

General Information

Country:	USA
Gender:	F
Handedness:	Right-handed
Date of birth:	1982-03-30
Education:	STUDENT
License:	30031982000

Further Personal Information

Family	Husband Bradley Shelton, son Henry [2017]
Other names	Aleksandra Socha
Residence	Portland, OR, USA
Occupation	Athlete
Languages	English, Polish
Higher education	Physical Education - Jozef Pilsudski University of Physical Education: Warsaw, POL

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport?	She began taking foil lessons at age 11 in Pabianice, Poland. At age 17 she switched from foil to sabre.
Why this sport?	She was inspired to take up the sport after watching her mother compete in fencing on television.
Club / Team	Oregon Fencing Alliance : United States
Name of coach	Ed Korfanty [club], POL
Handedness	Right
Footedness	Ambidextrous

International Debut

Tournament	Word Cup
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General Interest

Nicknames	Ola (olasocha.pl, 07 May 2017)
Hobbies	Travelling, snowboarding. (sportowefakty.wp.pl, 06 Mar 2019)
Memorable sporting achievement	Winning a gold medal at the 2004 European Championships in Copenhagen, Denmark, and competing at four consecutive editions of the Olympic Games between 2004 and 2016. (SportsDeskOnline, 03 May 2021; mjakmama24.pl, 01 May 2017)
Injuries	Before the 2012 Olympic Games in London she struggled with a slipped disc in her back. (przegladSPORTOWY.pl, 08 Aug 2016)
Sporting philosophy / motto	"Every experience is an opportunity to learn and grow." (Instagram profile, 24 Apr 2021)
Famous relatives	Her mother competed in fencing at national level in Poland. (olasocha.pl, 21 Feb 2016; NOC, 04 May 2004)
Ambitions	To compete at the Olympic Games in 2020 and 2024. (magazynSPORTOWIEC.pl, 05 Mar 2019)
Other information	<p>NATIONALITY SWITCH She represented Poland at four consecutive editions of the Olympic Games between 2004 and 2016 but decided she wanted to compete for the United States of America in 2019. She was unhappy with the support she had received in Poland following the birth of her son Henry in 2017 and qualified to represent the United States of America through her marriage to US citizen Bradley Shelton. "I did not receive support after my maternity break from the Polish team, which would have allowed me to return to the highest level and fight on the international stage. I was too old for them and not good enough, so that's why I went to the US team." When the Polish Olympic Committee and Polish Fencing Federation attempted to block the switch in 2019, she appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, which ruled in her favour in October 2020. Her switch to the US team was confirmed by the International Olympic Committee in December 2020. "It's a huge relief. I should never have had to go that far to get help. The whole thing cost me and my family a lot, also financially. We had to spend our life savings. I spent about \$100,000 on fighting for my career." (sport.tvp.pl, 24 Dec 2020; olympic.org, 07 Dec 2020; nytimes.com, 14 Oct 2020, 22 Feb 2020; sportowefakty.wp.pl, 06 Mar 2019; magazynSPORTOWIEC.pl, 05 Mar 2019)</p> <p>COACHING She is a qualified fencing coach and fitness instructor. (olasocha.pl, 21 Feb 2016)</p> <p>FURTHER EDUCATION Having previously gained a physical education degree from Jozef Pilsudski University of Physical Education in Warsaw, Poland, she went on to study international relations and diplomacy at Collegium Civitas in Warsaw. (olasocha.pl, 21 Feb 2016)</p>