

British International Championship Club



Benzing Sponsored

Alencon Provisional Race Report

11th May 2024

Alencon is 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.

This was a BENZING - Gantner Pigeon Systems GmbH sponsored race and on Saturday 11th May, Alencon played host to 6,178 birds from the British International Championship Club. If the numbers were down on the opening race from Guernsey, members made up for it at Alencon, with all sections contributing to a great birdage with 377 members sending.



Transporters at Alencon

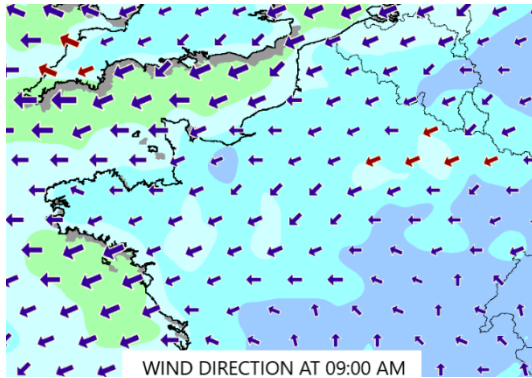
Of those 6,178 birds, each section sent the following: In the South Centre, 186 members sent 3,149 birds, South East, 63 sent 1,037, South West, 69 sent 1,202, North Centre, 26 sent 408, North East, 18 sent 159 and in the North West, 14 members sent 223 birds.

The weather/race report

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

For this BICC race from Alencon the weather could not have been better, as a perfect day greeted our convoyers at first light. Having been briefed the previous evening that Saturday was a good racing day the convoy was released at 07:15 into a light north easterly wind. Our chief convoyer, Trevor, reported that after many years in the job, this was one of the best liberations he had

witnessed. Conditions on the flight path were first class as supported by all webcams displaying views of sunshine and endless visibility. Winds did vary at times from light easterly to north easterly on route. Over the channel they did strengthen along some French and English coastlines with some gusting recording up to 14 mph. Visibility over the channel varied from area to area but was recorded up to 10 miles.



Wind Flow Map



View from Caen

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

The Provisional Open winner, taking 1st South West Section and winning a BENZING - Gantner Pigeon Systems GmbH system were Mr & Mrs Hodges of Templecombe over 210 miles on 1577. After a very successful race, the delighted winning partnership told me, 'The pigeon we timed was a small to medium blue cock bred by Lossin and Gerard who fly together in Germany. The pigeon is of Roeper x Joseph lines. Joseph a winner of 7 x 1st combines with big bridages. He is a super breeder, and most of our winning pigeons come from John, from these lines. Flown on total widowhood and fed on Vanrobaeys food, we had 16 out of 18 on the day. We would like to thank all those who phoned, text or left messages congratulating us. We are over the moon to win the Benzing clocking system.' Gary added, 'I would also like to thank Prilly for all her help and input and say a big thank you to the conveyors because the birds arrived in immaculate condition as always, they are a credit to the BICC.'



Prilly Hodges holding 1st Open with John Gerard and Gary Hodges

The Provisional South West Section Winners

2nd South West Section, 2nd Open were **S Woolley & A Luscombe of Saltash** over **237 miles on 1555**. Steve Woolley and Tony Luscombe of Wyndham Lofts had two hens arrived together, raced on their widowhood system. The first a blue hen of Staff Van Reet bloodlines, bred from the birds of Pete Norton of Walsall. Their second was a chequer pied hen from the breeding stud of Steve and Lesley Wright, House of Arden and both direct Padfields.



S Woolley & A Luscombe

3rd South West Section, 3rd Open were **Mr & Mrs A Mabin of Gara Bridge** over **219 miles on 1547**. Andrew sent congratulations to all the section winners on a difficult channel race. He said, 'My first bird was a dark 3-year-old hen claiming her second top 10 in the Open with the BICC. Bred from a son of my Poitiers NFC winner crossed with a daughter from Mark Gilbert's rather good 2010 red cock. They were sent on erratic widowhood for the start of the season with my plan to pair for the longer races.'



Mr & Mrs Mabin's bird and loft

| PEDIGREE | | Color | Sex |
|--|----------------|--------------|--------|
| 1st Hen | Staff Van Reet | Blue | Female |
| 2nd Hen | Chequer Pied | Chequer Pied | Female |
| <p>Staff Van Reet bloodlines bred from Pete Norton of Walsall. Chequer Pied hen from Steve and Lesley Wright, House of Arden. Both direct Padfields.</p> | | | |
| <p>Pete Norton, 387 Westonwich Road, Delves, Walsall, Walsley (01922 441364)</p> | | | |

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S Woolley & A Luscombe pedigrees

The Provisional South Centre Winners

1st South Centre Section, 21st Open were **Cottrell, Richmond & Rogers of Wimborne** over **188 miles on 1457**. 'We are delighted to be asked to contribute to the write up on our performance from Alencon' said Tony Cotrell and he continued, 'The marking morning didn't start well as I'd forgotten my ETS clock, unfortunately I'm getting very forgetful, I'm told it's an age thing but I'm only 22! Sorry, that's 72! So, my birds had to be rubbered. Justin came up for the race from Bosliven in

Cornwall, setting off just after 4am for a round trip of over 400 miles. We thought the birds could be reasonably fast with the wind in the north east which favours us on the west side of the section. GB21N, is a blue hen now called, Merrifield Samphire, after the herb that grows close to Bosliven. She came to Wimborne in a kit for racing from Bosliven Lofts. She's been most consistent from across the channel, being in the first half dozen to the lofts many times. She's one of the chaos widowhood lesbian hens and she and her partner were in the same box with one of the widowhood cocks. We had a great start with multiple birds turning up together and then they just dried up like many others. Her breeding is: sire bred by Justin from Bosliven, a Heremans Cuester who is a double grandson of Euro. Dam, also bred by Justin. She's a Van Den Bulck and is a double granddaughter of Kittel. Both were bred to retain top bloodlines of the original blood Justin had.

A big thank you to the committee and marking team that run Sarisbury marking station who jumped into action to rubber all my birds, you know who you are, and I owe you a beer. Also, to the winners and section winners and all those who timed on what turned out to be a very testing day, till the next time remember, motivation and observation are the key words so, keep 'em flying.'

2nd South Centre Section, 30th Open was R Lowe of Caversham over 215 miles on 1443. Roger said, 'My first bird was a hen and was my pool bird from last week's Classic race, where she was a bit behind. She is now named, 08 and both parents are bred by Mark Gilbert. The sire being, The One That Got Away. He is a grandson of Armando and Golden Prince, and he has bred some outstanding pigeons. 08 finished 14th fed the week before from 1,589 birds. The dam of 08 is Dark Wonder, a grizzle hen from Mark's grizzle pair, which have bred multiple prize winners. When she arrived, I knew she must be a good one by doing nearly 50 miles an hour in a strong east wind. It turned out to be a very good race with over 6,000 birds, so well done to all concerned.'

3rd South Centre Section, 36th Open were Mr & Mrs B Wall of Havant over 174 miles on 1430. Brian said, 'I was quite surprised when the bird hit the loft and went straight in, I thought it was my club bird from Guernsey. I was not expecting him to be that fast. GB23N02171 is a dark pied and this was his third race of the season and he's been coming well. He is a grandson of Kittle, also a dark pied when paired to a daughter of a Macalony hen. His next race will be with the BBC from Fougères and he is a lovely handling bird, just like his father.'

4th South Centre Section, 38th Open was Paul Arnold of North Cheam over 203 miles on 1428. Paul contacted me, knowing that the standard procedure is to include the first 3 positions from each section, but he asked if he could include his 4th centre section bird given the easterly wind direction where all the leading birds were timed. He also said that it was the first time he had raced from France in 4 years – so welcome back Paul. He said, 'Mike, I basically live in south west London and the winner of the centre section is in Dorset approximately 100 miles west of me, with 2nd & 3rd being 50 miles west and northwest respectively. This is the first time I've raced from France in 4 years after I was fortunate enough to win the Messac race with the NFC in 2020. I've decided to return to channel racing after a few seasons with club racing. If you look at the result, there is nothing within 50 miles of me this far east, and I hope you will agree that this hen's performance on the day was exceptional. She is a blue w/f, and this was her first time across the channel, and she has raced consistently this year and as a young bird. Her sire is one of my old retired multi winning race cocks who is the son of 1st Sec E, 2nd Open NFC Alençon for me in 2007. Her dam is the sister of my 1st Open NFC Messac winner in 2020. Many thanks Mike.'



Cottrell, Richmond & Rogers



Roger Lowe



Mr & Mrs Brian Wall's bird



Paul Arnold

The Provisional South East Section Winners

1st South East Section, 164th Open was Damian Szpak of Deptford over 207 miles on 1391. 'Firstly, I want to congratulate all the winners' said Damian, he continued, 'I clocked a 2-year-old widowhood hen to win 1st East Section. I bred the sire from my Figo hen x Eleckto UK and the dam is Jellema. She has scored before, being 3rd and 10th fed in the Thames. My 2nd pigeon who will be 3rd East Section, was my nom bird, a grandson of Queen 85, a very good pigeon who has scored many times before. I sent 36 and had 32 back on the night and they came in good condition as always. So, thank you to the convoyers once again.'

2nd South East Section, 168th Open were P Jackson & Son of Bromley over 206 miles on 1384. Lee's chequer pied hen arrived very fresh from her first channel race this year, having been raced on a jealousy system. She had two races before this event and her full nest brother won the Thames North & Eastern Counties from Holmsley with a velocity 1384. In 2023, her sire's brother won the Thames North & Eastern Counties Holmsley on a velocity 1417. Lee said, 'Happy days for us as they seem to like it steady and she is bred down through our Channel Queen, the Sars lines of Jos Thorne, herself a winner of 4th Open NFC Guernsey OH, 22nd Open NFC St Malo OH and 12th Open NFC Fougères OH.'

3rd South East Section, 157th Open was Dean Childs of Wickford over 219 miles on 1256. Dean said, 'My pigeon is a lovely blue pied yearling hen who was my most consistent young bird last year, so this result comes as no surprise to me. She is a cross between my already established middle distance national winning family and my new Best Kittel family. The Best Kittel family have been a fantastic introduction for me. The father of this blue pied hen won the BICC Section from Guernsey

last year. My birds have all started this season on the roundabout system and this was their first channel race. Well done to all the winners on the day.'



Damian Szpak



Lee Jackson



Dean Child's bird

The Provisional North Centre Section Winners

1st North Centre Section, 15th Open was Purchase & Walker of Lichfield over 306 miles on 1474. The partnership timed two Johaan Van Erch pigeons quickly, who may well take 1st and 2nd section. The first was a Belgian rung 2022 bird.

2nd North Centre Section, 70th Open were Summers Bros & Daughter of Braunston over 293 miles on 1382. Scott said, 'Hi Mike, first of all well done to all on a hard testing day. Our first bird is one of the first three from the last race. A reliable pigeon bred by my brother from Isja Rainy Day Boy x and an Alan Wicker pigeon. We only had 7 out of 14 on the day but by Monday we were up to 10.'

3rd North Centre Section, 80th Open was D Gruzelier of Houghton Conquest over 252 miles on 1361. Dominic had two dropping together. He said, 'The first was a home bred widowhood hen that has already scored in the fed this year. Her father is from Best Kittle grizzle lines son of Bk 1st Ace x daughter of Gabriela Gino Clinc.' He had 22 from 29 on the day.



Purchase & Walker



Summers Bros & Daughter's
bird



Dominic Gruzelier

The Provisional North East Section Winners

1st North East Section, 146th Open was Dave Downing of Newmarket over 263 miles on 1272. Dave timed a 3-year-old blue cock to win the section. This bird was well fancied by Dave being a previous

club winner and 4th Section BICC Guernsey last year. He stormed in, being well clear of the field in the section beating a loft mate, that is provisional 2nd section, by half an hour and the next member in the section by nearly an hour. Dave flies a small team of widowhood cocks in the traditional manner and another small team on roundabout. His team are performing well this year, winning 3 out of 4 club races. The section winning cock is from his widowhood team and is a Hardy Kruger cross Vandenabeele bred from a cock out of a pair direct from Hardy, when paired to a Vandenabeele hen purchased at a Doncaster show auction from Stewart Knowles. Dave's second and third arrivals are provisionally 2nd and 4th section and Dave had 8 on the day out of his 10 entries with 1 the next morning, in what was a testing race into a fresh east wind on the eastern side of the country.

2nd North East Section, 245th Open, was D & E Ball of Eyke, Woodbridge over 261 miles on 1099. Dennis said, 'I was well pleased with this bird from Alencon, being right out on the east coast. A huge fly for this 2-year-old Gaby. Well done Dave Downing for taking the section and also the marking team and helpers at Colchester.'

3rd North East Section, 262nd Open was Roly Rix of Newmarket over 265 miles on 1053. Roly timed a 2-year-old and told me that he was a little off the pace this week, knowing that his good friend Dave had a few in front of him. He wanted to pass on his congratulations to Dave and Dennis.



Dave Downing



Dennis Ball



Roly Rix

The Provisional North West Section Winners

1st North West Section, 8th Open was Martin Williams of Hereford over 275 miles on 1512. In picking up another section win, Martin had this to say, 'Firstly congratulations to Mr & Mrs Hodges. My section winner is called One Hit Wonder, named by a friend of mine after winning Section J, 23rd Open in the Young Bird National from Coutances by 200 yards. Last year he went to Fougères with the National and came back flown out, so I only gave him some light racing for the rest of the season. He is now a 2-year-old flown on the roundabout system. His sire is in-bred off my old Huybrechts x Roodhooft x Sablon. His dam was my best National hen called, Blue Gem, who won 2nd Northern Ace Pigeon in 2021. Sadly, I lost her from her first race last year, from Weymouth, but her genes live on! I was a little unsure of the fitness of my team as I am two weeks behind where I wanted to be. My first bird dropped in the passage and was exhausted due to lack of fitness. However, overall, I am delighted with the team, clocking 5 out of 14 in 12 minutes and it looks like I will take the first five positions in the section. Returns were very good, having 12 out of 14 by nightfall and one the next morning.'

2nd North West Section, 19th Open, were Crehan & O'Connor of Salford over 362 miles on 1457. The partnership timed a previous first fed winner, who has been a steady hen, raced on widowhood who arrived with a loft mate. They also had another a few minutes later. They said a well done to the winners on what turned out to be a tough race.

3rd North West Section, 44th Open was M & C Lee of Alfrick over 280 miles on 1421. Mickey timed GB20X30974, a blue cock sent unpaired this season. He had three club races before going to Alencon and wanted to thank Mick Howard for transporting the birds to Gwent and to all the marking team at Gwent.

