

General Information

Country:	GER
Gender:	M
Height:	173
Weight:	65
Handedness:	Left-handed
Date of birth:	1985-07-30
Profession:	etudiant science de sport
License:	30071985000

Further Personal Information

Occupation	Athlete
Languages	English, German
Higher education	Business Law - German Sport University Cologne: Germany

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport?	He began fencing in 1994 at Rheinisches Fencing Club in Dusseldorf, Germany.
Why this sport?	"I originally played roller hockey but when I was nine, I wanted to try something new so I began fencing. I do not remember the exact reason why. It was probably my mother's idea, but the decision was good. I like foil because it finds a middle ground between epee and sabre. Sabre is very fast, epee is more about patience and timing. Foil is somewhere in the middle, where you combine all the elements of fencing, both tactical and athletic."
Club / Team	DFC Dusseldorf: Germany
Name of coach	Ulrich Schreck [national], GER
Handedness	Left

General Interest

Nicknames	Benni (topsport-nrw.de, 31 Jan 2021)
Hobbies	Working out, going to the cinema. (stockheim-teamduesseldorf.de, 16 Apr 2019)
Memorable sporting achievement	Winning an individual gold medal at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and a team bronze medal at the 2012 Games in London, and claiming his sixth national title in 2019. (stockheim-teamduesseldorf.de, 16 Apr 2019)
Injuries	In 2016 he suffered a traumatic brain injury after being attacked by a tourist outside a restaurant in Shanghai, People's Republic of China. He made his return to fencing in November 2016. (fechten.org, 12 Nov 2016; welt.de, 07 Jun 2016) He missed the 2011 European Championships in Sheffield, England, due to a motorcycle accident that left him with an injured left shoulder. (sportal.de, 20 Apr 2011)
Sporting philosophy / motto	"The most important thing about fencing is mental toughness, especially in decisive battles. It's just like a penalty shootout in football. It is also possible in fencing to be very successful without being the most talented, as long as you work hard." (sport1.de, 28 Apr 2010)
Milestones	He became the first male German fencer to win gold in individual foil at the Olympic Games, when he triumphed at the 2008 Games in Beijing. (SportsDeskOnline, 06 Jul 2017; sport1.de, 28 Apr 2010)
Other information	RETIREMENT AND RETURN In September 2012 he retired from the sport, citing the pressure of competing at elite level and a desire to build a new career away from sport. He went on to obtain an undergraduate degree in business law and a master's degree in business administration, and began working at an accountancy firm. He decided to return to fencing at the end of 2015. (sportstadt-duesseldorf.de, 16 Apr 2019; Reinische Post, 08 Feb 2016; taz.de, 03 Oct 2012; sportschau.de, 30 Sep 2012) OTHER ACTIVITIES He has served as a member of the athletes' commission of the International Fencing Federation [FIE]. (fie.org, 07 Oct 2017)