

# British International Championship Club



## 2024 Season Review – part four

With the 2025 season rapidly approaching, this is the final part of the review for 2024. Having reported on the other races, this report concludes with Barcelona, Dax, and Perpignan (Tuchan).

### Barcelona International Race – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Barcelona is considered by many to be the greatest pigeon race in the World. On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July, 17,109 pigeons were liberated at 6.15am to make the epic journey back. This was another combined race, this time with the BBC. The race produced two winners. Andrei Bagaoanu won the BICC and Mark Gilbert won the BBC. Mark was also 2<sup>nd</sup> BICC.

**The BICC Open & 1<sup>st</sup> South Centre Section winner was Andrei Bargaoanu of Basingstoke over 690 miles on 896.** An overjoyed Andrei said, 'I am so happy with this win, 292 is a super hen. Winning this feels like a dream. As a lot of people know, I bred this super hen, 292, from a pair of eggs from Daniel Coropciuc. All the top results that she has, including the 4<sup>th</sup> National Open Barcelona last year and 1<sup>st</sup> Open Barcelona this year, were achieved without a lot of racing. I have been following the advice of my friend David Goddard, the legend of Barcelona and Palamos racing. This year I trained the hen 4 times from 20 miles, 4 times from 50 miles and one race from Nort-sur-Erdre with the BICC, four weeks before basketing for Barcelona. I then let the hen rest. She was sent sitting 10-day old eggs. In 2023, she was sent on 14-day old young ones. One of the many pieces of advice that I have taken from Dave Goddard is, you don't have to burn out your birds training to win hard races, you have to have the right pigeons and it's easily done.'

Sound advice from one of the all-time long-distance greats. Dave is not in the best of health at the moment and the BICC would like to send him our best wishes.

**The BBC winner and 1<sup>st</sup> Section D BBC, & 2<sup>nd</sup> Open BICC, 1<sup>st</sup> South Centre Section was Mark Gilbert of Windsor over 697 miles on 862.** This is what Southfield Lofts said about their win.

Firstly, can we say congratulations to Andrei Bargaoanu for winning the BICC with his fantastic hen that was 4<sup>th</sup> Open Barcelona last year. We put her through at the marking station and told Andrei that she was in super condition and even joked with him that he would win it with her. Well done to you and your special hen.

With a low expectation of a repeat of last year's day bird, we were up at 4.30am on the Saturday with a lot of talk about how long they could be. The weather was awful all morning with loads of rain, the sky was filled in, with gale force winds which were much stronger than forecast. So, as the morning went on it became clear the birds had an awful task ahead of them and we feared the worst for good returns. We didn't feel this year that we had the best team in Barcelona, compared to other years, so we were hoping they would produce a surprise or two. At 12.09pm our first bird arrived recording a velocity of 684ypm for the 698-mile journey. We finally had one in the clock and seeing her in good condition, we started to think more would follow. And follow they did, we timed 8 home in race time.



## **Dax International Race – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

Dax followed Barcelona and at 6.10am on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July 8,566 pigeons were liberated into broken cloud and blue skies with light winds varying from east to southwest for the journey through France. The UK contingent consisted of 153 birds sent by 33 members. Each Section sent the following: South Centre, 14 members sent 53 birds, South East 13 sent 66 and in the South West, 6 members sent 34 pigeons. Of the 8,566 birds that were basketed, France sent 3,016, Netherlands 2,119, Luxembourg 38, Germany 668 and Belgium 2,575.

**The Open and 1<sup>st</sup> South East Section winner was Catalin Olaru of Romford over 551 miles on 865.** Catalin was also 4<sup>th</sup> Section, 4<sup>th</sup> Open on 791. Catalin's yearling hen was raced on the natural system and was sent sitting on 10-day old eggs. She had a few races with the North Thames and Southern Club, and she flew St. Just and Fontenay with the East of England Club.



Catalin Olaru

## **Perpignan (Tuchan) International Race 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

In 2023 the Perpignan race took place on 7<sup>th</sup> August, following a 3-day holdover and the birds were moved to Elne. The story was a similar one in 2024. The liberation point was changed to a place called Tuchan and the birds were again held over for 3 days. They were finally liberated on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August at 6.00am.

A total of 14,148 birds were basketed from the six countries competing. With France sending 4,041, Netherlands 4,363, Luxembourg 23, Germany 665, Belgium 4,848 and 210 pigeons from the UK, sent by the BICC.

**The Open and 1<sup>st</sup> South Centre Section winner was Mark Gilbert of Winkfield, Windsor over 612 miles on 895.** Delighted with another National win, Mark reported, Perpignan (Tuchan) was the final old bird race of the season and as has been the way with all Channel racing this year, this was another tough race. Due to the weather conditions, we did not think that there would be day birds, but we did keep one eye on the loft Monday night just in case - as you never know with pigeons, they can surprise you.



There were no day pigeons, so it was a 5am start at the loft Tuesday morning. The weather started off nice in the morning and we even had blue sky and sunshine for a while, but that soon turned to full cloud cover and then rain for a lot of the day. We sent 12 pigeons which consisted of 3 pigeons that already went to the Pau/Tarbes this season and 9 that had been to Barcelona a month ago. We were confident in their ability but wondered what Barcelona would have taken out of them. At 9.20am our blue hen, Two Nine One, came out of the east to win flying the 612-mile course with a velocity of 895ypm. This hen was also 2<sup>nd</sup> Section, 4<sup>th</sup> National BICC Perpignan last year, so she seems to like this race point.

And that concludes the review of 2024. The BICC will organise 8 National races and 5 International races this season, with 4 races being joint with the BBC and CSCFC. 10<sup>th</sup> May – Alencon £4.25 per bird, 24<sup>th</sup> May – Nort Sur Erdre £4.75 per bird, 7<sup>th</sup> June – St Philbert £4.50 per bird (joint with BBC & CSCFC), 20<sup>th</sup> June – Pau International £9.50 per bird (joint with the BBC & CSCFC), 27<sup>th</sup> June – Agen International £10.50 per bird, 4<sup>th</sup> July – Barcelona International £10.50 per bird, 11<sup>th</sup> July – Bordeaux £7.00 per bird (joint with the BBC & CSCFC), 11<sup>th</sup> July – Dax International £10.50 per bird, 1<sup>st</sup> August – Perpignan International £10.50 per bird, 23<sup>rd</sup> August – Falaise YB & OB £4.25 per bird, 6<sup>th</sup> September – Fougères YB & OB £4.00 per bird (joint with the BBC & CSCFC).



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