

Jujie Luan, Master Fencer Biography

Jujie Luan was born in Nanjing, China on July 14, 1958, part of a family of 7 children. She grew up loving track and field, in particular high jump, and volleyball. When Jujie was 16, she was convinced to try fencing and has loved it ever since. After only one year of fencing, Jujie made the phenomenal jump to the Chinese National Team and went on from there to win many national and international titles for China, most notably an Olympic Gold in 1984. As well, she was a coach for the Chinese National Team for 10 years. During this time, Jujie earned a degree in Sports Management from Nanjing University. In 1999, Jujie was celebrated as one of China's Top 50 sports stars since the founding of the People's Republic of China.

"They still study Luan in Chinese textbooks for what she did as a 20-year-old at the 1977 world junior championships. In her first match, the foil of a Russian snapped and stabbed through Luan's left arm, her foil arm. . . . Fencing has rigorous injury standards. They pulled the metal out of her arm and the clock started ticking. The cut was clean so Luan continued. She fenced for 2 ½ hours. Her arm turned blue from the deep bleeding. 'But I had to try and finish,' she said. 'China had not had a female fencer at the worlds in more than 80 years.' Luan won a silver medal and the Chinese had a new hero. Books were written about her. A movie chronicled her life." (Mike Ulmer, *Toronto Sun*, September 15, 2000)

These accomplishments were all the more remarkable because Jujie struggled with a serious kidney problem that persisted throughout most of her career as a competitive fencer in China. Her pursuit of excellence in the face of adversity was part of her star appeal.

When Jujie came to Edmonton for the 1983 Universiade Games, she fell in love with the city. She moved to Edmonton in 1989 and studied English at the University of Alberta, where she also fenced and coached. In 1989, Jujie joined the Edmonton Fencing Club and as Head Coach, she has been instrumental in its growth from about 40 members to its current record enrollment of approximately 300 members.

In 1994, Jujie proudly became a Canadian citizen. Jujie has focused on her coaching while continuing to compete nationally and internationally, winning several titles along the way, including 8 Canadian National Championships. In 1999, Jujie decided to qualify for the Canadian Olympic Fencing Team and was successful, representing Canada in the 2000 Olympics in Australia, her third time as an Olympian!

Jujie is mother to three young children, ranging in ages from 10-16 years, one of whom is a special needs child with several health issues. As well, Jujie lends support to her extended family in China. Her ability to balance the difficult challenges and demands of being a wife, a mother, a successful competitive athlete, and a coach is a testament to her strength of character and will.

Qualifying for the Olympics 2008 in Beijing is Jujie's latest accomplishment. Her quest for a berth in her fourth Olympics began in January 2007. An intense training and travel schedule has challenged Jujie, a challenge she has met extremely well. Jujie was honoured to go back to her home country as a Canadian and fence in the 2008 Olympics, having come full circle from her beginnings. A media frenzy followed her everywhere she went in China.

2008 also saw Jujie inducted into the City of Edmonton's Hall of Fame and she received the YWCA's 2008 Woman of Distinction Award in Sport. Jujie won the Gold Medal and became the Veteran World Champion 2008 in Women's Foil. [In 2013, Jujie was listed in the Top 100 FIE Hall of Fame.](#)

Jujie continues to coach at Edmonton Fencing Club (EFC) and fences competitively. Jujie has coached and mentored 12 past or current members of the Junior and Senior Canadian National Fencing Team. Because of Jujie, the EFC is one of the largest and most comprehensive fencing clubs in Canada. The EFC also has one of the largest numbers of adult recreational fencers, mostly due to Jujie's insistence to parents that they too can fence along with their children.

Jujie is an excellent example of commitment to lifelong fitness. She continues to love the sport of fencing and instills in all who know her the inspiration to be the very best you can be in all you do. She is an admirable role model not only to fencers but coaches and athletes of any sport