


FLESSEL-COLOVIC LAURA

NOC	France 
Gender	Women
Born	06 Nov 1971 in Pointe-a-Pitre, GLP
Height	1.71 m
Weight	55 kg

Head-to-Head results**HUMAN INTEREST****Further Personal Information**

Marital status	Married
Family	Husband Denis Colovic, daughter Lenlou [2001]
Residence	Paris, FRA
Occupation	Consultant, Councillor, Home Duties, Volunteer
Languages	English, French, Spanish
Higher education	Business, Event Management, Tourism

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport? She began fencing in 1977 at OMCS de Petit-Bourg in Guadeloupe.

Why this sport? The daughter of a football playing father, she grew up in an active household alongside three siblings and says she ran, swam and played like all boys in the Caribbean. Her mother tried to direct her energy into classical dance lessons, but Laura says she knew dance was not for her. One day she saw French sabre legend Jean Francois Lamour on television and was inspired to try fencing. Once she got a taste for competition, she was hooked.

Handedness Left

General Interest

Nicknames She earned the nickname La Guepe [the Wasp] in Guadeloupe. (Time Magazine, 11 Sep 2000; Athlete, 01 Oct 2011)

Hobbies Golf, opera, scuba diving, travelling, spending time with family and friends, movies, dancing and music, French fashion. (escrime-ffe.fr, 24 Sep 2007; Athlete, 01 Oct 2011)

Memorable sporting achievement Winning the individual gold and team gold in epee at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. (interviewsport.fr, 15 Oct 2010)

Superstitions / Rituals / Beliefs She always listens to music when she trains. (INFO 2000)

Sporting philosophy / motto "Fencing is a sport of maturity, like golf or chess... The older I get and the more experience I have, I take on a style that relies less on the physical and more on the mental." (newsofmarseille.com, 20 Apr 2011)

Awards and honours She was France's flag bearer at the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympic Games in London. (NOC, 21 Jul 2012)

Famous relatives Her father, Edward Flessel, was a footballer. (Athlete, 17 Jul 2003)

Other information RETIREMENT
She retired from the sport following the 2012 Olympic Games. She joked that her decision to continue until 2012 [she had previously announced retirement after the 2010 World Championships] came because "my little daughter told me she wanted to meet the Queen of England! I took that as a 'yes'." She insisted that with all her experience she would continue to be involved in developing fencers from France and its overseas territories. She also planned to pursue a master's degree in political

science. (lexpress.fr, 30 Jul 2012; newsofmarseille.com, 20 Apr 2011; lemonde.fr, 18 Oct 2010)

MISS TELEPHONE

She has been nicknamed 'Miss Telephone' by her French teammates, because she spends so much time talking with her daughter on Skype or the telephone when she is away competing. "Even in the middle of a competition, I can think of her without losing my concentration. I know that might seem paradoxical, but having her in my thoughts even though she may be far away actually boosts my motivation." (la-croix.com, 17 Aug 2011)

GOVERNMENT AND CHARITY WORK

In October 2010 she was one of 40 personalities named to the Economic, Social and Environmental Council in Paris, which advises the national government. She was chosen particularly for her sporting experience and specifically worked on the integration of sport into the education of children. She has also been involved with 'Plan France' and 'Handicap International', an anti-landmine campaign, and regularly works with local hospitals and schools in France helping sick and disadvantaged children. She also returned to Guadeloupe in 2005 to help earthquake recovery efforts, as well as to Haiti after its devastating 2010 earthquake. In 2011 she was named as president of a committee for the French minister of sport to fight discrimination in sport. (Athlete, 01 Oct 2011; legifrance.gouv.fr, 28 Oct 2010; lejdd.fr, 31 Oct 2010)

PREGNANT FENCING

"I already wanted a baby after Atlanta but I was a little young. But after Sydney and after 20 years of training, I felt like laying down the arms and becoming a mother," she said. "But I actually only stopped after being three months pregnant and even then, I was restless so I kept fencing in a chair," she said. "With age and after becoming a mother, you're not at risk of losing your style but your craving for the sport," she said. Her love of fencing was apparently unaffected as she won a silver medal at the world championships in 2001, four months after giving birth. (Eurosport.com, 10 Aug 2004)

DOPING CONTROVERSY

In November 2002, she received a three-month suspension after testing positive for a banned substance. She pleaded that she was not responsible, claiming a national federation doctor had inadvertently given her [and the entire French team] medication containing the substance. The doctor responsible for the alleged mixup, Dominique Poux, claimed an inexperienced assistant had bought the wrong glucose supplement for the team that contained the banned substance. After threatening to prosecute the French Federation of Fencing [FFE], she received compensation of approximately 100,000 euros from the federation's insurers. (Oxford Fencing.com, 04 Mar 2003; sport.fr 06 Feb 2004; tempsreel.nouveljobs.com, 19 Aug 2002)

MAJOR RESULTS

Year	Rank	Event	Venue
Olympic Games			
2008	7	Individual Epee	Beijing, China
2004	2	Individual Epee	Athens, Greece
2004	3	Team Epee	Athens, Greece
2000	3	Individual Epee	Sydney, Australia
2000	5	Team Epee	Sydney, Australia
1996	1	Individual Epee	Atlanta, GA, United States
1996	1	Team Epee	Atlanta, GA, United States
World Championships			
2011	8	Team Epee	Catania, Italy
2010	5	Team Epee	Paris, France
2010	6	Individual Epee	Paris, France

2009	4	Team Epee	Antalya, Turkey
2009	6	Individual Epee	Antalya, Turkey
2008	1	Team Epee	Beijing, China
2007	1	Team Epee	St. Petersburg, Russia
2006	2	Team Epee	Turin, Italy
2006	3	Individual Epee	Turin, Italy
2005	1	Team Epee	Leipzig, Germany
2005	3	Individual Epee	Leipzig, Germany
2003	5	Individual Epee	Havana, Cuba
2002	5	Individual Epee	Lisbon, Portugal
2001	2	Individual Epee	Nomes, France
1999	1	Individual Epee	Seoul, South Korea
1999	7	Team Epee	Seoul, South Korea
1998	1	Individual Epee	La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland
1998	1	Team Epee	La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland
1997	3	Team Epee	Cape Town, South Africa
1995	2	Team Epee	The Hague, Netherlands
1995	3	Individual Epee	The Hague, Netherlands
European Championships			
2012	7	Individual Epee	Legnano, Italy
2011	7	Individual Epee	Sheffield, England
2010	3	Individual Epee	Leipzig, Germany
2010	3	Team Epee	Leipzig, Germany
2009	3	Individual Epee	Plovdiv, Bulgaria
2007	1	Individual Epee	Ghent, Belgium