

FIE COACH PROGRAMME, SABRE

Observations, Learning and Thoughts

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15. Counter Attacks

In sabre, the timing of the counter attack is crucial for one simple reason; if there are two lights, the attacker scores. This lesson commences with the coach and fencer exploring where and when the counter attack timing exists. Note how the coach distinguishes between what could be an attack and what is a preparation - exaggerating the hand going forward for the former and backward for the latter - until the student learns the signal.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wgrgi3VC28Y&list=PLW9OQerjy9W3kizillfQ6wokHKCpTU05Y&index=84>

The counter attack becomes more difficult when the distance opens to an authentic competitive distance, meaning that the visual signal has to be precise. Eventually, the student will be skilled enough to set up the distance, draw the mistake from the coach/opponent and execute the counter action.

But for now we can break the actions down to bring out the correct timing and technique, the fundamentals of which are explored in this next video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VaEKAHJdDQI&list=PLW9OQerjy9W3kizillfQ6wokHKCpTU05Y&index=83>

In this video, the coach is being very clever. Note at the beginning of the lesson how he gets the fencer to start with a double cut, both to relax the shoulder and to get the timing into the hand. By the end of the lesson, the coach is gently hitting the blade after the counter action, preparing the fencer to take the parry/block-out after the counter attack. I like the way this is being taught, because otherwise the fencer might become overly concerned with the parry, rather than focusing on delivering a good timing on the counter attack.

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