

# Marathon Loft in Pattaya, Thailand

My name is Willi Netzer. I am residing in Thailand since 1976.

In 1999 I started racing pigeons and was able to obtain some pigeons of the Van der Wegen and Wijnaker lines, direct from Holland. Both lines are world famous for winning 1st National Barcelona.

Success in Thailand however didn't come that quick. It took two seasons for a beginner to get some routine, to find a favourable loft design and of course find successful combinations in breeding.

It would certainly be a challenge for any seasoned flyer from a cold climate to start racing here and I am very happy to be able to lend some support to new overseas starters David Staley from England and Clive Comperat from Wales, both old hands and very successful fanciers.

It is no easy task winning against our local fancier friends, even so many overseas visitors to our local lofts tend to think this way at first impression.

Many Thai fanciers pull their resources for one or two races which makes them very hard to beat. Most lofts train 150km twice a week during the short races. Loft flying appears to be difficult in city lofts with lots of antenna support wires competing with all kinds of electric wiring.

February 2001 brought my first major success, winning 1st, 3rd and 4th club at our longest distance race, Maesai-Pattaya 830km. At an average Thai winter season the month of December and January are much like July and August in central Europe, but February can have a lot of tropical surprises including hailstorms with ice cubes the size of pigeon eggs.

This is a race, were you need the likes of the Delbars, Catrijsse, Stichelbouts or like in my case Van der Wegens or the hardy Wijnakers.

The week after this race started like every year with a new race direction going northeast. The particular matter for this route is, that birds from our club will have a markedly different line of flight from the one of the Bangkok birds. The major obstacle however is a 100km mountain range with high peaks and prime forest discouraging them from breaking away.

I assume I was a bit lucky too, at this time. At a 300km race from Korat to Pattaya, my birds came 1st and 2nd club, but the real gravy was beating the 1st Fed and all the other birds going to different provinces next to Bangkok altogether 3000 pigeons, with my second bird beating the 3rd Fed.

What I most like about racing in Thailand is putting birds into an international race and competing against birds directly from famous lofts like Houben, Desmet Matthijs, de Weert and not the least, lofts here in Asia, that spent a fortune obtaining the very best money can buy.

In 2000 I entered 6 birds into the F.C.I. Chiang Mai race and ended up 250st, in 2001 I send 8 birds and got a prize being 50st and in 2002 I entered 10 birds resulting in 4th from Bungarn 600 km.

The last big one came finally at Maesai 2003. 1st, 2nd and 3rd club arriving all within 1/2 an hour. Even so I am happy with this results, there is so much more left to win.

So still - way to go.

Latest update: May 22. 2003



Pure Van der Wegen, Father of 4th F.C.I. 600km and 6th F.C.I.pre-race Korat(nestbrother)



Pure Van der Wegen. Mother 4th F.C.I. 600km, 6th F.C.I.300km, 2nd club Chiengrai 2003 und 4th Maesai 2002



Releasing



Talking pigeons



My Race Loft



Our Loft Mouse



Getting the birds out for an exercise



Where are they?