

BRITISH BARCELONA CLUB – MESSAC NATIONAL 2010

On the 22nd May the British Barcelona Club was at Messac with 263 members sending 1,966 birds which is a lower turnout than normal for our Messac National but a lot higher than expected as unfortunately our race clashed with the National Flying Clubs St Malo National. This was not an ideal scenario for either organisation and I know both committees will liaise with all other organisations and endeavour to avoid similar clashes in the future.

Once again everything proceeded well at all three marking stations except for Walkern where Edna Shepherd rang me to apologise as she had forgotten to run the marking station raffle. Not that Christine Broom from the Isle of Wight was worried as she was lucky enough to win the prize of a young bird which has been entered in this year's Somerset One Loft race. Do not worry if you did not buy tickets as you will all still have the opportunity to buy tickets at future race markings with the possibility to win an identical prize. For those fanciers who use the excellent facilities at Walkern then I'm sure Edna would welcome a gentle reminder at the Poitiers marking. Once again there was a lucky winner of £100 in the Basket Sponsorship Scheme this was won by Bristol fanciers Nick Carter and daughter who I'm sure will put the money to good use.



Richard holding his National winner



Richard in front of his loft

Onto the Messac race where with temperatures forecast to be high an early liberation was considered the best option for the birds well being so the convoyer Nigel Rigiani liberated at 06.45 into clear blue skies and a light East North Easterly wind. This East in the wind was always going to favour those in the West of the country and it was the Channel Islands who came out on top with Richard Mauger of St Sampsons in Guernsey timing two excellent pigeons close together to take **1st and 2nd Section H, 1st and 2nd Open.**

Richard is no stranger to success having previously won the BBC Bordeaux National in 1997 and the BBC Lamballe Young Bird National in 2000.

His first pigeon was a chequer hen whose preparation consisted of two 28mile training tosses, a 60mile club race and then won last week's club race from Messac which to Richard is a distance of 119 miles. She is a Janssen x Jan Arden and was flown on the roundabout system.

His second bird is a blue cock which is a grandson of his BBC Bordeaux winner (Misty Lady) he had also done the same training and races as the first bird. Only the best food as all birds are fed on Versele-Laga corn mainly based on Gerry Plus.

1st Section B and 3rd Open – was the Crewkerne ace fancier Mike Staddon who also had a marvellous race from St Malo with the NFC where he has provisionally finished 1st Section and 7th Open what a marvellous weekend for Mike.

His first bird named “Piper” has been a superb cock all his racing life, winning 1sts as a young bird, as a yearling and as a two year old. But this is his best yet. He has flown Vire BBC 2010, 6th bird home before going to Messac. Obviously the Vire race put him spot on for Messac. He was paired up at the beginning of February, as were all his race team, and reared one pair of young birds. His hen was taken away when the young birds were 15 days old and not re-paired before racing to hold the moult, and has been on widowhood ever since.



Mike Staddon holding “Piper”

He is a medium size cock and is pretty well a pure Hofkens pigeon, going back to the very best bloodlines of Andre Roodhooft, Belgium. Sire of “Piper is a direct son of Andre Roodhooft, Nat winner given to Mike as a present by his great friend Sheldon Leonard, and his dam was an 03 hen bred by Sheldon,. This pair bred Mike a lot of winners, thanks again to Sheldon. All his racers are flown on pure widowhood, rear one pair of ybs or sit one pair of eggs and then they are parted, but are never re-paired to stop the moulting of the flights. He sent 16 cocks to Messac and got 14 on the day and none have dropped any flights, which I think is extremely important. He feeds “Endurance Plus” and “Concorde” from A E James & Son of Bristol, which he mixes differently for different types of races, to which he always adds good barley. He also uses the herbal products from “Hilton Herbs” all the year round, which he finds is a great aid and also practices natural immunity and his pigeons never receive any treatments, if sick, they get disposed of.



Paul Mauger outside his loft with son Mason

3rd and 4th Section H, 4th and 5th Open – it was kept in the family on Guernsey with Paul Mauger also timing two birds to take 4th and 5th Open.

His first bird was a blue Gaby Vandenabeele cock of Benetton x Devon lines both parents were purchased from M+D Evans. The second bird was a chequer pied hen she is a Van Geel , both her parents were purchased from Jeff Woodfield of Wittekop Lofts, both birds were flown on the roundabout system and fed on gem corns.

Preparations for these birds were two 60mile races and a 120 mile race prior to this race; both birds had been consistent in all three races.

2nd Section B and 5th Open – was Blandford fancier C A J Riley who timed a four year old chequer cock to take 5th Open – unfortunately details of this bird have not arrived at the deadline to go to press.



Bill Stribling, Mervyn Gray and Phil Newton all members of Clevedon and Wraxall pigeon racing clubs who had a field day in Section C of the BBC Messac National.

4th Section C and 10th Open – was yet again another club mate Phil Newton of Weston Super Mare with a blue cock flown on the natural system sent sitting 6 days. He is a grandson of a chequer cock that won 1st section 3rd open in the BBC Palamos race in 2003 for Phil. The birds are fed on Country Wide super widowhood mix with beans and peas added as required.

3rd Section C and 9th Open – were the in form Geoff and Catherine Cooper who timed a yearling hen called “Lucky” to win provisional ninth open. “Lucky” earned her name by surviving a hawk attack returning from the NFC young bird race. This season Geoff has been racing a small team of hens with a view to sending them to one of the long distance Nationals. “Lucky” was paired to a stock cock at the beginning of the season then when she had been sitting eggs for several days she was moved into a section just for the racing hens. The hens see the cocks for a couple of hours prior to the race and when they return, they return to the section they were paired up in and stay with their cocks for a couple of hours. As a young bird she had three channel races plus club racing. Her Sire is down from “Farm Boy” and “Twenty One” two of Geoff’s top racers and breeders and her Dam is “Miss Pau” who flew a hard Pau International as a yearling. “Miss Pau” is also the Grand dam of “Ridge” who won the section from Messac in the CSCFC last week. “Miss Pau” is a daughter of “Miss Somerset” who won the Somerset Cup in the NFC and she is a daughter of “Twenty One”.

“Lucky” has winning birds in every line of her pedigree on both her Sire and Dam’s side, so if “like breeds like”, we should expect to see more top performances from this hen in the future.

1st Section C and 7th Open – was Bill Stribling of Weston Super Mare with blue white flight cock the sire is bred by Ken Hine of Hayes Middlesex and the dam is a Staff Van Reet cross bred by club mate Phil Newton. He was sent to the race re-paired after previously been flown on the roundabout system. The birds are fed mainly on gem concord mix.

2nd Section C and 8th Open – were Bill’s club mates David Wyatt and Mervyn Gray of Wraxall Nr Bristol who timed a 2year old blue Janseen cock bred by Ron Davies of Bristol. This bird was first to home to the loft last week in the club race from Bedhampton to win 2nd in the Clevedon SRFC. This bird is flown on the widowhood system and was shown his hen before basketing. In this loft the race birds are fed on gem sprint mix and gem super widowhood.





John Gerard and Vince McConnell

Vince keeps feeding simple with only barley being given during the winter and mixes his own for racing as he believes the feeding to be one of the most important aspects for successful pigeon racing. The birds are never broken down and given clean water every day apart from Sunday when a canker treatment is given and multi vitamins on the Wednesday.

5th Section B and 13th Open – was another Crewkerne partnership Mr and Mrs Brian and Christine Frost who have been successfully racing pigeons for as many years as I can remember. They were one of the first fanciers I became acquainted with back in 1985 when they reported one of my first youngsters which I duly collected.

They timed a lovely blue chequer Van Loon x Busschaert cock flown on the roundabout system. Previous to the BBC Messac race he had three races with the West of England South Road Combine and Messac with the Central Southern Classic.

3rd and 4th Section B, 11th and 12th Open – were Poole fanciers R & V McConnell a father and son partnership who have been racing pigeons for 20 years. Now days the father is just responsible for the stock birds only helping son Vincent with the race team when they need to be taken to marking for the big races. Vince is the race team manager responsible for the team of 40 Hartogs which this year are being flown on the roundabout system. These Hartogs were obtained from good friend John Gerard and continually stand the test of time as many other strains have been tried and tested against them and fallen to the wayside. John advises that these Hartogs will race out to 500 miles but at the present we are happy to race out to Saintes which is 350 miles.



Mr & Mrs B Frosts 13th Open Winner



David Ellams of Telford

1st Section E and 14th Open – winning Section E we have the well known Telford fancier David Ellams who timed a four year old chequer white flighted widowhood cock. This racing machine has achieved the following results. 1st club 6th fed Messac....55th Open MNFC Fougères 3,987 birds....7th sec 106th Open NFC Messac 6,902 birds....7th sec 157th Open NFC Alençon 7,476 birds and is the Grandson of "Davy Lad 42861" who won 1st sec 11th Open NFC Saintes 4,225 birds....1st sec 15th Open NFC Saintes 487 miles 3,387 birds.... 11th sec 141st Open Nantes NFC 10,150 birds....75th Open MNFC Le Ferte Bernard 7,192 birds. The birds here fly basic widowhood and fly 1 Hr morning and 1 Hr in the evening. If the birds are not exercising well then they have a 20-30 mile training toss. Birds are fed Marimans Super widowhood mix.

2nd Section E and 15th Open – another well known and good looking fancier (I have to say that as several fanciers think we are twins) takes second Section E that is Budgie Crathorne of Manchester who timed his good pigeon “Kiln Rhythm” this bird is a Marriott x Southwell, (Warrior). His Sire is a Marriott Cock bred by John Barnett, Telford and his Dam was bred by Vick Lough, Scotland. He has been a consistent pigeon in all races and now he is starting to show his breeding at the longer races.



Budgie Crathorne

5th Section C and 16th Open – was the top Bristol fancier R E Taylor & Sons John and Nigel who timed a blue cock bred from their old family at 13:1:17 to record a velocity of 1176. This cock had been lost two weeks previous from the BBC Vire and had only returned on the Tuesday after the race where he discovered that his hen had paired to another cock. This last week this cock had worked very hard regaining the attention of his hen who had given way a couple of days before basketing which had obviously given him the additional motivation to home well from Messac. It's the first time the cock had performed to this standard the only reason for his retention being the fact that he had bred a young bird which had won two races.

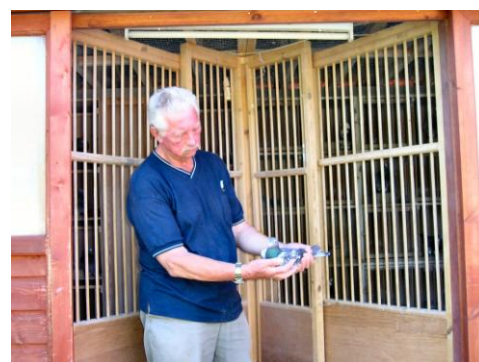


John and Nigel Taylor



Malcolm Herbert's Pigeon

6th Section C and 17th Open – was Malcolm Herbert of Cheltenham who clocked his 2 year old Widowhood Cock. A first cross De. Weerd / De. Weerdt who's best performance to date was 2nd club Wincanton, beaten by a loft mate.



Malcolm Herbert



Patrick Harris holding his Section winner

1st Section A and 20th Open – was another fancier whose name keeps cropping up now and again Patrick Harris of Cosham, Hampshire who when I spoke to him was really chuffed to bits and would really like to thank those fanciers who had rung up to congratulate him. Not surprised that he was chuffed as he's now topped the section from messac for consecutive seasons.

His first bird was a two year old Busschaert cock that is kept on the roundabout system which is different to most fanciers as he allows the cocks see the hens every day. This cock was 24th section 165th open Vire two weeks ago with the B.B.C. and was also 7th section 13th open Messac last year as a yearling.

He was beaten last year by his loft mate who was 1st section 4th open and was his second pigeon this year. The parents of this year's section winner were a gift from Paul Izena of Bognor Regis who no longer keeps pigeons due to ill health. Patrick would like to thank him immensely for giving him some great birds to work with. Patrick is once again another winning fancier who feeds Bryan Walls super widowhood mix and uses a wide selection of the Gem range of products.

1st Section D and 25th Open was the club's Patron Mark Gilbert of Windsor who proved once again what a top flier he is as not only did he win the Section in the BBC Messac National but also on the same day won the Section in the NFC St Malo National.

His section winner is a two year late bred which only had one race as a youngster and then taken steady as a yearling. This year he has had both BBC races.

He is a half brother to the bird that won the section from St Malo with the NFC , the mother that bred both the section winners is a direct from Van Elasker of Jepsen. She won 1st Salbris 412 birds and was 2nd Salbris Provincial 1837birds at 350miles as a youngster for Van Elsaker. She is bred from Fenomenale 9999 who is a direct son 1st national Ace pigeon middle distance when paired to a daughter of Elsaker Indiana Jones.

The father is another Direct Van Elasker and is a son of Kilamanjaro, 1st prov Bourges and 1st zone B 4000 birds and 2nd National plus 1st Noyon 1027 birds, 1st Dourdan 354birds,1st Dourdan 354 birds and 1st Noyon 680birds.



Mark Gilbert outside his loft



Mark Gilberts Section D winner



Mick and Tracy Carrick

2nd Section D and 28th Open – was a partnership that are continually cropping up in the results of BBC races Mr and Mrs Carrick and son of Chesham in Buckinghamshire. They timed a two year old French hen bred by The Moulin Rouge Stud a Barnby x Kees Boshua. This pigeon was purchased as a young bird and quickly showed her worth by topping the Fed she was then brought along steadily as a yearling and her most recent performance was 2nd Section BBC Vire National two weeks previous.

This partnership had a good race, especially when you consider they are located out in the Eastern side of the country they sent 10 hens to the race and had nine on the day. In fact they had a good weekend as they also clocked a good pigeon in the NFC St Malo race taking 2nd Section once again just behind that top flyer Mark Gilbert.

1st Section G and 59th Open were Chichester fanciers Tony and Carol Welch who timed a two year old blue bar widowhood hen which was bred through his old Barcelona family then crossed into a Janssen. She has flown all the inland races with the South Coast Fed and was sent to Vire with the BBC and was his first bird clocked from that race. She had two weeks rest with some training and was sent with high hopes to Messac, she was in perfect condition when she arrived home unlike some of the later pigeons which were flown out.

Tony and Carol were once again fanciers who have their birds in top condition as they also won 1st Section from the NFC St Malo race on the same day. My congratulations to you all a tremendous achievement.

Do not forget the next race in the BBC calendar is from Poitiers on Saturday the 12th June with marking on Thursday 10th June.

Also a date for your diary the BBC is running an Open National race from Fougères on Saturday the 10th July in aid of the **Help for Heroes** charity. Marking stations at Penkrige, Hucknall, Stevenage, Kingsteignton and Salisbury lets give our forces the support they deserve – more details in the fancy press soon.



Tony Welch holding his Section winner

Convoyers Report:

I am pleased to say that this week's race went with no problems what so ever, all the marking stations went smoothly and I would like thank all those who helped out especially those who stayed behind to help us load the transporter.

Thursday all birds fed and watered by five thirty then rested at Salisbury for three and half hours before going on to Poole docks. for the night ferry. The journey to Messac was uneventful but there was some early morning mist on the way down but this burnt off by 8 am arrived at Messac by 11am and watered the birds. The birds were all fed by 4 pm, received a call from our race controller stating that he had been in touch with Steve Appleby our weather advisor and stated that things looked fine for an early lib but there may be some early coastal fog.

Saturday dawned clear and sunny at the lib site and after a call from Eric it was decided to lib at 06:45 into clear blue skies with a lt ENE wind all birds cleared immediately to the north.

As the day progressed the wind strengthened from the NE and another stiff channel crossing was on the cards which proved to be the case with the winning birds being clocked on the Channel Islands followed by birds into sections B and C and as the day progressed all sections verifying birds and right up into section E flying in excess of 400 mls.