

FIE COACH PROGRAMME, SABRE

Observations, Learning and Thoughts

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16. Counter Time

This next video is a long one, but quite a vital one because it begins to link together a lot of key elements we've discussed in this series of articles.

Firstly, the coach establishes a simple exercise to teach the timing of counter time. This gets interesting from 3min 50secs when the fencer starts to get the timing corrected.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSoPW7oi228&list=PLW9OQerjy9W3kizillfQ6wokHKCpTU05Y&index=86>

At 5min 30secs the beginnings of a very good training game are introduced, where the coach either counter attacks, or doesn't counter attack. The timing of the counter time action improves exponentially within this training dynamic. This brings out true counter time rather than a clunky feint-attack parry-riposte.

There is quite a bit of chat in this video, but at 15min 40secs there is some important information about the timing of the attack in sabre.

I've time-stamped this next link to take you to the point where they begin to explore how to deal with a stop-hit from a point-in-line set up. The fencer here has difficulty in controlling the first blade preparation. Where it is a good preparation, he is able to finish either with the counter time action or the direct attack. But as he rushes in with little control, he is struggling.

<https://youtu.be/WSoPW7oi228?t=1067>

With a stronger fencer and this time taking the counter time in quinte, the following example towards the end of the video is sweet.

<https://youtu.be/WSoPW7oi228?t=1650>

You may ask the question in the last example, why the fencer just doesn't finish on all of them. I think that is a good question and it can be answered in a number of ways. Firstly, there is tactical intent on the part of the fencer. His first intention may well be to deal with the threat of a good counter attacker. Where there is no counter attack, the direct finish is obvious. However, if you compare the first student with the second one, you'll see how difficult this skill is, but how effective it is once mastered. And also, looking ahead, this is a good primer to the higher level skill of reading a counter attack or a feint counter attack set up for a defence.

Always happy to take any questions on prof.carson@yahoo.co.uk