



## MY SYSTEM

I am happy to share my system. It's built on trial and error and years of experience racing pigeons. My pigeons are coupled mid April and after 5 days on the eggs, the eggs are taken away. Widowhood starts from the first of May. The widowers are taken first for a flight of 20km and are liberated together, two days later on Wednesday they are liberated again for a distance of 20 km, but then set free one by one. On Thursday, again liberated one by one for a 50km flight and then on Friday they all go together to Peronne (270km). This means they are taught everything in one week; also the yearlings (only the late ones, because I breed only after the season). The yearlings are out every day during the whole winter, come rain or shine. Snow, fog, rain, storm, name it and they fly. Because of this, they become very 'loft loyal' and they select themselves out. Even though this sounds harsh, I lose very few pigeons. As mentioned, in spring they are trained up in one week and then liberated from Peronne (270 km.) They learn from and with the older pigeons. The last flights with the club they go on one night basket, then two nights basket, each week. One half of the yearlings are entered into the Bordeaux ZLU morning liberation and the other half are entered into the late afternoon liberation Bordeaux/ Bergerac. With this system, I hardly suffer any losses in the summer season. Who wrote that late young are dumb? I don't have problems with Coli or disaster flights with young birds. The yearlings that cannot be placed in the widowhood loft, fly as 'monk' or 'priest' and are entered in the same races as the widowhood yearlings and their results are equally good. Selection takes place throughout the whole year, but the big selection occurs when they are 2 years old.

## Medication

It sounds boring, but outside the prescribed inoculations nothing at all and this already since 2005 (5 years now). In the years before that, I used to join the others in all the popular medical treatments put in drinking water and sprinkled over feed. However, when my wife suddenly got a stroke, my focus was on her care and for about 6 years I simply could not play, except for a small race here and there to keep things going. After a while however, not being able to race, I had to make the radical decision to completely stop with the medication. That decision cost me a lot of pigeons in the first years, but the ones that survived were very healthy. It did not mean that they were fast, but that came back later. During the first two years without medication, they were regularly checked by Dr. van der Sande (Belgium) and together we built resistance with natural products. In the third year, I stopped this also and now they only receive VIOR (Biff) a mildly acid natural product from the same doctor in Belgium that kills bacteria in the lining of the stomach and intestine. I have not seen any "canker" or digestive infection in my loft in years now. I send three or four times a year my manure to Dr. van der Sluis and this is clear each time. Equally no Coli or wet eyes amongst my young. A dirty nose every now and then, but never for long, otherwise they go. As said my selection is tough and I also think it has to do with the fact that my yearlings do not fly in races with other young. This way, they do not bring any problems home.

WITH THE BREEDERS IT'S ANOTHER STORY as pigeons from a different milieu are being introduced. I do cure some of those if needed, but DO NOT EXAGGERATE here either. It is against my principles now. However, I do need Dr. Van der Sluis as some of Max' and my own top birds are worth a small fortune and I simply cannot say goodbye to them, although I must confess that even this has occurred on several occasions.

When you read all this, you must think that it cannot be this simple anymore in today's racing environment. You are right to a certain extent. I learned from my many visits to other top lofts that yes, even though my pigeons were very healthy; they were not fast enough. Flying in the frontline and recuperating were my problems. I could not manage all the morning and afternoon liberations and get them ready (in form) in time for the next flight. I only entered ZLU races. However, for Perpignan the last race, I never had any pigeons left. Every bird and already participated in at least two or more races. I could see they just would not handle anymore. It was not the pigeons. They had come from the best breeders.

Then one day, I read in an article by Fons van Ophuizen in the 'DUIF' that he had no problem to nurture his pigeons back into form with the usage of natural products from Dr. Brockamp. I decided to give it a try and selected a few birds including 'RONALD'. To my big surprise the difference between the group with and without was enormous.

'RONALD' straight away won 1<sup>ST</sup> Asduif of C.C. Leiden dept.5 ZLU flights in 2008 and 'Hidde' played 1<sup>ST</sup> on Narbonne (see photo's on my site). First, I thought that this could be coincidence, but in 2009 I decided to give all my pigeons the natural products of Dr. Brockamp and I became 1<sup>st</sup> Champion of C.C. Leiden dept. 5 ZLU and again 1<sup>st</sup> ASDUIF, this time with 'WILLEM'. He also became 2<sup>nd</sup> ASDUIF of dept. 5 Z-H (South Holland) and 2nd ASDUIF of North and South Holland (see photo of championship on my site).

Recuperation which used to take more than a week now happened in a day. They were so quickly back in form, that I had trouble with my discipline. PERPIGNAN was no longer a problem and I could have, if I wanted send all of them. I will not go over the explanation of it all here, but if you would like a booklet, let me know.



**"WILLEM"**  
NL. 07-1838475

2009:  
1° Asduif Z.L.U. "De Glazen Stad"  
1° Asduif Z.L.U. C.C. Leiden  
2° Asduif Z.L.U. Af. 5 Zuid-Holland  
2° Asduif Z.L.U. S.N.Z.H. Noord-Zuid Holland  
1° Bordeaux Z.L.U. N.I.C. Nieuwveen  
2° Bordeaux Z.L.U. C.C. Leiden  
3° Bordeaux Z.L.U. FC. "De Glazen Stad"  
5° Bordeaux Z.L.U. Afd. 5 Zuid-Holland  
23° Nationaal Bordeaux Z.L.U.

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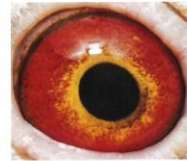
Foto: Fred La Brijn

## Feeding system

I can be short about this. I follow the system of PEET SOLLEVELD from MAASDIJK with the brand BEYERS, I customize this. I have stopped the full bowl at all times and also the heavy fond feed all season long. I now use perhaps 1 bag of heavy fond feed (Fond Olympic) for seven ZLU flights on 28 widowers. Before, during and after the flights I use Premium VANDENBEELE, egg white poor (avoid the beans with regards to muscle stiffness). Eight days before the flight I start mixing this in with the Fond Olympic and the last five days only Fond Olympic. With this 3-6-9 kernel (CéDé), treat seeds and 'Super Energy' the last 3 to 4 days, in a small bowl on the side. After they get home, two feedings of Olympic Fond and after that again VANDENBEELE. And do not forget the products by Dr. Brockamp, before and after the flights. If you want to read this in more detail, have a look at Peet's site (his link is on my site here) as he has made a study of this.

"C.C. LEIDEN & OMSTREKEN 2008"

- 1° Asduif Fond Z.L.U. vluchten C.C.L.
- 2° Tarbes
- 6° Pau
- 19° Perpignan



"RONALD"  
06-1089936

W.P. van Rijk,  
Hazerswoude dorp.

Foto: Fred La Brijn

## Breeding

This is my biggest hobby and it keeps be busy forever. The software programs alone; and I have more than 15,000 family trees in my PC. I can sit for days searching and analyzing bloodlines. During an interview with a fancier I sometimes know more about their pigeons than they do themselves. I go through great lengths to find the best of the best that are suitable for the rest of my breeding stock. I am grateful that I have the luxury of being offered many really great birds coming from 1st winners and I sometimes have to be diplomatic in saying 'no' because they do not fit into my breeding program. Together with my cousin Max we travel long distances to find the best pigeons. Sometimes I spend months of study beforehand, but despite this, we still (regularly) go wrong. On paper it can look so beautiful, but in reality, the bird can be so different. Forty years ago I started with Wanroys and they are still the base of my current breeding stock. The only problem is, trying to find a really great pigeon. I believe that HANS KNETSCH' from Katwijk is the only one left to breed Wanroys that consistently fly in the lead Nationally and I am very lucky to be able to visit him regularly for an article. I nearly never leave there without a promising bird.

The Wanroys of Hans Knetsch perform in the worst conditions (especially in our notorious western winds) and still come in 1st along the coast. They arrive at night or early in the morning and are great breeders ('Maarten', 1<sup>st</sup> Nat. and 2<sup>nd</sup> Inter Nat. and 'Jopie' 3x 1<sup>st</sup>). They are the real performing Wanroys. At age 76, Hans' output is a little lower these days and his pigeons just do it by themselves without much pampering. With him I can talk about Wanroy's for hours and hours as he has a photographic memory and does not need a computer. People arriving with bags full of money are sent away with nothing on many an occasion, but if you genuinely get on with him and it clicks, you leave with champions.

Currently, we are in the middle of the breeding birds from Peet Solleveld and Luc van Coppenolle, (Florizoone/ Coutteau pigeons) which we believe will bring more speed into our overnights. This proved to be necessary in 2009. Four ZLU flights and home the same day, unbelievable! Our breeding method has been the same for years: cross the best pigeons, then select the best, cross them back with each other, select again the best, coupling them back across, select and then take the best pigeons and cross them with the original couple you started with. Make sure you select only the best, so be tough!

If you have any questions, please send me an email and I shall do my best to respond ASAP.

Best regards, Wim van Rijk

