



(703) 321-4922  
www.VAFinc.com

# VAFNews

*A newsletter for VAF members*

*Fall 2006*

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## **1. ANOTHER YEAR OF FANTASTIC RESULTS AT THE UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION 2006 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS!**

This year's Championships were held the week of July 4th in Atlanta, Georgia. Nearly 50 VAF fencers participated in numerous events with over 4,000 fencers from all over the country. Medals were awarded to the top 8 finishers in each category, many categories having hundreds of fencers. Our fencers brought home THIRTEEN MEDALS! Thanks go to all foil, epee, and sabre fencers who represented VAF at this annual event.

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING MEDALISTS:**

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| <b>A. C. ELDEIB</b>   | <b>NATIONAL CHAMPION GOLD MEDALIST</b><br>Youth 10 Mens Epee<br>5th Place Youth 12 Mens Epee<br>8th Place Youth 10 Mens Foil |
| <b>SASHA RYJIK</b>  | <b>NATIONAL CHAMPION GOLD MEDALIST</b><br>Youth 12 Mens Sabre  |
| <b>JEANINE BENDER</b>   | <b>SILVER</b> Veterans 50/59 Womens Sabre  |
| <b>TALIA ALEXANDER,<br/>NANCY BOWDEN, and<br/>SARAH AULT KLAM</b> | <b>SILVER</b> Senior Womens Team Epee  |
| <b>PHIL SBARBARO</b>  | <b>BRONZE</b> Veteran's 60+ Mens Sabre   |
| <b>LOGAN MCKINNEY</b>   | <b>BRONZE</b> Division II Mens Epee  |
| <b>TALIA ALEXANDER</b>  | <b>7th Place</b> Division II Womens Epee   |
| <b>DEB STOPAK</b>   | <b>7th Place</b> Veterans 40/49 Womens Sabre   |
| <b>ED SADY</b>  | <b>7th Place</b> Veteran's 60+ Mens Foil   |

### **Congratulations also go to the coaches:**

Head Coach Alexandre Ryjik, producing his 3rd National Champion in a row.

Olympic Coach Alexei Sintchinov, who adds to his impressive resume by producing another National Champion in less than a year.

Epee Coach Ilya Lobanenkov, whose students led the VAF team to a silver medal.

## **2. VAF PROGRAMS**

VAF's diverse program structure offers members the opportunity to excel in their fencing training in either the Historical Swordsmanship or the Olympic Sport program.

### **HISTORICAL SWORDSMANSHIP**

The Historical Swordsmanship program offers not only a broad-based youth program but also both Intermediate as well as Advanced classes for teens and adults in Two-handed Sword and Rapier.

The Youth program allows students to explore a variety of historical sword fighting techniques from the Medieval and Renaissance periods. Weapons studied include the rapier and dagger of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the two-handed sword, and the sword and shield of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The Teen/Adult program allows students to focus on a particular sword fighting style, specifically the two-handed sword or the rapier. Both Intermediate as well as Advanced classes are offered in these two historical sword fighting disciplines.

Benefits include social interaction and camaraderie with other members who share a love of history, theatre, and swashbuckling adventure. VAF Historical Swordsmanship competitions, while not required, offer these students the rare opportunity to participate in a structured event to test their sword fighting skills.

### **OLYMPIC SPORT**

The Olympic Sport programs offer a wide array of training opportunities for both non-competitive as well as competitive fencers in the three sport disciplines – foil, sabre, and epee. VAF's unique structure provides the opportunity to develop an individualized training program geared to accomplish a variety of goals in one or a combination of the different sport disciplines.

### **NON-COMPETITIVE TRAINING**

Members participate in "dry" (non-electric) or electric classes with a focus on developing basic skills in a fun and social environment in a moderately paced learning program. These members enjoy a good physical workout in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere with no pressure to compete.

**Dry classes** provide an excellent opportunity for new members to transition from the Beginning program to the intermediate level. While new members have the option to join electric classes at any time, dry classes allow them to fine tune and hone their fencing skills in a relaxed setting. Students generally stay with a dry program for a few months to a year, when they are strongly encouraged to consider switching to an electric class.

**Electric classes** are recommended for any student, and especially for those students who have completed one year of training. Classes use electric scoring equipment that enables the student to significantly improve point control and overall technique.

Regular attendance at Supervised Free Fencing sessions and participation in VAF clinics are encouraged. The opportunity to participate in VAF dry and electric competitions, in a friendly atmosphere, enables participants to test their skill level as well as to provide a springboard to becoming actively competitive, if interested.

## **COMPETITIVE TRAINING**

Competitive fencing requires commitment, time, and a strong work ethic. VAF offers two distinct advanced-level training programs for members who are interested in becoming active competitive fencers: Competitive and Master. While admission to both programs requires coach's approval, it is possible for some students to go directly from an intermediate "dry" class to one of these programs.

The benefits of competitive fencing are numerous and are not limited to specific age groups. Youth participants have the opportunity to demonstrate a disciplined approach in a unique sport on college applications. Excellent results open the door to admission at top universities such as Harvard, Stanford, Cornell, Notre Dame, Penn State, U Penn and many others (see a list of colleges in the Parent Information area hallway at VAF). Adults also can benefit by qualifying to represent the US in a number of World Cup competitions or as a "veteran" in the World Championships.

Fencing at tournaments greatly improves physical and mental responses, including analytical decision making under pressure. Confidence, discipline and sportsmanship are developed, rewarding benefits that last a lifetime. Competitors also explore new cities and socialize with fencers after fencing events.

**Competitive classes** meet twice a week for 1½ hours per session. These programs include group instruction, physical fitness workouts, and strategy and technical development sessions. Members entering this program are required to attend all classes and to begin competing in local and in some national competitions. The goal is to achieve results at local, state and national levels.

**Master classes** meet three times a week for 2 hours per session and provide the highest level of training. Serious and intensive, classes are designed to produce skilled competitive fencers. A strong commitment is essential, not just for the individual, but for the team as a whole. Attendance of all classes and competitions at local, national, and international (when applicable) events with additional free fencing practice is mandatory. The goal is to create national and international champions. Skill level is not as important as having the right attitude. An interview between the coach and the prospective student (and parents, if student is a minor) must be arranged in advance.

**PRIVATE LESSONS** offer the opportunity for individualized focus and continuous improvement. They are an excellent addition to any training program. Students often combine individual private lessons and frequent free-fencing with classes to progress more rapidly.

## **3. YOU CAN FENCE AT THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Summer Nationals 2007 will be in Miami, Florida! Four divisions – I, IA, II, and III – accommodate all skill levels and age categories. Age categories are Youth 10 and Under, Youth 12 and Under, Youth 14 and Under, Under-16, and Under-19; Veterans are 40/49, 50/59, and 60+; and Seniors.

To qualify, fencers must participate in specific events held either in their divisions, sections, or on the national level. There also are a number of other national competitions where everyone can participate. Check the Virginia Division and National schedules for qualifying events, pre-registration deadlines, and details about eligibility.

Now is the time to plan and prepare. Consult with your coach, take competitive classes, and start participating in VAF training competitions.

#### **4. VAF COMPETITIONS FOR FALL 2006**

VAF competitions are unique opportunities for those who want to prepare for a higher level of fencing. Events are fenced in a format similar to USFA competitions, but in a much friendlier and more helpful environment. Participants easily learn the procedures, etiquette, and skills necessary to compete at local/divisional and national events.

New this year, VAF is introducing a Youth Electric Foil and Epee Competitive Circuit – competitions geared specifically for younger fencers (must be born in 1994 or later) and a veteran competition (for ages 40+).

##### **VAF TRAINING COMPETITIONS**

*All Ages*

Dry Foil, Sunday, Oct. 29

Electric Foil, Sunday, Oct. 15

Electric Epee, Saturday, Oct. 28

Dry Sabre, Saturday, Sept. 30

Electric Sabre, Saturday, Oct. 14

All competitions start at 2:30 p.m.

##### **VAF ELECTRIC FOIL & EPEE YOUTH CIRCUIT**

*Must Be Born in 1994 or later*

Electric Foil – Sunday, Oct. 1

Electric Epee – Sunday, Oct. 22

Electric Foil – Sunday, Nov. 5

Electric Epee – Sunday, Nov. 19

All competitions start at 2:30 p.m.

##### **HISTORICAL SWORDSMANSHIP COMPETITIONS**

Two Handed Sword, All Ages  
Sunday, Nov. 12, at 2:30 p.m.

Adult Rapier  
Sunday Nov. 12 at 5:00 p.m.

##### **VETERAN DRY & ELECTRIC FOIL COMPETITIONS For Ages 40+**

Sunday, Nov. 5 at 2:30 p.m.

#### **5. RULES AND REGULATIONS OF VAF COMPETITIONS**

- In addition to an appropriate uniform and footwear, proper equipment is required for each event. Fencers in electric events ***must*** have appropriate, working electric equipment.
- The event times indicated are “close of registration” times. You should sign in no later than the scheduled time for your event. We will begin fencing approximately a

half-hour to one hour later. Fencers should use the time to warm up and prepare for the competition.

- Competitors may be divided into different age or gender groups depending upon the configuration of entries.
- Each event begins with a short meeting to discuss how the event will be conducted and to assign fencers to pools. Important announcements are made at this time.
- The competitions last approximately two to four hours, depending on the number of participants.
- The top finishers in each event receive medals.
- Spectators are encouraged to observe, but must follow the safety directions of the competition officials. Young children must be supervised. Non-flash photography and video taping will be permitted.
- To participate, you must be a VAF member. Each fencer should return a separate pre-registration form and payment to the front desk by the pre-registration deadline. The fee is \$45 per event. **The pre-registration deadline is one week prior to the event.** The entry fee is \$90 per event after the pre-registration deadline or on the day of the event. **There are no refunds.**

## **6. COACHING AT LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS**

New for the 2006-2007 season: to offset expenses associated with sending a coach to local competitions, the student fee for local coaching is one payment of \$100 for the entire 2006-07 season. Major Virginia Division and other local competitions that most likely will be attended by a coach are listed below:

Kick-Off Open  
Junior & Cadet Championships  
Charm City Classic

Hangover Open  
Team Championship  
Division II and III Championships

The standard VAF policy will apply for coaching at national competitions – a minimum of \$100 per event. Actual fees charged per fencer will be determined by the number of fencers attending and requesting coaching assistance; the cost is lower for the second event if more students request coaching.

If you would like to request coaching for local, national, or international competitions, please complete a Coaching Request form available at the Front Desk. Coaching Request forms must be submitted and paid for 1 month prior to the competition or the fee **will be** higher.

## **7. COMPETITIVE MEETINGS**

**New Competitive Students (and parents)** - for anyone who's just started competing or may be interested in finding out more about what competitive fencing entails:

**Sunday, October 1, 2006 3:00 pm**

**Current Competitive Students (and parents)** – for anyone who wants to share ideas on improving any part of the competitive program at VAF.

**Sunday, October 1, 2006 3:30 pm**

## **8. NEW CLASSES**

To accommodate the growing number of competitive students, VAF is adding additional classes. If you would like to enroll or change into these classes, please complete a Change of Training form at the Front Desk.

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|--|---|
| <b>Master Foil (Coach Alexei)</b><br><b>All Ages</b>       | Monday, Wednesday & Friday (6:00 – 8:00pm)<br><b>Starting Monday, October 2, 2006</b>                 |
| <b>Competitive Epee (Coach Alexei)</b><br><b>All Ages</b>  | Tuesday (6:30 – 8:00 pm) &<br>Saturday (11:00 – 12:30 pm)<br><b>Starting Tuesday, October 3, 2006</b> |
| <b>Competitive Sabre (Coach George)</b><br><b>All Ages</b> | Tuesday & Friday (6:30 – 8:00 pm)<br><b>Starting Tuesday, October 3, 2006</b>                         |
| <b>Youth Electric Foil (Coach Frank)</b>                   | Thursday (6:00 pm)<br><b>Starting Thursday, October 5, 2006</b>                                       |

## **9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING VAF CLINICS**

All clinics are FREE to VAF members, and open to all ages and all sport or historical disciplines. No additional equipment is required to participate. They are designed to introduce members to new disciplines or to sharpen skills for those already attending similar classes. Come wearing appropriate athletic attire and bring your gear. Each clinic runs for 1 hour and is unique in its approach utilizing each coach's specific skills and knowledge.

**FOIL CLINIC BY COACH LOSHA MURAVYEV**  
**Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>**

**HISTORICAL SWORDSMANSHIP CLINIC BY COACH BILL GRANDY**  
**Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>**

**EPEE CLINIC BY EPEE COACH ILYA LOBANENKOV**  
**Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>**

**SABRE CLINIC BY COACH GEORGE KING**  
**Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>**

**PHYSICAL FITNESS AND COMPETITION PREPARATION CLINIC BY OLYMPIC  
COACH ALEXEI SINTCHINOV**  
**Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup>**

**SPORT PSYCHOLOGY CLINIC BY USFA OFFICIAL HEAD SPORTS  
PSYCHOLOGIST JOHN HEIL**  
**Coming in October/November**

**ALL CLINICS START AT 3:00 PM**

# **EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **10. VAF WELCOMES NEW FOIL COACH**

VAF welcomes new foil Coach Losha Muravyev. Coach Losha has over 20 years of coaching experience and has earned the certification of Master of Sport of the Russian Federation. Coach Losha comes by way of Marlborough, Massachusetts where he also was a high school physical education teacher. He teaches intermediate classes and is available immediately for private lessons.

## **11. FAMILY FENCING DAY**

VAF will hold Family Fencing sessions to introduce Mom, Dad, Grandparents, Sisters, and Brothers (6 years or older) to the fun of fencing! Only immediate families of VAF members may participate in these free, hands-on sessions; absolutely no other guests. Everyone must reread and sign the safety rules, with parents signing for minor children. You must wear long athletic pants, athletic shoes with non-marking soles, and have a glove for your dominant hand. Please arrange supervision for young children who are not fencing. A Question and Answer time will follow.

***Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup> @ 9:15 pm***  
***Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup> @ 2:15 pm***

## **12. VAF WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS:**

- Thanksgiving Holiday - Wednesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> through Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup>. VAF will reopen on Monday, November 27<sup>th</sup>.
- Winter Break – Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> through Monday, January 1, 2007. VAF will reopen on Tuesday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **13. The 9th ANNUAL ACADEMY AWARDS and HOLIDAY CELEBRATION**

Before you leave for winter break, plan to attend VAF's traditional gathering of members and their families. Dinner, refreshments, and dessert will be served along with music and entertainment. Join us as we gather to honor this year's Academy Award recipients. Fencers who have earned new ratings or medaled at select local and national championships will be recognized for their achievements over the past year.

***Saturday, December 16th, 6:30 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.***

**6:30 Dinner and Music**  
**7:00 Academy Awards**  
**8:00 Show and Dessert**

**VAF closes for Winter Break after the party.**  
**Classes will be held on December 16<sup>th</sup> but there will be no Supervised Free Fencing on this day.**

## **14. HOLIDAY SHOPPING**

Come and view our collection of gift merchandise including historical reproduction swords along with VAF warm-ups, pullovers, shirts and caps.

## **15. ARMORY REPAIR SESSIONS**

Learn basic weapon care and maintenance that could prevent on-the-strip breakdowns. VAF's armorer, Coach Frank, will cover what repair tools are needed and how to use them and what to do on the strip when there is an equipment failure. Contact Coach Frank directly for a schedule and fees.

## **16. BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

You can schedule your next birthday party at VAF – your friends will love it!! Members receive a \$50 discount. Please call the office to find out more.

## **17. JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

VAF is looking to fill positions in Marketing and Customer Service (front desk, weekend coverage). Applicants must have good communication skills and a strong work ethic. Please bring resume or contact the Office at 703/321-4922.

## **18. SUPERVISED FREE FENCING**

Come join other VAF members for a chance to refine your fencing skills. Supervised Free Fencing is a great opportunity for members to practice fencing and to meet fellow fencing enthusiasts. Members are not required to attend the entire session; however, many members stay well after the assigned times enjoying this friendly and beneficial training opportunity. An assigned coach helps students to get acquainted and give tips on fencing techniques. The coach also helps to direct bouts and assists students with questions about equipment. Supervised Free Fencing is scheduled:

|          |                    |
|----------|--------------------|
| Tuesday  | 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm  |
| Friday   | 9:00 pm – 10:00 pm |
| Saturday | 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm  |

## **19. SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT SPONSORSHIPS**

The students and staff at VAF extend their appreciation to Phil Sbarbaro for the new target practice columns and to Phil Renzulli for an upgraded and extended target practice wall. VAF currently is exploring a mirrored practice wall project and potential "strip" sponsorship. If individuals, families, or businesses are interested in sponsoring a skills improvement project, please contact the office.

## **20. SUGGESTIONS**

We truly value our members' opinions. Please write down any suggestions you might have that can improve your experience at VAF and submit to the Front Desk or put a note in the suggestion box located by the coaches pictures in the parent information area hallway. Suggestions can be made anonymously. If you would like a reply, please include your name and phone number.