
ISU ATHLETE COMMISSION

January 3, 2019

Dear Skating Family,

The ISU Athlete Commission would like to honor the life of Paulien Van Deutekom, who passed away on January 2, after a hard fought 6 month battle with cancer. She was a Dutch champion speed skater who specialized in the middle long distances, specifically the 1000 and 1500 meters.

Van Deutekom had a decorated career that spanned well over a decade, during which she proudly represented The Netherlands in elite international competition. She reached the peak of her sport in 2008 when she claimed the Gold Medal in the World Allround Speed Skating Championships in Berlin. She also achieved multiple medal-winning performances in single distances at ISU Championships.

Paulien was universally regarded as a warm and friendly person, and handled her battle with illness with the same positive spirit and grace.

We paraphrase the words of her dear friend and teammate Ireen Wüst , who said it best:

“So bravely you fought an unfair battle that could not be won, but so full of zest for life and always positive!...I have learned so much from you, learned to look without judgment and see the positive in everything. Our friendship is more than special, it is love.”

We echo the outpouring of love and support in memory of Paulien to her family and friends, and we will cherish her contributions to our world both on and off the ice.

With heavy hearts,

ISU Athlete Commission