**Sports**

**MIT Fencing Team Takes Third in Nation**

Two Fencers Named all-Americans

By Rick Aasen

In a fitting climax to an outstanding season, the MIT fencing trio of George González-Rivas ‘81 in sabre, Geoffrey Pingree ‘81 in epee, and Eric deBeus ‘82 in foil finished third in the NCAA Championships this weekend at Pennsylvania State University. Wayn State retained the title with 111 points, and Penn tied MIT with 106 points; however, Penn gained second place on touches. This was the highest finish ever in the NCAA’s for MIT fencing.

González-Rivas, the team captain, took third in epee, with 18-5, and thus earned the title of all-American in this weapon. deBeus gained the all-American title in foil with a sixth place finish, and Pingree placed 10th in epee.

Rivas’ accomplishments are truly remarkable, considering that he never saw a fencing match before he came to MIT. In fact, González-Rivas was a member of the pistol team during his freshman year.

I took a physical education class in fencing and won the class tournament, he recalls. Silvio Vitale, MIT’s fencing coach, suggested I go out for the team, so I signed up. The team was to qualify for the all-American squad, although he mentioned that González-Rivas “fenced like a demon.”

Sollee conceded that epee was the best weapon for me. I really felt my game coming around the corner, he conceded. I think I’m one of the top fencers in the nation, he added.

Pingree earned “A” classification at an APLA tournament earlier this year. “It was there that I really felt my game coming together.” After winning the IFA best eveon award and placing in the nation’s top 10 in epee, he adds, “There’s always more to learn, and he has another season to learn more and to do even better.”

Though any coach would love to lose a fencer like González-Rivas to graduation, MIT will hold another top-notch fencer next season. deBeus and Pingree will continue to grow, and the back-up fencers from this season have the savvy to go for the top like González-Rivas did. Since most of MIT’s fencers are “home-grown,” that is, recruited from physical-education classes, there is no reason to doubt that MIT will continue to produce top-caliber fencers with great desire and ambition. As coach Eric Sollee so aptly put it, “The Tech fencer delivers.”

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