

# Jac Steketee of Bruinisse

I have meant to write something about Jac Steketee for a number of years now but have held back because of his concern over publicity. That part of the story goes back many years and I will not pretend to know the ins and outs of it but what I do know, as a result of that lack of publicity, few in the UK had really taken much notice of his name until quite recently.



## The lofts

I first came across the name Steketee when I went to interview Robert Ben and discovered that one of his great pigeons was part Steketee. Although Robert was quite deliberate in his breeding plans this part occurred by accident as in 1996 a stray came into

his loft which he clearly liked because he made a note on a piece of paper and tucked it into the pigeons ring before he released it. Later he got a letter of thanks from the owner Mr Groenleer and later still, when Mr Groenleer was on his way to England, he took Robert six pigeons which were all bred down from Jac Steketee stock. One of those pigeons turned out to be a great breeding hen, one of those golden strokes of nature. Unfortunately Mr Groenleer could not help with the pedigree of that pigeon when I enquired of him several years later but it became quite clear that Jac Steketee was a very well know name in the Netherlands whether he liked publicity or not. So I enquired further.

### **The beginnings.**

Like many fanciers Jac comes from a pigeon family but his first hobby wasn't pigeons at all but fish. He was very successful with tropical fish aquaria winning many regional titles before he moved on to pigeons. It is easy to understand this affinity with water and what lives in it when you see where he himself lives. [Bruinisse](#) is a village on the edge of one of the islands that go to make up [Zeeland](#), or Sea Land, that coastal area between Antwerp and Rotterdam. The area is actually a complicated mix of islands and water where the estuaries of three major rivers, the Rhine, Scheldt and Meuse finally find their way to the sea. It has also become a very famous area for racing pigeons.

It was not until the early 1970's that Jac started with pigeons himself and it was in 1975 that he obtained stock from a man who became a firm friend and who's pigeons left their mark on many lofts and fanciers from that time, Jan Cools of [Nieuw Vossemeer](#). Jan Cools of course was a long standing friend of Jan Aarden and many exchanges of pigeons had taken place between them which provided a very sound base for the start of any loft. It was with these pigeons that Jac first flew in the St. Vincent National of 1977 where he scored highly and he was from that time hooked on long distance racing. The following year Jac

obtained pigeons from Jo Hendriks of [Twello](#) and it was this blend that formed the basis of his family of birds that has proved so successful right up to this present day.



### **Jan Cools**

Picking out individual pigeons to mention can at times get quite difficult especially here as Jac has had so many but two that stand out for me are “De Marseille” and “Stayer”. Starting with “De Marseille” NL82-903065 he was a great racer and was 4<sup>th</sup> National Marseille, clearly from where he takes his name but much more important than that is how often he appears in the pedigree of successful pigeons that followed him in many, many lofts. The sire of “De Marseille” was NL77-2083788 “De Stam Doffer” or “De Stamvader” (The Tribe or Clan Cock) from Jan Cools who appears in even more pedigrees so which do you pick.

**NL 77-2083788**

**De Stamvader**

**Vader van**

4e Nat. Marseille  
5e Nat. Perpignan  
6e Nat. Pau  
9e Nat. Dax  
9e Nat. Pau  
15e Nat. Pau  
27e Nat. Perpignan  
36e Nat. Lourdes

**Grootvader van**

1e Nat. Dax  
3e Nat. Bergerac  
20e Nat. Dax  
21e Nat. Bordeaux  
53e Nat. Perpignan



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While “De Marseille” was very much a pigeon of Jan Cools origin “Stayer” is a little different because while Jac was and has been very successful with his family blend he has appreciated that you do need occasionally to bring in some fresh blood. On his sire’s side “Stayer” is a product of the Jan Cools/Hendriks blend with “De Stam Doffer” appearing in the pedigree but his Dam was a little different. Jac bought two eggs on a Bon or voucher from a local source that he knew to have a very high reputation but the origin of the pigeons was Piet Lazeroms with influences from Van

Agtmaal and clearly these had real blending potential with his own pigeons. It actually worked out a little better than even he hoped as one of the eggs produced the Dam of “Stayer” and the other a very good racer. “Stayer” was an exceptional racer and crowned National and International Ace Pigeon of the ZLU in 1996, primarily for his performances at Perpignan over several years. Again you will find him and his close relatives in the pedigrees of many successful lofts and pigeons.

**NL 91-9103526**  
**De Stayer**  
**1e Internationale Asduif grote Fond**

43e Nat. Perpignan	5024 d.
105e Nat. Perpignan	4342 d.
108e Nat. Pau	2082 d.
282e Prov. St. Vincent	4333 d.
295e Nat. Marseille	4307 d.
568e Nat. Perpignan	3815 d.
600e Nat. Lourdes	2543 d.
687e Nat. Barcelona	5229 d.



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**Frans van Peperstraten, Piet de Vogel and Jac Steketee  
admire a true Stayer.**

Great families of pigeons do not confine themselves to one fancier though and for many the test of a family is whether they can stand the transition to other fanciers. It is perhaps in this regard that the Steketee family really stand out as they have played their part in many of the great success stories of recent years including Piet de Vogel and Frans van Peperstraten. One other name that is well known in the UK is Jan Polder of [Middleharnis](#) who has won worldwide fame with his performances. Jan went to Jac Steketee in 1985 and bought 15 latebreds and from breeding with those pigeons soon shot to fame with pigeons like ‘Witstaart’ (Golden Barcelona bird 1995-1997), ‘Husky’ (International Ace Pigeon Pau 1998-2002), Black Magic Woman (National Ace Pigeon Pau 2004 – 2006) ‘Rainbow Warrior’ who won three National top 10 positions a new record in Dutch pigeon racing, and then in 2005 ‘Victoria’ won 1st National St. Vincent.



That Steketee blood runs through them all and when we look at the pedigrees of pigeons like “Nadal” above or his sister “Dolores”, 16<sup>th</sup> National Barcelona 2005, we see only a couple of generations back “De Marseille” and his sire “De Stam Doffer”.



**Jac, Frans and Piet examining the stock loft.**

The performance level of Jac Steketee and his pigeons carries on to this day. Looking at the 2012 Barcelona result we find that Jac Steketee sent an entry of 10 pigeons and timed 3 in the ZLU (Dutch National) result. His first pigeon was 10<sup>th</sup> National, that is 10<sup>th</sup> from an entry of 6,392 pigeons and 1,159 fanciers and it was 27<sup>th</sup> International from an entry of 25,320 pigeons. Then if we look at the 1<sup>st</sup> Dutch National pigeon, 6<sup>th</sup> International, for A. Schults, also from Bruinisse, and we look at the pedigree of that winner we find, just a couple of generations back, “De Marseille” of Jac Steketee with of course his sire “De Stam Doffer” and then in another line a sister of “Stayer”. I hesitate to mention it, well not really as I am very proud to mention it as much for Jac Steketee as anyone else, but if you look at the pedigree of the 1<sup>st</sup> UK National and 475<sup>th</sup> International in that very same race you will see just a few generations back that very same “De Marseille”

with his sire “De Stam Doffer” and this time as well the sire of “Stayer”.

Jac Steketee despite his shunning of publicity has firmly established himself as one of the most important names with one of the most influential families of pigeons in the modern age of International pigeon racing. None of this happens by accident and certainly you cannot maintain a presence at the top of the game for as long as he has without great skill. Jac Steketee has that skill and he has great confidence in his ability and knowledge but he just doesn't like shouting about it. He is simply a very nice man and an exceptional pigeon fancier.

Nigel Lane

**[Jac Steketee 2013](#)**