

IN MEMORIAM



JACQUES ROGGE

Gent, 2 mei 1942 - Deinze 29 augustus 2021

He was IOC President from 2001 to 2013.

He was made Doctor Honoris Causa in 14 universities worldwide, including UGent and KU Leuven.

Wikipedia recently recorded two million hits so far on his name.

But what is not mentioned on this official website is the relationship between all of his international commitments and nominations and how we knew him as a fellow orthopaedist in his earlier professional activity and sporting start so many years back in sailing competition.

On the site, barely 3 lines are filled about his medical career and not even 10 lines about his sporting career. We knew him differently and have very fond memories of that. Therefore, these tributes to colleague Jacques Rogge.

Many of us will have fond memories of an eminently gentle and competent man who practised in Ghent following his residency training in the service of the late Professor Claessens and who had devoted himself to the surgery focused on the knee surgery, reflecting his interest in sports and sports medicine. He did so in partnership with the late Professor Michel Vercauteren. This allowed him to ensure continuity of care for his patients when his obligations in the Belgian Olympic Committee became imperative.

As a young student and then a yachtsman with experience, his dear wife shared the ups and downs of these activities. When it came to a choice, he told me, between a new sail or a new dress for Anne, the new sail was chosen.

We all do have distinct memories of the debate on doping that took place at the sports medicine days in Bruges in 2002. Two eminent minds came together at this venue, Jacques Rogge and the late professor Etienne Vermeersch.

We remember the gracious manner in which Jacques Rogge led this debate and challenged doping, which he maintained throughout his career on the International Olympic Committee. "Participating is more important than winning".

Jacques Rogge was also consistently available as a colleague for international sports-oriented orthopaedic meetings such as ESSKA and ISAKOS where he always engaged in active patronage. He shared an interest in the development of sports medicine and its impact on young athletes.

He also developed the sports medicine service at the IOC and through this influenced our sports medicine activity and clinical practice. With him, for me, has gone an era of wise, gracious and wise leaders who serve as role models for our orthopaedic approach to and the way we treat and care for our patients.

Jacques Rogge was an enthusiastic and masterful leader Of the International Olympic Committee for many years but preserved his roots.

He leaves behind a wife, Dr Anne Bovyn, and their two children.

The BVOT and SORBCOT offer their condolences on their loss.

Prof. em. Dr. R. Verdonk