

Gators gallop and stay en garde



DEBORAH BURNETT/The Campus

Deborah Burnett, '10, practices her epee style fencing with her coach at the Heartland Fencing Academy.

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Traditionally, gators eat horses.

But at Allegheny, some Gators would rather ride them.

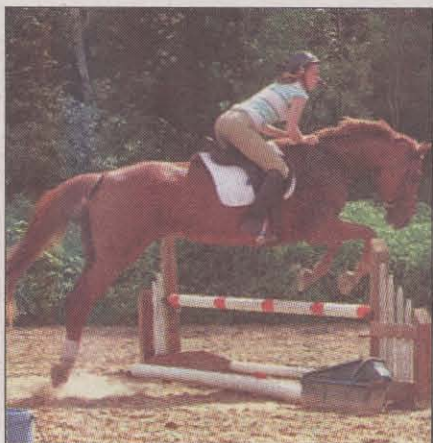
These Gators meet Wednesdays at 6 p.m. and call themselves the Allegheny College Equestrian Team, and instead of eating horses, they ride them, groom them and often compete with them. The Allegheny E-Team is one of the school's little-known gems.

Second-year rider Jessica Markeiwicz, '11, describes E-team as something that everyone can enjoy.

"It's for anyone who has ridden before or wants to try something new and likes animals," she said. "It's very beginner friendly."

Although some of the E-Team members have horses of their own, most groom and ride horses at Brenrick Stables in Edinboro, PA. The team heads down to the stables to practice once a week, but those not looking to compete still have options.

"Our club members come to our meetings anywhere from once a week to once a semester," Markiewicz said. "You can pick and



JESSICA MARKIEWICZ/The Campus

Jessica Markiewicz, '11, leads her horse over a hurdle.

choose. If you're having a busy week and don't want to ride or a really free and open week, it's easy to accommodate."

Students looking to get involved in a horse show can work with the team. The E-Team competes in the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association, which includes other colleges in the region. The team is still small, and is hoping to have future success as membership grows.

"It's great because we have people who come in never having ridden before who end up competing with us," said Markeiwicz.

And the greatest aspect of the E-Team is getting together with others who share your passion, explained President Lauren Mursch, '11.

"One of the best things is sharing out love of horses," she said. "Riding is an amazing experience and we love giving that opportunity to others."

Fencing is no longer just for pirates and the French.

Fencing is now open to Gators of all shapes, sizes and classes.

The Allegheny College Fencing Club has been around for many years, but it recently lost much of its membership and thus was disbanded. A few years ago, Professor Tomas Nonnemacher decided to bring the club back to campus, and it has since seen a strong surge in interest with the student body.

Carolyn Killiany, '11, feels that one of the reasons fencing has become so popular is because it's unique from all other sports.

"It's a way to exercise, but there's also lots of strategy behind each move," she said. "It's not just about randomly hitting people."

And because Gator Fencing does put some thought into their moves, they've had some success in region-



DEBORAH BURNETT/The Campus

Alumni Dave Rockey, and Brendan O'Leary, '11, practice their jabs.

al competition. Last year, the team traveled to compete at the Fencing Institute of America in Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, and Oberlin College.

President Brendan O'Leary, '11, saw last year as a productive year.

"My co-captain, placed in our last Allegheny hosted event," he said.

Though it seems as though one needs years of practice to become skilled with a sword, Killiany attests to the fact that fencers of all levels can join the team.

"The captains are very good at instructing new beginners," she said.

Those interested should sign up soon, because the Allegheny Invitational will be held on October 25th, and all students are welcome to cheer from the sidelines or even participate.

Practices are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Wise Center, and interested students can contact Brendan O'Leary at olearyb@allegheny.edu.