

General Information

Country:	COL
Gender:	F
Handedness:	Right-handed
Date of birth:	1987-08-29
License:	29081987000

Further Personal Information

Occupation	Athlete
Languages	Dutch, English, Spanish
Higher education	Journalism - University of Amsterdam: Netherlands

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport?	She began fencing at age six, and at age 14 she started to take part in competitions. "I started going to tournaments every weekend, while I saw that my classmates from school were spending it at parties. That's when I knew that this was my thing."
Why this sport?	Her mother was an international fencer and Saskia got involved in the sport as soon as she was strong enough to hold a sword. "I had it in my blood. Seeing the foil in my living room was normal because my mother, who is Colombian, was a fencer. Fencing takes a long time, I always liked dancing and judo, but when you feel that a sport belongs to you, there is nothing you can do in trying to stop it."
Club / Team	SchermaCentrum Amsterdam: Netherlands
Name of coach	Daniel Nivard [personal], NED
Handedness	Right

General Interest

Hobbies	Walking in the countryside, riding horses, eating Colombian food. (elpais.com.co, 11 Apr 2021)
Memorable sporting achievement	Competing at the 2012 Olympic Games in London. (elpais.com.co, 11 Apr 2021; Cali es Deporte YouTube channel, 31 Mar 2021)
Most influential person in career	Her mother Gloria Garcia Pacheco. (elpais.com.co, 11 Apr 2021; coc.org.co, 25 Feb 2018)
Sporting philosophy / motto	"Fencing has always been the only consistent thing in my life. It was the thing I could fall back on when I had good days and bad days. The thing I always prioritised and always had it as my main focus. Missed opportunities and sacrifices like a steady social life like my peers since high school, a steady home base or living just life without the pressures and stress of always trying to perform at your best. On the other hand, it has given me so many other amazing things and experiences in return about myself and the world." (Facebook page, 28 Dec 2021) "Fencing, more than a sport or a hobby, is my life, my inspiration." (coc.org.co, 15 Jun 2016; elpais.com.co, 13 Jun 2012)
Famous relatives	Her mother Gloria Garcia Pacheco represented Colombia in fencing. She won bronze in team foil at the 1971 Pan American Games in Cali, Colombia. Her father Roy van Erven has also competed in fencing in the Netherlands. (coc.org.co, 15 Jun 2016; SportsDeskOnline, 25 Jun 2015; elpais.com.co, 13 Jun 2012)
Other information	HERITAGE She was born in Rotterdam, Netherlands, to a Dutch father and a Colombian mother. She represented the Netherlands in fencing earlier in her career, including at the world championships in 2006 and 2007, but she began competing for Colombia in 2011. "I was in the Dutch national team until age 21, but the possibilities there in sport are very difficult. People think that by being a country with a lot of money things are easier, but it is not like that. In Colombia there is more support and that is what I like the most. In addition, I had represented Valle [her region in Colombia] since age 19 at the National Games, so for me it was not strange [to represent Colombia]. The idea was to represent my mother's land." (elpais.com.co, 11 Apr 2021; antena2.com.co, 30 Jul 2018; colombiasports.net, 24 Apr 2013; saskialoretta.com, 01 Jan 2012)