

Specialist club, call it what you will but we race for the King George V Cup and was founded in 1901, now that is something to be proud of, and there is more if you do win the Kings Cup you receive and exact hand crafted solid silver replica of it to keep.

The NRCC guarantees 30% prize money of all race receipts apart from the futurity where we pay out 95% prize money and the total paid this year will be £24,000. Of course we all would like more prize money and I feel one thing the Futurity has proved is that if there is an opportunity of a return then people most definitely don't mind taking a 'punt'.

With 400 members you would think we would be scrambling for a second transporter after all with 400 members if each member were to send eight pigeons to a race then both transporter and trailer would be full. This year's biggest send was Perth

just over 2,000 birds entered by 206 members so with those latter numbers I'm confident that next year we will have a capacity send.

Young birds, well I have always struggled to understand the number of rings sold and the low entry but then again I do feel that young bird racing is suffering all round.

#### NRCC Day of Champions

The NRCC Day of Champions' is back at the Springfields Event Centre at Spalding on Saturday 25th November when we will celebrate our 2023 winners. By now all of the Section and Open winners will have received their request to bring along their winners for them to be displayed on the Champions Row.

The Event Centre is situated at the Springfields Shopping Outlet home to over 70 high street retail outlets. Reaching the

event is fairly straight forward, from the north, follow the brown signs to Springfields and from the south turn off the A1 at Stamford and take the A16 East to Spalding. Follow the brown signs to Springfields. If you are travelling using a satellite navigation system our Sat Nav postcode is PE12 6EU.

The day is more than the distribution of trophies and of course your prize money. This is a day where the whole club can come together our usual sponsors will be present with a trade stand others include Boddy & Ridewood, Pigeon Testing Centre, Bamfords, Pigeon Botanicals, TMP Breeding Stud, Gold Bird Products, STS Lofts.

Klaus and Hugo from Geraldly will not be in the hall but we will have the transporter and trailer in the hall and our conveying team on hand to answer any questions you

may have.

The NRCC have their own 'Transport Mix' which is put together for us by Bamfords Top Flight so I was quite surprised this year when I saw in the Vanrobeys range of corn their 'Transport Mix'. The amount of positive feedback from people commenting on the condition of their birds on return from the time spent in baskets is when in the club's charge is most appreciated, as I say our conveying team will be on hand so call by and take a look at the 'NRCC Transport Mix'.

Come along and see what this great club is about or should you wish to take advantage of a free trade stand be it to sell a few birds or present your product to market please feel free to contact us.

**Ray Knight**  
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# Van Gent

Marathon Noord is a competition in the Netherlands for fanciers with a distance further than 1030 kilometres from St Vincent. Only the first two pigeons from the entry list (assigned pigeons) count for this competition. For the Midday release Championship, the races St Vincent, Cahors and Bergerac count. For the Morning release Championship Barcelona, Marseille and Perpignan count.



**Kees Cluistra.**

Marathon Noord is a fair competition. Every fancier competes with two pigeons. Further you have to register in advance. So only members can compete. In 2023 we had over 55,000€ worth of prizes.

#### Kees Cluistra, Nederhorst den Berg, Champion Midday release 2023 Marathon Noord.

The 64 years old Kees was very surprised when he received the phone call from our Chairman that he finished on top of the podium in the Midday release Championship. We agreed to visit Kees and we went to Nederhorst den Berg.

Nederhorst den Berg is a small village in the middle of the Netherlands, near Hilversum. Kees had his lofts in Polsbroek until 2020. Then he moved to Nederhorst den Berg and 2020 was his first racing season on the current location. This was his last racing



**Wood feeder for Kees' pigeons.**

season here. He is going to move back to Lopik/Benschop, to live close to his children.

The lofts are situated on a farm outside town. So he does not live nearby. The lofts were bought from a secondhand internet site and were just put there on the land of the farm. He added an aviary in front of the loft and started racing. He managed to move his race birds as well and they were immediately on top of their game. He became the champion of the marking centre. The loft for the racers is 10 metres wide, and the loft for the breeders and youngsters approximately 5 metres. The lofts face the west, which is not perfect in view of the rain and wind, but the birds do not mind at all!

Kees is a known figure with our competition, because he won in 2014 St Vincent with his topclass hen Karin.

#### 2023

Kees started 2023 with a bang. He won the first marathon race, Limoges. In Department 7 with the '772'. This hen was his 1st assigned on Cahors and he clocked her as the first of nine entered birds. She won 2nd place with Marathon Noord on this Cahors race. In 2022 this hen was as a yearling, 15th in the Rivacare Yearling Ring race. This ring race is a special competition. Participants with Marathon Noord can buy six rings for 15 euros each year. The birds with these rings will compete as a yearling on Bergerac in a special competition. Marathon Noord sold



**The '416'.**

1800 rings, so 300 x 10 euro is the prize money for this race (5 euros is costs for the rings, sending them, package them etc.). The '772's' father is a direct Frank Zwiens cock, inbred to 'Le Bernard'. The mother is a hen out of the old strain of Kees. This old strain begins with a Jan Aarden cock of Paul van den Berg and a Van Rijn-Kloeck hen from Pim van Rijn Eagles. Unfortunately the '772' did not return from Bergerac.

From St Vincent, Kees clocked both of his assigned birds. The first was the '448', which he got from his pigeon friend Richard Kniest out of the Jacco van Schipperen pigeons. Unfortunately this cock did not return from Cahors.

From Bergerac he clocked his 2nd assigned the '416' at 06.26 in the morning. This cock is a descendant of the 'Karin' (1st National St Vincent 2014). With the arrival of this cock Kees secured the title. After St Vincent and Cahors he was 10th in the standings, but with clocking this one early he managed to clinch the title.

#### The racing season

The pigeons are on Widowhood until four weeks before the first Marathon race. Then the darkening is taken off and the birds are put together in a way that St Vincent is raced on a youngster of four until six days old. Then they have the Cahors race on a big youngster and eggs and Bergerac on a youngster of four until six days again.

When the pigeons return home from a race or training toss they always get Travipharma Turbo Disinfect in the water. And the pigeons get Toliamin of Vet Schröder now and then.

Feeding wise it is easy. Kees has his own

mixture at the Patagoon called Cluistra 4 in 1. In the week before basketing he adds the race mixture of Patagoon and Beyers Koopman all in one. The feeding takes place in a feeder which can hold 10-15 kilo of mixture. The pigeons can eat all day and at night he covers the holes so that all kinds of mice and rats cannot eat from it. The Cluistra 4 in 1 mixture is whole year around.

The pigeons only trained during the season 20-30 minutes maximum. They do not get tossed between races, they are only basketed on club races. Kees finds this remarkable, he used to toss them every week at 60km, but due to his health he was not able to.

Although being in the country, he has almost no fear for hawks or other bird of prey. Only during the spring there are some, but they stop attacking when there is enough other animals to hunt for.

He is very sharp on mice and rats and other predators like marten. He has a radio playing 24/7 and I forgot to ask which station is hated by the predators.

#### Conclusion

I find it astonishing that fanciers move to a new place for their home and lofts, build a new loft, move the racers there and then they start racing on a high level the same year. I think that these fanciers have more capabilities than ordinary fanciers. If that is due to the system they use, the way of keeping the pigeons or just a feeling for the pigeon and the sport, I have no idea. What I do know, is that Kees will perform on his new spot again on a high level.

**Arjan van Gent**