Moulting time

First I need to give you an update of the last weekend of my racing season 2020.

I am still a happy fancier. I basketed four for Bergerac. 'Marathon Lady' just produced her first egg on basketing day. So I did not basketed her. For Narbonne I basketed three birds. Bergerac was superb. I have two of four in the result list and only one is still on his way home. From Narbonne I have two home out of three. Not getting on the result list but

The first bird of Bergerac was my second on the same race in 2019 just after 'Marathon Lady'. My second bird home was the hen that was first from Bordeaux. It was a hard race, with a lot of rain on the way home in Belgium. I am also happy that the pigeons I basketed for 245km for training are also home again. These pigeons were injured or miss flown in the beginning of the season. So these have proven that their compass is correct again.

The old bird season 2020 brought challenges, but we dealt

with it. Not many birds got lost, and the lengthening of the day after the longest day with light was successful.

Youngsters

The youngsters are trained upto 190 kilometers. They were basketed four times in total. The last race was a weird one and a hard one. Some lofts suffered great losses and on mine I only lost 10%. So good for now.

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Automatic feeder.

Pre and after Vacation

After the last race I started to select the birds and I cleaned all the lofts under the wooden grids. In the breeding loft I have an automatic feeder all year and I have a second one

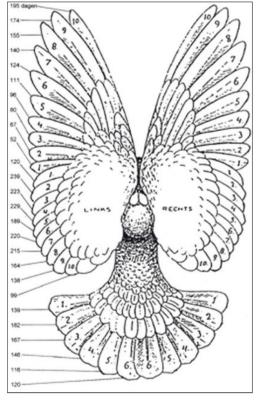
which I use during my vacation. The nest boxes in the winter position, so all nest bowls were cleaned, washed and stored. I also stopped the extra lightning that I had from the 21st June until return of the last race. I did this from 0500 till 2300. I installed it, put all the pigeons into the race and young bird lofts. The three departments are connected with each other and the pigeons can go anywhere. So two automatic feeders into the lofts. Three five litre drinkers and the pigeons can take care for themselves for at least four days. So the caretaker of my pigeons only needs to visit the loft five times in a 18 day period. He is an exfancier who can see enough on a visit and do the water and the food.

On our vacation we stayed in the Netherlands and travelled from Terschelling to the Veluwe and then to the South of Limburg. Bikes packed on

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the car, so we did a lot of cycling and we can say The Netherlands is very beautiful!

Another advantage is that the breeding compartment is unoccupied for five weeks. Farmers always say that it is good to leave a stable empty for a longer period. So it was cleaned, treated with a gas burner. After I returned from vacation I treated the loft with a disinfectant spray and let the loft rest for another two weeks. I removed the automatic feeders and after this I am doing my daily care taking. After this the remaining breeders returned to their loft and I could let the racers train again.

I do not use special tricks to promote the moulting of the birds. They will start it themselves and do it while they are healthy. I handle the birds frequently to see if they are not too heavy, if there are defects, if they show weaknesses. Also during these times they must present themselves in a

good way. They get a moult mix which a make a bit lighter with a light mixture. They must be

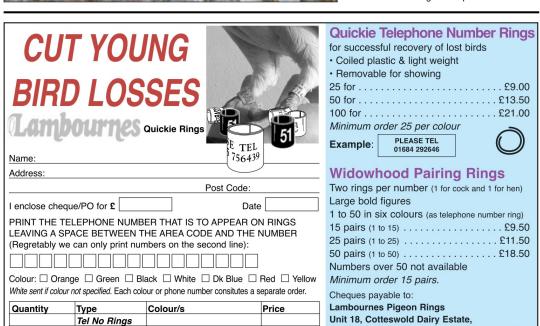
eager to eat!

I also give them the opportunity to take a bath two times a week at least. In this I put a big spoon of Epsom Salts and a dash of vinegar. This is much cheaper than the bath salts you can buy and just as good. And they get at least twice a week a mixture of minerals, red stone. calcium grit and small seeds. When the pigeons cannot produce good feathers with this treatment, they are not healthy and not well to stay during the winter. We must stay focused during these times. Humans and animals do have a lower resistance against diseases, flues and other treads.

I like to make lists when I am away on vacation. Plans for the winter, which breeders to keep and to cut, which racers to keep or to cut and plans for 2021. Last year I started with a professional photographer taking pictures of my breeders and top performing racers. I will continue to do this. Further I have plans to buy a hen on a sale of a specific fancier. He has a sale in November so I am going to focus on this. I also made the first mating lists for my breeders. I will make probably a few more before the end of January when I do the mating. I also keep my pedigree program on my computer up to date.

Next time I will introduce to you the best lofts of the Marathon Noord competition 2020 morning release and midday release.

Arjan van Gent www.van-gent.com



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