

“Kingdom Boy”, does it again!

1st Open SNRPC Reims Premier Gold Medal race

For James Benvie Ladybank!

The Beginning.

I was about 13 years old when I got started after my brother Dave came out of the Army after the war. My other brothers Bert and Wull also took an interest and we were greatly encouraged by our parents. I remember going to visit the Legendary Jock Reid Stenhousemuir, and what an eye opener this was. For this was a fancier with immense talent and a strong bond with his birds, and the National results proved this! The base of the loft came from Jock & Hughie Reid and birds we bought from Mr Pitcailly from Burntisland in Fife from his 1st Fed Open Amiens. I moved to several locations in Fife and was always lucky enough to have success in National races from wherever the loft was.

Another great fancier I met was Jimmy Callan of Blairhall, what a gentleman he was, wonder what he would think of the sport now! In 1973 Jimmy gifted me some eggs, and these gave me some good time ins from the channel crossed with birds from Dave Baxter, and some from John Trail! In 1976 a bit of luck came on my part when local fancier Sandy McCleod gifted me a pair of y.b's, which were of Newcombe bloodlines! One of them a blue hen I named Tracey B', after my daughter. She was unraced as a yb. As a yearling she was timed on a difficult day from Dorchester 376mls at 6pm. As a 2yo she won 118th Sect Rennes, in those days we could have between 2-3 thousand birds just from the East Section. As a 3yo in 1979 she won 1st Fed, 2nd sect, 2nd Open behind the great Eddie Newcombe! The next year she won 115th Open Rennes 562mls, and 184th sect Avranches. The following year 1981, she won 269th Open Rennes and her Gold Award for 5 channel prizes in the National, and the first Gold Award into Fife, something I'm still proud to have done!

A daughter of Tracy, Lady B; won 1st Fed 5th Open Rennes 1985 when only a yearling. Another 2 good birds at the time were Mrs B', 24th, 46th, 78th and 96th Open Avranches, and Jimmy B', 48th Open Nantes 622mls and 46th Open Sartilly, 518mls, to my loft in Dysart. Quite a few successes came when flying here, and some was also gained at my next move to Thornton. However, we moved again to Methilhill in 1990, and in that year I was pleased with a 2nd Fed 24th Open Sartilly.

Many successes were had here with a 16th Open Chenoise with a yearling not so long ago and 1st, sect y.b National and quite a few prizes from race points like Rennes, Nantes, Sartilly, Beauvais, La Ferte Bernard, Messac, Lille, Reims, Clermont, Leige, Vire, Falaise, and so on to mention but a few. I would like to say though that just a few years before moving again in 2005, I had some success with birds from Jock King and ,Jimmy Hamilton, with a 5th fed Beerstal, a Jim Mackie hen paired to the Hamilton cock bred a 50th, and 172nd Open Falaise pigeon recently, and some Busschaerts from Jock Scott have also performed with a 4th Fed Beerstal!

New Beginning.

As Margaret and I moved again late in 2005, I had over 100 diplomas in channel racing and wondered if I could keep it going at this new address in Ladybank, thinking by now I have surly served my apprenticeship and need to settle down! This is a great place to fly the pigeons and they have plenty of peace and quiet and have the sun all day. There was also enough room to allow me to bring my old loft with me without any hassle and erect it on the site where Dennis Dall used to fly his y.b's to. The breeding season came and although I managed to settle most of them some good birds were lost. However though some good ones still remained and gave me something to work with. 2006 will be remembered for the H5N1 virus and the swan found dead at Cellardyke Fife. This did interrupt the old bird season but when we eventually got the all clear I managed to get a couple of wins in the club .

Followed by 148th Open Scottish National Racing Pigeon Club Newbury 350mls. Then 6th & 12th Open Maidstone 376mls with the Kingdom Racing Pigeon Association. From the SNRPC Reims Gold Medal race I was very pleased to win 23rd, 31st, & 36th Sect, 55th, 73rd & 81st Open at our new address and having now scored in National races at every location I have flown to. Something I'm very proud of.

Day Of Reckoning.

When the last race of the year came I finally decided I would send there to Lessay. The birds were away at 8.05 am into a brisk East wind, which later changed to N.East and the wind in the channel was 32mph! This was an extremely tough race as expected. I was in the back garden pottering about, and counting the y.b's as one or two were amiss from earlier in the day, when a pigeon alighted on the sputnik. At first I thought it was another youngster home, but on looking again I noticed it

was one from Lessay! It was the cock I was 12th Open from the KRPA Maidstone race where he was my 2nd bird and over 9 and a half hrs on the wing. My heart was pounding, and I hurried to try and get this pigeon in. This Yearling I timed at 9.04 pm in excitement was bred by none other than John Proctor Kirkaldy. He had flown the Y.B National 260mls 2005, and was a broken bird in 2006. The bird timed by Bob Nisbett at 8.38, was the one to beat. In all there were only 16 on the day with many good birds down for the night. My timer was sitting 7 days and on his 5th flight and had 3 tosses from 40mls. I was a relieved man when the clock was read and the President called me to confirm I was the winner and also first Yearling Award with my Chq W.F cock, Kingdom Boy. I was also 81st Open with a Mealy cock who was 10th Open fed Maidstone before Bob Millar of Glenrothes, gifted him to me. This pigeon also won from Newbury National 350mls, scored from Falaise and won 73rd Open Reims SNRPC 2006. While I marveled at Kingdom Boys performance with him only being a yearling, I thought at the time he could have kept going! I thought a lot about this during the winter and as he is only a yearling I made up my mind that he would go again possibly to Reims the Gold Medal race, for 2007!

Extra Special.

In 2007 Kingdom Boy was paired mid February, but did not rear his first round. After rearing the second he was sent to the 5th race on the Programme from Wakefield 190mls, where he was 2nd club beaten by a loft mate! He then had Leicester 266mls, and Wanstead Flats with SNRPC, 350mls, taking about 9 and a half hrs. BASKETING was on Wednesday, but on the Saturday I wasn't 100% sure I would send him. He is a very quiet pigeon in the loft never causing any problems, and he seems to be the same all the time. So it's difficult to know when he is right! However though for the previous few nights and up until Monday he kept going out with the Y.B's and they did 1hr to 1 and a 1\4 hrs and never once did he try to bring them down. He was given no other training. That was on Monday and I then knew he was right and sent him with confidence! In 2006 he was sent on 7 day eggs, this time he was on a 4 day y.b.

The Reims pigeons were held over from Friday until Tuesday due to atrocious weather conditions. When the SNRPC birds were liberated at 11.35 am on 26 June, they were given a North to North West Wind all the way home! The wind was pretty strong between 25- 30mph in places and it was clear only the fittest would

get to the front as the channel was also particularly hazardous. There were obviously none on the day, but we were all just glad they were away.

News came through next afternoon Wednesday, that Tim Hall, Chirnside had a good one at 12.58 pm. I was out felting the shed opposite the main loft quite calmly, when a pigeon hit the trap! I looked up to see Kingdom Boy staring at me wondering when I would let him in. My god, I thought panic stations again, i got down and over to the loft as fast as my legs would carry me. I timed Kingdom Boy at 13.27pm for 572mls, and I was shaking I can tell you!!! This is what pigeon racing is all about, getting a good one from these big races! Later as time went on it appeared I had a good one, and when George Wilson, confirmed I was the winner once more it was unbelievable! It is still hard to believe even now, and when you think that “ Kingdom Boy” is now Scotlands only Double National Winner, it makes all the more satisfying! Kingdom Boy truly is a unique pigeon, Some say a champion, but we shall see!

Both 2007, and 2006 will forever be remembered by me and my family personally. For not only getting 2 National wins and my hands on the Gold Medal, but for creating a piece of History by being the first Fancier in all Scotland to win 2 Nationals with the same extra Special pigeon! This is an extra special feeling and I owe a lot to John Proctor who bred Kingdom Boy, a once in a lifetime pigeon!!!

I was also lucky enough to win the following in the main races during 2007. Reims with 2nd bird winning 68th Open vel, 457, shows how hard it was with the winner on 823.452, only 83 in race time 3days, from some of Scotlands hand picked finest. This chq, cock won previously, from Falaise, then 55th Open Reims and 87th Open Lessay. In the end I was lucky to get 4 from 5 sent. Then at Tours I was 22nd Open 635mls. At the last race with the SNRPC we couldn't get to Arras, but I was 25th, 74th, & 112th Open Portsmouth 388mls. Also at the Inland National earlier in the year from Wanstead Flats 350mls, finished in 41st Open place. From the KRPA, Wanstead Flats race I was 36th Open. From Portsmouth, 9th & 34th Open. The 2nd one bred from one I bought at the late Jimmy Keirs Clearance sale. Then at the Y.B Open Wakefield won 6th Open with a Mealy hen, which was from the Mother of Kingdom Boy when paired to her G.Son. Finally at the SNRPC Leicester Y.B race I fortunate to win 95th Open 266mls, with another 5 on the result, rounding off an excellent season and also a difficult one! In the KRPA, I have just learned that I have the best Ave all Open Association and SNRPC races. In the Howe of Fife Premier club I have done ok but the one that stands out the most is a little yearling chq hen which has won 3x1sts and a 2nd beaten by a loft mate. I will be looking for her next year to do well!

Lofts

I have a 14x 7 stock loft, with two sections. An old bird loft with 3x8foot sections, this was my original loft. Two sections for ob's one for y.b's. They have access to a big aviary and all trap through stall traps. There are no tiles or sky lights in my lofts, and there are 18 nest boxes for ob's. They are scraped twice daily, with no deep litter used. All ob's are flown natural.

Ob's

The ob's are cankered before pairing in mid February, with some of the channel birds eggs floated under the yearlings. I will also sometimes breed a few from the yearlings as I have found you sometimes get one or two good ones from them. The y.b's will be weaned at 23 days. The ob's are fed a good breeding mix when rearing. When the racing starts they are on versele laga Gerry plus in the morning and All rounder at night, this is all measured out and given in the nest boxes. Linseed is added twice per week and they are given about 3 peanuts also.

Their training usually starts 2nd week in April weather permitting. Yearlings are expected to fly from the coast 370-400mls, with the occasional one popped over the channel. 2yo's and over go to the channel, and are usually given 3-4 races, hoping for time on the wing from their last fly. They would then normally receive training morning and night from 20mls for 7 days. They also exercise twice daily and have access to the bath once a week and are given no other special treatments or anything unless there is something wrong. If it's not broken I don't try to fix it.

Y.B'S

I normally keep 36 y.b's and when weaned they are fed just maples for 4 weeks, and scraped twice daily. Then they go on Versele laga young bird no maize, which is fed right up to the y.b National 260- 300mls. They are trained 3 weeks before the first race and have about 15 tosses out to 35 mls. And they all fly naturally to the perch. Although I have tried the Darkness system before with some success. The y.b's are Cankered before racing and are spotted with one drop for lice and worms. Other than that they have no other treatments except the compulsory vaccination. After their main feed I like to give them a little hormoform, which I'm a great believer in. Once racing starts I like to give them liberty twice per day, and most of them are expected to fly out to Wakefield. Some are selected for the Y.B National. I do try one or two from fancier friends, and maybe one or two from local y.b sales, and sometimes you get a bit of fun, trying something different from a

another loft. I won the Y.B Open from Wakefield in 2005, with one such purchase, a vandenabeele from a loft in the N East, brought up by Derek Powers. Sometimes you have to speculate to accumulate!

Conclusion.

Before finishing this article I would advise young fanciers to go to someone who is winning well with birds at a distance you yourself would want to win at.

Remember Rome was not built in a day, take your time, learn the basics first and learn them well. Above all work hard and in the end you will succeed. I would also like to thank my wife Margaret and family in supporting me in my many years in this great sport. Last but not least I would like to thank the Editor and staff, for inviting me again this year to do an article!

Jim Benvie.



^JIM Benvie, with his Silver Medal & Peter Bryant, at the 2007, SNRPC Presentation.



^The wing of 'Kingdom Boy!'



^J.Benzie with 'Kingdom Boy!'



^ ‘Kingdom Boy!’ double national winner with one of his late bred.



^ view of main loft, and y.b. aviary.



^view inside main loft.



^ blue hen dam of 'Kingdom Boy'.



^ chq cock, scored from Newbury & Falaise, plus 55th Open Reims, 87th Open Lessay 2006, and 68th Open S.N.R.P.C. Reims 2007.



^ blue cock 22nd Open S.N.R.P.C. Tours, 635mls 2007.



^ yearling Blue cock, 41st Open S.N.R.P.C. Wanstead Flats, 350mls 2007.



^ yearling chq hen, 3 x 1st's and a 2nd club 2007.



^blue hen, 25th Open S.N.R.P.C. Portsmouth, 388mls 2007.