

BICC Perpignan International Winners and Race Report 2019

The seventh and final International race of the season for the British International Championship Club was held on the 3rd of August from Perpignan and following on from their previous 1st National, provisional 121st International from Narbonne just a few days earlier, the Perpignan National winning pigeon once again flew 596 miles to the loft of Geoff and Clayton Preece in Dover, and they also put up a very impressive team performance.



Clayton & Geoff Preece of Dover with 2 National winners

Their 1st Open BICC winner now called "Sunny Jim", is a blue white flight cock raced on a widowhood system.

"Sunny Jim"

GB17D10205

**1st East Sect 1st Open
British International Championship
Club Perpignan 2019
Bred & Raced by
G M Preece & Son, Dover**



Perpignan 2019 is his second International this season and he has flown the channel six times including BICC Cholet 300 miles and Messac 270 miles with the Kent Combine two weeks before being sent to St Vincent 533 miles. He was 5th BICC National from St Vincent, returning in very good condition and rested in preparation for Perpignan. As a yearling he flew the channel ten times but only up to 250 miles and he crossed the channel twice as a young bird, so he has already completed nineteen channel crossings. The sire is a direct Bernd Morsnowski and the Dam is a direct Stoffel, which also bred their day bird from Mont De Marsan in 2017, being 10th BICC National.



“Sunny Jim” 1st BICC Open Perpignan International 2019

When I visited to report on their Narbonne winner the Perpignan team had already been basketed, so all that was there to see was the huge straw nests the cocks had been building. The hens were sitting in their compartment, which is lined around three sides with an ingenious perching system. It consists of widths of 9mm ply running around at a 45 degree angle with blocks of 4” x 2” timber attached for the birds to use as a perch. Starting at around a foot from the ceiling, the second tier is another 12 inches below that and so on, which leaves the center free for the birds to feed without any restrictions to the width or depth of the section. Geoff said this was a system used by his great friend and mentor the late Geoff Horn, and basis of it is that each “shelf” reduces in width by an inch so the droppings from above go clear of the birds below.

They are obviously very contented in the new loft and the partners have sectioned it to allow the yearlings to have an identical nest box layout to the old bird section. “yearlings are a different animal” said Geoff and they are given plenty of channel races in order to learn their trade, with 420 miles being the furthest they have been this year, but normally they would go to Narbonne and Perpignan. Then at the end of the International season they are carefully moved over to the old bird loft with the same nest box position being available to them. This is achieved by opening the corresponding box in the yearling section, if an old bird is lost during the International races, so when he is moved over it is unoccupied.



Cocks Section of the Lofts

They plan their whole season around the seven International races and will send to the Atlantic race points as well as the Mediterranean in order to find the “complete” pigeons, as Geoff calls them. They need to be able to pull out and although the UK entries are not as significant as the other countries, on a percentage of returns, the UK is on a par with them all. “You need to understand the International scene” said Geoff and went on to explain that the first 25 percent of the entry go on to make up the International result, and a loft that can do so in all the races is highly rated in Europe and recognised as having a team of “Complete” pigeons.

I asked why there are German pigeons in the bloodlines, as most in the UK would think Holland was the place to go to acquire long distance birds. He agreed to an extent but went on to explain that in his opinion, due to the zone system in Germany, he considered zone

three to be the right distance and terrain to select birds best suited for the Internationals in the UK. "You have to forget about the channel" Clayton added, "it is there and nothing can be done about that, when the crossing conditions are good we should be in amongst the top 25% of the international convoy and when its bad you have to take it on the chin but some fanciers talk themselves out of racing the Internationals as they feel the disadvantage of the channel is to big however with the right conditions, it has not stopped the UK winning the International. Many Internationals are won on the second day, into Holland and Germany flying 700 miles or more".



Young Bird perches

They must be on the right track, because as well as winning their second BICC National of the season, within days of the first from Narbonne, they also put up a super team performance from Perpignan at 596 miles. Of the eleven pigeons they entered, they timed six on the winning day, with nine of the team in the clock when I visited them. Their second bird home being 9th BICC Perpignan is a granddaughter of "Jack Jones" and also won 6th BICC Barcelona 2019 then rested until Perpignan. Their third being 11th BICC Perpignan is a grandson of "Jack Jones" and was 107th BICC Agen 2019 was being prepared for Narbonne but held for Perpignan. FR17 310895 was 15th BICC Perpignan 2019 which is a two year old September bred pigeon from the loft of Rezenthel frères. Next home was GB17D10211, 16th BICC Perpignan 2019 also a granddaughter of "Jack Jones" and "Wiggins" was 81st BICC

Agen 2019 and rested until Perpignan, she is half sister to “Nellie” 1st Open BICC Narbonne 2019. Yet another grandchild of “Jack Jones” was 20th BICC Perpignan 2019, 43rd BICC Pau 2019 and 18th BICC St Vincent 2019, he has returned in great condition from his three Internationals this year although he had some secondary’s missing from Perpignan. The 792 was the next one home, being 26th BICC Perpignan which completed his 12th International race, followed by GB17D10231 being 27th BICC Perpignan 2019 and is 100% Bernd Morsnowski, also 12th BICC Perpignan as a yearling in 2018, 39th BICC Pau 2019, 30th BICC St Vincent 2019 and then 27th BICC Perpignan 2019 which is a strong season for this 2 year old, and finally for this team FR17 310977 41st BICC Perpignan 2019 and is called “Pou-Pou” being a gift from the loft of Rezenthel Frères. This hen has also done three Internationals this year including 94th BICC Pau 2019, 2nd BICC St Vincent 2019 and 41st BICC Perpignan, a super conclusion to her 2019 race season.

“The 792”

GB12D25792

2nd BICC Perpignan 2017
 4th BICC Barcelona 2019
 7th BCC Narbonne 2016
 9th BICC Agen 2016
 13th BICC Perpignan 2018
 16th BICC Barcelona 2015
 18th BICC Agen 2017
 26th BICC Perpignan 2019
 30th BICC Perpignan 2014
 47th BICC Barcelona 2014
 53rd BICC Perpignan 2015
 100th BICC Pau 2018
 Bred & Raced by
 G M Preece & Son,
 of Dover



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You can see this loft is steadily building a huge reputation in the European marathon events and they are proud of their birds repeat performances, with ten or more International races expected before they are happy to retire them to the breeding loft. But they also know that a bird can go once too many and deciding on one last race for a bird could put a jinx on it, as has happen. This was the situation when I visited for the Perpignan winners’ article, and they had been unable to celebrate their national win properly, until a special pigeon returned which had been due to retire to the stock loft. GB12D25792 was having his 12th International race and was on the loft early in the morning at 6:40am to score 26th BICC Perpignan.

Known to them as “The 792”, his previous results are 2nd BICC Perpignan 2017, 4th BICC Barcelona 2019, 7th BCC Narbonne 2016, 9th BICC Agen 2016, 13th BICC Perpignan 2018, 16th BICC Barcelona 2015, 18th BICC Agen 2017, 26th BICC Perpignan 2019, 30th BICC Perpignan 2014, 47th BICC Barcelona 2014, 53rd BICC Perpignan 2015 and 100th BICC Pau 2018. His total International race mileage adds up to 7,115 miles, and if his other channel races were added to this total mileage, he has flown the equivalent of a flight to Australia over his career, which has earned his place in the stock loft and has proved himself to be “a complete pigeon”.



Young Bird Loft

Finally Geoff asked me to include the following on his behalf “Well done to everyone who timed from this top International race and thank you to the BICC for providing another complete International race program, which allowed us to participate alongside the best of the UK and Continental lofts also thanks to our sponsor’s Otto & Piet Klaus www.klaus-gritsteinwerk.de and ipigeon <https://topigeon.co.uk>”

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