

## Reimagine sport

# Jeroen Janissen (marathon skater)

**“Being outside. To feel the sunshine. I always feel the urge to go outdoors. The ice rink is a very technical environment but skating on natural ice is so incredibly beautiful”.**

Jeroen Janissen competes at the top level of marathon speed skating. He has won races on natural and on artificial ice. Recently he received his Masters on sustainable energy engineering at TU Delft and now works in the energy transition sector. Through his studies, he is heavily involved in sustainability and has a good insight into what is happening in the field. For him, sustainability means "trying to minimize my impact on the world." For example, he has already stopped eating meat, has solar panels on his roof, and keeps the thermostat below 18.5 degrees Celsius.



### Nature & training

He prefers to train outdoors. In the summer, he enjoys cycling through nature with the sun shining, but he also finds joy in training on less pleasant days. Spending so much time in nature for training has created a sense of connection for him, and he wants to contribute to preserving this beauty of nature. This feeling is especially strong during the summer when preparing for the new season and during the races on natural ice in Austria and Sweden.

### Direct consequences

Because of high temperatures and increasing costs for energy the ice rinks in the Netherlands are struggling. Some open later in the season, some will have to close all together. For skaters such as Jeroen this means they will have to rely more on inline skating or seek opportunities abroad. “It will change the way in which we were used to prepare ourselves for the winter season”. He also mentions explicitly that due to rising temperatures in winter, ice rinks require much more energy to cool the ice. This raises concerns about how long this can be responsibly sustained when some people can't afford to heat their houses. The race with the highest prestige is without a doubt the Friese Elfstedentocht (Eleven Cities Tour). Due to global warming he thinks the last edition of this race in 1997 was the final one. This is a major loss for his sport.

### World of sports

Looking at larger teams and federations, not much is being done on a large scale to create a greener skating environment. Teams still often fly to training camps abroad, and the federation has no regulations regarding energy consumption per ice rink or sustainability reports to make the situation clearer. He would applaud if the federation would make serious effort to take up the issue and maintain a level playing field for all. His former team Port of Amsterdam/SKITS is definitely the best example in his sport.

### Change!

These developments leave Jeroen feeling a bit disheartened. He is actively working to make his own life and surroundings as sustainable as possible, but the sport he loves remains behind. We have to work together to change our world for the better!

