

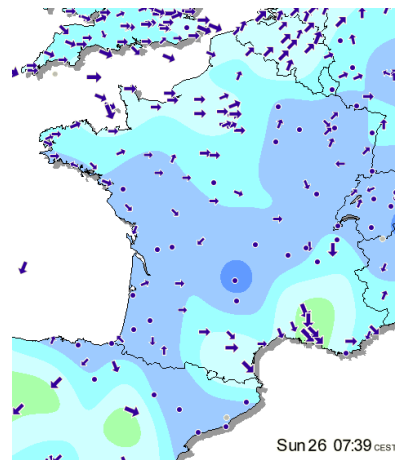
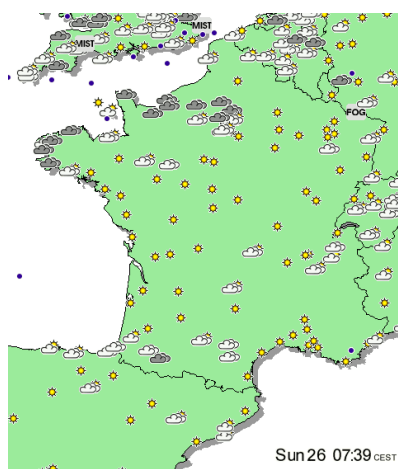


BICC AGEN INTERNATIONAL RACE REPORT.

The second International race of the 2016 season took place on Sunday 26th June, when 770 British pigeons were liberated at 5.50 am BST alongside 20,888 pigeons entered by fanciers from throughout main land Europe.

The breakdown of entries shows that the Netherlands entered the most pigeons with 11,588 birds away, followed by Belgium with 6,748 entries, Germany with 1,782 entries and the UK with 770 pigeons in the mix.

Yet again, the convoy was subjected to a delay in liberation due to the continued bad weather in France and the Low Countries, as the scheduled day of liberation was Friday 24th June which had to be delayed by 48 hours to Sunday 26th June when the weather had improved sufficiently for a liberation to take place.



Weather conditions on the day of liberation were forecast with light and variable winds throughout Southern and Central France, turning

westerly as the convoy reached the Normandy area in northern France. The weather was also forecast to be favourable throughout the whole of France with the possibility of heavy cloud cover in the Northern areas of France as the birds raced north and east in the late afternoon/early evening.

First pigeons to be clocked at 16.04 pm were to the German lofts of Rutz & sons flying a distance of 752 kilometres with a velocity of 1224 mpm. The early timers were all to German lofts which seemed to indicate the strong influence of the westerly air stream.

However, there must have been a southerly element in the wind direction, as the by now fragmented convoy reached Northern France as the eventual race winner proved to be in the Netherlands flying 853 kilometres at 1250 mpm to the loft of Jan Stevens.

Here in the UK it was expected that pigeons would make it across the English Channel on the day and this proved to be an accurate assumption with the race winner, for the third time this season being clocked by none other than arguably Britain's finest fancier – Mark Gilbert of Winkfield, near Windsor. Mark is re writing the record books of British pigeon racing as he is able to condition pigeons to win at short, middle, long and extreme distance events, racing his team of "Galacticos". These are pigeons whose origins are sourced from the very best lofts in the UK and Europe and then moulded and severely tested by the man himself, to produce every fancier's dream pigeon – the perfect all rounders.

Mark's winner this time at 505 miles was timed at 18.41 pm to record a velocity of 1054 mpm and is none other than Southfield Sebastian, a previous winner this season of 1st Open BICC Falaise competing against a field of 4,700 pigeons. Sebastian also topped the Centre section of the BICC in the 2015 Alencon race, so that makes 3 x 1st section and 2 x 1st Open for this Champion pigeon.

Sebastian is bred as follows:-

Sire is from a son of Brockamp's Perpignan 06 when paired to Mark's super breeding hen "79333" - a daughter of Southfield Supreme. This outstanding daughter of Mark's Dax International winner has bred



2nd,3rd,7th, 12th open NFC Tarbes. Sebastian's dam is a double grand daughter of Koopmans Kleine Dirk .

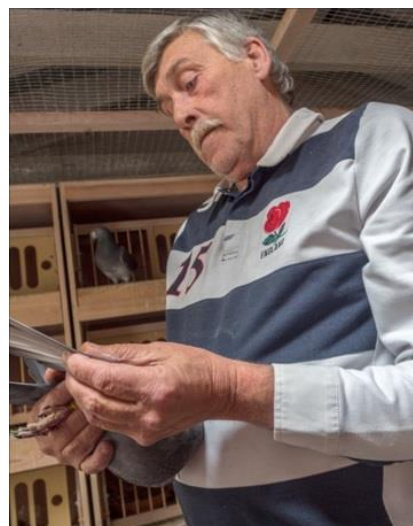


So, he contains the very best of the home bred Southfield Supreme bloodlines crossed with top continental middle distance bloodlines.. Outstanding pigeon flying by one of Britain's greatest ever pigeon fanciers. Well done that man!!

Runner Up is the father and son partnership of Wicky and Kirk Bullen. Wicky and Kirk compete at the highest level with a relatively small team of pigeons racing to a small back garden loft and yet they can compete with the best in selected races.

The Bullens' pigeon recorded 997 mpm and this is what Wicky and Kirk had to tell me about their latest top class performance:-

"We would like to send our congratulations to the winner Mark Gilbert on a great win on a testing day . Our 2nd open winner is a 3 year dark chequer cock flown on our own "crazy widowhood system". This year the he owns 2 nest boxes and returned home from Agen just wanting to fight with the



yearling cocks in the loft not worried about his hen . He was bred for us by our good friend Dean Garrett from his distance stock .The cock has always been a consistent pigeon, he just seems to lack a bit of pace at the short races. He was our first timer from the second BICC Alencon race this season and he was also our first pigeon from Agen last year”.



First East section and third Open vel 995 mpm goes to quadruple Europa Cup winner Simon Knowles of the F Knowles & son partnership. Simon clocked a dark cock of Southwell x Cyril Wells bloodlines that Simon has now decided to name 'Big Al' after Alan Annis who is in the attached photo with Simon. Alan actually timed him in while Simon was at the Barcelona marking. “Big Al” has had 4 x Bedhampton with Wingham F.C. and the E.E.C.C. Pithiviers on the Saturday before race marking for Agen.

He was so well on his return from Pithiviers that he was then sent back again on the Monday to Agen. The Knowles race team are fed on Versele Laga Best All Round with added sunflower hearts and peanuts in the run up to the International race basketting.

Besant & Son of New Malden in Surrey, the 2015 Agen International winners come in with two good birds on the provisional; result at 4th & 7th Open vel 992 & 971 mpm and this is what they had to tell me about their two timings:- Just to provide some info on the two pigeons we got from Agen today. They are both flown on the widowhood system and this is their 4th water race – it would have been 5th but spent 4 nights on the BICC Poitiers transporter but came home. They have actually both been in the crate for 10 nights over the past 3 weeks and been on the transporter longer than in the loft!

Our first pigeon named “Stitch”, is a three year old – he is bred from our stock cock “Diamond Prince” who is a grandson of “Indy” 1st and 8th NFC Tarbes and “Euro Diamond” of Brockamp when paired to a grand



daughter of “Indy” 1st and 8th NFC Tarbes – Matt Rakes. “Stitch” actually flew Agen last year and scored 205th Open BICC National 1000 birds but returned ripped open and we then had to stitch him up. This year he has been in the clock for every channel race and has so far scored: 78th Open BICC Falaise 3,694 birds, 188th Open BICC Alencon 4,751 birds , 91st Open BICC Alencon 4,326 birds and now 4th Open. He was our pool pigeon as this week prior to basketing he was playing up during exercise.



Our 2nd pigeon we refer to as the “Scottish cock” – but we might now need a better name for him! He is bred from a full brother of “Farm Boy” of Geoff and Catherine Cooper when paired to a hen bred by Roy Seaton and is a daughter of his national winner “Mari Mac” winner of 1st SNFC Maidstone 4193 birds. This year he has already scored 205th BICC Falaise 3,694 birds and 32nd Open BICC Alencon 4,326 birds and now 7th Open.

The Aylesham partnership of Steve and Sally Rhodes are always thereabouts in BICC long distance International races and following on from their recent 12th Open in the BICC Pau International race they are in once again at 2nd East section 5th Open BICC Agen vel 991 mpm. Here’s what Steven Rhodes had to tell me about their latest timer in an International race:-



“Our yearling chequer cock comes from a very good performance pigeon as his sire was 2nd open Perpignan and his dam was twice 2nd open Marseille. The grand sire was also a winner of 12th open Tarbes NFC. Bloodlines are down from our son of the "Joost" and a daughter of Crack Perpignan.



The cock was sent just starting to drive his hen to nest with full wing. He has previously won a club race down the coast with Snowdown 5 bird at 150 miles just a few weeks ago. Today was a good day for us we were first club from Le Mans and 6th Fed, plus 5th Open BICC Agen and then we had a phone call from Jill Rogers the secretary of

the GDSBNFC to say that we had won a young bird in the raffle generously presented by Geoff and Catherine Cooper - not a bad weekend!!! We would like to send our congratulations to that man who makes winning the Nationals “run of the mill” - Mark Gilbert. if we beat him we know we will have a good ‘un.’

Alan Dimes of Orpington in Kent comes in at 3rd East section 6th Open vel 977 mpm with a yearling Louella Jan Aarden cock sent sitting eggs. He has had just two preparatory races this season prior to Agen an inland race and the first BICC Alencon race then set up for his first crack at International racing from close on 500 miles.

In at 5th Centre section 8th Open on 929 mpm is one to Doug Gatland who had this to say about his latest foray into the International race scene:-

“My Agen pigeon was a two year old blue chequer widowhood cock and my fancied pigeon for the race. I fly a small team of pigeons looking to fly two or three distance races well each season and sent just two cocks to this race. My timer had flown 3 channel races this season prior to Agen and was first to the loft in his last training race from Messac with the NFC.



He is a son of 'Ailla' who was 1st Section 2nd Open BICC St Vincent in 2013 whose bloodlines were a blend of Van De Wegen, Jan Aarden and Padfield Wim Muller. His sire was bred by Calum Edmiston and was a Hebberecht cross Van De Velden. Calum is a great friend and a very fine distance fancier who has helped me on many occasions when my work gets in the way of the pigeons! Congratulations to those other 7 fanciers who timed day pigeons into a wet and dreary UK especially to race winner Mark Gilbert who timed another great pigeon!”



Geoff and Clayton Preece come in at 4th East section 9th Open vel 898 mpm to follow on from their excellent result in the recent Pau International race with the BICC. Unfortunately I have no further details on the pigeon at time of going to press.

Over in the West section the pigeons had it all to do struggling against the westerly wind but nevertheless the winner was clocked at one of the most westerly locations, to the Cwmtillery loft of Vince and Dave Padfield to record 760 mpm. This is what Dave Padfield had to tell me about their latest section winner [the Padfields have topped the Welsh section of the NFC in two races already this year]:-



1st West section 10th Open AGEN is a two year old Blue hen winning 1st Gwent Greater Distance Club as well.

She was sent off the loft directly into Maidstone 166 miles with no training whatsoever, just home exercise, and then went to the first two NFC Nationals, Fougères and Messac. In the Fougères race she had 9 hours on the wing and at Messac around 12 hours.

The birds were paired the end of February and reared a pair of youngsters after sitting the second round 10 days they were split and raced on the round about.

She was left to run with her cock the day before Basketting and overnight.

Sire is quite inbred as her Grand Sire is Old 89 a foundation pigeon and he is responsible for a dynasty of winners.

Also in her breeding is our great long distance racer "IRON LADY" who won the following prizes racing before being put to stock

- 2009 39th OPEN 2ND WEST SECT

BICC PAU INTERNATIONAL 2nd WDGCC.

2009 61st WEST SECT BICC ALECON

2011 Barcelona BICC 11th Open 3rd Sect 2012

Barcelona BICC 35th Open 4th sect 2013

Barcelona BICC 8th open 3rd sect FIRST PIGEON TO

FLY 3 TIMES OVER 750 MILES INTO UK IN RACE

TIME IN THE BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL.

On the dam's side there is a son of "DAVE" winner of 1ST WSRNFC TARDES 3RD CSCFC National Tarbes and GOLD Cup winner and Bird of the year in the Welsh SRNFC.

Geoff and Catherine Cooper's timer on 712 mpm comes in at second West section.

Geoff and Catherine clocked a two year old grandson of George to win 2nd West Section in a tough Agen International race. The weather in the Bath area was closed in from 3 pm with very poor visibility and heavy rain.

It was in the second morning race that they timed their first and second birds twelve minutes apart.

The two year cock has won many prizes including 6th National Falaise and 2nd section Saintes NFC.

He is a grandson of their super breeder George 1st Grand National Tarbes and a grandson of EuroStar a top breeding son of Euro Diamond. Apparently, he arrived home bouncing and rushed through the hens trap after the widowhood hens which were out for their morning exercise. The second pigeon clocked was another grandson of George. Geoff and Catherine clocked five pigeons to feature on the result of both section and Open.



Peter Atherton timed a Janssen hen that was 1st West section BICC Poitiers in 2015 to take third section velocity 709 mpm.

She was sent feeding a 10 day old baby and had been to two inland races plus BICC Falaise and Alencon in preparation for Agen.

Mr & Mrs Mel Errington come in at 1st North Central section with a timer on 718 mpm. This one finishes at 15th Open on the provisional result. Their timer is a 5 year old cock that was raced on widowhood in the early part of the season and has been on Natural for the past few weeks. He was sent to Agen driving his hen to nest and has had all BICC races except the first race from Falaise in preparation for Agen. Bloodlines are 50/50 Huybrecht and Super Crack.





John Black of Hitchin comes in at 2nd North Central section with a bird on 693 mpm.

John clocked a second pigeon close behind and this may well finish at 3rd section. The first in the clock is a two year old grizzle cock flown on widowhood, which has had every BICC race this season. He was bred by Lee Williams who is the Head game keeper on the



Pilkington Estate and was a gift to John's wife as she likes "pretty ones".

Stowmarket fancier John Mayes comes in with a bird on 733 mpm to top the North East section and finish at 12th Open. Unfortunately after three attempts to contact Mr Mayes I'm afraid to say that I was unsuccessful and so have no further details of his section winning pigeon.



Philip Harrod takes 2nd North East section on 617 mpm. Philip clocked a five year old widowhood cock bred by George Bowyer of Condlerton, which has had four in land races and the BICC Alencon 2 race before going to Agen.

This seems to be a lucky race point for Philip as he also topped the section of the BICC from Agen in 2015. Phil has asked me to thank Basil Burgess for setting and reading his clock. Job done Philip.

Well there you have it – the report on the second of the BICC Internationals in 2016. I must apologise to those fanciers who I failed to contact in compiling this report. I hope you understand that I have a VERY tight deadline to meet if the reports are to be in the papers the week after the race is flown, which makes it infinitely more difficult when we have hold overs. Add to this the fact that we have a series of International races now at almost weekly intervals, next one up this weekend, the BIG ONE, Barcelona International. Good luck to all who have entered.

Gareth Watkins

