

# At Home with Tom Powers

## Chatting with Rene & Peter van Langen

I was sitting here the other night just looking at short videos from lofts in Holland and Belgium, as you do, when I suddenly saw some pigeons that made me stop and look. I ran the video over a couple of times and then said to Bernie, here look at these birds. She looked over and said yes, they look like your kind of pigeons, and she was right. To me they looked a picture and this without any photo shopping or artificial enhancement. That was it, my interest was piqued, I had to find out more about these fanciers and the pigeons they kept. The name at the bottom of the video was Gebr van Langen, I was now on a mission, contact had to be made. I found their website and through the contact page sent them an email.

The next day they replied and discussion was underway. This is the story of Peter & Rene van Langen from De Lutte in Holland.

It was Rene who first started with pigeons back in 1984 and he was joined by Peter in 1992, the partnership was made. From the early days it was the beauty of the Janssen brothers pigeons that excited Rene & Peter so this is where they started. In later years this solid base has been added to with birds from Jan van den Pasch, Leo Heremans and Stefaan Lambrechts plus lines from the Leideidam Brothers. These pigeons have been blended together to become an awesome sprint-based family able to compete with the best out there. That is not to say that the sprint discipline is their sole area of success, they have also shown what they can do at the middle distance.

The original Janssen pigeons came from an auction in Arendonk back in

1994. These initial birds went on to breed Magic Man in 1996 and he is the true patriarch of the van Langen lofts, the sire and grandsire of some of the best pigeons they have ever had. Not only is he a great breeder, in his racing career he took 1st from 3,008 pigeons from Heverlee in 2001 and was also Champion Vitesse in his province the same year. Probably his greatest legacy though has to be his daughter Magic Woman, a consistent racer during her career but also at stock has been the grandam of pigeons such as Fallon, Miss Perfect and Anne. Fallon has won 1st (5,628 birds) from Nivelles; 8th (6,207 birds) from Laon; 9th (5,544 birds) Peronne; 6th (1,773 birds) from Nivelles; 7th (9,111 birds) also from Nivelles and the list goes on. Miss Perfect took amongst others 2nd Afdeling (27,532 birds) from Chalons, similarly 2nd (16,163 birds) Charleville; 1st (1,779 birds) from Chalons; 2nd (7,593 birds) also from Chalons; 1st (1,066 birds) at Charleville. Just two examples of the quality of racing hens that have called the De Lutte lofts their home. Miss Emmellie, another granddaughter of Magic Woman won 1st (6,777 birds) from Laon and 8th (2,089 birds) from Venlo. Another top pigeon was Diamant, winner of 1st Afdeling 9 from Chimlay in 2013 (29,537 birds). The present champion Magic Girl can also be traced back along the same lines.

The original Leo Heremans lines came through regular purchases from the lots of Kas & Karel Meijers, the top lines of De Jan, Olympiade 003, Rossi, Spinneke and added to these they have Denali, daughter of the Roeper Pair that came directly from Leo Heremans. These birds have been introduced



**Rene & Peter.**



*The lofts with aviaries.*



**Magic Girl.**

**Fallon.**



directly onto the van Langen pigeons in the stock lofts and also raced. The Lambrechts pigeons speak for themselves at the moment. The Leideman brothers are a name that may not be too familiar to the fancy at the moment but they are fanciers not to be trifled with. They work for none other than Gerard Koopman but are superb flyers in their own right.

All these top lines are housed in a loft that is 17m long and 3m deep. The loft is divided into nine sections, three for the racing cocks, one for the hens, two for the youngsters and three for the breeding team. They normally keep 60 pigeons as the race team and 25 stock pairs. All of the sections have access to the aviaries that run the length of the set up. The breeding programme normally realises a young bird team of 60, so no overcrowding in these lofts. The birds are raced on the double widowhood system, both old and young pigeons and they are put to test in the vitesse races, natour and young bird racing. Results will show that they have also conquered the middle-distance races with some aplomb. Feeding is not over complicated, they feed Mariman fly and breed food, Snoepzaad, Tovo, P40 pellets and Omega enz. All of the birds, stock, racers and youngsters are fed the same mix of food. Supplements from Hertsipower and Prange are also added through the week.

Peter & Rene believe that the best performances are achieved with yearlings or 2ys. After this the majority seem to lose that winning edge, those that have earned it can keep their contribution to the success going in the stock lofts. All of the pigeons, racers and stock birds are paired together around 15th January. The first round of eggs from the stock birds are under laid to the racers which enables the stock team to quickly go down on their second round. Those birds that have performed well are given the opportunity

to go down on eggs again once the racing season has finished. You will quite often find that the eggs from these late couplings are offered back to the fancy each year.

There have been numerous champion performances every year but highlights include, 1st Middle Distance Champion in 2014 for the whole of Holland, then fast forward to 2018 when the loft achieved 1st Vitesse WHZB -TBOTB with Magic Girl, NL17-1741529. Magic Girl is heavily weighted with the Leo Heremans pigeons when crossed with the original Magic Man line. Looking at some of the best pigeon performances, you will see that some of the best have been put up by the hens. Peter said that if a hen is performing really well then he will try and keep her cock at home, thus she will always have that motivation to return home as quickly as she can. Speaking to Peter van Langen he says that one of the most important things that is needed in a racing loft is motivation. The birds must have a good reason to want to come home whether it be the widowhood factor or jealousy. You have to couple this motivation with good food, a happy and healthy environment, observation and consistency to have any chance of getting consistent performances out of your loft.

One sign of a good breeding programme is the results of other fanciers with your pigeons and there have been with the van Langen family of birds. You can visit the website at <http://gebroedersvanlangen.nl> for a fuller picture on what they are about.

I know that I have raved about these pigeons of Rene & Peter van Langen but I think you have to agree that we may have turned up a real golden nugget family of pigeons that deserve the opportunity to show what they can do racing in the UK.

# RPRA London Region

A General Meeting was held on 6th October 2018 at the Mill House Social Club, New Road, Dagenham Essex commencing at 12.15 pm.

Committee members and Club delegates as per attendance book. Apology from Mr E Hendrie.

Minutes of the previous meeting having been circulated and printed were passed as a true record.

## Matters Arising, Nil Correspondence.

Letter from the Secretary Greater Harrow LN 385 requesting change of name to Greater Harrow North and South Road Club, also request to be able to race South Road as well as the option to race North Road. After discussion it was given approval and consent reference RPRA Rules 128 and 128b. Secretary to inform Club of decision.

Letter from the Secretary Stonebridge DHS LN 254 requesting change of route from North Road to North and South Road under RPRA Rule 128. After discussion consent was given. Secretary to inform Club of decision.

Letter from the Secretary of the Home Counties South Road Federation requesting affiliation to the London Region. Paperwork and fee in order. It was agreed that the Secretary post adverts in the fancy press.

Email from Head Office informing the Region of an emergency meeting to be held in September to agree the purchase of a lease for a new head office location. Region delegates unable to attend at such short notice but meeting cancelled due to a problem with the said lease. Any move or purchase will now be discussed at the October Council Meeting. The Council delegates were reminded that the first action should be the securing the sale of Reddings House and its land.

Letter from Mr O'Neil LN 4221 informing the Region of a vet bill that his niece was made to pay before collecting his pigeon that was reported to him. The bill was for £113.95 for 24 hours of care and minor medication. Secretary had contacted the vet and queried the fee imposed when Mr O'Neil had not requested any treatment to be carried out. After days of phone calls the vet finally agreed to repay £67. Still leaving Mr O'Neil £46 out of pocket. Region recommends that any fancier in a similar circumstance should refuse any payment for services that they did not request and to contact the Region Secretary for support.

Email from RSPCA Patcham complaining of the attitude of one of our members when he collected his pigeon from them. They accused him of being aggressive, threatening, rude and cruel. Secretary contacted the member to get his side of what happened and to relay the comments made in the email. Said member gave his side of the story and informed the Secretary that he would be taking this up with the RSPCA as he believed he was the one who should be getting an apology. Secretary asked the member to forward any resulting correspondence which he did, supplying the Region with an apology to him from Anne Bond of RSPCA Brighton. No further action required.

Email received from Secretary Hadleigh DNRFC LN 113 querying the use of an ETS master to strike against T3. After some confusion the Secretary replied that RPRA Rule 210 applied.

Letter from the Secretary of the Southern Region informing us that one of their members had been involved in an incident at a London Region Club and was looking for an apology. Secretary had contacted said member and advised him on the routes that were open to him. Matter left in the member's hands.

Correspondence from Sundridge Park DFC LN 280 detailing grievance with their Federation. Secretary advised on what course to take with their grievance.

Query from a club clock setter asking should a club be striking with the time signal and then striking other systems manually. Region's ETS specialist could give many reasons for losing the time signal such as battery problems or maybe their location. But generally once the time signal is gained it holds, separate systems do require unplugging and regaining the signal. Recommended that they have their system checked for any possible faults.

Letter from the Secretary Custom House WMHS. LN 77 informing the Region that their membership had dropped below the level to be able to function properly. Requesting the Region to dissolve the Club. Secretary to action.

**Confirmation of Suspensions.** LN 3187 Bellchambers Bros. Non-payment of BIOC fee and non-payment of RPRA fee. LN 2458 Mr Al Safi. Not collecting stray pigeon and non-payment of RPRA fee. These suspensions were confirmed.

## Any Other Urgent Business.

Ownership of pigeons disputed between LN

6140 and LN 1785. One loft says they had loaned pigeons to another member as they were moving away from the area and needed someone to look after the pigeons until he could have them at his new address. The other member said they were not loaned and that he had paid for them. He supplied copies of two cheques each for £200 made payable to the other member. The cheques were disputed as being for other loft equipment. After the secretary checking the ownership details of the said pigeons all were still in the name of the member who had loaned them. There were attempts at trying to resolve the issue away from the Region but to no avail. The Committee after listening to the dispute found in favour of LN 6140 the loft that had loaned the pigeons as LN 1785 should have requested transfer of said pigeons according to RPRA Rule 102 if he had purchased them. The registered owner at present is LN 6140. It was agreed that the Secretary send LN 1785 a recorded delivery letter informing of the need to return the listed pigeons to LN 6140 within 21 days or face being suspended under RPRA Rule 117.

RPRA Rule 159. The Council is looking at making changes to this Rule. After discussion it was stated that there were more problems with the change than leaving it as it is. A vote was taken for not changing the Rule. 8 in favour 1 against. Secretary to relay findings to Head Office.

Query from Mr J Ashenden on how double rung pigeons were registered or allocated on ETS, and how the pigeons were listed on results. Secretary to send query to the Clock Committee for their answer.

Secretary stated that he had received a query over the headroom of crates or baskets and had given out the wrong information at the time, as the Secretary was unsure who had queried it he thought it best to put in these minutes as clarification. **Appendix F Headroom.** As from 2008 any new vehicles are to have a minimum internal headroom of 10 inches for baskets/crates. The current standard recommended is a minimum of 9 inches.

The Wimbledon DHS LN 278 having been found not to have functioned for the last three years, it was agreed that the London Region withdraw its Affiliation. Secretary to inform Head Office.

There being no further business the meeting closed with thanks to the Chair at 2.15pm.

STEVE FINAN