




## **BRIEF OVERVIEW OF FENCING**

Fencing in the U.S. is overseen by the U.S. Fencing Association. They are out in Colorado Springs, CO. The international governing body is the F.I.E. (Federation Internationale Escrime). Escrime is the French word for fencing.

Fencing is an Olympic sport, and one that gets scholarships at such Colleges and Universities as Harvard, MIT, Brandeis, Tufts, Wellesley, Columbia, Cornell, Yale, Brown, Rutgers, Princeton, Case Western Reserve, Notre Dame, Northwestern, Stanford, and UC San Diego. It is very big in Europe. Around here, it is big at Stevenson, New Trier, Maine Township, and a few others. Stevenson has over 60 Fencers, including Varsity and Jr Varsity.

Modern fencing consists of 3 weapons: **Foil**, **Epée**, and **Saber**. Epée is pronounced as either 'a-pay' or 'ep- ay'. Like many terms, it is French. Fencing is very much an international sport.

The following table gives a brief but fairly comprehensive overview of the 3 weapons:

	<b>Foil</b>	<b>Epee</b>	<b>Saber</b>
<b>Target:</b> Torso	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b> (waist up)
Head & Arms	no	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Legs	no	<b>Yes</b>	no
<b>Point:</b> Touch	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Cut/Slash	no	no	<b>Yes</b>
'Right of Way'	<b>Yes</b>	no	<b>Yes</b>
			

Epée uses a slightly stiffer blade than Foil. Saber is fun because you can whack people on the head and get points for it. But some people like to spell it as Sabre, and they use the word 'cut' instead of 'slash' to describe the other way to score a hit.

Individual fencing 'fights' are called 'bouts'. They are conducted on a 'strip' about 40' x 6'. Most all Tournaments are scored with the aid of electrical equipment to detect the contact. Fencers need 2 sets of Foils and Lames to compete in such tournaments. 'Dry' is the term used when not using electrical equipment. But no one describes 'with electric' as 'Wet'. Go figure...

The main object of a fencing bout is to score 15 points (in direct elimination play) or five points (in preliminary pool play) on your opponent before s/he scores that number on you. Each time a fencer scores a touch, s/he receives a point. Direct elimination matches consist of three, three-minute periods

(taken from the BlasdeMasters website : [www.BladeMasters.org](http://www.BladeMasters.org))