

DR. GERALD I. CETRULO
MENTOR / COACH EXTRAORDINAIRE

Dr. Gerald I. Cetrulo (1907-1957) of Newark, NJ (Barringer H.S., 1924, Dartmouth, 1928, NYU Medical School, 1932) is one of the prominent early pioneers in the promotion and coaching of fencing in the NY-NJ area. The Chairman of the AFLA stated that Dr. Cetrulo was one of "the founding fathers" of fencing in the State of New Jersey. Giorgio Santelli, a member of the USFA Hall of Fame, and one of America's best known fencing masters, publically stated that "Dr. Cetrulo has compiled a [coaching] record unparalleled in athletic history."

As a competitor, Dr. Cetrulo was the third fencer to win individual medals in two weapons in the IFA championships, and was the first fencer to win two individual medals in the same IFA championship (1927). Dr. Cetrulo captained Dartmouth's fencing team in 1927 and 1928. Dr. Cetrulo fenced for Salle Vince while in New York, and was named first alternate to the 1932 U.S. Olympic foil team.

Dr. Cetrulo is best remembered, however, as the Fencing Coach at Barringer (Newark, NJ) H.S. and the Seton Hall University, where he introduced fencing in 1937. Seton Hall, became a dominant collegiate team between 1937 and 1942, when, during a 4 year span, it was undefeated and won 3 intercollegiate titles. The Seton Hall yearbook in 1940, declared that Seton Hall's fencing team was "...the most successful athletic [team] in [Seton Hall's] history." Later, Barringer H.S., Dr. Cetrulo turned the program into one of the strongest in the U.S. Barringer H.S. rode to victory in the first Biddles tournament at NYU (1934), and to 23 state team championships. Among Dr. Cetrulo's many pupils were Paul Ricardi, Harry Bouskiaris, Dean Cetrulo, 3-time, 2 weapon U.S. National Champion, and a Bronze Medal winner in the 1948 Olympics, William T. Pecora, a 1936 Olympian, August Prokop, a 1948 Olympian, and Dr. Samuel D'Ambola, the coach of Essex Catholic H.S., who patterned his own dual career in medicine and coaching after Dr. Cetrulo's.

As an advocate for our sport, Dr. Cetrulo was one of the early organizers of the New Jersey Division of the AFLA. Dr. Cetrulo organized, the Eastern Intercollegiate Fencing Association, and the first National Intercollegiate Tournament.

As a result of Dr. Cetrulo's pioneering work on behalf of fencing, New Jersey has had the largest and strongest interscholastic fencing program in the U.S. The state's three-weapon high school tournament is conducted annually in Dr. Cetrulo's name. The Cetrulo Tournament trophy is a bronze figure entitled "Escrimeur" by Clement L. Steiner. The trophy was presented in Dr. Cetrulo's memory by Giorgio Santelli in 1958.

Dr. Cetrulo's untimely death at age 49 in 1957 abruptly, and tragically ended a lifetime of dedication to the sport of fencing.