

NOTRE DAME FENCING – NCAA DAY ONE NOTES

Thursday, March 25, 2004 ... Waltham, Mass.

(Brandeis University – Gosman Center)

Notre Dame's quest to repeat as the NCAA combined fencing champion begins today at Brandeis University's Gosman Center, in Waltham, Mass. ... the NCAAs have returned to the familiar four-day format, with the women's bouts slated for Thursday and Friday (March 25-26) while the men will fence on the weekend (the '03 NCAAs were condensed to a two-day overall format, due to severe weather in the Colorado Springs area).

Perennial contender Penn State and upcomer Ohio State each have qualified the maximum 12 fencers (two per weapon) for the 2004 NCAAs while Notre Dame and Columbia qualified 11 and St. John's 10 ... recent history has shown that an 11-fencer squad can contend for the NCAA title, including the 2003 NCAAs that saw Notre Dame's 12-fencer squad edge an 11-fencer Penn State unit by just three total bouts (182-179) ... Notre Dame was runner-up to Penn State every year from 1996-2000 before finishing third in '01 and '02, with the '03 championship representing ND's first national title since 1994 ... Ohio State also qualified 12 fencers in 2003 but finished fourth, behind ND, PSU and St. John's (which had just 10 fencers at the '03 NCAAs).

Notre Dame could get an early indication as to its chances for overtaking PSU and OSU, with the Irish set to face both the Nittany Lions and Buckeyes in all three weapons during Thursday's first four rounds of the women's competition.

The 144-fencer field includes 24 men's and 24 women's fencers at each of three weapons (foil, epee, sabre) ... fencers will compete against the other 23 competitors in their respective weapons, with teams earning one point for each round-robin victory posted by a fencer from that team ... the top four round-robin finishers in each weapon then will fence for the respective individual titles at the end of Sunday's competition (those results do not factor into the team scores) ... the top 12 finishers in each weapon receive All-America honors.

Some notes on the Thursday matchups follow below ... check back to und.com throughout the NCAAs for complete coverage of ND's quest for a second straight NCAA title.

SPORTS HOTLINE UPDATES

The Notre Dame sports hotline will provide regular on-site updates from all four days of the NCAAs, with the hotline to be updated several times each day ... to access the hotline, call **(574) 631-3000**, then select option "8" (for tennis and fencing) followed by option "3" for fencing updates.

THE SCHEDULE

Thursday, March 25

10:00 a.m. – Women's Weapons, Rounds 1-4

Friday, March 26

10:00 a.m. – Women's Weapons, Rounds 5-7(end of team competition)

2:00 p.m. – Women's Individual Weapon Semifinals, followed by Finals

Saturday, March 27

Noon – Men's Weapons, Rounds 1-4

Sunday, March 28

Noon – Men's Weapons, Rounds 5-7 (end of team competition)

4:00 p.m. – Men's Individual Weapon Semifinals, followed by Finals

THURSDAY'S NCAA FENCING SCHEDULE (DAY 1)

The women will fence the first 14 (rounds 1-4) of their 23 bouts on Thursday, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Here's who the Irish will face in first-day action (see end of release for head-to-head history):

WOMEN'S FOIL

(juniors Andrea Ament and Alicja Kryczalo, paired with Cal State Fullerton's Senta Breden)

Round 1 – vs. teammate and CSF's Breden, plus Ohio State's Hannah and Metta Thompson and Sacred Heart's Leanda Ferland

Round 2 – vs. Penn State's Meredith Chin and Anna Donath and Harvard's Anne Austin

Round 3 – vs. Penn's Christina Kaneshige and Emmanuelle Humblet and Temple's Jenna Remmert

Round 4 – vs. St. John's duo Amy Delahanty and Erzsebet Garay and Yale's Alisa Mendelsohn

Highlight Bouts: vs. OSU's Hannah (8th in '03, 3rd in '02) and Metta (5th in '03 and '02) Thompson and PSU's Chin (15th in '03, 12th in '02) and Donath (6th in '03) ... four other ND Day-1 opponents are previous NCAA participants: Harvard's Austin (14th in '03), CSF's Breden (17th in '03), Temple's Remmert (18th in '03) and Penn's Humblet (18th in '02) ... SJU sends two NCAA first-timers (Delahanty and Garay) into the '04 competition.

Series Head-to-Head Notes vs. Thursday's Foil Opponents:

Cal State Fullerton (both 3-0) – Ament (5-4) and Kryczalo (5-1) most recently beat Breden at the 2004 ND Duals, with earlier wins vs. Breden in the '03 NCAAs (Kryczalo 5-0, Ament 5-1) and in the '03 regular season (Kryczalo 5-3, Ament 5-1)

Ohio State (the below results include 2002, '03 and '04 regular-season, Regional and NCAA bouts, plus '04 MFC results ... Hannah Thompson dnf at '04 ND Duals and '04 Regional, Metta dnf in '04 MFC individual competition):

Kryczalo vs. Hannah Thompson (7-3) – wins in the 2002 NCAAs (5-2 round-robin; 15-5 semifinal) and the '03 NCAAs (5-4), plus the '02 Regional fenceoff (5-3), the '03 Regional round-robin, and regular-season bouts in 2002 (5-1) and '03 (5-4) ... losses came in '02 Regional round-robin, '04 MFC team bout and '04 MFC title bout (12-15).

Kryczalo vs. Metta Thompson (8-1) – wins in the 2002 NCAAs (5-1) and the '03 NCAAs (5-4), plus the '02-'04 Regionals (5-2 in '04), '04 MFC team bout, and regular-season bouts in '02 (5-2) and '03 (5-4) ... loss at the '04 ND Duals (3-5).

Ament vs. Hannah Thompson (3-4) – wins in '02 NCAAs (5-2), '03 NCAAs (5-4) and '02 regular season (5-2) ... losses in '02 and '03 Regionals, '04 MFC team bout and '03 regular season (3-5).

Ament vs. Metta Thompson (6-2) – wins in the 2002 NCAAs (5-4), the '03 and '04 Regionals, and the '04 MFC team competition, plus regular-season bouts in '02 (5-1) and '04 (ND Duals) ... losses came at the '03 NCAAs and in the '03 regular season (both 4-5)

Penn State

Kryczalo vs. Chin (4-0) – wins in '02 and '03 NCAAs (both 5-1), plus regular-season bouts in '03 and '03-'04 (5-2, PSU Duals).

Kryczalo vs. Donath (2-1) – wins in '03 NCAAs (5-2) and at '03-'04 PSU Duals (5-4) ... loss at '03 ND Duals (3-5).

Ament vs. Chin (2-2) – win in 2002 (5-3) and '03 NCAAs (5-0), with regular-season losses at '03 ND Duals (4-5) and '03-'04 PSU Duals (2-5).

Ament vs. Donath (3-0) – NCAA win in '03 (5-1), also '03 ND Duals (5-0) and '03-'04 PSU Duals (5-1)

Harvard – Kryczalo (5-1) and Ament (5-2) both beat Austin at the '03 NCAAs.

Penn – Kryczalo (5-0) and Ament (5-1) both beat Humblet at the '02 NCAAs.

Temple – Kryczalo beat Remmert at '03 NCAAs (5-2) and in '03-'04 regular season (5-2), Ament also won in NCAAs (5-4) but lose to Remmert earlier this season (4-5).

SJU – Kryczalo swept Delahanty (5-3) and Garay (5-1) at the '04 NYU Duals, with Ament earning a split (5-4 vs. Garay, 1-5 vs. Delahanty)

Yale – Kryczalo posted 5-0 win over Mendelsohn at the '04 NYU Duals.

Key Friday Foil Bouts: Rd. 5 vs. Columbia newcomers Cassidy Luitjen and Kathleen Reckling ... Rd. 6 vs. Princeton's Jacqueline Leahy (7th in '03) and Harvard's Chloe Stinetorf (12th in '03) ... Rd. 7 vs. Northwestern's Julia Foldi (10th in '03, 8th in '02) and Jessica Florendo (high-rated newcomer) plus Stanford's Eva Petschnigg (13th in '03, also the 2000 NCAA champ while fencing for Princeton).

WOMEN'S EPEE

(senior Kerry Walton and freshman Amy Orlando, paired with Northwestern's Sharon Sullivan)
Round 1 – vs. teammate and NU's Sullivan, Ohio State's Kaela Brendler and Alexandra Shklar and Air Force's Apphia Taylor
Round 2 – vs. Penn's Holly Buechel and Livia Rurarz-Huygens and UNC's Courtney Krolikoski
Round 3 – vs. Penn State's Katarzyna Trzopek and Case Szarwark and Temple's Sara Forsythe
Round 4 – vs. M.I.T.'s Lucy Mendel, Harvard's Jasmine McGlade and Cornell's Meghan Phair

Highlight Bouts: vs. OSU's Shklar (3rd in '03, 8th in '02, 6th in '01) and Brendler (newcomer) and PSU's Trzopek (1st in '03) and Szarwark (newcomer), plus Cornell's Phair (6th in '03) ... three other ND Day-1 opponents are previous NCAA participants: NU's Sullivan (14th in '03), Temple's Forsythe (15th in '02, 23rd in '01) and M.I.T.'s Mendel (19th).

Series Head-to-Head Notes vs. Thursday's Epee Opponents:

Northwestern – Walton has posted five wins over Sullivan, including a 5-2 bout at the '04 Regional, two regular-season wins in '03-'04 (5-2, 5-0), 5-0 at the '03 NCAAs and 5-4 in the '03 regular season... Orlando split vs. Sullivan in the '03-'04 regular season (4-5, 5-3), followed by a 5-1 win in the MFC team bout and a 3-2 loss in the Regional.

Ohio State

Walton vs. Shklar (5-3) – wins in 2002 NCAAs (5-4) and again in '03 (5-1), plus '03 Regional and regular-season bouts in '02 (5-2) and '03 (5-3) ... losses at '02 and '04 Regionals (4-5) and '04 ND Duals (3-5).

Other Bouts – Orlando lost to Shklar at '04 ND Duals and in MFC team bout (both 4-5) before winning at Regional (4-3) ... Walton lost to Brendler at '04 ND Duals and again at the Regional (both 1-5) ... Orlando lost to Brendler at the ND Duals (3-4), followed by a win on the MFC team bout (5-1) and another loss at the Regional (2-5).

Penn State – Walton has lost three bouts to Trzopek, at the '03 ND Duals, '03 NCAAs and '03-'04 PSU Duals (all 2-5), but does own a win over Trzopek at the PSU Open in the fall of '03 ... Orlando lost to Trzopek (1-5) and Szarwark (3-4) at the '03-'04 PSU Duals, with Walton posting a 5-1 win over Szarwark.

Temple – Walton won three straight vs. Forsythe (5-3 in '02 regular season, 5-1 at '02 NCAAs and 5-3 at '03 NCAAs) before dropping a regular-season bout in '03-'04 (3-5, with Orlando losing by the same score).

MIT – Walton posted a 5-4 win over Mendel in the '03 NCAAs.

Cornell – Walton posted a 5-4 win over Phair in the '03 NCAAs.

Key Friday Epee Bouts: Rd. 5 vs. Brown's Ruth Schneider (12th in '03), Columbia newcomer Alexie Rubin ... Rd. 6 vs. Yale's Erica Korb (17th in '03, 6th in '02) ... Rd. 7 vs. Wayne State's Anna Vinnikov (8th in '03, 13th in '02) and Anna Garina (top newcomer).

WOMEN'S SABRE

(freshmen Valerie Providenza and Angela Vincent, paired with CSF's Rachel Leibing)

Round 1 – vs. teammate and CSF's Leibing, plus Penn's Annika Eiremo and Katelyn Sherry and Princeton's Mina Morova

Round 2 – vs. Penn State's Heather Brosnan and Sophie Hiss and Haverford's Abigail Burma

Round 3 – vs. Ohio State's Louise Bond-Williams and Marguerite Plekhanov and Air Force's Marisa Romero

Round 4 – vs. Tufts' Katherine and Louise Zouein and Harvard's Eunice Yi

Highlight Bouts: vs. PSU's Brosnan (3rd in '03, 6th in '01 and '02) and Hiss (newcomer) and OSU's Bond-Williams (4th in '03, 2nd in '02) and Marguerite Plekhanov (16th in '03) ... Tufts' Katherine Zouein (17th) and AFA's Romero (23rd) also competed in the '03 NAAs while the Penn duo of Eiremo and Sherry are top newcomers

Series Head-to-Head Notes vs. Thursday's Epee Opponents:

CS Fullerton – Vincent lost to Leibing at '04 ND Duals (0-5)

Penn State – Providenza beat Brosnan at '03-'04 PSU Duals (5-4; with Vincent losing 0-5)

Ohio State – Providenza lost to Bond-Williams at '04 ND Duals (4-5) and in MFC title bout (8-15) but beat her in the Regional (5-4), with the two slated to meet in the 9th bout of the MFC team matchup (OSU won, 5-3) ... Vincent also lost to Bond-Williams at ND Duals (2-5) but beat her in the MFC team bout (5-2) and again in the Regional (5-4) ... Providenza beat Plekhanov at the ND Duals (5-2) and in the MFC team bout (5-1) but lost in the Regional (1-5) ... Vincent added one win over Plekhanov (5-4, at the ND Duals), with losses in the MFC team bout (2-5) and Regional (0-5).

Air Force – Vincent beat Romero at the '04 ND Duals (5-2)

Key Friday Bouts: Rd. 5 vs. Columbia's Emma Baratta (5th in '03) and Christian Robinson (newcomer) ... Rd. 6 vs. the St. John's duo of Christina Crane (8th in '03, 5th in '02) and Julia Gelman (2nd in '03, 3rd in '02) ... Rd. 7 vs. regional rivals Mai Van Vu and Lauren Van Gieson of Northwestern, plus Temple's Aziza Hassan (11th in '03, 15th in '02).