



# NO STOP IN THE RUSH TO THE TOP

**Freddy Vandenbrande of Boortmeerbeek**

by Louis Vangramberen

In Boortmeerbeek, despite a terrible thunderstorm, there were no worries for Freddy Vandenbrande, only satisfaction at the performances of his pigeons, shared with his loyal assistant Gilbert Bellens and his helper Hugo Van Remoortel. It was the first international victory for him being a win from 1,263 pigeons all yearlings. Now you could say that there weren't so many pigeons in the Yearling National, but the great side of this coin is that just one pigeon scored a higher speed than Freddy's pigeon. So his winner became the second fastest pigeon from around 15,000 pigeons in total, a performance which counts. It was scored by one of his best pigeons 'Aline' 223/940.95. But the success isn't just with this triumph as, a week before, he also won 1st Provincial Vierzon (450 km – 281 mls).

Everyone who knows a bit about Freddy Vandenbrande's history in pigeon racing, knows that this man achieved a beautiful beginning in Kampenhout and afterwards in Boortmeerbeek in the period 1983 and 1990. For want of time in his busy business life, he stopped totally



*The wing of 'Aline', 1st National La Souterraine (wing and pictures courtesy La Colombophilie Belge).*

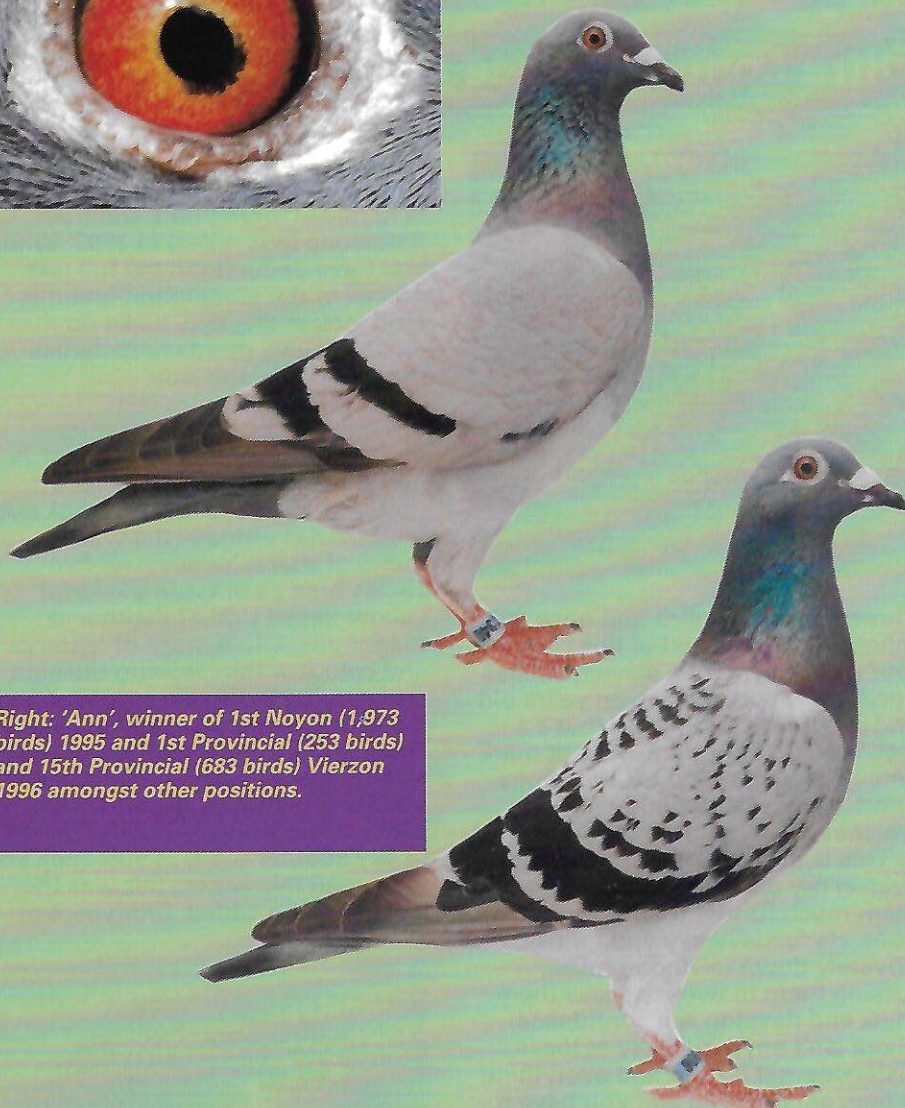
in 1990 and sold all his pigeons. He finished this period with about eight times 1st Provincial plus a few Interprovincial wins.

In 1992 Freddy became the victim of a terrible accident and is still in a wheelchair. Those circumstances brought him back to pigeon racing in 1992. First of all he turned to Gilbert Bellens and secondly he went looking for ordinary amateur fanciers who had that type of pigeon which was the most popular. The type that excels in the discipline that Freddy wants, namely 'zwarte halve fond' and one day 'halve fond'.

Who could he better consult than Gaby Vandenabeele from Dentergem? Freddy knew that he had to visit that address if he wanted to reach the same level again. "the most important thing is 'quality', the rest you should be able to sort out yourself", said Freddy. In 1994 he bought a full round of youngsters from Gaby Vandenabeele. Later he extended his collection with a few more pigeons. At this moment, he has seven sons and daughters directly from 'Wittebuik' and a direct son of 'De Kleine', two off the 1st



'Aline' (below) and her eye.



Right: 'Ann', winner of 1st Noyon (1,973 birds) 1995 and 1st Provincial (253 birds) and 15th Provincial (683 birds) Vierzon 1996 amongst other positions.

National Limoges, two off the great 'Ronker', 1st National Limoges and five off the 'Golden Lady'.

Freddy and Gilbert also went to Flor Engels & son in Putte and 25 pigeons of the Engels family moved to Boortmeerbeek. These included five direct descendants of 'De Witte' winner of National Bourges and five pigeons of the super 'Engels 231'. They also made a visit to 'Carteus' in Ronse after which they went home with eight direct sons and daughters of 'Super Limoges', 1st National Limoges, a pigeon of Verschuere, Knesselare and one off the 'Primus Interparces Barcelona', the best pigeon of the five years results of the Barcelona Club Brugge. All this is to explain the composition of Freddy Vandenbrande's loft.

The winner of La Souterraine Yearling National is a pigeon that had already been named after Freddy's wife 'Aline' in it's year of birth. Indeed it was a pigeon of which they expected good results from the beginning. Sire was a direct son of 1st National Limoges for Gaby Vandenabeele and the dam was a daughter of 'Superkweker 231' of Flor Engles & son, Putte. 'Aline's' performances were, 1995: Noyon 9th, 574 pigeons (250 km); Toury 13th, 716 pigeons (380 km – 238 mls); Vierzon 4th, 2,440 pigeons (460 km); La Souterraine 170th, 1,854 pigeons (600 km). 1996: Dourdan 13th, 274 pigeons (360 km); Bourges 338th, 10,149 pigeons (460 km – 287 mls); Chateauroux 25th, 1,107 pigeons (600 km – 375 mls); Vierzon 34th, 683 pigeons (460 km); Agenton 8th, 491 pigeons (500 km); La Souterraine 1st National, 1,263 pigeons (600 km).

However there is much more to this loft than one National winner as they scored seventeen 1st prizes in 1996 including the following: Dourdan (130 pigeons), 1st, 4th, 16th (six sent); Dourdan (422 pigeons),

From left to right: Gilbert Bellens, Hugo Van Remortel and Freddy Vandenbrande.



2nd, 5th, 19th, 27th (six sent); Dourdan (480 pigeons), 1st, 6th, 30th, 32nd; Chateauroux (1,107 pigeons), 2nd, 25th, 87th; Blois (1,377 pigeons), 25th, 34th, 69th (450 km); Bourges (1,417 pigeons), 12th, 21st, 39th, 43rd; Bourges (379 pigeons), 2nd, 7th, 12th, 15th; Narbonne (7,691 pigeons), 384th, 578th (800 km); Vierzon (683 pigeons), 15th, 18th, 34th; Vierzon (253 pigeons), 1st, 6th (two sent); La Souterraine National (1,263 pigeons), 1st, 9th, 18th (four sent).