

Formation of New Fencing League Planned by Group of Six Colleges

Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Army, Navy and Columbia, Old Guard of the Present Intercollegiate Association, Are Reported Organizing Body to Control Their Dual Meet Season.

By ARTHUR J. DALEY.

The Old Guard of the Intercollegiate Fencing Association, limited to only twelve of twenty-one championships in the past three seasons after long years of complete dominance, is ready to form a select group of its own. This was the most startling aftermath of the forty-second annual title tournament of the association that ended on Saturday with one of the newcomers, N. Y. U., once more taking a major share of the awards.

This new league is still in a quite nebulous state. It will control only the dual meet season of its members and will encompass teams from Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Army, Navy and Columbia. There is nothing official about it yet. In fact, it is still supposed to be very much of a secret, but that such a plan is in actual contemplation was learned from an authoritative source.

Task for the Alumni.

Influential alumni from each of the proposed member colleges attended a closed meeting the other night at the Hotel Commodore and decided to put the league into operation, possibly next year. It will be the task of each of them to "sell" the idea to his college and each is in a position, it was said, to put it through.

What effect it will have on the regular championship meet is a moot point. It may have none or it may have considerable. Where leagues among the so-called "ivy colleges" exist in baseball and basketball there is no other title meet in which they also can take part. In that respect this new group will stand apart from the other sports. The entire plan is no last-minute arrangement either since it has been considered more or less for the last few years.

The prospect of a new league came at a time when the Old Guard was able to salvage only four of the seven championships from the onward rush of N. Y. U. The Violet blades on Saturday swept before them the three-weapon team, the foils team and the foils individual titles, an exceptionally brilliant achievement.

Staged Remarkable Rally.

The only reason that New York did not take another was due only to the remarkable rally of Harvard's épée combination which performed the well-nigh impossible by winning all three of its last bouts from Navy, a feat that gave it a tie with N. Y. U. on bouts won and the crown on touches against.

The mere fact that this exploit was in épée made it all the more meritorious because the dueling sword is a dangerous weapon in a

close fight. There is always the possibility of a double touch upsetting the best laid plans. Either Harvard or Navy, the two standout épée teams in the tournament, could have won only by a clean sweep, seemingly an impossibility. Yet Harvard turned the trick.

The last match decided that championship and the last match between N. Y. U. and C. C. N. Y. in foils also decided both team and individual honors. The saber individual crown was won by Forrest Lombaer of Columbia in his last match and the Lions' team saber victory was mathematically assured only in the last match. And, for good measure, Kirkland Alexander of Princeton also won his individual épée laurels in his last bout, a fence-off.

Careful Schedule Arranged.

Thus it was that the careful schedule arranged weeks before by the bout committee on the advice of Miguel A. de Capriles, who drew up the master formula, came out perfectly. Nothing except the three-weapon championship, which could not be controlled, was decided until the final series of bouts, a singularly odd and meritorious bit of match making.

The new system of scoring that was imported from the salles d'armes of Europe met with complete and unqualified approval. A tournament that included almost 600 bouts was run off without a slip and in approximately twenty hours, a new all-time low in intercollegiate fencing history. Hugh Alessandrini, the new graduate secretary, did an extremely efficient job so that the entire tournament was hailed as the best run in the annals of the association.

Sons of Famous Coaches.

One of the sidelights of the two-day show was the fact that young Hugo Castello, a sophomore, won the varsity foils title. The week before Maurice Grasson of Yale captured the freshman foils crown. Both are sons of famous coaches, one of the quiet Julio Castello of N. Y. U. and the other of the ebullient Robert Grasson of Yale.

Thus a new era in the game is on its way to realization. Next year they will be fencing for the same individual foils championship, each bringing a great fencing heritage into action with him. The Castellons and the Grassons, senior and junior, subscribe to the French school of swordsmanship as contrasted with the Italian. Fundamentally they fence the same way.

Adding still more savor to what is to come is the fact that Jimmy Castello, another son of the N. Y. U. coach, will be a Violet freshman foilsman next year.