

Meinhardt Places 10th in Men's Foil

Contributed by Craig Harkins
Wednesday, 13 August 2008

Though Gerek Meinhardt is the youngest fencer in his event by over 4 years, he didn't let his youth or inexperience get the better of him. Meinhardt, the #9 seed, easily won his first match against Egyptian Mostafa Nagati before losing to semi-finalist Zhu in the round of 16.

Meinhardt got the nerves out of the way with the first touch in the bout as the Egyptian scored on him. "This morning I took some deep breaths b/c I definitely got the nerves going. I learned from the mistake on the first touch and made sure not to repeat it." Meinhardt would end up scoring the next 10 touches and easily won his first match.

{sidebar id=1}For his next match, he was looking forward to facing China's Zhu. "I'm looking forward to it because it will be really loud every time he scores. But all the pressure is on him. I will let them motivate me."

In his bout vs. #8 Zhu, Gerek took an early 3-2 lead, mainly on renewed attacks that caught Zhu before he could respond. Zhu adjusted to the tactic and the two fencers trade touches as Zhu led 6-5 at the break. The score evens up at 8 all before Zhu goes on a 4-0 run to put the bout out of reach.

Meinhardt reflected on his Olympic experience, and the fact that he is the youngest member of the US team. "I have a lot more years than these guys left so there is virtually no pressure on me." said Meinhardt "I'm here to have fun and get good experience - the next Olympics will be more pressure for me."