

Jonathon Smith of New Romney

1st Open BICC Alencon 2017.

The 2017 Alencon race organized by the BICC attracted an enormous entry of 5,654 birds and the eventual winner of what turned out to be a really fast race proved to be a two year old white grizzle hen racing to the New Romney, Kent loft of Jonathon Smith. Jonathon clocked a second bird just 20 seconds later and so could well finish with an impressive 1- 2 against a massive field.

The following is a short report on Jonathon's time in the sport and how, in that short time, he has gained such early success.



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THE BEGINNING.

Jonathon first showed an interest in racing pigeons in 2012 although as he says there were always birds in the garden at home although he did not have the luxury of an early mentor in the sport. Nowadays Trevor

Fowler has been a great help to Jonathon and as he says he has picked up a lot of management tips from various members of his club.



The racing loft of Jonathon Smith

His first loft was a 12ft x10ft structure containing just 2 sections that housed 8 pairs of pigeons which were flown on roundabout. However, the present loft is a much more imposing structure facing north west and measuring 42 ft in length and 8 ft deep with 3 sections, one each for Widowhood cocks, hens, and young birds. All sections are thoroughly cleaned twice to three times per week and with only a moderate team of 40 old birds and a similar number of young birds this does not become too much of a chore. Eight pairs of stock birds are housed in a separate loft.

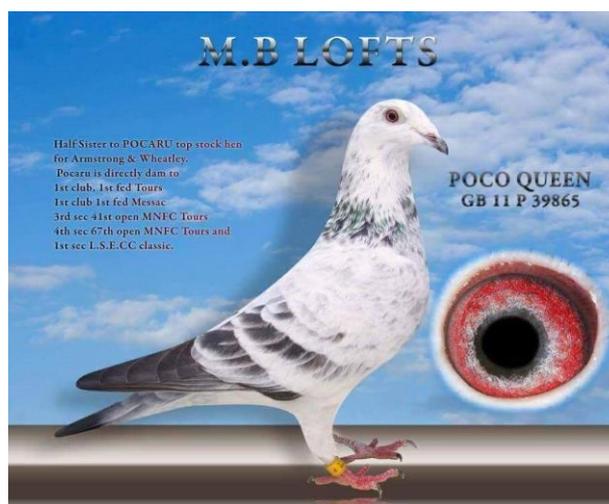
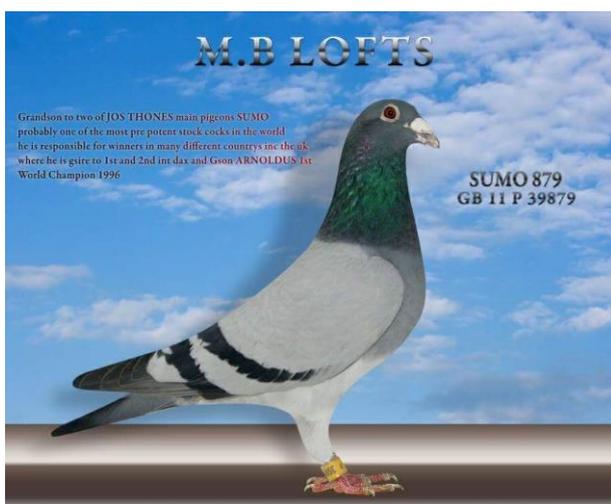


Birds taking to the air at Jonathon Smith's loft

MANAGEMENT.

Although he has flirted with both natural and roundabout systems in the past, the birds this year have been raced on pure widowhood with both cocks and hens expected to pull their weight.

All birds i.e. racers and stock birds are mated at the same time which is calculated to be exactly 96 days before the date of the first old bird race. The racers are separated and then race on widowhood for the remainder of the season.



Sire and Dam to the BICC Alencon 2017 Winner

Race Preparation.

Once separated the old birds undergo a pretty extensive pre season training regimen which entails plenty of single up tosses to enhance their homing instinct. This amounts to 25-30 single up tosses at 15 miles, followed by 5 more at 50 miles and finally 2 at 86 miles.

As for home exercise Jonathon says that if they fly well round the loft i.e.



White Mist 1st Open BICC Alencon 2017

sharp and putting in a lot of effort then he leaves well alone and does not feel the need to force them. The widowhood cocks are exercised once per day in the afternoon.



Loft interior of racing section Jonathon Smith

There is no specific preparation in the lead up to a National race as Jonathon likes the team to be happy and content in the home environment and hopes that the birds will peak at the right time aided by judicious feeding of various grains and specific motivation of individual pigeons.

The Smith young bird team receives as many as 30 tosses to 50 miles with a further 3 or 4 tosses at 86 miles and are then stopped until the yearling stage, all this education, whilst on the natural system.



Blue cock clocked in the BICC Alencon 2017 race (prov 2nd Open)

FEEDING

The stock birds are fed on Gem mixtures whilst the racers have various Versele laga mixtures including superstar plus black label and energy plus when the races are over 150 miles.

The racing hens are hopper fed and the widowhood cocks are fed individually in pots in their boxes.

Jonathon watches the birds as they eat and always looks for what they are leaving as he feels that its the best indicator to what they want, he then adjusts the food accordingly.

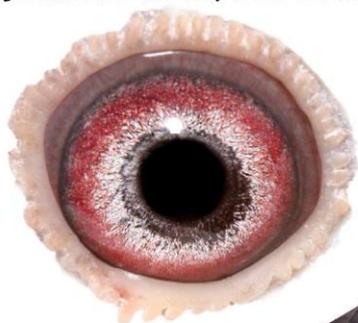
In the build up to a National race he will add 50% barley to his base mix and then as race day approaches he will reduce the barley content and replace with energy plus depending on the distance to be flown and the likely severity of race day conditions.

“White Mist”

GB15Z59424

**1st East Sect 1st Open British International
Championship Club Alencon 2017**

**Owned & Raced by
Jonathan Smith, New Romney**



©Chris Sutton

BLOODLINES.

The main bloodlines now housed are Jos Thone along with some Jan Aardens mixed in. Jonathon has found that cross breeding usually brings the best results for racing and to this end he intends to cross the Thones with the Jan Aardens in 2018.

As Jonathon has only been an active pigeon fancier for just five years he has had limited success so far, but the following is a brief outline of his progress thus far:-

1st year: 1st club Exeter young birds.

2nd year: Numerous club positions.

3rd year: 1st, 2nd Bergerac in club 45 minutes in front of his second bird which was 2nd. Both birds finished at up 3rd , 4th Combine.

1st Tours 35 minutes in front of the next club bird.

4th year which was the first season racing to the new loft

Followed in 2017 by his great National win this season. Onwards and upwards seem to be the watchwords here!

MEDICATION & SUPPLEMENTS.

Jonathon does not have a specific medication routine and as such only treats the birds if needed – therefore there is NO blind treating for an ailment that MIGHT be there at the Smith loft. Vitamins are given on race days and that's about it, although he does like to give the birds Matrix grit/ mineral mixture from Gem.

Congratulations Jonathon on your recent National win. I hope that you have many more enjoyable years in the sport. Also my thanks to Chris Sutton for many of the photos that accompany this report.

Gareth Watkins