



German Longsword Notes - Ann Arbor Sword Club

Source 1: *Secrets of German Swordplay* by Christian Tobler pub. 2002 by Chivalry Bookshelf
-a how-to manual based on Ringeck's *Comentaries* on Leichtenauer's verse.

Leichtenauer was a fourteenth-century German master on whose system most surviving medieval German *fechtbuchs* ("fight-books" --fencing manuals) seem to be based. But his own writings are obscure, brief verses of advice. Sigmund Ringeck, a 15th-century master, expanded them into instructions based on what "everybody knew." Christian Tobler has interpreted these for us moderns; his book is illustrated by photos of him and a partner executing the techniques described.

Source 2: Joachim Meyer's techniques as set forth in the Higgins Museum website: *Higgins.org*

Philosophy: Never just defend; every block should be a simultaneous counterstrike.

Keep the opponent on the defense; maintain the attack at all times (or, do nothing that does not threaten).

Guards/positions Pflugh - the plow - hands low, point at opponent's waist.

Ochs - the Ox hands high, point at opponent's head.

Alber - the Fool's Guard - hands low, point low in front.

Vom Tag - from the roof - hands and point high.

The Long Point - two-hander version of the foil fencer's point-in-line.

The five Meisterhau -Master strikes

All of these strikes can be aimed at the opponent, or at his sword as part of a counterattack.

Zornhau - the strike of wrath - downward/diagonal shoulder cut from Chambered, Ochs or Pflugh.

Krumphau - the crooked strike - Step and sweep blade wide, crossing your wrists to cut upward with the false edge to underside of opponent's hands.

Zwerchhau - the Cross Strike - hands overhead, pivot body to cut left or right.

Schielhau - the Squinter - from vom Tag, pivot body moving backshoulder and foot to your right, reversing the blade to cut with the short edge behind enemy's sword while glissading in on it.

Schietelhau - the Parting strike - can be an attack or a counterattack - at precise distance, aided by whatever footwork is necessary, extend your arms all the way to outreach any low attack or sword position, cutting vertically at the face.

Engagements/Binds/Parry-like things

Binding - blade-to-blade engagement: holding, pushing, angling for leverage. It can be the starting point for many sequences, including winding and changing through.

Fuhlen - sensing, feeling the intention of the opponent by the feel through your sword to his.

Hard at the Sword - describes a firm resistance meeting your strike or attempt to bind. You must strive to sense instantly whether your opponent is hard or soft and act accordingly.

Indes - instantly, in the moment: when you should be deciding and doing based on what you sense.

Versetzen = displacement of the attack using Master Strikes on the attacking blade

Absetzen = setting aside attacks using parries that put the point into the enemy's face.
There are four of these, 2 based on Ochs and 2 based on Pflug.

Abnahmen - taking the blade out or off an engagement.

Durchweheln - changing through - like a foil disengage *after* the parry.

Zuchen - "twitching" - like a "flip" in singlestick; rapid sequential strikes alternating sides.

Dupliere - "doubling back" or "changing up" while twitching so as to take advantage of the defender's pattern.

Mutiere - modification of the attack while it's underway.

Durchlaufen - "running through" the defense to grapple, trip and and throw the oponent.

There are several more techniques and terms best learned after these are absorbed.