

BICC DECEMBER NEWS REPORT

The December meeting of the BICC committee took place on Sunday 7th December at the club's H.Q. The Lion Brewery at Ash. The meeting was very well attended with all elected committee personnel present and no absentees. Following on from the usual preliminaries, Chairman Albi Deacon asked our Treasurer Russell Bradford to give a break down of the club's finances and it transpired, that yet again, the club has made a handsome surplus on the year's racing. Both Russell and Carol have worked tirelessly as our secretary and treasurer and were given a vote of thanks by all present in recognition of all the hard work they undertake on the members' behalf.

Russell also informed those present that the Epsom Moot held in conjunction with the superbly organised Epsom Show proved to be a great success and he had been approached by quite a number of fanciers enquiring if this would be an annual event. Russell tells me that it may well take place again next year but in a slightly different format.

In light of the club's healthy financial position, Russell suggested that we consider increasing the section prize money for the 2015 season and this was agreed giving something back to the members in recognition of their loyal support. The section prize money for 2015 will now be 1st £75; 2nd £40; 3rd £20. This is a massive increase in section prize money compared with only a few years previous. The Open prize money to stay the same as in 2014.

Next on the agenda was the subject of the Marseille International race and its omission from the 2015 race programme. A long and constructive discussion then took place and it was eventually decided that Marseille would be included in the 2015 race programme. There will be two Marking Stations - one at the club H.Q. in Ash and another in Kent. The price per bird will be the same as 2013 - £8 per bird a drop of £2 per bird on 2014 charges. Also it may well be that fanciers interested in sending to Marseille will be asked to pre-book their entries a week in advance so that the transport logistics can be organised. The entry costs for all other races will remain the same as in 2014.

Chairman Albi Deacon and President John Tyerman then brought up the matter of the purchase of a new trailer and crates to cater for our fast expanding membership. Quotes had been obtained from a number of companies and after discussion it was decided that we go for the Geoff Greenaway quote for the trailer and 250 new "state of the art "aluminium crates. The combined total for these being £35,500.

Next item on the agenda was the subject of the new identification rings.

I HAVE TO POINT OUT TO MEMBERS THAT, AS FROM 2015, ALL PIGEONS THAT ARE ENTERED IN INTERNATIONAL RACES MUST CARRY A REGISTRATION RING CONTAINING THE FCI LOGO. PIGEONS RINGED BEFORE 2015 CAN STILL COMPETE AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL BUT ALL PIGEONS RINGED THEREAFTER, MUST HAVE THE FCI LOGO INCLUDED ON THE REGISTRATION RING WHETHER THEY BE GB, WHU,IHU,SHU,NEHU or NWHU.

Still on the subject of rings - it was proposed that the Club run a "Gold Ring" scheme and that fanciers can purchase from Carol, or alternatively, nominate their own rings at £5 each to compete in the young bird races. Members can enter as many rings as they like but the nominated rings and monies must be with Carol a month before the first young bird race is flown. All monies less 10% to be paid out in the two young bird races on a 50/30/20% ratio.

Then we came on to the contentious issue of awarding the Cornish fanciers a section of their own. A long, and at sometimes heated debate then took place, and it was eventually decided that we offer the Cornish fanciers every help possible to enjoy National and International racing alongside existing BICC members. At present the club was not in a position to offer the Cornish fanciers a section exclusively for themselves, however, every assistance would be given so that they can compete under the BICC "umbrella" and this would include a 40 pence per bird subsidy to counteract the expense of bringing their pigeons to the nearest marking station at Bath. There is still the possibility that in future, if the number of Cornish fanciers warrants it, they will be granted their own section.

This spirit of cooperation spilled over into the next subject to be raised - the collection of the pigeons from the Chestfield marking station in Kent, which is one of the most well supported stations in the BICC. At present John Chipperfield is the I/C at Chestfield and has done a brilliant job in popularising the station. However, as from 2015, John will no longer be able to transport the Chestfield birds to meet up with the main transporter. Every effort will be made to accommodate the Chestfield Marking Station and in all probability this will include revamping the pick up routes given the greater flexibility allowed us by the purchase of the new trailer.

It was also agreed that we purchase new computer software as an aid to greater efficiency in the administration of the club.

Carol then informed the meeting that ALL 150 tickets for the annual presentation had now been sold and that she was in discussion with the management at the Queen's Hotel regarding the price of drinks on the weekend of the presentation. Trevor Cracknell and Brian Palmer to be invited as guests along with their wives. The secretary and treasurer's honorariums were then discussed, during which time Carol and Russell left the room. In view of the fact that the membership has increased by almost 40% in the past few seasons, it was agreed in principle that both Carol and Russell be given an increase in their salaries. The exact amount would be decided by the time of the next committee meeting. Finally, moving on to any other business, Albi asked if anyone had received an offer to carry out the job of "Administrator of the club's Trophies". Thus far there have been no takers so we may have to resort to "outsourcing" this extremely important job.

That concluded the business of the meeting and all that was left was for us to make our way home after a 360 mile round trip. Once again, Ray Strawbridge and I would like to thank Jackie and John Wills for putting us up [and putting up with us] for the weekend. Your hospitality was, once again, truly outstanding. I have included with this report photographs of two trophies donated to the club for competition in 2014. The Barry Hobbs Memorial Trophy is to be presented to the bird recording the highest velocity into Northamptonshire from the longest young bird race and was won in 2014 by Mr & Mrs Mick Smith of Wymington. The second trophy is the Jim Emerton Mensa Trophy awarded to the bird recording the highest velocity into Cornwall from the Barcelona International race

Gareth Watkins

