

Israel

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and East Jerusalem (Israeli and Palestinian areas, respectively).

As soon as our transport crossed the checkpoint into the Palestinian area, I felt like I had gone from heaven to hell. The smoothly paved two lane roads turned into what can only be described as large sidewalks, peppered with potholes that could swallow a person whole. Because the Palestinian areas receive no municipal services, any open space or evacuated building immediately turns into a dump, so there was trash everywhere. Sliman, the driver, pointed out the black tanks on top of all the buildings and told

us that they are water tanks put there by the Israeli government, who controls 100% of the water. Scattered all over the landscape were piles of rocks that, at first sight blended into the desert scenery, but a closer look revealed the reality of house demolitions.

Snuggled inside my sleeping bag, I thought about all these things. I realized at that point that I had not been prepared for this, but I still had no idea of the tragedy that I would encounter in the days and weeks to come.

Stay tuned for the next episode—"Here Comes the Gestapo"



Photo by S. Carlson

Club Spotlight: Fencing Club

by Ben Goff
News Editor

To many, nothing is more exciting than the clash of steel and the ringing of bellguards. Fencing brings to mind different images for different people; for some it is Zorro carving his initial into his foes, Olympians boutng for the gold medal, or maybe Scaramouch swinging from chandeliers. But for one group of BC students, fencing calls to mind Sunday afternoons spent crossing blades with friends.

The modern sport of fencing has changed somewhat since the days of dueling for honor and swashbuckling heroes, but the spirit remains the same. Instead of sharp weapons designed to kill, fencers now use weapons that have a button on the end, connected by wires to a scoring machine that lights up to show when a touch has been made. Instead

of tights and puffy pirate shirts, fencers now wear uniforms made of high-tech fabrics that are stretchy, light, and breathable, yet have the strength to stop a blade that has broken with a sharp edge from penetrating. The highest quality fencing uniforms are even touted as being capable of stopping small caliber handgun rounds (although I wouldn't want to test it myself). Instead of fencing in castle turrets, fencers now face off on a strip that is two meters wide and just under 20 meters long.

Fencing has gone through many changes, but the thrill of squaring off with an opponent, sword in hand, still exists. Fencing is often thought of as an Olympic or Ivy League Sport found only at schools like UNC and Duke, but over the past few decades fencing has grown to a new audience that is not Ivy League, preppy, or pretentious at all. Travel to a few local tournaments and you

will see people of all ages and walks of life enjoying the competition together. A byproduct of this trend has been a growth in college fencing clubs just like ours.

The BC Fencing Club was established in the spring of 2004 by 2007 graduate Jordon Huppert and began meeting in the fall of '04. Since then, the BC fencing club has grown from five people in the basement of Jones who had no idea what they were doing into a group of twice that size who are competitive (and winning) fencers.

The club is now a full member of the United States Fencing Association and holds two officially sanctioned tournaments each year that draw fencers from other clubs across the region. At the last tournament in the spring there were fencers from other college clubs such as ASU, Furman, Clemson, and Western Carolina, as well as fencers from

private clubs as far away as Chapel Hill and Wilmington, NC. Even in this strong pool of competition, BC fencers shined- taking one gold and two bronze medals in the two events. BC fencers have also traveled to other clubs in Charlotte, Atlanta, Knoxville, and Raleigh to compete and train with some of the best fencers in the southeast.

This year the club welcomed the largest and most eager group of freshman fencers since its inception, and reached a new landmark by bringing in a new student who decided to come here because of our fencing program. The club will continue to host its two annual tournaments, the White Squirrel Open later this semester, and the Tornado Open in the spring.

The BC Fencing Club welcomes everyone, whether you have fenced before or just

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