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Winner of the Danish Championship 3 times and 9 times No. 1 National: Anders Bo Brøbech, Skanderborg, Denmark

by Christina Hinge and Michael Th. Larsen on 05/10/2020, related fanciers: [Brøbech Anders Bo og Hans Henrik](#)



For readers of *Brevduen* (Denmark's leading pigeon racing magazine), Anders Brøbech needs no further introduction.

He has held his own at the peak of Danish pigeon racing for many years, and it's hard to believe that anyone could surpass Anders' interest in and commitment to the sport. He also takes part in all events in the racing calendar. Although Anders may be best known for his superb results at, long and marathon distances, he puts a great deal of effort and preparation into ranking among the best, even in the short-distance regional club races – and actually succeeds!

Whenever you are in Anders' company, you are left in no doubt that this is a sportsman who 'lives and breathes' racing pigeons. He is very keen on continually improving working methods, and it is particularly interesting to see that he doesn't shy away from trying out new techniques – even if they fall into the category of 'untraditional'. But, as they say, 'if you follow in the footsteps of others, you'll never get ahead!'

And this desire to test new methods quickly became the focal point of our conversation when I visited Anders to interview him for this article. From my conversations with Anders throughout the year and his two lectures, which I had the pleasure of attending, I already knew that I was going to see and hear something extraordinary.

1 & 2 National. Karlsruhe 2019 777 km.

Anders Brøbech Racing Pigeons



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1 NAT. 998 MPM

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‘Completely natural’ – system of care, feeding and a year in the life of the loft

This is Anders’ own name for his system of care and the way he races his pigeons. It is a somewhat ambiguous term and actually refers to a detailed system, which I will outline below. The essence of the system – and hence the name – is that the pairs always remain together, with no separation in the winter season. The birds live a completely natural life, and their moulting cycle is controlled by simple methods described later in this article.

Let us examine Anders’ account of the system. He explains that the new season begins after the last racing weekend in August, when the Danish national long-distance race is held with release from Munich 888 km in Germany. As soon as this race is over, all of the young birds are introduced to the loft, where the older birds remain and continue brooding. The pigeons are kept inside for five days, and then all the birds in the loft are allowed to exercise freely, from morning to evening, to accustom the youngsters to the loft for old pigeon. This process takes about a week, by which time the youngsters are familiar with the new loft. After this week, the pigeons are let out in the morning – they are forced out of the loft, and the entrance is closed for around 15 minutes. An hour later, they are called in for feeding.

We should mention here that after the end of the season in August, the birds have to make do with a two-week supplement of an oregano concentrate. From this time until 1 December, the pigeons are not given any kind of supplement, and Anders resolutely says that he prefers to spend his money on fat corn, he use his own mix ‘Aftenkaffe’ rather than vitamins during the moult.

Around 10 January, the moult is finished, and strict discipline is introduced to the daily training flights around the loft. Up to this date, despite the closed entrance, flying has been voluntary for the pigeons. When the birds begin this forced flying, the feed ration is reduced to encourage them to travel further during daily training. This system improves the condition of the pigeons, so they are able to fly at great heights above the loft for 45 minutes a day.

Readers will probably wonder how the paired pigeons are kept under control during this period, when it comes to egg-laying. This is done by removing all nest bowls on 1 October and opening up the front of the nests, so the pigeons don’t have any dark, cosy corners to brood in. This method is entirely adequate for preventing ill-timed egg-laying and premature start of the breeding and moulting cycles. In winter, the loft site is also very dark, and there are no streetlights to affect the lighting in the loft.

The daily training tosses around the loft continue until basket training begins, and the pigeons are in the air one hour a day. In very bad weather, however, the birds are allowed into the loft as soon as they land on the landing board, and they are not forced to fly for an hour. It is extremely important to Anders that the daily training hour, as described above, is continued for six consecutive weeks prior to basket training. This is to ensure that the pigeons are in peak condition when they begin training with the car.

Basket training usually starts from Vejle (42 km) and after that Middelfart (66 km). Before the first race the pigeons will train about 10 times from 42 km and 5 times 66 km. Anders training the birds mid-week at 42 ore 66 km. In the first 5 weeks of racing season after that training in car stops.



The mixture 'Aftenkaffe'

Daily training tosses around the loft involve releasing the birds early in the morning. All of the pigeons are driven out of the loft – even the ones that are brooding. Then the entrance is closed, and the birds train for around two hours. In the evening, this routine is repeated.

Building up the pigeons is very important in order to replenish their body fat stores for the demanding races. Anders explains how he conditions his pigeons to take in maximum nutrition. During the winter season, he feeds the birds very lightly and very sparingly – quite simply to teach them to ‘appreciate’ the good grains. You can tell that this produces perfect results, as the amount of grain Anders uses in early May is the same amount that he feeds on 1 August – and at that time of year, only half the number of pigeons still sitting in the loft.

1 & 3 National. Freiburg 2019 910 km.

Anders Brøbech Racing Pigeons



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Natural pigeons and their cycle

When Anders explains his method of caring for the pigeons, many of us are curious to know how he manages to control the moult, considering that pairs are together all year round and live a completely natural life 'as a family'. First of all, Anders aims to push the date when the birds lay their first clutch of eggs in the springtime to make it as late as possible. In 2019, this was on 15 March, and it is only at that time that the pigeons are provided with nest bowls. In 2020, the first egg was laid on 5 April, possibly due to the fact that the boxes were closed from 1. Marts. To delay the moulting process, lights are turned on in the loft from midsummer (23 June) from 4.45 a.m. until 11 p.m. This keeps the days at the same length and helps to slow down the onset of the moulting process.

As a priority, the aim is for the yearlings to be the first to have squabs, as experience shows that the rearing of young strengthens their attachment to the nest and their general motivation to follow the natural system. Also, it is often found that the yearlings which are then raced from sitting on 10-day-old eggs, after having reared their first clutch, are very keen in the races. Practically speaking, the first clutch does not produce a lot of squabs, because the eggs have gone cold during the preliminary training sessions. The older pigeons are not allowed to hatch young until after 15 May. Obviously, the nest conditions are carefully planned for those pigeons set to participate in national races, by counting back from the release date and the bird's ideal nest condition to the day when the nest must be cleared. However, no such planning work is done for any of the other pigeons – they will be released according to their form on the day. Anders uses a lot of little tricks to motivate his pigeons, and his efforts to come up with new methods are ongoing. Placing a squab in the nest on a Tuesday evening or removing the eggs from a pair on a Monday have turned out to be efficient ways of motivating the birds. Likewise, pigeons that can be kept on their eggs for longer – up to 30 days – may be very highly motivated. There is never more than one squab in the nest during races, and Anders says that when it comes to squabs, he has not had much luck using pigeons whose eggs have just hatched.

As for the ideal nest conditions, Anders is absolutely certain that these are 10-day-old eggs or 10-day-old squabs. This is backed up by two of his national wins with hens sitting 10-day-old eggs, while he has also gained this title once with a cock sitting a 14-day-old youngster. Similarly, he has managed on one occasion to bring home the national title with a hen who had her eggs removed from the nest on the Monday prior to releasing.

Building the stock and the breeding efforts

It goes without saying that to reach such impressive results as Anders has brought home over the last 25 years, you need to have quality pigeon stock. Anders refers to the basic bloodline – or rather bloodlines – as the two 'Brøbech lines'. These are two separate lines: **'the check line'** and **'the blue line'**.

The check line (Blåtavlet-Brøbech) Old check family. Was started by Anders' grandfather Carl Andersen in Allingåbro, Denmark, and is built around the foundation pair 'DAN208-88-192 Cock' and 'DAN115-93-573 Hen'. Dewerd + VanBruane + Delbar + Van Riel. [This pair features in the pedigree of four national winners from Anders' loft](#), and it is in those very hard races that the check line has proven its strength, as he reckons these pigeons are too slow in all other races. They like extremely hot weather, above 30 degrees and they are

very comfortable. From this foundation pair, Anders points out six particular birds – ‘DAN115-02-362’, ‘DAN208-01-572’, ‘DAN073-06-847’, ‘DAN073-06-848’, DAN073-11-2081 and DAN073-11-2426 – whose breeding shows that they carry on the foundation genes in the most eminent way.

The blue line (Blå-Brøbech) Old blue family. Delbar + Grondelease is represented by foundation birds DAN208-93-2, DAN115-93-632, DAN115-99-812 and DAN073-05-702, the old Delbar hen DAN208-86-329 and her offspring, the DAN208-97-300 hen and the DAN208-91-139 cock. In fact, DAN073-05-702 is the result of pairing DAN115-99-812 with an offspring from DAN208-91-139. The parents to 93-632 are also the grandparents to 93-2 and 93-2 is the father of 99-812, so this is by all means a firmly established line.

Unlike the check line, which is bred for marathon racing, ‘the blues’ are proper all-round pigeons, capable of winning young bird races and sprints, but their speciality is the one-day long-distance races. Crosses between the check line and the blue line have turned out to be excellent in national long-distance races, while crossing ‘the blues’ with Flor Engels, Janssen or Jos De Klak pigeons have produced several top performers in sprint and middle-distance races. This family can win as youngsters, yearlings, and old pigeons from 150 to 900 km. They like all kinds of weather. The family features in the pedigree of nine national winners and over 200 top pigeons.

That the foundation birds from DAN208-93-2 are still relevant was seen most recently in 2018, when ‘93-2’ featured as the great-grandfather of Christian Lund Andersen's impressive national winner DAN113-14-38 in the very difficult final from Munich 910 km.

DAN115-93-632 is also still truly relevant he is the grandfather to DAN073-17-271 National winner from Karlsruhe 777 km. Released at 06:00 Home 18:57. With 998 mpm. 271 have a lead by 1 hour and 39 minutes to the second pigeon national.

Anders has also concentrated his efforts on birds from Flor Engels (Jos & Jules) Not only that, but Anders is likely to be by far the greatest investor in these pigeons, focusing on purchases very close to the Engels foundation birds. Through the years, his purchases from the Belgian top loft amount to more than 100 birds, which include 5 direct offspring of ‘231’, 7 direct offspring of ‘178’, 5 offspring of ‘734’, and 4 offspring of ‘Argenton’. These pigeons have also contributed to great results on the longest distances. One example is the ‘11-2081’ hen that was national winner from Limburg 644 km in 2014 – her sire is a Engels pigeon grandchild of ‘Argenton’.

In 2009, Anders invested in pigeons from Jos De Klak, making a total purchase of 30 original birds and 20 birds bred from other original Jos De Klak. Among these pigeons were two direct sons of the legendary ‘613’. De Klak pigeons are great at speeds from 800 to 1,400 mpm, hot weather and the wind in the head. So far, the best results with these birds have been achieved in national long-distance races and very difficult races. This includes the breeding of a semi-national winner from Würzburg 707 km. with 50% Jos De Klak blood. In 2020 the super Ace-pigeon DAN073-17-115 is 75% Jos De Klak

As a marathon specialist, Anders has of course also been on the lookout for more classic long-distance birds. For instance, he has successfully introduced Van der Wegen pigeons and, not least, 12 Chris Hebberecht pigeons, almost every one of them has bred winners – including the semi-national winners from Karlsruhe 777 km in 2017 DAN073-15-1791 – and the hardiness of these birds is a particularly important factor. The Hebberechts has been particularly good in cross with Aarden and the two old Brøbech lines.

Janssen pigeons purchased directly from the breeder have also made a difference to Anders' loft. These are most the red type, and Anders reckons that they are almost impossible to lose during races. The semi-National winner from Giessen 622 km in 2017 was a yearling of this ancestry DAN073-16-289, and DAN073-16-263 the semi-national winner from Minden 427 km and the pigeon DAN073-14-4198 to reach 3. national from Freiburg 910km have their roots in this bloodline as well. The Janssen are very good to pair with the Jos De Klak pigeons.

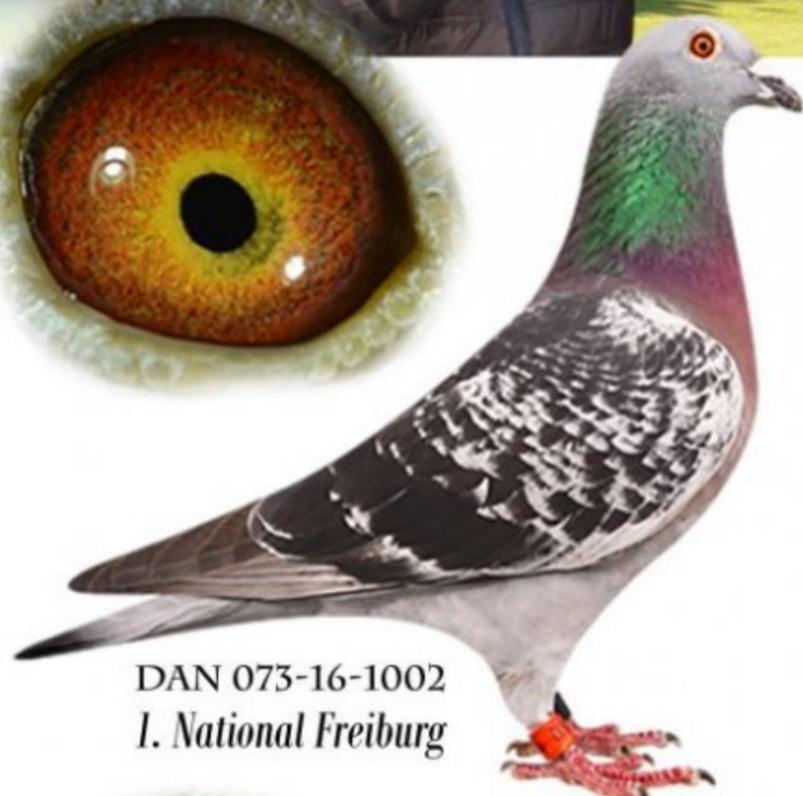
For the classic long-distance category, the most recent introduction is Jan Arden pigeons, with 30 birds purchased in 2014 and a further 20 in 2016 – these are from lines concentrated around the legendary ‘Dolle’. In 2017, breeding has produced a regional winner from Antwerp DAN073-16-350, which is a cross between one of these Aarden pigeons and the Hebberecht birds mentioned above. In 2018 DAN073-16-1002 a half Aarden/Janssen was National winner from Freiburg 910km. Very hard race 701 mpm. In 2020 DAN073-17-701 a half Aarden/Brøbech was 3. Nat. Ace-pigeon.

As with everything else pigeon-related, Anders is highly ambitious and dynamic in his breeding work, which always involves experiments to a greater or lesser extent. Thus, he has also purchased Geerinckx pigeons, and the five original birds have bred incredibly well in Anders' loft – not to mention that they stand out by having an excellent build.

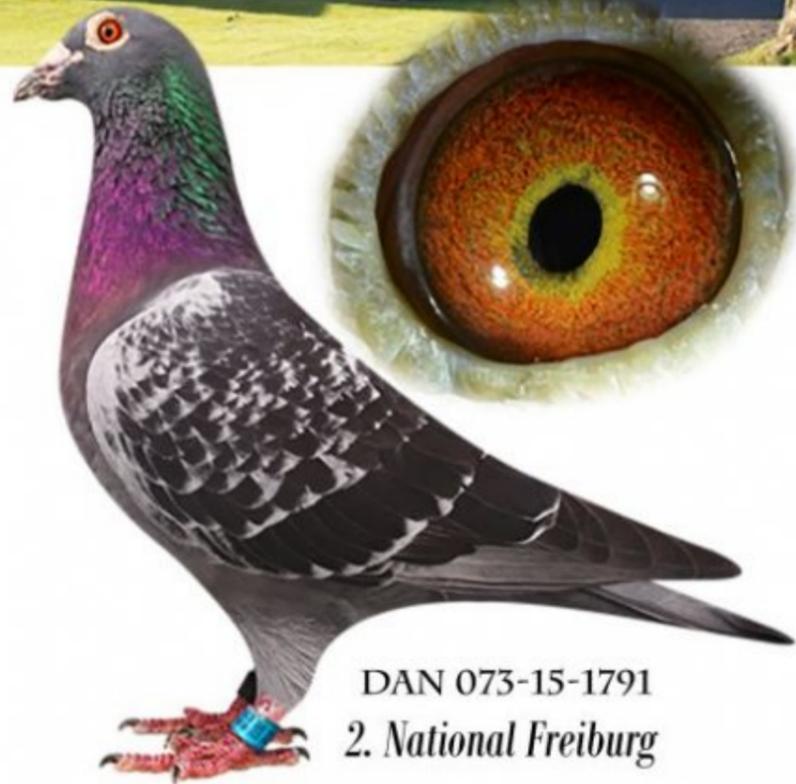
There is a definite strategy in the breeding work – top racers are always produced through crossbreeding, and as Anders puts it, ‘life is too short to be racing purebred pigeons’. He reckons that crosses, no matter their ancestry, can do well on all distances. The concept in his breeding work is based on very tough selection along the lines of ‘breed plenty – try out plenty – remove plenty’. Already at the time of weaning, 5 per cent of the youngsters are culled, and this share of ‘rejected’ youngsters will gradually become smaller, as the best birds are selected over several years. Alongside the crossbreeding, there is also some inbreeding with a view to further breeding and for sale. The inbred pigeons are subjected to even tougher selection, which Anders believes is absolutely crucial. These youngsters are also put through selection from 30 days old, when they are placed in an open aviary for two months. During this period, 25% are taken away, and after a further two months, 10-15% more birds are removed.



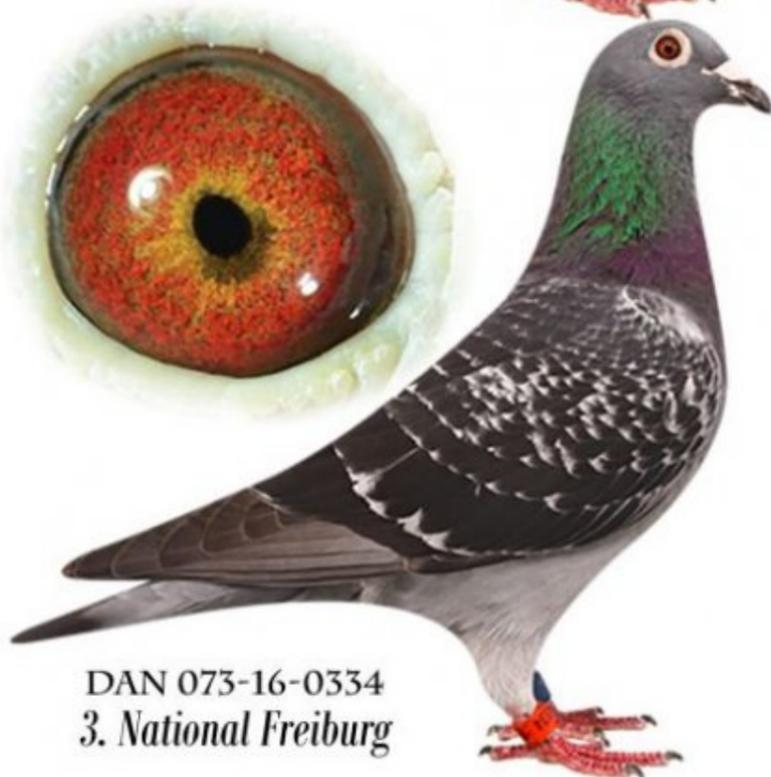
Anders Brøbech Racing Pigeons



DAN 073-16-1002
1. National Freiburg



DAN 073-15-1791
2. National Freiburg



DAN 073-16-0334
3. National Freiburg



DAN 073-16-0377
4. National Freiburg



1,2,3,4 National. Freiburg 2018 910 km.
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The sportsman and his serious attitude

Anders is well known by most Danish pigeon fanciers, and you don't need to be a great judge of character to realise that this is a truly serious sportsman. He is out to win everything – and he cuts no corners when it comes to achieving his goals.

Anders is passionate about one-day long-distance and marathon races, and these are his first priority. However, he also puts a great deal of effort into winning the sprints and middle-distance races. And, as his results show, he is doing rather well in these, too!

We have mentioned many times in this article that great results are not achieved by sitting still. Pigeon racing is a very high priority for Anders, and from 1 May until the Munich final, his pigeons take centre stage. He never leaves home to attend any other events during this period, and every day his aim is not to be away from the loft except for the seven hours between 9 am and 4 pm. In season, he spends eight to ten hours each day working with the pigeons, but he also admits that his batteries are ready for recharging as soon as the season has ended.

If you are interested in more information about Anders' loft, pigeons, methods, etc. you will find further details on his website: www.brdrbroebeck.dk.

Many thanks to Anders for an inspiring and, as always, stimulating visit, and congratulations on the well-deserved win at the Danish National Championship!

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