



ALL PROFESSIONAL COACHES



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Phone#: 701-371-6148

**FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB**



## FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB



Welcome!

Thanks for taking some time to read about the Fargo Moorhead Fencing club.

Our mission is to provide a safe, family-centered, personally challenging fencing program that develops people as well as fencers.

We based our instruction on:

- ✓ **Safety** - First and foremost
- ✓ **Respect** - for ourselves and those around us
- ✓ **Responsibility** - For our own actions, on and off the fencing strip
- ✓ **Inclusiveness** – Everyone is more than welcome

The Fargo-Moorhead Fencing Club is a registered **North Dakota Non-profit Corporation**. We are an **ALL VOLUNTEER** organization that teaches fencing in the FM area! Our coaches and board of directors are dedicated to teaching the sport because **WE LOVE FENCING!**

All our coaches are required to be certified in order to teach, either by the United States Fencing Association (Governing body for fencing in the USA) and/or the United States Fencing Coaches Association (Accreditation board for professional fencing coaches). In addition, all coaches are overseen by a Fencing Master.

We are open to all ages and ability levels from beginners to veterans division fencers. We support fencing for recreation, fitness, preparation for college and competition at all levels. Just let our coaches know what your goals are and we will put you on the right track.

For quality fencing instruction you can contact us at: [info@mfencing.com](mailto:info@mfencing.com)





## FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB



### WHAT IS FENCING?

The sport of fencing is fast and athletic, a far cry from the choreographed bouts you see on film or on the stage. Instead of swinging from a chandelier or leaping from balconies, you will see two fencers performing an intense dance on a 6-foot-by-40-foot strip. The movement is so fast the touches are scored electrically—more like Star Wars than Errol Flynn.

### BENEFITS OF FENCING AS A CHILD OR AN ADULT

#### *For young people*

The main benefits of fencing align nicely with the benefits of any sports activity.

- Fencing is an active and highly strategic game that develops endurance, flexibility, reflexes, self-reliance and mental agility.
- Fencing helps children get fit – you can't "swordfight" without a good bit of movement!
- Fencing helps children learn to pay attention and to develop their decision-making abilities.
- Because fencing is an individual sport, the fencer is responsible for their success or failure, which becomes a great lesson in responsibility.
- People of all body types can fence. Since fencing has both mental and physical aspects, no one body type has a predetermined advantage.
- Many great colleges have fencing teams (especially women's) and are always looking for experienced fencers. While scholarships are few and limited to top-level competitors, having fencing on your college resume provides another way for your child to market themselves.

#### *For adults*

Fencing is a lifelong activity that will improve coordination, strength and endurance, fine-tune balance, improve flexibility, sharpen reflexes, develop better cardiovascular fitness, greater confidence, enhanced mental agility, improved self-discipline, and finally reduced stress levels.





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**IS IT SAFE? (WE ARE TALKING ABOUT SWORD FIGHTING)**

Fencing is one of the safest sports that you can compete in. The most common injuries in fencing reflect those of other sports – ligament sprains and muscle strains account for over half of the injuries. (<http://extra.org/FencingChptr.htm>). Though puncture wounds can occur due to a broken fencing blade, these injuries are rare and the safety equipment for fencing is specifically designed to prevent injuries.

Even the insurance companies agree! When comparing insurance rates for “Accident Medical Coverage” for sports teams and leagues, the insurance premiums for fencing are the least expensive – cheaper than for volleyball and basketball.





## FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB



### THE WEAPONS

Foil, épée, and sabre are the three weapons used in the sport of fencing. While it is not unusual for fencers to compete in all three events, they generally choose to develop their skills in one weapon. Until recently, women were permitted to compete only in foil, but now the USFA & FIE offer national competitions for women in épée and sabre. Women's épée was added to the World Championships in 1989 and was held for the first time at the Olympic Games in 1996.

Foil and épée are point-thrusting weapons. Sabre is a point-thrusting as well as a cutting weapon. The target areas differ for the three weapons, though all three are scored electrically.

### Object

The main object of a fencing bout (what an individual "game" is called) is to effectively score 15 points (in direct elimination play) or 5 points (in preliminary pool play) on your opponent before he scores that number on you. Each time a fencer scores a touch, she receives a point. Direct elimination matches consist of three three-minute periods.

### Foil

The foil has a flexible rectangular blade, approximately 35 inches in length, weighing less than one pound. Points are scored with the tip of the blade and must land within the torso of the body. The valid target area in foil is the torso, from the shoulders to the groin, front and back. It does not include the arms, neck, head, and legs. The foil fencer's uniform includes a metallic vest (called a lamé) which covers the valid target area, so that a valid touch will register on the scoring machine. A small, spring-loaded tip is attached to the point of the foil and is connected to a wire inside the blade. The fencer wears a body cord inside his uniform which connects the foil to a reel wire, connected to the scoring machine.

There are two scoring lights on the machine. One shows a green light when a fencer is hit, and one shows a red light when her opponent is hit. A touch landing outside the valid target area (that which is not covered by the lamé) is indicated by a white light. These "off target" hits do not count in the scoring, but they do stop the fencing action temporarily.

### Épée

The épée (pronounced "EPP-pay"), the descendant of the dueling sword, is similar in length to the foil, but is heavier, weighing approximately 27 ounces, with a larger guard (to protect the hand from a valid hit) and a much stiffer blade. Touches are scored only with the point of the blade. The entire body is the valid target area.

The blade is wired with a spring-loaded tip at the end that completes an electrical circuit when it is depressed beyond a pressure of 750 grams. This causes the colored bulb on the scoring machine to light. Because the entire body is a valid target area, the épée fencer's uniform does not include a lamé. Off-target hits do not register on the machine.



## FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB



### Sabre

The sabre is the modern version of the slashing cavalry sword, and is similar in length and weight to the foil. The major difference is that the sabre is a thrusting weapon as well as a cutting weapon (use of the blade). The target area is from the bend of the hips (both front and back), to the top of the head, simulating the cavalry rider on a horse. The sabre fencer's uniform includes a metallic jacket (lamé), which covers the target area to register a valid touch on the scoring machine. The mask is different from foil and épée, with a metallic covering since the head is valid target area.

Just as in foil, there are two scoring lights on the machine. One shows a green light when a fencer is hit, and one shows a red light when the opponent has hit. Off-target hits do not register on the machine.





**FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB**



## How to Follow the Action

For those new to fencing, it is difficult to follow the lightning speed of the fencers' actions. To become more comfortable in watching a fencing bout, focus on one fencer. The fencer being attacked defends himself by use of a *parry*, a motion used to deflect the opponent's blade, after which the defender can make a *riposte*, an answering attack. Thus, the two adversaries keep changing between offense and defense. Whenever a hit is made, the referee will stop the bout, describe the actions, and decide whether or not to award a touch.

Fencers seek to maintain a safe distance from each other, that is, out of range of the other's attack. Then, one will try to break this distance to gain the advantage for an attack. At times, a fencer will make a false attack to gauge the types of reactions by the opponent that can be deceived in the real attack.

As you become accustomed to the speed of the game, the tactics and strategies become more apparent, and you will gain a better understanding for the finesse and fascination of fencing!





## FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB



### THE FMFC APPROACH

In the FMFC we believe that:

Fencing is a sport of honor. In traditional fencing, the true champion is not the person who defeats another human opponent. The true champion is the person who can see and defeat their own inadequacies rather than being defeated by them. It is the person who develops self-discipline and self-control over their own thoughts, attitude, and actions, aspiring continually to improve themselves, to become a better fencer and more importantly, a better person. It is one for whom the development of the character traits of honesty, integrity, courtesy, reliability, loyalty, patience, perseverance and genteel manners are of primary importance and who chooses to live their lives, in all that they do, both public and private, honorably in accordance with a code of conduct. It is in that context that we ask all our students to make the pledge set forth below to the Fargo Moorhead Fencing Club and the United States Fencing Association.

#### **ATHLETE PLEDGE**

**I pledge to uphold the spirit of this Athlete Code of Conduct (Code), which offers a general guide to my conduct as a fencer during practices and at any USFA designated event, training camp or competition.**

**AS A FENCER IN GOOD STANDING AT THE FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB, I HEREBY PROMISE AND AGREE THAT I:**

- **Will act in a sportsmanlike manner consistent with the spirit of fair play and responsible conduct**
- **Will refrain from conduct detracting from my ability or that of my teammates to attain peak performance**
- **Will seek to attend team functions, meetings, practices, competitions and media events in a timely manner and refrain from actions and activities that would be a disruption, either to myself or members of my team**
- **Will respect the property of others whether personal or public**
- **Will respect members of my Team, other teams, spectators and officials**
- **Will follow USFA rules, including by way of example**
- **Will act in a way that will bring respect and honor to myself, my teammates, my family, my club, the USFA and the United States of America**
- **Will remember that at all times I am an ambassador for my sport, my club and my country**

The United States Fencing Association (USFA) is the recognized governing body for the sport of fencing in the United States.

The USFA is affiliated with the Fédération Internationale d'Escrime (FIE), the international federation for fencing founded in Paris in 1913.



## FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB



### HISTORY OF THE FARGO MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB

The FMFC began as a loose association of local fencers who love the sport. In 2008 the club moved from basements and driveways to Minnesota State University Moorhead. Dr. Bianco began coaching the student-organized MSUM fencing club in addition to several members of the community who wanted to learn how to fence. In 2009, the club acquired coach Alvarez (Epee). In 2010, the FMFC became a registered North Dakota Non-Profit Corporation with the idea of improving the level of fencing in the area. The club has offered introductory clinics for different organizations in the area as well as Intermediate and Advanced lessons of those fencers who wanted to achieve a greater level of knowledge and a sense of competition. We have been open to all ages and ability levels from beginners to veterans division fencers. We support fencing for recreation, fitness, preparation for college and competition at all levels.



The FMFC is a member of the Minnesota Division of the United States Fencing Association (USFA). The USFA is the official governing body for amateur fencing in the United States. The Minnesota Division is itself a member of the Midwest Section of the USFA which is comprised of 5 member divisions: Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and southern Illinois (St. Louis Metropolitan Area).

The purpose of the Minnesota Division is to promulgate tournament schedules, results, and other information concerning competitive fencing in and around Minnesota, as well as coaching and referee development. North Dakota does not have its own division but North Dakota fencers can compete in the Minnesota division as part of a Minnesota club.

The FMFC owns all of the required gear and safety equipment necessary to teach and compete in foil and epee.



## FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB



### CURRENT CLUB STAFF



#### **FOIL COACH**

**Robert Bianco PhD**

[bianco@fmfencing.com](mailto:bianco@fmfencing.com)

Coach Dr. Bianco is originally from Bismarck ND. He began fencing foil in 1996 at the University of North Dakota while in graduate school. In 2002, he moved to the University of Iowa to do a postdoctoral fellowship. There he competed in foil and occasionally saber as part of the UI club. In 2006, Dr. Bianco moved to Fargo where there was no fencing. In 2007, he started the Fargo-Moorhead Fencing Club. In 2008, coach Bianco began volunteering his time as the coach for the Minnesota State University Moorhead Fencing club. The growing popularity of fencing prompted Dr. Bianco to start teaching fencing courses at MSUM beginning the spring semester of 2009.

Dr. Bianco is a USFA-certified level 1 foil coach.



#### **EPEE COACH**

**Enrique Alvarez**

[alvarez@fmfencing.com](mailto:alvarez@fmfencing.com)

Maestro Alvarez is originally from Oviedo, Spain. He began fencing in high school at 14 years old under Master Sahelices. In college he fenced for the National Institute of Physical Education in Madrid under the supervision of Master Enrique Lopez, Alberto Gonzalez and Francisco Saucedo. He was certified in 1999 as fencing coach level 1 by the AEMA (Spanish Association of Fencing Masters). In 2006, Enrique moved to Fargo ND where he graduated with an Electrical Engineering degree. In 2010, he was certified as Prevot d'Epee (entry level of professional coach) by the USFCA (United States Fencing Coaches Association). The USFCA is a national academy of the Academie d'Armes Internationale, (AAI), the world organization of fencing masters.

In 2011, he achieved the title of Fencing Master which is the highest level of accreditation by the USFCA and by the International Academy of Arms. Masters are capable of teaching fencers from beginners to high-level competitive champions.

Maestro Alvarez is a former member of the Spanish Junior National team, several times Division Champion in Spain and finalist of Junior Nationals as well as a competitor in Junior World Cup. He has fenced since 1996 and has competed in Spain, France, Canada and the US.

He is a certified referee in Spain and the US as well as certified examiner for the USFCA.



## FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB



### ASSISTANT COACH

**Dallas Herbel, PhD**

[herbel@fmfencing.com](mailto:herbel@fmfencing.com)

Coach Dr. Herbel first began fencing at a small recreational fencing club in St. Louis, MO in 2004 while completing his doctorate. He subsequently moved to the Red River Valley in 2007. After having taken two years off from fencing to complete his dissertation, he began fencing with the Minnesota State University Moorhead Fencing Club (MSUMFC). In 2010, he began competing in tournaments and became the faculty advisor to MSUMFC. That same year, he earned his certification as an Assistant Moniteur (USFCA). He remains MSUMFC faculty advisor while coaching concurrently with FMFC. He has recently passed the written exam for the Moniteur coaching level and is studying for the practical exam.



### ASSISTANT COACH

**Aron Velde**

[velde@fmfencing.com](mailto:velde@fmfencing.com)

Coach Velde, is originally from Fergus Falls, MN. He began his collegiate career studying Secondary English Education and Coaching at NDSU, in 2007. While attending NDSU he competed in NCAA D1 football as well as track and field for the Bison. In 2009 Coach Velde transferred to MSUM to continue his degrees and compete for the Dragon track and field team. In 2010, he began fencing epee for the MSUM fencing club.

Velde has coached high school athletics since 2008. He began with the Fergus Falls Otter track team. He is currently the wide receiver/defensive backs coach for the Fargo South football team, as well as the triple/long jump coach for the Bruin boys track team. His accomplishments as a coach include multiple all-state and all-conference selections for his wide receivers and defensive backs, as well as a North Dakota state football championship. Many of his young athletes have moved on to compete in NCAA D1, D2 and MIAC athletics. In 2011 Coach Velde earned his certification as a Fencing Assistant Moniteur.



### ASSISTANT COACH

**Jen Neuteboom**

[neuteboom@fmfencing.com](mailto:neuteboom@fmfencing.com)

Coach Neuteboom is originally from Layton Utah. She began fencing foil in 1998 at Weber State University.

After moving to Vermillion South Dakota with her husband, she eventually came to Fargo in 2005. A student at Minnesota State University Moorhead, she is majoring in both History and English. She is also president of the MSUM Fencing club and began competitive fencing epee as well as foil in 2009. Jen is a certified Assistant Moniteur by the United States Fencing Coaches Association.



**FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB**



The Fargo-Moorhead Fencing Club has a knowledgeable and enthusiastic coaching staff, and friendly and inviting members who have a lot of fun at club and competing together at USFA tournament events around the region.

The costs for fencing memberships are low and all funds collected are re-invested back into the club.

The mission of the club is to provide “our community with a knowledge and understanding of the art and sport of fencing”, but the club coaches and members really see themselves as stewards for fencing in the Red River Valley region.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

# **FARGO-MOORHEAD FENCING CLUB**

[info@fmfencing.com](mailto:info@fmfencing.com)

**ROBERT BIANCO**

701-371-6148

[bianco@fmfencing.com](mailto:bianco@fmfencing.com)

**ENRIQUE ALVAREZ**

701-541-6016

[alvarez@fmfencing.com](mailto:alvarez@fmfencing.com)