



SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

Individual/Team Name: Kate Douglass

Sport: Swimming

Connection to Virginia: University of Virginia Swim & Dive Program

2023 Achievement(s):

- Won 7 medals at 2023 NCAA Championships
- Led UVA to 3rd straight NCAA National Championship
- Honda Award winner for swimming
- College Swim Coaches Association Female Swimmer of the Year
- ACC Swimmer of the Year
- ACC Scholar Athlete of the Year
- Co-recipient 2023 Golden Goggle Award
- UVA Student-Athlete of the Year

Will Driscoll

From: Virginia Sports Hall of Fame <info@vasportshof.com>
Sent: [REDACTED]
To: Will Driscoll
Subject: Sportsperson of the Year Award Entry

Name of Individual

Kate Douglass

Name of Team

University of Virginia Swimming

Sport(s)

Swimming

Connection to Virginia

2023 UVA Graduate and member of Cavaliers swimming and diving program who graduated in May with a degree in statistics

Significant Athletic Achievement in 2023

Won seven medals at the 2023 NCAA Championships and led Virginia to its third straight national championship. Was the Honda Award winner for her sport and the College Swim Coaches Association Female Swimmer of the Year (for second straight year) and the ACC Swimmer of the Year for the second consecutive year. ACC Scholar-Athlete of the Year for Women's Swimming & Diving for second consecutive year. Shared the 2023 Golden

Goggle Award with Katie Ledecky as the sport's female athlete of the year. Named the UVA female student-athlete of the year (IMP Award).

Nominee Contact Information (email or phone)

Mobile: (914) 334-0778

If there are any additional accolades, accomplishments, or comments you would like the Hall of Fame to consider as it reviews your nomination, please list them here (500 words or less). Please include links to articles or news stories, and online biographical information in the space provided

2023 Highlights

2023 ACC Championships

- At 2023 ACC Championships, swam the 100-yard butterfly, 200-yard individual medley, and 100 yard freestyle, winning titles in all three events.
- At ACCs, set NCAA, U.S. Open and American records in 100 Fly and become just third U.S. woman to swim under 45 seconds in the 100 Free.

2023 NCAA Championships

- Won seven titles, three individual and four relays.
- In 100 Fly, 200 IM and 200 Breast, set American and U.S. Open records
- In two of the relays, (200 medley and 400 freestyle) set new American and U.S. Open records
- Named the NCAA Championships Swimmer of the Meet

2023 U.S. National Championships

- Won gold medals in the 10m0 Free and 200 IM, won a silver medal in the 200m Breast, and won bronze medals in the 50m Free and 100n Fly

2023 World Championships

- Competed in seven events and won six medals including gold in 200m IM and

4x100m medley relay. Won silver in 200m Breast, 4x100m free relay, and mixed 4x100 free relay and bronze in mixed 4x100m MR

Other

Semifinalist for the 2023 AAU James E. Sullivan Award, presented annually to the most outstanding athlete at the collegiate or Olympic level in the United States

Articles:

<https://olympics.com/en/news/independence-data-analytics-kate-douglass-us-swimming-paris-2024>

<https://swimswam.com/kate-douglass-i-see-retirement-in-the-near-future-im-looking-forward-to-it/>

<https://pelhamexaminer.com/56080/latest-news/kate-douglass-sets-new-u-s-record-leads-uva-to-third-national-championship-title/>

<https://news.virginia.edu/content/what-motivates-olympic-medalist-once-they-return-college-these-hoos-know>

<https://swimswam.com/kate-douglass-vs-caitlin-clark-who-had-the-better-ncaa-season/>

Please include any documents that details the student's academic and athletic achievements, and community contributions; this includes letters of support/recommendation and student essay.

[Kate-Douglass---Virginia-Cavaliers-Official-Athletic-Site.pdf](#)

Nominator Name

Jim Daves

Nominator Email

jimdaves@virginia.edu

Nominator Phone Number

434-962-7668

All nomination materials must be received together

Acknowledged

Sent from [Virginia Sports Hall of Fame](#)



KATE DOUGLASS

SPRINT FREE/IM

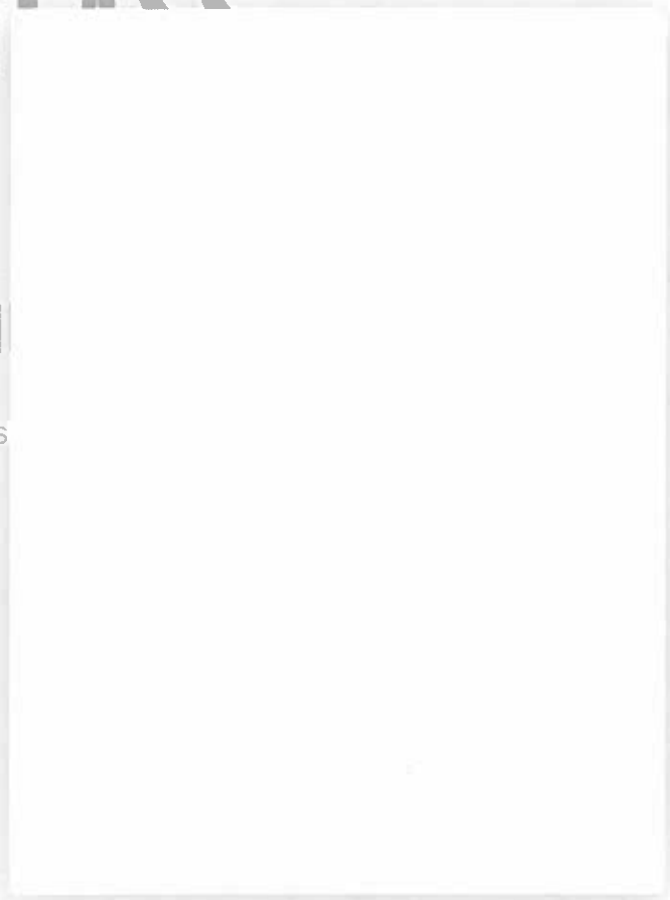
Position

SEN

Class

PELHAM MEMORIAL

High School



BIO



NEWS



2020 TOKYO OLYMPIAN

2020 OLYMPIC BRONZE MEDALIST - 200 IM

2022 WORLD AQUATICS SHORT COURSE CHAMPIONSHIPS (MELBOURNE)

- 200 Breast - GOLD

- 200 IM - GOLD

- 4x50 Free Relay - GOLD

- 4x100 Medley Relay - GOLD

- Mixed 4X50 Medley Relay - GOLD

- 2 SILVER (4x100 Free Relay, 4x50 Medley Relay)

2022 FINA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (BUDAPEST)

- 200 Breast - BRONZE

- 4X100 Free Relay - BRONZE

- Mixed 4x100 Free Relay - BRONZE

2021 FINA SHORT COURSE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (ABU DHABI)

- 2 GOLD (4X50 FREE RELAY, 4X100 FREE RELAY)

- 2 SILVER (4X50 MEDLEY RELAY, MIXED 4X50 MEDLEY RELAY)

- BRONZE (200 IM)

HONDA AWARD WINNER (2022)

CSCAA WOMEN'S SWIMMER OF THE YEAR (2022)

ACC WOMEN'S SWIMMER OF THE YEAR (2022)

ACC SCHOLAR-ATHLETE OF THE YEAR (2022)

NCAA Champion

2022: 50 Free, 100 Fly, 200 Breast, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay, 400 Medley Relay

2021: 50 Free

All-America

2022: 50 Free, 100 Fly, 200 Breast, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay, 400 Medley Relay

2021: 50 Free, 100 Free, 100 Fly, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay, 400 Medley Relay

2020: 200 Breast, 100 Fly, 200 IM, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay, 400 Medley Relay

ACC Champion

2022: 50 Free, 100 Fly, 100 Free, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay, 400 Medley Relay

2021: 100 Free, 100 Fly, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay, 400 Medley Relay

2020: 100 Fly, 200 IM, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay

All-ACC

2022: 50 Free, 100 Fly, 100 Free, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay, 400 Medley Relay

2021: 100 Free, 100 Fly, 200 IM, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay, 400 Medley Relay

.....,
2020: 100 Fly, 200 IM, 200 Breast, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay, 200 Medley Relay

Virginia Career Bests

50 Free: 20.84 (American/US Open/NCAA Record)

100 Free: 46.30 (2nd all-time at UVA)

200 Free: 1:46.29

100 Back: 51.84 (8th all-time at UVA)

100 Breast: 58.64 (4th all-time at UVA)

200 Breast: 2:02.19 (American/US Open/NCAA Record)

100 Fly: 49.04 (American Record)

200 Fly: 1:56.04

200 IM: 1:50.92 (2nd all-time at UVA)

2022-23

- Swam the final leg of the winning 200 medley relay team, and setting American, NCAA, Conference, Meet and pool records
- Won the 100 fly setting American and Conference records
- Swam the third leg of the 400 medley relay, placing first and setting American, NCAA, Conference, Meet and pool records
- Won the 100 free and placed second in the 50 free against NC State and North Carolina
- Won the 200 IM and placed second in the 50 free against Virginia Tech
- Placed second in the 50 free at the Tennessee Invitational
- Won the 100 fly at the Tennessee Invitational
- Placed second in the 100 breast at the Tennessee Invitational
- Won the 200 breast at the Tennessee Invitational
- Placed third in the 100 free against Texas
- Placed third in the 200 breast against Texas
- Won the 100 breast and 100 free against Florida
- ACC Academic Honor Roll

2021-22

- Qualified to compete for Team USA at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics that were postponed to 2021
- Won Olympic Bronze medal in the 200 IM in Tokyo
- Part of Team USA at 2022 FINA World Championships in Budapest, winning three bronze medals (200 breast, 4×100 free relay, 4×100 mixed free relay)
- Won individual NCAA titles in 50 free, 100 fly and 200 breast
- Set American, NCAA, US Open, meet and pool records in the 50 free and 200 breast at NCAA Championships
- Set American and pool record in the 100 fly at NCAA Championships

- Lead off winning relay team in the 200 free relay, 200 medley relay, 400 medley relay, 400 free relay at NCAA Championships
- Won three individual ACC Championships (50 Free, 100 Free, 100 Fly) and was part of four relay ACC titles
- Anchored two of UVA's American/US Open/NCAA record relays (200 medley relay & 400 medley relay)
- Led off the American/US Open/NCAA record 200 free relay and led off the ACC & UVA record 400 free relay
- Set a then-UVA record in the 50 free and a meet record in the 100 fly at the ACC Championships
- Won three Individual ACC Titles at ACC Championships
- Won the 400 free relay, 400 medley relay, 200 medley relay, and 200 free relay at ACC Championships
- Won three events against NC State and North Carolina
- Finished with two golds, two silvers and a bronze medal at the 2021 FINA Short Course World Championships in Abu Dhabi, winning gold in the 4x50 freestyle relay
- Won five events at the Tennessee Invitational
- Won the 100 fly, 400 medley relay and 200 free relay against Texas
- Won the 100 and 200 breast against Army
- Won 200 medley relay, 50 free, 100 fly and 200 free relay at Cal
- ACC Scholar-Athlete of the Year
- All-ACC Academic Team
- CSCAA Scholar All-America First Team
- CoSIDA Academic All-District At-Large
- ACC Academic Honor Roll

2020-21

- Set UVA records in the 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard freestyle, 200-yard breaststroke, 100-yard butterfly and 200-yard IM
- Eight-Time All-American
- Won NCAA individual title in the 50-yard freestyle and finished second in the 100-yard freestyle and 100-yard butterfly
- Swam on UVA's four second-place relays at NCAAs (200 free relay, 400 free relay, 200 medley relay and 400 medley relay)
- Set UVA and ACC record with 21.09 leadoff split in the 200 free relay at NCAAs
- Won ACC individual titles in the 100-yard freestyle and 100-yard butterfly and was second in the 200-yard IM at the ACC Championships
- Won four ACC relay titles (200 free relay, 400 free relay, 200 medley relay and 400 medley relay)

• Anchored the American Record setting 200 medley relay at the ACC Championships

- Anchored the American record setting 200 medley relay at the ACC Championships
- Swam at UVA record and ACC record time of 2:03.93 in the 200-yard breaststroke at the Cavalier Invitational
- Finished first in the 200-yard freestyle and 200-yard breaststroke against North Carolina
- Won the 100-yard freestyle, 100-yard backstroke and 200-yard IM against Virginia Tech
- Named ACC Swimmer of the Week twice for her performance at Navy and against Tennessee and Alabama
- Set an ACC record in the 200-yard IM against Tennessee and Alabama
- Set a UVA record 100-yard freestyle and 100-yard butterfly against Tennessee and Alabama
- Won seven events against Tennessee and Alabama
- Won the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle against Navy
- Finished second in the 50m free at the Toyota U.S. Open and placed third in the 100m free and 100m fly at the meet
- Named to ACC Academic Honor Roll

2019-20

- NCAA Championships cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic
- Named the ACC Freshman Swimmer of the Year
- Is the fourth-fastest all-time NCAA performer in the 200-yard individual medley
- Named an All-American in the 200 breast, 100 butterfly, 200 IM, 200 free relay, 400 free relay, 200 medley relay and 400 medley relay for qualifying for the NCAA Championships in the events
- Second highest point scorer at ACC Championships, winning five ACC titles for 91 points
- Won two individual titles in the 100-yard butterfly and 200-yard individual medley, and three relay titles in the 200-yard medley relay, 200-yard freestyle relay and 400-yard freestyle relay, at the ACC Championships
- Set an ACC and ACC meet record with the 200-yard medley relay team
- Also placed third in the 200-yard breaststroke and second in the 400-yard medley at ACCs
- Set an ACC record in the 200-yard individual medley at the Tennessee Invitational, swimming a time of 1:52.84, before topping the time at ACCs with a swim of 1:51.36
- Set an Aquatic and Fitness Center record in the 200-yard breaststroke in the Cavaliers' home meet against Wisconsin
- Holds the UVA record in the 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard butterfly and 200-yard individual medley
- Helped the 200-yard medley relay set an ACC and UVA record at the Tennessee Invitational
- Advanced to the finals in 100-meter butterfly at the Toyota U.S. Open Championships placing fourth overall in addition to placing 17th in the 200-meter individual medley and 22nd in the 50-meter freestyle
- Set a UVA long course record in the 100-meter butterfly (58.48) and a 200-meter individual medley (2:12.11) in addition to capturing third-best time in school history in the 50-meter

freestyle (25.70) and seventh-best time in the 100-meter freestyle (56.08)

- Set a Christiansburg Aquatic Center record in the 100-yard butterfly in the team's meet against Virginia Tech
- Won the 200-yard breaststroke and 200-yard individual medley at the Tennessee Invitational
- Placed first in the 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard freestyle and 200-yard individual medley at the Trojan Invitational
- Named ACC Swimmer of the week 10/8, 11/26, 1/7
- Named to the All-ACC Academic Team
- Named to the ACC Academic Honor Roll

Background

- A 2018-19 U.S. National Junior Team member
- Competed at the 2018 Youth Olympic Games in Argentina and the 2017 Junior World Championships in Indianapolis
- Set the U.S. Swimming National 13-14 and 15-16 Age Group Record for the 50 free
- New York high school record holder in the 50 and 100 freestyle
- Qualified for the 2016 U.S. Olympic Trials in the 50 free, 100 and 200 breast, and 200 IM

Personal

- Majoring in computer science
- Daughter of Allison and William Douglass
- Has one brother, Will, and one sister, Abby
- Recipient of the 2022-23 2018-19 Championships Bicentennial Scholarship



Independence and love for data analytics: Kate Douglass charts path to Paris 2024

Olympics.com caught up with the Tokyo 2020 bronze medallist at the 2023 Atlanta Classic as she looks to build on her Olympic Games debut.

 4 min

By Hayes Creech

13 May 2023 13:46 GMT-4

Kate DOUGLASS



Swimming



(2022 Getty Images)



There is a striking independence and nonchalant spirit about US emerging swimmer **Kate Douglass**.

One moment she is tearing apart her competitors in the pool - winning both the 100m breaststroke and 100m butterfly on Day 1 of the 2023 Atlanta Classic - and the next she's chatting with Olympics.com like someone on a vacation morning, shooting the breeze with a **cappuccino in hand**, contemplating what little they will get up to in the day.

"I think I do a good job of separating swimming and the rest of my life," Douglass told Olympics.com in the bowels of McAuley Aquatic Center on Georgia Tech's campus.

"The culture at the University of Virginia has helped my team to be normal college students and also be national championship swimmers. It's all about **having a good balance**. When you have to go to practise, your mind is on that and then afterwards not really thinking about swimming and doing things you enjoy and other things to pass the time."

Douglass chooses to pass the time with her Virginia team-mates, exploring **Virginia's idyllic Skyline Drive**, scoping out various lookout points and finding various **hiking trails**



How to qualify for swimming at Paris 2024. The Olympics qualification system explained

The New York-native won the bronze medal in the 200m IM at Tokyo 2020 for Team USA in what was her **first international meet** on that stage, and all indicators are that there are more medals to be added to her CV.

Since Tokyo 2020, Douglass has shattered **several collegiate records** in the United States and became the first top division swimmer, male or female, to win **three NCAA titles in three different strokes**. Add to that a bronze in the 200m breaststroke at the 2022 World Championships and, most recently, a standout showing at the Atlanta Classic invitational meet, and one senses an athlete finding her confidence and her true self as a swimmer.

“I’m trying to improve and have a wider range of events that I could have the possibility of doing really well in the summer. I want to focus on getting better at long-course racing and other events beside the 200m breaststroke.”

Her independence and balance can also be found at home. Douglass is the black sheep of the family; **the only swimmer amidst a soccer-obsessed bunch**. “My family isn’t a swim family. Both my siblings play soccer. My parents love to watch soccer. They didn’t swim. I’m the only one!” She takes pride in that independence and solo path she’s carved out for herself. “My parents do a great job with keeping their distance and letting me do my thing. They just want me to be happy. They don’t really care how I swim at all, to be honest!”

Kate Douglass: Chasing gold and preparing for life after swimming



“I’m still figuring out the next chapter of my career and life [after graduation from college]. I’ve decided I’m staying at the **University of Virginia** for graduate school for two years and train there also, because I love my coaches and my team, and wouldn’t want to go train anywhere else now. I don’t really want to change things up now heading into an Olympic year and I’ll stick to what I know, and I’m excited about that. I’m going to just see where it goes from there. I’ve never really thought I wanted to swim forever. I’m definitely invested in my career outside of swimming as well and that’s why I’m doing grad school, so I’m taking it year by year, but definitely the focus is on next summer for sure.”

While she trains and competes on the road to Paris 2024, she will simultaneously be working towards completing a **master’s degree in statistics**. while taking on a remote internship focusing on **data analytics** with Dell, one of world’s biggest computer manufacturers —once again, finding the right balance.

She’s taken **sports analytics classes**, but as with other aspects in her life, she wants to keep her options open. “I’m interested in the field of data analytics, and I’m not exactly sure how I want to apply that because it could be in so many different fields and there’s a lot of different opportunities with that. But I’m excited about that because there’s so many different things I could do with it.”

Opportunity. That seems to be the word for Kate Douglass as she charts her pathway toward more Olympic medals, but she’ll never forget who she is outside the pool along the way.

Add these to your favourites



Kate DOUGLASS



Swimming



USA



Subscribe to Newsletter Advertise Email Us Submit a Story Submit a Job Submit a College Recruit

SwimSwam

SwimSwam Store



Subscribe to SwimSwam Magazine

NEWS SWIM DATA COLLEGE TRAINING VIDEO Search SwimSwam

KATE DOUGLASS WATER POLO MEMPHIS THE NEAR FUTURE...I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT"

Comments: 85



On Friday, Kate Douglass and Claire Curzan took to UVA's Instagram story to answer questions about retirement, Olympic Trials, and Taylor Swift. [Archive photo](#) via Jack Spitsers/Spitsers Photography

BY YANYAN LI

85

November 03rd, 2023

ACC, College, National, News



On Friday, UVA sophomore **Claire Curzan** (next season) and pro swimmer **Kate Douglass** answered questions submitted for



ranging from Olympic Trials event lineups to Taylor Swift.

One question that Curzan and Douglass got was if they would ever retire from competitive swimming. Douglass had a firm "yes" answer, whereas Curzan was a bit more hesitant.

"I see retirement in the near future," Douglass said. "I don't know when, but it's coming. And I'm looking forward to it."

Meanwhile, Curzan said that she "operates on a year-to-year basis" and that her sole focus is currently on the U.S. Open. However, she stated that she loved swimming, so retirement wouldn't be coming soon for her.

Douglass, who was one of two American women to win individual gold at the 2023 World Championships and arguably the best American female relay swimmer, would be 22 years old if she decided to retire after the Paris Olympics. It's a relatively young age for an elite-caliber female swimmer to hang up the goggles, but it's not unheard of—for example, five-time Olympic gold medalist **Missy Franklin** retired at 23 after competing at two Olympic games and sustaining several injuries.

Currently, Douglass is doing a master's degree in statistics at Virginia. She said on the **SwimSwam podcast this August** that she wanted to pursue a career in the statistics field after she was done with swimming.

WORLD AQUATICS PUBBLICA IL VIDEO PROMOZIONALE DI DOHA 2024

KOSUKE KITAJIMA CUP: IPPEI WATANABE GUIDA IL RANKING MONDIALE NEI 200 RANA

BRONTE CAMPBELL VINCE SU CATE NELL'ULTIMO GIORNO DEI CAMPIONATI

GINEVRA CHALLENGE: MITYUKOV AL MONDO NEI 200 DORSO REGAR



back, 50/100 free, and 100 fly. Meanwhile, Douglass said she was training for the 50/100 free, 100/200 breast, 100 fly, and 200 IM. Curzan and Douglass both are entered in the events they listed for the U.S. Open that begins on Nov. 29, though they said that they would scratch events throughout the meet.

The lineup that Curzan listed was the same as her lineup at the 2023 U.S. National Championships, while Douglass raced all the events she listed besides the 100 breast (which she entered but scratched).

Below are some of the other questions given to Curzan and Douglass, as well as their responses:

Favorite Bodo's (bagel shop in Charlottesville) Order?

Curzan: *I've never been, so I wouldn't know.*

Douglass: *I think Bodo's is overrated—I'm from New York. That's not a real bagel, they don't even toast bagels, I don't like it at all.*

What Is One Trait The Other Possesses That You Respect?

Douglass: *I'd like to be able to do backstroke like (Curzan).*

Curzan: *I would love to do breaststroke even half as good as Kate.*

ANDREI MINAKOV ON TRAINING IN RUSSIA, RETURN TO STANFORD, EPIC DUAL WITH ASU

2024 OLYMPIC COACHES ANTHONY NESTY, TODD DESORBO ON PREPPING FOR AN OLYMPIC YEAR (PODCAST)

INAUGURAL ICE SWIMMING EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS SET TO RUN IN ORADEA, ROMANIA



GRAN TRABAJO ESPAÑOL EN GUERRA

season.

Curzan: *(Gormsen and Howley) for me too. I train with them and they train really, really hard—I think that hard work will pay off.*

What Is Your Favorite Event And Least Favorite Event?

Douglass: *I think the 200 breast might be my favorite event. Of everything I swim, the 200 IM might be the least favorite. It's unfortunate, but it's OK, we're starting to like it more.*

Curzan: *Least favorite? 200 fly, any day of the week, I will never change my mind about that. Favorite? Lately, I've been likely backstroke a lot, so any backstroke—100 or 200.*

Favorite Taylor Swift Song?

Douglass: *My all-time favorite is 'Our Song'. I also love 'All Too Well (10-minute version)', it's a classic*

If You Had To Pick One Stroke To Do For The Rest Of Your Life, What Would It Be?

Curzan: *Backstroke because it's like warm-down all the time.*

Douglass: *Freestyle, but specifically sprint freestyle. 50 free.*

Who's The Better Kicker?

Find your tax pro



Douglass: *If we had to do a pull race, (Curzan) would win. You should see my backstroke pull—it's the worst thing ever.*

What Are The Best Tips To Improve Underwaters?

Douglass: *Just get really good at breath control.*

Curzan: *Breath control and leg strength are really important.*

What Are Your Goals This Season?

Curzan: *I would love to go best times in my events.*

Douglass: *I think it would be great to go best times at trials this summer.*

What Is Your Favorite Animal?

Curzan: *My favorite animals are my puppies. They are little and white, some would say they are crusty, but I think they are gorgeous.*

Douglass: *I don't have a favorite animal. I just don't.*

What Is Your Favorite Candy?

Douglass: *Reese's or Twix.*

Curzan: *Airhead Xtreme strips or KitKats.*



What Motivates an Olympic Medalist Once They Return to College? These Hoos Know

March 14, 2023 • By Andrew Ramspacher, fpa5up@virginia.edu
Andrew Ramspacher, fpa5up@virginia.edu



Kate Douglass, left, and Alex Walsh are among the rare college athletes in the country to have won an Olympic medal and a national championship. (Photo by Matt Riley, UVA Athletics)

Todd DeSorbo walked to the corner of a room and cried tears of joy. In this moment, few people in the swimming world had it better than him.

It was July 29, 2021, in Tokyo, Japan, and DeSorbo, the University of Virginia head swimming coach who was spending a summer as an assistant for the U.S. Olympic swim team, had

just watched two Wahoos earn Olympic medals in the same race.

“The U.S. national team director walked over to me,” DeSorbo said, “and she was like, ‘Are you happy, or sad because neither won gold?’ And I said, ‘Are you kidding me? We have two women from the same college team that just medaled in the same event at the Olympics? I couldn’t be more happy!’”

Alex Walsh, who won silver, and bronze-winner Kate Douglass were responsible for DeSorbo’s glee. The pair of then-19-year-old UVA student-athletes placed in the 200-meter individual medley final at Tokyo’s Summer Games. It was the first time in 37 years that two Americans medaled in that specific Olympic event.

This all came four months after Walsh, then a first-year student, and Douglass, a second-year, helped UVA win the school’s first NCAA team swimming championship.

The duo, whom DeSorbo labeled “superheros,” could lay claim to being the most decorated students returning to Grounds for the 2021-22 academic year. But they had already done so much; what was left to do?

Apparently, plenty. A year and a half later, Walsh and Douglass are leading the No. 1-ranked Cavaliers into the NCAA swimming championships, which begin Wednesday in Knoxville, Tennessee. The Hoos are seeking a third consecutive team national title, while Walsh, now a third-year, and Douglass, a



UVA head swimming coach Todd DeSorbo has the Cavaliers on the brink of their third consecutive national team championship. (Photo by Matt Riley, UVA Athletics)

fourth-year, can add to their eight individual or relay NCAA championships.

DeSorbo said a key to keeping his star swimmers focused has been the winning culture the UVA program has built since his arrival in 2017.

“I think some Olympians come back from the Olympics and have a little post-Olympic depression,” he said. “And we have such a great environment and such a great team that they came back and just got swallowed by them and really immersed themselves in the team goals of trying to put ourselves in a position to challenge for another national title.

“I think that’s really helped those two in particular come back and stay motivated.”

Walsh, the owner of four school records and two Atlantic Coast Conference marks, said that while her Olympic medal is stored away, her national championship rings are placed on her bedside table.

It's not that one means more to her than the other; it's just that those rings were earned with her friends.



Walsh and Douglass have established themselves as two of the best swimmers in the world. (Photos courtesy of UVA Athletics)

“I was able to reflect more during our celebrations as NCAA champions,” Walsh said. “It was really satisfying. The team effort and feeling like you’re a part of something bigger than just yourself, it just feels different.

“It was a lot more fun being with my team celebrating this huge accomplishment for us and for UVA. I love looking at those rings on my nightstand.”

The season following the Olympics, Douglass further established herself as one of the best young swimmers in the world. She was named the 2022 women's swimmer of the year by both the ACC and the College Swimming & Diving Coaches Association of America. The statistics major was also named the 2022 ACC Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

Douglass said something as simple as being back on Grounds in August 2021 was instrumental in her continued improvement as a swimmer.

"It was definitely nice to be able to come back and get into a routine and be back with my friends and my team and just feel like a normal college student," said Douglass, who holds American records for fastest times in the 50-meter freestyle, 200-meter breaststroke and 100-meter butterfly. "It was fun that, yeah, we had this amazing experience and now we're just normal college students again."

Coming back to Charlottesville, Walsh said, "re-centered me, which I needed."

Douglass and Walsh have matching Olympic rings tattoos to represent their time in Tokyo. They're both expected to return to the Olympic stage next summer when the Games are in Paris.

For now, though, they're dialed in for one last ride together as Wahoos.

“I feel like the main goal for all of us is to try to win again, try to get our third national championship as a team,” Douglass said. “No matter how I do, if we accomplish that, I’ll be happy.”

“We like doing it for ourselves,” Walsh said. “But I know I also like doing it to represent UVA and the strength of this program.”

MEDIA CONTACT

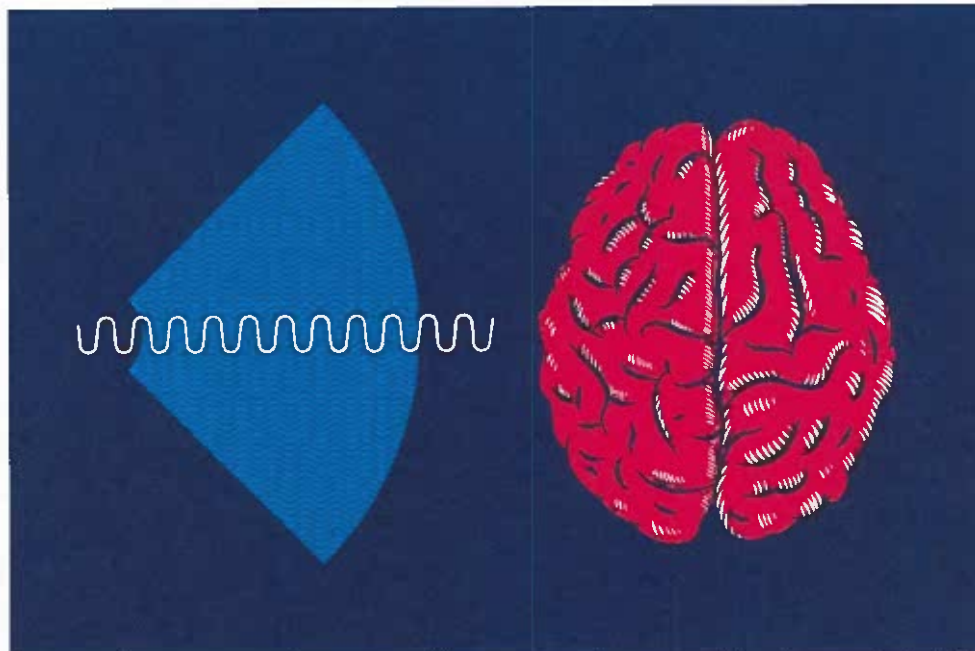
Andrew Ramspacher

University News Associate
University Communications
fpa5up@virginia.edu
(434) 924-6856

ARTICLE INFORMATION

January 22, 2024

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE



[\(/content/31-million-grant-backs-research-ultrasound-brain-treatments\)](/content/31-million-grant-backs-research-ultrasound-brain-treatments)

\$3.1 Million Grant Backs Research for Ultrasound Brain Treatments

[\(/content/31-million-grant-backs-research-ultrasound-brain-treatments\)](/content/31-million-grant-backs-research-ultrasound-brain-treatments)

Subscribe to Newsletter Advertise Email Us Submit a Story Submit a Job Submit a College Recruit

SwimSwam

SwimSwam Store



Subscribe to SwimSwam Magazine

NEWS SWIM DATA COLLEGE TRAINING VIDEO Search SwimSwam

KATE DOUGLASS WATER POLO vs CAITLIN CLARK: WHO HAD THE BETTER NCAA SEASON?

Comments: 77



After Clark's historic NCAA March Madness performance, we decided to compare her NCAA season to that of swim star Kate Douglass. [Archive photo via Jack Spitzer](#)

(left)/John Mac CC 2.0 license (right)

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic License.



BY YANYAN LI

77



April 07th, 2023

ACC, Big Ten, College, Nationa...



University of Virginia swimmer **Kate Douglass** and University of Iowa basketball player **Caitlin Clark** are two of the top athletes in the NCAA. In addition, they are both 2023 Honda Sport Award finalists for their respective sports (swimming and basketball), meaning that they have a chance of being up against each other for the overall Honda award (amongst other potential awards)—which is **given** every year to the best Division I athlete on the women’s side.

Because of this, and also because of the recent hype surrounding Clark’s dominant NCAA tournament performance that led Iowa to the national championship game, I was left wondering: who had the better 2022-23 NCAA season, Douglass or Clark?

MORE NEWS

WORLD AQUATICS PUBBLICA IL VIDEO PROMOZIONALE DI DOHA 2024

KOSUKE KITAJIMA CUP: IPPEI WATANABE GUIDA IL RANKING MONDIALE NEI 200 RANA

Braden Keith

@Braden_Keith · **Follow**



Caitlin Clark is a human highlight reel. The way she moves with so much purpose on the court and the control when she pulls up for 3 after moving full speed...the Steph Curry comparisons are actually kind of perfect.

9:57 PM · Mar 31, 2023



Before the two get compared, it's important to note that Douglass and Clark are undeniably the best NCAA individual performers within their own sport.

Douglass, the winner of the 2023 CSCAA and SwimSwam Women's Collegiate Swimmer of the Year award, was the only female swimmer to go three for three in individual events at the 2023 NCAA Championships and broke NCAA records in all her events. Clark on the other hand swept all five national "player of the year" accolades in women's basketball, being named the recipient of the 2023 Naismith College Player of The Year, 2023 Wooden Award National Player of The Year, 2023 AP Women's College Basketball Player of the Year, 2023 Wade Trophy, and 2023 Ann Meyers Drysdale awards.

Obviously, swimming and basketball are very different sports, so putting Douglass and Clark against each other would be like comparing apples to oranges. But sometimes comparing apples and oranges can still be interesting – oranges are juicier than apples; apple juice tastes better than orange juice.

RECORDS BROKEN

During the 2022-23 NCAA season, Douglass broke three NCAA records in three individual events, swimming the fastest times in history in the 200 IM, 100 fly, and 200 breast. She also set the record for the fastest 100 fly in history off a relay start. Many historic barriers were also broken by Douglass this year, as she became the first woman to get under both the 1:50 and 1:49-point barriers in the 200 IM, the first woman to split a sub-49 100 fly, as well

BRONTE CAMPBELL VINCE SU CATE NELL'ULTIMO GIORNO DEI CAMPIONATI

GINEVRA CHALLENGE: MITYUKOV 3° AL MONDO NEI 200 DORSO-RECAP

ANDREI MINAKOV ON TRAINING IN RUSSIA, RETURN TO STANFORD, EPIC DUAL WITH ASU

2024 OLYMPIC COACHES ANTHONY NESTY, TODD DESORBO ON PREPPING FOR AN OLYMPIC YEAR (PODCAST)



the first to get under 2:02-point in the 200 breast.

**INAUGURAL ICE SWIMMING
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS SET TO
RUN IN ORADEA, ROMANIA**

GRAN TRABAJO ESPAÑOL EN GINEBRA

Last year, Douglass also became the first swimmer in NCAA history to win national titles across three different strokes, though it wasn't possible for her to do it again this year with her NAAs event lineup.

Clark also made history in many ways, recording the most points and assists ever in an NCAA tournament (her points record was also higher than the men's tournament record) and scoring the most three-pointers ever in a women's NCAA title game. Several barriers were broken by her too, as she became the first player to have 900+ points and 300+ assists in one season, the fastest Division I women's basketball player to score 2,000+ career points (tied alongside Elle Donne Donne), and the first player in NCAA tournament history (men's or women's) to record a 40+ point triple-double when she



put up 41 points, 10 rebounds, and 12 assists in the Elite Eight against Louisville.

Overall, Clark outnumbers Douglass 9-8 in records/barriers broken this season. However, it's also important to note that there are way more categories and opportunities for breaking records in basketball, whereas in swimming it's really only possible to take down records in events. That being said, even when you only consider single-category records that don't factor in time constraints, Clark also outnumbers Douglass 5-4.

List of NCAA records and barriers broken by Kate Douglass, 2022-23 season:

200 IM (1:48.37)

100 fly (48.46)

200 breast (2:01.29)

100 fly relay split (48.25)



First woman under 1:50 in the 200 IM

First woman under 1:49 in the 200 IM

First woman under 49 in the 100 fly (relay split)

First woman under 2:02 in the 200 breast

List of NCAA records and barriers broken by Caitlin Clark, 2022-23 season:

Most points scored in an NCAA tournament
(191)

Most assists in an NCAA women's tournament
(60)

Most three-pointers in an NCAA women's title
game (8)

Most three-pointers in an NCAA women's
tournament (32)

Most points scored in an NCAA tournament
triple-double (41)

Most 25+ point triple-doubles in NCAA history
(5)

Most 25+ point, 5+ rebound, and 5+ assist
games in NCAA history for a woman (5)

Tied as the fastest DI basketball player to score
2,000+ career points (75 games)

First player to have 900+ points and 300+
assists in one season




In terms of dominance, both athletes are also pretty even. Douglass is the fastest ever in the 200 IM by nearly two seconds and also holds five out the fastest six times in history for the 200 breast, while Clark has scored 14 more



points, 10 more three-pointers, and 10 more assists in NCAA tournament history than the the next-highest women in both categories.

VERSATILITY

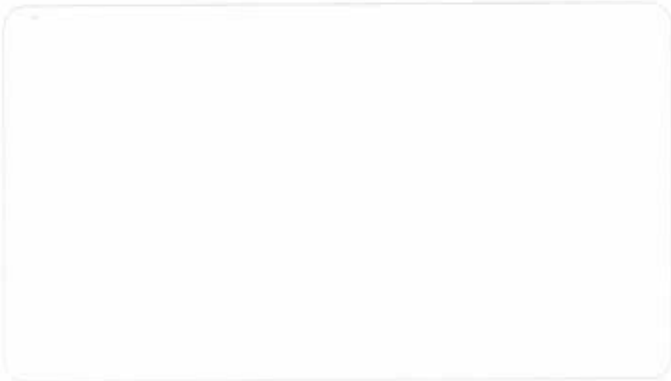
Both Douglass and Clark are considered to be highly versatile athletes. Douglass is amongst the fastest in history in sprint freestyle, breaststroke, butterfly, and IM, whereas Clark is widely regarded for her ability to score in multiple ranges. In fact, the distance of Clark's average three-point is 25'11 feet, which is is two feet past the three-point line in the NBA.


NBA on ESPN   




@ESPNNBA · [Follow](#)

Caitlin Clark regularly hits from NBA RANGE 🤪🎯

(via NBA Today)



4:10 PM · Mar 31, 2023 

 12.4K  Reply  Share

[Read 119 replies](#)



When looking at hard stats, Douglass was ranked top ten in the NCAA for 7 different events, while Clark was ranked top ten in 12 different categories (per the [NCAA stats site](#)). In total, there are 14 individual events in NCAA swimming, while there are 26 individual statistic categories determined by the NCAA in women's basketball. So once again, if we are looking at things percentage-wise, Douglass and Clark are even.

List Of Events Where *Kate Douglass Is Ranked Top Ten, 2022-23 Season:*

50 free: 20.95 (3rd)

100 free: 45.86 (2nd)

100 back: 50.47 (t-4th)

100 fly: 48.46 (1st)

100 breast: 58.14 (9th)

200 breast: 2:01.29 (1st)

200 IM: 1:48.37 (1st)

List Of Categories Where *Caitlin Clark Is Ranked Top Ten, 2022-23 Season:*

Assists: 327 (1st)

Assists Per Game: 8.6 (1st)

Field Goal Attempts: 715 (3rd)

Field Goals: 338 (3rd)

Free Throw Attempts: 285 (2nd)

Free Throws: 239 (2nd)



Total Points: 1,055 (2nd)

Three Point Attempts: 360 (1st)

Three Pointers: 140 (1st)

Three Pointers Per Game: 3.68 (1st)

Triple-Doubles: 5 (1st)

Across the events where Douglass is ranked top ten, she has an average ranking of 3, whereas Clark averages a ranking of 1.5.

BONUS: TEAM SUCCESS

Even though the strength of a team shouldn't determine the strength of an individual, it's still interesting to compare how much of an impact Douglass and Clark had on their respective teams.

The one major accolade that Douglass has and Clark doesn't have is an NCAA team championship, as the Virginia swim team is arguably better than the Iowa basketball team. While Virginia won the NCAA swimming championships by 127 points, Iowa fell just short, losing to LSU 102-85 in the national basketball title game. In addition, Virginia had been heavily favored to win NAAs all year, whereas Iowa was an underdog against several basketball teams such as South Carolina, who were undefeated headed into the Final Four.

At NAAs, Douglass scored 60 individual points (the maximum you can score), which means she contributed to 11% of Virginia's 542 total points. Without those points, Virginia still would have won NAAs with 482



points (second-place Texas had 415), but the race would have been tighter. However, it's important to note that she was also a big part of four national championship relays, which earned 160 points—though one could argue that Virginia's depth would allow them to score a similar amount of points on relays even without her, even if they don't win them all. Meanwhile, Clark scored 1,055 out of Iowa's 3,116 total points this season (33.9%), but that doesn't account for how she's helped the team through making assists and rebounds.

Although losing Douglass hurts Virginia, the Cavaliers are still one of the top teams in the NCAA without her, with generational talents like **Alex Walsh**, **Gretchen Walsh**, and **Ella Nelson** also the roster. Iowa has other strong players like AP All-American honorable mention **Monika Czinano**, but it's clear that Clark is the core of their team, and the Hawkeyes would not have made it to the national championship game if it wasn't for her. Clark's individual impact on her team is much bigger than Douglass's, but you can't really penalize Douglass for being on a superteam. Therefore, this category shouldn't really be considered a factor in the "who is better" debate.

CONCLUSION

I'm going to be completely honest here: before I wrote this article, I was not expecting Douglass and Clark to be so close to each other stats-wise, which makes the debate about who's objectively better much more difficult. Of course, when you're comparing swimming and basketball accolades with each other, you've got to weigh in a lot of



subjective factors, which isn't an easy task for me since I'm much more familiar with college swimming than I am with college women's basketball.

For a lot of these national awards though, popularity and cultural impact are factored in, and Clark undoubtedly beats Douglass in this category. **Women's basketball has a much bigger market than college swimming**, and the way that Clark single-handedly got so many more people tuning into the WNCAA tournament is almost equivalent to the Phelps effect in swimming. In fact, the University of Iowa even had to **pause** women's basketball season ticket sales for the 2023-24 season due to overwhelming demand (they have seen 6,700 new season ticket requests as of April 6, 2023).

I'd even go as far as saying Clark's impact even reached people outside of basketball—after all, what else got me to spend hours researching March Madness stats for an article on a swimming website?

That being said, Douglass is also transcending NCAA swimming in her own ways, even if her sport isn't as popular as college basketball. We've never seen a swimmer like her before, and the versatility shown by her and other NCAA swimmers like the Walsh sisters, **Torri Huske, Maggie MacNeil**, and **Leon Marchand** are raising the sport to another level. In addition, the dominance of the University of Virginia dynasty over the last three years has cemented the Cavaliers as one of the greatest teams in the sport.

So who do *you* think had the better season, Douglass or Clark? Was I being swimmer-



biased, or was I not giving the swimmers enough credit? Let me know your thoughts in the comments down below.

« [Matt King](#) [Santo Condorelli's 18-Month Suspension Quietly Lifted Last October](#) »
[Contemplating Olympic Redshirt Year, Plans On Returning To Virginia](#)

IN THIS STORY

ALEX WALSH

ELLA NELSON

GRETCHEN WALSH

KATE DOUGLASS

LEON MARCHAND

MAGGIE MACNEIL

