

Scottish National Racing Pigeon Club Wanstead Flats Inland National Friday 5th June

Due to the inclement Weather forecast for the weekend of this our first National race of the season a decision was taken by the race controller and the race control committee to bring the race forward one day to Friday 5th with the expectation that we would beat the worst of the weather before it set in over the weekend.

The decision was not taken lightly and great thought was given before it was agreed to go late on the Thursday night. The race controller Ian McLaren made the request to Chairman George Wilson on Thursday evening and after considerable effort the convoy set off in time to ensure they would arrive at Wanstead Flats in time to prepare for a mid day liberation, weather permitting.

The decision was based on the horrendous weather forecast for Saturday and Sunday over many parts of England, Heavy rain plus 15mph North East winds with the possibility of some improvement on Monday

The Chairman, race controller and committee would like to sincerely thank Gordon Geddes, Willie Johnston and our convoyer Mathew Boyle for their great effort in making this possible.

This decisive action demonstrates that the SNRPC continues to progress as a forward thinking Innovative club not afraid to deviate from the norm to ensure that the welfare of our pigeons is our highest priority at all times.

The Race Controller Ian McLaren's report on the morning of Friday 5th June at 08.15 states that the line of flight forecast was confirmed through Ian's good friend Brian Denny of York who has been a great source of information to the Kingdom Association and the SNRPC over the last 5 years, the report at that time from Brian was light north winds high cloud and good visibility with the promise of regular updates throughout the day, Ian was also in contact with Mick Brennan of Doncaster to arrange afternoon updates as the forecast prediction was heavy rain in a band 40 miles wide and North East winds for the North of England, arrangements were also made to update conditions with Fred McCluskie President of the U.N.C. as the forecast for the North East area around 3pm was heavy rain and 8-10 MPH wind from North East, Fred provided regular weather updates throughout the afternoon also.

11.40 am Wanstead Flats, report from convoyer Mathew Boyle was that the birds were ready to go, great visibility, blue sky's and high cloud with a 8/10 MPH South East wind giving the birds a great start for the first 100 miles. The convoy of almost 2000 birds which included some Dundee Federation pigeons were released at 11.30 am cleared the race point in 5 minutes at a great height heading in a North Westerly direction.

A pm update from Mick Brennan at Doncaster reported that conditions had deteriorated with the rain becoming heavier and that very few pigeons would attempt to fly through this.

More encouraging news though from Fred McCluskie UNC that the rain had stopped at Newcastle between 2.30 and 3pm great conditions, sunny with high cloud, blue skies wind 4/6 MPH from North East excellent visibility.

Norman Renton in the Scottish Borders also confirmed similar good conditions there; in the Fife and Dundee areas winds were also from the North East but in general good flying weather with good visibility.

In the West of Scotland conditions were good from Carlisle up to the North with light North East winds.

Although a difficult race was expected the controller and officials were confident that good pigeons would be timed in all areas.

The first reported pigeon timed was to the loft of Mr & Mrs Chris Little of Eastriggs in section A at 19.08 and it was very encouraging news indeed that this pigeon a widowhood cock was in immaculate condition on his return.

National Winner

1st National was that great distance fancier Sandy Bain of Duns, Sandy timed his yearling Blue Bar cock 1736 at 19.20

This is Sandy's second National win having won Rennes in 1996 with the SNFC

The blue cock was in very good condition when I verified him and was none the worse after this hard race, this season so far he has raced a total of 1736 miles, how about that for a coincidence the total miles raced amounts to the same as his ring number. I suppose the superstitious amongst us might be thinking there is something in this???

He was also trained sometimes twice a week from 60miles in addition to the races flown.

Sandy is eternally grateful to Alan Rockcliffe and Brian Kelly for all the help they have given him this season also his good neighbour Norman Ingles who has been a fantastic help to him when he has been unwell, it is very reassuring that there are people who are on hand to help out when the need arises.



Sandy Bain Duns pictured with his National winner

Sandy has been in the game for many years and has had some wonderful pigeons and performances in his time this latest winner is bred down through his old family with an interesting cross brought in, the Grandsire of 1736 was bred by Sandy especially for stock out of his great pigeon and Gold award winner Tinklers Tarzan when paired to his 1996 Rennes Gold Cup winner Flirtatious lady, also featured in the pedigree is a chec pied hen that Sandy received as a gift from Chris Gordon direct out his Snyderdale Treble when paired to his half sister, they don't come any better than that!

1736 is paired to an 11-year-old hen and was raced natural sitting dummy eggs although according to Sandy he didn't appear to be that interested in them.



The National Winner bred and raced by S Bain Duns

2nd Open 2nd Sect B is Dave Owen of Coldingham, Dave won the Young Bird National last season from Leicester, first and second in fact with nest mates and almost did it again this Time from Wanstead Flats.

Dave is more an inland racer and is a formidable force in club and fed racing I can assure you that he takes some beating up to the coast and has won more than his fair share since moving up to Coldingham from Newcastle six years ago, bear in mind that he fly's in the strong Eyevalley club and the Border Fed and competes against some very good fanciers

This 2nd Open winner is a medium to small blue cock bred from a Blue Rodger Maris cock who has 3 first and 3 seconds in the club

He has been a very steady racer for Dave and was raced on the widowhood, prior to the National he had not raced or trained for three weeks. He has a few seconds to his name, beaten by loft mates.



3rd Open 3rd Sect B, Norman Renton of Foulden Berwickshire, Norman needs no introduction and is a past National winner and has been at the top in distance racing for more years that he would care to remember with some fantastic performances to his credit, too many to even try and mention. Normans 3rd Open winner was raced natural to eggs actually two hens were paired to the same cock and both took their turns sitting the eggs when one moved the other would push it's way on to the nest, this must have been the incentive required for her to do the business on this occasion. Her Dam was bred by Walker & Wilson St Abbs and the Sire is a cross from Mell Bell and an Alistair Rae Kirkpatrick.

Norman had an unbelievable race timing 7 on the day and 5 within 25 minutes taking 3rd, 5th, 7th, 23rd, 27th, 121st and 122nd Open positions.

Norman has recently retired from running his own building business and is now enjoying more time to spend with his pigeons.



3rd Open Norman Renton of Foulden Berwickshire

Section A

1st Section A was Mr & Mrs C Little of Eastriggs. Mr & Mrs Little are triple National winners and had the only day bird when they won the SNRPC Cholet National in 2005. Their section winner is a 3-year-old Blue widowhood cock. He has been a steady performer this season and had 4 races prior to Wanstead Flats his last one was from Marlborough 253 miles with Annan &

District Premier FC. He returned home in immaculate condition (as you can see from the photo) and had just dropped his first flight. He is bred from a proven pair of breeders the sire was bred by the top Belgian sprint loft of Vanherle-Reyskens and the dam was bred by Frans Laeremans also from Belgium.



Chris Little pictured with his apprentices David and Kelly



1st sect A Mr & Mrs C Little easttriggs

2nd and 3rd Section was Dennis Anderson of Annan, his first bird is a two year old Blue Pied hen sent sitting on 4 day eggs, she is a Jan Aarden/Janssen cross and is now earmarked for the channel.

Dennis's second timer is a two-year-old Chequer hen also sitting on 4-day eggs she is a Jan Aarden and now strongly fancied for Allencon.

Both these pigeons were never raced as youngsters then raced out to Newbury as yearlings. The Wanstead Flats National was only their second race of the season.

Section C

Section C had an excellent race with many members getting very good returns. The winner of the section is Jim McCafferty of Dundee what a good performance flying some 360 miles into this area; Jim's pigeon is a 2-year-old Blue Chec cock, he is a Wildermeersch given to Jim from his good friend Jim Edward as a young bird he was flown to Wakfield being very consistent. From the yearling stage he was raced to Arniston,Whiton Castle and Retford all in East winds he was then sent to Wanstead flats and he was 8 days adrift. This season he was flown on widowhood and had every race up to Leicester before going to the National.

Jim is indebted to his friend Bill Fotheringham who is a great help to him about the loft.



Jim McCafferty Dundee 1st sect C

2nd Section is Pete Patrick of Thornton, Pete was another fancier who had a great race with 9 on the open result taking the following positions 11th, 26th, 44th, 85th, 111th, 120th, 123rd, 164th, and 169th.



3rd Sect C is John Duthie of Dundee, John had a great race also with 6 on the sheet his 3rd Sect, 12th Open winner is a yearling blue cock raced on the widowhood and had every race up to the National.

His breeding is Ralston Grahame from a Derek Nordon cock whose dam was a full sister to Eskvalley Pat. The Dam of Johns winner was Eskvalley Mark 11th Open Rennes who in turn was bred from Mell Bell's 3rd Open Reims, 1st Open Clermont

Section D

Ist section D was to Frank Baillie of Clackmannan with a 2 year old Light Blue chequer hen flying some 350 miles, Frank's pigeon taking around 8hrs 24 mins to cover the distance with a velocity of 1100.57. This was a hard working velocity from an 11.30 liberation and was always going to be a difficult day race when over part of the course birds would have to face rain showers and an east north east wind and more especially when racing to date has been mainly with southerlies. Frank must surely be delighted that he has won the Bronze medal in these trying conditions in fact by Saturday Frank had 10 out of 10, amazing when many fanciers are still looking for birds Since moving from Bo'ness in 2006 Frank is now seeing his efforts coming to fruition in his lofts performances and to the changes he has made to his house and I would congratulate Carol for keeping his nose to the grind stone, as the saying goes, behind every good man is a great woman??

This blue chequer hen handles well and has a very quiet temperament, its sire was what Frank calls the Royal cock this was purchased at the Forth Bridges first ever young bird sale in 2006 and was bred and presented for our sale by the Royal Lofts its ring number is ER 1 05. The dam is a full sister to Stuart Mullans Gold medal winner in 2008 Karen's Girl 1st open Reims SNRPC without doubt this pigeon is certainly bred in the purple As a later bred young bird reared on the darkness system in 2007 she was timed from our young bird National at 265 miles. As a yearling she flew most races to Maidstone 376 miles during that year winning a number of club positions. This year this hen flew round about to Catterick 160 miles then was paired up. For Wantstead Flats she was given a 10 day old young bird on the Thursday afternoon before basketing and was carrying a full wing. I

am sure that we will see Franks name appearing prominently in the coming distance races.

2nd Section D

Was to Jim Smith of Polmont Jim is no stranger to winning at any distance and has once again came to the fore his velocity is 1077 timing at 20.49

3rd Section D

Went to Joe Lewico of Alloa, timing at 21.27 with a velocity of 1034,

Joe is another very consistent fancier and always features in the Nationals.

Section E

The winners of Section E are the very well known partnership of Mr & Mrs Elliot of Newbiggin this is their 11th 1st section win in National races.

Jock Alston bred Davy's section winner from a direct son of Fern gifted to him by Davy, Fern was a great channel pigeon and won 1st sect 5th Open Chenois and 2nd Sect 9th Open Tours in her illustrious career

This 3-year-old red chequer cock was sent with a full wing and had two or three club races prior to the national.

Photo 9

Davy Elliot Newbiggin 1st Sect E

The winner of 2nd Section E is Ken Buchanan of Hamilton, Ken timed his 3-year-old blue cock at 8.51 pm some 9 hours 21 minutes on the wing he was sent sitting 7 days with a full wing and is bred from his Van Hee Motta lines. This very good blue cock was Ken's 1st section 11th Open winner last season from Arras. He had no basket training prior to the season starting but was exercised twice a day gradually building up to 35 minutes by flagging, he had three races before going to the Wanstead National, Hexam, Wakefield and Dunbar.

Photo 10

Ken Buchanan Hamilton 2nd Sect

3rd Section is John Callan of Lesmahagow with another 3 year old.

John's pigeon is very well bred his sire was 5th Sect 23rd Open Tours and the dam has scored 4 times from the channel, he had just thrown his first flight and had Weatherby and Newark before going to Wanstead.

Last year this pigeon won 5th Sect 54th Open Reims.

Photo11

JohnCallan Lesmahagow 3rd Sect E

Section F

Robert Reid of Beith wins section F with a yearling dark chequer hen she was timed at 5.44am on the second day and had 5 races up to the national the last being Leicester the previous week. Her sire and dam are both Tom McEwan of Elphinstone pigeons and she has previously won 1st club Appleby and 4th club Leicester. She was sent to the National as a spare hen looking for a mate.



Robert Reid 1st Sect F

2nd Section is Haggerty & Menzies of Johnston

The partnership's second section winner is a two-year-old chequer cock

His sire and dam were both bred by Jean Harrison of Lesmahagow

He has had every race this season and was also trained once a week from Livingston. He had lost his hen last week and had taken a new mate.



Haggerty & Menzies 2nd Sect

J Murdoch of Johnston takes 3rd section with a two-year-old hen both sire and dam are Warren Foster Janssen's, she had every race up to Newark 2 weeks before the National and was sent spare looking at a new cock.



J Murdoch Johnston 3rd Sect

Although this turned out to be a difficult race many members have commented on the great condition of their birds on return there are several factors why this is so firstly our convoyer who is one of the best in the business and secondly our method of transport, the new Geraldty transporter with the new roomy aluminium crates with integrated feeding and watering system

must be one of the best innovations to our sport in modern times it has certainly dragged us out of the dark ages as far as the care and attention of our birds are concerned and it also must be a pleasure for our driver/convoyers to be heading off on the road in one of these vehicles .

Section B members please note Reims, Andrezele and Lillers marking will be in Ormiston Village Hall

Duncan Knox

P.R.O. Scottish National Racing Pigeon Club