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Mark Groeneveld, 20, Becomes Fifth Dutch Cyclist to Die or Suffer Serious Heart Problems This Year



In the early hours of Monday, October 23rd, the 20-year-old Dutch cyclist Mark Groeneveld passed away, apparently of a heart attack, after having dropped out of a race in Hong Kong earlier in the day. Several reports (here, for instance, in Dutch) claim that he dropped out of the race for mechanical reasons and that his subsequent collapse was "unrelated".

In a statement on Facebook, his team X-Speed United writes: "While the circumstances of Mark's passing are currently under investigation, we have received preliminary information that suggests it may have been due to a heart attack."

This would make Groeneveld the fifth Dutch or Flemish cyclist to be stricken by serious heart problems this year. Groeneveld's death comes just one month after the Flemish cyclist Nathan Van Hooydonck got into a car crash after suffering what the Belgian paper *De Morgen* has described as "cardiac arrest" while driving. The incident happened on September 12th, just two days after the conclusion of the Tour of Great Britain, in which Van Hooydonck helped his teammate Wout van Aert of Team Jumbo Vista to victory.

Van Hooydonck, who was 27 years old at the time of the incident, would have to be placed in an artificial coma. He would subsequently undergo surgery to have a defibrillator implanted. He has retired from professional racing.

Just two weeks before the Van Hooydonck incident, in the early hours of August 29th, the 32-year-old Dutch cyclist Wesley Kreder of the French Cofidis team suffered what he himself has described as "cardiac arrest" while sleeping. "I'm happy to be alive," Kreder told the Dutch public broadcaster NOS. Kreder has also announced his retirement from competitive racing.

Two other professional cyclists, the 35-year-old Flemish cyclist Sep Vanmarcke and the 25-year-old Dutch cyclist Jarno Mobach, announced their retirements this summer after they were both discovered to have heart tissue scarring. Mobach is a former winner of the junior version of the prestigious Paris-Roubaix race. Vanmarcke announced his retirement in July and Mobach in late September, just a couple of days after Van Hooydonck's announcement.

As previously reported on the *Daily Sceptic* here, Flemish cycling already had a serious scare in the summer of 2021, when three members of just one Flemish cycling team developed cardiac problems and would be diagnosed with myocarditis shortly after being vaccinated against COVID-19.

Robert Kogon is the pen name of a widely-published journalist covering European affairs. Subscribe to his Substack and follow him on X.

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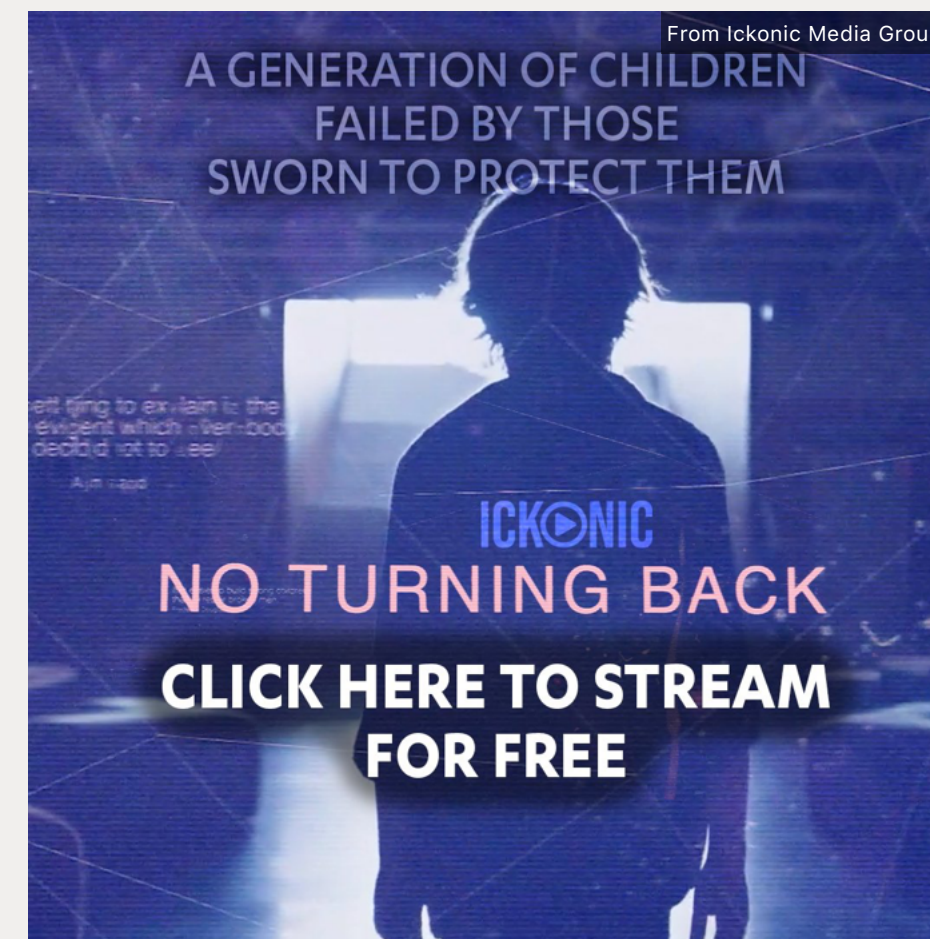
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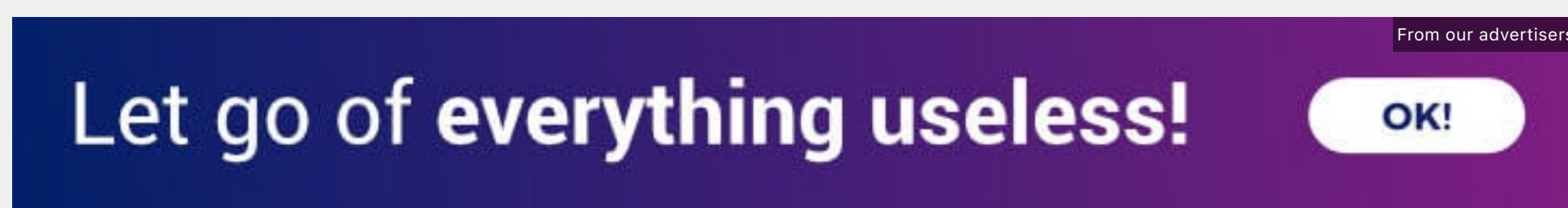
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