

## DINOKENG LOFTS CHAMPIONS FOR 2013: ENGELBRECHT LOFTS

Written by Hannes Nel

I suppose one can call Tersia and Jannie Engelbrecht one loft specialists, even though they also keenly participate in club and federation races. The reason why I regard them as one loft specialists is because their pigeons do seem to regularly perform extremely well in one loft races and because they clearly enjoy participating in such races. As Tersia put it: "Being able to participate in one loft races is a privilege, there is no substitute for such competitions."

During the 2013 racing season one of their pigeons won the final race. A second pigeon of theirs took 13<sup>th</sup> position in the same race. They won the two-pigeon competition as well. As if these performances were not already a huge achievement, one of their pigeons also took an eighth place in the Barzalona race, which was flown two weeks after the final race over a distance of 780 km.

This year's outstanding performances were not a flash in the pan. In the 2012 Dinokeng races their pigeons took the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> places in the final race and they won the second Turbo (hot spot) race. They also won the two pigeon competition in the final race and the three pigeon competition in the Turbo races.

One inevitably needs to ask why their pigeons perform better than the pigeons of most other pigeon fanciers in one loft races? Judging from my (way too brief) discussion with them and some written inputs that I received from them, I would ascribe their success to the following four criteria:

1. An extremely good genetic pool. The entries for one loft races are selected from a good number or excellent breeding pairs, not just one or two. In addition to their proven champion breeders, they continuously experiment with new mating combinations. They first test the offspring from new matings in races flown from their own lofts, after which youngsters for one loft races are bred from the pairs that proved successful. Although the Clausings play an important role in their pigeons, they also purchased some pigeons locally. Some of their breeders are gifts from friends.
2. Diligent preparation of the pigeons for one loft races. I believe Tersia plays a leading role in the preparation of youngsters for one loft races. Preparation starts with the breeders. They are given regular supplements such as vitamins, minerals, trace elements and amino acids. Special care is taken to ensure that the youngsters learn how to drink water on their own.
3. Careful selection of pigeons to enter in the race. To begin with, the breeders were already carefully selected. This ensures that all youngsters will have the characteristics needed to perform well, notably the will to win and perseverance. Because of this youngsters are selected for health rather than pedigree. Only youngsters that are perfectly healthy are entered in one loft races.
4. Treatment of pigeons against illnesses. Preventive treatment is regarded as important, even though medication is administered sparingly. Youngsters are vaccinated against new castle disease as well as paramyxo virus. Each youngster is given a tablet against canker (trichomoniasis) and coccidiosis when they are weaned. They are also treated against bacteria, fungal diseases and external parasites.

In closing, Jannie and Tersia gave some really valuable advice to pigeon fanciers who are thinking about entering pigeons in one loft races:

- It is not necessary to be a club or federation champion to participate in one loft races. If your pigeons are good quality you stand the same chance as these champions to achieve success in one loft races.
- Participate as a member of a syndicate if, at first, you do not have enough confidence in your own pigeons.
- Select your breeders and entries carefully and objectively.
- Prepare your racers as well as you possibly can.



Tersia and Jannie Engelbrecht