



60 Years Natural Breeding Station

The Natural Breeding Station



In the early 1950s the two brothers Noël and Robert De Scheemaecker decided to found a large breeding station for racing birds. Construction started in 1955 and the first young birds were already delivered to the clients of Natural in 1956.

The construction of this breeding station, which developed into the

largest breeding station for racing birds worldwide in no time, proved an enormous challenge. Never before had someone built so many pigeon lofts in a single place: 55 lofts with a width of 25 metres each, featuring 660 sections in total. And never before did one single place populate so many birds from the most renowned Belgian breeds.

Two thousand breeding birds were purchased from the most famous Belgian pigeon fanciers, as well as from some renowned French and Dutch champions. Those breeders built the foundation for the Natural Breeding Station as it is still known today.

The objective that the De Scheemaecker brothers had in mind

when they founded their breeding station was to give pigeon fanciers with limited financial means the chance of obtaining a youngster from a world-famous breed for free. Anyone who purchased 250 kg of Natural pigeon feed would be given a young bird for free. However, in 1971 a new law on offering free gifts with purchases was introduced in Belgium, which made it illegal to give young birds away for free. The De Scheemaecker brothers then decided to sell their breeding station's young birds very cheaply, so that basically every fancier would be able to afford them. Not every fancier

achieves good results with pigeons from the Natural Breeding Station and not every pigeon which was bred here will develop into a good racing or breeding bird. That is the inevitable truth and we have always been open and honest about that. What is much more important though is the fact that the Natural Breeding Station is still up and running after more than 60 years and that demand still exceeds supply almost every year. It says everything about the quality of the pigeons which we breed here and about the time and effort which is spent on selling those pigeons.

The team which is responsible for the caretaking has two tasks which have to be borne in mind at all times: keeping the pigeons healthy and improving the quality of the breeding birds. That twofold objective demands an extreme level of hygiene on the one hand, and a stringent selection process for breeding pairs on the other.

Hygiene

Good hygiene, a healthy environment and proper caretaking are of crucial importance in keeping your pigeons healthy and are es-

BASISRAS - RACE DE BASE
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DE SCHEEMAECKER



essential for developing their natural defences. A constant search for improvements in terms of accommodation has led to some major changes in the lofts. It is fair to say that the team has managed to get the lofts close to perfection in terms of hygiene and that the pigeons can now breed in the most natural conditions possible. The grills on the floor and in the widowhood boxes, the feeding silos and the automated system which supplies drinking water at the exterior of the aviaries all enable us to keep the pigeons healthy with minimum use of medicines. The combination of a stringent selection process for breeders, healthy breeding lofts, an efficient feeding

system and conscientious medical guidance allows us to breed healthy and high-quality youngsters, both in winter, spring and summer.

Every loft is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected every year and is then left empty for one to two weeks.

A stringent selection

The quality of your breeding birds has a direct impact on the quality of your youngsters. Being able to select good-quality breeders is thus of crucial importance. A pigeon is selected based on its visible and physical qualities, ir-

respective of its descent. Pigeons which fail to meet our strict criteria are eliminated. Likewise, the „normal“ breeding lofts of the Natural Breeding Station are also occupied with nothing but well-built pigeons with superior origins.

In addition, the quality of breeders is also dependent on the quality of any newly acquired birds. The Natural Breeding Station invests in pigeons from renowned and lesser-known champions every year. Those pigeons are selected by the Natural Breeding Station manager himself and they can stay here as long as they breed healthy youngsters. The youngsters of



A look inside a breeding loft filled with breeders waiting to breed.

those newly introduced original birds are not offered for sale but are given a spot in the breeding lofts after passing a tough quality test. They are then paired to each other or to descendants of previously purchased pigeons. That is how we ensure that new bloodlines are incorporated into our foundation breeds regularly.

Before a pigeon leaves the Natural Breeding Station it is thoroughly examined for possible physical defects. The goal is to provide our clients with nothing but healthy and well-built pigeons.

The Breeding Station's golden rule

Not a single fancier is allowed to pick a pigeon for himself. Every client, no matter his reputation, is treated correctly and in the same way. Demand exceeds supply almost every year. When a pigeon is leaving the Natural Breeding Station we guarantee a perfect health and a thorough check-up before dispatching. However, we cannot guarantee that the bird will eventually become a good racer or breeder.

Foundation breeds

When we founded the breeding station it was never our intention to create one pure breed. In other words: we do not breed or sell any pure breeds. We do believe in a foundation breed, a strain of pigeons which was developed by the fancier himself, based on clever cross-breeding and stringent selection. We are against pure in-breeding because that could in no way lead to any quality improvements in our lofts which house over 4,000 breeding pairs; quite the contrary.

Before birds are shipped, they are carefully examined one last time. Here Freddy De Prins carries out the examination.



It is impossible for us to compete in prize-winning races with our own breeding pairs or their youngsters as if we were an individual loft. That is why we select pigeons mainly based on their natural resistance against diseases, combined with the visible and physical qualities of a good pigeon. In order to maintain and preferably improve their vitality and their natural resistance against diseases, we are obliged to cross-breed our pigeons regularly. It is quite likely that a pigeon from the Natural Breeding Station originates or its forefathers originate from different crossings. That is what we mean by a foundation breed.

Working with breeds of champion friends

The reason the breeding station was founded was to be able to provide our numerous clients with pigeons of good descent at an affordable price. The De Scheemaecker brothers have been publishing a pigeon magazine since

1930 and so they have been able to develop good relations with countless successful pigeon fanciers, many of whom have even become close friends. That made it considerably easier for Noël and Robert De Scheemaecker to obtain good-quality birds from the best pigeon lofts in Belgium.

In its 60 years of existence and to this day the Natural Breeding Station has been investing in new pigeons every year. Old foundation breeds are being improved, some of them also disappear, and new foundation breeds from Belgium and abroad are introduced as well.

It is important to know that it will always take a few years before we have a sufficient number of good-quality breeding birds of a particular foundation breed to be able to sell youngsters from that strain. That explains why we usually only communicate about new introductions into the Natural Breeding Station after a number of years.



The breeders are fed from the outside with a quality and well balanced breed mixture.

Foundation breeds

Janssen

The Janssen brothers from Arendonk of course don't need an introduction. Their breed is the most popular one in the world and many birds from that breed have moved to the Natural Breeding Station since the station was founded.

Leus

Achiel Leus from Lede was a sprint phenomenon. His breed is famous for its black birds.

Marcelis

Albert Marcelis from Brecht was one of the figureheads of Antwerp sprint racing. Even at a very respectable age, he managed to win the titles of provincial and national sprint championships and to represent Belgium in the sprint category at the Olympiad. Eric Berckmoes now continues Marcelis's life's work, mainly in middle distance racing.

Soontjens

Jos Soontjens from Wommelgem struck terror into Antwerp sprint fanciers' hearts for years on end.

His breed was strengthened with birds from Luc, Bart and Jurgen Geerinckx.

Tournier

Whoever says the name Tournier thinks of their typical pied colour. It is said that those birds could master any distance.

Van Dyck

Dirk Van Dyck from Zandhoven gained international recognition with birds such as "Kannibaal", "Rambo" and "Bourges". His strain is very popular with both sprint and middle distance fanciers.

Engels, J. & J.

Jos and Jules Engels from Putte have been continuing their father Flor's life's work for several years. Especially the bloodlines of the "231" and his on "178" performed very well in middle distance races.

Grondelaers

Jan Grondelaers from Opplabbeek wrote history in middle distance racing in (the Belgian province of) Limburg. His birds such as "Goede Jaarling", "Orléans I",

"Orléans II", etc. form the basis of the family of pigeons of numerous ace lofts.

Horemans

Corneel Horemans from Schoten is part of the old Antwerp legends. His pigeons still form the basis of many top lofts' families of pigeons.

Houben

The Houben family possesses a pigeon breed which is in high demand all over the world. The one and only stock cock is "Jonge Artiest".

Huyskens-Van Riel

Huyskens-Van Riel's docile pigeons wrote history in Belgian pigeon racing. They were actually middle distance birds but also competed in races such as St Vincent, Barcelona, Libourne and the like. In 1969 the Natural Breeding Station purchased all of Jef Van Riel's racers and breeders. Jef was the manager of the Huyskens-Van Riel loft. The foundation breed was later on improved with birds from his son Georges Van Riel.

Meulemans

Karel Meulemans became famous thanks to his unique stock pair “Donkere Witpen Van den Bosch” x “Blauw Janssen”. They became the parents of numerous middle distance aces such as “Kadet”, “Prins”, “Benjamin”, etc. Karel Meulemans successfully participated in extreme long distance racing in the past two decades.

Roosens

Marc Roosens from Lernes perhaps possessed the fastest long distance birds which also triumphed in sprint and middle distance races such as Bourges and La Souterraine and achieved national victories at the long distance.

De Scheemaecker

The De Scheemaecker foundation breed is still very popular. At present the foundation loft is populated by many descendants of the “69”. They are highly successful in both one-loft racing and regular prize-winning races. Important to mention: The sire of the 1st National Ace Bird Middle Distance KBDB Young Birds 2011 is a grandson of the “69” whereas the 1st Ace Bird in the 2005 One Million Dollar Race in South Africa was a daughter of the “69”.

Vandenabeele

There is no need to tell you anything more about the birds of Gaby Vandenabeele from Dentergem. We will just mention the following pigeons: “Kleinen”, “Wittenbuik”, “Turbo”, “Bliksem”, etc.

Thoné

Jos Thoné from As crowned himself champion in no time thanks to his father-in-law Thomas Peeters’ birds. Those birds can easily compete in middle distance as well as long distance races.

Aarden

Several fanciers who successfully raced at the extreme long distance in the Netherlands have a pigeon breed of which the basis goes back to Jan Aarden.

Bricoux

Dr Arthur Bricoux from Jolimont wrote history in long distance racing. He was practically unbeatable in races such as Pau, Bordeaux, Dax, St Vincent, Libourne and Angoulême.

Catrysse

Catrysse birds form the basis of numerous present day long distance racing champions. They are still respected worldwide.

Delbar

Maurice Delbar was one of the figureheads of Belgian pigeon racing and doesn’t need an introduction. He bred multiple long and extreme long distance aces. His son Mic still races pigeons very successfully.

Desmet-Matthijs

The “Klaren” of Valère Desmet-Matthijs ranks high in the annals of Belgian pigeon racing. Valère’s son Roger is still feared in today’s long and extreme long distance racing.

Sion

Paul Sion from Tourcoing was a good friend of Noël De Scheemaecker’s. He was one of the best long distance racers in France. Most people still remember him for his birds’ red colour even though his blue and chequered birds performed equally well.

Stichelbaut

The basis of the Stichelbaut loft dates back to Derumeaux, from whom the Catrysse family also bought reinforcements. Alois Stichelbaut’s birds co-form the basis of super breeds such as the Vanhee, Bostijn and Van Spitael birds.

Vanbruaene

André Vanbruaene has been one of Belgium’s long distance icons for years on end. He for example won the international race from Barcelona in both 1966 and 1984.

Van Wanroy

Several Dutch extreme long distance fanciers race with this breed, especially J B Hendriks. It is mainly birds from Jef Van Wanroy which form the basis of those fanciers’ breeds.

Wuyts-Comines

This is a combination of the foundation breeds Wuyts and Comines because of their white colour.

New breeds

Hok Vitesse (sprint)

The loft of “Hok Vitesse” is populated by birds of well performing sprint fanciers living in Antwerp and East Flanders. Some of the fanciers from whom birds were purchased: Roland Janssens (Beveren), De Ridder & Son (Edegem), Antoine Degraeve (Waarschoot) and Stickers-Donckers (Lille). Offspring from Karel Boeckx, Leo Heremans and Willy Gysels (Halle) birds were also acquired.

Ko van Dommelen (long distance)

About 80 Ko van Dommelen pigeons found their way to the Natural Breeding Station through Pedro Ruigrok. In addition, 100 original birds from Ko Van Dommelen were bought from the man himself for the coming auction season.



Thirty-five years of top results at national and international level thanks to the Natural Breeding Station

Thousands of pigeon fanciers from Belgium and abroad order birds from the Natural Breeding Station every year, having full confidence in what we offer them.

Every year national and international top results are achieved by birds bred in the Natural Breeding Station, by offspring from birds bred in the Breeding Station or by birds which carry the blood of a Natural Breeding Station bird through their sire or dam.

1981: 1st International Alicante – 1,300 km – 1,487 b. – Oscar Deroanne from Libramont (Belgium)

1982: 1st National Marseille – 700 km – 1,183 b. – Gustave Dauphin from Arlon (Belgium)

1983: 1st International Perpignan – 900 km – 3,541 b. – Luc De Geest from Ninove (Belgium)

1984: 1st National Bourges – 400 km – 9,975 b. – Mario Kepski from Mons (Belgium)

1984: 1st National Bergerac North – 900 km – 12,817 b. – Geert Thiemes from Didam (the Netherlands)

1984: 1st National La Souterraine – 500 km – 5,753 b. – Pierre Jennequin from Baileux (Belgium)

1987: 1st International Pau – 900 km – 4,928 b. – Anton Jedem from Merzig (Germany)

1987: 1st National Bourges – 450 km – 1,013 hens – W. & J. Fagot from Nethen (Belgium)

1988: 1st National La Souterraine – 500 km – 2,550 b. – Guy Capelle from Dinant (Belgium)

1989: 1st International Perpignan – 900 km – 10,892 b. – M. Celesteyns from Zottegem (Belgium)

1990: 1st International Dax – 900 km – 4,730 b. – Frédéric Fernand from Bléharis (Belgium)

1992: 1st National Perpignan – 850 km – 17,331 b. – Michel Petelak from Duidans (France)

1992: 1st National Brive – 680 km – 1,242 b. – Henri Thienpondt from Sint-Martens-Latem (Belgium)

1993: 1st International Dax – 1,000 km – 9,163 b. – Raymund Hermes from Hamm/Sieg (Germany)

1997: 1st National Bourges – 450 km – 11,396 b. – Gaston Van Froyenhoven from Boutersem (Belgium)

1998: 1st International Marseille – 700 km – 19,968 b. – André Guebs from Longchamp (France)

1998: 1st National La Souterraine – 500 km – 7,419 b. – Aaroô Henriques Cunha from Waltzing (Belgium)

1999: 1st National Antwerpen – 1,021 km – 5,420 b. – J. & J. Dziegielewski from Danzig (Poland)

2000: 2nd National Narbonne – 874 km – 6,929 b. – Martens Brothers from Sint-Lambrechts-Herk (Belgium)

2002: 1st National Marseille – 897 km – 5,352 b. – Horst Was-muth from Bottendorf (Germany)

2003: 2nd National Bourges – 450 km – 16,496 b. – Robert Rock from Grez-Doiceau (Belgium)

2005: 1st Ace Bird One Million Dollar Race – South Africa – De Scheemaecker Brothers (Belgium)

2006: 1st prize Europa Classic One Loft Race – Edinburgh – 480 km – 1,277 b.

2006: 1st National – 600 km – 971 b. – Susum Okino from Tokio (Japan)

2008: 1st International Marseille – 736 km – 13,954 b. – Christian Belliot from Missilac (France)

2009: 11th International Soustons – 929 km – 11,030 b. – Stefaan Anthoons from Kortenaeken (Belgium)

2009: 1st Grand Prix Gaspar Vila Nova Portugal – 275 km – 898 b. – Mader Family from Germany

2010: 1st International Soustons – 872 km – 10,190 b. – M. Van Der Beken from Overboelare (Belgium)

2011: 1st International Tarbes/Agen – 730 km – 10,695 b. – Michael Mascart from Brunelle (France)

2011: 1st National Ace Bird Middle Distance KBDB Young Birds – Rudi Diels from Beerse (Belgium)

2012: 1st National Ace Bird Long Distance – Wilson Dekens from Zingem (Belgium)

2012: 2nd Dutch Olympiad Bird Extreme Long Distance – Frank Kwekkeboom from Enschede (the Netherlands)

2012: 1st National Ace Bird TBOTB Extreme Long Distance – Frank Kwekkeboom from Enschede (the Netherlands)

2013: 1st National Bourges – 468 km – 11,883 b. – Tony Lievens from Sint-Laureins (Belgium)

2014: 9th International Narbonne – 820 km – 12,528 b. – Patrick Genot from Auvélais (Belgium)

2014: 6th National Cahors – 759 km – 7,140 b. – De Kempe-Commendador from Eeklo (Belgium)

2015: 3rd National Châteauroux – 413 km – 10,933 b. – Jean-Luc Jennequin from Aublain (Belgium)

2015: 1st National Ace Bird Longer Middle Distance KBDB – André Roodhooft from Pulderbos (Belgium)

2015: 1st Zone Argenton – 580 km – 5,327 b. & 31st National – 19,925 b. – Willy Van Thillo from Beerse (Belgium)

2016: 4th National Barcelona – 1,058 km – 7,693 b. – Christiaens Desmedt from Pamel (Belgium) & 4th International Barcelona Hens – 5,523 b. (fastest Belgian hen) and winner of the ‘Silver Wing’ from the prestigious Brugse Barcelona Club

2016: 1st National La Souterraine – 583 km – 7,617 b. – Kumpen Schepers from Kortenaeken (Belgium)

Apart from the top performances listed above there are without doubt numerous other remarkable results achieved abroad from which we weren't informed.

