

ATHLETICS (8):

MARCEL LOMNICKÝ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 6th July 1987, Nitra

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 175 cm, 110 kg

CLUB: ŠK Dukla o. z. Banská Bystrica/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Libor Charfreitag

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: London 2012 – 13th in the hammer throw (74.00), Rio de Janeiro 2016: 5th in the hammer throw (75.97 m)

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2nd at the 2006 World Junior Championships in Beijing, 3rd at the European U23 Championships in Debrecen in 2007, 2nd at the Universiade in 2011 and 2013, 5th at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, 5th at the 2016 European Championships in Amsterdam, 8th at the World Championships in 2013 and 2015

HOBBIES: Cooking

He started his sporting career as a figure skater, but later became an athlete, gradually trying all the throwing disciplines. After the shot-put, discus and javelin he ended up as a hammer thrower. He has been the established number one in the hammer throw in Slovakia over the last years. Not far from his home in Nitra he has built his own throwing circle.

MICHAL MORVAY

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 19th August 1996, Nitra

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 178 cm, 71 kg

CLUB: ŠK Dukla o. z. Banská Bystrica

COACH: Matej Spišiak

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: A three time champion of Slovakia in the 50 km race walk, 16th at the IAAF World U18 Championships

HOBBIES: Travelling and different sports (especially football and tennis)

He has been playing sports since he was a child; he started as a good, solid football player. In the 2nd Schoolboy League, as the highest scorer for ČKF Nitra he helped them advance to the highest competition. While attending a class for athletes he also started to race walk. It gradually became his fate. He admires Matej Tóth and Cristiano Ronaldo. He wants to do everything he can to make his sporting dreams come true.

MATEJ TÓTH

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 10th February 1983, Nitra

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 185 cm, 72 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠK Dukla o. z. Banská Bystrica/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Matej Spišiak

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Athens 2004 – 32nd in the 20 km race walk (1:28:49 h), Beijing 2008 – 26th in the 20 km race walk (1:23:17 h), London 2012 – 5th in the 50 km race walk (3:41:24 h), Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 1st in the 50 km race walk (3:40:58 h)

ACHIEVEMENTS: Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 1st in the 50 km race walk, 2015 World Championships – 1st, 2014 and 2018 European Championships - 2nd , 2011 World Cup – 1st (20 km), 2013 – World Championships – 4th in the 50 km race walk and in 2016 the Slovak Athlete of the Year

EDUCATION: The Faculty of Arts of the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, graduating in journalism

HOBBIES: Family, books – detective stories, film and cars

Sports hero: Jozef Pribilinec

Favourite song: Nech sa Ti darí – Samo Tomeček

Favourite game: Activity

Favourite film: "Černí baroni"

If someone wants to win an Olympic 50 km race walk they need to do something extraordinary. Matej Tóth did just that in Rio de Janeiro on 19th August 2016. It was the highlight of the career of this native of Nitra. His opponents were of the highest quality and excellently prepared. However, Tóth displayed the highest degree of persistence and the highest speed and put in an excellent performance to become the Olympic Champion. He won a dramatic and dynamic race, where there were constant changes throughout the race. He was active during the entire race, dictating the pace in his group. He did not mind leading the group, he was very resistant. He displayed his experience as well as a high level of tactical maturity. He worked hard during the race so he could enjoy the last kilometre of fame. He was awarded the gold medal in the Olympic Stadium, in the evening after the race, by the Slovak member of the IOC Athletes' Commission, Danka Barteková.

Tóth became a positive role model for all Slovak athletes. His way to the top was gradual, a result of his diligence and hard work; he did not collect any awards as a junior.

As a child he would run around blocks of flats in Nitra with his peers. He chased the ball wearing football boots, he stopped the puck as an ice-hockey goalie, and he also tried karate. Ultimately the queen of sports – athletics won. When thirteen-year-old Matej Tóth appeared at training at the athletic club in Nitra, his choice of discipline shocked his coach Peter Mečiar. After the achievements of his most famous athlete, the coach described him, in various interviews, as a short, stocky kid lacking the necessary prerequisites, he was not suited to being a walker. Tóth endured, advancing systematically.

He gradually became an example of a peculiar Slovak phenomenon. He did not reach the top thank to the system, but his parents were the ones who helped him on his way to the top. He would probably never have achieved his Olympic victory without their help. His parents changed their lives to fit around his sporting career, they accompanied him to competitions and training camps. Often even on their days off. His father Viliam often raised money from friends to support his son. He discovered that finding a sponsor for an athlete was very demanding. The family budget was better balanced after Tóth joined the Dukla Banská Bystrica Club in the autumn of 2002. He became a member of the training

group coached by the recognised expert Juraj Benčík, who had also coached our first Olympic Champion athlete, Jozef Pribilinec.

MIROSLAV ÚRADNÍK

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 24th March 1996, Brezno

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 172 cm, 57 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠK Dukla o. z. Banská Bystrica/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

PERSONAL COACH: Matej Spišiak

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 3rd at the 2019 Military World Games in Wuhan

HOBBIES: Cars, quad-bikes and everything with a strong engine

The sports hero of Miroslav Úradník is his training and race walk colleague Matej Tóth. This car lover likes the song Memories by Maroon 5, and he enjoys any laser game. His favourite film is Forrest Gump.

JÁN VOLKO

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 2nd November 1996, Bratislava

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 177 cm, 82 kg

CLUB/COE: Naša atletika Bratislava/ŠCP Bratislava

COACHES: Naďa Bendová, Róbert Kresťanko

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 3rd in the 60 m run at the 2021 European Indoor Championships, 1st in the 60 m run at the 2019 European Indoor Championships, 2nd in the 60 m run at the 2017 European Indoor Championships, 1st in the 200 m run and 2nd in the 100 m run at the 2017 European U23 Championships, 6th in the 60 m run at the 2018 World Indoor Championships (best European), a participant in the semi-finals (15th) of the 200 m run at the 2017 World Championships, 3rd in the 200 m run at the Universiade in 2017. He was a silver medallist in the 100 m run at the European Games in Minsk in 2019, and a member of the team that won silver at the European Games in Baku in 2015.

HOBBIES: IT, cars

The fastest Slovak in history. His sports hero is Wayde van Niekerk. This student of information technology at the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava likes the song Fix You by Coldplay, and if he has time he enjoys playing the video game, NHL 20. His favourite film is Avengers Endgame.

As a child he played football at the Domino Club in Bratislava, later he became a member of the Naďa Bendová athletics group. Volko is the first Slovak sprinter to make it to the sprint final at a significant international event.

MÁRIA KATERINKA CZAKOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 2nd October 1988, Nitra

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 166 cm, 57 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠK Dukla o. z. Banská Bystrica/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACHES: Matej Spišiak, Martin Pupiš

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: London 2012 – 49th in the 20 km race walk (01:37:43 h), Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 48th in the 20 km race walk (01:38:29 h)

ACHIEVEMENTS: Bronze in the team event at the 2009 European Cup, 5th in the 50 km race at the 2018 European Championships, 10th in the 10,000 m race at the 2008 European Junior Championships, 8th in the 20 km race at the 2015 Universiade, 9th in the 20 km race at the 2013 Universiade, 12th in the 20 km race at the 2011 Universiade, 14th in the 20 km race at the 2009 European U23 Championships

HOBBIES: Music, cinema, theatre, books and hiking

The walking hero of Mária Katerinka Czaková is the Olympic champion Matej Tóth, and her sports hero is the American sprinter Allyson Felix. Apart from Slovak, she speaks English, German and Hungarian. She likes the song Bad Liar by Imagine Dragons. She enjoys the parlour game "Svet – otázky a odpovede" (The World – Questions and Answers).

MARTINA HRAŠNOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 21st March 1983, Bratislava

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 177 cm, 83 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠK Dukla o. z. Banská Bystrica/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Rudolf Lukáč

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Beijing 2008 – 6th in the hammer throw (71.00 m, 72.87 in the qualification round), London 2012 - 15th in the hammer throw (68.41), Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 19th in the hammer throw (67.63 m)

ACHIEVEMENTS: Bronze medallist in the hammer throw at the 2009 World Championships, silver medallist in the hammer throw at the European Championships in 2012 and 2014, 2nd at the 2001 World and European Junior Championships, 2nd at the 2009 Universiade.

HOBBIES: Reading, baking

The most successful Slovak hammer thrower declared Anastasiya Kuzmina as her sports hero. She loves baking. She spends time playing any game with her daughter Rebeka. Her favourite song is Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen. Her favourite film is Million Dollar Baby.

EMMA ZAPLETALOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 24th March 2000, Nitra

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 177 cm, 63 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠK ŠOG Nitra/NŠC Bratislava

COACH: Peter Žňava

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 5th in the 400 m hurdles at the 2018 World Junior Championships, 8th in the 4x400 m relay at the 2018 European Championships, holder of the Slovak 400 m hurdles national record in the junior, under 23 and women's categories

HOBBIES: Hiking, reading

When the twelve-year-old handball player from the UDHK Nitra Club, Emma Zapletalová, was only narrowly defeated in a 600 m race by a specialised athlete in the early round of the competition "Hľadáme nových olympionikov" ("In Search of New Olympians") she caught the attention of the coach Peter Žňava. He offered the talented girl the opportunity to take up athletics. He was not successful, yet he did not give up and his third attempt was a success. Emma combined handball and athletics. The queen of sports did not take priority until 2014.

Zapletalová speaks English and Russian. She likes the song Hall of the Fame by The Script, and she enjoyed the film adaptation of the story of Gabby Douglas.

BADMINTON (1):

MARTINA REPISKÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 21st October 1995, Zvolen

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 171 cm, 65 kg

CLUBS: BK Odense (Denmark)/TJ Slávia TU Zvolen

COACH: Lennart Engler

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: Five-time Slovak champion in the women's singles, 9th at the 2019 European Games at Minsk, 3rd at the 2018 and 2019 Brazil International Badminton Cups, 3rd at the 2018 Norwegian International, 1st at the 2017 Morocco International and 2nd at the 2017 Jamaica International

EDUCATION: University of Southern Denmark (MSc. in International Business and Management)

HOBBIES: Travelling, family, friends, books, films and sporting/active lifestyle

Martina Repiská seeks to realise her full sporting potential and to become the best player she can. Her sporting heroes are Carolina Marin, Tai Tzu Ying and Katrin Davidsdottir. The badminton player, who speaks English and Spanish, likes listening to the Irish pop-rock band The Script, particularly to the song Superheroes. Her favourite film is Harry Potter. If she has time, she enjoys speedminton on the beach.

BOXING (1):

ANDREJ CSEMEZ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 6th May 1998, Šaľa

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 186 cm, 75 kg

CLUB/COE: K.O. Box Club Galanta/NŠC Bratislava

PERSONAL COACH: Tomi "Kid" Kovács

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 3rd in the Olympic qualification event in Paris and qualification for the Olympic Games in Tokyo, 1st at the 2018 European Union Championships, 3rd at the 2019 European Games in Minsk, 3rd at the 2016 European Junior Championships, 5th at the 2017 European Championships, 9th at the 2017 World Championships

HOBBIES: Fishing

The sporting hero of Andrej Csemez, nicknamed Bandi by his friends, is the legendary boxer Muhammad Ali. The dream of this boxer from Dolné Saliby is to succeed at the Olympic Games.

CYCLING ROAD (2):

LUKÁŠ KUBIŠ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 31st January 2000, Zvolen

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 175 cm, 70 kg

CLUB: Dukla Banská Bystrica

PERSONAL COACH: Martin Fraňo

NATIONAL TEAM COACH: Ján Valach

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2nd GC Grand Prix Chantal Biya 2020, 2nd National Championships Slovakia - ITT 2021, 2x 3rd National Championships Slovakia - Road Race 2021, 2020, 5th GC Cycling Tour of Szeklerland 2020, 5th GC Tour du Sénégal 2019

HOBBIES: Ice Hockey, football, classic ski.

JURAJ SAGAN

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 23rd December 1988, Žilina

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 173 cm, 66 kg

CLUB: Bora-hansgrohe (Germany)

PERSONAL COACH: Sylwester Szmyd

NATIONAL TEAM COACH: Ján Valach

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: Four-time Slovak Road Race Champion (2016, 2017, 2019 and 2020)

HOBBIES: Enduro

He is among the hardest workers in the peloton, who do not win races, yet make significant contributions to the achievements of the team leaders. Despite this he dreams of winning a professional race. With his brother Peter they are like twins in their team.

The sports hero of Juraj Sagan is the ice hockey player Zdeno Chára. He speaks English and Italian. His favourite song is Beautiful Day by U2, his favourite film is Pulp Fiction. He likes to play Activity.

GOLF (1):

RORY SABBATINI

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 2nd April 1976, Durban (RSA)

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 177 cm, 77 kg

CLUB: Junior Golf Foundation

PERSONAL COACH: Rick Smith

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: Six PGA Tour titles, a member of the winning team at the 2007 Presidents Cup

HOBBIES: Films

This native of Durban became the first Slovak golfer to qualify for the Olympic Games. Olympic qualification was not Sabbatini's primary motivation when he decided to become a Slovak national. The six-time winner on the PGA Tour decided to apply for Slovak citizenship after he married his girlfriend Martina in 2018. At the same time, as a Slovak national, he sought to contribute to the development of Slovak golf.

He reported that the former Spanish professional golfer Seve Ballesteros is his sporting hero. His favourite song is the Redemption Song by Bob Marley. If he was to choose a film, he would pick Why Him?!, Green Mile, or Invincible.

CANOE (5):

SPRINT

SAMUEL BALÁŽ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 25th August 1998, Bratislava

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 193 cm, 85 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠKP/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Andrej Wiebauer

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: Silver medallist in the K-4 500 m race and the K-2 1,000 m race at the 2021 European Championships in Poznan, bronze medallist in the K-4 500 m race at the 2019 World Championships in Szeged, bronze medallist in the K-4 500 m race at the 2019 European Games in Minsk, silver medallist in the K-4 1,000 m race at the 2018 World Championships in Montemor-o-Velho, 2018 World U23 Champion in the K-4 500 m race in Plovdiv, 2018 European U23 Champion in the K-4 500 m race and the K-2 1,000 m race in Auronzo

HOBBIES: Spending time outdoors, music, films and sport

Samuel Baláž started canoeing in Karloveská zátoka, at the local Tatran canoeing club. When he was a child he was tempted to try canoe slalom racing but he was a little anxious about the white water so he chose calmer waters. At first he did not find kayak very interesting. However, while he was still a junior he experienced first international successes, and became very keen on his sport.

He likes the FIFA computer game. His favourite film is 8 Mile.

ADAM BOTEK

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 5th March 1997, Komárno

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 193 cm, 93 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠKP/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Peter Likér

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2nd in the K-2 1,000 m race at the 2017 World Championships in Račice, 2nd in the K-4 1000 m race at the 2019 World Championships in Szeged, third in the K-4 500 m race at the 2019 European Games in Minsk, 2nd in the K-2 1,000 m race at the 2021 European Championships in Poznan, 2nd in the K-4 500 m race at the 2021 European Championships in Poznan, 2018 World U23 Champion in the K-4 500 m race in Plovdiv

HOBBIES: Music

The first strokes of Adam Botek, whose great hero is Erik Vlček, were managed by his coach from Komárno, Kristína Medovčíková. When Adam was 18 years old Peter Likér became his new coach. His new coach immediately suggested to the young Adam, who was a lover of nightlife, that he had to accept his rules. And he did. Today he is among the world's top kayakers.

PETER GELLE

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 29th August 1984, Nové Zámky

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 183 cm, 82 kg

CLUB/COE: VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Radovan Šimočko

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: London 2012 – 6th in the K-4 1,000 m race, 8th in the K-2 1,000 m race (with Vlček), Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 8th in the K-1 1,000m race

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2011 World Champion in the K-2 1,000 m race in Szeged, silver medal in the K-1 500 m race at the 2010 World Championships in Poznan, silver medal in the K-2 1,000 m race at the 2017 World Championships in Račice, silver medal in the K-2 500 m race at the 2011 European Championships in Belgrade, bronze medal in the K-2 1,000 m race at the 2012 European Championships in Zagreb, 4th in the K-1 1,000 m race at the 2019 World Championships in Szeged

HOBBIES: Family, films

Of the various parlour games and logic games he enjoys Sudoku. If he was to choose his favourite film he would take Gladiator.

DENIS MYŠÁK

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 30th November 1995, Bojnice

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 189 cm, 93 kg

COE: ŠKP/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Andrej Wiebauer

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Rio de Janeiro 2016: 2nd in the K-4 1,000 m race

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2015 World Champion in the K-4 1,000 m race in Milan, 2016 European Champion in the K-4 1,000 m race in Moscow, silver medal in the K-4 1,000 m race at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, bronze medal in the K-4 1,000 m race at the 2019 World Championships in Szeged, silver medal in the K-4 500 m race at the 2021 European Championships in Poznan

HOBBIES: Dog, films and friends

Sports hero: Erik Vlček

Favourite song: JLo by Kontrafakt

Favourite game: Fortnite

Favourite series: Two and a Half Men

Denis Myšák was born in Bojnice, and it was his grandmother who took him to the dock. He became acquainted with kayaking when he was eight years old, coached by Ľubomír Hagara. He has always been calm and sober, which is why he became the "hook" and brain of the K-4 crew. A strong stroke is essential for all kayakers, yet the pace is dictated by the first man in the boat. He races cold-bloodedly, without stress. His strengths include a perfect stroke. As a person he is quite introverted, and needs time to open up to other people. His crew describe him as incredibly phlegmatic. That is why he was entrusted with a great deal of responsibility in the boat, and he is outstanding in the way he handles it.

ERIK VLČEK

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 29th December 29 1981, Komárno

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 190 cm, 90kg

COE: ŠKP/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Peter Likér

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Sydney 2000: 4th in the K-4 1,000 m race, Athens 2004: 3rd in the K-4 1,000 m race, Beijing 2008: 2nd in the K-4 1,000 m race, London 2012: 8th in the K-2 1,000 m race (with Gelle) and 6th in the K-4 1,000 m race, Rio de Janeiro 2016: 8th in the K-2 1,000 m race (with Tarr) and 2nd in the K-4 1,000 m race

ACHIEVEMENTS: Two silver medals and one bronze medal in K-4 1,000 m races at the Olympic Games, a ten-time World Champion (7x in the K-4 and 3x in the K-2), and an eleven-time European Champion in the K-4, he has won 42 medals at top events.

HOBBIES: Television, sport and cars

This native of Komárno, ERIK VLČEK will set a Slovak record for the number times an athlete has participated in the Olympic Games when he goes to Tokyo. This triple Olympic medallist will be the first Slovak in history to participate in six Olympic Games.

The iron man of canoe sprint racing and a steely kayaker likes the film Pulp Fiction and if he were to play a video game he would choose Call of Duty.

CANOE SLALOM (4):

MATEJ BEŇUŠ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 2nd November 1987, Bratislava

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 196 cm, 90 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠKP/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Peter Škantár

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Rio de Janeiro 2016: 2nd in C1

ACHIEVEMENTS: 10 World Championship medals (9 - 0 - 1), one of which was in C1 (0 - 0 - 1), 12 European Championship medals (8 - 2 - 2), four of which were in C1 (0 - 2 - 2), he has ranked in the top three in the overall World Cup standings seven times (3 - 2 - 2), a silver medal in the C1 at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro

HOBBIES: Sport, ice hockey and family

In 1996, when he was eight years old, Matej watched the victory of Michal Martikán at the Olympic Games in Atlanta, and he dreamt of doing the same. He built on the achievements of the five-time Olympic medallist 20 years later in Rio de Janeiro.

Beňuš comes from a sports-loving family; his father Ladislav was a modern pentathlete, a Czechoslovak Junior Champion, his mother Jana represented the former federation in the canoe slalom, and later she was a coach at Tatran Karlova Ves. Matej and his older sisters Monika and Dana spent their childhoods in canoes. Later Monika competed in canoe sprint racing and rafting, in which she became a European Champion and a World Vice-Champion. Dana succeeded in canoe slalom; with Jana Dukátová and Elena Kaliská she became a World Champion in the team disciplines; since 2013, when she married the American canoe racer Scott Mann she has represented the USA.

He has three sons with his wife Ivana.

JAKUB GRIGAR

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 27th April 1997, Liptovský Mikuláš

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 182 cm, 80 kg

CLUB/COE KTK Dukla Liptovský Mikuláš/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Stanislav Gejdoš

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Rio de Janeiro 2016: 5th in the K-1 race

ACHIEVEMENTS: A silver medal in the 3xK-1 at the 2015 World Championships in Lee Valley, London, victory in the June 2021 World Cup K-1 race in Markleeberg, and also a second place, 5th in the K-1 race at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, 10th at the 2019 World Championships, World and European Junior and U23 Champion in the K-1 event, a silver medal at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games

HOBBIES: Cooking, guitar

His sporting heroes are Michal Martikán, Elena Kaliská, Jiří Prskavec, Peter Kauzer and Vavřinec Hradílek. He would like to be an Olympic and World Champion, and be number one in the world rankings. He likes playing Clash Royale, his favourite film is The Untouchables, and his favourite band is Bring Me The Horizon and their song Throne.

ELIŠKA MINTÁLOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 23rd March 1999, Žilina

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 171 cm, 61 kg

CLUB: KTK Dukla Liptovský Mikuláš/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Peter Cibák ml.

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 3rd in the K-1 race at the 2020 World U23 Championships, 2nd in the K-1 race and 3rd in the 3xK-1 race at the 2017 World Junior Championships

Her sporting story started when she was eleven years old and she attended her first training session at the Žilina club. Her biggest hero is her Australian opponent Jessica Fox. She likes listening to music, her favourite song is Saturday Night by The New Division. Her favourite film is Avatar.

MONIKA ŠKÁCHOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 22nd November 1999, **Liptovský Mikuláš**

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 174 cm, 68 kg

CLUB: KTK Dukla Liptovský Mikuláš/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Tomáš Mráz

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: European U23 Champion in the women's C-1, 3rd at the World U23 Championships, 6th at the Senior European Championships, 2021 European Champion in the women's 3xC-1 race

HOBBIES: Cycling, hiking and travelling

She wants to be as successful as her sporting hero Petra Vlhová, also a native of Liptovský Mikuláš. She likes listening to the song Know Your Enemy by Green Day, and she likes the film Game Night.

ARCHERY (1):

DENISA BARÁNKOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 7th September 2001, Bratislava

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 162 cm, 72 kg

CLUB: LK Bratislava/NŠC Bratislava

COACH: Vladimír Hurban ml.

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 3rd at the 2021 European Championships, 5th in the 2021 Olympic qualification, 33rd at the 2019 European Games

HOBBIES: Archery, music

Her hero is Gabriela Bayardová, she loves listening to music. Her favourite song is Fado by Milky Chance. Her favourite game is Sims 3 and her favourite film is Inside Out.

SWIMMING (2):

RICHARD NAGY

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 9th March 1993, Želiezovce

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 188 cm, 85 kg

COE: ŠK Dukla o. z. Banská Bystrica/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACHES: Russell Barber

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 9th in the 400 m individual medley (4:13.87 min), 34th in the 1,500 m freestyle (15:26.48 min), 20th in the 10 km marathon swim (1:53:35.4 h)

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2nd in the 400 m individual medley at the 2016 European Championships, 4th at the 2015 European Championships, 8th at the 2017 World Championships

HOBBIES: Sport, books and TV series

His sporting hero is the Australian torpedo, Ian Thorpe, along with the triathlete and friend Richard Varga. His favourite song is Shipping Out to Boston by Dropkick Murphys. He likes NHL video games. If he was to choose a film he would take Pulp Fiction or the Lord of the Rings.

ANDREA PODMANÍKOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 23rd February 1998, Topoľčany

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 188 cm, 85 kg

CLUBS: NC State University Raleigh (USA), SC Pirana Topoľčany

COACHES: Pauline Zilleková, Vladimír Železník

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 3rd at the 2019 World Cup in Budapest, 9th, 10th and 11th at the 2019 European Championships in the short course pool

EDUCATION: SMU Dallas

HOBBIES: Hiking, cycling and travelling

She respects everyone who has maintained high sporting level over a long period of time. Apart from her participation at the Olympic Games she seeks to make it to the finals of the European or World Championships. Her favourite song is Vamos a la playa. She likes different card games, such as poker.

TABLE TENNIS (3):

ĽUBOMÍR PIŠTEJ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 6th March 1984, Prešov

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 182 cm, 82 kg

CLUB/COE: SPG Linz (Austria)/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Jaromír Truksa

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2nd in the mixed doubles at the 2013 and 2021 European Championships, 4th in the mixed doubles at the 2019 European Games, a participant in the mixed doubles quarter-final at the 2019 World Championships, gold medal in the mixed doubles at the European Junior Championships, a two-time winner in the Champions League

EDUCATION: The Faculty of Physical Education and Sports – coaching, table tennis

HOBBIES: Tennis, football and wellness

He speaks English, French, German and Serbian. His sporting hero is the tennis player Rafael Nadal. He likes the video game FIFA. His favourite song is In Case You Do Not Live Forever (Sam Novota cover), his favourite film is Maverick.

JANG WANG

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 24th September 1994, Anhui (China)

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 183 cm, 75 kg

CLUB: TTC Caen (France)

COACH: Jaromír Truksa

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 17th in mixed doubles (he advanced to the 2nd round)

ACHIEVEMENTS: 5th at the 2019 European Games, 9th in the mixed doubles at the 2019 World Championships

HOBBIES: Singing

This native of China is keen on different strategy games. He admires the basketball player Kobe Bryant, and he listens to Queen.

BARBORA BALÁŽOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 18th March 1992, Topoľčany

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 170 cm, 73 kg

CLUB: Saint Denis US 93 TT (France)/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Aya Umemura

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 17th in the mixed doubles (she advanced to the 2nd round)

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2nd in the mixed doubles at the 2013 European Championships, 4th in the mixed doubles at the 2019 European Games, a participant in the mixed doubles quarter-finals at the 2019 World Championships, an eleven-time medallist at the Youth European Championships, a participant in the singles quarter-finals at the 2020 TOP 16, a participant in the women's doubles at the 2019 Grand Final

HOBBIES: Reading, travelling, snorkelling and photography

MOTTO: Everything happens for a reason.

The favourite song of this player fluent in English and German is Sunset Lover by the French DJ, Petit Biscuit. Her favourite film is The Untouchables, and her favourite game is Monopoly.

ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS (1):

BARBORA MOKOŠOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 10th March 1997, Bratislava

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 168 cm, 63 kg

CLUB/COE: Slávia UK Bratislava/NŠC Bratislava

COACH: Martin Zvalo

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 45th in the qualification for the individual all-round (52.799 pts)

ACHIEVEMENTS: 3rd in the uneven bars at the 2020 European Championships in Mersin, winner of the uneven bars at the 2018 World Cup in Koper

EDUCATION: The Faculty of Physical Education and Sports of Comenius University in Bratislava

HOBBIES: Yoga, swimming

The first Slovak, in the era of the independent Slovakia, to win a European Championship medal. She won a bronze medal in the uneven bars at the 2020 Championships held in Mersin.

She admires the former American gymnast of Russian origin, Nastia Liukin. She enjoys songs by Adele and she likes watching the film Happy New Year. If she has time, she enjoys Sudoku. She speaks good German and English.

SHOOTING (7):

PATRIK JÁNY

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 29th July 1997, Banská Štiavnica

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 175 cm, 82 kg

COE: VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Zoltán Baláž

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: Winner of the 10 m air rifle at the 2019 Universiade in Naples, 3rd in the 10 m air rifle at the 2019 World Cup in Rio de Janeiro and Putian, 3rd in the 50 m rifle 3 positions at the 2021 World Cup in Osijek, 7th in the 10 m air rifle at the 2019 European Games in Minsk

EDUCATION: Matej Bel University: International Relations and Diplomacy

HOBBIES: Snowboarding, hiking and cycling

Patrik Jány's sporting hero is Niccolò Campriani of Italy. He likes listening to Travis Scott's Highest in the Room. His favourite game is Clash of Clans. His favourite film is The Shawshank Redemption.

MARIÁN KOVAČÓCY

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 17th September 1984, Trnava

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 181 cm, 93 kg

CLUB: ŠKP Trnava/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Branislav Slamka

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 18th in the trap (114 pts in qualification)

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2009 World Champion, 2001 World Junior Champion, 2008 World University Champion and 2004 European Junior Champion in the trap, 2021 European Champion in the men's team trap

HOBBIES: Hunting

After Jozef Gönci he was the second Slovak to become a World Champion in an Olympic shooting discipline. Sensationally he won at the 2009 World Championships in Pragersko. This perennial star of Slovak shooting started to achieve success while he was a junior. For a long time he did not qualify for the Olympic Games. He first participated in the Olympics in 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, when he was nominated because Zuzana Reháková Štefečeková did not travel, she was on maternity leave.

JURAJ TUŽINSKÝ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 24th August 1984, Lučenec

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 184 cm, 85 kg

COE: VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

COACH: Miroslav Marko

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: London 2012 – 15th in the air pistol, 10 metres (580 pts), 23rd in the free pistol, 50 metres (554 pts), Rio de Janeiro 2016 - 4th in the air pistol, 10 metres (582 pts in qualification), 33rd in the free pistol, 50 metres (541 pts in qualification)

ACHIEVEMENTS: In the air pistol events he came 1st at the 2021 European Championships and 3rd at the 2010 European Championships, 3rd in the 2015 World Cup competition in Gabala and in 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, 3rd at the 2015 European Games and 7th at the 2014 World Championships

HOBBIES: Motorsport

As a lover of steering wheels and fast wheels, his favourite athlete is Sebastian Vettel. If he were to choose a game his choice would be the motorsport game Forza.

ERIK VARGA

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 9th June 1976, Šaľa

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 186 cm, 84 kg

CLUB/COE: ŠKP Trnava/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Branislav Slamka

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Beijing 2008 – 9th in the trap (117 pts in qualification), London 2012 – 12th in the trap (121 pts in qualification), Rio de Janeiro 2016 – 21st in the trap (114 pts in qualification)

ACHIEVEMENTS: In the trap, he was 1st at the 2014 and 2015 World Championships, 1st at the 2011 European Championships, he was the 2013 overall World Cup winner, he came 1st at the 2007 and 2013 World Cup competitions. He was the 1992 World Junior Champion, and a double European Champion in 1995 and 2011. At the 2015 European Games in Baku he won a gold medal in the mixed team with Reháková, and a silver medal in the singles. Along with Reháková he won the 2018 World Championships mixed team and the 2018 World Cup competitions in Siggiewi and Changwon.

HOBBIES: Swimming, hunting, hiking and IT

The sixth shooter in the history of the trap to defend his World Championship title. He managed to repeat the achievement at the 2014 championships a year later. Michael Diamond was his sporting hero however since he finished his career he no longer has a sporting hero. His favourite game is billiards, his favourite song is Take on Me by A-ha, and his favourite film is Django.

DANKA BARTEKOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 19th October 1984, Trenčín

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 170 cm, 60 kg

COE: ŠKP Trnava/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Sandro Bellini

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Beijing 2008 – 8th in the skeet (67 pts in qualification), London 2012 – 3rd in the skeet (90 pts in qualification and the final), Rio 2016 – 16th in the skeet (64 pts in qualification)

ACHIEVEMENTS: She came 3rd in the skeet at the 2012 Olympic Games in London and 8th at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. She came 3rd at the 2005 World Championships in Lonato, the 2006 World Championships in Zagreb, the 2010 World Championships in Munich and the 2014 World Championships in Granada. She was the 2008 European Champion in Nicosia, the 2010 European Champion in Kazan, the 2018 European Champion in Leobersdorf and the 2019 European Champion in Lonato. She won the 2012 World Cup competition in Maribor (finals), the 2006, 2009 and 2021 World Cup competitions in Cairo and the 2012 World Cup competition in Lonato. She is a six-time European Champion and a double silver medallist at the World Championships in the team skeet. She was a double European Junior Champion and silver medallist at the World Junior Championships. She has won 10 gold, 6 silver and 12 bronze medals at top senior events. She was the flag-bearer for the Slovak delegation at the opening ceremony of the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

EDUCATION: The Faculty of Political Science and International Relations at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica

HOBBIES: Representation of athletes in the IOC Athletes' Commission

Interesting facts: She studied international relations focusing on sports diplomacy at the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. In 2020 she was awarded a PhD. for her dissertation thesis "Sports Diplomacy in the Context of Public Diplomacy and Its Influence on Conflict Solution in the 21st Century". She is a consultant for the Crystal Wing Awards. She has presented several cultural and social events.

What else did she reveal about herself: Her sporting heroes are the shooter David Kostelecký and the biathlete Martin Fourcade. She speaks English, Italian and German. Her favourite songs are Beautiful Day by U2, In the Sand by Anouk, and What About Us by Pink. Her favourite comedy is Gossip.

Additional sports activities: During the 2012 Olympic Games she was elected to the IOC Athletes' Commission, in July 2013 she was appointed as a member of the IOC (since then she has also been an ex officio member of the Executive Committee of the Slovak Olympic and Sports Committee). She has been a Vice Chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission since 2018. She managed the IOC Coordination Commission for the 2020 Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne, and she was a member of the Coordination Commission for the 2018 Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires. She is a member of the IOC Ethics Commission and the Commission for Public Affairs and Social Development through Sport, she is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Olympic Channel Services S. L. in Spain, the Executive Committee of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the WADA Foundation Board.

ZUZANA REHÁK ŠTEFEČEKOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 15th January 1984, Nitra

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 165 cm, 74 kg

COE: ŠKP Trnava/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Branislav Slamka

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES: Beijing 2008 – 2nd in the trap (89 pts in qualification and the final), London 2012 – 2nd in the trap (93 pts in qualification and the final)

ACHIEVEMENTS: Silver medal at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and the 2012 Olympic Games in London, the 2010 World Champion in the trap in Munich and in 2018 in Changwon (in addition, she has won one silver and two bronze medals at World Championships), she is a double European Champion (2015 and 2016), she also held the qualification world record under the old rules. At the 2015 European Games in Baku and the 2018 World Championships in Changwon she won a gold medal with Erik Varga in the mixed team trap.

HOBBIES: Family and children

MOTTO: Be satisfied with yourself.

This native of Nitra, Zuzana Štefečeková, was the very first Slovak female shooter to win an Olympic medal – she finished second in the trap in 2008 in Beijing. She repeated this achievement four years later in London. She did not participate at the 2016 Olympic Games as she was on maternity leave.

This athlete, who likes the song If You Don't Know Me By Now by Simply Red, is mainly family oriented. She is married and with her husband Martin they have two sons, Nathan and Noah. She is committed to her family. As she has two young children her favourite game is Lego. She likes the film Forrest Gump. Her sporting hero is the biathlete Anastasiya Kuzmina. She speaks English, German and Spanish.

JANA ŠPOTÁKOVÁ

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 10th September 1985, Bratislava

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 175 cm, 85 kg

COE: ŠKP Banská Bystrica/ŠCP Bratislava

COACH: Branislav Slamka

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 3rd in the 2021 World Cup competition in Osijek, 2001 European Junior Champion in Lonato

HOBBIES: Swimming, shooting, horse riding and dancing

This trap shooter, whose hero is Deborah Gelisi, dreams of competing in the Olympic finals. She likes music and the film Gladiator.

TENNIS (3):

NORBERT GOMBOS

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 13th August 1990, Galanta

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 194 cm, 86 kg

CLUB: TK Slávia STU Bratislava

COACHES: Tibor Tóth, Dávid Olasz

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: He reached the quarter-finals of the Washington and Marseille ATP tournaments, the winner of seven Challenger Tour events.

HOBBIES: Playstation, table tennis, football and football tennis

He is impressed by the style of the Argentinian tennis player Juan Martin del Potro. He enjoys any playstation game as well as different parlour games. His favourite film is The Untouchables.

FILIP POLÁŠEK

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 21st July 1985, Zvolen

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 193 cm, 85 kg

CLUB: TK LOVE 4 Tennis Bratislava

COACHES: Erik Csarnakovics, Leoš Friedl, Pavel Šmela

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: Doubles winner at the 2021 Australian Open, a participant in the 2019 Wimbledon and the 2020 Australian Open semi-finals, winner of the Cincinnati Masters Tour event. On the ATP Tour he has won 15 doubles tournaments, and has won 33 lower-category events. He has been a Top 10 doubles player.

A doubles expert, he won the 2021 Australian Open doubles with Ivan Dodig of Croatia. This tennis player, who likes the song Kometa by Jaromír Nohavica, first retired from tennis in November 2013 due to health problems. He hardly even held a racket in his hand for the following four and a half years; he concentrated on the education of talented players.

During his time working with Mike Bryan he felt he wanted to play competitive tennis again; in June 2018 he played his first Challenger Tour event in Poprad and played doubles again on the ATP Tour a year later.

He gradually reached 7th in the ATP doubles rankings. His best doubles ranking in the past was 555th position. In February 2021 he won his first Grand Slam title.

He is the father of two daughters, Karolína and Olívia-Viktória, who was born during his victorious tournament at the 2021 Australian Open in Melbourne.

LUKÁŠ KLEIN

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 22nd March 1998, Spišská Nová Ves

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 194 cm, 90 kg

CLUB: MŠK Poprad – Tatry

COACHES: Peter Vlk, Dávid Olasz

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: The winner of 6 Futures doubles tournaments

HOBBIES: Films, TV series and music

His sporting hero is Roger Federer. His greatest dream and goal is to win an ATP tournament. His favourite song is Lose Yourself by Eminem and his favourite PC game is Minesweeper.

FREESTYLE WRESTLING (1):

BORIS MAKOJEV

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 22nd January 1993, Chikola (Russia)

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT: 175 cm, 86 kg

CLUB/COE: ZK 1904 Košice/VŠC Dukla Banská Bystrica

NATIONAL TEAM COACH: Erik Cap

FIRST PARTICIPATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

ACHIEVEMENTS: 2nd at the 2017 World Championships, 3rd at the 2020 European Championships, 2nd in the 2021 Olympic qualification event

If his wrestling instincts on the mat were as slow as his speech he would not win many matches. But his phlegmatic speech is balanced by his explosiveness and agility on the mat.

In Russia he probably would not have had the chance to compete at the top events. As a Slovak competitor his chances are better. He achieved his first success at the 2017 World Championships, when he shocked everybody by winning a silver medal, although he still was not a Slovak citizen. According to the international wrestling rules an athlete may represent a new country, e.g. at the World Championships, once they have registered a permanent address in their new country.

He became a Slovak national in December 2018.

