

# **Mr & Mrs J Peters, Hornchurch.**

## **From North to South.**

I got my first pigeons in 1987. At that time in my area, the north east of London, there were two big names. The first was Planet Brothers and I actually joined the club they raced in, but this was the end of their racing career as it turned out and so I never really experienced them in action.



**Jim at the loft.**

The other name of the time was Jim Peters but as I joined the sport to race North he turned to race south. Jim had enjoyed an extraordinarily successful London combine record at a time when the London North Road Combine was a serious organisation with large birdage. Jim had a very successful team of pigeons winning things like 1st and 2nd London North Road Combine from Berwick and the Tommy Long Trophy, a very prestigious trophy for the best LNRC performances of the year. This team was part Busschaert, which were very good up to about 200 miles, but the other main family was Deweerdt. Jim was quite friendly with Emiel Deweerdt, and he obtained the best pigeons he could from him. It was primarily the Deweerdt's that brought him his combine successes. However, when he turned south he telephoned another towering London champion, who had preceded him with great success on the North Road followed by perhaps even greater success from the South, the incomparable Jim Biss seeking advice. He was quickly told that his pigeons would not survive two years on the South Road, and as it turned out he was absolutely correct. Despite their extraordinary consistency and success on the North road they simply could not perform at all on the South. It has taken Jim quite a while to climb back up to the level he experienced on the North road and this should stand as a lesson to all that the International races, particularly Barcelona, from the UK present an enormous challenge to even the best of flyers. So winning 1st National Barcelona, as Jim did in 2007, is a real mark of success.

## **International recognition.**

None less than [Jan Polder](#) noticed Jim's success in this race, when a westerly wind carried the winner to Holland leaving the British pigeons to plough against it, and offered the following words in tribute to the achievement.

*"In Holland more and more fanciers are changing to the long distance races. I like this development very much, but on the other hand some of*

*them are afraid to compete with the whole country and just want to make result lists in sections. I think that's not good for the long distance sport. In Holland it is possible to play against the whole country. Of course sometimes the weather circumstances mean that some parts of the country are prospect less for a top-ranking, but another time they have the best prospects to have a chance for a top result. Today you are the doctor and tomorrow you are the patient. So it is on the long distance races and if you want to win you must not be afraid to lose. Some fanciers from the north of Holland (not all) are afraid to lose from the southern fanciers. Sometimes they are right, but often they make brilliant results, as Vertelman, winning 1st. International Perpignan this year on one of the longest distances with difficult circumstances and there are many more examples.*

*I have very deep respect for the performances from the long distance fanciers from the UK on the international races such as Tarbes this year and Mr. Jim Peters, National winner from the jewel of International long distance sport, Barcelona. These super long distance pigeons prove that you also have on longer distances, even when they have to cross the sea, chance to make a good result. But of course you have to go with the best long distance pigeons there are and when they have the top condition there is a chance they make something from which we think is really impossible.*

*Jan Polder "*

The full story of that success is a one of dogged determination, hours of study, years of frustration and disappointment, considerable expenditure of both emotion and money and above all an inner confidence in his own abilities. No doubt the success when it came felt that much better for all that had gone before. All of this applies to Jim but this is very much a partnership, racing as **Mr & Mrs J. Peters**, with the **J** standing as much for **Jean** as for **Jim**. While there is no doubt, as far as pigeons are concerned anyway, that it is Jim that takes the lead Jean has played

a very important part in this success. She is very much part of the day to day care of the pigeons but more important than that while she is intimately involved with them she also manages to sit back a little and retain a cool objective outlook. There have been several occasions over these past years when Jim has felt totally frustrated and bemused and it has been Jean with a few simple words, often questions, that has put him back on track.



**Jean & Jim with the 2007 pigeons.**

## **The new beginning**

Resulting from that first conversation with Jim Biss three pairs of pigeons came over to the Peters lofts but there was also an attraction to Silver Toye that sent Jim off to Louella with Eric Guinchard. When he handled the pigeons though Jim wasn't happy and so he was shown some Norbet Norman pigeons. He found one, a cock, he liked very much and then he found a hen he liked as well but they turned out to be

brother and sister. Nevertheless he bought them and paired them with the Deweerdt stock pigeons that he still had and the Biss pigeons. Shortly after this a Sheikh came over from Qatar and bought all the Deweerdt stock pigeons so, in his own words, he mucked about for a couple of years until the Dutch pigeons became available.

## **Dutch influence.**

I imagine most people can remember when Louella bought the Dutch champions, it was quite an exciting time, so Jim did quite a bit of reading and then set off to Louella again, this time with Jean. Again he wasn't keen on what he was shown but these weren't the top pigeons, he was told he would have to speak to Mark, which he did. Mark told him that they did not have the better bred pigeons there at the time but if he could wait for 1/2 an hour or so he would go and collect some. Jim waited and Mark went to fetch some quality pigeons. These were different, he liked the way they handled, their shape and feather quality and while he looked them over a small crowd gathered. He bought several. He bought two from Dolle and one from Smaragd II and a son of Vlekje. They weren't cheap. After a little while he realised he had to many cocks so he returned and bought another two hens from Blue Dax and Smaragd. One of these hens he soon found would not lay. When he put her with a hen she behaved like a hen and when he put her with a cock she behaved like a cock, cock or hen there was no way she would lay. So he got on to Mark who told him to send her back as they had a product that might make her lay. It didn't, so Mark replaced her and sent Jim a yearling hen. Jim was really pleased with this hen but almost a year to the day, when Jean went out to the loft, there she was dead on the floor, somehow she had broken her neck.

## **The disappointments.**

These pigeons bred some nice looking pigeons, Jim was very pleased with them, but they didn't perform. There were some exceptions one

cock in particular raced very well but everything he bred was lost. Jim spoke to Jim Biss about this only to learn that he had had a similar experience. So Jim decided to race the youngsters on the North road, just as a tester, because there was no local south road young bird racing. The Hornchurch Club welcomed him back knowing what he was trying to do. He sent 46 youngsters to the first race which turned out to be a bad one. His pigeons kept coming all afternoon and by the time he went to the Club he had 40 back. He ended up 2nd Club, but nobody believed his returns. The second race was an ordinary sort of race but the third turned out to be worse than the first. It rained a lot and his pigeons returned shaking the water off. He sent 42, all that had returned from the previous two races, and by the time he went to the Club he had 40 home. He made a point of taking all the rubbers with him as he knew they wouldn't believe him. Dave Dadson, at that time one of the best flyers in the Club, got to the Club at 7.30 and had just got his first pigeon. Well Jim was 1st Club and he was quite right, they did not believe him, so he had to produce all the rubbers. This showed these pigeons could get home but they didn't get home when they went South. Jim said "It has taken me a long time to work it out, but I can't dispute this because on the North they come down all together, like they do in Holland but on the South we are spread right across the country and they couldn't manage it. I would win the East of England then two weeks later I would send it back and lose it. I was putting them in the National and not timing in. I had lost my way."

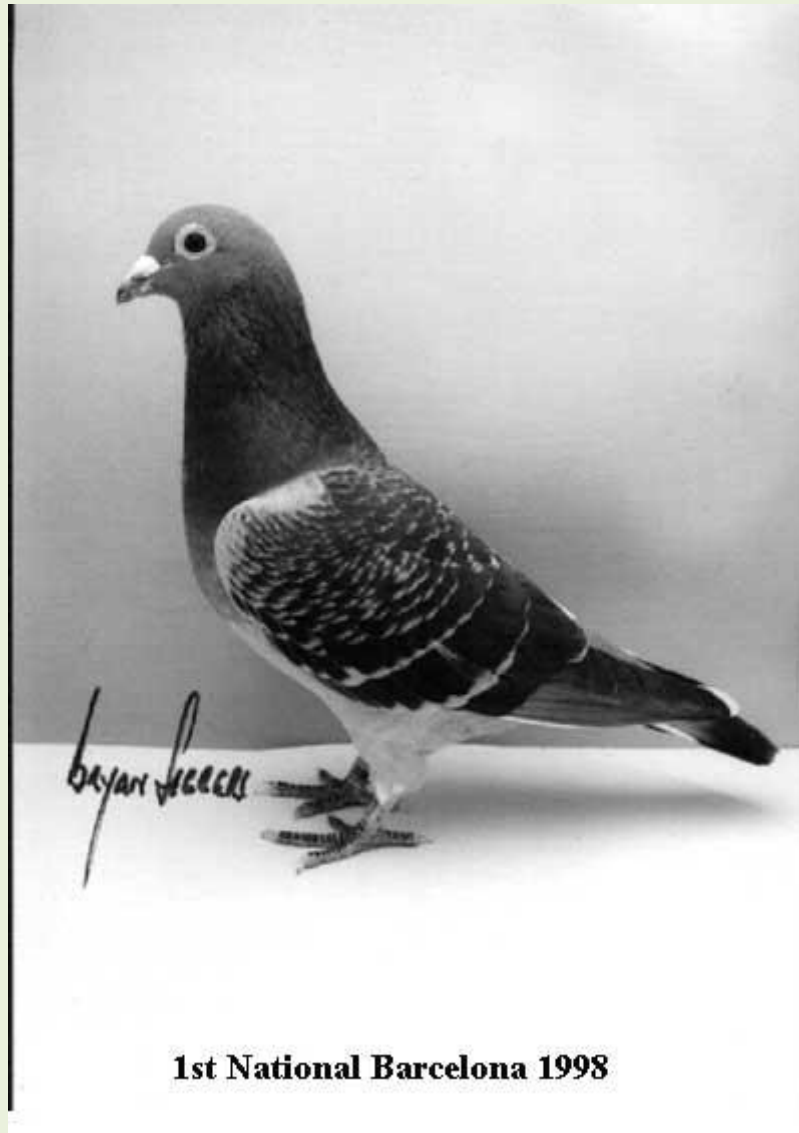
## **The realisation.**

In about 1994, 5 years into this phase, he tried a couple of crosses and they came out a little bit different but they started to come home, although they were still erratic. The penny really dropped though when he went to Birmingham to buy a Jim Donaldson pigeon, again for a tidy sum. He lost everything this pigeon bred and he became so frustrated that he just threw her out of the loft. She came back after a while and eventually came down and into the loft. He just left her there for awhile and then put her down. "Mistake. Big mistake. The problem was they

were all good on the outside, eyes, feet, shape, buoyancy etc. but they had no engine. They were brilliant pigeons but not for this country." Jim says he couldn't find fault with what he was doing, he was buying pigeons from top Barcelona pigeons to fly Barcelona but it wasn't working. People kept saying "Why don't you get rid of them you cant fly them." And his reply was "I want to know why I cant fly them". He read and studied widely, he looked at the Barcelona results and saw that the top pigeons were 4 years or older and he had tried that, but it didn't work, nothing he tried seemed to work so he said to Jean "Don't let me look in this book anymore I am looking at pedigree and forgetting what I know about pigeons." From then on he decided to judge his pigeons as he always had, in his hands and he started selecting on that basis. He recalled that Florizone had said "They must come home with a body the same as they went with, round and full of power." He used that as his selection criteria and as they returned from races he examined them, times were irrelevant, he judged them on the condition they returned in and any that were suspect were eliminated.

## **Marathon Man.**

2007 wasn't the first Barcelona win for Jim of course. He first won this race in 1998. This was with GB94L02989 "Marathon Man" which perhaps gives the first real testament to Jim's theory. "Marathon Man" was bred from a mealy cock GB93L03134, a grandson of "Lama", one of Jim Biss's great champions who twice won 1st National in the Marseille International while his dam was GB91R74661 a blue chequer granddaughter of both "Dolle 800" and "Smaragd II" . So here we have Jim's blending plan producing a champion performance in the first generation. It didn't stop with the first generation though because "Marathon Man" is the grand sire of the 10th National Barcelona 2007, GB2003J29194. This pigeon is mainly of Dutch origin as his Dam is from "Marathon Man" when paired to a hen from the "Dolle" and "Smaragd" lines while his sire was bred by Louella being a grandson of both "Invincible Spirit" and "De Smaragd II".



## **Lacoste.**

"Lacoste", GB2001J04747, a Mealy cock, was the winner of 1st National Barcelona 2007. He is a good example of this breeding plan. His Dam is "The Socks" bred for the stock loft primarily from the "Smargd II" and "Dolle 800" lines but tucked away three generations back is "Rambo" one of Jim's North road champions who took 1st London North Road Combine Berwick from 8,200 pigeons, about 300 miles. So substantially the dams side is Dutch but the Sire's side is pure Biss. The sire of "Lacoste" is a grandson of "Natrix" who won 1st National Marseille on three separate occasions and also a grandson of G & M Vanhee's "Adamo" who won high positions in the Barcelona International on three



separate occasions. With ancestry like this you might think that success was inevitable but from Barcelona nothing is inevitable. "Lacoste" was raced on the natural system and for preparation he was sent to one race from Alencon, 217 miles, and then one from Tours, 291 miles. After that he was given one weeks rest and then he had one 50 mile training toss each week until basketing. He was sent to Barcelona sitting 10 day eggs. Normal feeding is by hopper and over the last four days a high carbohydrate/fat mixture was introduced. He arrived home in very good condition and was still very strong, which fortunately fits the selection criteria. He has now been retired to take his place in the stock loft along with the other Barcelona winner from 1998, and who knows what future Barcelona pigeons these two are going to breed. You can find Jim's recent performances in the [I.P.R.R. Results Database](#). "Lacoste" had shown his potential earlier when he took 20th National in the Pau International 2004.





## **A challenge to us all.**

Jim has now won the Barcelona National on two occasions. Barcelona has been his target from the time he turned South and he turned South searching for a new challenge. He found that challenge and there can be little doubt that he was a match for it. Now he presents the challenge, a real challenge to all of us when he says ***"Without a doubt now I have the best team of pigeons I have had, but they are all young."*** So the challenge for us, over the coming years, is Mr & Mrs J. Peters and Barcelona.

Nigel Lane