

UTC Fencing club lunges forward

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Since its start in the fall of 2002, the UTC Fencing Club has continued to grow and compete in tournaments across the Southeast.

"We do pretty well. We are getting better and getting good experience," said Bart Weathington, the coach of the fencing team who is also a psychology professor.

The team has competed in tournaments at Vanderbilt University, the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and local clubs in Birmingham, Ala., Rome, Ga., and Dunwoody, Ga.

Currently a part of the Tennessee division of the United States Fencing Association, the club is working with fencing club at UTK and the University of Memphis to create a stronger collegiate fencing presence in the state of Tennessee and the region according to Weathington.

Perhaps UTC's most proficient fencer is club president Kyle Harper.

Harper, a Lebanon, Tenn. senior, has reached a D ranking in the USFA by competing in area tournaments, according to Weathington.

Jodie Mayfield, a Dayton, Tenn. senior, said that the sport is a good way to get exercise and has other benefits as well.

"It's a good way to vent out frustration," Mayfield said. "It also helps with hand-eye coordination."

Mayfield was attracted to fencing by participating in reenactments with the Society for Creative Anachronism. "It's a classy and noble sport," she said.

Marin Rieman, a Bartlett, Tenn. senior, said she wanted to find something athletic to do that was fun. "I always wanted to try it, and this year I was able to free up some time," she said.

"It's fun to compete one-on-one with another person," Rieman said. "I mean, we're playing with weapons here."

Both Rieman and Mayfield agree that the sport is not difficult to learn.

"It depends on the individual, but as long as you stay focused its easy," said Mayfield.

"It helps because there are a lot of really good instructors on the team," Rieman said.

Practices are every Tuesday night from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Desalles-Harrison Racquet Center. The club provides basic equipment for beginners purchased with funding from SGA, according to Weathington.

Weathington also says that the team plans to attend two more tournaments this year.

<http://media.www.utcecho.com/media/storage/paper483/news/2007/04/05/Sports/Fencing.Club.Lunges.Forward.With.New.Members.Tournaments-2826341.shtml>