

## BRITISH BARCELONA CLUB – MESSAC NATIONAL

The second National race of 2011 for the British Barcelona Club was on Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> May when 327 members sent a record entry of 2,594 birds to the lovely small ancient Roman town of Messac which is located on the left bank of the river Vilaine. A strange set up with the town of Guipry located on the opposite bank and the two towns then being connected by a bridge.



**The Harbour at Messac**



**The Mill at Messac**

Marking took place on Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> May with two thirds of the birds being marked at Salisbury and the rest at Penkridge and Walkern. At Salisbury everything went as smooth as a baby's bottom with many fanciers commenting on the short wait which can be directly attributed to the army of volunteer helpers who manned the four ETS and the three marking tables for rubbers. Thank you, to you all, you were a credit to the British Barcelona Club and were instrumental in ensuring that the birds were efficiently marked, loaded and safely transported to the point of liberation.

A mention and special thanks should also be extended to our fancier friends from Ireland, Phil Smith and Thomas Dardis who made the long journey from Ireland to bring their small contingent of birds to compete in our Messac national it was a shame that they had not competed in our first race from Carentan when the conditions would have been more favourable for them. Not only did they attend but were there all day manning a marking table and sharing banter with their many friends.

After careful consultation between the convoyer Nigel Rigiani (see report at the end of this article) the race controller Eric Ilsley and the weather guru Steve Appleby the birds were liberated at 0630hrs on the Saturday morning and forecast to meet strong North Westerly winds on route.

I bet that I'm not the only fancier who expected the East of the country to dominate the result but this was not the case as surprisingly all of the sections (except F – our Irish entry) figure in the first 20 positions on the provisional result with the first bird recording a velocity of 1219 (41.55 mph) and the 20<sup>th</sup> bird a velocity of 1149 (39.17 mph).

The winning bird was timed by **Harry Maplesden and Son of Bedhamton** at **11:37** to record a velocity of **1219** and win **1<sup>st</sup> Section A and 1<sup>st</sup> Open BBC Messac 2011**. This three year old blue Kees Bosua hen named **"Prim"** is flown on the roundabout system and originates from John Gerrard.



### **Harry Maplesden and family – 1<sup>st</sup> Open BBC Messac 2011**

Until last season Harry used to fly in a partnership **"Maplesden and Shipp"** so I think it is rather fitting that not far behind we have his ex racing partner **Malcolm "Buddy" Shipp** of **Portsmouth** who also clocks a two year Kees Bosua pigeon called **"The Buckland Bosua"** at **11:33** to record a velocity of **1210** which takes **2<sup>nd</sup> Section A and 2<sup>nd</sup> Open**.

Raced on the roundabout system this Kees Bosua pigeon was also supplied by John Gerrard to whom Buddy is immensely grateful as he would not be as successful as this without Johns help and the provision of these top grade pigeons.

It was only last season when I visited Buddy to congratulate him on winning the **2010 BBC Poitiers National**. For those of you who want to pick up a few tips on how he and the other winners do it then I suggest that you purchase a copy of the video **“A Year with the British Barcelona Club”** which reveals some very interesting facts – it will be the best £20 you spend – honest.

Buddy would like to congratulate the winner, Mr Maplesden on a great race. Secondly he would like to thank all the fanciers in the local area for spurring him on because without these so-called 'pigeon flyers' he doubts that he would be so successful.

He would also like to thank his daughter, Lily Mae, for helping him with the birds because she does all the young birds, which gives him time to concentrate on the old birds. As you can see she is his new apprentice!

And finally thanks also to the BBC convoy as the birds were, as usual, returned in superb condition.



**Buddy Shipp with daughter Lily Mae**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Open BBC Messac**

Further North but on the same line we have **Steventon** fanciers **Lloyd and Kelly** with Eamon all excited as he clocks at **12:59** to record a velocity of **1190** to win **1<sup>st</sup> Section D and 3<sup>rd</sup> Open**. Eamon would like to dedicate this win in memory of Carlo Napolitano. Carlo had become a good friend to Eamon and Jenny and they had wonderful times whilst in South Africa with him which they will remember fondly. Our thoughts are with Judy and the family at this sad time. Saturday turned out to be a very good day as they also celebrated Jenny's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday where many pigeon fanciers strutted their moves on the dance floor, particularly Ernie Smith who won the the best dressed male competition and Elvin Parry (89 years young) who managed to dance with literally all the females in the buidling! Eamon and Jenny would like to thank everyone that came to the party despite it being a result night in the clubs.



**Steve Radcliffe, Richard Elliott (holding Little Margaret), Eamon (holding 3<sup>rd</sup> Open) and Lee Davison**  
**all looking quite rough after the party**

Onto the race, the 1st pigeon is a medium size blue bar hen now called “**Birthday Gal**”, bred by Paul Kenny (Kenny & Segedsky). She is bred down from Paul's Janseen Van Triest pigeons from the late Mark Kidby's original stock. This is not the 1st good pigeon Paul has bred Eamon as he previously bred Stan 9th Open, 2nd Section Tarbes NFC 2009.

Eamon had great returns, managing to clock in 8 birds before switching his clock off. He would like to take this opportunity to thank all the race controllers for liberating the birds nice and early, particularly Eric Ilsley as he dedicates a great deal of time in ensuring the safe return of the pigeons.

With the leading pigeons heading for all directions further West we have **Billy & Dawn Clark of Poole in Dorset** timing the first yearling on the result at **11:29** to record a velocity of **1183** to take **1<sup>st</sup> Section B and 4<sup>th</sup> Open**.

Together they started into the sport of pigeon racing in 2010, racing young birds with the Branksome Club, and then going on to join the BBC this year to race their birds as yearlings – and what a start a 1<sup>st</sup> Section in their first year. Some fanciers race for a lifetime without ever recording a section win – **ask Eric**.

This was after a long ten year break from racing for Billy whom first started pigeon racing after nursing an injured pigeon back to health at the young age of 14 years old.

This Grizzle yearling cock bird has been named “**Uncle Roy**”, as a young bird he had three races, and as a yearling has so far raced Carentan and now Messac, and has been a consistent flyer for them.



**Billy and Dawn Clark**

**4<sup>th</sup> Open BBC Messac**

For this race he was allowed his hen for 5 minutes before basketing, their birds are raced on roundabout and are fed on regular widowhood corn, and trained when needed.

Special thanks are extended to Arty Baverstock for KEEPING ON TO THEM (well needed) reference the feeding, and to Tony Stephens for gifting us the stock cock of this section winner. They would also like to thank all the other club members who have also kindly gifted birds to get them started back into this great sport.



**Brian and Sue Crutcher**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Open BBC Messac**

Close up in **Poole** are **Brian and Sue Crutcher** who clock a blue 3 year old Van Reet widowhood cock at **11:30** to win **2<sup>nd</sup> Section B and 5<sup>th</sup> Open** with a velocity of **1179**. race various strains of b. This bird was bred by Brian from stock birds lent to him by Derek Bartlett. The nest mate of this bird was 3rd Section, 18th Open in the BBC Messac race 2009. That same year Brian and Sue were also 1st Section, 5th Open from the BBC Poitiers Race. Brian has kept pigeons for over 40 years and you can always find their birds in the Dorset Fed results. Brian is a hard task master and always demands high standards from their birds. These details were provided by Steve Travers who would like to say that it is always a pleasure to do a report on such nice people and personal friends. Brian is always the first to help out with any problem at the Parkstone Club which they fly in and always the first person to offer him help with the Dorset Fed Transporter when work needs doing on it.

We go East to Fontwell for the next pigeon where top class fanciers **Ian Crammond and Nigel Langstaff** clock yet another Kees Bosua at **11:53** to take **1<sup>st</sup> Section G and 6<sup>th</sup> Open**. The blue pied hen who won sect G for them is a Kees Bosua out of their no.1 pair from a son of Chico x Dochter Figo x daughter of Kleine Figo x Witkopje [this hen is full sister to Kerkduifje 1st Le-Mans 99.104 birds] this pair is responsible for a lot of their top pigeons and also winning for others Green & Hilson and Johnie EAST WIND Attrill this blue pied hen is aunty of John Attrills 1st sec BBC Carentan two weeks ago and also his 2nd sec in the same race also 2nd sec CSCFC last week. Green & Hilson had two the same way bred as the blue pied hen and they both bred North West Grand National Winners.



**Ian Crammond and Nigel Langstaff**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Open BBC Messac**

Ian and Nigel would like to start by saying a big thank you to all the friends who have helped out after Nigel's recent operation. Robbie Jones for calling in three times a week and catching the pigeons and taking them back to Southampton training, Paul Chewter calling in most days moving corn splitting the birds up etc, Tony Welch for taking the birds to the B.B.C marking, and

also maintenance work etc and also to EILEEN Nigel's partner for doing all the day to day work for the last six weeks. The partnership has been unable to race for the last six weeks due to Nigel's operation the 12 hens they sent last raced six weeks ago from Lyndhurst 40 miles. The partnership was very pleased with this result as they were not expecting too much.

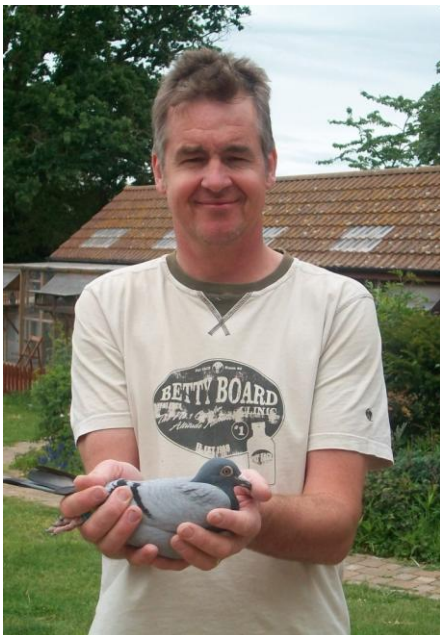
Keeping over to the East side of the country taking **2<sup>nd</sup> Section D and 7<sup>th</sup> Open** on a velocity of **1176** we have **Ian and Dave Holt of Chesham**, a father and son partnership who clock their blue 2yo roundabout hen at **13:20**. Once again an in form bird which earlier this year took 5th Sect in the BBC's Carentan National.

Bred from two gift birds a Jan Loot from near neighbour and Bordeaux specialist Mick Carrick and a Soonjten from the late Davy Allport of Darlington.



**Ian, Dave and Joseph Holt – 7<sup>th</sup> Open Messac**

Taking **3<sup>rd</sup> Section D and 8<sup>th</sup> Open** was **Antony Crook of Newbury** who with loft manager **Bert Kent** sent eight birds and had them all on the day. The first clocked was a three year old Staf Van Reet widowhood cock at **12:43** to record a velocity of **1172**. This cock is bred down from Hession x Marden stock purchased in 2005 and is no stranger to the winner's enclosure as it has three previous club wins to its credit. This loft is very successful in club racing in the Newbury area recording 9 x 1sts (2008), 19 x 1sts (2009) and 10 x 1sts (2010) time now to move forward and make a name at Classic and National racing.



**Mark Gower – 9<sup>th</sup> Open**

One fancier who has already become a household name at Classic and National racing is **Mark Gower of Fordingbridge** who clocks his yearling hen at **11:55** to record **1171** and take **3<sup>rd</sup> Section B and 9<sup>th</sup> Open**.

This blue hen is flown on a round-a-bout type of system and is an Ian Stafford Jos Thone. She has always been a consistent pigeon and was 8th Sect 43rd Open BBC Fougères 183 miles and then went on to be his first bird from the High Littleton Tours race a distance of 271 miles as a young bird.

This year she has flown 2 x 59 mile club races and 1 x Channel race from Carentan before the Messac race.

He had 14 from his 15 entries home on the day and all came back in good condition. This is becoming a familiar tale as without exception all fanciers with leading pigeons also had good returns. This goes to show that to get them you just have to have them right on the day.

In a North West Wind who would have expected the Section C winner to be timed in at Weston-super-Mare but that's what happened when **Phil Newton** clocked his good chequer cock at **12:47** on a velocity of **1160** to take **1<sup>st</sup> Section C and 12<sup>th</sup> Open**.

Really motivated no doubt as this is the same bird that he timed two weeks ago in the BBC Carentan race to win 3rd Section and 4th Open.

He is raced on the natural system and was sent to this race on over sitting eggs that are now about 24 days old. When he returned from this race he was still keen to get back on the nest.



**Phil Newton 12<sup>th</sup> Open**



**Brian Stubbs and Louis Pereira of Jersey**  
**16<sup>th</sup> Open BBC Messac**

It's good to see that the regular section winner in Jersey is not having it all his own way as in this race we have the partnership of **Brian Stubbs and Louis Pereira** recording a velocity of **1157** as they clock their lovely Red Cheq hen "**Lass**" at **08:53** to take **1<sup>st</sup> Section H and 16<sup>th</sup> Open**.

This red cheq hen is bred for the distance by Brian and Louis down from French stock birds bred by Augusto Rodrigues of St Malo with the original stock obtained from Augusto's brother in Portugal.

This was the hen's first race this year. She has always been a consistent pigeon, flying Bordeaux in 2010 and is being set up for both Bergerac and Bordeaux this year.

Another fancier whose name is becoming a regular feature of late in my reports is that of **Alan Akmenkalns** a member of Bognor and Chichester SRFC. Having taken 1<sup>st</sup> Section G in the recent Carentan National race he follows this up with **2<sup>nd</sup> Section G and 17<sup>th</sup> Open.**

Timing a yearling at **11:55** with a velocity of **1156**. Yet again, the bird is from his Janssen based family from world famous blood lines of Jos van Limpt (de Klak). His Janssens are closely related to many first Combine winners and National ace birds.



**Alan Akmenkalns - 17<sup>th</sup> Open BBC Messac**

The first bird gets to **Southampton** at **11:59** for **Bartlett and Jones** to take **3<sup>rd</sup> Section A and 18<sup>th</sup> Open** on a velocity of **1155**.

Rob Jones has been racing since the age of 12 now some 26 years ago .F.Bartlett was his uncle who passed away a few years ago now, but Rob kept the partnership name. He races on his own system called NATURAL HOOD which he has used for many years. All birds are fed on his own race mixes made up from Versa Laga - Marimans & Vanrobayes.

Additives are given in the water via the AVIFORM products to help cover total health in the race season. Medication is always on the shelf just in case but very rarely used. The first bird to the loft was a 2 year old Janssen V D Bosch base cock that scored well as a baby and a yearling last year.

He was well fancied at the start of the season to race well and was his pool bird in his first race but came almost last home from the team sent on a fast race but since he has raced in to head wins he was 3rd section 6th open BICC Falaise two weeks ago doing 1300's so was Robs all pooler for this race.



**Robbie Jones - (Bartlett and Jones)  
18<sup>th</sup> Open BBC Messac**

When handling this cock on the Sunday morning for the photos for this report Rob noticed that he has a keel injury from this BBC race but will hopefully be fighting fit for the NFC races.

Another in form loft is that of top **Telford** fancier **Eric Jones** who follows up his 1<sup>st</sup> Section win from Carentan with another two weeks later from Messac.

This time at **15:06** he takes **1<sup>st</sup> Section E and 20<sup>th</sup> Open** with a velocity of **1149** with a Busscheart bred by Graham Bailey of Ketley Bank, Telford. The parents originate from David Ellam's best Busscheart lines. They timed 3 birds in, and had 7 out of the 10 they sent on the day.

Eric and Barry would like to thank Graham Bailey for the continuous help he gives them.



**Barry and Eric Jones of Telford**

**20<sup>th</sup> Open BBC Messac**



**Brian Lock – 21<sup>st</sup> Open Messac**

We go back down country to **Worcester** where **Brian Lock** takes **2<sup>nd</sup> Section C and 21<sup>st</sup> Open** when he times his two year old grizzle at **14:14** to record a velocity of **1148**.

The pigeon's origin is Kirkpatrick Grizzle from John Crowder of Lincoln. The pigeon was timed in as a young bird from the BBC Lamballe race. Brian asks me to please pass on a special thank you to his mate Nigel Bennett for all his help.

For the third bird in Section C we go back further South to the **Nailsea** lofts of **Wyatt and Gray** who clock at 13:01 to record a velocity of 1140 fast enough to take **3<sup>rd</sup> Section C and 28<sup>th</sup> Open**.

We go much further South for the next pigeon in the result right down to the Channel Islands and onto **Guernsey** where **Paul Mauger** last years Young Bird National winner clocks at **09:35** to take **2<sup>nd</sup> Section H and 30<sup>th</sup> Open** with a velocity of **1131**.

The pigeon clocked in this race was a (Van de Poel x Vandenabeele) cock it was a gift bird as a youngster from Paul Osborne of Alderney. As a young bird it flew very consistent always in his top 5 birds home. This year he had 3 training flights before this race as far as 69 miles. Paul races all his birds on the roundabout system and they are fed on the best Versele Laga corn mixed with gem breeding.

We go back to Jersey for the winner of **3<sup>rd</sup> Section H and 81<sup>st</sup> Open** to the St Helier loft of Glen Moon who clocks at 09:06 and records 1079. Most of you will remember Glen winning the 2009 Poitiers National.



**Paul Mauger and son Mason**

In **2<sup>nd</sup> Section E and 41<sup>st</sup> Open** was **Stafford** fancier **Christopher Whittingham** who clocked at **15:20** to record a velocity of **1123**.

He was followed by another **Telford** fancier **Mal Hope** who timed at **15:24** to record a velocity of **1117** to take **3<sup>rd</sup> Section E and 44<sup>th</sup> Open**.

Mal's bird was a Colin Lloyd Cattrysse with Colin's Saintes National winner well represented in the pedigree this being crossed with Mal's old distance birds from the late Colin Brough. This hen was flown unpaired and had previously been 4th Section as a young bird from the Fougères National last year and her nest mate is well up on the result from Carentan a fortnight ago. He had nearly 12 hours on the wing this time but no harm done.



**Mel Hope – 44<sup>th</sup> Open**

**Convoyers report:** Thursday saw marking commence at Penkrudge where 400 + birds were marked and watered by 10:30, departure for Stevenage at 10:45, arrived at 13:30 where all the birds were marked and ready for loading. Left Stevenage at 14:15 having had the statutory 45 min rest break, the journey to Salisbury was slow due to an accident on the A 303 arrived at 16:45 and all the birds were loaded, fed and watered and rested until 20:00 hrs. The journey to Portsmouth docks went without a hitch and caught the mid night ferry to Caen.

Friday dawned to clear blue skies and no wind, the journey to Messac saw small pockets of mist lying in the valley's, arriving at Messac at 11:30 and all the birds were watered in quick time now the water pump has been fitted. All birds were fed at 16:00 and to see all the heads out in the feeding troughs was very encouraging (see picture)



**Birds being fed from the troughs**



**Lorry at the Messac Site**

Saturday dawned to clear blue skies and no wind the temperature in the transporters was 14 degrees and the outside temp was climbing all the time and after speaking to our race controller Eric Ilsley the forecast was good all the way back to Britain but the wind was due to increase to a strong NW and heavy showers as the day progressed so I made the decision to liberate the 2,594 birds at 06:30 to give the longest fliers a fighting chance of a day bird. The birds climbed high in the sky before heading off to the north clearing well at the time of liberation the outside temp 17 degrees and no wind at all but the high clouds were coming from the North West.

By the time we had cleared up and put everything away it was 08.00 and the wind had picked up to a brisk NW at the lib site.

The weather back to Caen was clear and sunny all the way with excellent visibility and a moderate NW wind. Arrived at the docks to find very little wind and blue skies with the odd white cloud, the crossing was surprisingly calm giving the early forecast that I was given. So things were looking that we should have a good race as far as the channel was concerned.

Having arrived back in the UK I was given the news that seven of the eight sections were won in the first twenty of the result so the wind did not favor any area and returns were mostly good.

I would like to thank all the marking station volunteers for their help because without you this club would not be where it is today.

Nigel Rigiani

Well that's our second national race of the season over with the next one due to take place from Poitiers on the 11<sup>th</sup> June. Thank you to all those members who helped in any shape or form at the marking stations please continue in the same vein for the rest of the season – your support is really appreciated.

May I also congratulate and thank the new secretary for knuckling down and putting so much time and effort into producing his second provisional result which was completed five hours quicker than his first – well done Barry.

Finally congratulations to Mr & Mrs Jerome of Reading who won the Basket Sponsorship and to Janet Wilcox who won the marking station raffle and who is now the proud owner of young bird GB11N07333 which has been entered in this year's Somerset One Loft Race.

There are still three more young birds entered in the Somerset One Loft these can be won at the Poitiers, Palamos and Bordeaux marking station raffles so do not forget to buy your tickets – Good Luck.