

General Information

Country:	FRA
Gender:	F
Handedness:	Right-handed
Date of birth:	1996-02-07
License:	07021996000

Further Personal Information

Family	Husband Bolade Apithy
Residence	Orléans, FRA
Occupation	Armed Forces Athlete
Languages	English, French
Higher education	Marketing - EDHEC Business School : Roubaix, FRA

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport?	She began fencing at age seven at the Sabre au Clair club in Lyon, France. Her potential was soon noticed by the national training hub [Pole Espoir] in Orleans, France, which led to her joining the Cercle d'Esgrime Orleanais club and eventually the National Institute for Sport, Expertise and Performance [INSEP] in Paris, France.
Why this sport?	"I was doing taekwondo and dancing but I didn't enjoy them. A friend of mine then suggested I try fencing. What attracted me at first - and it's kind of funny - was the sort of disguise you get to wear. I was the only girl at the fencing club, and I loved it. I was supposed to try handball the next day, but I never went. I was a timid girl, and I felt like behind the fencing mask I could just let go. It's such a complete sport - technical, physical and tactical. I think I was lucky to start with the sabre, I'm not sure I would have had enough patience for the other weapons."
Club / Team	Cercle d'Esgrime Orleanais: France
Name of coach	Christian Bauer [personal], from 2021
Training Regime	She trains for up to six hours a day, five days per week.
Handedness	Right

General Interest	
Nicknames	Brunette (piao.fr, 26 Nov 2016)
Memorable sporting achievement	Winning two medals at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, and securing gold in the team event at the 2018 World Championships in Wuxi, People's Republic of China. (femmedesport.com, 15 Dec 2022)
Most influential person in career	Her parents. (pianetascherma.com, 24 Jul 2016)
Hero / Idol	French judoka Clarisse Agbegnenou. (all-tigers.com, 21 Sep 2020)
Injuries	<p>In 2022 she sustained an injury to her right shoulder while competing at a World Cup event in Tunis, Tunisia. She required surgery and missed the 2022 European Championships in Antalya, Turkiye, and the 2022 World Championships in Cairo, Egypt. She returned to training in September 2022. (lequipe.fr, 19 Jun 2023; eurosport.fr, 10 Nov 2022; lefigaro.fr, 21 Sep 2022)</p> <p>From July 2020 to January 2021 she struggled with recurrent tendinitis in her adductor [thigh] muscles, which was caused by returning to training too intensively following the end of the COVID-19 lockdown in France. (larep.fr, 13 Mar 2021; sport24.lefigaro.fr, 10 Aug 2020)</p>
Superstitions / Rituals / Beliefs	"I created a routine with my mental trainer to put myself in a kind of bubble and try to put myself into combat mode. Often, we have a ritual in competition where we are invited to go into a waiting room and then out onto the piste with our referee and our opponent. In that room, I do my little mental warm-up routine and a little physical warm-up to wake up my body and my mind." (le-medias-blog-de-julian.over-blog.com, 27 Feb 2021)
Sporting philosophy / motto	"Fencing, for me, is a complete sport that requires a variety of skills, reflexes, self-control and respect. I do this sport so much that it almost feels like my sabre is part of my body." (sportmag.fr, 30 Oct 2019)
Awards and honours	<p>In 2021 she was named Knight of the National Order of Merit by the French government. (legifrance.gouv.fr, 08 Sep 2021)</p> <p>In 2021 she was named Female Fencer of the Year by the French Fencing Federation. (escrime-ffe.fr, 08 Dec 2021)</p>
Famous relatives	Her husband Bolade Apithy represented France in fencing at the 2012 and 2020 Olympic Games. Her father, Philippe, played football for French Ligue 1 club Olympique Lyonnais. (SportsDeskOnline, 07 Apr 2022; sportmag.fr, 21 Dec 2021, 30 Oct 2019)
Ambitions	To win gold at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. (eurosport.fr, 10 Nov 2022)
Other information	<p>TRAINING SWITCH After the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, where she claimed a silver medal in the team event and a bronze medal in the individual event, she decided to quit the National Institute for Sport, Expertise and Performance [INSEP] in Paris and relocated to Orleans, France, where she joined the Christian Bauer Academy. "Winning an [individual] medal helped me to boost my confidence because I was waiting for it since a long time, either at the Games or at the world championships. However, after finishing the Games I decided to change it all and switched both training centre and coach in order to try to start all over again, erase my habits and look for something bigger." (loiret.fr, 20 Mar 2023; lefigaro.fr, 21 Sep 2022)</p> <p>FENCING COUPLE After the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo she married fellow French sabre fencer Bolade Apithy. The pair train together at the Christian Bauer Academy in Orleans, France. "We don't speak [about fencing] when we are at home because it is important to separate things. We already train together. But, what is true is that I wouldn't be able to do everything I do without him. At the [2020 Olympic] Games in Tokyo, between my defeat in the semifinals and the time to get back to the piste for the bronze medal, he was the only person who managed to motivate me again and make me smile. Every time I'm in doubt I call him. He is my life coach." (olympics.com, 08 Dec 2023; lefigaro.fr, 21 Sep 2022)</p> <p>IMPROVEMENT AT OLYMPICS She finished in fourth place in individual sabre at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. She then won individual bronze and team silver at the 2020 Games in Tokyo, and put the improvement down to increased maturity. "When I get touched now, I don't react like before. I manage my emotions better. I feel like what I have done on the piste since the [2016] Games frightens my rivals more. I have improved technically and tactically a lot. When I came home with my two medals, I looked at them and said to myself, 'Finally, I want even more'. I want to relive those moments already and feel the adrenaline when you enter the track and the emotion when you get on the podium." (sportmag.fr, 21 Dec 2021; dicodusport.fr, 02 Apr 2021; larep.fr, 12 Jun 2017)</p> <p>PSYCHOLOGIST In 2022 she sustained an injury to her right shoulder while competing at a World Cup event in Tunis, Tunisia. She required surgery, and during her recovery her coach Christian Bauer suggested she see a psychologist. "It was tough to be back to training so fast [after the injury] and the training was so harder than before. I struggled to get motivated to go training to the point that my coach, feeling I was about to become depressed, sent me to a psychologist. I felt so tired I even struggled to put on my competition vest. There was no longer this happiness when you say that you love fencing. So I decided to be well supported every day until [the 2024 Olympic Games in] Paris." (eurosport.fr, 10 Nov 2022; lefigaro.fr, 21 Sep 2022)</p>