

▶ Van Gent

Second part of the season and winter preparations

The second and last part of racing season 2018 was good. The yearling racers did their last part of their education races and they did the National race of Chateauroux 670 kilometers with a National release. So they had to find their way home all by themselves. And they did! Dax National was also a good race for me with 2 out of 3 on the result list. The youngsters were basketed 3 times and they only had one job, return home in a good way. And most of them did. Of course you have your losses, but that is normal. Not all youngsters you breed are top class performers and can find the way home. So now the fools and idiots are not there anymore we can go on.

Before I went on vacation in September I cleaned the whole loft. I have wooden floor grills and the grills are lifted and everything is cleaned underneath. I then use a gas burner which is used to get rid of weeds and moss and all surfaces in the loft. With this I hope to get rid of germs and stuff. Then I spray Virkon S in the loft and use the gas burner again to make the loft dry. I did this for the whole loft in a period of 3 weeks. Compartment by compartment. We can put the most in the city collection of natural garbage so I can only do this with a limited amount per week.

Doing this, I got rid of the nest bowls and put the breeding boxes to their winter layout. Youngsters and racers were put together, so that

the youngsters can get familiar with their new home for next year.

After I came back from vacation I started the paratyphus cure. I do this every year and I use a different vendor every year. The minimum length of this cure is 21 days. After about 10 days I separated the boys from the girls. I handled each bird, they got a drop against parasites. Further I can see if the pigeons have a good weight, how far they are in the moulting process and I can see if there are differences between the pigeons. This year I took 5 out which were negatively outstanding. Why do I do this after 10 days? The paratyphus cure is a tough cure for a pigeon. And it is known that when they have something that is not good, they will suffer more than the healthy ones. I can also take action on the feeding if they are too fat, and I can take action when a pigeon is dealing with a very bad moult. In the last stretch of the 21 days or just after I will give them the paratyphus combined with paramix shot. The last one is obligatory here in the Netherlands and is for 1 year. After a week I will handle all the birds again and see if I can see some weird things.

During the moulting season the pigeons get the opportunity to take a bath at least twice a week. And they make good use of this. The weather does not mind at all, the only thing is that I like to do this in the morning, so that they can dry during the day. After we move the clock

to the winter time, the pigeons will not train anymore. First of all I will leave and return home when it is dark. And secondly during the weekends I try to train them, but that is from the



beginning of February. So I try to get as much fresh air as possible into the loft.

I do not use heating of any kind because I think that the pigeons are able to cope with the cold. And I think that the cold is very good to kill germs and other stuff. Only when I am breeding and I have youngsters with the breeders and it is very cold, then I use a bit of heating under the fountain, just to let the parents feed their children properly.

What else?

I am in the steering committee of Stichting Marathon Noord. This is a competition for fanciers in the Netherlands with a minimum distance to St Vincent of 1,030 kilometers. We have an international morning release competition with the races Barcelona, Marseille and Perpignan and a midday release competition with St Vincent, Dax and Bergerac. Only the first 2 of the entry list count for this competition, so every competitor has the same chances.

We had our Champions gala recently and the next time I will present the champion Morning Release and the Champion Midday release to you. Have a good last part of the year and keep on being alert in the loft and keep your eyes open.

Arjan van Gent
www.van-gent.com



The winter layout of the nest boxes.