

# The Biographies of All IOC Members

Part XXXIX

By VOLKER KLUGE



## 514. | María de la Soledad Casado Estupiñán | Spain

Born: 11 October 1956  
in Madrid  
Elected: 12 February  
2010  
Attendance:  
Present: 19, Absent: 0



Marisol – a shortened form of María de la Soledad, a title given to the Virgin Mary – studied at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (1974–1979), where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish Language. In 1991, she earned a Master of Business Administration at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

During her studies, she played field hockey and participated in running competitions. She was among the first Spanish women to compete in the inaugural Madrid Marathon in 1978. In 1983, she participated in the first Spanish triathlon in Guadalajara, which she won.

Marisol Casado co-founded the Spanish Triathlon Federation in 1989, serving as its secretary-general (1989–1994, 1997–2008) and later its vice-president. From 2002 to 2009, she headed the European Triathlon Union.

In November 2008, she became the first woman and the second person (after Canadian Les McDonald (1933–2017)) to be elected president of the International Triathlon Union (ITU, now World Triathlon). She previously served as ITU Treasurer (1992–1994, 2000–2008).

Marisol Casado was a member of the Spanish National Olympic Committee from 1992 to 1994. After her re-election in 2000, she became a member of the Executive Board in 2010. She was also a council member of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF, 2011–2015) and has been a member SportAccord (previously GAISF) without interruption since 2011. She has held the position of SportAccord's treasurer since 2016.

At the IOC, she has been appointed to various commissions, including Women in Sport (2015–) and the Coordination Commissions for the Olympic Games in Paris 2024 (2017–) and Los Angeles 2028 (2019–). Since 2021, she has been a member of the Future Host Commission for the Olympic Games.

## 515. | Dagmawit Girmay Berhane | Ethiopia

After attending Nazareth School in Addis Ababa, Dagmawit Girmay studied at the Commercial College of Addis Ababa University from 1993, earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Education in 2000. This was followed by an Executive Masters in Sport Management in Lyon, France (2004) and in Educational Planning and Management in Addis Ababa (2005). In 2007, the mother of three became the director of DKT International–Ethiopia, one of the world’s largest non-profit organisations in the field of family planning, HIV prevention, and maternal and child health products and services.

Since 1998, the former track and field athlete, basketball player, and taekwondo fighter has been involved in sports administration. She was vice-president of the Ethiopian Martial Arts Federation (1998–2000) and general secretary of the Sport for All Committee (1999–2000). She was president of the Ethiopian Badminton Federation (2000–2016) and Badminton Confederation of Africa (2011–2013), and vice-president of the Badminton World Federation (BWF, 2013–2018).

She was elected first vice-president of the Ethiopian Olympic Committee in 2000. From 2004 to 2008, she served as president and, from 2009 to 2013, as general secretary. Following that, she joined the NOC as a board member.

In ANOCA, she served on the Executive Board (2009–2013) and the Women and Sport Commission (2006–2017). In the ANOC, she was also a council member (2009–2016). Since 2019, she has been an executive council member and chair of the Finance and Audit Commission.

Twice she was elected to the IOC: in 2010 as an NOC representative and in 2013 as an individual member. She was appointed to the Coordination Commissions for the Olympic Games of Paris 2024 and Brisbane 2032.



**Born:** 27 July 1975  
**Elected:** 12 February 2010  
**Second term:**  
**Elected:** 9 September 2013  
**Attendance:**  
**Present:** 18, **Absent:** 0

## 516. | Yang Yang | People’s Republic of China

Yang Yang was one of the most successful short track skaters in the world. She was the first Chinese winter sports Olympic champion, winning two gold medals, two silver medals and a bronze medal at the three Winter Olympic Games between 1998 and 2006. From 1994 to 2005 she also won 23 World Championship titles, including 18 in individual disciplines. She won seven times at the Asian Games and took two first-place spots at the Universiade.

To differentiate herself in the press from a fellow Chinese athlete of the same name, she referred to herself Yang Yang L (Large), while her teammate, one centimetre shorter, was named Yang Yang S (Small). She later changed this moniker, placing the letter "A" at the end of her name as a reference to her birth month, August.

Yang started skating at the age of 11 at Qitaihe Sports School in her home province of Heilongjiang. She won her first national championship at the age of 15 and was called up to the national team in 1993.

Yang’s interest and involvement in sports politics began while she was still an active athlete. She was a member of the Athletes’ Commission of the International Skating Union (ISU) from 1999 to 2002 and of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) from 2003 onwards. In 2006, after retiring from sports, she was elected to the Executive Committee of the Chinese NOC and became a member of the IOC Women in Sports Commission.



**Born:** 24 August 1976  
in Jiamusi City,  
Tangyuan  
**Elected:** 12 February 2010  
**Resigned:** 25 February 2018  
**Attendance:**  
**Present:** 11, **Absent:** 0

After studying business administration at Tsinghua University in Beijing, where she graduated with a Bachelor's degree in 2007, Yang began her professional career as Director of AGTech Holdings Ltd. In 2008, she served as the first Olympic torchbearer to carry the Olympic flame in mainland China; that same year, she founded the Champion Foundation to promote sports in Chinese schools.

After twice running for the IOC Athletes' Commission in 2002 and 2006, she was elected as a member of the IOC in her capacity as an active athlete in 2010. She was also a member of the Athletes' Commission from that time onwards. In 2017, she became a member of the so-called Schmid Commission (IOC Disciplinary Commission) in her capacity as Athletes' Representative on the IOC Ethics Commission; however, she did not stand for re-election as an IOC Member, which would have been due in 2017.

In 2015, Yang played an important role in Beijing's successful bid for the 2022 Winter Olympics, serving on the Organising Committee as chair of the Athletes' Commission. In 2019, she was elected vice-president of WADA for a term of three years.

## 517. | Angela Marie Ruggiero | USA

Born: 3 January 1980  
in Panorama City,  
California  
Elected: 12 February  
2010  
Resigned: 25 February  
2018  
Attendance:  
Present: 10, Absent: 0  
EC member no. 96  
Elected:  
4 August 2016 –  
25 February 2018



Angela Ruggiero's glittering career as an ice hockey player made her an American sporting legend. To date, she is the all-time leader in international appearances by any female or male, with 256 games for Team USA. She competed at the Winter Olympics on four occasions, earning gold (1998), silver (2002 and 2010) and bronze (2006) medals. Along with her team, she also won four gold and six silver medals at ten World Championships. In recognition of her achievements, she was inducted into the US Hockey Hall of Fame in 2015 and into the IIHF Hall of Fame two years later.

As a child, seven-year-old Angela Ruggiero was one of the few girls in her native Southern California who chose to devote her free time to ice hockey training. She was called up to the US junior team at the age of 15 and made her debut in the national women's team just one year later.

Later, while studying political science at Harvard University, Ruggiero played 127 games for Harvard Crimson. When she was signed by the Minnesota Whitecaps in 2007, she commenced further study at the University of Minnesota, graduating with a Master of Education in Sports Management in 2010. Ruggiero retired from sports in 2011 due to a shoulder injury.

During the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, she was elected to the Athletes' Commission with the second highest number of votes (605). This was followed by her admission to the IOC, where she was particularly active in promoting women's sport and gender equality. Ruggiero was elected to the IOC Executive Committee as chair of the Athletes' Commission in 2016.

She was a founding member of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA, 2014–2016) and a member of the Board of Directors of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) from 2010 to 2018.

When she left the IOC after eight years, President Thomas Bach expressed his sadness at losing one of the committee's greatest campaigning members. "In the previous two years, as Chair of the Athletes' Commission, she has really been a great voice of the athletes. She tackled this task with great dynamism, new ideas, and an active, positive and constructive approach."

Ruggiero then served as chief strategy officer for the successful Candidature Committee for the Los Angeles Olympic bids for 2024/2028. In 2018, she became CEO of the Sports Innovation Lab, a technology-powered market research firm that provides empowering insights to industry-leading sports brands, of which she is also a co-founder.

## 518. | Adam Laird Pengilly | Great Britain

Adam Pengilly, who graduated from Birmingham University in Sport and Exercise Science in 2000, dedicated five years to bobsledding. He spent time as an assistant coach following graduation, working with the British women's team at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Pengilly then returned to active sport in November 2002 – this time the skeleton. He took 13<sup>th</sup> place at the IBSF World Championships in 2004, won a silver medal at the 2005 Universiade and finished eighth at the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin. He achieved his best results at 2008 European Championships, where he finished third, and at the 2009 World Championships, where he won the silver medal. At the 2010 Winter Olympics, he was injured and finished 18<sup>th</sup>. In 2012, he retired and became a youth coach.

Pengilly became a member of the British Bobsleigh and Skeleton Association in 2003 and of the British Olympic Association in 2005. He was admitted to the IOC after receiving the highest number of votes (615) in the IOC Athletes' Commission elections at the 2010 Winter Olympics. At the 2016 Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lillehammer, Pengilly served as the head of the British team's mission.

Following the publication of the McLaren Report, as a member of the WADA Foundation Board Pengilly argued for Russia to be completely barred from the 2016 Olympic Games. At the 129<sup>th</sup> Session, he was the only IOC Member to vote against the Executive Committee's decision to exclude the whistleblower in this case from Rio 2016, seeing this as harming the fight against doping.

Pengilly's eight-year IOC membership ended in PyeongChang in 2018 with an untimely departure. After getting into an altercation with a security guard, he apologised but ultimately left the event early.



Born: 14 October 1977  
in Taunton, Somerset  
Elected: 12 February  
2010  
Resigned: 25 February  
2018  
Attendance:  
Present: 10, Absent: 0