

General Information

Country:	VEN
Gender:	M
Height:	183
Weight:	80
Handedness:	Left-handed
Date of birth:	1985-08-03
Education:	estudiante
Profession:	Educacion fisica y deportes olimpi
License:	03081985000

Further Personal Information

Family	Wife Ana Carolina Ramirez, children Gaby Isabella [2015] and Alex Ruben [2020]
Residence	Poland
Occupation	Athlete
Languages	English, Polish, Spanish
Higher education	Physical Education - University of Computer Sciences and Skills: Łódź, POL

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport?	He began fencing at age seven.
Why this sport?	His uncle Ruperto studied in Hungary during the 1980s, where he picked up a love for the sport. When he returned, he taught his nephews how to fence. Ruben initially fenced in foil with his right hand but a skateboard accident at age 12 forced him to change to his left hand and also switch disciplines.
Name of coach	Benry Martinez [national]
Handedness	Left

General Interest

Nicknames	Ru, Rubenoszky, Oreja, Orejon (Twitter profile, 29 Mar 2022; touchelatino.com, 15 Nov 2015; laverdad.com, 02 Aug 2012)
Most influential person in career	His mother, and his uncle Ruperto Gascon. (tokyo2020.org, 10 Aug 2020; noticierovenevision.net, 18 Jun 2017)
Injuries	<p>Pain in his left elbow and left hand did not prevent him from winning individual gold at the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru. Later he had to withdraw from the team competition due to meniscus problems in his left knee, a blow to his right knee, and acute lower back pain. (meridiano.com.ve, 05 Aug 2019; 2001.com.ve, 08 Aug 2019)</p> <p>He sprained his right knee while competing at the 2019 Grand Prix in Cali, Colombia. Despite the pain, he competed two weeks later at the World Cup event in Paris, France. (eluniversal.com, 19 May 2019; supuestonegado.com, 09 May 2019)</p> <p>In December 2015 he experienced pain in his lower back. He required specialist treatment in order to reduce the inflammation of the nerves and avoid the need for surgery. (diarioelprogreso.net, 23 Jan 2016)</p> <p>He underwent surgery on a ruptured cruciate ligament in May 2014. He was out of competition for the remainder of the year. He had suffered a similar injury to his left knee in 2008. (vtv.gob.ve, 15 Feb 2015; vtv.gob.ve, 29 Apr 2014)</p> <p>In 2013 he contracted malaria and was hospitalised for 12 days. (radiohc.cu, 11 Dec 2013; eluniversal.com, 08 Nov 2013)</p>
Sporting philosophy / motto	"I don't measure success by the triumphs I've achieved. But for the times that I have managed to get up in difficulties." (Instagram profile, 28 Mar 2022)
Awards and honours	<p>In 2020 he was inducted to the Hall of Fame of the International Fencing Federation [FIE]. (covoficial.com.ve, 08 Sep 2020)</p> <p>He was flag bearer for Venezuela at the opening ceremony of the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. (fie.org, 05 Aug 2016)</p> <p>In 2012 and 2015 he was named Sportsman of the Year in the state of Bolivar in Venezuela. (eluniversal.com, 06 Jan 2016)</p> <p>In 2012 he received the Order of the Liberators of Venezuela, and a replica of the sword of Venezuela's Liberator Simon Bolivar. He was also named National Hero by the Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez. (larepublica.pe, 07 Aug 2012; Globovision videos YouTube channel, 07 Aug 2012)</p>

General Interest	
Milestones	<p>He and teammates Francisco Limardo, Jesus Limardo and Grabiél Eduardo Lugo Lugo became the first fencers representing Venezuela to win a medal in a team event at the world championships when they took bronze in team epee at the 2023 edition of the tournament in Milan, Italy. (SportsDeskOnline, 09 May 2024)</p> <p>At the 2012 Olympic Games in London he became the first fencer representing Venezuela to win an Olympic gold medal. He defeated Norwegian Bartosz Piasecki in the individual epee final to also secure Venezuela's first Olympic gold in any sport since the 1968 Games in Mexico City. (SportsDeskOnline, 14 Jun 2019; fie.org, 04 Aug 2016; bbc.co.uk, 03 Aug 2012)</p> <p>He and his brother Jesus Limardo became the first brothers to contest the final of the men's individual epee competition at the Pan American Games. The brothers faced each other in the final of the 2019 edition in Lima, Peru, with Ruben claiming the gold medal. (correodelorinoco.gob.ve, 05 Aug 2019; panamsports.org, 06 Aug 2019)</p> <p>He became the first fencer from Venezuela to win a medal at the world championships when he won silver in the individual epee at the 2013 World Championships in Budapest, Hungary. (SportsDeskOnline, 09 May 2024)</p>
Famous relatives	<p>His younger brothers Francisco and Jesus have represented Venezuela in fencing. All three brothers were part of the Venezuelan epee team that won gold at the 2023 World Championships in Milan, Italy. His uncle Ruperto Gascon has been a fencing coach since the 1990s. (SportsDeskOnline, 16 May 2024; meridiano.com.ve, 27 May 2017; elluchador.info, 18 Oct 2018)</p>
Ambitions	<p>To win a team medal at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris alongside his brothers Jesus and Francisco. (radiofeyalegrianoticias.com, 24 Jun 2022)</p>
Other information	<p>OLYMPIC DISAPPOINTMENT AND EYES ON PARIS After winning gold in individual epee at the 2012 Olympic Games in London, he was eliminated in the first round of the individual epee competition at the two subsequent editions of the Games in 2016 and 2021. Despite his disappointment, he has set his sights on competing in his fifth Olympic Games in Paris in 2024. "It was a big disappointment, a very hurtful one, but I do fencing because I love this sport, so I am not going to give up. I have been working very hard since Tokyo [2020 Games], I have not stopped training, and we are working with a new plan to go back to the top." (France 24 Espanol YouTube channel, 16 Mar 2022; france24.com, 24 Nov 2021)</p> <p>FENCING FAMILY Having competed at senior international level with his younger brother Francisco several times, it was not until 2017 that his youngest brother Jesus joined them at World Cup level. The three siblings went on to claim victory in team epee at the 2017 Pan American Championships in Montreal, QC, Canada. His mother, who died in 2010, and his uncle Ruperto Gascon established a project in Venezuela to send fencers to Poland where they could train. The scheme later became known as the Ruben Limardo Foundation. "It is really difficult to develop as an athlete in Venezuela. There is no system to help you achieve success. So they created a system. My uncle was a fencer, and he trained in the former Soviet Union. Years later, he chose Poland because it was an important country. Plus it was cheap. It was the centre of Europe. In his opinion, Poland was the ideal place to establish the project. Now [speaking in 2020] we have over 20 Venezuelan athletes in the foundation. The aim of the project is to provide quality of life to the athletes. In Venezuela, many children don't have the means to practise fencing, so they see it as an elite discipline. Our intention is to fulfil the dreams of these children." (tokyo2020.org, 10 Aug 2020; cactus24.com.ve, 18 Jun 2017; meridiano.com.ve, 27 May 2017)</p> <p>OTHER ROLES He has served as president of the Venezuelan Athletes' Commission. He also was alternate deputy at the Venezuelan National Assembly in 2015, which is an experience he regrets. "It was something that I lived and I can only say that I was wrong. I don't know about politics, my stuff is sports. Those are very different things. It taught me to be stronger, to fight, and to decide that I wanted to keep on claiming victories for Venezuela." He has also served as president of the athletes' commission at the International Fencing Federation [FIE]. (triangulodeportivo.com, 12 Sep 2020; analitica.com, 04 May 2019; fie.org, 2022)</p> <p>FUTURE PLANS He hopes to continue competing up until the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris, and then take up a role with the Venezuelan Olympic Committee and the national fencing federation. "I want to be president of the Venezuelan Fencing Federation to bring knowledge and good management in order to prioritise all issues. I want to be on the Venezuelan Olympic Committee and also the international one [the IOC]. I would like to help sports by improving management." (triangulodeportivo.com, 12 Sep 2020; marcavinotinto.com, 11 Sep 2020)</p>