

DINOKENG LOFTS OFFER THE BEST VALUE FOR MONEY

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What an eye opener the 2014 racing season was for me. I entered 70 pigeons in five one loft races and kept statistics as well as mental notes on how each loft is managed, how they treat their clients, etc. Perhaps I should mention that I did not enter pigeons in the SAPIR race or the Million Dollar Pigeon Race.

Each single loft has its strong and weak points. However, overall Dinokeng Lofts offered me much more than any other loft. I, therefore, decided to enter pigeons in Dinokeng Lofts only for 2015. The following are the reasons why I took this decision:

Taking care of the pigeons. Banie Deetlefs looks after one's pigeons better than even I look after my own pigeons. In fact, I lost less pigeons at Dinokeng Lofts than in my own lofts when I still raced in a club. Eight of the nine pigeons that I entered were still in the lofts for the final race in 2014. On average, Dinokeng Lofts lost only 34% of the pigeons entered, calculated two days after the final race. The average losses for the other four lofts for the same period were 61%.

Open and regular communication. I always knew exactly what was going on with the pigeons. When I made enquiries about anything, Meisie or Banie always responded within a day by email or phone. Participants in the races are regularly asked for their opinions regarding new initiatives. They are also invited to suggest ways in which the race can be organised better.

Integrity. I most certainly will not claim that any of the other lofts where I had pigeons did anything unethical or illegal. In fact, I am rather proud of the fact that South African single lofts are internationally known to be trustworthy. Dinokeng Lofts, however, went out of their way to ensure that race results are fair. One need only look at the variety of pigeon fanciers who won the race since its inception to see that every entrant has an equal chance. It all depends on the quality of the pigeons that you enter. This also applies to the BarZAlona race. The BarZAlona race is a long distance race that takes place approximately two weeks after the final race. Entrants to the main race can also enter their pigeons for this race if they want to. This gives one a second chance to win some good prizes.

Splendid organisation. Meisie sees to it that the administration and finances of the lofts are managed perfectly while Banie sees to it that the pigeons are trained, fed and medicated so

that they are in a perfect condition once the racing starts. Anton van der Merwe helped Banie from their inception to date. He, unfortunately, will no longer be involved with the lofts from 2015. However, Banie is more than capable of ensuring that the pigeons are taken care of.

A good test of the quality of your pigeons. Most of the best pigeon fanciers in South Africa and even some pigeon fanciers from abroad enter pigeons for this race. The performances of your pigeons in the loft is a good indication of the quality (or not) of your pigeons, because they participate on an equal footing with fanciers who perform well in clubs, federations, unions, etc. If you beat them at Dinokeng Lofts, you should also beat them in your club, federation, or union. If you don't beat them, then you know that you should probably obtain better pigeons. How often do pigeon fanciers not persist with pigeons that will never make them champions just because the pigeons were expensive, boast impressive pedigrees, were imported, came from the lofts of a champion fancier, etc. In the process they waste thousands of rands and decades trying to make their substandard pigeons perform well. You can change all of this by having a professional test them for you against some of the best pigeons in the country, if not the world.

Value for money. Dinokeng Lofts paid out a total of R7 480 000.00 in the last four years, excluding the prize money for the BarZAlona race (R255 000.00 was paid out as prizes for the latter). Some pigeon fanciers felt that the entry fee of R7 000.00 per pigeon was too high. Consequently the entry fee has been reduced for 2015. The new entry fees are as follows:

- You will need to pay a R500.00 perch fee per pigeon entered. This applies to your main entry as well as your two reserve pigeons. You can also send less than two reserve pigeons if you so prefer.
- If you enter only your main pigeon for the races, you will need to pay an additional R2 500.00 to activate it. This must be paid before March 2015.
- You will also need to pay an additional R2 500.00 per reserve pigeon that you activate. A pigeon can be activated at any time before the final race. Just keep in mind that a pigeon that has not been activated cannot win any prizes.

- You need not enter any pigeons in the BarZAlona long distance race. However, if you do, you will need to pay an additional R2 000.00 entry fee. This need only be paid after the final race and before the pigeons are basketed for the BarZAlona race.
- You can also enter pigeons for the Four in One Competition. The entry fee is R200.00 per pigeon. The Four in One Competition is a medley of four competitions, namely the Knockout Competition, the Point Winner Competition, the Champion of Champions Competition and the Triple Crown Jackpot Competition. See the Dinokeng web site (www.dinokeng.co.za) for more details on this.

What you can win. In spite of the reduced entry fee, there are still a huge number of possible prizes for which your pigeons will participate. To begin with, the total money that will be made available for prizes will be R900 000.00 on condition that at least 600 paid pigeons are entered.

- The number of prizes will be calculated on a sliding scale, for example 40 prize money opportunities if 400 pigeons are entered and paid for, 60 prize money opportunities if 600 pigeons are entered and paid for, etc.
- At least 50% of the entry fees received will be paid out as prizes if less than 600 pigeons are entered and paid for.
- 75% of the Four in One Competition entry fees will be paid out as prizes for the competition.
- Clubs may in future enter all three their pigeons (the main pigeons as well as the two reserves) for the club competition.
- 60% of the entry fees for the BarZAlona race will be paid out as prizes.
- Pigeons may be entered from 1 October of the previous year until the end of March of the year in which the races will take place.
- Pigeon fanciers will no longer receive free entries for the next year if their pigeons are lost without winning anything. However, pigeon fanciers may replace lost pigeons up to the end of March of that particular year.

Close. In summary, Dinokeng Lofts provide pigeon fanciers with the best balance in terms of management, quality, integrity, caring for the pigeons and prizes that can be won. Banie is confident that the loft will become the best loft for South African pigeons. In terms of prizes his vision is pay more than a million rand in prize money while the owner of the Ace Pigeon

will win a new car. Achieving his vision is very much in the hands of pigeon fanciers. The more pigeon fanciers support Dinokeng Lofts, the sooner will we all benefit.