

# INTRODUCTION

by Claude Rothgiesser

The birds on sale are the breeders that were fully fertile last year, breeding up to August. They have been examined recently by a vet with an excellent knowledge of racing pigeons and all were declared in perfect health. Where there was the slightest doubt they were discarded.

The older the birds on the sale, the more winners they will have produced and that is why they were kept for breeding.

## THE SUN CITY MILLION DOLLAR RACE (SOUTH AFRICA) 2012

It is over for this year – 27 races in all called the greatest pigeon event in the world.

The Canadian team had bad luck. For some reason the 2 shipments sent 2 days apart apparently went in to the state quarantine instead of the Sun City quarantine, and only half the Canadian birds came out alive, and perhaps damaged.

My team started very well, winning one of the early races against 5200 birds. The final (big) race was very tough with heat & headwinds. My first bird was 306<sup>th</sup> on the first day out of a total release of nearly 3500, but my team result was the best ever – 11 out of 12 back before 2pm 2<sup>nd</sup> day. My first bird, “Cookie”, was 18<sup>th</sup> overall in the Grand Averages of 27 races and 7000 birds that were originally entered.

## THE FAMILIES

### J& J Engels

Those in the New York / New Jersey area who tell me how well the Haveniths do there, will be interested to know that the Engels and the Van Rhijn Kloecks are probably the 2 oldest and most successful Havenith based families in existence – dating back to the 1940's.

The Engels are a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation family loft – the father of the brothers Engels was the famous Flor Engels who took over the loft from his father and uncle.

The Engels are strong, good - looking pigeons and are in the background of nearly all Belgian champion lofts. The Engels were a great cross for Gaby Vandenabeele – at the end of 2011, Gaby introduced 3 new Engels hens to his stock loft based on their great results for him over the previous 15 – 20 years.

The Engels have done extremely well in the Sun City races in South Africa – this year's 7<sup>th</sup> position was a pure Engels.

### Van Rhijn Kloeck

Jan Kloeck, who died in January at the age of about 94, raced in earlier years with his father-in-law, Van Rhijn. They won the Championship of Antwerp about 14 times – easily a record. They raced out of a small loft with very few birds of the highest quality. Their birds were very successful in South Africa already 50 years ago when I started and I have been racing them that long. They are also an old Havenith – based family and good at all distances and in all weather. I had great success with them up to our longest races of 540 – 560 miles, and also in the Sun City race where my first winner (29<sup>th</sup>) was a Van Rhijn Kloeck cross. They handle beautifully and are a very good looking family.

### Houben

Nadia Houben gave Silvere Toye 2 of their best young birds as a “thank you” for his kindness to her on a Belgian trip to the Far East . The best of the 2 is the oldest bird on sale – an amazing 2000 hen that handles and lays like a 4 year old. She is inbred to “Young Artist” and bred me many outstanding pigeons.

### Silvere Toye

Needs no introduction to North American fanciers. Silvere has an outstanding record in the National & Provincial races going back 30 years, winning the “Belgian Masters” one loft race 2 years ago, and placing in the first 6 in Sun City about 5 years ago with a sister of Toronto lots 1 & 25 bred from the best Gaby Vandenabeele pair that I know of.

Silvere tried every year to buy the Belgian Champion Birds and his breeding loft was therefore of the highest possible quality. Silvere’s birds were extremely successful in North America not only for me, but for many other successful fanciers like Tony Melucci.

## **De Saer**

Rudi and his late father, Antoine, are probably the most successful one day long distance (500 to 800 km) loft in Belgium over the past 11 years. They race the purest old Gaby Vandenabeele family since 1995 when Gaby was at his peak.

The De Saers have won more KBDB trophies since 2000 than any loft I know.

## **Rik Cools**

Rik Cools is a very close friend of Gaby Vandenabeele and one of the best middle distance fanciers in Europe. Rik recently sold all of his birds with the exception of the 2011 birds, and the auction realized over 1 million euro ( 1.4 million USD ).

Rik’s family of pigeons is 75-80% Vandenabeele. Rik and Gaby often breed together

## **Dirk Van Dyck**

A very successful fancier who became famous through his world-renowned prepotent breeder “Kannibaal” that established so many winning families – particularly the “Kleine Dirk” and his sister “Annalies” of Geraard Koopman .

I had 9 from Dirk, and the 3 on sale were the good breeders.

## **De Rauw Sablons (from Marcel Aelbrecht, and Jef Dechamps)**

The strain that the pigeon world has gone crazy for. The prices that these birds realize is mind – boggling. They are reputed to have bred more long distance winners in Belgium than any other strain over the last 10 years.

Frans Sablon is a close personal friend of mine. He was the breeder who “made” the strain and then had to sell his pigeons because of ill-health.

The fancier who raced the family with great success & became Belgian National Champion was Marcel Aelbrecht .

Jef Dechamps bought a lot of the best at Marcel Aelbrecht and Erik Limbourg’s sales. Jef then sold the ‘848’ to Erik Limbourg who re-sold it for a record sum. The ‘848’ is reputed to be the best De Rauw Sablon in the world.

## **Chris Hebberecht**

One of Belgium’s greatest champions over the past 10 years, at the long and middle distance. Chris has won many KBDB championships, and has also done very well in the Asian One Loft races.

Chris’ birds cross very well and Gerard Koopman and Gaby Vandenabeele both got 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Sun City big race with a Hebberecht cross.

## **Luc Van Coppenolle**

Luc was a nephew of the great Roger Florizoone, one of Belgium’s best long distance fanciers of the past 40 years. Luc & his father had a great long distance family which they crossed with the best of Roger Florizoone’s, and often bred together with Florizoone.

Luc was long distance champion of Europe on 2 or 3 occasions. His pigeons bred extremely well for me at the long distance.

## **Wout Spierings**

I bought from Wout in his best years at about the same time that Mike Ganus did – before Wout sold out totally. Mike called them “The Creators”. The strain was primarily Janssen x Van Loon and made Wout the Dutch Champion in old & young birds.

The Spierings did extremely well for me at all distances, and I strongly recommend them as a cross.

## **Georges Carteus**

Probably Belgium’s greatest long distance fancier of the last 40 years. His birds also did very well at the middle distance. Brockamp – the German long distance champion – and some of Holland’s top long distance lofts used Carteus’ pigeons.

The Carteus family was started by Georges’ father with Bricoux x Horemans and later Delbar and Van Bruane.

The Carteus pigeons did well for me, including 19<sup>th</sup> Sun City in South Africa with a youngster off lot 40 in the Toronto sale.

## **Stefaan Steenbergen**

One of Belgium’s new champions winning 3 Nationals in 3 recent years. He has done so well that Dr. Henk De Weerd, the famous pigeon vet and the late Piet De Weerd’s son went in to partnership with Stefaan recently .

## **The Putteries**

Frans Putterie was a Belgian from Antwerp who emigrated to South Africa in 1928.

In 1938 Putterie visited Belgium and started racing in South Africa with 11 pigeons from the best flyers of his old “Scaldis” club in Antwerp. These pigeons demolished the competition in South Africa. It was said in South Africa that you could not win without Putteries in your loft. The pigeons were kept pure by Mr. Putterie’s loft boy, Morris Adler, who emigrated to San Fernando Valley in California that had one of America’s strongest clubs with members like the Lorenz brothers, Marty Ladin, Art Hees & Danny Hinds. The Putterie pigeons were sensationally successful in California, especially in the hot, tough races.

Morris Adler returned to South Africa for health reasons about 12 years ago and sent me his best stock birds. They had been and continued to be extremely successful for me and others. The amazing thing about this family is that after 74 years of straight breeding it has not deteriorated in body, feather or racing prowess. Art Hees told me before he died that the best pigeon he ever raced was a pure Putterie. My best young bird in 2011 was a Putterie cross.

If you have a Putterie you will never regret it. I very seldom sell pigeons, but a Taiwanese fancier who heard that I had them, persuaded me to sell him a pair and became a champion in Taiwan with them.

## **Emil Denys**

One of Belgium’s best known long distance fanciers.

Emil became friendly with Georges Coutteau, whose pigeons were reputed to be the toughest in Belgium, and crossed them with his old Cattrysse x Stichelbaut family with great success. They have done very well in North America.

## **Germain Imbrecht**

One of Belgium’s greatest ever fanciers at all distances.

Germain is getting on in years and had a bad fall recently. We have been friends for many years and his pigeons did extremely well for me – in North America and in South Africa.