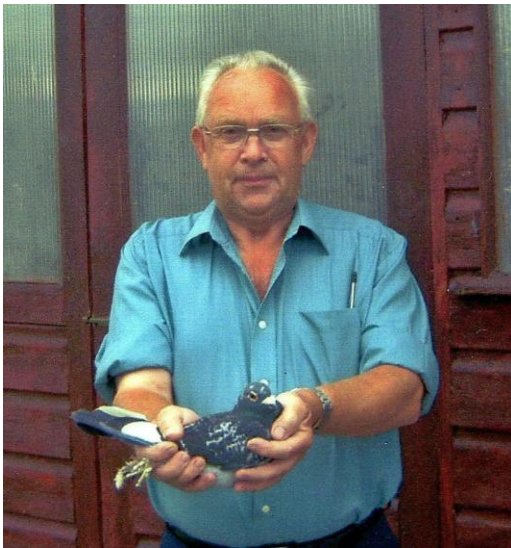


BRITISH BARCELONA CLUB – BARCELONA (BLUE RIBAND) NATIONAL

I suspect that I was not the only club member who was excited at the prospect of competing in the British Barcelona Clubs Blue Riband National “**The Barcelona International**” with the Curregem Centre. I was one of the 134 members who sent 415 birds to Barcelona to compete in this great event. The turnout was lower than last year which is hardly surprising when you consider that during the close season low life had raided the lofts of two of the club’s top distance fanciers Mick Parish and Ken Hine who have supported this club and its long distance race for many years. Poor Mick was totally wiped out and so disillusioned that he’s having a rest from pigeon racing this year. However Ken has persevered with a greatly reduced team and this year will be attempting to win the Blue Riband for a record third time.

However they also have an infestation of low life in Spain and yet again members of the club suffered a similar fate at Barcelona when during the early hours of Thursday morning 19 pigeons were stolen from one of the transporters ten of these birds belonged to our members. It was with sadness in my heart that I had to inform seven of my fellow fanciers that their birds had been taken not a task that I enjoyed which left me feeling quite depressed that evening. I feel sure that the organisers of this race were as disappointed if not more so as we were and will take the relevant steps to ensure the security of our birds in future at least they were sufficiently well organised to be able to identify which birds were stolen and not put the race in jeopardy. Well onto the race and the birds were liberated on a lovely Friday morning, clear blue skies and a helping South, South West wind.



Bert Shepherd

As to be expected no birds were timed on the day of liberation and it was a longer than expected wait on the second day before the first bird was verified this was to the eventual winner of our Blue Riband Barcelona National that well known, well liked and extremely successful distance fancier **Bert Shepherd** of Woodmancote, West Sussex who flies the old Ko Nipius family built up since 1978 when he obtained the original Kippax stock. Bert timed his seven year old dark cheq cock at **14:41:29** to record a velocity of **822** and then had a long wait before it could be confirmed as **1st Section A and 1st Open**. This cock is a racing machine not only does he take first Open but also wins a Spanish Diploma as last year he was 1st Section 6th Open from Barcelona and the previous year won 2nd Section and 7th Open from Palamos.

There can't be many previous winners of a Diploma that have done so with three top ten positions. Add to these performances 40th Open San Sebastian, 23rd Open BBC Bordeaux, 49th Open BBC Poitiers and 129th Open NFC Tarbes and you will understand why I refer to him as a racing machine.

His Sire “Middle Man” was no slouch either- 1st Club Rennes, 1st Club Nantes, 2nd Club Nantes, 13th Sect NFC Nantes, 19th Sect NFC Nantes, 77th Open CSCFC Nantes, 3rd Club Rennes. 1st club, 1st South Coast Fed 1st South East Combine , 2nd club 13th open South Coast Fed Nantes, 109th Section A Nantes NFC, 49th section A Saintes NFC and his Dam also won 35th Sect 153rd Open BBC Palamos.

It was obvious as time passed and the race progressed that this had not been as easy a race as one had hoped for as several hours passed before the next bird was verified to the loft of **Mr and Mrs Simon and Carole Fear of Hayes, Middlesex** who also clocked a very experienced pigeon at **21:26:00** to take **1st Section D and 2nd Open** on a velocity of **679**. Incredibly this pigeon "**Drenon King**" a six year old chequer cock also qualifies for a Spanish Diploma and amazingly also with three top ten positions as he was 2nd Sect, 3rd Open Palamos in 2008 and 1st Sect, 8th Open Barcelona in 2009. This is the third Spanish Diploma won by the couple which for a small loft is something special.

Simon and Carole concentrate on distance racing with only a small 3 compartment loft (19ft x 6ft) which can house a maximum of 16 pairs. There are no prisoner stock birds kept everything flies out. A small section is used as a stock loft for special matings, the larger section houses all the racers and the third section is for the young birds. The birds are fed on GJW Titmuss breeding mixture with a generous supply of peanuts fed separately from the mixture in the build up to the long races. Grit, along with red and black minerals are in front of the birds at all times.



Simon Fear

The birds are raced on the natural system, mainly sitting eggs but now and again feeding a youngster. Training starts at the 20 mile mark and progresses down the South coast, all training is done in conjunction with Ken Hine. Bloodlines kept are mainly Peter Titmuss and Ken Hine with introductions from Alan Parker and also some Catrysse from Derek Human. These bloodlines that have stood the test of time and are performing well for Simon and Carole. It shows that this was not the day for inexperienced pigeons as these two fabulous birds were the only birds timed on the winning day. However on day three Simon and Carole timed another pigeon at **11:19:20** to record a velocity of **541** high enough to secure **3rd Section and 5th Open** and in the process also win the coveted two bird average.

The club was very fortunate this year as Simon and Carole donated a young bird direct from "Drenon King" into our annual young bird sale the lucky buyer none other than your club secretary has in his loft a lovely chequer cock which will start his racing life on the road tomorrow with his first training toss from 5 miles. I will watch this bird's progress with interest and keep you informed.



Keith Young

Day three opened up with the third bird in the race timed at **07:04** to the Guernsey lofts of **Keith Young** of St Sampsons. Recording a velocity of **517** which was early enough to win **1st Section H** and finally finished up in **7th Open** position as other further flying birds were verified and he gradually slipped down the list.

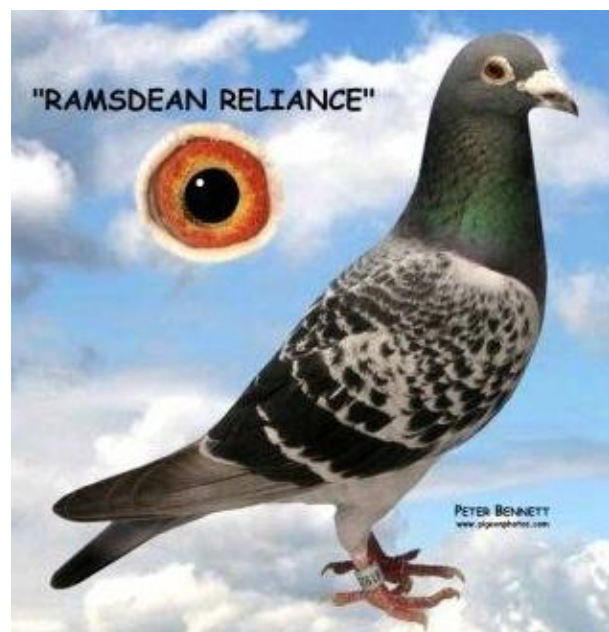
This three year old blue chequer Jan Aarden cock is bred down from a long list of winning British Barcelona bloodlines. The sire is a son of "Grace" who won Barcelona for Keiths friend Bryan Kett in 1999 being the only bird home on the second day .

On the dams side the pigeon is bred down from Mike Palamos White lines another previous winner of the Blue Ribband race, also in the bloodlines are Pi et Heikamp of Holland Jan Aarden based pigeons. This pigeon has always flown consistently well in 2009 it was Keiths second bird home when he won the Section in the BBC Bordeaux race.

This year in preparation for Barcelona the pigeon flew St Malo and BBC Poitiers and was racing to 7 day eggs. This was the first time he had sent to Barcelona since returning to the Island after a short spell racing pigeons in Blackpool and his previous best performance racing with the BBC was 1st Section and 7th Open Palamos.

The fourth bird clocked is a truly amazing pigeon "**Ramsdean Reliance**" who improves the older he becomes. He's only **eleven years old** and today he was timed by his owner Adrian Human at **08:40** to record a velocity of **556** to take **2nd Section A** and **4th Open**. Oh and he did not win a "**Spanish Diploma**" today why because he's already got one, he's also got a "**Silver Salver**" for finishing in the result four times. Last season he won "**The Engraved Glass Diploma of Distinction**" for finishing in the result five times and now this season he wins "**The Meritorious Performance Award**" for finishing in the result of our longest race a record equalling six times.

The record equalling exceptional performances of this wonderful bird are listed below.



Raced by Adrian Human

PALAMOS NATIONAL 20th June 2003

19th Open, 7th Section A

Velocity 446.307

Distance 657 Miles 220 Yards

840 Competing Birds

PALAMOS NATIONAL 2nd July 2004

44th Open, 10th Section A

Velocity 344.067

Distance 657 Miles 220 Yards

678 Competing Birds

PALAMOS NATIONAL 21st July 2005

51st Open, 17th Section A

Velocity 198.641

Distance 657 Miles 220 Yards

650 Competing Birds

PALAMOS NATIONAL 30th June 2007

108th Open, 23rd Section A

Velocity 455.390

Distance 657 Miles 220 Yards

690 Competing Birds

BARCELONA NATIONAL 3rd July 2009

16th Open, 4th Section A

Velocity 568.602

Distance 678 Miles 393 Yards

474 Competing Birds

BARCELONA NATIONAL 2nd July 2010

4th Open, 2nd Section A

Velocity 556.859

Distance 678 Miles 393 Yards

415 Competing Birds

The fifth bird clocked was once again to a St Sampsons loft this time to Guernsey fancier **Paul Mauger** who was one of the fanciers that I had to contact on Friday to inform him that one of his entries had been stolen. At least some consolation for Paul as he times a seven year old at **09:41:03** to record a velocity of **480** and takes **2nd Section H** and **15th Open**. I had the pleasure of visiting Paul's loft only ten days ago when visiting Guernsey to video the lofts of his father Richard who earlier in the season won our Messac National race not to forget in the same race son Paul was 4th and 5th Open. Paul has a lovely race set up with Hermes self cleaning nest boxes and his birds are raced on the roundabout and fed Gem.



Paul Mauger and son Mason



Hazel and Robbie Morris

The sixth bird clocked was to the Great Missenden lofts of **Hazel and Robbie Morris** who timed their four year old grizzle cock at **10:23:26** to record a velocity of **565** and take **2nd Section D and 3rd Open**. This cock was from their old Welsh long distance family crossed with a Vanhee and was raced natural sent sitting eggs 12 days. Fed beans, barley and Gerry Plus he had previously been their fourth bird from Barcelona last year and in preparation for this race he had competed in the NFC St Malo and Messac races.

Once again the best all round team performance was achieved by what is probably one of the best long distance lofts in the country **John Nicholson & Sons of Rochester** who proved once again that they are the loft to be reckoned with as on a difficult race they clocked four pigeons at **12:01:40 , 12:51:29 , 18:55:44 and 19:36:08** to take **1st , 2nd , 4th and 5th Section G and 6th , 9th , 17th and 18th Open**.

John & Spencer's first pigeon was a five year old blue chequer hen going to Barcelona for the 2nd time. She has always been a consistent pigeon, having flown Tarbes twice with the NFC. Her best position being 58th Open. Her dam is the 3rd pigeon clocked in this race and she will win a Spanish Diploma and has now flown the Blue Riband race 4 times. The second pigeon home is a four year old blue chequer hen who was also flying the Barcelona race for the second time, having been 28th Open last year.



Spencer Nicholson

She has also been high up in the BICC Pau result. Her dam is Jinni, who has been of the best pigeons they have ever owned with many top positions from Barcelona & Palamos and she has also been 1st BICC Marseille. Sire is Jasper, who was 4th BBC Palamos, as a 2 year old then retired to stock after losing the sight in one eye. The 4th bird home is a 3 year old dark chequer hen who last year was 6th BICC Pau and then was clocked well up in the BICC Tarbes race 4 weeks later. Her sire is Cornelius, their NFC Certificate of Merit winner, when paired to a daughter of Sarah, their 1st BICC Barcelona winner. All 4 of the pigeons flew 1 x 200 mile channel race and 6 x 80 mile training races - no private training has been given due to the increased hawk activity. Since joining the BBC 9 years ago the Nicholsons have won 6 Spanish Diplomas, which they are led to believe is a record, and 47 birds have been on the result from Palamos or Barcelona. The only other bird timed in Section G was to the Guildford loft of **Stephen Howard & Son** who timed at **13:43:41** to take **3rd Section G and 11th Open**.



Raced by R J Goddard & Son

Surprise, surprise we have another class pigeon appearing in the result of this testing race this time its **"Sophie"** one of last seasons **"Spanish Diploma Winners"** who this year figures once again in the result to pick up a **"Silver Salver"**. Raced by **R J Goddard & Son** of Reading she was the 11th bird timed at **13:35:42** to record a velocity of **512** to take **4th Section D** and **8th Open** which will now be engraved on the Silver Salver as will her previous performances which are listed below.

PALAMOS NATIONAL 30th June 2007

28th Section, 120th Open.

Velocity 336.227. Distance 688 Miles 894 Yards. 690 Birds Competing

PALAMOS NATIONAL 27th June 2008

7th Section, 24th Open.

Velocity 271.607. Distance 688 Miles 894 Yards. 576 Birds Competing

BARCELONA NATIONAL 3rd July 2009

3rd Section, 12th Open.

Velocity 714.658. Distance 710 Miles 288 Yards. 474 Birds Competing

Bill Stribling you are going to have to stop doing this it's not good for your health every time you verify from Barcelona you are so excited I think that you are going to have a heart attack. Following his 2nd Section 4th Open last year Bill goes one better this year when he timed his blue Venner hen at **15:05:43** to record a velocity of **506** and take **1st Section C** and **10th Open**. This blue hen was sent sitting 12 day eggs she is a pure Venner from Dave Vowles of Street. In preparation for this race she was sent to three channel races St Malo NFC, Messac BBC and Messac NFC. The birds are fed mainly on Gem concord mix, The loft set up is a 16ft x 6ft split into three sections one with box perches for the young birds and two with nest boxes for the old birds no prisoner birds are kept. Only 13 pairs of birds are kept with 6 to 8 birds being sent to the big races as bill believes in quality not quantity. The birds are flown on the roundabout system at the start of the season



Bill Stribling

and then repaired for the longer races.



Scott Storie

Only five other birds were clocked on the 3rd day making 20 birds in total two of these were to the lofts of **Mr and Mrs Ken Hine of Hayes** which took **13th and 17th Open**, one to **M White and Son of Bournemouth** which takes **14th Open**, one to **Richard Pugh of Hanley Swan** which takes **16th Open** and the other by **G & M J Frewin and Son of New Milton** who took **20th Open**. As this article goes to the printers three more have been clocked on the Tuesday morning one more each for Mr and Mrs Morris and for Mr & Mrs Hine and the other for Mark Gilbert.

The 10th bird timed was to the Poole lofts of **James S Storie** who timed his 6 year old dark checker cock at **13:33:55** to record a velocity of **486** to win **1st Section B and 12th Open**. This cock flown on widowhood, and bred from Jim Biss stock containing the bloodlines of Turban, Unsaid and Crack Perpignan. The cock was his only entry for this year's Barcelona race, as he was last year when he was 2nd Section, 17th Open. He has also scored 3 times with the NFC from Tarbes, Alencon and Messac. This is Scotts 9th year back in the sport after a 10 year break after moving from Scotland to Poole. Jim Biss was the first person he bought pigeons from when he decided that he wanted to return to the sport as he had previously raced his pigeons in Scotland and in his opinion he was one of the best in Britain. He only keeps Jim Biss pigeons and uses the Venus Supercracks as a cross to find they are an all round family which will score from 150 to 650 miles.