

General Information

Country:	ITA
Gender:	M
Handedness:	Right-handed
Date of birth:	1983-04-04
License:	04041983001

Further Personal Information

Family	Wife Lavinia Bonessio, daughters Elena [2018] and Nicole [2020]
Residence	Rome, ITA
Occupation	Armed Forces Athlete
Languages	English, Italian

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport?	He began fencing at age seven.
Why this sport?	His father introduced him to the sport. "I used to play volleyball and football. My father took me to the gym one day to show me fencing and I realised that it was the sport for me."
Club / Team	CS Aeronautica Militare: Italy
Handedness	Right

General Interest

Hobbies	Listening to music, scuba diving, volleyball, tennis. (Facebook page, 12 May 2019)
Memorable sporting achievement	Claiming gold in individual epee at the 2011 World Championships in Catania, Italy, and winning silver in team epee at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. (Instagram profile, 07 Jul 2017)
Hero / Idol	Swiss tennis player Roger Federer. (sportfair.it, 23 Jul 2017)
Injuries	In 2017 he sustained an injury to his right elbow, which required him to undergo surgery and kept him out of action for seven months. He returned to competition in June 2018 at the Mediterranean Games in Tarragona, Spain. (Facebook page, 21 Jun 2018; liberta.it, 22 May 2018; pianetascherma.com, 25 Mar 2018) He underwent an operation on his hand in November 2012. (cattolicanews.it, 03 May 2013)
Superstitions / Rituals / Beliefs	He always carries seven weapons for a competition, rather than the more usual number of three or four. (ilsupporter.it, 12 Nov 2018)
Sporting philosophy / motto	"Fight for what you believe in and never give up." (tiburno.tv, 18 Mar 2015)
Famous relatives	His wife Lavinia Bonessio has represented Italy in modern pentathlon, and won bronze in relay at the 2014 World Championships in Warsaw, Poland. She announced her retirement from the sport in 2016. (fipm.it, 17 Dec 2016; SportsDeskOnline, 08 Jul 2015; pianetascherma.com, 12 Oct 2014)
Ambitions	To compete at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. (lasicilia.it, 18 Mar 2021)
Other information	<p>RETIREMENT AND COMEBACK In May 2019 he announced his decision to leave the Italian national team, putting aside his goal of participating at the 2020 Olympic Games, to compete solely at national level tournaments in Italy and spend more time at home with his wife and daughter. Following the postponement of the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, he decided to return to the national fencing team and returned to action at the 2021 World Cup event in Kazan, Russian Federation. "I still want to throw myself into the fray, I have nothing to lose. I have the utmost respect for my teammates in the national team, but I feel I can continue to give my best. I am very happy to be back on the platform." (lasicilia.it, 18 Mar 2021; catania.meridionews.it, 30 Aug 2020)</p> <p>COACH He has worked as a physical and mental coach with young international athletes from a number of sports in Italy. "I still feel like an athlete, but I have begun to gain experience both as a coach for young talents and as a mental coach. I had the good fortune to meet exceptional people and coaches throughout my career. The ability to listen to the right advice has always been of great importance. Treasuring it without passing on this wealth of knowledge to future generations would be a mistake. Now I can pass on my experience to young people. I started with [fencing at] the 2020 European U20 Championships in Rome [Italy], and then continued with the athletes of the national swimming team. I spent a month with them." (catania.meridionews.it, 30 Aug 2020)</p> <p>ILLNESS At age 13 he had a tumour removed from his brain. He has written a book about his experiences called 'The Winning Thrust: How I Beat Cancer and Realised My Dream'. He has also served as an ambassador for the Italian Association of Cancer Research [AIRC]. "I have been a fortunate guy. I think that the mental aspect has been fundamental. I learnt that I needed to be strong, to never surrender. They seem common sentences, but they are true. I suffer when I remember those days. Now I teach people to never surrender." (corriere.it, 26 Jan 2018; ccaniene.com, 07 Jun 2016; lanotiziah24.com, 06 May 2015)</p>