

BICC Pre-Season Update

As I write this pre-season update, the snow is still on the ground following this incredible cold snap we have just had! I have had no screen washers for the last few days as they have been frozen, so I was very pleased when I pulled the switch this afternoon, more in hope than expectation, and the water rushed out over the windscreen! My wife thought I was mad when I rushed through the front door and bellowed, "THE WASHERS ARE WORKING!!!"

I hope those of you that are in breeding season are doing OK, I haven't even given a thought to my pairings yet but may have a little look at the end of this month, what with the season being all but here now. I am not sure I would want to be in a Federation that starts racing in the first week of April, although we know what the British weather is like and for all we know we could be in 20-degree sunshine by the end of March. Well that's enough of the British weather, what about the British International Championship Club? Here we go with a mixed update about various areas of the club that the committee thought the members would want to know about.

NARBONNE INTERNATIONAL

Following lengthy discussions, Narbonne has been welcomed back to the BICC programme for 2018, meaning that we are now competing in all the International races on offer. I believe this has already been made public, but we just wanted to make you all aware that the marking times for the Narbonne International race have been altered at Radstock and Ash, being brought forward to Sunday afternoon, to accommodate the journey down to Chestfield where the birds will go from over to the International marking.

FINANCE AND MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Our Secretary and Treasurer, Carol Francis and Russell Bradford, work tirelessly behind the scenes, ensuring that we have our house in order, and they have asked for a reminder to be published that fees for the BICC must be paid by the end of March to avoid a late payment fee of £10. As of a last week there was still a huge 601 members who had not yet paid, and I am afraid to say I was one of them, although I have now sent my payment so won't be in Carol and Russell's bad books now. For any members interested, as of a couple of days ago, there were around 600 rings left of the 10,000 that were ordered, so for those of you wanting some rings, get in touch with Carol and get them ordered! We have also had 80 new members come on board so far and welcome them all to the BICC with open arms, we hope you enjoy the season. That brings me nicely on to.....

CHIRK MARKING STATION and ECLIPSE THE 650 CLUB

The new marking station seems to have generated an excellent response from the fancy around the North West Section and only today, I pointed a fancier in the right direction for a membership application form on the BICC website. It would appear that the percentage growth in membership in the North West Section is going to far outweigh any other sections growth and this can only be a good thing for the BICC and the Eclipse. The members up there are working tirelessly, and I am sure

it is going to be a roaring success! No doubt one or two successes in the Section and Open results will go a long way to drawing in even more members and more support. Now we have the new race programme in place, which is going to be published in an upcoming advert, we believe that the BICC programme now goes a long way to catering for people in the North East, North Centre and North West Sections, with Alencon, Poitiers and two races from Le Mans now all offered from the middle of May onwards, in fact just one week before the MNFC and the NFC start.

TRANSPORTATION

I know many of the BICC members truly believe that the transport offered is second to none, well it just got even better! 75 brand new aluminium crates have been put together by Jeff Greenaway and will be delivered very soon. These will replace the outdated wooden ones which are currently used, and it has been confirmed that the BICC can now transport 6,000 birds in aluminium crates, this can only be a good thing for the birds, and for those of us that race regularly with the BICC, the condition on the birds is fantastic upon their return.

LATEBRED SALE

The late bred extravaganza which is being organised by Mark Gilbert is well on the way to being signed off. Mark is currently liaising with several companies to ensure that the sale will be publicised in the best possible way and ultimately generate as much money as possible for the club. If you are lucky enough to be asked for a donation, please give generously. Mark has already stated that he is looking for around 50 donors from who he described as, "the best fanciers in the country", so if Mark comes calling, take it as a huge compliment and put forward your very best! I think my phone is playing up as I've not had a call yet from Mark regarding this.....haha!

CELEBRATION

Finally, a celebration. Due to family circumstances, Mick Smith is not always able to make it down to Bournemouth for our prize presentation evening, but we wanted to make sure his success was celebrated. I am thankful to Russell Bradford for supplying the information below.

"This is Mick Smith being presented with the Barry Hobbs memorial Trophy for the first Young Bird into Northamptonshire. It is the second time Mick has won this trophy in four years, so clearly a good young bird flyer. To the left is John Black and to the right is Paul Loom, who both came up to Northants to present Mick with his trophy."



The final meeting for the BICC Committee is due to be held on 18th March. Unfortunately, I won't be in attendance as it is my eldest daughter's birthday on that very day. Fortunately, my Co-Press Officer Chris Sutton will be there and will be taking notes, ready for me to compile the final report of the off season, in readiness for the BICC season getting under way at the end of April!

Have a great build up to the start of the season. Keep them babies warm, dream of success, every single one is a champion at this stage!

John Ghent

BICC Press Officer