

General Information

Country:	FRA
Gender:	M
Handedness:	Right-handed
Date of birth:	1993-06-20
License:	20061993002

Further Personal Information

Residence	Issy-les-Moulineaux, FRA
Occupation	Armed Forces Athlete, Journalist
Languages	English, French
Higher education	Communications, Journalism - Journalist Training Centre [CFJ] Paris: France

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport?	He began fencing at age five at the Mousquetaires d'Issy les Moulineaux club in Paris, France. He also played football until age 14, at which point he decided to focus on fencing. At age 19 he left the family home to live and train at the National Institute of Sport, Expertise and Performance [INSEP] with the French national team.
Why this sport?	"I started fencing when I was five simply because I wanted to be like my heroes at the time, Zorro and D'Artagnan. I was encouraged to try the foil and as it turned out it was the weapon that suited me best. For me, fencing is more than just a sport. Everything I've learnt and experienced in fencing has helped in my life outside of sport. For example, learning that you have to work hard to achieve your goals because talent alone is not enough. Fencing also teaches respect for others. It is a sport that has helped complete my education, and helped me develop as an individual."
Club / Team	Mousquetaires d'Issy les Moulineaux: Paris, FRA
Name of coach	Emeric Clos [national], FRA; Edouard Dumont [national], FRA
Handedness	Right

General Interest

Nicknames	Max, Pingou (Facebook profile, 11 Dec 2020; baku2015.com, 25 Jun 2015)
Hobbies	Spending time with friends and family, sport, playing games, news and current affairs, philosophy. (ffescrime.fr, 01 Jan 2024)
Memorable sporting achievement	Winning gold in team foil at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, and winning gold in team foil at the 2019 European Championships in Dusseldorf, Germany. (Instagram profile, 05 Aug 2021; interviewsport.fr, 07 Mar 2021)
Hero / Idol	Italian fencer Valentina Vezzali. (issy.com, 29 Apr 2024)
Sporting philosophy / motto	"I am learning to be patient. It's difficult to make progress if you're always focusing on the goal ahead and lose sight of the process of getting there. You have to learn to make the most of the moment, to enjoy the journey. This is something I am truly starting to understand this year [2019]. It's OK to chase big dreams, but if you want to actually achieve them you have to focus on enjoying the journey, not the destination." (lequipe.fr, 11 Jan 2019)
Awards and honours	In 2021 he received the National Order of the Legion of Honour [the highest French order of merit] in the degree of Cavalier from the president of France. (legifrance.gouv.fr, 08 Sep 2021)
Ambitions	To win the individual and team foil titles at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. (issy.com, 29 Apr 2024)
Other information	<p>GENERATION PARIS 2024 He hopes France hosting the 2024 Olympic Games will inspire a generation of French youth in the same way he was inspired by the French men's 1998 World Cup-winning football team. "My objective is to win two gold medals [in Paris], one in individual and one in the team event. In Tokyo [2020 Olympic Games], we won the team event. This time I would like to win an individual title, that's my objective. It will take a lot of work and suffering, but there will be pleasure as well. It's a childhood dream come true. I was part of 'generation 98' that witnessed France becoming football world champions, and I know there will be a 'generation Paris 2024' to inspire other children." (issy.com, 29 Apr 2024)</p> <p>POST-TOKYO BREAK After claiming gold in team foil at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, he admitted to struggling with motivation and took a three-month break from the sport in mid-2022 to recapture his love for the sport. "I had accomplished my childhood dream to become an Olympic champion. But all the preparation was a constraint. The Games postponement [due to COVID-19] and being one year without competitions was mentally tough. Around 30 times I woke up in the morning telling myself that I didn't want to go to training anymore. That's when I felt lost. I couldn't do it anymore. I told the coaches to leave me on my own for three months, the time I needed to recover myself, physically and mentally. I needed to be away from fencing." He returned to training at the National Institute for Sport, Expertise and Performance [INSEP] in September 2022. "I was once again ready to do all the sacrifices needed to be among the best in the world and to go to [the 2024 Olympic Games in] Paris to win gold in both the individual and the team event." (lequipe.fr, 20 Dec 2022)</p> <p>TURNING POINT He said that the individual World Cup gold medal that he won in 2018 was a turning point for his self-belief and attitude towards fencing. In the two previous years he had served as a replacement for the French senior team for the world and European championships, as well as the 2016 Olympic Games, and was questioning his future in the sport. "At age 24 I couldn't waste any more time, I had to decide whether elite sport was really for me. Winning a [first] World Cup allowed me to believe in myself, to believe that I deserved to be here [at the highest level]. From that point forward, I decided to give everything to fencing, and invest 200% to achieve my objectives. That victory helped me regain my confidence after two years of doubt." (ISSY TV YouTube, 23 Oct 2018; lemondedelescrime.wordpress.com, 08 Jun 2018)</p> <p>OCCUPATION He studied journalism and has worked in the field, but in 2021 he spoke about his decision to focus primarily on his sporting career. "When I finished my [journalism] studies, I told myself that my dream was to be a fencing champion. However, if I had to work a career alongside fencing I could certainly continue to compete, but I would not be able to achieve my goal of becoming the best. You have to be 100% committed. So I made the decision to take the risk of not working and only do fencing." He has been supported in his fencing career by the National Gendarmerie, a branch of the French armed forces, since 2019. "I had the chance to sign two contracts - one with the club of Issy [Mousquetaires], which pays me as a fencer, and one with the Gendarmerie. I am part of the Joinville battalion. These two contracts allow me to make a living from fencing. I'm lucky enough to do just that and to be a professional fencer." He previously worked as a presenter on the web show 'The Lounge' for INSEP TV, the online channel for the National Institute of Sport, Expertise and Performance in Paris, France. (terre.defe</p>