

Is it an adventure park? Is it an alternative reality? No, it's Newman-Escrima!

More precisely, the 3rd Newman-Escrima Symposium, which took place on November 23rd and 24th, again in a gym in Maulbronn, to the great enthusiasm of all participants.

The agenda published in advance sounded promising. Although Master Bernd could not yet contribute any of his coveted sessions, he made sure to find a very good substitute. Not in the Escrima sense per se, but very much in the spirit of a symposium where people exchange practical and theoretical things. Master Bernd managed to win Armin Steiner, an extremely experienced osteopath, for the first day. And on top of that there was another surprise speaker (easily recognizable on the picture by the "signal colour")... 😊



Master Falk started this year's symposium with a theme that was tailor-made for him: "Grab'n'Break" - grasping and breaking - with levers of all colours. Quickly not only the heads and enthusiasm of the participants were smoking hot, but also their wrists and fingers, which some even seemed to like very much.

After 90 minutes there was the first, well-deserved break of 20 minutes. It has become a well established tradition to ensure sufficient recovery time after each session.

Then it went on with Basti's "Hard Core 2.0". Still remembered by the participants of the NESY 2018, he enriched his step work exercises with coordination tools used in professional sports in addition to the proven music this time. The first really sweaty session, at least for me...



After the well-deserved 30-minute lunch break, the session I personally was most curious about began: "Causes of pain and injuries to the musculoskeletal system. An excursion into anatomy and physiology."



Conducted by Armin Steiner, an osteopath by trade. But not just any osteopath. THE osteopath who relieved Master Bernd of his greatest pain and significantly influenced his regeneration after the latest operations - for the better. The audience of a little over 30 people gathered sitting on the floor on mats, benches and

chairs around Armin and listened to his explanations.

He ended his session not only with practical applications, demonstrated to volunteers, but also with a large question and answer list, which he had created during his lecture on demand. An extremely instructive and helpful topic, not only for the symposium, but for everyday life and personal attitudes in general. My rating was A+ with an asterisk.

Now the first round of taking pictures began, followed by rearranging the gym for the evening event. My sincere thanks go to Alfred(a), without whose preparations the setup would never have been possible so quickly.

And then ... the demos were just around the corner. Literally. There were three teams again this year, starting with the winning team from last year, this time with a slightly different line-up: Tilla and Anne.



The stage design definitely aroused my curiosity and when the accompanying music started and the two main actresses came in at the front door I knew, "this will be worth seeing again!" In "Valhalla's Kitchen", two quarrelsome and well-fortified shield-maidens exchanged strikes that eclipsed even the most

spectacular cooking show by far. When it came to the duel between cucumber and a big kitchen knife, I held my breath for a moment. It was clear to see that sharp blades are at work here. If we were in an episode of "Forged In Fire", Doug Marcaida would have commented this scene with his usual broad grin along with his favourite quote, "this blade will cut." Wow.



After a short break for rearranging the stage, we went on with Team 2, the newcomers of this evening: Maureen and Sarah, light against dark, good against evil, an epic battle from an intermediate world. What these two have shown here can hardly be put into words, you just had to see it. Two amazons in splendid robes combating each other with one-and-a-half-handed swords extremely hard and stunning. Any halfway experienced Escrimador could already tell by the sound that clean, strong strikes are exchanged here. And the battle never ended! Over and over again the opponents

attacked each other so heavily that sparks flew. Also here my breath stopped for a short moment, when one of the two swords flew 3-4 meters through the air and was caught perfectly, just to attack the opponent directly again. What a show! Mind you, from two newcomers, who are just going to the 5th and 9th SG. My hat's off to you girls! And I don't want to meet any of you in the dark... 😊



The following break to rearrange the stage once more should take a little bit longer, because team 3 brought the most elaborate stage design. No problem at all, because there were already drinks. Then it was time again, start the music, start the show! A piece from "Nutcracker". Exactly, the well-known ballet in two acts by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, based on the story "The

Nutcracker and the Mouse King", written by E. T. A. Hoffmann. An eager guard soldier (the same nutcracker who has come to life) patrols up and down in front of the princess's castle until she shows herself. (Tiny footnote: We wouldn't be at the NESY if there were no surprises.) The blonde-haired person that peeked through the curtains was none other than "Alfreda", princess in a pink tutu. The audience raged with laughter, of course. The laughter became frenetic as the princess stepped completely out of the "castle" and one could admire "her" in full splendour and bloom. Of course, the poor soldier was completely helpless at the mercy of her charms, but his attempts to approach her were unsuccessful for the time being. To make matters worse, the sneaky Mouse King came on stage and so our poor soldier had to deal with this creep first, which was anything but easy. In the meantime it even looked as if the Mouse King would win, which our princess was able to prevent courageously and sovereignly (with two maces). How do fairy tales end? Right, "and they lived happily ever after", the Mouse King could be defeated in the end and our Nutcracker won the heart of the princess.

After the demos, this year's guests of honour, Grandmaster Tom and Armin Steiner, opened the buffet. Once again, there was delicious food across the menu, something for everyone (and I just noticed in the picture that my two colleagues from Speyer were among the top five again - of course, when it comes to food! 😊).



Master Bernd and I used the time to count the votes for the demo-battle. As expected, due to Alfreda's show interlude Team 3 took an early lead, but places 2 and 3 were an extremely close neck-and-neck race that was open until the last ballot. But then the final score was fixed: 1st place for the Nutcracker, 2nd place for the kitchen battle, closely followed by 3rd place for our newcomers.

After a short break for food and drink, the screening of the Speyer Newman Knights finally began, which, out of competition, fired a potpourri of contemporary film categories. Almost everything was represented: Science fiction, zombies, mutants, Sharknado(!) and superheroes. A colourful firework display that built a bridge to the last official agenda slot of the evening, the award ceremony.

Master Bernd didn't miss the fun and pleasure of conducting the ceremony again this year, including joint winner photos - because all demo participants were winners that evening.



The evening ended sometime around 10.30pm, because the start of the second day was already at 10 o'clock and there was still a lot on the agenda!



Frank started the 2nd day with a very instructive introduction to everyday objects, or "every day carries" (in short EDC). It's exactly these everyday objects that make our Newman-Escrima so useful and helpful, besides all the fun we have with historical weapons. The focus was on "ladies' handbags with its content". The participants were asked to bring one of their handbags with the usual contents, preferably in everyday clothes. As an example, the bag of a volunteer was emptied on a table and the

contents examined. In fact, there is no everyday object that cannot be used as a "weapon", you just need a little creativity or mental help from time to time. Of course Frank's session was also instructive for men, as it was also about the use of flashlights (one of many EDC) in general and especially under difficult environmental conditions. For this purpose groups of 10 were "abducted" to the toilet facilities to demonstrate the difficulties and possibilities in low or bad light.

The 2nd Sunday session should have been held by Master Steffen, but this event's surprise speaker, who had already contributed a few things to the NESY the day before, should now get his own 60-minute session: Our new grandmaster Thomas Dietrich! Needless to say that

this was the second, seriously sweaty session for me - but always with a smile on my face!



After the necessary break Master Steffen presented his program, "Search'n'Destroy". Meaning: Search for a target, focus on it, destroy it, which was not always as easy as it may sound with two sticks. Since Master Steffen donated 30 of his 90-minute session for Tom, as well as yours truly did, we were able to keep the overall schedule of the NESY and after another little break we went to the last session, the adventure park, sorry, I mean "Go For It v2.0".

The participants from 2018 still remembered: A colourful course with 6 stations, of which four were often similar but always a little different, and two stations where you could let off steam. Based on one of GM Tom's favourite drills, the players had to face three opponents from three different directions with one or two weapons and hit or stab the targets presented to them. Again, the "double-station balls" was part of the game, where you had to hit balls of different sizes on their way to the ground. New this year was a station with balance boards. Everyday physics in use, because "action=reaction" can be quite annoying, can't it...? 😊



After a good hour I gave the redeeming final signal and Master Bernd closed this year's NESY with a short summary and the farewell of the participants, not without giving the participants another opportunity for group pictures.



On the journey home the last two days went through my mind and I felt the broad grin on my face and the inner satisfaction about what I had learned and achieved. They were again two wonderful days, some of which were simply out of this world.

To the next year., to „NESY MMXX“!

The Navigator, a.k.a. "The Walking Mad"



PS: Of course yet another person in the background must not remain unmentioned. Also a magical creature from another world: Bettina Hoyer, our coffee fairy! Not only did she provide the entire troupe with coffee and home-baked cake for two days, she also put them in a good mood and always provided a warm smile. And she kept the two bloodthirsty chain dogs in check so that all participants could move around safely. 😊

Bettina, thank you very much!