

*MICKY WATTS*  
*of*  
*Southminster, ESSEX.*

*1st,2nd,3rd, 4th & 5th Open BICC Guernsey OH's 1,014 birds and 2nd Open BICC Guernsey YB's 1,891 birds in 2014.*

*The above performances are pretty impressive I'm sure you'll agree. As a result of this and also the fact that as BICC press officer I like to feature each BICC race winner in a personalised article, I approached Micky and asked if he would be prepared to share his experiences in the sport with the fancy in general.*

*Micky kindly completed the questionnaire which is printed below and I am also grateful for the excellent photographs provided by Chris Sutton.*

*When did you start in the sport.*

*I started in the sport in 1992*

*Who was your first major influence.*

*The Cooley Brothers.*

*Can you give brief details of your first loft, birds, management etc.*

*My first loft was in my parents back garden where I raced for 10 years.*

*How long have you raced to your present location.*

*I have raced to my present location for 2 years having previously been in partnership.*

*Can you give details of your present loft set up i.e. overall dimensions , orientation , number of sections etc.*

*My present loft has 4 sections along with an aviary.*

*The young bird loft is 14 ft long and has two sections with the old bird loft also 14 ft long with two sections. Both lofts are 6ft deep, with a 12ft long and 8feet deep aviary split into two sections.*

*Do you use deep litter ,grids or clean daily/regularly.*

*Both lofts are cleaned daily.*

*How many birds do you keep:- stock, racers, young birds.*

*I do not have any stock birds and the race team starts with approx. 50 youngsters . At the moment I have 20 racing cocks.*

*What system do you use to race the birds e.g. widowhood, round about, natural etc.*

*All old birds are raced on the widowhood system.*

*When do you mate your stock birds, racers.*

*The old birds are mated each season on Boxing Day.*

*What is the preparation of the racers prior to the first old bird race.*

*The birds having been confined to the lofts for the duration of the winter months are exercised around the loft for a period of 2 weeks and then have two weeks of intensive road training prior to the first race.*

*Do you force fly your birds during exercise or are they left to do as they please.*

*My birds seem to exercise well of their own accord and do not need to be forced to fly.*

*How often do you exercise the race birds.*

*I like to train the race team in the mornings and are then exercised around the loft in the evenings weather permitting.*

*How often do you train the race birds before and during racing.*

*I like to get them into 3 trainers at 33 miles each week if possible.*

*Is there any specific preparation for the birds before National races.*

*There is no specific training before Nationals as I like to maintain a high level of fitness in the birds at all times during the racing season.*

*How much racing do your young birds receive and how many training tosses do they have in the year of their birth.*

*I try and send to every race if possible, with as much training as possible-weather permitting.*

*Do you race your young birds on the Natural system or Darkness/light system.*

*All young birds are raced exclusively on the Darkness System.*

*How do you feed the racers, stock birds, young birds – hopper /by hand. How do you gauge how much they need at each feed.*

*Young birds are always fed by the hopper and the old birds fed individually in pots in their boxes.*

*What mixtures do you feed.*

*I am a great believer in Versele Laga Gerry plus and also add barley and a good widowhood mixture from time to time. I don't feed any differently for the National races.*

*What are the main bloodlines that you house now and which lines have proved the most successful.*

*The only family I have now are the very versatile Vandenabeeles from M&D Evans .*

*Do you line breed, in breed outcross when breeding. Which method has been most successful for you.*

*I don't have any fancy theories about line breeding/inbreeding. My system is simply "best to best".*

*Is there any fancier who has helped you more than any other.*

*Yes , M&D Evans have provided me with good pigeons and good advice when needed.*

*Can you give an outline of your many top class performances and those that have given you most pleasure.*

*I have been fortunate to have recorded multiple Combine, and Amalgamation wins plus two National wins. In addition to these outright wins I have also many 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> etc.*

*Can you give details of some of the top pigeons that you have raced.*

*M&D Evans blood lines "The Man" winning 3<sup>rd</sup> combine as a baby and as a yearling 1<sup>st</sup> Combine and then the week after 1<sup>st</sup> Amalgamation.*

*Do you have a specific programme of medication.*

*I try not to medicate so keep it to a bare minimum if possible.*

*Do you use any supplements such as vitamins etc.*

*Yes multi vitamins.*

*Do you feed any supplements in the build up to long distance / National races.*

*No nothing special.*

*How does your ideal pigeon look/ handle.*

*My ideal pigeon would handle like a pear fairly broad at the front and tapering off towards the tail.*

*If you could only use one product / supplement what would it be.*

*Garlic.*

*Straight and to the point. Many thanks Micky.*

*Gareth Watkins*



*Micky Watts in the main corridor checking over the inmates*



*Micky Watts loft-Set-Up*



*Micky Watts Trapping-Set-Up*



*Micky Watts-Set-Up*



*Micky's Old Bird cocks' section*