

WWRacingpigeons, A Team Based on Friendship and a Passion for Long Distance Pigeons (Biddinghuizen & Harderwijk, NL)

By: Calvin Gall (Marathon Masters)

calvin.gall@mail.wlc.edu

The name of the team “WWRacingpigeons” stands for “World Wide racing pigeons” and are also the first initials of two passionate pigeon fanciers Wulfert and Wilfred. They have a shared passion for pigeon racing and the ambition for top performances, the friendship between Wulfert ter Beek and Wilfred Hamstra is centered on pigeon racing. The basis for WWRacingpigeons is friendship, passion, ambition and fun. A life without pigeon racing is too hard to imagine for both fanciers, for them it is a lot more than a hobby, more like a sport, it is a passion. From this mutual feeling and opposed to all the negative opinions within our sport, they see the positive and a feeling of nothing but opportunities to continue practicing their beloved sport. Their motto is dream differently, think differently, do otherwise! Both members of the partnership race together with their fathers in a combination, Combination Ter Beek in Biddinghuizen and G. Hamstra and Son in Harderwijk both in The Netherlands.

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?

There is no doubt a real family in their lofts. Over the years they have performed well with offspring from various top fanciers or bloodlines. They believe in getting several pigeons from the same loft to lay a foundation for ten to fifteen years, but in principle there are pigeons from different lofts in the breeding loft. This is done with the idea of establishing hybrid connections through crossing.

The team determines which pigeons are intended for the breeding loft by contacting people who perform well with multiple pigeons in the results or who have a well-performing pigeon. For them, they must also feel right about the person they are buying from, especially if they intend to purchase several pigeons. In addition, it must be a well-performing family from which pigeons are bought. If those conditions are met, they will then look at the external characteristics of the pigeons that are purchased, with the exception of internet auctions.

Since 2012 they have gone several times to Bennie and Loes Homma to get pigeons, several of which are from their best pigeons in the breeding loft. The last few years they have also obtained several pigeons from Jan Morsink, the collector of Jelle Jellema pigeons.

Also home-bred pigeons are used for breeding, bred from their best breeders or racers when focused on inbreeding, for example from their best breeding hen 'Fatih.' Good racing pigeons are also moved to the breeding loft to ensure the future (for example 'Mr. Tropical' and 'Lady Karma').

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

The team participates in the marathon races in both lofts. Preparation starts when they are youngsters by training them 4 to 5 times in their year of birth. The following year as a yearling is also seen as training. As a yearling, depending on how it goes in the season, they get a few one day long distance races of about 500 to 700 kilometers. In some cases they will also race them on an afternoon marathon release.

As a two-year-old, everything is expected of them and they are seriously prepared for the marathon races. They are entered every week until about three weeks before the main races. There is a build-up in the preparation not only in kilometers covered, but also in food of course. During the marathon races they are regularly taken down the road by themselves for training in hopes to get them in a rhythm. Everything revolves around training and energy that is required to perform well and for that, of course, you need quality and healthy pigeons. They select for health year round and during the season they regularly visit a veterinarian, alternating between three experienced and highly skilled veterinarians.

What supplements do you use or natural products?

The men try to stay as close to nature as possible in both lofts. They do this by giving supplements that acidify the water, onions and garlic and oregano. This as a basis with supplements in the race season to support the competing pigeons. Electrolytes and vitamins are used for this, but also probiotics and supplements containing iron/iodine.

Of course it is not entirely possible to do it 100% in a natural way. The pigeons are also vaccinated for paramyxovirus (NCD), pox and salmonella. If necessary, antibiotics are used to clean the airways (respiratory) or intestines and keep them free from bacteria.

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

In the preseason the pigeons are fed food with little protein and more carbohydrates, which is then measured. Towards the main season this becomes more high protein and high fat and during the marathon season the pigeons are given unlimited food. The last five days before basketing, the pigeons receive a lot of fats (peanuts) and proteins for food before the race and electrolytes in the water for the last two days.

Thoughts on medications?

As stated above, the team feels that medication is needed at some point, unfortunately, but they do their best to limit this.

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

At the loft of Combination Ter Beek years of racing were done on the one day long distance races (500-700 kilometers). They have been focusing on the marathon races for about three

years now and the first achievements have already been made with three top ten prizes on the NPO marathon races in two seasons!

The loft of G. Hamstra and Son was the 2008 morning release champion in Province 8 G.O.U. and in 2013 they were the National Champion Loft for the marathon on the afternoon releases.

What is currently your best pigeon?

The team's best racing pigeons at the moment are 'Lady Karma' although she has moved to the breeding loft, 'Mister Gijs,' 'Annemiek,' 'Tabasco' and 'Appie'.

Their best breeding pigeons are 'Fatih,' 'Daughter New Cheeta' and 'Orangini.'

Goal for the future?

We focus on cooperation to obtain a collection of racing pigeons who have the characteristics to perform at marathon races and win top prizes. They wish to gather knowledge, share knowledge, joint-breeding, racing together and raising the standard in regards to quality. In both lofts in Biddinghuizen and Harderwijk, the products of mutual breeding will be raced. In addition, having fun and working together with their fathers is even more important. Another goal is to participate in the one loft races in the near future. A beautiful passion, racing pigeons!

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

We do not talk about our own success, but enjoy working together and racing together with our fathers; and we enjoy when other pigeon fanciers perform well with our pigeons.