

▶ Van Gent

The end of racing season 2019 is at the horizon

We have just basketed the pigeons for our final Marathon race Bergerac yesterday. Monday evening the last race of the international morning release schedule was basketed for Perpignan. Eight hard weeks of racing lie almost behind us.

This year was a year with a lot of influence of the weather, especially rain and thunder, bad decisions on the releases and extreme hot weather.

Here in North-Holland we have three National races, St Vincent, Dax and Bergerac. These are organised by the NPO, the Dutch Pigeon Association. The we have three races that are organised by Sector 2, provinces North and South Holland. Two of these are midday releases and one of this is a morning release. Then we have seven international races organised by the ZLU, South Limburg Union. These are Pau, Agen, Barcelona, St Vincent, Marseille, Narbonne and Perpignan. So from midway through June until the first weekend of August we can participate in 13 marathon races, from approximately 900 till 1,250 kilometers.

Therefore it is known that the marathon pigeons from this part of Holland are wanted because they already were bred and raced on big distances. St Vincent, Dax, Pau, Agen, Barcelona, Marseille, Perpignan and Narbonne are all above 1,000km and only Bergerac is below 950km.

You need to have a very large racing team to be able to race all 13 races, but most of the fanciers choose between morning and midday release and some even do some of both. In our province of North-Holland there are only about 10 lofts who can do this. Amongst these Ysbrand Kaptein from Akersloot, Combine Jan Hommes & Sons from Akersloot, Dirk Pals from Bovenkerk, Leo Pronk from Breezand, Gertjan Rigter from

Amstelveen, Combine Verweij de Haan from Mijdrecht, Harry Hendriks from Vinkeveen, Brugemann Brothers from Assendelft and the Jacobs Brothers from Nes aan de Amstel.

Weijden from Hoorn are amongst these. They use the midday release for training purposes or do not race these races at all and focus themselves on the international races. They know they have to compete

against lofts that are 300km (north of France), 200km (mid Belgium) and 120km (South of Holland) shorter in distance. But even on the big Barcelona races of the last five years the result list in North-Holland was already made up (1 in 4 pigeons will get on it) while they were still busy with registering or clocking the birds in Belgium 120-200km shorter in distance. This is also one of the threads for this race. There are too many fanciers in Belgium who think that Barcelona is just a bit further than Vierzon, Chateauroux or Bourges. They still think that a long distance pigeon can also come home early from Barcelona only twice the distance. They like to gamble on this race with their pigeons which cannot do the distance and will be lost.



Please take good care of stray pigeons. I always look after them like they are my own. I have two cages in my garage where I try to get them ready again. I first try to find out where they are from. When close by, I contact the owner. When further away I will get them ready and release them 20km from my home. I bought some drinkers with my Chinese friends and they work very good.

There are lofts who make choices and only do morning release international races. Kees Droog from Andijk, Cees van der Laan from Castricum, Dirk and Elitsa Veldhuis from Diemen, Ewoud van der

My season up so far

I've basketed in total five of the six NPO and Sector 2 races. I only did not basketed Cahors morning release two weeks back because the pigeons were all without any good nest position.

After good training flights for the two year old and older I've basketed five birds for St Vincent. Due to a very bad release on the Friday, the pigeons got into a hail and rain storm in the North of France/ South of Belgium. Luckily I timed a 2015 year hen on time within the first 10% of the result list. A second one came home and I lost three, two experienced birds and a new one. The bad release was done to please the religious fanciers who do not time their birds on a Sunday. So a Saturday release was out of the question.

A week after we had a race from Bordeaux. I basketed six



Super hen 15-233 'Marathon Lady'.

pigeons, two experienced ones and four 2017 birds. The pigeons were released on Saturday and again it was a rainy weird race. I timed a 2017 cock really early, with the first 40 in the Province and was very happy with the result. Four out of six returned. One experienced hen with already six prizes and a 2017 bird did not return.

Then we got Agen midday release. I planned international Agen for six 2017 birds, but I passed on that one due to the very high temperatures on the way home (40 degrees). I basketed them a week later on the Agen race. Two were just too late for the result list, and a third one came home three weeks later. This release was also disputable, hail and rain were again predicted and that was a good prediction. We cannot help it, but it was not good.

So for Dax I basketed the hen of St Vincent and the cock of that race. The hen was again within the first 30 in the

Province and I was delighted. This hen got back on her eggs after St Vincent, but her cock did not return. She laid eggs again without a cock and started breeding on them 24/7. That was the nest position she was basketed. Now she is basketed for Bergerac. She found a new cock on the return of Dax. I've put a just ringed youngster in the nest bowl and she took immediately power over it. After five days she added a pair of eggs and this is the nest position she was basketed yesterday. I am hoping for three out of three for her in 2015. When she does that she will have 3,000 prize kilometers.

The yearlings were trained on the middle distance races and now will get National Vierzon (620km) as their final test for this year. The whole of the Netherlands will be release in one go and they need to find their way out of it and just get home in a decent manner.

The youngsters now train around the

loft for 45-50 minutes a day. I have already trained them twice on 12 kilometers. They will get 25 kilometers and then they will go with the club for three times. When I train them myself I always release them one by one and increasing the time in between from 30 seconds to 90 seconds. Then they are immediately awake and they feel the need to orientate. They will end up in groups and go home, but the groups get smaller each time I train them. So I think they learn more out of these tosses than when you liberate the whole group in one go.

Update:

Bergerac was superb! The hen of St Vincent and Dax did it again and finished at the top four in the Region. Almost 3,100 kilometers on three races, Then 16 minutes later the second pigeon is timed. Also a very early bird. I basketed two my racers, so I was done for the day.

THE LINCOLNSHIRE GEORDIE



The first race of the young bird season was cancelled due to weather conditions, so onto the next three races. On the 3rd August our members sent 331 birds approx 95 miles to Abingdon. D Parker & Son & Rogerson were 1st, 3rd & 4th, I was 2nd with a gift bird from Gordon Smart. J Ramm was 5th and H Walker 6th. Most birds came on time but quite a few adrift. I sent 12 with only 6 returning and 3 reported, not a good start.

On to Abingdon (2) a great result for Peter Norris loft coming in 1st, 2nd & 3rd with velocities of 1930, & 1924. Mr & Mrs Maurice Colyer were 4th & 6th with D Parker, Son & Rogerson 5th, once again a lot missing. I eventually got 14/17 and I believe some lost double figures. Once again our club sent over 300 birds, coming home in a strong west wind but our club had the slowest velocities.

The weather for Bedhampton looked a bit iffy and with young bird sickness about birdage was down to 196 largely to 2 members each sending over 60 each. The birds were released at 7.45 into a south west wind. D Parker & Son & Rogerson only sent his hens and clocked a blue bar at 10-11-28 to win on 1724; Secretary Jim Ablitt was 2nd & 6th, with Tim Ramm 3rd, 4th & 5th. Tim had 6in a minute so well



Peter Norris.

done when other members once again struggled.

H Walker from Balderton trains twice a week 50 miles and his returns have been excellent, many times having multiple drops.



Mark Lawrence.

After 3 races the young bird sickness has arrived, at least 6 lofts in our club are affected, on medication right away. After 4 or 5 days they are back eating and exercising. The amount of birds missing has been heavy for some, in 2 races I have lost 8 but lost 10 in training. This week is our Breeder/Buyer and the Fed Gold Ring race, I have 2 Breeder/Buyers and 1 Gold Ring so fingers crossed. Only 4 races left, then its back to the drawing board.

Congratulation to Mark Lawrence who had a fantastic old bird season especially in the MNFC races and now after 3 young bird races he has topped the Fed every week. Well done Mark.

Colin Creighton