

Willy Vanhoutte (Wevelgem, BE): Flemish grandmaster ends a marvellous career

Willy Vanhoutte is a grandmaster with a phenomenal palmares and countless references in other lofts. Willy is starting to feel his age, which eventually forced him to auction his top class pigeon family in a total sale.

The emperor from West Flanders

Willy Vanhoutte has been one of the great champions in the sprint and the middle distance for decades. He was for instance the general provincial champion KBDB West Flanders in **2000, 2002, 2003, 2004 (Emperor), and 2006**. This makes him the best player in the province in 5 out of 7 seasons. This is a fancier who combines top quality and expertise. Willy delivered in the national championships KBDB on a number of occasions as well: he was for instance 5th national champion KBDB yearlings 2009, 5th national champion shorter middle distance young birds 2010, 11th national champion yearlings KBDB 2010, etc. Through the years, Willy managed his team with a firm hand and a strict selection process, which is one of the key strengths of the Vanhoutte breed. His super class team was at times impossible to beat, especially in the middle distance. They claimed numerous victories and impressive results on a regular basis, insofar that many other renowned pigeon lofts turned to the fancier from Wevelgem for their own reinforcements. Clearly, the Vanhoutte breed is renowned for having provided tens of other fanciers with good quality bloodlines. While attaining success in pigeon racing can be notoriously difficult for a beginner, Willy was always willing to provide valuable advice or a helping hand to newcomers to the sport. These newcomers quickly started to win races, which made them even more committed to pigeon racing. And that alone is reason enough for Willy Vanhoutte to deserve a medal.

Countless references

It would be almost impossible to sum up every loft that has gained success with the help of Willy Vanhoutte birds. Numerous fanciers, ranging from the smallest teams to the biggest stars (including none other than Gaby Vandenabeele), have invested in pigeons from Wevelgem. After all, the Vanhoutte pigeons can be successfully crossed with almost any other bloodline. This is one of the most valued breeds around, particularly in the middle distance. Here is a brief selection of pigeon lofts that have done tremendously well with the help of the Vanhoutte breed, just to give you an idea:

Gevaert-Lannoo, Benny Steveninck, Gaby Vandenabeele, Gino Clicque, Jos Joosen, Delbaere-Sampers, Raf & Kurt Platteeuw, De Schepper-De Temmerman, ... these are just a few of a long list of fanciers from at home and abroad that fared well with these bloodlines! Willy set high standards for himself, and was used to racing with a small team. And although Willy has never been very vocal about it, he has helped quite a few fanciers raise their game.

Guaranteed success

Whenever the pigeons of Team Vanhoutte lined up for a race, their opponents knew they would be in for a hard time. That same scenario unfolded week after week, season after season. Willy basketed nothing but renowned racing birds with race winning experience. **Ace pigeon and championship titles** became the order of the day for the superstar from Wevelgem. Still, Willy Vanhoutte remained surprisingly modest, even though we cannot think of many fanciers with so many victories and major titles to their name. Wevelgem is located in the renowned Leiestreek region, where competition is fierce, especially in the middle distance: great champions have pushed each other to a higher level since the start of the last century. You have to be on top of your game if you want to make it in this competition, and you have to ask a lot from your pigeons. It was in this very competition that Willy Vanhoutte has been one of the most prominent names, both at home and in other lofts. It explains why the champion from Wevelgem is without doubt one of our sport's biggest stars.

Excellent as a racing and breeding bird

Willy has a long list of talented pigeons that combined a highly successful racing career with excellent breeding abilities. We picked two incredibly gifted birds, which Willy never would have sold when he was still actively racing. **Primus (BE12-3054001)** is an excellent bird who lives up to the excellent reputation of Team Vanhoutte. This is a clear example of a highly rated bloodline: **Primus not** only bred some very talented youngsters; his grandfather, great-grandfather, etc. have been winning races as well. In other words, this bloodline consists of many race winning birds. Think for instance of **Cupido (BE08-3109133)**, winner of 7 clear first prizes, and **De Groten (BE06-3107045)**, which claimed several victories and prizes per 100 from Arras, Clermont, Ablis, Roye, etc.

The palmares of Primus is nothing short of impressive:

1. Fontenay - 208 pigeons
 1. Fontenay - 149 pigeons
 1. Chateaudun - 127 pigeons
 4. prov. 1,961 pigeons
 1. Clermont - 80 pigeons
 3. Fontenay - 270 pigeons
 13. Clermont - 123 pigeons
 19. Fontenay - 169 pigeons
 19. Clermont - 126 pigeons
- As well as a 21.-22.-24.-25.-26.-27.-32.-33.-37.-37. prize.

He is also the sire and grandfather of:

'Magic' 033/19 1. Arras - 324 young birds
'Baron' 046/17 1. Clermont - 425 pigeons and 1. Brionne - 241 pigeons /
12. prov. 4,440 p.
'Bijter' 045/17 1. Clermont - 747 pigeons
'Den IJzeren' - winner of a 1.-1.-1.-1.-2.-4.-7.-8.- 11.-13.-15.-21. prize
...

Racing bird **Cipier (BE11-3082021)** illustrates that there has been a tremendous amount of talent in the racing lofts in Wevelgem over the past ten years. He was almost impossible to

beat in the middle distance, which resulted in several victories in a competitive field. And his descendants proved equally talented of course. Cipier is related to such renowned birds as **Tarzan (BE08-3109103)**, a very successful racing bird, especially in Orleans. He is also linked to **Den Bourges (BE02-3074206)**. In other words, Cipier originates from a group of bloodlines carefully crafted by a fancier who favours quality over quantity.

Racing bird Cipier has a fantastic palmares as well:

- 1. Fontenay - 173 pigeons
- 1. Fontenay - 168 pigeons
- 1. Fontenay - 104 pigeons
- 1. Fontenay - 103 pigeons
- 1. Chateaudun - 47 pigeons / 3. prov. 1,165 pigeons
- 3. Chateaudun - 110 pigeons / 5. prov. 2,157 pigeons
- 4. Clermont - 124 pigeons
- 4. Fontenay - 100 pigeons
- 6. Clermont - 709 pigeons
- 7. Clermont - 87 pigeons
- 8. Clermont - 386 pigeons
- 9. Clermont - 544 pigeons / 99. prov. 8,103 pigeons
- 10. Ablis - 277 pigeons
- 11. Clermont - 583 pigeons
- 199. prov. Fontenay - 4,689 pigeons
- As well as a 14.-14.-15.-16.-16.-16.-22.-23.-25.-30.-31. prize

As a breeder, Cipier is the sire or grandfather of:

- 'Perfect Schuwen' 855/18 1. Arras - 101 young birds
- 'Diplomaat' 016/16 1. Fontenay - 386 pigeons
- 'Son Perfect Schuwen' 2. Clermont - 641 young birds
- ...

Willy says goodbye in style

2019 was the season that marks the end of Willy Vanhoutte's highly successful racing career. This is a fancier with an excellent reputation, and so he wanted to say farewell in style. His racing birds were once again tough to beat this season. They are always on top of their game, and that is what defines this pigeon family. We not only saw the old birds and the yearlings excel this year; the young birds had an excellent last season as well. As always, this resulted in high prize percentages, several top prizes and prestigious wins.

Being a top level fancier with a career that spans several decades has only one downside: the fancier involved grows older along the way as well. Willy has now reached a point where he wants to take things a bit easier. He wants to enjoy his retirement years. And that means 2019 was the last season for Willy Vanhoutte, who can look back on a fantastic career. You can tell from his results in 2019 that his pigeon loft is still home to a tremendous amount of quality. Numerous other fanciers owe a lot to this renowned fancier, and we think anyone who can obtain one of his pigeons will be a lucky man. PIPA is honored to be auctioning such a collection of high quality pigeons. The auction, which started on **30th of September**, marks the end of a marvelous pigeon racing career.