

NOTRE DAME FENCING – NCAA DAY ONE NOTES
Saturday, May 22, 2003 ... Colorado Springs, Colorado (Air Force Academy)

Notre Dame's quest to reclaim the NCAA combined fencing title resumes today at Air Force's Cadet Field House, in a condensed two-day format that will feature the men and women competing on the same day. Notre Dame – runner-up to Penn State every year from 1996-2000 before finishing third in 2001 and '02 – is taking aim at its first national title since 1994 and joined growing regional rival Ohio State as the only teams to qualify the maximum 12 fencers for the NCAA field (Columbia and defending champion Penn State qualified 11, followed by St. John's with 10).

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.

THE SCHEDULE

Saturday, March 22

9:00 a.m. – Men's Weapons, Rounds 1-4

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

Sunday, March 22

9:00 a.m. – Men's Weapons, Rounds 5-7

11:00 a.m. – Women's Weapons, Rounds 5-7 (end of team competition)

1:00 p.m. – Men's and Women's Individual Weapon Semifinals, followed by Finals

THE CONTENDERS – Notre Dame's 12 fencers include nine returners (seven All-Americans) from the '02 NAAs, plus two others that earned All-America honors in earlier NAAs ... the Irish are led by three former NCAA champions (women's epeeist Kerry Walton and foilist Alicja Kryczalo and men's sabre Gabor Szelle) and two others who have reached the semifinals in previous NAAs (men's epeeist Jan Viviani and foilist Ozren Debic) ... Ohio State returns eight of its 10 fencers from the 2002 NAAs, led by five All-Americans, one defending champion (sabre Louise Bond-Williams) and two other semifinalists (sabre Jason Rogers and foilist Hannah Thompson) ... Penn State returns just six of its 12 fencers from the '02 NCAA champs (all of them All-Americans), led by defending men's foil champ Non Panchan, men's epeeist Adam Wiercioch and Alex Weber (both 4th in '02) and women's epeeist Jessie Burke (5th in '02, 2000 champ) ... St. John's returns eight of its 11 fencers from the '02 runner-up team (all of them All-Americans), led by men's champions Ivan Lee (sabre) and Arpad Horvath (epee) and two women's semifinalists (foilist Irina Khouade and sabre Julia Gelman) ... Columbia returns just five of nine fencers from the '02 NAAs (only two All-Americans, who both finished no higher than 10th) ... NCAA newcomers who could make a big impact include three each from OSU (men's sabre, women's epee and sabre) and PSU (men's sabre, women's foil and epee), two from SJU (men's foil and sabre) and Columbia's women's sabre addition.

CONDENSED FORMAT PRODUCES NEW COMPETITIVE DYNAMIC – Unlike the past few seasons, when the four-day tournament would feature all of the men's bouts on two days and all of the women's bouts on the other two days, this weekend's condensed format will make for possibly a more wide-open final day of competition ... the teams will head into Sunday's bouts with the chance to make a final push in three rounds of men's and women's bouts (maximum of 108 final-day points available, or 18 per weapon for each team).

BREAKING DOWN THE SCHEDULE (see pp. 2-3) – Notre Dame's key bouts essentially will come vs. the other contenders (OSU, PSU, Columbia and SJU) and other top individuals at each weapon ... the ND men's foil and epee fencers will need to clear the cobwebs right out of the chute, facing three tough tandems in the first three rounds (PSU, OSU and Stanford) while the ND epeeists will battle a strong Air Force duo in Round One, the potent SJU tandem in Round 2 and PSU's top fencer in Round Three ... the ND sabremen will close Saturday vs. OSU before facing SJU (Rd 6) and PSU (Rd 7) on Sunday ... the daunting women's foil field will see the Irish face plenty of top fencers on Saturday (including the duos from Princeton, PSU, SJU and Harvard) before closing with huge showdowns vs. OSU (Rd 6) and vs. a Stanford pair that includes the 2000 and '01 NCAA champs (Rd 7) ... there are plenty of key women's epee bouts on Saturday, vs. PSU (Rd 1), SJU (Rd 2) and OSU (Rd 4) ... finally, women's sabre faces SJU in Round 2 and one PSU fencer in Round 4 while Sunday's slate includes bouts vs. OSU (Rd 6) and PSU's other fencer (Rd 7).

SPORTS HOTLINE UPDATES

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

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

The men will fence the first 14 (rounds 1-4) of their 23 bouts on Saturday, beginning at 9:00 a.m, followed by the women's rounds 1-4 at 1:00 p.m. Here's who the Irish will face in first-day action (see end of release for head-to-head history):

Men's Foil (senior Ozren Debic and sophomore Derek Snyder, paired with BC's Paul Taylor)
Round 1 – vs. teammate, BC's Paul Taylor, PSU's Non Panchan and Chris Miller, BC's Brian Sohn
Round 2 – vs. Ohio State's Nathan Weir and Matt Carbone and Nitai Kfir (St. John's)
Round 3 – vs. Stanford's Steve Gerberman and Florian Reichling and CS Fullerton's Roland Breden
Round 4 – vs. NYU's Gabriel Sinkin and Michael Pasinkoff and Rutgers' Ronald Brooks

Highlight Bouts: vs. Penn State's Panchan ('02 NCAA champ, '01 runner-up), SJU's Kfir (newcomer), OSU's Weir (15th in '02), Stanford's Gerberman (3rd in '02) and Reichling (11th in '01), CSF's Breden (12th in '02, 13th in '01) and NYU's Pasinkoff (10th in '02)

Key Sunday Bouts: Rd. 5 vs. Penn's Andrew Radu (17th in '02), Rd. 7 vs. RU' Jesse Schibilia (10th)

Men's Epee (senior Jan Viviani and soph. Michal Sobieraj, paired with Rutgers' Brian Garrett)
Round 1 – vs. teammate and RU's Garrett, AFA's Seth Kelsey and Tim French, Stanford's Martin Lee
Round 2 – vs. St. John's Arpad Horvath and Anton Gurevich, MIT's Samuel Korb
Round 3 – vs. Duke's Nathan Bragg and Nicolas Yesterman and PSU's Adam Wiercioch
Round 4 – vs. NYU's Matt Galvin and Alexander Tsinis and CS Fullerton's Matthew McConaughy

Highlight Bouts: Air Force's Kelsey (3-time All-American, 3rd in '02) and French (newcomer), SJU's Horvath ('02 NCAA champ) and Gurevich (6th in '02) and PSU's Wiercioch (4th in '02, 2nd in '01)

Key Sunday Bouts: Rd 6 vs. Princeton's Soren Thompson ('01 NCAA champ, '02 runner-up) and Rd. 7 vs. Ohio State's Brian Gross (15th in '02) and Spencer Jones (16th)

Men's Sabre (seniors Gabor Szelle and Matt Fabricant, paired with UNC's Wesley Newkirk)
Rd 1 – vs. teammate, UNC's Newkirk, Columbia's Paul Reyfman/Andrew Sohn, RU's Daniel Mazor
Round 2 – vs. Drew's Richard Frank, Haverford's Chris Flanders and N.J. Inst. Tech. Phil Dolata
Round 3 – vs. Harvard's Timothy Hagaman and David Jakus and Brown's Paul Friedman
Round 4 – vs. Ohio State's Adam Crompton and Jason Rogers, NYU's Alex Tsinis

Highlight Bouts: vs. Columbia's Andrew Sohn (10th in '02), Brown's Friedman (11th in '02), OSU's Crompton (freshman, Midwest champ) and Rogers (3rd in '02)

Key Sunday Bouts: Rd. 6 vs. St. John's Ivan Lee ('01 and '02 NCAA champ, '00 runner-up) and Serhiy Isayenko (newcomer), Rd. 7 vs. Penn State's Alex Weber (4th in '02) and Marten Zagunis (newcomer)

Saturday's Schedule (cont.)

Women's Foil (soph. Andrea Ament and Alicja Kryczalo, paired with MIT's Shannan Dorfman)

Round 1 – vs. teammate and MIT's Dorfman, Columbia's Ellen Blount and Princeton's Jacqueline Leahy and Mindy Rostal

Round 2 – vs. Penn State's Meredith Chin and Anna Donath and St. John's Irina Khouade

Round 3 – vs. Temple's Jeanne Browne and Jenna Remmert and St. John's Elizabeth Thottham

Round 4 – vs. Harvard's Anne Austin and Chloe Stinetorf and NYU's Kristin Wentrcek

Highlight Bouts: Columbia's Blount (14th in '02), Princeton's Leahy (newcomer) and Rostal (3rd in '01, 9th in '00), PSU's Chin (12th in '02) and Donath (newcomer), SJU's Khouade (4th in '02) and Thottham (11th in '02, 10th in '01) and Harvard newcomers Austin and Stinetorf

Key Sunday Bouts: Rd. 5 vs. Northwestern's Julia Foldi (8th in '02) and Wayne State's Inga Wallrabenstein (5th in '01, 6th in '02), Rd. 6 vs. Ohio State's Hannah (3rd) and Metta (5th) Thompson, Rd. 7 vs. Stanford's Iris Zimmerman ('01 NCAA champ, 7th in '02) and Eva Petschnigg ('00 NCAA champ, with Princeton)

Women's Epee (sr. Meagan Call and jr. Kerry Walton, paired with Northwestern's Sharon Sullivan)

Round 1 – vs. teammate, NU's Sullivan, Penn State's Jessie Burke and Kasia Trzopek and Temple's Sara Forsythe

Round 2 – vs. St. John's Arlene Stevens, BC's Tiffany White, Penn's Jean Goto

Round 3 – vs. Air Force's Elia Burrill and Caitlin Harris and UC San Diego's Lauren Muir

Round 4 – vs. Ohio State's Alexandra Shklar and Sherice Gearhart and Wayne State's Anna Vinnikov

Highlight Bouts: vs. NU's Sullivan (newcomer), PSU's Burke ('00 NCAA champ, 5th in '02) and Trzopek (newcomer), SJU's Stevens (7th in '02, 2nd in '01, 4th in '00), OSU's Shklar (8th in '02, 6th in '01) and Gearhart (newcomer) and WSU's Vinnikov (13th in '02)

Key Sunday Bouts: Rd. 6 vs. Yale's Erice Korb (6th in '02), Rd. 7 vs. Columbia's Monica Conley (12th in '02)

Women's Sabre (juniors Destanie Milo and Maggie Jordan, paired with NU's Emily Pasternak)

Round 1 – vs. teammate, NU's Pasternak, FDU's Cathleen Ferris, Columbia's Emma Baratta and Christian Robinson

Round 2 – St. John's Christina Crane and Julia Gelman and Yale's Sophie Jones

Round 3 – Temple's Aziza Hassan and Sakinah Shaahid and Princeton's Catherine Pack

Round 4 – Tufts' Kasara Williams and Katherine Zouein and Penn State's Heather Brosnan

Highlight Bouts: vs. NU's Pasternak and Columbia's Baratta (newcomers), SJU's Gelman (3rd in '02), Temple's Shaahid (4th in '01 and '02) and PSU's Brosnan (6th in '01 and '02)

Key Sunday Bouts: Rd. 5 vs. Rutgers' Alexis Jemal (5th in '01, 10th in '02), Rd. 6 vs. Ohio State's Louise-Bond Williams ('02 NCAA champ) and Marguerite Plekhanov (newcomer), Rd 7 vs. PSU's Austin O'Neill (newcomer)

NOTRE DAME'S 2003 NCAA COMPETITORS

Men's Foil

* **Ozren Debic** ... 6-1/175, Sr. ... Zagreb, Croatia (Ugostiteljska) ... team captain

Regular-season record: 43-1 in 2003, 157-8 career ... Midwest Fencing Conference Champ, 1st at Midwest Regional ... NCAA record: 55-14 (+127) ... 2nd in 2000, 5th in '01, 4th in '02 (3-time All-American)

* **Derek Snyder** ... 6-0/165, So. ... Chatsworth, Calif. (Chaminade Prep/Masque De Fer Club) Regular-season record: 34-6 in 2003, 66-13 career ... 2nd at Midwest Fencing Conf. Champ., 1st at Midwest Regional ... currently 33rd in U.S. senior men's foil rankings ... 2002 All-American, placing 7th in NCAAs (15-8, +25)

Men's Epee

* **Jan Viviani** ... 5-10/180, Sr. ... Haworth, N.J. (N. Valley Demarest HS/N.Y. Ath. Club) ... team cpt.

Regular-season record: 44-6 in 2003, 162-20 career ... 2nd at Midwest Fencing Conference Championships, 1st at Midwest Regional ... NCAA record: 51-18 (+100), 3rd in 2000 and '01, 5th in '02 (3-time All-American) ... currently 8th in U.S. senior-level men's epee rankings

* **Michal Sobieraj** ... 6-2/185, So. ... Krakow, Poland (1st L.O. HS/Krakovia Fencing Club)

Regular-season record: 44-4 in 2003, 70-5 career ... 9th at Midwest Fencing Conf. Champ., 2nd at Midwest Regional ... 2002 All-American, placing 10th (12-11, +5)

Men's Sabre

* **Gabor Szelle** ... 6-0/150, Sr. ... Budapest, Hungary (Lonyay Calvinist)

Regular-season record: 48-5 in 2003, 182-13 career ... Midwest Fencing Conf. Champ, 2nd at Midwest Regional ... NCAA record: 40-6 (+117), 2nd in 1999, 1st in 2000 (2-time All-American)

* **Matt Fabricant** ... 5-11/155, Sr. ... Elizabeth, N.J. (St. Benedict Prep/N.Y. Fencers Club)

Regular-season record: 49-4 in 2003, 151-21 career ... 3rd at Midwest Fencing Conf. Champ, 5th at Midwest Regional ... 2002 NCAA participant (14th, 9-14, -15)

Women's Foil

* **Andrea Ament** (5-3, So., Gates Mill, OH/Hawken School/Saturn Fencing Club)

Regular-season record: 41-6 in 2003, 68-8 career ... 5th at Midwest Fencing Conference Championships, 3rd at Midwest Regional ... 2002 NCAA runner-up (22-1, +76) ... member of 2002 U.S. World Junior Championship Team, currently 7th in U.S. senior-level women's foil rankings

* **Alicja Kryczalo** (6-0, So., Gdansk, Poland/Gdansk #70 HS/Gdansk City Club)

Regular-season record: 40-3, 79-5 career ... repeated as champion at both Midwest Fencing Conference Championship and Midwest Regional ... 2002 NCAA champion (23-0, +100)

Women's Epee

* **Kerry Walton** (5-9, Jr., Londonderry, NH/Londonderry HS/Seacoast Fencing Club)

Regular-season record: 43-5 in 2003, 93-10 career ... 2nd at Midwest Fencing Conference Championship, 2nd at Midwest Regional ... 2002 NCAA champion (18-5, +40) ... member of 2002 U.S. World Junior Championship Team (bronze medallist) and champion at 2002 U.S. Open ... ranked 5th among U.S. senior-level women's epeeists

* **Meagan Call** (5-2, Sr., Eugene, OR/Marist HS/Eugene Fencing Club)

Regular-season record: 38-9 in 2003, 168-52 career ... 3rd at Midwest Fencing Conference Championship, won Midwest Regional ... NCAA record: 26-20 (+17), 12th in 2000, 5th in '01 (2-time All-American)

Women's Sabre

* **Destanie Milo** (5-4, Jr., Knox, IN/Culver Academy/Indiana Fencing Academy), team captain

Regular-season record: 40-5 in 2002, 126-24 career ... 5th at Midwest Fencing Conf. Champ., 4th at Midwest Regional ... NCAA record: 16-30 (-42), 17th in 2001, 18th in 2002

* **Maggie Jordan** (5-3, Jr., Maplewood, N.J./Columbia HS/Lilov Fencing Club)

Regular-season record: 56-6, 81-22 career ... 3rd at Midwest Fencing Conf. Champ., 5th at Midwest Regional ... fenced NCAA foil in 2001 (17th, 8-15)

2003 NCAA FIELD – WEAPON CAPSULES

Women's Foil – easily the most competitive and talented field of competitors in the 2003 NAAs, with 12 of 24 competitors back from the '02 NAAs (including 10 All-Americans and each of the top-eight finishers) ... several newcomers add to the deep field, including Stanford transfer Eva Petschnigg ... each of the past three NCAA champs are among the field: ND's Alicja Kryczalo ('02), Stanford's Iris Zimmerman ('01) and Petschnigg ('00, while at Princeton) ... other top returners from the 2002 NAAs include ND's Andrea Ament (2nd), OSU's Hannah (3rd) and Metta (5th) Thompson and SJU's Irina Khouade (4th) – plus Wayne State's Inga Wallrabenstein (6th) and Northwestern's Julia Foldi (8th) ... top newcomers to watch include Princeton's Jacqueline Leahy (the world's #2-ranked junior level in world), Penn State second-semester addition Anna Donath (who ended Kryczalo's long winning streak, in the ND Duals) and the Harvard duo of Anne Austin and Chloe Stinetorf ... the field also includes Princeton veteran Mindy Rostal (9th in 2000, 3rd in '01, did not fence in '02 NAAs), SJU's Elizabeth Thottham (15th in '00, 10th in '01, 11th in '02), PSU's Meredith Chin (12th in '02) and Columbia's Ellen Blount (20th in '00, 14th in '01 and '02).

Women's Epee – also features 12 returners from the 2002 NAAs but just five All-Americans, with defending champ Kerry Walton of ND being the only returner from the '02 semifinalists ... PSU's Jessie Burke won the 2000 NCAA title (dnf in '01, 5th in '02) while SJU's Arlene Stevens was the 2001 runner-up, after finishing the 2000 round-robin as the top seed for the semifinals (she ended up 4th in '00, also placing 7th in '02) ... ND's Meagan Call (12th in '00, 5th in '01) makes her NCAA return while OSU's Alexandra Shklar (6th in '01, 8th in '02) also is a two-time All-American ... newcomers who could make an impact include Northwestern's Sharon Sullivan and PSU's Kasia Trzopek ... Columbia has two returners from the '02 NAAs: Monica Conley (12th) and Kim Bush (24th) ... ND senior Anna Carnick (a three-time All-American) is an alternate.

Women's Sabre – NCAA's "youngest weapon," in fourth season of competition, with 11 returners and six of the 12 All-Americans back from '02 ... Yale's Sada Jacobson is only non-returning '02 champion but '03 field includes last year's 2-6 finishers: OSU's Louis Bond-Williams (2nd), SJU's Julia Gelman (3rd) and Christina Crane (5th), Temple's Sakinah Shaddhid (4th in '01 and '02) and PSU's Heather Brosnan (6th in '01 and '02) ... ND's Destanie Milo (18th in '02, 17th in '01) is 9th-highest returner from '02 NAAs while her classmate Maggie Jordan earned an at-large berth for her first NCAA sabre appearance (she placed 17th in '01 NCAA foil competition) ... the field also includes Rutgers' Alexis Jemal (5th in '01, 10th in '02) and several noteworthy newcomers: OSU's Marguerite Plekhanov, Columbia's Emma Baratta and Northwestern's Emily Pasternak.

Men's Foil – field includes 12 returners from '02 NAAs (seven of them All-Americans) and three of the '02 semifinalists: PSU's Non Panchan (champ), Stanford's Steve Gerberman (3rd) and ND three-time All-American Ozren Debic (4th, also 2000 runner-up and 5th in '01) ... ND's Derek Snyder (7th) is the 4th-highest returner from the '02 NAAs ... ND senior Forest Walton is an alternate ... SJU has just one entrant in this weapon (departed Jon Tiomkin was the '02 runner-up) but that fencer, Nitai Kfir, is considered a semifinal contender ... Stanford's Florida Reichling (3rd in '01) is making his return to the NAAs (his brother Felix beat Debic in the '00 title bout) ... OSU's Nathan Weir placed 15th at the '02 NAAs while Columbia's Jeremy Sinkin was 16th.

Men's Epee – the most impressive returning talent among men's weapons, with the 11 fencers back including eight All-Americans and each of the top-six from the '02 NAAs: SJU's Arpad Horvath (1st) and Anton Gurevich (6th), Princeton's Soren Thompson (2nd, also '01 champ), Air Force three-time All-American Seth Kelsey (3rd, also 9th in '00, 6th in '01), PSU's Adam Wiercioch (4th, also '01 runner-up) and ND three-time All-American Jan Viviani (5th, also 3rd in '00 and '01) ... ND's Michal Sobieraj (10th) is the next-highest returner with the raw talent and international experience to compete for the title ... Viviani and Kelsey are longtime U.S. rivals while Sobieraj and Wiercioch have been teammates with the Polish National Team program ... PSU's Ethan Muri is the first alternate (ND junior North Carey the second) ... Air Force's Tim French is among the top newcomers ... OSU's Brian Gross (15th) and Spencer Jones (16th) also return from the '02 NCAA field.

Men's Sabre – 10 fencers return from the '02 NAAs but just five All-Americans, led by SJU's Ivan Lee (the '01 and '02 NCAA champ) ... ND's Gabor Szelle – who beat Lee in the 2000 NCAA semifinals, en route to the title – returns after not fencing in the '01 or '02 NAAs (he was the '99 runner-up) ... OSU boasts a strong tandem of Jason Rogers (3rd in '02) and newcomer Adam Crompton (brother of former ND All-American Andre Crompton) ... PSU's Alex Weber placed 4th at the '02 NAAs while ND's Matt Fabricant (14th) is the 7th-highest returner ... Columbia's Andrew Sohn (10th) posted an All-America finish at the '02 NAAs ... joining Crompton among the top newcomers to watch is SJU's Serhiy Isayenko.

RECAPPING THE 2002 NCAAs

* The Irish headed to Drew University with six NCAA newcomers – and three of those rookies played key roles in the strong showing by the ND women ... the Irish went 61-7 to claim the Day 1 lead in the four-day NCAA battle but St. John's claimed a narrow lead (100-97) over ND at the end of the women's competition ... the ND men and women combined for 10 All-America finishes, besting the team record (9) set in the 2000 NCAA runner-up season ... head-to-head matchups versus Penn State and St. John's helped provide the final margins, with PSU holding a 14-10 edge vs. ND (an eight-point swing) while SJU split its 22 bouts vs. the Irish.

* Freshmen **Alicja Kryczalo** and **Andrea Ament** – who had earned the nickname of the “A Team” – did plenty of damage en route to combining for the maximum 45 wins in the round-robin ... Kryczalo opened with a 5-3 win over Ament but then lost just 12 more touches in her other 22 five-touch bouts, with 14 shutout wins and an unheard of +100 indicator point margin ... her more noteworthy wins came vs. her countrywoman and the 2001 NCAA runner-up Marta Grochal of Penn State (5-1), OSU twins Hannah (5-2) and Metta (5-1) Thompson, SJU's Stephanie Thottham (5-0) and Irina Khoude (5-3, avenging an earlier loss) and WSU's Wallrabenstein (5-1) – with a 5-1 win over defending champ Zimmerman capping the round robin.

* Kryczalo topped Hannah Thompson in the semifinals (15-5) and Ament in the final (15-6) to join epeeist Magda Krol ('97 champion) as the only ND women's fencers ever to win the NCAA title as a freshman (two men have matched that feat) ... Ament added her own round-robin wins over the tough field (including 5-0 vs. Grochal, 5-2 vs. Khoude and 5-3 vs. Zimmerman) before outlasting Khoude in a 15-13 semifinal.

* Sophomore **Kerry Walton's** win in the women's epee final made Notre Dame the second women's team ever to post multiple champions at the same NCAAs (the 1999 and '02 SJU teams are the only men's squad to do so since 1991) ... it also marked the first time in ND athletics history that a brother and sister had earned All-America honors (in any sports), with Forest Walton having placed ninth in the 2001 NCAA foil competition.

* After rallying for a third-place finish in the round-robin (18-5), Walton scored a huge semifinal win over defending NCAA champ Emese Takacs of SJU (15-12) and defeated PSU's Stephanie Eim by the same score in the title bout (her only loss of the '02 NCAAs) ... Walton's top round-robin bouts included wins over OSU's Alexandra Shklar (5-4), Princeton's Maya Lawrence (5-2) and NU's Kate Rudkin (5-2) ... junior **Anna Carnick** – who placed 10th (14-9) for her third All-America finish – combined with Walton for a key sweep of SJU's Arlene Stevens ('01 NCAA runner-up) ... the Walton-Stevens bout was tied 3-3 after regulation and Stevens earned the tiebreaker coin-flip - but Walton scored the dramatic winning touch with just 0:04 left in the bout.

* Senior **Carianne McCullough** closed her career with an All-America finish (12th, 12-11) to become Notre Dame's second All-America in women's sabre while sophomore **Destanie Milo** was 18th (8-15).

* The Irish then slipped to third on the first day of the men's bouts (148), behind Penn State (155) and SJU (153) – with PSU going on to edge SJU (195-190) for the title. Notre Dame's final 186 points actually would have been good enough to win the NCAA title in 2000 or 2001.

* Junior foilist **Ozren Debic** became the 15th men's fencer in Notre Dame's storied history to earn multiple first team All-America honors (top four NCAA finisher), finishing second in the round robin (18-5) before losing to SJU's Jon Tiomkin (15-10) and Stanford's Steve Gerberman (15-9) ... Debic's top round-robin wins came vs. Columbia's Kevin Eriksen (5-0) and Stanford teammates Mark Mulholland and Gerberman (both 5-4),

* Junior epeeist **Jan Viviani** joined Carnick and Debic as three of 12 all-time ND fencers to post All-America finishes as a freshman, sophomore and junior ... his 5th-place showing (17-6) included wins over SJU's Anton Gurevich and Arpad Horvath (who went on to claim the title), AFA's Seth Kelsey (5-4), PSU's Adam Wiercioch (5-4) and Stanford's Graham Allen (5-2).

* Senior sabre **Andre Crompton** repeated as an All-American (4th, 18-5), losing a spot in the semifinals based on indicators (OSU's Jason Rogers claimed the 4th spot) ... Crompton's top wins came vs. Rogers and his OSU teammate Colin Parker (both 5-4) and SJU's Darrin Whitmer (5-2).

* Freshman **Derek Snyder** (15-8, seventh), who beat Debic on the first day (5-3), joined the Irish captain as one of two sets of teammates that finished in the top seven of the NCAA men's foil field ... freshman epeeist **Michal Sobieraj** rallied for his own All-America finish (10th, 12-11), highlighted by a 5-2 win over Stanford's Graham Allen ... junior sabre **Matt Fabricant** finished 14th (9-14).

TERRIFIC TRIO – Senior captains **Jan Viviani** (162-20/.890 in epee) and **Ozren Debic** (157-8/.952) both rank atop the Notre Dame lists for career regular-season winning percentage in their respective weapons while senior sabre **Gabor Szelle** returned to the program this season to give the Irish a potent combination at all three weapons (with a combined career regular-season record of 501-41/.924) ... Szelle finished 6th all-time at ND in career men's regular-season wins (182, 4th among sabres) and winning pct. (.933, 182-13; also 4th among sabres) ... Debic also finished 3rd on the ND all-weapons list for career winning pct. (Viviani is 16th), behind sabres Leszek Nowoliewski (97-2/.980; '88-'91) and Mike Sullivan (183-4/.979; '76-'79) while Viviani is 14th on the all-weapons list ... Debic's .977 regular-season pct. in 2003 (43-1) ranks 5th in ND men's fencing history (all weapons, best in foil)... Viviani climbed to 8th on the Irish all-time victory list (162, 3rd-best among epeeists, with Debic 10th overall in wins, 2nd among foilists) ... Debic is the only ND fencer listed four times in the single-season men's foil winning pct. list.

POSTSEASON POSSE – The above three fencers also have excelled in the NAAs, with **Gabor Szelle** (.870, 40-6) ranking third in ND history for NCAA men's winning pct. ('99 runner-up, '00 champion) while foilist **Ozren Debic** (.797, 55-14; 2nd in '00, 5th in '01, 4th in '02) is 7th on that list (also 8th in wins) ... epeeist **Jan Viviani's** 52-18 mark (.732; 3rd in '00 and '01, 5th in '02) gives the trio a 148-39 combined record in the NAAs (.792) ... the above three fencers combined in 2000 for one of just four times in ND history that teammates have finished in the top three of all three weapons.

OTHER ND RECORD BOOK NOTES

* Senior epeeist **Meagan Call** (166-52 38-9 in '03) finished 11th on the wins list (5th among epeeists).

* Sophomore **Michal Sobieraj** wrapped up the 6th-best men's epee season pct. (.917, 44-4) ... Sobieraj (.933, 70-5) will head into the 2004 season tied for 6th on the ND career win pct. list (all men's weapons).

* Junior **Kerry Walton** finished the regular season 43-5 (.896; 5th-best in ND women's epee history).

* Junior **Maggie Jordan** set the ND record for women's sabre wins (56-6) while posting the program's 2nd-best season winning pct. in women's sabre (.903) – with her classmate **Destanie Milo** (.889, 40-5) completing the 3rd-best women's sabre season win pct. ... Milo (.840, 126-24) now owns the 16th-best career regular-season winning pct. in ND women's fencing history.

* Senior sabre **Matt Fabricant** (151-21; 49-4 in '03) finished 16th (6th among sabres) in career regular-season wins and 21st on the win pct. list (.878).

* The program's trio of talented second-year women's fencers – sophomore foilists **Kryczalo** (3rd; .941, 79-5) and **Andrea Ament** (9th; .896, 69-8) and epeeist **Kerry Walton** (8th; .903, 93-10) will head into 2004 ranked among the program's top-10 career leaders in winning pct. (they own a combined record of 241-23) ... only foilists Maria Panyi (.980, 146-3; '94-'95) and Sara Walsh (.970, 231-7; '96-'99) have posted a better win pct. than Kryczalo (among all women's weapons).

WINNING STREAK ROLLS ON – The Notre Dame men reclaimed the nation's No. 1 ranking in 2003, after fashioning a 23-0 record that extended the program's third-longest winning streak to 82 matches (dating back to early in the 2000 season) ... the Irish posted noteworthy wins over Penn State, Ohio State, Stanford and Air Force ... the third-ranked ND women went 21-2 in 2003, losing to OSU and PSU.

SENIOR SALUTE – The 2003 regular season marked the completion of one of the most accomplished senior classes in Notre Dame fencing history, with those eight fencers combining for nearly 1,300 regular-season wins and an .852 winning pct. (1,282-222) – in addition to 15 combined All-America finishes in NCAA Tournament competition (with the '03 NAAs still to come) ... those seniors include men's epeeist **Jan Viviani** (162-20 career), men's foilists **Ozren Debic** (157-8) and **Forest Walton** (115-28, year of eligibility left), men's sabres **Gabor Szelle** (182-13) and **Matt Fabricant** (151-21), women's epeeists **Anna Carnick** (179-43) and **Meagan Call** (168-52), and women's foilist **Liza Boutsikaris** (168-37).

BACK FOR MORE – Notre Dame senior captains **Jan Viviani** (epee) and **Ozren Debic** (foil) are two of five fencers among the 144 entrants in the 2003 NCAA field who are making their four straight trip to the NAAs ... the others include epeeist Seth Kelsey (Air Force), sabre Ivan Lee (St. John's) and women's epeeist Arlene Stevens (St. John's).

FRIEND OR FOE? – Several of Notre Dame's NCAA opponents are former high school or club teammates, led by sabres Ivan Lee and Serhiy Isayenko (St. John's), Andrew Sohn and Paul Reyfman (Columbia), Adam Crompton (Ohio State) and Harvard's Tim Hagaman and David Jakus – all of whom trained alongside ND's **Matt Fabricant** at the New York Fencers Club ... ND senior **Jan Viviani** is one of four fencers in the epee field who are products of the New York Athletic Club, with that group including Princeton's Soren Thompson, Harvard's Julian Rose and Columbia's William Verigan ... ND sophomore foilist **Derek Snyder** has become close friends with Stanford's Steve Gerberman (they are the top-ranked U.S. junior-level foilists and were part of the three-fencer U.S. men's foil squad that competed at the 2002 Junior World Championships) ... Irish freshman epeeist **Michal Sobieraj** will reunite with fellow Polish National team member Adam Wiercioch of Penn State (one of the top contenders in epee) ... on the women's side, ND sophomore foilist **Alicja Kryczalo** and Penn State epeeist Kasia Trzopek are products of the Poland national team program, ND junior sabre **Maggie Jordan** (Maplewood, N.J.) was a prep teammate of Columbia epeeist Monica Conley at Columbia HS, ND senior epeeist **Meagan Call** and Duke men's sabre Nicolas Testerman are Eugene Fencing Club products, ND junior epeeist **Kerry Walton** (Londonderry, N.H.) and Princeton epeeist Kira Hohensee are Seacost Fencing Club products while ND sophomore foilist **Andrea Ament** has competed at various U.S. and international tournaments while Ohio State foilists Hannah and Metta Thompson and OSU epeeist Brian Gross.

ANSWERING THE CALL – Senior epeeist **Meagan Call** battled her way back into the NCAA Fencing Championships and this weekend will be looking for her third All-America finish as the co-favorite Irish enter competition at the Air Force Academy while taking aim at the elusive NCAA team title (ND last won the NCAA title in 1994, was the runner-up from 1996-2000 and third in '95, '01 and '02) ... Call – who placed 12th at the 2000 NCAAs and then fifth in '01 – failed to earn one of Notre Dame's two women's epee spots for the 2002 NCAAs, finishing behind classmate Anna Carnick (a three-time All-American) and current junior Kerry Walton (who claimed the '02 NCAA title) ... Call appeared destined for the same fate this year, entering the Midwest Regional as the sixth seed while Walton was second and Carnick fourth, with regional seeding factoring 40% into the NCAA selection while regional result is worth 60% ... Call rose to the challenge by winning a three-way fenceoff (vs. Walton and Wayne State's Anna Vinnikov) to claim the regional title while Carnick's seventh-place finish left her behind Call in the final NCAA rankings.

MEN'S HEAD-TO-HEAD RESULTS – Here's a sampling of recent ND results vs. Saturday's opponents:

MEN'S FOIL

vs. Gerberman, Stanford - Debic won 5-4 ('02 NCAAs), lost 9-15 ('02 NCAA 3rd-place) won 5-4 ('03), Snyder won 5-3 ('02), lost 4-5 ('03)
vs. Reichling, Stanford – Debic won 5-1 ('01 NCAAs), 5-2 ('03), Snyder lost 2-5 ('03)
vs. Pasinkoff, NYU - Debic won 5-1 ('00), 5-0 ('00 NCAAs), 5-1 ('01), 5-3 ('01 NCAAs), 5-3 ('02), 5-4 ('02 NCAAs), Snyder won 5-2 ('02), 5-4 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Weir, OSU - Debic won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), 5-3 ('03), Snyder won ('02 NCAAs), 5-4 ('03)
vs. Carbone, OSU - Debic won 5-1 ('03), Snyder won 5-2 ('03)
vs. Panchan, PSU – Debic lost 5-0 ('02 NCAAs), 2-5 ('03), Snyder lost 2-5 ('02 NCAAs), won 5-4 ('03)
vs. Miller, PSU – Debic won 5-4 ('03), Snyder lost 0-5 ('03)
vs. Breden, CSF - Debic won 5-2 ('01 NCAAs), lost 4-5 ('02 NCAAs), Snyder won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), 5-3 ('03)
vs. Mosca, Air Force – Debic won 5-4 ('03), Snyder lost 4-5 ('03), won 5-0 ('03)
vs. Stodala, Princeton – Debic won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), Snyder won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Sinkin, Columbia – Debic won 5-4 ('02 NCAAs), Snyder won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. McBean, Brandies - Debic won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), Snyder won 5-3 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Schiblia, Rutgers – Debic won 5-3 ('02 NCAAs), Snyder won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Cohen, Penn – Debic won 5-3 ('00 NCAAs), 5-2 ('01 NCAAs)
vs. Radu, Penn – Debic won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), Snyder lost 4-5 ('02 NCAAs)

MEN'S EPEE

vs. Tsinis, NYU - Viviani won 5-3 ('00), 5-2 ('01), 5-1 ('01 NCAAs), 5-2 ('02), 5-3 ('02 NCAAs), Sobieraj won 5-3 ('02), 5-3 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Gurevich, St. John's - Viviani lost 1-5 ('00), won 5-2 ('02), 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), Sobieraj won 5-4 ('02), lost 1-5 lost 1-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Horvath, SJU - Viviani lost 1-5 ('02), won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), Sobieraj won 3-2 ('02), lost 4-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. McConaughy, CSF – Viviani won 5-3 ('03)
vs. Bragg, Duke – Viviani lost 3-5 ('03), Sobieraj lost 1-5 ('03)
vs. Testerman, Duke – Viviani won ('03), Sobieraj won 5-2 ('03)
vs. Wiercioch, PSU – Viviani won 5-3 ('01 NCAAs), lost 8-15 ('01 NCAA semi's), won 5-4 ('02 NCAAs) and 5-3 ('03), Sobieraj won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), 5-1 ('03)
vs. Lee, Stanford – Viviani lost 2-5 ('03), Sobieraj won 5-2 ('03)
vs. French, AFA – Viviani won 5-4 ('03), Sobieraj lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. Kelsey, AFA – Viviani won 5-2 ('00 NCAAs), lost 0-1 ('01 NCAAs), won 5-4 ('02 NCAAs), lost 4-5 ('03), Sobieraj lost 3-4 ('02 NCAAs), 4-5 ('03)
vs. Gross, OSU - Viviani won 5-2 ('02), lost 4-5 ('02 NCAAs), won 5-4 ('03), Sobieraj lost 3-5 ('02 NCAAs), won 5-4 ('03)
vs. Jones, Ohio State - Viviani won 5-2 ('01), won 5-4 ('01 NCAAs), lost 4-5 ('02), won 5-2 ('01), won 5-4 ('02 NCAAs), lost 3-5 ('03), Sobieraj lost 2-5 4 ('02 NCAAs), won 5-1 ('03)
vs. Bouloubasis, JHU – Viviani won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), 5-1 ('03), Sobieraj lost 3-5 ('02 NCAAs), 3-5 ('03)
vs. Thompson, Princeton – Viviani lost 4-5 ('01 NCAAs), 3-5 ('02 NCAAs), Sobieraj lost 3-5 ('02 NCAAs)

MEN'S SABRE

vs. Sohn, Columbia - Fabricant lost 3-5 ('02), won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Frank, Drew - Fabricant lost 3-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Crompton, Ohio State - Fabricant lost ('03), Szelle lost 1-5 ('03)
vs. Rogers, Ohio State - Szelle lost 3-5 ('03), Fabricant lost 2-5 ('03 NCAAs), 1-5 ('03)
vs. Zagunis, Penn State - Fabricant lost 3-5 ('03), Szelle won 5-4 ('03)
vs. Newkirk, North Carolina - Fabricant won 5-0 ('02 NCAAs), Szelle won 5-1 ('03)
vs. Mathias, Wayne State - Szelle won 5-3 ('03)
vs. Lee, SJU - Fabricant lost 3-5 ('02 NCAAs), Szelle won 5-3 ('00 NCAAs) and 15-12 ('00 NCAA semifinals)
vs. Weber, Penn State - Fabricant lost 2-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Cohen, Duke - Fabricant lost 3-5 ('02 NCAAs), won 5-1 ('03), Szelle won 5-2 ('03)
vs. Owens, Stanford - Szelle won 5-0 ('01 NCAAs), 5-0 ('03), Fabricant won 5-3 ('03)
vs. Pearlstein, Stanford - Fabricant won 5-1 ('03), Szelle lost 4-5 ('03)
vs. Runyan, UCSD - Szelle won 5-4 ('03)

WOMEN'S HEAD-TO-HEAD RESULTS – Here's a sampling of recent ND results vs. Saturday's opponents:

WOMEN'S FOIL

vs. Blount, COL -Kryczalo won 5-1 ('02), 5-0 ('02 NCAAs), Ament won 5-1 ('02), 5-2 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Khouade, St. John's - Kryczalo lost 3-5 ('02), won 5-3 ('02 NCAAs), Ament lost 3-5 ('02), won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), 15-13 ('02 NCAA semifinals)
vs. Thottam, St. John's - Kryczalo won 5-0 ('02), 5-0 ('02 NCAAs), Ament won 5-2 ('02), 5-4 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Chin, Penn State - Kryczalo won 5-0 ('02 NCAAs), won ('03), Ament won 5-3 ('02 NCAAs), list 4-5 ('03)
vs. Brown, Temple- Kryczalo won 5-0 ('02 NCAAs), Ament won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Donath, Penn State - Kryczalo lost 3-5 ('03), Ament won 5-0 ('03)
vs. H. Thompson, Ohio State - Kryczalo won 5-1 ('02), 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), 15-5 ('02 NCAA semifinals), 5-4 ('03), Ament won 5-2 ('02), 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. M. Thompson, Ohio State - Kryczalo won 5-2 ('02), 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), 5-4 ('03), Ament won 5-1 ('02), 5-4 ('02 NCAAs), lost 4-5 ('03)
vs. Zimmermann, Stanford - Kryczalo lost 3-5, won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), lost 1-5 ('03), Ament won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. Petschnigg, Stanford - Kryczalo lost 4-5 ('03), Ament lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. Breden, CS Fullerton - Kryczalo won 5-3 ('03), Ament won 5-1 ('03)
vs. Wallrabenstein, Wayne State - Kryczalo won 5-4 ('02), 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), won 5-1 ('03), Ament won 5-4 ('02), 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. Foldi, NU - Kryczalo won 5-1, 5-2 ('02), 5-0 ('02 NCAAs), 5-0 ('03), Ament won 5-2 ('02), 5-1 ('02 NCAAs), 5-1 ('03)
vs. Wang, Northwestern - Kryczalo won 5-0 ('02), Ament won 5-1 ('02)

WOMEN'S EPEE

vs. Shklar, Ohio State - Walton won 5-2 ('02), 5-4 ('02 NCAAs), 5-3 ('03); Call lost 4-5 ('03)
vs. Stevens, St. John's - Walton lost 3-5 ('02), won 4-3 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Forsythe, Temple - Walton won 5-3 ('02), won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Burke, Penn State - Walton lost 3-5 ('02 NCAAs), lost 3-5 ('03), Call lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. Vinnikov, Wayne State - Walton won 5-4 ('02), lost 4-5 ('02 NCAAs), Call lost 5-4 ('03)
vs. Burill, AFA - Walton won 5-4 ('02), won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs), lost 2-5 and 4-5 ('03), Call lost 3-5 and 4-5 ('03)
vs. White, Boston College - Walton won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Knutson, Harvard - Walton won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Roberts, UC San Diego - Walton won 5-4 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Sullivan, Northwestern - Walton won 5-4 ('03), Call lost 4-5 ('03)
vs. Gearhart, Ohio State - Call won 5-3 ('03), Walton won 5-1 ('03)
vs. Trzopek, Penn State - Walton lost 2-5 ('03), Call lost 0-4 ('03)
vs. Harris, Air Force - Call lost 3-5, won 5-2 ('03), Walton won 5-3, lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. Muir, UCSD - Call won 5-1 ('03)
vs. Bush, Columbia-Barnard - Walton won 5-4 ('02), won 5-2 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Conley, Columbia-Barnard - Walton won 5-1 ('02), won 5-4 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Kehoe, Rutgers - Walton won 5-1 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Korb, Yale - Walton lost 2-5 ('02), won 5-4 ('02 NCAAs)

WOMEN'S SABRE

vs. Crane, St. John's -Milo lost 3-5 ('02), 1-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Gelman, St. John's - Milo won 5-2 ('02), 1-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Brosnan, Penn State - Milo lost 0-5 ('01 NCAAs), 3-5 ('02 NCAAs), 1-5 ('03), Jordan lost 0-5 ('03)
vs. Pack, Princeton -Milo lost 2-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Pasternak, Northwestern - Milo lost 2-5 ('03)
vs. Romero, Air Force - Milo won 5-0 and 5-1 ('03), Jordan won 5-1 and 5-2 ('03)
vs. Hassan, Temple - Milo won 5-2 ('02), lost 3-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Shaahid, Temple - Milo lost 2-5 ('01 NCAAs), won 5-4 ('02), lost 2-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Rix, AFA - Milo won 5-2 ('01), 5-3 ('02), 5-4 ('02 NCAAs), 5-0 and 5-1 ('03), Jordan won 5-1 and 5-2 ('03)
vs. Bond-Williams, Ohio State - Milo lost 1-5 ('02), lost 2-5 ('02 NCAAs) , Jordan lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. Plekhanov, Ohio State - Jordan lost 3-5 ('03)
vs. O'Neill, Penn State - Milo lost 1-5 ('03), Jordan won 5-2 ('03)
vs. Jemal, Rutgers - Milo lost 1-5 ('01 NCAAs), 2-5 ('02 NCAAs)
vs. Marien, Brandies - Milo lost 4-5 ('02 NCAAs)