

British International Championship Club

Berwick National Provisional Race Report

19th June 2021

The BICC's fifth National race was from Berwick, on the north road, where 206 members sent 2,624 birds that were liberated at 9.45am on Saturday 19th June. Each Section sent the following: South Centre 74 members sent 966 birds, South East 34 sent 463 birds, South West 21 sent 233, North Centre 30 sent 371 birds, North East 27 sent 304 and in the North West, 20 members sent 287 birds.

The proper name for the town of Berwick is, Berwick-upon-Tweed and it is sometimes called Berwick-on-Tweed. It is a town and civil parish in the county of Northumberland and is the northernmost town in England. So for this race, the BICC race point had moved from Penzance, the most south-westerly town in England, to the most northern town. It appears that pigeon racing throughout the whole of Britain was affected on this weekend and Berwick was no exception, with many members reporting a tough race.

The weather/race report

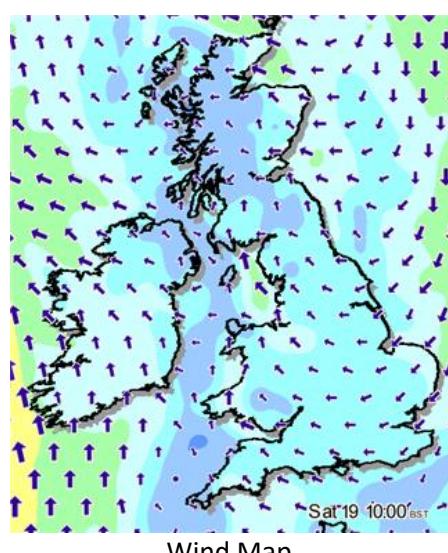
Steve Appleby, the BICC race and weather advisor, provided the following report:

Liberation saw the convoy break into several batches before clearing the race point which is not usually a good indicator. A dry day was forecast and the flight path was one of varying cloud formations with a few areas seeing the sun break out. In fact, most of England was under heavy cloud. Visibility was very good as supported by the webcam image captured at Holy Island, as can be seen on the coastline, some 25 miles south of Berwick. The winds although light, came from the east or south east. This race turned out to be very difficult and many other organisations experienced the same outcome. So can we identify any contributing factors? The extensive heavy cloud over many regions and the easterly winds were certainly part of the story. Were atmospherics a factor to be considered creating the difficult conditions? Quite possibly but, of course, there is no absolute evidence and subsequently no answer. Suffice to say that over the past years a few races have experienced similar challenging circumstances. Thankfully they are uncommon but are still likely to affect future races.

Steve Appleby race/weather advisor.



Webcam Holy Island



This report is based on member's first bird verifications and the final result may differ.

The Provisional Open winner, taking 1st North Centre Section and 1st Open was John McCall of Leeds, on 1185.6ypm over 133 miles. A delighted John said, "This win is amazing and after losing my dad a few weeks ago, who was my biggest influence with pigeons and was always here with me on race days, I just wish he could have seen this, as he would have loved it. As you can see in the picture, my dad's place of rest is next to the loft as this was his passion. Although he packed up racing some years ago, he was always here and talking about pigeons. And to be honest, I had lost a little love for the sport since his passing but, this win has given me back some motivation, so I'm really looking forward to the longer ones now. I would like to congratulate everyone else in the prizes, especially Mr and Mrs Skinner who are only a decimal point behind and any kind of clock variation could change the outcome so, I'm still only the provisional winner but crossing my fingers. I had 27 from 30 on the day but, across the country I know there have been huge losses and I feel for the guys that have lost good birds in this race."

John continued my explaining some of his racing methods, "My main concentration on pigeons is from 200 plus miles and mainly 300-500 miles. I usually have a single attempt at Tarbes and Pau, which is 740 miles to me, and I've had birds back but, out of race time at both the previous year's extremely difficult races. I have had some excellent performances with the YNDC and MYC and club and fed at 500 miles, timing the only birds on the day and once timing five or six on the day, on an exceptionally tough day, when few got them home. I regularly have a good team performance at 300-400 miles. I've been the north east regional, Premier Distance Award winner but everyone's ambition is to win a National. Last year my concentration was with the NFC and North East 700 mile club where I had some good results, being 1st and 2nd Section K, 7th Open with O/H as well as a few other good performances in the top 6 of the Section and 700 mile club.

My aim this year was with the NFC and BICC, as we now have a marking station at Carlton. This makes it much more accessible for us up here but, with no racing from France and my team having already been to the coast and Chale twice, and only losing four birds all season, I needed something different to sort them out. So I decided to turn them north and that is what I did. I started with the hens at Hexham, as they have been trained north regularly in the past in preparation for channel races, as I prefer them to have a head wind and to think for themselves. So after a good race from there, over a short distance, I decided to turn the full team north in preparation for the longer ones, with Lerwick in mind."

John explained that he has 16 cocks that are raced on widowhood to the racing hens and a handful of stock hens. John only houses 6 pairs of stock and they all fly out. The hens are kept in the same section but are split into two teams, with the yearlings raced as widowhood hens to the cocks, with the first home getting time with the cock. The older hens are paired to the stock cocks, which have a section behind the hens section, and are prepared for the longer races on nest positions. In general, both hens and cocks are exercised daily in the morning and evening and are fed on Vanrobaeys' mix. With the disrupted season, John explained the preparation of the winning bird, "This hen along with three others was meant for the first races into France and to be sitting on chipping eggs but, as this never happened they were split back up with the youngsters remaining with the cocks. However, when training or racing, I allowed the hens to trap back to the section where the youngsters and cocks were, through a Velux window, which I recently fitted in the roof. They were then removed an hour later. Although I don't normally train the cocks, as they had never been north they were given three, 'Scotch corners' last week from around 40 miles, then straight in the north for the first time. My second bird has been my number one all season, taking the club pool money most weeks.

And so, to finish up, the hen was bred for me by Peter Hornby of Leeds after having a disaster with youngsters in 2019 on a bad toss , so I took a team of late-bred's he offered me. I believe they are Peter's, Gary Inkly pigeons. This hen is the only one I have left but, has been showing promise for weeks. Looking at Nathan Hoggard's write up from Hexham, Peter Hornby was mentioned by him, so

again, there must be some good pigeons in this loft, although as Peter knows, I consistently torment him otherwise!"



John's National Winning Pigeon



John McCall

2nd North Centre Section, 2nd Open was Mr & Mrs Skinner of Boston, on 1185.1ypm over 209 miles.

As John mentioned, the second placed loft was Russ and Denise Skinner, previous winners of the three NRCC races, once from Perth and twice from Thurso. They said, "The yearling hen we timed was raced on total widowhood, as all the hens and cocks are. She was the pool pigeon because she had shown previous good form from both Perth and Fraserburgh with the NRCC. She is bred from a hen that was purchased from AP Overwatwer of the Netherlands. She is a granddaughter of Jellema Star breeding hen, Klein Kweestertje and Harold Zwiers' star breeder, Moos. Her father is a grandson of Wijnands, Triple A and Cor De Heijdes, Super Klamper. Congratulations to all the winners."

3rd North Centre Section, 5th Open was L & A Milne of Sutton, on 1122ypm over 152 miles. This partnership is made up of the husband and wife team of, Lewis and Angela along with their daughter Eva. They told me, "This year we started racing a small team north and south every other week, the Berwick birds had been to Chale the week before, and this cock, a Heinz 57 was also in the clock from Hexham. He is a grandson of our 3rd Open National winner from Bordeaux, so from a good winning line. We are loving the north road and the cock has been christened, The Night Crawler after a friend in Kent who likes to creep around in fields at night! I would like to say a big thank you to the lads at the marking station in Carlton for doing a great job."



Mr & Mrs Skinner's bird



Eva loft manager for L & A Milne

The Provisional North East Section Winners

1st North East Section, 4th Open was Mr & Mrs Kingswood of Hittoft, on 1147ypm over 195 miles. Darren and Jackie followed up their 1st Hexham Section win with another top spot from Berwick. In only their second BICC race, they have now taken two from two! Perhaps to top that, on a hard days' racing, they had all 30 entries back by 8.30pm on the Saturday evening. Raced on roundabout, they told me, "We timed our dark chequer hen that was bought in a Pigeon Chat sale as a youngster. We bid on a kit of 6 from a fancier called Cliff from Rotherham, to raise funds for a children's charity. Cliff asked us to send 16 rings and he sent us his first round of young birds. They have proved to be excellent birds but, this hen has never taken a card until today. We haven't got all of Cliff's details because we sent him the rings and didn't have a transfer record. So if Cliff is reading this, it's a big thank you from us." Darren and Jackie are now preparing the birds for Elgin, which will be a jump of 195 miles and want to congratulate all of the other section winners.

2nd North East Section, 6th Open was Robert Frew of New Cottesse, on 1119ypm over 252 miles. Bob told me, "On a tough day we had two drop together, which was a real bonus. First on the pad was a good cock that I got as an egg from club mate and good friend Dave 'Hicko' Hicks, who also had a cracking race. The sire and dam are both Jonan Donkers bred by Bill Walsh with top fed and NRCC honours. Three seconds later a top racing cock followed our first bird and he was bred by ace flyer Micky Betts of Doncaster."

3rd North East Section, 8th Open, was D Hicks of Mattishall, on 1117ypm over 247 miles. David told me, "The pigeon that came for me is an Irish bred 2017 Van Loon hen bred by Bill Walsh. She has previously been 2nd Open NRCC, Arbroath in 2020, 23rd Open NRCC, Perth and has also topped the Norwich NRCC Fed from Seaham. She has also taken a few other cards. She was flown on my celibate/widowhood system, so she hasn't been paired this year and indeed she has never been bred from. This was my first BICC race so, I'm well pleased having three more birds back just a few minutes behind my first. Well done to all the winners, and well done to Bob Frew, my club mate and chairman who just pipped me."



Darren & Jackie Kingswood



Bob Frew



David Hicks

The Provisional North West Section Winners

1st North West Section, 27th Open were Mr & Mrs Shaw of Crewe, on 1001.8ypm over 187 miles. The Shaw loft continued their consistent racing form, by taking another first Section position. The husband and wife partnership of Nigel and Wendy told me, "Our pigeon that took 1st Section in the BICC this week, was a two year old Herman Ceusters hen bred by David Sara. She was 9th Section the week before from Penzance and was 2nd Section last year from MNFC." So a consistent bird from a consistent racing loft.

2nd North West Section, 28th Open were Booth & Roper of Twesbury, on 1001.5ypm over 259 miles. The ever present Booth & Roper also timed a good bird and John and Trevor told me, "We clocked a four year-old widowhood cock in a very hard race, flying 259 miles in 7 ½ hours. This bird was beaten by .3 of a yard to the top honours flying over 70 miles further than the Section winner. He is bred from Brian Sheppard's 'Leon' lines and Jan Aarden from Louella lofts. Their Tarbes hen, Amy has the same great grandfather as this cock. We sent lucky 13 and had 11 back, so we were pleased. Can we also congratulate the winner of the Open, John McCall and Nigel Shaw on winning the Section. Also once again, thanks go to Richard Chambers and his team at Rugeley marking station."

3rd North West Section, 35th Open was J Rodway of Ruswick, on 991ypm over 247 miles. John, competing in his first north road race for many years, said "A real tough day! I managed to time in four birds on the day and my first bird was a big blue bar three year old hen racing unpaired. She was my third bird last weekend in the BICC Penzance race. This hen is very lucky to be alive as she was very badly injured in 2020 following an attack on her by a bird of prey. Congratulations to Section winner, Mr and Mrs Shaw and I have to thank my fellow club member, Mick Howard, for taking my birds to the Gwent marking station."



Nigel & Jackie Shaw



Booth & Roper



John Rodway

The Provisional South Centre Section Winners

1st South Centre Section, 3rd Open was Mark Gilbert of Windsor, on 1153ypm over 303 miles. Mark took first Section and recorded the only bird in the top ten of the Open from the southern sections. He timed a 2 year-old bird that was bred from a son of Southfield Junior, 1st BICC Pau, and 7th NFC Ancensis. The dam was from, Starlight, 2nd International Tarbes, when he was paired to Melissa 1st International Agen.

2nd South Centre Section, 12th Open was Terry Haley from near Watford, on 1098ypm over 288 miles. Terry told me, he timed a blue bar cock, called Miles Apart who had previously been 2nd Section form 966 birds, 12th Open, 2,624 birds. He was also 2nd D Section, 2nd Open BBC National from Blaydon last week, competing with 1,564 birds, and was beaten by a loft mate for 1st National. Terry said, "He was my single nom pigeon in this tough and unusual race from Berwick. The breeder of this bird is Kevin Henstock from Sutton in Ashfield and I purchased him as a baby in the Spelthorne breeder / buyer sale and he won money in the Open race held in conjunction with this sale. So, a big thank you to Kevin! Also, congratulations to Mark Gilbert for winning the section and all the other section winners and thanks to the many fanciers who have text or phoned me with their comments on the three Nationals over the last 14 days, as I have been lucky enough to have scored in all three with my small team of birds."

3rd South Centre Section, 16th Open was Dennis Wood of Greenford, on 1060ypm over 299 miles. Dennis wanted to firstly send congratulations to the winners and then tell me about his pigeon. He said, "This hen is a Cattrysse pigeon and I turned her north this year after she previously raced south for 2 years. She won the breeder buyer as a young bird in the Stonebridge club and has won races as a yearling. She was bred by my son Gary Wood from his best stock hen who won 3 races herself, before going to stock. I raced her on the roundabout system and she came very well, as if it was a sprint race not a 300 mile race."



Mark Gilbert



Terry Haley



Dennis Wood

The Provisional South East Section Winners

1st South East Section, 21st Open was T & A Wilson from near Bishop Street, on 1034ypm over 280 miles. The partnership is made up of Trevor and Adrian, with Adrian being in sole charge of their distance pigeons, which are 7 hens in total. They were pleased with the way the birds performed and they timed a second bird an hour after this Section winner, on what was a tough day over the 280 miles to their loft. They told me, "Firstly, a big well done to everyone who clocked on the day. We clocked a blue chequer hen, called, Fatty, as our Section winner. As a young bird she took 2nd Blandford, and was 2nd Falaise last year, with limited racing, and also 173rd Open NFC Countances O/H. She was also our 3rd of 4 entries that flew Bordeaux, so a really consistent bird for us. Of the team of seven, we sent six and were pleased to time two on the day. This year she was privately trained north, as we are not in the radius of any north road clubs. Her sire is 68, a winner of 6 x 1st clubs for us and bred by our good friend Alan Wicker, the BICC St Vincent International winner."

She is from his best sprinter, Magic Man, 6 x 1st Feds, 4 x 2nd Fed, 5 x 1st Combines, 2nd 2 x 3rd 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th & 10th Combine etc. Her dam is, Sonia, bred by our good friend Mark Bulled of Harlow, who won 1st Open NFC Tarbes, raced by us and the winner of 3 x 1st club and 2nd Open UBI Combine, Falaise. So, we have to say a big thank you to both of Alan & Mark."

2nd South East Section, 26th Open was D Dumitrascu of Basildon, on 1005ypm over 307 miles. Darius said, "I timed a yearling hen, which was sent sitting on eggs. This was her second race and she was 1st club from Laindon. Her breeding on the sire's side is, Luc de Roeck/Eric Limburg and on the dam's Duijvestijn-Piepke/Theunis Embregts."

3rd South East Section, 29th Open was Dean Childs of Wickford, on 999ypm over 307 miles. Dean told me, "The first bird I clocked from Berwick was not raced as a youngster and only lightly raced as a yearling, having had 3 x 200 mile French races. This year he started off south and then I switched him north to Hexham, and gave him a weeks' rest before sending him to Berwick. His sire is inbred to, Tuff Nut bred by Terry Robinson and his dam is a hen that I bred myself from Mark Gilbert bloodlines. This pairing has bred me many good performers and my next target race will now be Thurso!"



Trevor & Adrian Wilson



Darius Dumirascu



Dean Childs

The Provisional South West Section Winners

1st South West Section, 31st Open was Clive & Jill Rogers & Neil Sales of Writhlington on 995ypm over 309 miles. The partnership told me, "Our pigeon GB19R01305 is a two year old chequer cock that is bred from a pairing from the Compton Bassett Missiles family, of Richard Green & Anna Crowley who presently reside in Belgium/Portugal, and a Bill Keay's hen. This pigeon was flown with the West of England South Road Combine and then turned north with the CSCFC from Ilkeston, then the BICC race from Hexham, before racing from Berwick. The birds are flown on the chaos system, with no designated widowhood hen. They are fed on a mixture of Versele Laga and Vanrobaeys corns and follow the Tollisan supplement system. We are pleased to have had success in both the BICC north road races, being 3rd Section from Hexham and 1st Section from Berwick. The cock bird was in excellent condition on arrival and Treetops Loft would like to thank the convayers and Carol Francis for the fantastic service that they give to the members of this great club."

2nd South West Section, 48th Open was GG Cooper & CJ Cooper of Peasedown St John, on 959ypm over 307 miles. Catherine reported, "We clocked a three year old inbred grandson of Farmer George, who also has the bloodlines of Wollongong, New Laureaat, Special One and Kliene Jade. When we knew how hard the race was going to be, this was one we were confident of clocking. He has previously scored in the Section and Open from Pau in the International race, so a very dependable pigeon. At the time of writing, which was midday on the Sunday, we had 50% of our

birds' home. Finally, congratulations to the winner on what was an exceptionally hard race."

3rd South West Section, 52nd Open was D & J Staddon, of Ditcheat, on 945ypm over 321 miles. Dave had this to report. "Congratulations to John McCall, the winner, and to Clive, Jill & Neil on winning the Section. This was truly a terrible race for us, as we entered a strong team of 23 tried and tested and reliable birds. Although they are south roaders turned north this was their fourth race on the north and they had been getting the hang of it, gradually, as each race progressed. This race was certainly a step backwards for us. Virtually every race on Saturday was very difficult with poor returns reported all over the country. Nobody is to blame and our race advisors and weathermen together with our conveyors do everything they can to ensure a good race but, perhaps we have to go back to relying on blue sky and sunshine to get a liberation in the future. At the time of writing on Monday, we have 10 from 23 back with some very big prize winners AWOL.

Our only bird on the day flying 321 miles was a 2 year-old chequer cock. He has been steady in the past without previously scoring. He is a full brother to our great cock Fahrenheit, who was 23rd BICC Pau National and 2nd BICC Rieux Minervois National in 2020. His sire is a son of, Pearler from Barry and Peter Winter, and his mother is a daughter of, Frelands Gem from Bill and Beryl Lewis. He was raced on our Chaos Widowhood system. Lastly, just a thought...we all have pigeons missing from this weekend, if you get in any strays, and we had eight since Saturday, please report them, feed them up and help them to get near to home. We need to help each other after weekends like this one just passed. All the best to everyone, for the remainder of the season."



Jill, Clive Rogers & Neil Sales



Geoff Cooper



Dave and John Staddon

The Provisional Top Ten Open Positions:

1st John McCall of Leeds, on 1185ypm, 2nd Mr & Mrs R Skinner of Boston on 1185ypm, 3rd Mark Gilbert of Winkfield, on 1153ypm, 4th Mr & Mrs Kingswood of Huttoft on 1147ypm, 5th L & A Milne of Sutton on 1122ypm, 6th Robert Frew of New Cotesse on 1119ypm, 7th J Finlay of Pudsey on 1118ypm, 8th D Hicks of Mattishall on 1117ypm, 9th R Mamwell & Grandson of Louth on 1113ypm, 10th Harry Jackson of Selby on 1112ypm.

Mike Jackson

BICC Press Officer

Email:mike.jackson026@hotmail.com

Tel:07964448291