

Piet de Vogel (Oude Tonge, NL) An Icon in Dutch Long Distance Racing

By: Calvin Gall (Marathon Masters)

Calvin.gall@mail.wlc.edu

Piet de Vogel is a modern day icon in Dutch long distance racing being well respected throughout Europe and known worldwide. Piet has touched every avenue of the sport during his pigeon fancier career. He has been an entrepreneur by launching the well-known site top pigeons.com which became the first major successful online pigeon auction site which has continued to grow and not only include auctions, but has become a hub of everything about Dutch Marathon racing with results and articles and reports of winners. Piet also spends time writing articles about the marathon racing world and also what is going on in his own lofts with routine installments under the name "Fond Snippers." He has also been a type of scout in marathon circles, not only dealing with big commercial names, but also able to find high quality pigeons housed in "unknown fanciers" lofts. Piet's eye for talent cannot be denied as he has had the opportunity to handle countless champions not only in his own loft, but through his affiliation with [top pigeons](http://top pigeons.com) he has had the opportunity to visit countless lofts and view their champions. Through these experiences he has gained an immense knowledge of long distance pigeons and is a master when it comes to being able to select pigeons. Piet also recognized the importance of nutrition especially when it comes to the long distance races and used his knowledge to help launch the very successful [Toppigeons](http://top pigeons.com) PE Granule which is used in numerous top lofts to compete at the highest of levels which is used to help complete a pigeon's nutritional diet. Throughout all of this time and involvement in so many different areas of the sport he has still been able to compete at a champion level in his own loft. This is a testament to the quality housed at his lofts. When interviewing Piet it was obvious how much passion he has for the long distance sport of racing pigeons and he confirmed this thought when he told me, "it (long distance pigeons) is my life."

What is the base of your family of pigeons (bloodlines)? How did you breed them to create your current family? How do you decide what goes into your breeding program?

It first started in 1990 with "Jan Aarden" based pigeons. Piet's big inspiration was Piet de Weerd also from Oude Tonge! A world famous pigeon scout and selector. He helped create the Jan Aarden pigeon and in Piet's region which is the southwest part of the Netherlands in the delta works area many fanciers were successful in the marathon races with these pigeons. The first foundation pigeons came from, Jac Steketee, Wim Kooreman, Brinkman, Brugemann, and vd Wegen x Theelen (Brinkman). Piet's super breeder was "De Jonge Stayer" who was a son of the 1st International Ace Pigeon in the International Marathon races winning 4 prizes in 1 season from Pau, Barcelona, Marseille and Perpignan, an unheard of and unbelievable achievement. 2 other famous couples of Piet's were "Donkere Lazeroms" x "675" and "Stamvader 67" x "Brinkman Duivin."

After winning the 1st Western European Marathon title in 2006 Piet still did not settle for this, but the best pigeons available were located to cross breed with his base pigeons which were mainly children of the world famous breeder “Jonge Stayer.” Piet went to Ko van Dommelen where he bought “Paarsborst” a 2 time 1st national winner and according to Piet, “the best pigeon I have ever seen.” He also got “De Cas” which was the Best European Barcelona pigeon from 2009-2010. He then went to Fons van Ophuizen where he bought the “Tarbes” a top racer of Florizoone origin and others. Then from Karl Heinz Kanski the international winner of Agen “Super Agen” was also purchased which has turned out to be a fantastic breeder himself. Piet then coupled his old strain of the “Jonge Stayer” with these new acquisitions and the result were super pigeons! This line made him famous and gave Piet 4 official National Ace Pigeon ZLU titles, along with 12 unofficial rankings and many official top 10 Ace rankings. This “new” family of pigeons Piet dubbed his “Ace Pigeons Line.”

Piet says that the pigeon sport is evolving very fast and so are the type of winning pigeons. As founder and owner of the world famous marathon auction site toppigeons.com Piet does many loft visits and so he is able to rub shoulders with other champions and decided to introduce the best there is for his discipline being the extreme long distance. His goal is breeding top pigeons that win, not necessarily creating a strain. A strain of pigeons can help, but is not the end goal. The use of inbreeding is only good to keep the good genes together, but not necessarily to improve. Piet also keeps an eye out for winners, but especially ace pigeons at a national level with other top rankings. Successful introductions he has made were the “Max” line (Bungeneers/De Heijde) “Mr. Gijs” (Arjan Beens) and pigeons of Jellema.

With these pigeons and strategy Piet created 3 lines of pigeons, his Ace Pigeon Line – Max Line – Mr. Gijs line. These lines are further developed by some inbreeding, then crossing with the best and again inbreeding with the best. Piet’s Ace Pigeon line was refreshed with a cross of the Wijnands pigeons and nowadays pigeons from Arie and Bert Saarloos who has a family of winning pigeons based on Noel Peiren of Belgium.

Piet’s lines of thinking when it comes to having a successful breeding loft is based on the fact that he never sold the best racers or breeders, but only their youngsters. Then invest in the best proven pigeons there are. Focus on ace pigeons at the National level when it comes from a family of winners. Also the understanding that a winning team is ever changing, because standing still is stopping the evolution and improvement of a winning team. Piet is always looking for better which is part of his basic principles which are; scouting, testing and selecting at the highest level.

What system do you race and how do you prep them for a long distance flight?

Piet races mostly on the widowhood system only with cocks. A few years he also tried total widowhood, both cocks and hens. He puts some couples on the natural system that are pointed towards Barcelona. In comparison to his competitors Piet races with a much smaller team than

most and he focuses on quality not quantity. Success comes from good pigeons, on a good system, by a good fancier. Piet's main focus is on very special top quality pigeons!

What supplements do you use or natural products?

Piet of course makes great use of TopPigeons PE Granulate which he was instrumental in its productions. Some additional products used are probiotics, sedochol, animal protein, oregano, wonder pigeon and electrolytes.

How do you feed and what do you feed your birds during the training period and leading up to a race?

During the training season the type of food used is very light (low protein), enough is given, but it's a light mixture as to its content. During the marathon season more fat and energy food is given, but relatively light. In Piet's opinion 6 feedings of high energy feed is good enough to load the pigeons for the most difficult and longest races, but also keep them eating in the basket. Piet uses the feed mixtures of Matador.

Thoughts on medications?

According to Piet medication use needs to be as little as possible. You need to have strong pigeons. Only strong soldiers can win the war states Piet! Natural health is important for pigeons. A vaccination for PMV, Pox and Herpes plus sometimes a product or tablet for canker is given. When he thinks there is a problem he will go to the vet. The main medicine used is oxygen and a tough selection where the weak pigeons are taken out.

What are some of your best achievements, championships, titles or prizes won?

There are so many to mention, its hard to keep the list short, but here are some top championships, ace pigeons and prizes won. 2018-2019-2020 were very successful seasons winning a lot! Here a short overview of recent results!

2nd, 3rd, 4th in the National Marathon ZLU (loft competition)

1st, 4th, 5th in the West European Super Marathon ZLU

2nd, 2nd, 3rd, 12th the International PIPA IATP ranking

4 official 1st National Ace Pigeons ZLU and 2x Best ZLU pigeon over 5 years according to the ranking of the Fondspiegel

Along with 40 vases won in ZLU races which go to top 25 national winners.

In his local club from Middelharnis more than 30x 1st prizes have been won in races from 800 to 1170 km, this with only 7 races a year. St Vincent 6x (ZLU & NPO), Bordeaux/Agen ZLU (4x), Barcelona (2x), Perpignan (4x), Mont de Marsan (2x), Cahors (3x), Pau (2x), Marseille (2x), Bergerac (2x) Narbonne 4x

4 wins on a Semi-National level in the SNZH (Combine North & South-Holland): Mont de Marsan NPO, Barcelona, Agen ZLU and Narbonne 2020

National Prizes:

2nd Agen ZLU

2nd Mont de Marsan NPO (morning liberation)
3rd Mont de Marsan NPO
3rd St. Vincent NPO
4th Cahors NPO (morning liberation)
5th Pau ZLU
6th Agen ZLU
6th Narbonne ZLU
6th Cahors NPO
7th Bergerac NPO
8th Narbonne ZLU
9th Narbonne ZLU
9th St. Vincent NPO
10th St. Vincent NPO
11th St. Vincent NPO
11th Bordeaux ZLU
11th Cahors NPO (morning liberation)
13th Cahors NPO (morning liberation)
13th Bergerac NPO
13th Bordeaux ZLU
14th Perpignan Rieux
16th Barcelona ZLU
17th Agen ZLU
18th Narbonne ZLU
17th Narbonne ZLU
18th Narbonne ZLU
20th Narbonne ZLU

References of winners in other lofts:

Piet is very proud of his breeding abilities and how successful other fanciers are with his pigeons. It seems every year another ace pigeon or national winner is bred out of a pigeon from his loft or descends from a pigeon with de Vogel in the pedigree. It just goes to show the strength of his loft. The following is a just a small sample of 1st national winners bred from pigeons of Piet de Vogel, there are many others, but these are some of the most recent: 1st National Marseille by Jan Polder, 1st National Marseille by Boonen Brothers, 1st National Bergerac 2019 by vd Rhee, 1st National Bergerac 2020 by Burggraaf, 1st National Barcelona by Jacky de Bruine was a grandchild of a de Vogel pigeon etc. Piet has recently started working in cooperation with Carlo Dominicus who acts as a satellite loft for Piet where more pigeons can be tested that are bred by Piet and this with great success having already won a 2nd National Agen, 7th National Perpignan, 18th National St. Vincent, 23rd National Narbonne etc. as well as 4th National Ace Pigeon ZLU and 7th National Ace Pigeon ZLU. Piet continues to focus more and more on the art of breeding top quality pigeons and a saying he often uses is “breeding is gold

and racing is silver.” A few years ago Piet made an investment and built up a fantastic breeding loft where he houses his ace pigeons, top breeders and children of numerous top birds throughout Europe from the best long distance genetics he can get. The foundation of his results is his fantastic breeding center where he focuses on making the best pigeon combinations.

What is currently your best pigeon?

When asked this question Piet said “many,” and rightly so, but he did point out a few and broken them down in a few categories, like ace pigeons, top breeders and racers.

First are the 1st National Ace Pigeons, of which he has four of them:

“DRIFTKIKKER” Grandson of PAARSBORST and SON TARBES

“BARCELONA DUIVIN” daughter of MAX

“CAHORS” son of TARBES

“VLEERMUIS” Piet’s old lines

Top Breeders:

“MAX”

“MR GIJS” son of the famous OLYMPIC MISS GIJSJE

“ZWARTE AS” (BLACK ACE) grandson PAARSBORST

He is sire of two top racers over the past two years “NEW ACE” and “BLACK WARRIOR” read their results below

Top racers:

“NEW ACE” winner of 1st NIC St. Vincent ZLU 2019 – 8th SNZH – 33rd National ZLU

“BLACK WARRIOR” 1st NIC Narbonne 2020 – 1st Department 5 Narbonne – 1st SNZH (semi-national) vs. 2,035 birds and 18th National ZLU

“DELTAMAX” 5th International Ace pigeon Barcelona in 4 of the toughest Barcelona editions in history.

He consecutively won against the strongest competition in the Netherlands the following:

2017: 403rd National

2018: 40th National

2019: 233rd National

2020: 242nd National

He was also entered in two other National ZLU races and won:

185th National Perpignan in 2019

93rd National Narbonne in 2018

And as a yearling he won a nice prize from Cahors which was a morning release

Goal for the future?

Piet wants to remain at the top in the international races and continue to have fun/pleasure with his pigeons.

What is the secret to your success or what do you attribute your success to?

Dedication, good scouting of talented birds, a very strong selection and very rational approach to the pigeon sport.

I would like to thank Piet de Vogel for his cooperation in this article. He has a wealth of knowledge in the long distance pigeon game, with super birds and is indeed an icon in the sport.