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The Cutting Edge

The Society of American Fight Directors

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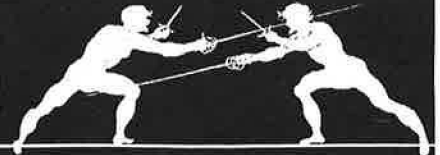
The Society of American Fight Directors

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The Cutting Edge



Newsletter for the Society of American Fight Directors

Volume V, Number 4 ♦ September/October 1994



NEW ADJUDICATION REQ.

A fully stocked First Aid Kit and ice packs must be on site and easily available at all adjudications.

NSCW 1995

Congratulations to Mark Guinn who has been appointed NSCW Coordinator for 1995!

START SAVING NOW!

Effective for the National Workshops in 1995 tuitions are:
National Workshop \$1000.00
Advanced Workshop \$1200.00
Teacher's Workshop \$1500.00

USE OF SAFD NAME GET APPROVAL FIRST

OFFICIAL POLICY:

No one may use the SAFD name without express consent from the officers. Those who do not adhere to this policy will face grievance charges and possible censure

FORMAL GRIEVANCES

There has been some fear by SAFD members that they will suffer from bringing grievances before the group. There is a formal grievance process (see the SAFD Policies and Procedures) and members need not fear reprisal or punitive measures if a grievance is filed. Grievances should not be made capriciously, but if you feel there is a problem, please file!

J.R. BEARDSLEY MOVING!

NEW ADDRESS & PHONE as of October 29, 1994:
The Hamilton House Arts Ctr.
Main Street
Charlestown, Nevis
West Indies
(809) 469-1424

1994 SAFD Officers' Meeting

EACH YEAR FOR SEVERAL DAYS prior to the start of the National Stage Combat Workshop, the SAFD officers hold their annual meeting to address issues of importance to the group. Following are some highlights of that meeting.

AGMA Ruling

The AGMA has officially adopted the ruling which requires that a qualified SAFD person must serve as the safety consultant for any weapons handling.

Certified Teachers' Choreography

Choreographic Sanction of Certified Teachers is extended to those individuals who have proof of at least 10 choreographic credits from university theatre, community theatre, pre-professional, or professional venues. At least one of the ten credits must be under the auspices of AEA, AFTRA/SAG, AGMA and the credits

must have occurred within five years prior to application for sanctioned status.

Amendment for Teacher ReCert.

Under the SAFD Policies and Procedures Section 7.01 (J), items 1-4 would remain the same. Item 5 would be rewritten as follows:

"5. Information on (and results of) any and all actor/combatant proficiency skills tests they have held during the three years, including adjudicator and date.

or

A half-inch VHS video (unedited) from a stationary camera of the candidate teaching two students fight choreography from actor/combatant proficiency skills tests of their own
(continued on page 3)

The First Aid Requirement - Why?

By Geoffrey Alm

Your smallsword is sticking into your opponents chest: "Do I leave it in, or pull it out?" The answer is to immobilize the sword in the wound, and get thee to a surgeon. By leaving the sword in, you create a plug that will slow down the bleeding process. In fact, it takes a clear head to resist the impulse to pull the object out of any puncture wound.

For instances like these and many less serious instances, it is important for every Fight Master and Certified Teacher to maintain a current first aid and CPR Certificate. Being able to respond to whatever situation might occur in teaching your classes or choreographing in such a physical art form as ours brings an obligation for each of us to have as much knowledge

as possible at our disposal, in case an accident does happen. Knowing when not to do something is as important as knowing when to do something.

Professionally, it reflects favorably on each of us, and the SAFD as an organization, that we put the time and effort into learning and maintaining these skills. That we need to repeat the first aid skills test every two years, is part of the price we pay to keep our certificates vital. also, each time we repeat this we learn and retain a little more. Going back and stressing the basics is an integral part of what we do. I think the same concept applies here. Hopefully the times you will be called on to use this knowledge will be far and few between. Keep your information and first aid kit with you.

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Profile
 CERTIFIED TEACHER
Ralph H. Anderson
 by Dale Anthony Girard

UNLIKE MOST PEOPLE, pain was Ralph's introduction to theatre and stage combat. In 1973 at Hampshire College, Ralph was asked to play Snout the Tinker and Mustardseed in a production of A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. There was, however, something lacking in the proper rehearsal of the stage violence. In a scene where Ralph was to be swung around by the arm and flung aside, he was actually thrown. He managed to jam his toe on a large stump, hit his head on a support beam, fall and gash his side on a ramp. Banged, bruised and bleeding he thought "there must be a better way!"

This was to be the beginning of Ralph's life in the theatre and it was the rehearsal process that fascinated him, "It was amazing to see how much time and energy they spent to get every moment, every joke, every line to mean something: to work just right."

In the years that followed Ralph devoted himself to theatre. He finished his B.A. in Theatre at the University of Massachusetts and went on to receive his M.F.A. in Directing at the University of Texas. During this time he never

Banged, bruised and bleeding he thought, "there has to be a better way!"

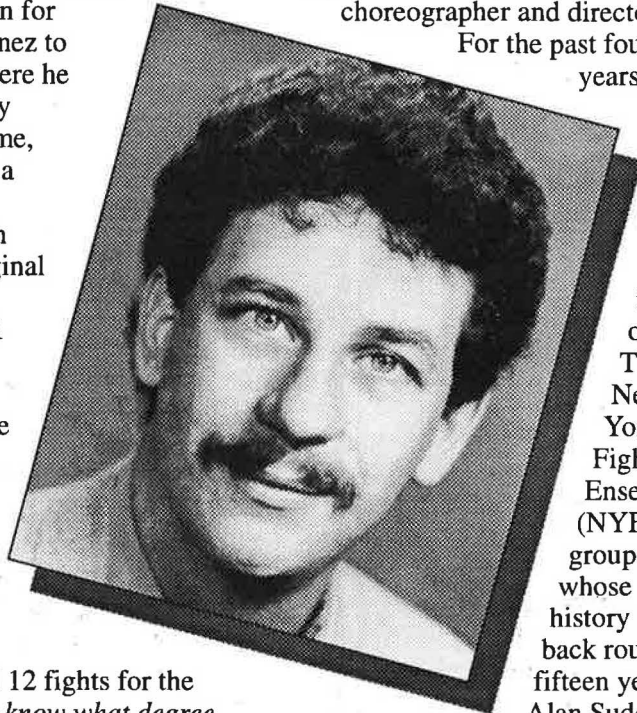
lost sight of stage combat and finding a better way. He sought out anyone who had something to teach. While attending a stage combat workshop at SETC in 1985, Ralph was introduced to David Boushey, Joseph Martinez and Drew Fracher. "If you're going to meet anybody from the Society, those are as good as any three to

start with."

This meeting resulted in the invitation for Maestro Martinez to visit Ralph where he taught, at Berry College in Rome, Georgia. With a fellow faculty member, Ralph created an original show for the Maestro, FAIR QUARRELS, consisting of alternating love and fight scenes from the Elizabethan / Jacobean era. Ralph directed and choreographed 12 fights for the show! "I don't know what degree of horror he [Maestro Martinez] watched in, but afterwards he was kind, saying 'it was all very nice work- but wait till you see what we've got.' And he was absolutely right. In the next week he proceeded to open all our eyes."

At his urging, Ralph attended the NSCW in Utah in 1985, and continued with the following summer's NSCW in Memphis, and in 1987 he attended the first ever Teacher Certification Workshop. After receiving his teaching certificate, Ralph returned the following year to work as "TA" to Maestro Boushey. Although having taught theatre for nine years, Ralph decided to leave academia and made the move the New York in 1986. Since that

time he has never looked back He began freelancing as a teacher, fight choreographer and director. For the past four years he



has been president of The New York Fight Ensemble (NYFE), a group whose history goes back roughly fifteen years to Alan Suddeth's "Fights R Us".

Along with J. David Brimmer and Michael G. Chin, Ralph teaches stage combat classes.

Along with his impressive list of teaching and choreographic credits, Ralph has acquired quite a reputation as a director. He is currently in the process of producing and directing a new work, BEHIND THE MASK (by fellow SAFD member Ricki G. Ravitts), as an Equity Showcase.

With a stable job as a computer software instructor at HBO, Ralph has the comfortable ability now to choose his projects and put his focus on personally initiated work. As always "Its the rehearsal process that I really enjoy. Making it work just right."

Ralph lives in midtown Manhattan with his twin black cats Syracuse and Ephesus. ♦♦♦

1994 SAFD Officers' cont.

(continued from page 1)
(not to exceed seven minutes).
PLUS service to the SAFD in a concrete capacity

or

A written evaluation from a fight master who has seen said choreography live. PLUS - service to the SAFD in a concrete capacity. (Examples of this service would be regional rep., committee chair, assisting at the national workshop, organizing a bona-fide regional workshop, etc.)

Honorary Members

The list of honorary members is now:

Fight Master Emeritus

Paddy Crean

Rod Colbin

Joseph Martinez

Honorary Members

Douglas Fairbanks Jr.

Dale Kirby

Richard Gradkowski

Bob Miles

Adjudication Fee

The fee paid to Fight Masters adjudicating a skills test will be raised from \$100.00 to \$125.00 AND the fee that students pay to take the skills test will be raised from \$25.00 to \$35.00.

Any single adjudication with a group of 21 or more students would increase the fee owed the adjudicator by \$75.00.

Please note the adjudication cost has remained at \$25.00 for ten years. The survival of the organization demands that it make adjustments for the increasing costs associated with its maintenance and growth.

Professional Apprentices

Individuals can become professional apprentices, working with various Fight Masters. Please check with an SAFD officer for details.



Charles Conwell, Associate Professor of Theatre Arts at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, has been engaged to direct the violence in RICHARD III, opening in September at the Hartford Stage. Mark Lamos will direct, and Richard Thomas will play the hunchback king. This is Professor Conwell's seventh collaboration with Mark Lamos and his second with Richard Thomas. In 1987 he directed the fencing match in the Lamos/Thomas HAMLET.

Nick Sandys recently taught a term of stage combat at The Theatre School at De Paul

University. He also choreographed Shakespeare's ROMEO AND JULIET and COMEDY OF ERRORS at Fort Worth, Texas Shakespeare in the Park, as well as playing Father Lawrence and Antipholus of Ephesus (respectively). Next up, he will be playing Jack in Shaw's THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST for the new Texas Stage Company under the direction of Charles Marowitz.

John M. Callahan, Ph.D. was a visiting professor in March 1994 at Doncaster College in Doncaster, England teaching his specialty - hand-to-hand combat. ◆◆◆

The First Aid Requirement - (continued)

(continued from page 1)

Suggestions for a basic First Aid Kit:

3 inch Ace Wrap

6 inch Ace Wrap

Sterile Gauze

Band aids (varied sizes)

Surgical Gloves

Cleanser-hand sanitizer: Purell

Ice Packs (chemical) or access to ice

(Sports Medicine Tip: Soaking your wraps in cold water along with icing helps spread the cold quicker.)

What you can't have:

Scapels, Hypos, Sutures, Skin Clips

Steri Strips and Drugs

Remember the acronym ICE for strains and sprains:

I - ice

C - compression

E - elevation

Know your State Laws pertaining to first aid. Legally, a victim must give

consent to an offer to help before a person trained in first aid begins to help him or her. The law assumes that an unconscious person would give consent. If a victim is conscious, you must ask permission before helping him or her. If they refuse your help you must walk away. Consent is also implied for a person who is unconscious, badly injured, or so ill that he or she cannot respond, or for a minor if no parent or legal guardian is present.

State "Good Samaritan" laws generally give legal protection to rescuers who act in good faith and are not guilty of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

If the cost of the test seems prohibitive, look around. Many businesses and organizations offer this training for varied prices, and sometimes at no cost. This investment becomes a big plus the first time you calmly and professionally respond to an injury.



Semester Sabbatical Replacement

The Department of Communication and Performance Studies, Northern Michigan University, seeks individual with MFA or equivalent professional experience to teach introductory acting and stage combat (SAFD teacher preferred) to replace faculty member on sabbatical. Teach two courses, serve as combat choreographer for mainstage production of HAMLET, and assist with lab studio productions. January 4, 1995 to May 2, 1995. \$16,000 plus excellent fringes. Send letter of

application, resume and names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three references, postmarked not later than November 4, 1994 to: Dr. Donald Rybacki, Head, Department of Communication and Performance Studies, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI, 49855.

Northern Michigan University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age in its programs or activities. ♦♦♦

Help! First Class Sought!

Please help answer the following question for John Callahan: "What is the earliest class anyone can document in stage combat offered for college credit at an accredited school? I taught a one hour credit course in hand-to-hand combat at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in 1967, but I feel sure there must have been some earlier. (I don't mean fencing, I mean a course specifically designed for actors in how to simulate violence.)" Send to: John M. Callahan / 27 Crestview Drive / Fleetwood, PA 19522-9612 ♦♦♦

The Cutting Edge

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