

Coach's Notes: NFC Meets 11/22/2008 @UNH

The team dual meet season began this past weekend at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) with the first of the Northeast Fencing Conference (NFC) meet dates. UMass fenced MIT, Brandeis, Wellesley, Boston University, and Brown on Saturday. While UMass did not fare well competitively, there were many positives to take away from the day.

Spirit and team camaraderie were high throughout the day. The couple of novices that we threw into the fray after only two weeks of practice scored touches and came out hungry to improve and fence more. The seeds of our future are sown.

Overall best performances on the day by **Laura Brassard GS '09** (12-3) and **André Laffitte '10** (8-4). Videos from this meet are available at <http://www.YouTube.com/UMassFencingCoach>.

Our next competition: a novice scrimmage at **UMass** on Saturday 12/6/2008.

UMass vs. MIT

	Women (L 6-21)	Men (L 4-23)
F	0-9	2-7
S	3-6	1-8
E	3-6	1-8

On the women's side, **Laura Brassard GS '09** (S) provided the stability we've grown accustomed to from her, while **Paola Arango '12** (E) and **Caitlin Coughlan '12** (S) contributed victories, showing that UMass's future will be bright. The men were overmatched in all weapons, today, with only **Laffitte** winning more than one bout.

UMass vs. Brandeis

	Women (L 6-21)	Men (L 7-20)
F	0-9	3-6
S	4-5	3-6
E	2-7	1-8

Thanks to the efforts of **Brassard** and **Coughlan**, the women's sabre meet was very close, coming down to the last bout between **Brassard** and 2008 NFC fencer of the year, Anna Hanley. Clearly overmatched in the other weapons, UMass fencers still put forth a solid effort, making Brandeis work for their touches. **Laffitte**, especially, went on a tear, winning all his bouts.

UMass vs. Wellesley College

	Women (L 8-19)
F	0-9
S	6-3
E	2-7

Sabre garnered UMass's first squad victory of the day with **Brassard** and **Coughlan** both going undefeated in sabre. **Arango** and **Alyson Cotton '11** contributed in épée against a very strong Wellesley squad, but our foilists were overmatched. Wellesley head coach Gamil Kaliouby observed that we "are much stronger than last year."

UMass vs. Boston University

	Women (L 12-15)	Men (W 17-10)
F	3-6	6-3
S	5-4	3-6
E	4-5	8-1

The only team victory on the day by UMass was spearheaded by the men's épée squad in convincing fashion. In the only contest against another club program, it was good for UMass to be able to flex a little muscle. Though BU continues to get better as the years go by, it seems that we are able to keep pace with them, as the close scores outside of men's épée indicate.

UMass vs. Brown University

	Women (L 6-21)	Men (L 6-21)
F	0-9	0-9
S	3-6	1-8
E	3-6	5-4

While Brown's foil squads are nearly unbeatable right now, we did put dents in their armor in epee and sabre, taking the men's epee squad meet from them narrowly in a truly team effort, as **Dougherty, Toleson, and Justin Young '11** all contributed victories to the effort. UMass's efforts against Brown were good, but it seemed that we were unable to keep up with the multiple and rapid adjustments that the Brown fencers made during the bouts.