

British International Championship Club



Alencon National Provisional Race Report **14th May 2023**

Alencon in Normandy, northern France and is situated 107 miles west of Paris. Alencon has long been renowned for its lace-making traditions, which date back to the 17th century. The famous Point d'Alençon stitching method became known as the 'queen of lace and the lace of queens' and has been listed by UNESCO as part of the world's cultural heritage. It is also twinned with Basingstoke and Deane, a borough in Hampshire, in the south east of England. And on the weekend of 13th and 14th of May, it played host to 4,637 birds from the British International Championship Club.

The birds were liberated at 10.30am on Sunday 14th May after a one-day holdover.

Of those 4,637 birds, each section sent the following: South Centre, 147 members sent 2,118 birds, South East, 83 sent 1,498, South West, 42 sent 481, North Centre, 27 sent 325, North east, 17 sent 141 and in the North West, 7 members sent 76 birds.

The weather/race report

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

From a weather perspective, the race control team experienced a challenging weekend for the BICC race from Alencon. On Saturday the low cloud which plagued Northern France and the Channel did not break up as forecast until much later in the day. Conditions on Sunday were much better and with the flight path improving quite quickly, the prospects for the race were very encouraging. At about 09:30 a decision was made to liberate the convoy due to the rapid improvement in conditions. At 10:30 am our convoyers released the convoy of 4639 birds under broken cloud and sunshine, clearing the site immediately. The passage to the northern French coastline was mainly under blue skies. The view from the Caborg webcam on the coast near Caen looking towards the channel shows the broken cloud over the sea. Over the channel there were various cloud formations, but visibility was good, 8 miles and more. Winds generally were light from the north but in some areas, they did vary in direction. It would seem the early times indicated a good race for our members.

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



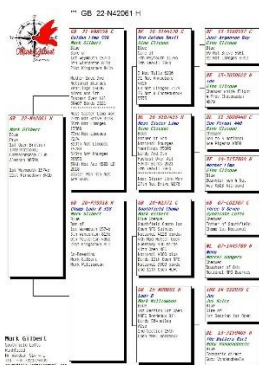
View over Cabourg

The Provisional South Centre Section Winners

The Provisional Open winner, taking 1st South Centre Section was Mark Gilbert of Winkfield on 1381 over 210 miles. Mark Gilbert continued with this impressive list of National race wins, by timing a roundabout hen, who topped the fed last week from Weymouth from 1,500 birds. Southfield Lofts had four pigeons drop together, and it looks like they will take the first four in the National. Mark said, "I must say the birds have come back in superb condition and I would like to thank Trevor and Chris for the way they have looked after them, we now have 61 from 78 and will be sending 40 back to the National Flying Club. I would also like to thank Steve Appleby who has been excellent with his advice on liberation. I am delighted to win the Benzing clocking system and would like to thank Benzing for their fantastic sponsorship for the 2023 season. BENZING - Gantner Pigeon Systems GmbH have sponsored the BICC with 6 clocking systems and the winners of the next race from St Philbert will also win one of these state-of-the-art systems. Good luck to all the BICC members for the rest of the season."

2nd South Centre Section, 2nd Open was Roger Lowe on 1378 over 215 miles. Roger said, "My first bird is a blue 2-year-old round about hen, who has already won 3rd Open Central Southern Classic and 25th Open BBC National, both from Guernsey. She is a cross between a pure Pieter Veenstra grandson of, Return Flo Joe when paired to a direct Rudy van Reeth daughter of, Rambo. My follow up bird was also very good, so all in all, a very good race and well done to all the winners."

3rd South Centre Section, 3rd Open was John Haynes of Fiffield on 1369 over 213 miles. John followed up his section win from the Guernsey National, with another excellent performance from Alencon, timing the same a 2-year-old roundabout blue cock. The sire of the pigeon is from Malik and Khan and the dam is bred out of one of John's best retired racing cocks, of Vandenebee bloodlines.



Winning bird's pedigree



Mark Gilbert



Roger Lowe



John Haynes

The Provisional South East Section Winners

1st South East Section, 6th Open were **Mr & Mrs Cooper & Son of Canterbury on 1399.9 over 201 miles.** The partnership timed a 2-year-old pigeon but couldn't provide any more information at this time.

2nd South East Section, 7th Open was **Dave Bastone of Althorne on 1399.8 over 224 miles.** Dave's first bird home was from Junior Bonny and the Young Couple from Syndicate lofts. He timed a blue yearling.

3rd South East Section, 17th Open was **Damien Szpak of Deptford on 1313 over 207 miles.** Damien told me, 'My Alencon pigeon is from the bloodlines of Armora. A hen that I bred who won 4th Open BICC Falaise in 2019. On the dam's side is my Figo hen that has won 14th and 17th Open BICC. Can I congratulate all the Open and Section winners.'



Dave Bastone



Damien Szpak

The Provisional South West Section Winners

1st South West Section, D & J Staddon of Ditchat on 1286 over 219 miles. Winning Provisional 1st & 2nd West Section are Dave & John Staddon of Ditchat. Dave commented as follows, 'Hi Mike, firstly as part of the marking team at Radstock we would like to thank Jill and Clive and all the other ICs and markers for making the first race marking so smooth. The paperwork is not easy anymore and dad and I are thankful for being able to race from France. We are absolutely stoked to win 1st & 2nd West Section in the first French National race of the season with the BICC from Alencon. After a north wind start, the wind turned to mainly westerly and west north westerly which obviously didn't favour us in the Open result, but neither did it in the Section result. It was a tough fly for the birds but just what our long-distance pigeons needed. We sent only long-distance pigeons to the race

keeping our middle-distance pigeons for the NFC next week. We timed two Chaos Widowhood cocks within one second to record a velocity of 1286. This was bang on the time we hoped for. The first over the pad was a yearling cock that currently doesn't have a hen. He is from our own Staddon Long Distance pigeons. His Sire is Marathon Man, a son of our brilliant racers Red Treble & Evie. Evie was of course the NFC Ace Pigeon in 2018. His dam is Gina G-Force who is bred from two other champion national racers, namely G-Force, the NFC Ace Pigeon of 2016, and brother of Evie (see above) The dam is Gina G, 2nd, 4th & 4th Open NFC, bred from our world-famous Miracle Pair. It's really pleasing to see another generation of our own pigeons score so well. This young cock was also our only bird on the day from the 2022 YB National. The second-section winner is a 2-year-old Chaos cock who also currently doesn't have a hen. He is a loft favourite as he is very quiet to handle and pick up. He is bred from Portrait Boy, 2nd National Agen, 66th International Agen 22,000b when raced by our good pal Dave Young of Midsomer Norton. Portrait Boy was bred by us and gifted to Dave. He was paired with the Evie to breed this cock. She was a champion for us, and we are proud to see her children and grandchildren doing the business. He must be slightly unlucky as he was 2nd club 25th WOESRC Guernsey the week, previous being beaten by his loft mate again by one second! Finally, a mention of our corn manufacturer. After years of much success using Versele Laga we decided to change our breeding and racing mixes this year to Bamfords as the price was so much better than the Belgium firm. Alan Bamford was a pleasure to deal with and we came up with a mix we now call the Staddon Chaos Mix. The birds love it and are racing fantastically already. We have won 4 x 1st Club and now 1st West section this year, already on the corn, so well done team Bamfords.'

2nd South West Section, 51st Open was Wojciech Blachut of Trowbridge on 1257 over 224 miles. Wojciech said, 'Well done to the winner Mark Gilbert and all section winners, I clocked the yearling hen, she is the daughter of Brian. She has already won 5th Section with the NFC young birds. The father was 3rd Open, and 1st Section from Poitiers last year. I'm very proud that it's the second flight in a row from BICC and they're found in the top of the section.'

3rd South West Section, 57th Open were Llanahan & Gerard of Poole on 1248 over 187 miles. The partnerships' pigeon that took 3rd section in this race, was from their Zwarte Louders pigeons. They are pleased with the way the pigeons are performing so far this season.



Dave & John Staddon



Wojciech Blachut



Llanahan & Gerard

The Provisional North Centre Section Winners

1st North Centre Section, 9th Open was Dominic Gruzeleir of Houghton Conquest on 1327 over 252 miles. The ever-consistent north centre fancier, Domnic told me this, 'My section winner is a small check pied hen raced on widowhood. She scored last year in the section and dropped with a loft mate. They were followed with another 3 in quickly, and they will probably take first 4 in the section. The hen that was first is well bred, her mother being 63, a hen that won the club 3 times and was

twice 3rd section behind loft mates. Her father is bred down from best Kittle lines I got from my late friend Pieter Oberholster at PIPA. He is now also proving to be a good breeder.'

2nd North Centre Section, 38th Open were R & P Montilla of Everton on 1278 over 245 miles. The partnership timed a 5-year-old pigeon to take 2nd section but couldn't add any more information at the time of the report.

3rd North Centre Section, 53rd Open was P Lane & Son on 1254 over 254 miles. Phil's first bird was a 2-year-old hen blue. She has flown the full programme for the last 2 years with no mistakes. This was her first time across the Channel, and she was raced on the celibate method. He sent 8 birds, had 4 on the day and 2 early next morning.



The Provisional North East Section Winners

1st North East Section, 74th Open was Dean Jones of Sibsey on 1231 over 317 miles. Dean said, 'Hi Mike, first I'd like to congratulate Mark Gilbert on winning the race, a class performance! My section winner is a 4-year-old hen from Padfield's x Dave Impett. This is her 2nd section win, with the BICC last year she won the section from Bordeaux, which replaced Pau. She will be sent back to St Philbert in 2 weeks then aimed at the Pau International again. I'd also like to thank Mark and the conveying team for taking into consideration the longer flyers on Saturday, the condition of the pigeons on return home was first class as always.'

2nd North East Section, 106th Open were Mr & Mrs Auker of Lakenhealth on 1195 over 276 miles. The husband-and-wife partnership, said, 'Our successful pigeon timed from BICC Alencon was a yearling chequer w/f cock. His sire is our good cock, Edge of Dark, who has won the section from Bordeaux and Nort Sur Erde with the MNFC. Alencon was his second race this season having only been to Reading, at 100 miles. He has been trained 20 miles twice a week and was sent sitting 10 days on his first round of eggs. Last season he only had two races as a youngster flying Bovington, 65 miles then BICC Guernsey and was the first pigeon we timed in that day. Can we also thank Roly for letting us know about the timing.'

3rd North East Section, 113th Open, was Rolly Rix of Newmarket on 1197 over 265 miles. Roly timed his first bird at 17.01.58 but made a mistake when verifying his bird, so he took 3rd section and not 2nd as original recorded and Roly called Ron Auker to explain. Nonetheless, he timed a good pigeon, being one of his most consistent for many years. Roly's 7-year-old widowhood cock, Joe 90, won the section from Guernsey in 2022 and has picked up several good positions over his racing career. The

bird's breeding is from Ray Farrington's NRCC birds with Van Hee crosses. There are distance lines in this bird, and he always proves himself on a hard racing day.



Dean Jones' pigeon



Mr & Mrs Auker



Roly Rix

The Provisional North West Section Winners

1st North West Section, 63rd Open were Booth & Roper of Tewkesbury on 1241 over 266 miles. Booth and Roper timed a 3-year-old blue chequer pied cock to take provisionally 1st Section, 61st Open in a tough race. This bird, bred from their Jan Aarden lines, has been a very consistent widowhood cock for them without scoring, but this time he came good. He is a son of Sportsview Diamond who was a top racing hen to their lofts, taking 7th Section, 84th Open NFC Sigogne, 8th Section, 8th Open MCC Saintes and 4th Section, 7th Open MNFC Norte sur Erdre. This family are very consistent in their loft. If he turns out to be half as good, they will be very happy. They would like to congratulate Mark on winning the Open, and all other section winners. And want to say thanks for all the kind messages from their friends.

2nd North West Section, 91st Open, was Martin Williams of Tarrington on 1216 over 275 miles. Martin timed a 2-year-old pigeon to take 2nd section but couldn't add any more information at the time of the report.

3rd North West Section, 207th Open were Dave & Kyle Harris of Newport, Shropshire on 1093 over 318 miles. Dave told me, 'In our photo, I'm standing on the left holding our first bird timed. He is a 2-year-old widowhood cock from our old Busscheart family, this family is based on the Corbett / Turner lines from Sid Plant (Kevin Doley) of St Georges, Telford, and John Preece of Red Lake, Telford, though, Joe 90. This family have remained as pure as they were twenty years ago with outcrosses gifted from both John and Kevin in the last few years to ensure the bloodline continues. They come into their own on the Channel, especially on a testing day like Sunday was, with very few birds over the three hundred miles mark. Our second bird held by Kyle, is again a 2-year-old widowhood cock and from our Evans and Walker Soontjens. Another family that has performed well over the years at all levels, especially when the going gets tough. This line of birds have numerous section winners within it, the dam and sister both have topped the section at national and classic level, and the grandmother has bred 5 section winners over the years. She is a great granddaughter of the, 181, one of Jack's favourites and has the famous names from the old original family such as, Steek Hen, Golden Eye, Steek, Vet Bol, Blauwe Jan, Vechter and Blauwe Lichte contained within her pedigree. We also timed a 3rd bird on the day, which was a brother to the 2nd pigeon. These two families have stood the test of time, and basket, and still show up when the new breeds fail! Thanks to Kyle for his continued support and Kevin Doley for his help, advice, and assistance throughout the year, it is appreciated. Well done to all the winners and thank you to all the officials of the BICC for making our channel racing happen again.'



Booth & Roper



Dave & Kyle Harris

The Provisional Top Ten Open Positions:

1st Gilbert Winkfield of Winkfield on 1381, 2nd Roger Lowe of Caversham on 1378, 3rd John Haynes of Fifield on 1369, 4th Robert Rome of Fleet on 1346, 5th Ian & Scott Smith of Eastleigh on 1346, 6th Mr & Mrs Cooper & Son of Canterbury on 1339, 7th Dave Bastone of Althorne on 1339, 8th Mr P Ayling of Gosport on 1328, 9th D Gruzelier of Houghton Conquest, 10th Garry Inkley of Hillingdon on 1326.

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