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The Cutting Edge

The Society of American Fight Directors

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The Society of American Fight Directors

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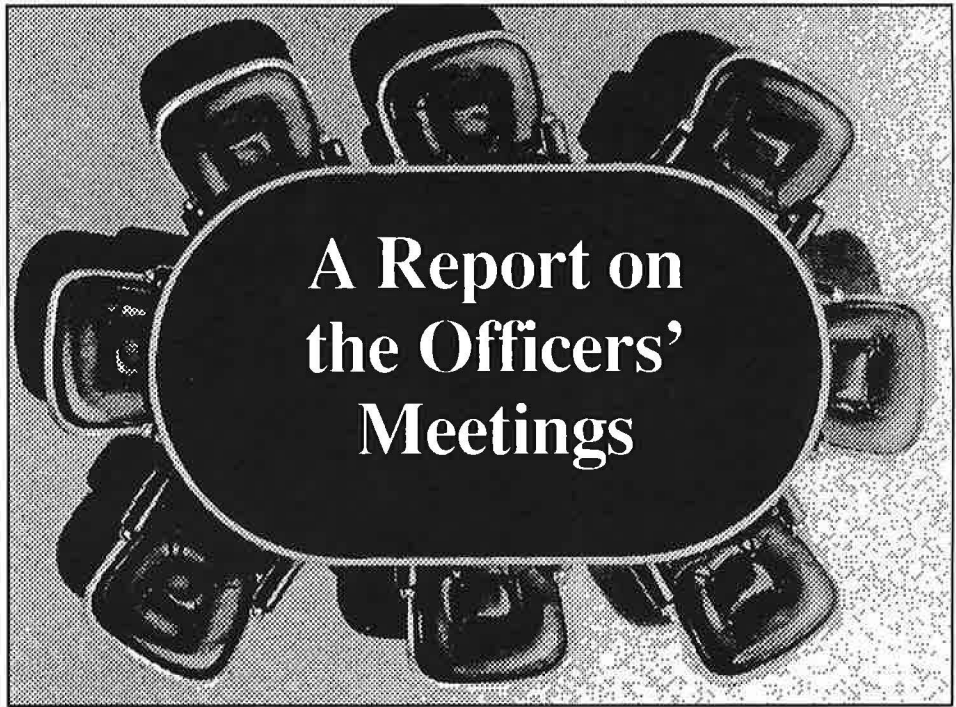


New ReCertification Procedure

To members who have griped about what a pain it is to recertify—we hear you. Detailed below is a new alternative. It's simpler (only two fights to learn, no prepared scene) and cheaper.

- Any SAFD Certified Teacher or Fight Master may hold an Actor Combatant recertification workshop.
- The workshop will be a minimum of six hours, split over two sessions.
- Session One will be four hours:
 - Three hours devoted to technique drills and exercises covering *all* required moves from Rapier/dagger and Unarmed certification tests.
 - The last hour will be devoted to teaching an unarmed fight and a rapier/dagger fight.
 - These fights will be around one minute in length, not to exceed two minutes total for both fights.
 - Fights may be separate or linked.
 - The fights need not include all required moves for a certification test.
 - Fights should be performed up to speed, but no dialogue needed.
- Session Two will be at least two hours and will include a review of the fight choreography, coaching, rehearsal time and, finally, a videotaped performance of the fight(s).
- Within a week, the teacher will forward to the nearest Fight Master, the teacher's written evaluation and recommendation, along with a xerox of the student's old certificate, student's resume and the videotape.
- The Fight Master will adjudicate based on tape and the teacher's recommendations, returning certificates and test materials to teacher.
- The cost of the workshop is not to exceed \$75.00 per student.

★★★



A Report on the Officers' Meetings

Officers Announce Changes

On July 13 and 14, 1990 the officers of the SAFD met in marathon meetings lasting over fifteen hours at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, just prior to the start of the National Stage Combat Workshop. President J. Allen Suddeth, Vice President Drew Fracher, and Secretary/Treasurer Richard Raether were joined by Fight Masters Erik Fredericksen, Joseph Martinez, and David Leong to discuss the current and future operation of the SAFD.

"Currently, we need to make the SAFD more efficient and, therefore, more productive," stated Mr. Suddeth. He went on to solicit ideas for streamlining the daily operation of the society.

Long Term Goals

The officers also focused on long term SAFD goals. Objectives include:

- Stronger safety regulations for actor combatants in Actors Equity Association contracts
- Pursuing outside funding for an expanded armory for the NSCW.
- Establishing scholarships for the National Workshop

- Setting up an SAFD Stage Combat library.

A New Recertification Policy

In an effort to be more responsive to the needs of the membership, Suddeth asked for a new recertification procedure for Actor/Combatants who wish to keep their certification current. "The current system seems punitive, both monetarily and timewise," said Mr. Suddeth.

After consideration, a new procedure was voted in, effective immediately. (*See F.Y.I. for particulars.*) The new procedure is an option open only to previously certified actor/combatants.

A further change involves the procedure for arranging a certification fight test (*see Page 4 for details*).

Working With the Board

On July 15, the officers met with Jeff Koep, Chairman of the SAFD Board of Directors, to discuss SAFD objectives and what part the board of directors can play in achieving them. The board will meet this fall and Jeff stated he is looking forward to pitching in.

★★★

HEAR YE, HEAR YE!

SAFD goes to the Faire

Knights battle on the field of honor in Renaissance Festivals across the country each summer... this particular knight in Pennsylvania.



Renaissance Festivals and stage combat seem to go hand in gauntlet, so it is not surprising that SAFD members are finding employment swashbuckling their way through a bygone era.

Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire, now in its 10th season, has SAFD members in a number of key positions.

David Leong, as associate producer of the faire, teamed up with Chris Villa, who serves as Entertainment Director. Steve Vaughan, a veteran jouster himself,

entertainment director. Martin's job includes coordinating entertainment and choreographing fights for the festival, which is a non-profit event that benefits the Kansas City Art Institute.

Martin has written three half hour shows that appear yearly: *Robin Hood and Little John* (the duo's famous first meeting); *Sir Frederick of the Fatal Flaw* (an adventure tale of heroes, wizards, maidens, and—of course—fights); and *The Tales of Grimm* (a children's show).

"What makes the stage combat at the festival so much fun for me," says Martin, "is the diversity of the fights and situations." Besides standard weapons, he has staged fights with hand bells, brooms, buckets—even a feather duster.

New York

The New York Renaissance Festival features some 250 performers, many of whom come under the jurisdiction of J. David Brimmer, fight choreographer for *The Tales of Robin Hood* (a chronicle of the outlaw's adventures) and the *Living Chess Match* (with Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham opposing kings).

"Almost a quarter of the festival is combat oriented," reports David. "This

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was brought in to direct and choreograph the joust, which features five mounted knights in armour, performing three different shows a day.

Also on staff, K. Jenny Jones serves as director of animal entertainment. In addition to being an SAFD member, Jenny has worked professionally with horses for the past ten years. Payson Burt is also on hand as Fight Captain.

The Penn.Renn.Faire produces over 30 shows on 11 stages, not least of which is the human chess match, featuring Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots commanding their chess board armies. James Sheerin, along with Jenny and Payson, is among the many SAFD certified actor/combatants featured.

Missouri

The Renaissance Festival of Kansas City has Martin English on board as



SAFD member Liz Zazzi scores a direct hit off her opponent in the New York Renaissance Festival's Living Chess Match.



Linda McCollum Steps Down from *The Fight Master*

After serving as the Editor of the *Fight Master* for six years, Linda McCollum has announced her retirement.

"My life has become so busy," says Linda, "I no longer have the time to devote to the *Fight Master* that I would like." In addition to working full time at University of Nevada—Las Vegas, Linda became a proud grandmother on July 9th (obviously, Linda was a child bride).

Since 1984, Linda has been a mainstay of the SAFD. In addition to her editorial duties, in 1986 she was appointed Secretary for the SAFD and for several months in 1988 and 1989, acted as interim Treasurer. Linda stepped down as secretary in 1989 when she took over as on-site coordinator of the National Stage Combat Workshop—a position she still holds.

Linda was carrying such a herculean load that it took three people to replace her. Margaret Raether has been named the new *Fight Master* editor. She will be aided by co-editors Joe Martinez and Richard Raether.

Margaret is currently editing the *Cutting Edge* and, yes, she is married to Richard What's-his-name. What began as fill-in work between acting jobs turned into a career in graphic arts for Margaret. In New York, Margaret worked as the

Macintosh Guru for Jordan, McGrath, Case & Taylor Advertising, and now, back in the Midwest, she and her Mac are in the art department at Cain & Company Advertising. Margaret's also studied stage combat with Allen Suddeth and Steve Vaughan.

All submissions for the *Fight Master* should be sent to Joe Martinez, P.O. Box 1053, Lexington, VA 24450.



What's Happening?

Congratulations go to the following brand new SAFD Certified Teachers:

- ★ J. David Brimmer ★ Bob MacDougal
- ★ Dale Girard ★ Ron Piretti
- ★ Colleen Kelly ★ Bob Walsh

More congratulations go to SAFD Board member **Kim Zimmer** who just won her third Best Actress Emmy for her work as Reva on *Guiding Light*. Kim is a veteran stage combat aficionado, and is married to SAFD member **A.C. Weary**. Kim and A.C. recently relocated to the West Coast, where A.C. will teach stage combat at the California Institute of the Arts.

Speaking of relocating, **Jane Ridley** has headed east. By the time this newsletter is out, she will be reporting for duty as the new movement specialist at Penn. State. Jane can be reached c/o of the Dept. of Theatre Arts, 103 Arts II Bldg., Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802.

The SAFD abroad—**James Finney** reports in from Australia, where he has been the last ten months as part of his round-the-world cycling tour. Down Under, James staged the violence for *The Redemption* (a cast of 200 in a modern dress passion play), *As You Like It*, and *Maggie's Nest* (a prison drama). He also taught at the Western Australia Academy of Performing Arts and The Actors' Center of Perth. James is now headed for Europe—stay tuned for further adventures.

T.J. Glenn keeps busy as a cop on *Guiding Light*, performing in his *ActionMaster* promotional tour, and doing high falls and martial arts fights for the movie *Run Like Hell*, in which T.J. plays six different ninjas!

The next SAFD generation keeps arriving. **Joe Martinez** and his wife have a new baby girl—**Lea Simone**, born May 2, 1990.

SAFD goes to the Faire

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year, the theme of the faire is 'Where Comedy is King and Queen' which has presented a real challenge. But it is a very creative company and a lot of fun."

David also noted that one perk of the New York locale is the large pool of trained fighters from which to draw, most of whom are SAFD certified.

Minnesota

The Minneapolis Renaissance Festival has hired En Garde Unlimited, a Minneapolis stage combat performance troupe headed by David Doersch, to create action for its 20th season. David is choreographing and performing in *Robin*

Hood and Little John, a combat chess match, and various additional fights.

The 27 members of the En Garde troupe will be performing nearly 30 fights in all. SAFD members in the troupe include Michael Anderson, Kristin Hawbaker, Raphael De May, and Joseph Manussier.

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We've touched on only four of the twenty-odd Renaissance Festivals in the U.S. And the SAFD continues to play an ever-larger role in bringing thrills to people everywhere who still hunger for a day with a knight.

New Procedure for Fight Tests

So you've been introducing your students to the glories of stage combat and you think they're ready for the ordeal by fire—whoops, scratch that—make that the SAFD certification fight test. Then this is for you.

In the last year, the SAFD has adjudicated 34 Actor Combatant Fight Tests and this year we anticipate even more. The great majority of these tests occur from mid-April to early June. To keep abreast, the society is compelled to simplify the process of arranging a test.

This is new, so pay attention. If you have any questions, please get in touch with Richard Raether. But not the day before your test, okay?

1. A representative of the school (i.e., the stage combat teacher) calls the SAFD Treasurer (815-962-6579) to request adjudication.



2. The SAFD Treasurer sends the school an information packet which includes:
 - a) Fight Test Rules and Regulations
 - b) Minimum required moves list
 - c) Glossary of terms
 - d) A Fight Master contact sheet
 - e) A Letter of Agreement
3. School finds an available Fight Master.
4. The school sends the Letter of Agreement to the Fight Master and a copy of that Letter with a \$50 registration fee to the SAFD Treasurer. Registration fee must be received *prior* to test date.
5. The school arranges transportation and housing with the Fight Master.
6. The school pays for all transportation and housing.
7. The school pays the Fight Master an adjudication fee and a per diem.
8. There is a \$25 fee per student for taking the test. If this amount exceeds registration fee, adjudication fee, and expenses, the balance is forwarded to Treasurer.

THE CUTTING EDGE

The Cutting Edge is concocted bimonthly by Richard and Margaret Raether and is a publication of the Society of American Fight Directors.

Submissions to *The Cutting Edge* should be sent to:

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