



**Dear President,**

**Death of Samuel David Cheris (MH, HOF, USA)**

It is with deep sadness that we inform you of the death on December 13, in Denver, Colorado, USA, of Samuel D. Cheris (USA), FIE Member of Honour and Hall of Fame member. He was born on November 14, 1945 in Brooklyn, New York, USA.

Sam Cheris had been a member of the FIE Executive Committee from 1996 to 2004 and has been a continuous member of the Legal (formerly Statutes) Commission since 1992, and served as its President from 1996 to 2008, and from 2012 until now. Prior to that, he was a member of the FIE PCM Commission (formerly Propaganda Commission) from 1989 to 1992.

As a young student, he fenced foil at Brooklyn (New York) Technical High School and then for three years at Brooklyn College. As an assistant fencing coach at Stanford University, he elevated the women's fencing program from a physical education course to eventual NCAA varsity status — a position it still holds today. He expanded referee gender and nationality representation at World Cups, World Championships and the Olympic Games.

Sam Cheris received his MBA and Juris Doctor at Stanford University in 1971. He was admitted to practice law in California (1972) and Colorado (1973).

He practiced law at the U.S. Court of Appeals – Federal Circuit in 1971 and 1972, and then worked as an attorney. He was named a “Super Lawyer”, specializing in the fields of mergers and acquisitions and closely held businesses.

Sam Cheris co-drafted the revised FIE Statutes in 1999, which were approved by the FIE Congress the same year, then the FIE Disciplinary Code and revised FIE Administrative Rules. In 2018, he submitted the FIE Safeguarding Policy, which was approved by the Congress the same year.

In 1994, he supported a proposal from several federations to add English and Spanish as FIE working languages. The proposal was adopted by the Congress the same year.

He organised the 1989 Senior World Championships and 1993 Junior & Cadet World Championships, both of which took place in Denver, his home city.

Sam Cheris was an international referee in foil (B-category) and épée (A-category). He refereed in numerous World Cups and World Championships from 1982 to 1996.

He was President of the Directoire Technique in sabre World Cups and foil Grand Prix events held in the USA from 2012 to 2020, a member of the Directoire Technique in numerous Junior and Cadet and Senior World Championships and at the Olympic Games in Atlanta.



He was Chief of Protocol in Junior & Cadet and Senior World Championships and Olympic Games from 1998 to 2004.

Sam Cheris officiated as FIE Safeguarding Officer in several Junior and Cadet World Championships and in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, as well as Safeguarding mediator.

He represented the United States at more than 25 FIE Congresses. As part of USA Fencing, he played multiple important roles, among other positions, as President, Vice-President, Treasurer and President of the Refereeing Commission (FOC), where he has been the Chair since 2008. He was inducted into the USA Fencing Hall of Fame in July, 2023.

Sam Cheris dedicated his entire life to fencing, fencers and the FIE. His remarkable contributions, brilliant expertise and monumental support to our sport shall persist as being an illustrious example of devotion in our history.

The fencing family has lost an exceptional and highly respected personality with outstanding and impressive human and professional qualities and talents. But above all, the fencing family has lost one of its members, a very dear friend who was tremendously appreciated by all.

The corporate, cultural and sporting legacy he leaves behind is immense. Sam Cheris will be deeply missed and remain in our hearts and memories.

We offer our sincere condolences to Sam Cheris' wife Susie, his family and friends, USA Fencing and the Pan American Fencing Confederation, and we would like to express our deepest sympathy to them in these difficult moments.

**Emmanuel Katsiadakis (MH)**  
**Interim President**