

IN MEMORIAM: FREEK MEIJERS

(From the KNBR Website <https://knrb.nl/2021/03/28/in-memoriam-freek-meijers/>)



On Saturday, March 27, we received the sad news that Freek Meijers, FISA referee, member of the Olympic Training Center (OTC) committee and holder of the KNRB medal in gold has passed away.

Freek was diagnosed with cancer in 2019. Freek has faced the disease combatively, as we know him. After successful treatment, the disease appeared to have returned at the end of last year. Freek's wish was to inform his fellow referees of this himself with the invitation to raise a glass together again and recall old memories. Unfortunately, it shouldn't have been. Freek died in the night from Friday to Saturday at the age of 65.

Freek took his first steps in the rowing world as a junior at De Hunze, but it was only after his student days that he really embraced rowing at Nautilus in Rotterdam and then at De Maas. He was active as a rower and coach, but we mainly know Freek as an enthusiastic referee. He discovered refereeing in 1995. Refereeing

may be voluntary work, but it is certainly not without obligation. National regattas were always on his agenda and at international regattas in the Netherlands, Freek could always be counted on as NTO or coordinator, after becoming the FISA umpire in 2008. His extraordinary dedication eventually took Freek to the highest level, culminating in starting the A-finals at the 2017 World Championships in Sarasota, USA.

As a true Groninger and through his studies at the TU in Delft, Freek had a clear vision about the course of certain things. In addition, he set the bar high. Not only for themselves, but also for competition organizers. Concerned as he was with training new referees, Freek acted for several years as editor-in-chief of the updates of the Guide for Judges, with tips for the application of the RvR in practice. In addition, Freek was also active as a referee coach in guiding young referees such as within the talent program TOP. And if Freek was your examiner and you passed, it was beyond any doubt. In his years as a member of the Referee Committee, Freek has mainly devoted himself to the international exchange program for Referee Judges. He has always kept his international contacts warm.

In addition to all these roles, Freek has been associated with the KNRB for many years from his profession as an architect. As a member of the OTC committee, he participated in both the first construction round in 2005 and the expansion in 2014 of the Olympic Training Center at Bosbaan. He then advised and assisted the KNRB with the maintenance of this complex. His keen eye, his great knowledge of technology and the market of contractors and installers will also be missed here. Everyone in the rowing world knew Freek and Freek knew everyone.

For all these merits, the KNRB has awarded Freek the medal in gold.

We wish Freek's wife Jolanda, close family members and many friends all the strength in coping with this enormous loss. We hope that the knowledge that the rowing world remembers Freek with gratitude will help them in this.

The family has opened an online condolence register. You can access it directly via [this link](#).

On behalf of the KNRB,

Arjon Pals

Chairman of the Judge's Committee