

Zelman, Judith



Judy passed away peacefully, in Ottawa, Canada, on Saturday February 3, 2007, at the age of 39 years, after a brief battle with breast cancer. Beloved wife of Eron Main and loving mother of Isaac and Susan, Judith will also be missed by her parents Maier, Marion, Peggy, and the late Bill; her sister Margaret and brother Michael; and the Main family, Jon, Lynn, Teri, Bill and their families.

Disabled at the age of fourteen as a result of Guillain-Barré Syndrome, Judith first became involved in sport for athletes with a disability as part of her rehabilitation. This quickly turned into a lifelong passion for wheelchair sports as both an athlete and a volunteer. Judith's two great loves in sport were athletics, where she specialized in throwing events, notably shot put, and wheelchair rugby. In athletics, she participated in numerous national and international events, representing Canada at the Paralympic Games in Seoul in 1988 and Barcelona in 1992 as well as several ISMWSF world championships, holding several national and world records in her class. In wheelchair rugby, she participated in countless events across North America and internationally, including several Canadian championships where she was frequently named to all-tournament teams. She was also member of Canada's national team at the first Wheelchair Rugby World Championships in Notwill, Switzerland, in 1995, one of the few female athletes ever to compete at that level in the sport.

Following her retirement from competition, Judith remained a committed volunteer in sport for athletes with a disability. She served for many years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association, as the Chair of the Canadian Wheelchair Rugby Committee, and as Secretary of the International Wheelchair Rugby Federation, posts she held until her death. Judith always credited sports for making her the person she was, and her life was a testament to the power of sport and active living to change the lives of persons with a disability. She gained a great deal from her involvement, and worked hard to give back to sport what it had given to her. Judith was devoted to her family, and they shared her passion for sports; in recent years a frequent sight was her sitting courtside, be it in Sydney or Gothenburg, Athens or Christchurch, with one or both of her children, watching the action. She was also dedicated to her long career with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, where she remained at work until the week of her death.

In lieu of flowers, her family has requested donations in her memory to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation or the Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association.

Judith's courage, joy, and passion for life touched the hearts of everyone who knew her, and she will be missed.