



Olympic Champion 2004 & 2008

Mariel Zagunis

at a glance...

Statistics

- Hometown: Beaverton, OR
- Birthdate: March 3, 1985
- Height: 5' 8"
- Education: attends University of Notre Dame

Athletic Accolades

- World Rank: #1
- 2008 & 2004 Olympic Gold Medalist
- 2008 Olympic Bronze Medalist
- 2009 World Champion
- 2010 & 2009 World Cup Champion
- 19-Time World Championship medalist
- University of Notre Dame's Athlete of the Decade

Points of Interest

- In 2004, Mariel was a last moment replacement athlete in the Olympic competition - she went on to win the gold medal. It was the first gold medal for an American fencer in over 100 years.
- Mariel is the most decorated fencer in U.S. history...by far.
- In 2009, Mariel received the Chevelier Feyerick Trophy from the International Fencing Federation as the person that best represents sportsmanship and fair play as a role model for fencing's future – the first American ever to do so.
- Both of Mariel's parents, Cathy and Robert, were Olympic rowers at the 1976 Montreal Games.



Carpe Diem

In the countdown to the 2004 Olympic Games, as a young but decorated fencer, Mariel stood by and agonized, as it appeared her long awaited Olympic dream had slipped away and she would be forced to wait four more years for another try. She was the highest ranked American fencer not to qualify for the Olympic Team. Then, in a stroke of good fortune, just weeks before Team USA embarked on the trip to Athens, opportunity knocked for Mariel when Nigeria declined to send its team to The Games. She seized the moment - one that would change her life. She went on to win the Olympic gold medal. Four years, and countless trips to award podiums around the world later, Mariel returned to the Olympic Games, this time in Beijing, to defend her title. She did, and then some, capturing her second individual Olympic gold medal and adding a bronze medal in the team competition. Still at the top of her game, Mariel is the World Champion and ranked #1 in the world.


A native of Beaverton, OR, Mariel has the Olympics in her blood. Both of her parents were rowers, who met at the 1976 Olympic trials and competed at The Games in Montreal. She first picked up a sabre (sword) at ten years old and began competing against the best in the world at just 14. In 2001, she was Cadet World Champion (under 17), Junior World Champion (under 20) and Junior Team World Champion all at the same time, an historic first. She's won everything there is to win in fencing, most more than once. The middle sister of two brothers who also fence, Mariel spends her free time experimenting in the kitchen, playing tennis and volunteering at a local food bank. In August of 2010, The US Olympic Committee named Mariel one of the Top 12 Athletes to Watch at the London Olympics, calling for a gold medal three-peat. Mariel intends to deliver.



Mariel Zagunis

in depth...



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