

BRITISH BARCELONA CLUB – BORDEAUX NATIONAL

The last old bird National race of the 2010 season saw 186 members of the British Barcelona Club sending 1,062 birds to Bordeaux an increase of over 100 birds from last season which to most was rather surprising considering the losses of late and the reduction seen in the send to the recent National and Classic races. Everything almost went smoothly at marking except for the ETS playing up and the convoyer and driver had an uneventful journey to the race point arriving at Bordeaux at approximately 1430 hrs on the Friday evening when the birds were fed and watered in preparation for an early liberation on the Saturday morning. This race was a repeat of last season as once again **Chesham fanciers Mr and Mrs Carrick and Son** clock a blue hen **“Bordeaux Queen”** to take **1st Section D and 1st Open** what a marvelous achievement winning the Bordeaux National in consecutive seasons.

Their blue hen 08FR518726 is a Barbry x Kees Bosua bred by the Moulin Rouge Stud and has previously won two x 1st as a young bird including a 1st Fed. She would have won more but is bad trapper as a yearling she would have won a 1st Fed but would not trap and therefore she was sent her to Saintes 412 miles where she won 1st Club, 2nd fed and 2nd UBI Combine. This year she had 6 channel races and been clocked 4 times she recently cast 2 flights in each wing which left a large gap so Mick phoned Robbie Morris for advice on whether to send who told him it was OK to send the pigeon and it would be alright. Robbie was correct as the pigeon arrived at 5.37 and once again she would not trap, in the end she trapped at 5.45. Mick was not happy and felt sick inside but it all worked out well in the end as she was so far out in front and even with the poor trap still won the race by 30 ypm. The nest sister to this hen is also a star performer having won 2nd Section from Vire , 2nd Section from Messac and also 14 Section from Messac.



Mick Carrick holding “Bordeaux Queen”



The Wing of “Bordeaux Queen”



One of the Carrick Lofts

Flying 514 miles to take **2nd Section D and 2nd Open** were Wellingborough fanciers **B Hobbs and Son** who are a father and son partnership with Barry (Father) and Troy (Son) Hobbs timing a three year old dark cock.

This Father & Son partnership specifically joined the British Barcelona Club this year, when the Northamptonshire Championship Club added Bordeaux as their last and longest race across the Channel and via the BBC. What a good decision that turned out to be for them, given this is their very first race with the BBC, if you ignore that is, the Help The Heroes race where they were 95th Open. Barry as the elder statesman of the partnership and semi retired does much of the day-to-day management, as Troy who works as a slaughter man works long hours and leaves at the crack of dawn each day.

However it is Troy who decided to enter this dark chequer three year old Busschart /Vandenabeele cross cock, based on the way he has been flying over the last few weeks and generally performing in the loft. Now named "Leather" the bird had flown Carentan (212 miles) the previous week with the Midland National Flying Club, scoring 4th club and a creditable 26th SE section and 132nd Open MNFC, and the week previous to that had flown Exeter (175 miles) in the Burton Latimer club, which is part of Harrowden Fed, winning the club and taking 5th, Fed. This all adds to around 900 miles of racing in three consecutive weekends.

The Sire of Leather was a gift bird from Leather Brothers; Linsdale North Yorkshire and is the Gaby Vandenabeele, whilst the Dam is a Busschart hen gifted from Tim Radwell Gravesend in Kent. Troy states that the pigeon has been so consistent over the last two years being raced on full widowhood and based very much on the suggestions from Tim Radwell who the partnership would like to thank for all the help and advice.



Barry Hobbs holding 2nd Open BBC



"Leather" 2nd Open BBC Bordeaux



The Hobbs Partnership Lofts

Taking **1st and 3rd Section A** and **3rd and 10th Open** was **Jason Ross of Portsmouth** who after the Bergerac race with the Solent Fed decided that his old bird season had finished so the birds were locked up and he went off on holiday. When he came back he saw that the BBC had the Bordeaux race coming up. Only really being a sprint flyer, he asked Buddy Shipp if he would advise sending them 400 miles after being locked up for two weeks with less than a week to go before basketing. Buddy said they would be ok, so 10 birds were picked that had not been exactly prolific this year and he put them on open hole for a week they had two training tosses and he changed the feeding and that's how he did it.



Jason Ross outside his lofts

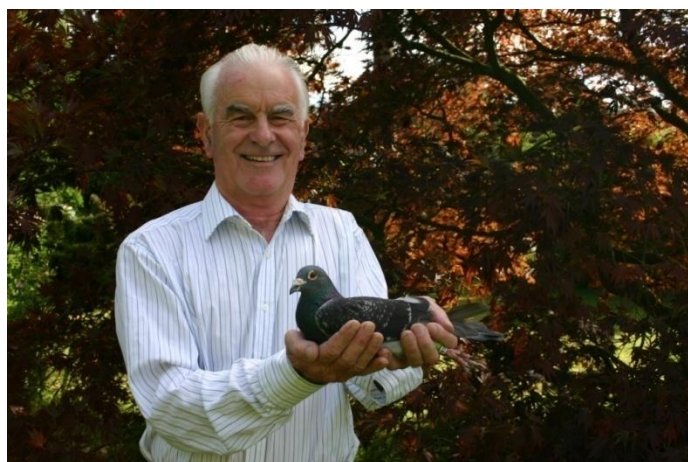
He would like to thank Buddy for that advice, and for taking the birds to marking. His first bird was an Andre Clemens/Gaby Vandabeele x a Southwell unrung hen, gifted to him by Ernie Deacon, thanks also to Ernie. He was sent sitting dummy eggs, and had previously had most of the channel races with the Solent Fed, with Bergerac being his last race 3 weeks ago. His second bird is a Gaby Vandabeele x Syndicate loft pigeon, his sire being his first open BICC Alencon winner. He also had most of the Solent Fed channel races, with Bergerac being his last race, where he was 7th club. He would like to thank the convoyor for looking after the birds as they came back in fantastic condition after a hard fly. Also all the people who rang and texted him on this unexpected Section win as it's very rare for him to get them from over 250 miles.



3rd Open for Jason Ross



10th Open for Jason Ross



Bill Keays holding "Ronnie" 4th Open

Bath fancier **William Keays** produces a magnificent performance to take **1st Section C and 4th Open** with his 3 year old Deweerdt cock "Ronnie" a great grandson of Deweerdt's outstanding pigeon Emiel a marked improvement on his 68th open in the BBC Poitiers National earlier in the season.

Bill flies his birds on the widowhood system as he finds this the easiest to system to manage. The loft is a converted section of a former cowshed. It's not ideal as it is generally cold in the early part of the season and his better results generally come when the weather warms up later on.

The birds are fed on a standard widowhood mix until the longer races when he reduces the protein and increase the maize content up to about 35% and adds 5% hemp.

In **1st Section B and 5th Open** were the top Wimborne loft **A G Cottrell, Richmond and Son** who timed their Dark Pied Cock GB 09N85962 the Sire GB06A01202 is from a Willy Clerebaut (cock) Nigel Rigiani X Blue W/F (hen) Daughter of O/L 1st BICC 18th International Pau (on the day).

The Dam GB06N77560 Dark Hen – was 2nd Section 20th Open Pau and is from Two Lowick Bros birds from their Night Flyers, down from their 1st VNC Dax and 3rd National Bordeaux 4,748 birds crossed with a pure Jan Aarden hen from Piet Lazerooms.



Cottrell and Richmond – 5th Open

Known as "Prod" which is short for Prodigal, as in "Prodigal Son" He was lost in training as a baby and found in the loft in February this year. After a couple of days Tony took him to work (about 12 miles) he appeared after about 4 hours. He was trained wherever Tony was working for a couple of weeks and then was missing from the loft for three days, when Tony said to Ollie as he arrived at the loft "The Prodigal Son has turned up again" since then he hasn't made any mistakes.

He was due to go to Saintes N.F.C, but the day before marking he wouldn't come into the loft with the others, but proceeded to fly the sky for over three hours. They decided that he was either a nutter or perhaps telling them something. On the NFC marking day they let the birds out very early and when they left for Frome at 11-30 "Prod" was still flying, so they had to find another to take his place. Prior to the BBC Bordeaux marking, he was singled up from 15 miles, but still flew round the loft for over an hour, so on the marking day he was shut in the loft and taken to Salisbury as their top pool pigeon. He didn't let them down.



"Dragon" 6th Open for Crowley and Green

Taking **2nd Section C and 6th Open** was the **Compton Bassett partnership of Crowley and Green** who timed a three year old dark chequer cock from their Harry Brakele distance team. This cock named "Dragon" is a full brother to their BBC Lamballe winner "Mamba" and is no stranger to the winner's enclosure as last season it had been 1st Section 15th Open NFC Alencon and also 216th Open with the NFC from Messac. However up to now this season he had not flown that well and had been missing for two weeks from his last race which had been Poitiers with the NFC on the 19th June. He eventually returned from this race on the 1st July and was given time to rebuild his reserves before being given a couple of 25 mile tosses and then considered as a potential entry for Bordeaux which as it turned out was a wise choice. These Brakele pigeons win out of turn for Richard and Anna and are bred for distance racing, founded around the best lines of Jan and Bram Walpot, Marcel Braakhuis and the veterinarian Hans vd Sluis.

Portsmouth fancier **E Mellis** is never far away and times his two year old widowhood hen to take **2nd Section A and 7th Open.**

BBC Bordeaux was the eighth race of the season for this Burger/cross hen, she has flown Vire (BBC) , Fougères, Messac, Poitiers, Carentan & Bergerac with the Solent Fed, she was then timed in from Saintes with the NFC before sending her to Bordeaux as part of his five bird team. He clocked a further two birds before leaving for the Club at 8.30 and found a yearling hen in the loft on his return. The birds have finished the season well winning 3rd Sec 11th Open Tarbes NFC, provisional 14th Sec Saintes NFC and now provisional 2nd Sec 7th Open Bordeaux.

All birds are raced on Widowhood from the start of the season until the end and are fed 'heavy' never breaking his birds down, feeding Gerry plus in the morning and Irish Mix at night with regular use of cider vinegar in the water.



E Mellis of Portsmouth



Darren Baker and Ernie Smith

Taking **3rd and 4th Section D and 9th and 15th Open** were the mother and son partnership of **Neil and Jean Andrew of Much Hadham** who are members of the Walkern Pigeon Club.

The club's headquarters is the venue for the new BBC marking station capably run by Michael and Edna Shepherd which in their view and mine has been a major success this year and with the help of the Penkrige marking station has been instrumental in attracting 112 new members to the club this season. Hopefully this success will continue and we will see an influx of members ready for next season.

Winning **3rd Section C and 8th Open** are the extremely successful Swindon partnership of Ernie Smith and Darren Baker who clocked a four year old blue widowhood cock.

This bird was one of seven entered and was their only arrival on the day and on speaking to Ernie early the following morning it was obvious that the others were not dropping in as expected and it was actually close to lunchtime before they timed their second pigeon. Which was the case in many lofts including mine it just goes to show that to be successful you just need that single bird out in front of the rest.



Neil and Jean Andrews

Due to Neil's work they are unable to send to many races and have only sent to 4 club races this year but do plan to send more often next season. They keep 12 pairs of racers with a few spare of each sex, one stock cock and 3 stock hens. This year they have kept things simple - after rearing the birds were split and loft flown once a day cocks first out with hens 2nd which Jean does whilst Neil is at work, no training was given after the 9th of April up to the week before Bordeaux when 2 x 20 mile tosses were given.

Feeding this year was a hopper of beans and pellets supplemented with a high carb low protein mix feed after each exercise period. Peanuts and more of the carbohydrates are added towards marking day so much so that the birds were only eating this mixture. This feeding suits as they are not always able to be at the loft in the evening time due to their work so they came up with this way which gives a regular routine for their birds.

Their first bird was bred by Barrie Smails from the North East who Neil regularly chats to about the pigeons, the bird was obtained via the pigeon land web site in a young bird exchange, the site is run by Davey Barkel and is a first class site for tips and information. She was trained to the coast as a young bird and flew 3 inland races this year as a yearling then sent to the H4H Fougères with the BBC and was their 6th bird their first bird being 18th London Region and the hen was 41st, she was sent to Bordeaux on 9 day eggs.

Their 2nd pigeon is a two year old trained as a young bird and raced twice as a yearling both from the channel with no inland races. This year she was their 2nd pigeon from the 4 sent to Poitiers being placed 207th National with their first pigeon being 176th open. She is a mix of Kevin Lawson, the late Mell Bell and Frank Sheader blood that have scored 13th, 33rd, 37th, 54th, 77th, and 88th Open in the London and South East Classic over the last 6 years since they restarted in the sport and this from just 2 or 3 races a year with the Classic. Although now they have a National marking station on their doorstep they will just be sending with the BBC in future as from the 3 races they have sent with the BBC the birds have returned in great condition and it is nice to know that the birds are being cared for by a top class conveyor.



The Special Hen

Taking **4th Section C and 11th Open** are a loft who this season have shown noticeable improvement and could be a force to reckon with in the future that is **James and Gordon of Cheltenham**.

They timed a Delbar x Jan Aarden hen bred by Phil Heslop from Annan, hence the Scottish ring. She was one of a batch of six young birds sent down to them by the Anglo Scottish club in 2008. She has flown the channel five times this year, starting with Lessay with the West of England South Road Combine and then Messac, Poitiers where she was 34th Open, Fougères H4H and Bordeaux.

She is known as the Special Hen or the cut and shut hen as she has a distinct line across her breast feathers with dark above and light below.

The dam to SU08S2116 is a blue pied hen, a daughter of Ian Axe's Bergerac Cock. This cock was a direct son out of Phil Heslop's Nantes winner which goes to show that genes will out in the end. Karen was home alone when the "Special Hen" came and went into meltdown immediately. George had to administer copious amounts of alcohol to bring her around! Hence she was in no fit state to verify it and George had to do it for her. At least he spoke slowly enough! Karen would like to thank the BBC Conveyor, Nigel Rigiani for all the encouragement he has given her this season and the BBC would like to thank her and George for all the help they have given at Salisbury this season.

Robbie Brown of Worton near Devizes times two birds to take **5th and 6th Section C, 12th and 24th Open**. Both birds were the same way bred as the pigeon that was 2nd Sec 11th Open Poitiers this year the first one GB07N60816 had previously won 4th Sec 16th Open Poitiers in 2008, 23rd Sec 130th Open Bergerac Classic in 2009 and now 5th Sec 12th Open Bordeaux in 2010 and the second bird GB09N67717 was lightly raced as a young bird, been consistent this year and now wins 6th Sec 24th Open Bordeaux

The sire of these 2 pigeons won 1st sec 6th Open Poitiers 2008 and is bred down through Frank Quinns good Dax cock and the Dam is a pigeon bred from one originating from Crowley and Green of Compton Bassett.



Robbie Brown of Worton



In **1st Section G and 13th Open** are **Crammond & Langstaff of Fontwell** who clocked a two year old Koopman x Reynaert. This game cock last year as a yearling was in the clock in most of his races and at Saintes with the NFC ended up 2nd Sect (beaten by a loft mate) and 8th Open. This year he has still been performing outstandingly only two weeks ago he was sent to Bergerac with the LSECFC and was clocked at 6.57 the next morning but he seemed to come on from this. The partnership have once again had another good season winning three Sections in National and Classic racing, but they said it had been a long and hard season and they are now looking forward to young bird racing.

Another top team the **Wearn Brothers** of Ramsdean take **4th and 6th Section A, 14th and 17th Open** timing five birds home on the day and 21 on the second day from the 37 sent, which are excellent returns in comparison to most fanciers who competed in this race.

Their first bird taking 14th Open was GB03N53951 a blue cheq Wall-Lunt-Green Janseen hen who has been a good performer a winner of three 1st Clubs with high Fed positions. She has also scored well at the top level flying Tarbes on the day a distance of 538 miles to take 90th Open with the NFC and has also won 6th Open from St Nazaire with the NFC plus various other positions in other organizations.



**The Wearn Brothers Lofts (above)
and first pigeon (below)**

Their 2nd bird taking 17th Open GB08N68717 was a Blue cock also a 1st prize Club winner and was also their 1st bird from the NFC Poitiers race this year. His breeding is Colin Ganus x Vandebelle via Peter Fox. Like the rest of their pigeons which are all raced at the top level this cock has put up some top performances with the NFC its best recent performance was last week when it won 2nd open NFC Saintes.



Great Missenden fanciers **Hazel and Robbie Morris** time a two year old hen to take **5th Section D and 18th Open.**

This hen is a Vanhee x with a Don Green of Monks Risborough pigeon. She was sent sitting a 7 day youngster and last year as a yearling she was their 3rd bird from this race winning 19th Section and 83rd Open. In preparation this year she had 4 channel races and had been the 1st pigeon in the clock in all four races. A pigeon of this quality will undoubtedly appear in the results next season.



Hazel and Robbie Morris



Don Harvey of Dover

Don Harvey of Dover had an excellent race clocking three pigeons to take **2nd, 3rd and 4th Section G, 25th 36th and 65th Open.** His first bird a two year old dark cock which had two races with the East England Continental Club this season. He was his most consistent yearling last year. The Sire is a son of the late Keith Nethercott's Cannon cock, when paired to a daughter of his car winner 2nd Open Pau National 1995. The Dam was a gift from his good friends Heath and Peter Archibald, from their good distance family. The second bird is also a two year old blue cheq cock which is bred from another son of the Keith Nethercott's Cannon cock (Nest mate to the Sire of his first bird). The dam is from Eric Fox blood lines, which he brought direct from Eric in 1998.

The third bird is also a two year old blue cock which has been consistent for him, the Sire is a Brian Shepherd cock and the dam is from Michael Spencer's Border Duke blood lines. The feeding in his loft is Gem Irish and Concord plus a few peanuts and multi-vitamins in the water once a week.

On a difficult day the furthest flying birds timed were to the Hinckley lofts of **Mr and Mrs David Glover** who timed two birds at a minute past nine to take **19th and 20th Open** which meant that there were no birds into Section E on the day. However we did not have long to wait the next morning before **Brian Littlewood** flying almost **590 miles into Stockport** clocked his two year old dark chequer cock at 0750hrs to take **1st Section E and 26th Open** – tremendous flying Brian.

This one was closely followed by one to **Mr and Mrs A Shore of Crewe** who clocked at 0829hrs to take **2nd Section E and 40th Open** and another to **G A Baker of Shifnal** who clocked at 0802hrs to win **3rd Section E and 42nd Open**.

Unfortunately details are scarce on the birds into Section E as details are hard to obtain as the race is ongoing with fanciers still waiting for their birds and then either are uncontactable or not having time to collate the required information prior to this write up going to print at midday on the Monday.



The first bird clocked in our last old bird race the Bordeaux National was to the Jersey lofts of **Paul Davies** who timed two birds to **take 1st and 2nd Section H and 45th Open**.

His first bird timed was none other than the nine year old blue cock called 'No Fear', which has won 30 firsts, including two first sections, and 1 first combine.

Rather fitting that he clocked 'No Fear' as this pigeon was the first bird clocked in our first race of the season the Vire National when in the process he also took first section H, good flying Paul.

Convoyers Report

Marking as always went smoothly with a good turnout for this time of the year producing 1062 birds, Stafford and Stevenage numbers were down a little but considering they were all flying in excess of 500 miles that is not surprising.

Arrived at Salisbury at 3:30 and all birds were fed and watered by 4:30. Departed for Poole docks at 7:00 pm for the 23:00 sailing and arrived at Cherbourg at 05:00 GMT.

The journey down to Bordeaux went well with good weather all the way down, we had two stops en route to water the birds at Gavrey and Niort, arrived at Bordeaux at 4:30 GMT and birds were fed and watered by 5:30. The weather at the lib site was very hot with clear blue skies and very little wind. It was confirmed by the race controller that it would be the same for an early lib the next day but there was concern that the rain on the south coast and the channel would continue through the night. This was expected to clear by midday, hopefully giving the birds a clear run right through.

Saturday dawned with clear blue skies and no wind at all and with the sun rising at about 05:45 the decision was made to liberate at 06:00. With the clear conditions the birds climbed high in the sky before heading north in two batches. The journey back was clear, very hot and all the wind turbines from Bordeaux to Tours were completely stationary so it was obvious that it was going to be a stiff race with the heat and lack of wind. The wind began to pick up north of Le Mans and as it was coming from the south west, the clouds began to build. By the time we reached Caen there was full cloud cover and it was remarkably cooler.

Before boarding the ferry I had already received a call from Richard to tell me that birds were arriving on the south coast and by the end of the evening there were some forty four first bird verifications. With birds

flying more than five hundred miles on the day that is the sort of call any convoyer is pleased to receive.

May I take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who helped with the organisation of this race, without you all this race would not have been possible and also to congratulate all the competitors who timed especially the winner and section winners on their sterling performances.

Nigel Rigiani