

# The Complete Rapier Course

This draft of the Complete Rapier Course plan and shooting script is subject to review and may change. You can find the rapier course [here](#).

If you find any errors, omissions, or have any suggestions before July 14th 2018, please email them to me at [guywindsor@gmail.com](mailto:guywindsor@gmail.com)

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## Part 1: Introduction

**Video: Safety Briefing** mindset v. equipment

**Video: Introduction:**

General training notes: how long it takes to do the course. Left handers. Be gentle. Break it up. Go back and revise.

HMA sources, (Capoferro is in the course materials)

Build up the skills: the plates show final moment of complex action.

Capoferro in context;

Sidesword-rapier-smallsword

Equipment: basics: mask, sword. Freeplay kit (jacket, gorget, plastron, pads, gloves)

**Video: Introductory Class:**

Solo:

Warm-up; gentle range of motion

Basic guard position

Basic footwork: lunge, passing, step forward and back; step-step-lunge-recover two passes.

Partner:

Control measure exercise

Deliver power: grounding the lunge

Both sides!!

Solo:

Holding the sword: grounding (partner ideal)

4 Guards

Footwork with weapon. Lunge in 2 and 4 (plate 5)

Partner:

Measure control with weapon

Forte v debole: Hunt the Debole

Stringering

Direct attack

Attack by disengage

CHALLENGE: 2 minutes SOLO PRACTICE every day.

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## Part 2: Fundamentals

### **Video: FUNDAMENTALS CLASS**

Warm up

Footwork and grounding revision

(ref: Rapier module on footwork course)

Hunt the debole

Approach a sharp sword... Stringering

Attack by Disengage

- Parry riposte in two tempi (2nd and 4th)

Attack by Disengage

- Parry riposte in one tempo (Plate 7, 16)

=90% of all rapier fencing

Play: hunt the debole, with footwork

- add a thrust, direct or with disengage

- parry if you like

- now fix what didn't work.

Now fix what didn't work: measure? control of the blade?

THIS IS NOT FENCING YET

SOLO: shadow fencing. Wall target, mirror. Accuracy, grounding

CHALLENGE: 5 minutes solo practice every day.

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## Part 3: Blade Actions

### **Video: BLADE ACTIONS CLASS**

Warm-up yourselves

revise: basic guards, lunges, solo

revise 7 and 16

PLATE 7: the feint

-parry and riposte to chest

-parry and riposte cut head

CUTS: basic actions: 1-2; 1-4; 1-6

shoulder; elbow; fingers

False edge 3 and 4

Stramazzone

Return to plate 7

PLATE 16: Beat attack

ACTIONS ON THE BLADE:

-cavazione, contracavazione, ricavazione

-beats (in both lines)

-glides/expulsions (not Capoferro)

-transports (not really capoferro)

PLATE 10: versus the cut (all four steps)

FEINTS:

-to draw an attack (eg 7, 10)

-to draw a parry (cf Giganti)

Play: run a diagnostic, fix the weakest link, run the diagnostic again. Play as diagnostic tool.

SOLO PRACTICE: shadow fencing with all the above.

CHALLENGE: Get plates 7 and/or 16 clean, video, and post to me or the cohort.

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## Part 4: Completing the Basics

### **Video CLASS:**

Warm up, revision of basic footwork.

Grounding

ADD: Pass with change of lead arm, and with no change of lead arm.

Revision: plates 7 and 16, cuts.

PLATE 8: cut to leg

PLATE 9: attack with pass

PLATE 13: Scannatura

### ADD COMPLEXITY:

Rule of 'c's

add a step;

who moves first;

Degrees of freedom: using responses to stringing as starting point:

- step back

- direct attack

- cavazione

- beat attack

- pressure

SOLO: add the passing actions to shadow fencing.

CHALLENGE: Run through 7, 8, 9, 13, 16 from memory in one take. Video, and post it to me or the cohort.

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## Part 5: Avoidances

### **Video CLASS: Avoidances**

Warm up yourselves.

Theory of avoidances: inside, outside, low (no jumping!)

actions: dell pie dritto, della vita, sbasso

Revise: 7 and 16,

PLATE 11: all five sequences

PLATE 17: scanso dell pie dritto, and counter

PLATE 19: scanso della vita, and counter

NB: drill solo, and on both sides.

Play: hunt the debole with movement, add avoidances.

SOLO: Add avoidances to shadow fencing

CHALLENGE: Pick one of the plates we have not covered, figure it out from the text, post a video and share it with the course cohort, or just with me.

### **Video CLASS: Rapier Footwork Form**

Taught step by step, pair drill then solo.

Part One:

- 1) Step, step, Lunge, recover with two passes backwards. eg Plate 7 and Plate 16.
- 2) Step, slip the leg. Plate 8
- 3) Step back, extension; step back, strike with the fixed foot; step back, lunge with two passes forwards. Capoferro's mezo tempo, full tempo, tempo and a half.
- 4) Scanso del pie dritto. Plate 17: Scanso del pie dritto.

Part Two:

- 1) Step, pass left, recover forwards. Plate 11
- 2) Step, pass forwards, recover forwards. scannatura. Plate 13: Scannatura.
- 3) Step, pass forwards, recover backwards. Plate 18.



4) Step, scanso della vita. Plate 19: Scanso della vita.

CHALLENGE: Memorise the footwork form, video it in one take (alone or with partner), post it to me or the cohort.

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## Part 6: Skill Development

### **Video: Freeplay kit**

### **Video: CLASS:**

Warm-up, Footwork form, plates 7 and 16.

Theory of coaching: create the environment

Rule of 'c's

Add complexity: add a step; who moves first; degrees of freedom

Using plate 7 as a base:

- Coach attack by disengage

  - timing

  - measure

  - recovery

  - blade control

Coach any other skill.

Technical Study:

- The Compound Counter-Riposte Drill

  - as extended sequence

  - as flow drill

    - break the flow

    - counter the break

Prerequisites for any action

Build complexity step by step from Plate 7 to freeplay

CHALLENGE: Run a diagnostic on your partner. Fix the weakest link using these coaching methods, run the diagnostic again, demonstrating a clear improvement. Video the process, and post to me or the cohort.

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## Part 7: Rapier and Dagger

### **Video CLASS: Rapier and Dagger basics**

Warm up yourselves

Rapier Footwork Form

Plates 7 and 16

How to hold the dagger

Rapier and dagger progression game:

-parry with the dagger

-parry with the dagger while striking with the sword

-avoid the parry

-parry while avoiding the parry

The four dagger parries

The six guards of rapier and dagger (plates 2-4)

SOLO: Shadow fencing with rapier and dagger.

### **Video CLASS: Rapier and Dagger Plates**

Warm up yourselves

Rapier Footwork Form

PLATE 22: target the open line

PLATE 23: feint against the dagger

PLATE 24: force the weapon

PLATE 25: high parry

PLATE 38: Against the left hander (sorry!)

PLATE 39: The cross parry

PLATE 40: Thrust with both weapons

CHALLENGE: Interpret and video one of plates 26-35; share with me or the cohort

CHALLENGE 2: Develop your own bridges between set drill and freeplay; video and share with me or the cohort.

**Video CLASS: Rapier and Cloak**

PLATE 36: Releasing the cape, + the other actions

PLATE 37: contracavazione in quarta, controlling sword with cape

From Alfieri: plate 37, throw the cape

CHALLENGE: Freeplay with sword and cape, and make it look good. Video and share with me or the cohort.