Sliding down their blade AS you are Extending/Lunging to score the touch.

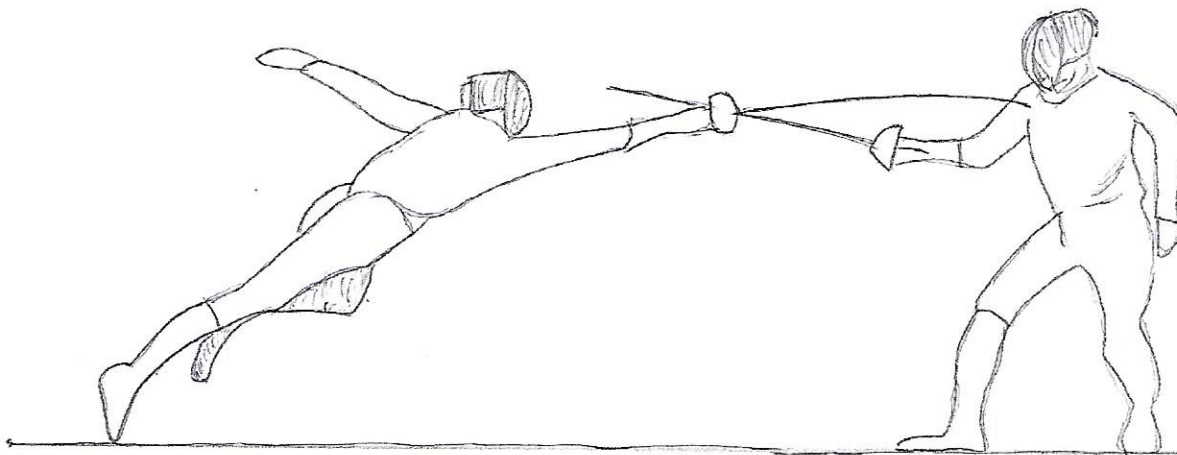
Press-Attacks: These are simply Attacks that you make by Pressing-Against/Controlling your Opponent's blade AS you Extend/Lunge - Forcing their Épée Tip away from you.

The "FLÉCHE" Attack:

The Flèche Attack (In English Pronounced: "Flesh"), is an explosive Attack, which is made from just outside of a Fencer's normal Lunging Distance from their Opponent. It is a powerful leaping movement made by pushing Forward off the Front Leg (Not Upward). The Touch is scored Before the Back foot lands on the floor (The Flèche is Not a Running Attack*).

The Arm is quickly and completely extended while pushing-off the Front foot - making a Straight line from the Épée Tip through the Arm, Body & Front Leg. As the Touch is scored, the Fencer's Back foot, (Already moving forward), lands as the Fencer moves Past the Opponent (Touching an Opponent with your Arm or Body; or Scoring a Touch While Falling, can result in a Penalty and/or a Scored Point not being allowed).

The Flèche should not be repeatedly attempted during the same bout. It is best used as a Surprise Attack, or as for All Attacks - when you can create an advantage in Distance and Timing, and/or when you can catch your Opponent during a moment of Hesitation.



[*Running Attacks generally are used when a Fencer is behind and Time is running short in the bout. At the command of "Fence", the Fencer rushes forward attempting to score without allowing a Double-Touch].

Shawn - (2019)

YouTube Channels Useful for Fencing Training & Motivation:

"USAFencing" - Search the channel, "Women's Epee" / "Men's Epee", to display videos of Competition Direct Elimination bouts.

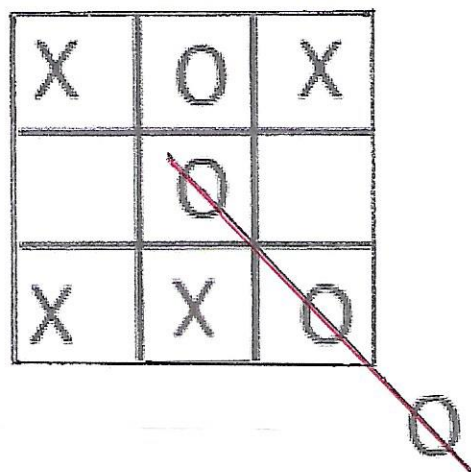
"Fencing Vision" - Search the channel, "ME" (For Men's Epee) or "WE" (Women's Epee). International Competitions - Direct Elimination or Team Bouts.

"Dax68" - Click on "Videos" below the "Dax68" to display the videos of Competition Bouts. Most of the actions are shown with Slow-motion replay.

"Michel Sicard" - Click on "Videos" below his name to display short videos of portions of lessons. Sicard is one of the coaches for the French National Team.

Be sure to observe how the Fencers adjust their Tactics as the Score and Time-Remaining dictates. (*Watch the INDIVIDUAL 15 - Point bouts, rather than the TEAM 45 - Point bouts, as Team bouts are Fenced with a different strategy).

ÉPÉE is "Physical Tic-Tac-Toe":



[Think OUTSIDE The Box]

-- Shawn