

Bewaren

NEVER ENDING WHEELS OF LAMBERINK

By: Sharon Barlow

Like a circle in a spiral,
like a wheel within a
wheel. Never ending or
beginning on an ever
spinning reel. As the
images unwind, like the
circles that you find in the
windmills of your mind!

Windmills of Your Mind was written in the late 1960's for the 1968 Steve McQueen movie, *The Thomas Crown Affair*. Penned by songwriters Michel Legrand and Marilyn and Alan Bergman, the song was intended to create a feeling of restlessness. Quite successful in its intent, *Windmills of Your Mind* won the 1969 Oscar for Best Song from a Film. For most listeners, the lyrics may conjure images of beautiful wheels spinning in the tulip fields of the Netherlands, but for the American showman the idea of a wheel conjures images of equally beautiful Ferris wheels ever spinning on the midway. Of these wheels there are perhaps none more beautiful than the wheels from the land of windmills and tulip fields and the brilliant mind of Jan Lamberink, owner of Reuzenrad Bouw Lamberink in Overschild Netherlands, the manufacturer of some of the most beautiful wheels in the world.



LAMBERINK



Since 2016, the first Lamberink Wheels, the RL33, have found positions of prominence on iconic midways like Ray Cammack Shows, Talley Amusements, and Powers Great American Midways, while the larger version the RL46, owned by Michael Woods, has reigned some of the largest state fairs in the country. A similar version of the RL46 draws the eye of millions of tourists as it stands high over the popular destination of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Despite the success of the Lamberink Wheel across the United States and even throughout the world, the wheels in Jan Lamberink's mind never seem to stop turning. An experienced showman himself, Jan has a unique understanding of the showman and knows how to translate that into an exceptional piece of craftsmanship.

The new RL22 is only the latest of Jan's latest extraordinary craftsmanship. "The RL22 is a one-trailer, 22-meter wheel," Jan's son, Sebastian Lamberink describes. "It can easily be assembled by three people in four hours. Its weight is lower, so it will travel well here in America. We have learned that the weight limitations in the United States are very restricted compared to the Netherlands. We think this is a good wheel for America."

"The wheel has 16 gondolas with a 64-person capacity," he adds.

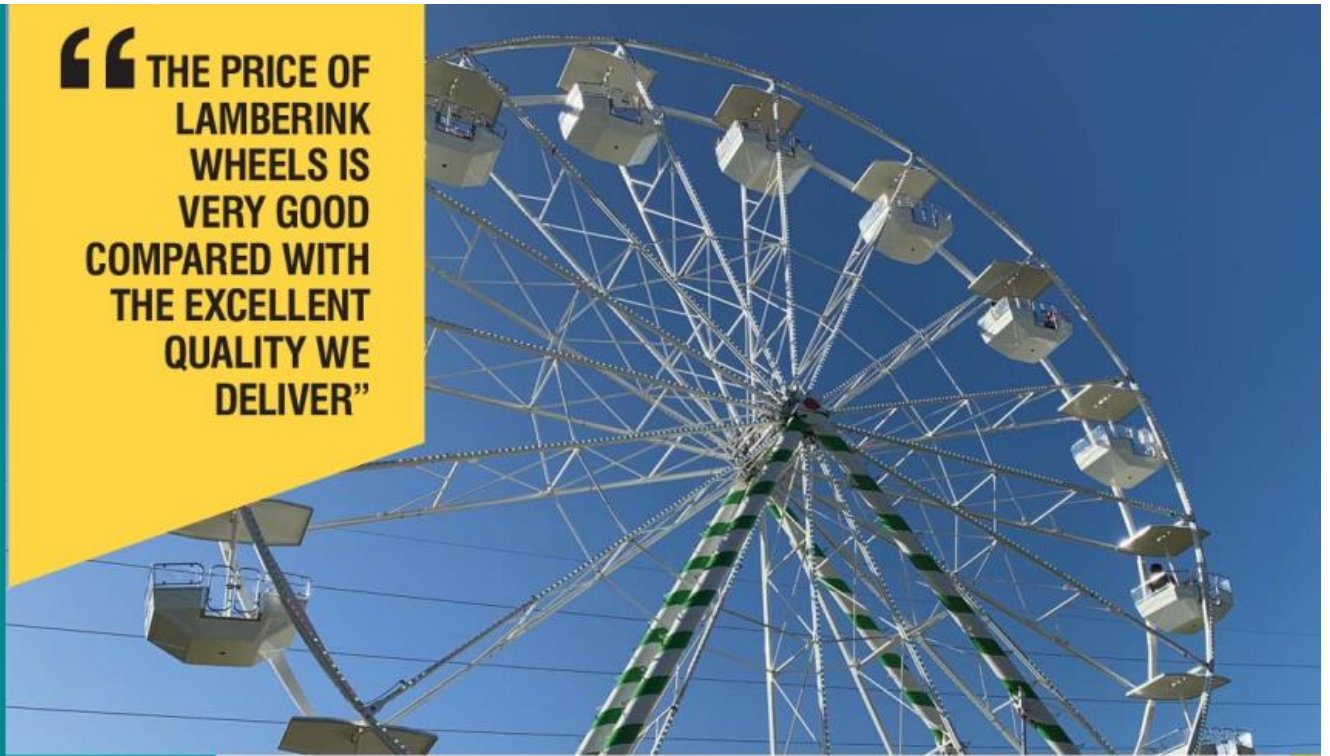
"There was a great demand in the market for this wheel," Jan shares. "People were impressed with the success of the RL33, but they needed a smaller affordable wheel with the same level of quality."

"The price of Lamberink Wheels is very good compared with the excellent quality we deliver," Tineke Visscher, Marketing Manager of Lamberink Wheels, adds. "There are many showmen who have experience with our wheels, so they know what they have bought. That's something that is spoken about. Lamberink Wheels are very, very good quality."

To continue to deliver that high level of expected quality of the RL22 along with an increasing demand for customization, Jan has created a professional network of companies in the vicinity of Overschild to manufacture specific components including the gondola polyester, stainless steel fences, Lunawood composite floors, control panels, and some of the most brilliant lighting available. "For the ticket booths," he says, "we have been working with a company in England for years. Despite Brexit, they have consistently provided us with tailor-made, often luxurious ticket booths without any difficulties."

"By working with companies in the area," Jan continues, "we can respond better and with more flexibility to the specific wishes of our customers. Plus, we share knowledge and collaborate on creative concepts, which just makes us twice as creative."

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Perhaps the perfect family wheel, first RL22 was sold to an American showman renowned for choosing the perfect family rides, Jim Drew of James H. Drew Expositions, who took delivery of the wheel in December 2020. “I love the wheel!” Jim exclaims. “Everything about it is beautiful.”

Unfortunately, because of the restrictions of COVID-19, Lamberink was unable to provide something else they are known for to level they typically provide it, service after the sale. “After delivery of a Ferris wheel, no matter where in the world, we always go with our people to that location,” Jan tells. “We do the initial set-up and instruct the wheel operators about all operational and technical matters.”

“We couldn’t go to Jim to help him with the initial setup,” he continues. “We were not allowed to travel because of the restrictions of COVID-19, but it wasn’t really necessary enough to make trip. We were able to help him with a phone call. We were very disappointed that we couldn’t be there because that’s one of the things we do best, help and instruct.”

Although Jim Drew was thrilled with every aspect of his new RL22, the circumstances that prevented the team from traveling to the United States also prevented Jim from being able to utilize the wheel as he originally intended, as a rental piece for concerts, music festivals, and sporting events. As those types of events continued to cancel or limit capacity, Jim made the difficult decision to sell. His buyer was another show owner with a great deal of experience with Lamberink Wheels, Ben Pickett of Ray Cammack Shows.

Ben Pickett debuted his RL33 on the midway of Ray Cammack Shows at the Pima County Fair in Tucson, Arizona in April 2016. "We're very familiar with the Lamberink Wheels," he shares. "We had the first one that was sent to the United States. I went to the Netherlands and toured the factory, and then I went to Europe and looked at other operators who had the RL33. So, I was very familiar with their product line, and it was an easy decision when the RL22 became available."

"Both Guy Leavitt and Ben Pickett visited our facility before purchasing their wheel," Jan adds. "We have a real manufacturing facility. We are not simply showmen who build rides at our winter quarters in our backyard."

To meet the needs of fairs and events that are now defining new terms from the pandemic like limited capacity and social distancing, Ray Cammack Shows has launched a new unit where the RL22 will be a beautiful centerpiece. Ben explains, "Over the last 15 months, with a large inventory or equipment and management, we've started focusing on doing a smaller unit. Moving our 33-meter wheels or our 50-meter wheel wasn't conducive to having a small unit out, so we were looking for a small one-truck ride. We reached out to Lamberink and other manufacturers when Jim Drew's wheel became available. It definitely sparked some interest. I reached out to try to understand why it was available, and it was just clear their needs had changed which created

a great opportunity for us to take advantage of a brand-new piece of equipment that had already been delivered to the states."

Although he is now the owner of two Lamberink wheels, Ben does not draw comparisons. "I don't think it's fair to compare the RL22 to a 33. It's like trying to compare a sedan to a SUV," he laughs. "They're different, and they meet different needs. The RL22 is obviously more versatile. It's a one-truck self-erecting wheel similar to a Technical Park 20-meter wheel or the Chance Century wheel except that it's over six feet taller."

◉ The RL22 has addressable Chameleon LED lights on it," Ben adds, "so, the lighting package is very impressive. It has a smooth



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drive system, stainless steel decks and front-loading platforms. I'm very happy with it, and I like the Lamberink family. I think they're good people. They're show people. They've moved equipment, and those elements show in the design of the RL22."

While the RL22 has already been up for a trial run, it will make its official debut at the Orange County Fair in July 2021. "Our plan," Ben describes, "is to theme the RL22 in red, white, and blue theme and call it the Liberty Wheel when we debut it at the Orange County Fair."

With five new Ferris wheels now in production including two more RL22's, the wheels in the mind of Jan Lamberink continue to turn as Lamberink prepares to turn out another new model. "We considered the wheels we are currently producing along with the

wishes and needs of our customers," Jan shares. "We realized a gap between our showpiece the RL33 and the RL46 for the big boys. I'm happy to announce the RL43 has just come off the drawing board. The RL43 is truly a combination of all the best attributes of all our Ferris wheels."

He continues, "The new 43-meter Ferris wheel is built on three semi-trailers with the total transport including the gondolas will be on five trailers. It will have 32 closed gondolas."

Like a circle in a spiral, like a wheel within a wheel. Truly, the ideas of Jan Lamberink for wheels are never ending or beginning on an ever-spinning reel. As for the American showmen? They can hardly wait for those images of beautiful Ferris wheels to unwind.

Just Possibly...the World's Finest Carnival.

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