

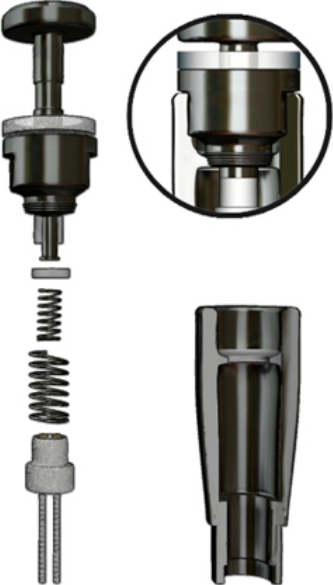
Epee Maintenance & Repair 101

Julie Newell—August 2012

Page 1 of 2

RULE NUMBER ONE: put your name on your epees and your body cords!

BASIC PRINCIPLE: To score a point in epee fencing, you have to close the circuit. There has to be a continuous path for that little tiny bit of electricity from the scoring box to the reel to your body cord to the tip of your epee and back again.

	<p>“bits” you need to know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">TipTip screwsContact spring (the little one)Pressure spring (the big one)BarrelContact Points & Wires <p>Basic stuff you should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) screws, springs, screwdriver—the most basic emergency repair supplies and inexpensive(2) alcohol and cotton swabs—the most basic additional maintenance supplies and inexpensive. ANY time you have a tip apart, clean inside the barrel!(3) weights, shims, and test box—a little more costly, but if you’re going to compete regularly you need your own
<p>Image from: http://www.leonpaul.com/armoury/epee.html (lots more detail there, too)</p>	
<p>Note: Buy / Order “German” Parts! (They are a little more expensive than French, but worth it. Leon Paul is “different,” less common, and harder to deal with in most common situations for beginning fencers.) They aren’t really interchangeable, so it’s important to know what you have and be consistent.</p>	

BASIC TESTING:

- (1) Test your weapons and body cords and check screws for tightness before every practice / tournament. Know how to do it yourself!
 - a. Body Cord: Make sure your body cord works before you use it to test a weapon! (Testing a body cord is easy to do and easy to show—and would take me about a page to type out as directions!)
 - b. Epee:
 - i. Does it have both screws? Are they tightened firmly?
 - ii. Hook up to the test box and do these tests:
 - Test #1: Depress the tip: the test box SHOULD light up. If it does, go to test #2. If not, go to “repairs” below.
 - Test #2: Insert the thin shim (0.5 mm) and depress the tip: the test box SHOULD NOT light up. If the light does NOT go on, go to Test #3. If it does light up, go to “repairs” below.

Epee Maintenance & Repair 101

Julie Newell—August 2012

Page 2 of 2

Test #3: Does the thick shim (1.5 mm) fit all the way in between the tip and the end of the barrel? If it fits, go to test #4. If not, to go “repairs” below.

Test #4: Hold the weapon vertically and gently slide the weight (750 g.) onto the tip. The test box SHOULD NOT light up. Press down gently on the weight. The test box SHOULD light up AND go off again when you quit pressing on the weight. If you pass this test, you’re ready to fence. If not, go to “repairs” below.

(2) Visually check for screws EVERY time you are getting ready to step on to the strip—even if you checked earlier. Even (maybe especially!) if you “just” fenced with the weapon.

REPAIRS:

(1) Missing Tip Screws: Coach Vail says “asking somebody to put in a tip screw for you is like asking them to tie your shoes.” She’s right—it’s something you really need to be able to do for yourself. (And sometimes there IS a reason to ask for help ☺) If you start losing screws repeatedly or the holes are stripped, you need to replace the tip.

(2) Failing Weapons Tests: You need to know WHICH test your weapon failed. That tells you what to do (or let’s you tell the armorer where to start).

Test #1: *If you’ve checked to make sure everything is plugged in, connected, and turned on* and nothing happens when you depress the tip on your weapon, look for broken wires. Or you might need to replace your contact spring. See (b) for notes on adjusting.

Test #2: If you fail thin shims, you probably need your contact spring adjusted. This happens really often! Contact springs can be tightened / shortened by rotating them clockwise. They cannot be lengthened or unwound! So adjust by quarter turns, testing after each adjustment, and as soon as the weapon passes thin shims, QUIT! (You don’t have to put the screws back in to test, just after you’ve got it adjusted, but test again AFTER the screws are back in just in case.)

Test #3: If you fail thick shims, the screws may be too tight or you might need to change out the pressure spring—or just give the shim a good wiggle. This is one where asking a coach or armorer may be very helpful!

Test #4: If the weight lights up the test box without that extra little push, you need to change the pressure spring. Take out the screws and the tip, take out the pressure spring, put in a new one, and put the tip and screws back in. Much easier—but not nearly as common—as changing a contact spring.

Body Cord Repair: Like body cord testing, easy to do, easy to show, takes LOTS of words to write out. You need a small screwdriver, a tiny screw driver, wire cutters, wire stripper, a test box, and ten minutes so I can show you what to do!