

# The 600: Class Descriptions

## Day One: Friday

### **Application of Fiore's Art to Positions of Disadvantage**

Instructor: Roger Siggs, Rocky Mountain Swordplay Guild

Class Length: 3 hrs

Experience Level: Any

Intensity Level: Moderate

Pre-Requisites: A basic knowledge of Fiore's abrazare and dagger

Required Equipment: Mask, gloves, weapon trainers

#### Description:

Set-plays are just that: formal techniques that show a basic tactical situation and how to deal with it. However, part of internalizing a system of martial arts is taking the lesson of that play and understanding how to apply it creatively and spontaneously in less than ideal circumstances. We will take several of the core plays and applying them in various states of dis/advantage (standing but off line/facing wrong; dropped to one knee; flat on your back/stomach; etc)

### **Improve Your Survival Odds with Proper Cutting Mechanics**

Instructor, Part 1: Sean Hayes, Northwest Fencing Academy

Instructor, Part 2: Gregory Mele, Chicago Swordplay Guild

Class Length: 3 hrs

Experience Level: Any

Intensity Level: Moderate

Pre-Requisites: A basic knowledge of the use of the two-handed sword

Required Equipment, Part 1: longsword

Required Equipment, Part 2: longsword, gloves, mask

#### Description, Part 1:

A great many fights are lost in freeplay due to attacking in false times and with poorly framed actions that slow the attack, leave the attacker's body and weapon vulnerable, and close off opportunities to counter the defender's remedy (parry). This class will teach proper hand-foot timing, proper direction of travel of the hands, covering the attacking line as completely as possible, and recruiting the core muscles for efficient movement, and development and projection of power. (Note: this is not a "test-cutting" class.)

#### Description, Part 2:

Every sword school has some sort of "cutting drills" that are used to teach students how to execute basic cuts or combinations of cuts. However, quite often those drills have no context besides as "sword swinging". Good compound exercises should have a clear, tactical component and should also be capable of becoming a two-person training exercise or set-play. We will take several cutting exercises and then apply them as two-person drills, ending with the students being given a combination of actions and then constructing a tactical application of their own.

### **Down You Go: Two Ubiquitous Throws of Armizare**

Instructor: Greg Mele, Chicago Swordplay Guild

Class Length: 2 hours

Experience Level: Any

Pre-Requisites: A working knowledge of Armizare, comfort with falling.

Required Equipment: mask or helmet, sturdy gloves, dagger and longsword trainer. A spear, staff or poleaxe is desirable, but not required.

Description:

We routinely discuss that Armizare is a fully-integrated “system” of martial arts. This class looks at two of the most basic throws in the system: the “rear leg takedown” and the “collar throw” and shows their explicit and implicit application unarmed, with the dagger, sword and polearms.

### **Playing with the Plays: Making Techniques Adaptable, Applicable and Fun**

Instructor: Guy Windsor

Class Length: 2 hrs

Experience Level: Intermediate

Intensity Level: Moderate

Pre-Requisites: A basic knowledge of Fiore’s abrazare, dagger and swordsmanship

Required Equipment: Mask, gloves, weapon trainers

Description: Just what it says! We will look at how to adapt formal technique to a changing combat environment in a creative, spontaneous way. Students will realize the *depth* of the art we study, and learn to train creatively and have a great deal of fun in the process.

### **KISS - Keep it Simple Student**

Instructor: Mark Lancaster, The Exiles

Class Length: 2 hours

Experience Level: Basic to Intermediate

Pre-Requisites: A working knowledge of medieval two-handed sword

Required Equipment: mask or helmet, sturdy gloves, dagger and sword trainer

Description:

This would look at how the 4 unarmed postas follow through into the daga (and then into sword) showing they are just a variation on the basic theme. Then we would look how all remedy techniques are just a combination of volta and posta with a little bit of brain realization (variation).

### **How to Open a Can Without Cutting Yourself: Techniques for Fighting in Harness**

Instructor: Sean Hayes, Northwest Fencing Academy

Assisted by: Gregory Mele (Chicago Swordplay Guild) and Alex Spreier (Northwest Fencing Academy).

Class Length: 2 hours

Experience Level: Intermediate

Intensity Level: Moderate to High

Pre-Requisites: A basic knowledge of medieval swordsmanship and dagger fighting is required.

Required Equipment: Longsword, gloves, fencing mask (or similar), forearm & elbow protection such as skate pads, etc.

Optional: As much harness as you can bring!

Description:

Fiore dei Liberi's armoured fighting techniques are given focus in the spada en arme (sword used while in harness) sections of his manuscripts, but critically important instruction is covered in the abrazare, dagger, single-sword and two-handed sword sections. Fiore's noble students came to him as mature fighting men who already understood the fundamentals of armoured combat; as a result, these fundamentals are covered very concisely and embedded throughout in his four surviving manuscripts. Using the rules found in them, we will develop a basic command of armoured combat techniques and tactics.

Since we will have a variety of different harness configurations, and in some cases none at all, we will use this as opportunity to explore "unequal" situations, from full harness against full harness, or against no harness, and variations in between.

## Day Two: Saturday

### **Ponderous, Cruel and Mortal: Dei Liberi's System of Axe Play**

Instructor: Greg Mele, Chicago Swordplay Guild

Class Length: 3 hours

Experience Level: Intermediate

Pre-Requisites: None, but a general knowledge of sword and abrazare is desired

Required Equipment: mask or helmet, sturdy gloves, poleaxe and dagger trainer are required, a gambeson and harness is desirable.

Description:

Dei Liberi's instructions on the poleaxe are one of the most misunderstood portions of his manuscript: six poste and a handful of plays, all dealing with the low bind. However, this weapon, perhaps more than any other, shows the internal logic of the system. We will begin with the poste and look at the fundamental actions of axe play discussed therein. We will then follow with certain, core actions of sword and spear play: the *colpo di villano*, *scambiar di punta*, *rompere di punta* and the *punta falsa*, adapted for the axe, and then finally look at the formal axe plays, which are designed for circumstances unique to playing with this weapon. Students will come away with a working knowledge of a complete system of axe combat contained within *il Fior di Battaglia*.

### **Attacker's Choice: Responding to the Bind**

Instructor: Guy Windsor

Class Length: 3 hrs

Experience Level: Intermediate

Intensity Level: Moderate

Pre-Requisites: A basic knowledge of Fiore's swordsmanship

Required Equipment: Mask, gloves, sword

Description:

Fiore divides his swordsmanship into plays of *largo* and *stretto*. This class will begin by examining the crossings of the sword, and establishing the all-important *why* for the tactical choice each play represents. Over the course of the classes, we will cover at least the beginnings of each section of the longsword out of armour (sword in one hand, sword in two hands *zogho largo* and *zogho stretto*), and the circumstances in which each of the four crossings shown most naturally occur. By the end, students will be effortlessly choosing the correct play for the circumstances they find themselves in.

### **Patterns of Remedy: Treatise Organization and Internal Connections in Fior di Battaglia**

Instructor: Bob Charrette

Class Length: 2 hours

Experience Level: Any

Required Equipment: mask or helmet, sturdy gloves, dagger trainer

Description:

This class is a combination of AV presentation and practice, reexamining Fiore's system of Remedies, Scholars and Counters, showing an even higher level of internal organization and forethought than is generally recognized by students of Armizare.

### **Zogho Stretto - Break the Distance?**

Instructor: Rob Lovett, The Exiles

Class Length: 2 hours

Experience Level: Intermediate

Pre-Requisites: A working knowledge of medieval two-handed sword

Required Equipment: mask or helmet, sturdy gloves, longsword trainer

Description: The question-mark is the important bit! This class will show at how distance can be controlled within Stretto footwork and how this can change the dynamics from the incrossada - giving more options than simply closing and "piling in".

## **Day Three: Sunday**

### **Connecting Largo to Stretto**

Instructor: Rob Lovett, The Exiles

Class Length: 3 hours

Experience Level: Intermediate

Pre-Requisites: A working knowledge of medieval two-handed sword

Required Equipment: mask or helmet, sturdy gloves, longsword trainer

Description:

This class begins with the final plays of Largo and transitions into the first plays of Stretto, showing how they flow one into the other as part of the natural continuation of the fight.

### **Spontaneous Tactical Response Skills for Freeplay**

Instructor: Sean Hayes, Northwest Fencing Academy

Assisted by: Alex Spreier and Mark Kruger of Northwest Fencing Academy.

Class Length: 3 hours

Experience Level: Intermediate to Advanced

Intensity Level: Moderate to High

Pre-Requisites: A working knowledge of medieval two-handed sword, either Italian or German. Previous freeplay experience valuable, but not necessary.

Required Equipment: gambeson, mask or helmet, gorget, sturdy gloves, basic forearm & elbow protection (skate pads, etc are fine)

Description:

This class will use Fiore's basic tactical paradigm of attack/remedy/counter (and occasionally counter-counter) and his discussions of the qualities of the poste or guards to develop a framework for quickly analyzing an opponent's strategic and tactical position, comparing to one's own position, and immediately executing an offensive, defensive or counter-offensive action that minimizes risk and maximizes the possibility of success. We will examine and practice spontaneously acquiring measure and tempo on the adversary, or denying it to him, in a series of free-flowing combat scenarios.

At the start this class will draw from pre-defined drills of my own as well as actions taught in other classes at this event. In the latter portion we will examine situations raised by students. Finally, students will work in groups of three to devise and execute tactical drills of their own, and present them to the class for analysis and discussion.

### **More than the Getty**

Instructor: Rob Lovett, The Exiles

Class Length: 2 hours

Experience Level: Basic to Intermediate

Pre-Requisites: A working knowledge of medieval two-handed sword

Required Equipment: mask or helmet, sturdy gloves, longsword trainer

Description:

While the Getty Ms is the largest of the Fiore texts, it does not supersede the other three manuscripts, particularly the Pisani-Dossi. This class demonstrates plays particularly found in the PD and how they both add to and compliment the Getty plays (daga and spada). Students will learn that the PD has a lot to offer and the Getty is *not* the exclusive text for study.

### **It's a System: Movement informs Technique**

Instructor: Roger Siggs, Rocky Mountain Swordplay Guild

Class Length: 2 hrs

Experience Level: Intermediate

Intensity Level: Moderate

Pre-Requisites: A basic knowledge of Fiore's abrazare, dagger and swordsmanship

Required Equipment: Mask, gloves, weapon trainers

Description:

We will take a movement pattern from one aspect of the art (such as a hanging parry for instance) and work through the method for applying it to a different weapon or unarmed situation, and show how you see the same play over and over again. This will also involve a look at the correct environment for applying the particular pattern, how it needs to be modified for different types or ranges of weapons, etc.