

‘The Gladiator’ wins the SNRPC Reims Gold Medal Race for W & G Flockhart of Tranent

There was uncertainty in Pigeon Racing Circles with the Bird Flu situation and the committee of the Scottish National Racing Pigeon Club had an inland race programme. The situation changed with the lifting of the ban on Channel Racing and the committee were able to swing into action and the Gold Medal Race was on from Reims, Willie Johnston drove the South Lanarkshire transporter and Matthew Boyle was the convoyer, these guys do a wonderful job for us. Believe me its no fun convoying pigeons to France, I know I've been there. We had a slightly smaller entry than last year but with all the uncertainty, we had 140 members sent 532 birds. The Scottish National Racing Pigeon Club basket on a Wednesday for the Friday race which keeps the time the birds are in the basket to a minimum and with the good weather forecast things looked set fair for a good race on the Friday. The birds were in Reims for midday on the Thursday and John Alston and his race control team authorised a liberation for 05.50 on the Friday morning. The wind was light south westerly varying from 5 to 10 mph with a little more cloud and maybe a light shower in Scotland.

The Section entries were as follows Sect A – 21 birds, Sect B – 120 birds, Sect C – 133 birds, Sect D – 39 birds, Sect E – 170 birds and Sect F- 49 birds.

The first bird reported to the Lib Line was to Crombie & Mechan of Annan who timed at 19.04 flying 504 miles and recording a velocity of 1117. The Lib Line then heard of pigeons being timed further up into Scotland. Peter Virtue timed two great pigeons at 19.16 and 19.30 flying 536 miles. Kenny Bald , the winner of our Inland National from Newbury timed at 19.49 flying 548 miles and Wilf Flockhart of Tranent who was to be the winner timed 19.36 flying 549 miles and recording a velocity of 1171. Then the Fife fanciers started getting birds with Jackie Wishart of Kirkcaldy timing at 20.06 flying 564 miles closely followed by David Burns also of Kirkcaldy at 20.08 flying 564 miles. John Cosgrove & Son of Lesmahagow was the earliest in Sect E at 20.37 flying 554 miles. John McNeill of Broxburn was the earliest in Sect D at 20.43 flying 561 miles. Ian Ross of Glasgow timed two good pigeons at 22.17 and 22.23 flying 577 miles. All the sections had received pigeons on the night and there is no better feeling in pigeon racing than timing on the day from 500 – 600 miles. We had 44 pigeons timed on the night most of them flying over 550 miles which in my opinion says a lot for the quality of the pigeons and the fanciers in the Scottish National Racing Pigeon Club.

Winning 1st Sect B, 1st Open, the Gold Medal and a special prize of £250.00 donated by Mr & Mrs A. Forrest of Ratho are **W & G Flockhart of Tranent**. This is a new partnership this year as Wilf's brother returned from California earlier this year and the partnership was formed. Wilf has had many good pigeons over the years with a highlight being his SNFC Gold Award with 'Coal Neuk King' in recent times and now Wilf has won our coveted Gold Medal Race with the Gladiator. Wilf was also to continue his great season with two marvellous pigeons being 4th and 5th Open St Nazaire, our longest race just over 600 miles to Tranent. The Gladiator was timed at 19.36 flying 549 miles and recording a velocity of 1171. He is a 3 year old Dark Chequer Cock and his sire was purchased at Davidson and Little's clearance sale when Jimmy Little died in 1993 the sire was from a half brother, half sister pairing a son & daughter of 'Five times a Lady'.

He was paired to an Ian Imrie of Humbie hen off his 3rd Open SNFC Rennes, Dennis Dall lines and from this pair Wilf bred 'The Gladiator' the Gold Medal winner. W & G Flockhart were also 33rd and 105th Open SNRPC Reims. 'The Gladiator' had also been 109th SNRPC Alencon in 2005 he was on his third race of the year having been to Ripon and Newbury plus 4 tosses from Carter Bar prior to Reims.



GLADIATOR

Hard on the heels of Wilf was another Veteran who's been there done it and will do it again, **Peter Virtue of Cockburnspath** who was to take 2nd and 3rd Sect B, 2nd and 5th Open when he timed at 19.16 and 19.30 recording velocities of 1170 and 1150. Peters first pigeon was a 5 year old Blue Cock Peter bought him at his great friend the late John Fairbairn's Clearance Sale in May 2005. John was a neighbour of Peter's and it is fitting that this pigeon should do so well in the SNRPC premier long distance race. John had been a great supporter of distance racing through the years and Peter and John were regularly seen together at all of the main pigeon events a sad loss ! Peter's 2nd pigeon was 2 year old Pied Hen she had been on the SNRPC results before being 15th Open SNRPC Falaise in 2005. Her sire was bred by Patrick Bros and is the best of the Van Geel x Kuypers a grand son of 'Jonge Favoriet'. Her dam is Peter's No 1 Stock hen at the present time, the best of his old blood. Peter was to have a dream race also taking 10th, 11th and 31st Open 5 birds in an hour flying 536 miles. There is an article on the website titled 'A Dream Race for P W Virtue of Cockburnspath' it gives more information on Peter's Reims 2006 Adventure.



Peters first pigeon , a 5 year old Blue Cock

We move north over the Forth Estuary into the Kingdom of Fife and to **Jackie Wishart of Kirkcaldy** who timed a 3 year old Chequer Pied Hen flying 564 miles at 20.06 recording a velocity of 1160. The pigeon was bred by Jackie's friend John Proctor (our SNRPC St Nazaire only bird on the day from 613 miles man) out of a chequer pied cock gifted by Buster Brown to John Proctor, the dam was the last daughter of a mealy pied that was also gifted to John Proctor from Buster Brown that had the Eddie Newcombe Peter Virtue Blood. John flies the Roundabout system in the club with some success, but pairs up for national racing. She went to Reims sitting 15 day eggs and had had every race to 260 miles and as a 2 year old she flew SNRPC Alencon and was on the tail end of the result despite being injured.



Jackie Wishart's 3 year old Chequer Pied Hen

We stay in Kirkcaldy and very close behind Jackie we have **Davie Burns** who timed a 4 year old Blue Hen to take 2nd Sect C, 4th Open timing at 20.08 flying 564 miles and recording a velocity of 1157. The hen had been unraced as a young bird but was trained, as a yearling to 300 miles, 79th Open SNFC La Ferte Bernard as a 2 year old, as a 3 year old she was 10th Open from Alencon with SNRPC and now 4th Open SNRPC Reims. She had 4 races to 260 miles, 3 x 15 mile tosses and 2 x 25 mile tosses sent sitting 11 days on eggs. Davie flies his yearlings on the Roundabout system and his old birds natural. David Burns has had great success over the years at the distance.



Davie Burns 4 year old Blue Hen

3rd Sect C, 7th Open we have **John Anderson of Anstruther** he timed a 3 year old Mealy hen at 20.19 flying 561 miles and recording a velocity of 1143. This hen was bred from a stock cock bought at the Edinburgh Show and was bred by a Mr Clarke of South Wales. The dam is a grand daughter of Donaldson and Downie's 1988 SNFC Nantes winner and contained some of John's original blood lines. John was also 8th Open timing 33 seconds after his 1st pigeon, truly remarkable at 561 miles he also had 7 home out of 9 sent. John Anderson has been flying and winning in national racing since the early 50s.

1st Sect A, 12th Open were **Crombie and Mechan of Annan** they were also 3rd Sect A, 105th Open. Jim Crombie and John Mechan have been excellent at the distance for many years with many fine performances. They timed a 4 year old blue chequer WF hen at 19.04 flying 504 miles recording a velocity of 1117. This hen had been raced on the roundabout system earlier in the season and then she was pairedup especially for Reims, she had 6 races to Newbury all the Annan & District Flying Club. As a young bird she was 4th South Section in the SNFC Leicester YB National, then as a yearling she was 49th South Section SNFC Newbury Inland National, as a 2 year old and 3 year old she homed just out of the SNFC gold cup prize list. John and Jim would like to thank John Jamieson of Tarbrax for the excellent pigeons he has gifted the partnership over the last 3 or 4 years, their winning pigeon was bred from two John Jamieson pigeons.

2nd Sect A, 29th Open were **Mr & Mrs Jimmy Graham of Ecclefechan** who timed a 2 year old blue hen at 19.43 flying 509 miles and recording a velocity of 1075. they have now added to their when they were 2nd Sect A, 4th Open SNRPC Newbury 2006

Moving onto Sect D and 1st Sect D, 20th Open we have **John McNeill of Broxburn**, John timed a 3 year old blue chequer hen at 20.43 flying 561 miles and recording a velocity of 1105 to win his 6th section bronze medal out of 7 national races with the SNRPC, losing by a decimal for 1st sect position in 2005 from Alencon. The hen is a Busschaert cross Rab Hamilton blood line. The sire of the hen was out of R H Busby's good stock cock which was responsible for many winners. Her dam was from a stock hen bred by John's brother from his Busschaert's. John's Busschaerts originally from W Malley & Son of Musselburgh and John has been racing Busschaert's since 1979. The hen had as a 2 year old won 12th Open from Falaise with the SNRPC and 1st Sect D and as a young bird flew the young bird national, she also won consistently in Club and Federation.



John McNeill of Broxburn

2nd Sect D, 24th Open we have **Ian M Brown of Powmill, Near Dollar**, Ian timed his 2 year old chequer hen at 21.14 flying 576 miles recording a velocity of 1095, the hen was lightly raced as a young bird, then flown every race as a yearling to 300 miles winning 1st in the Forth Bridges club and a probable position in the first 10 of the Caledonian Combine. Flown 3 races to 342 miles prior to Reims and she was sitting 10 days eggs. The sire is a Jan Aarden Cattryse cross and the dam is Imbrecht these birds were bred from Masserella Stock and Captain Cutcliffe bloodlines. Ian is of course P. R .O. of the SNRPC and does a lot of work writing about the club and its members. Well Done Ian !



Ian M Brown of Powmill, Near Dollar

3rd Sect D, 25th Open we have **Frank Baillie of Bo'ness**, Frank timed his 4 year old chequer hen at 21.04 flying 568 miles recording a velocity of 1093. Frank was happy with the hen's performance, she had already won in the SNRPC taking 40th Open in Alencon in 2005. Her sire is a red chequer pied cock bred by his friend Martin Sneddon of the M & D Sneddon partnership from Bo'ness. The dam is from Frank's own family of pigeons.



Frank Baillie of Bo'ness

Moving further west 1st Sect E, 22nd Open we have **John Cosgrove & Son of Lesmahagow** their blue hen now named 'Gateside Lady' was timed at 20.37 flying 554 miles recording a velocity of 1099. In 2005 she won 17th Sect E, and 87th Open SNRPC Falaise. She was flown from 81, 168 and 271 miles then trained every day for the week prior to the Reims Race. Her sire is a Blue Pied Cock bred by A K Stainthorpe of Lesmahagow and the dam is from their own stock. Her best racing condition is a newly hatched young bird. The partnership also won 5th Sect E, 38th Open plus other two to take 82nd and 83rd Open. Another great performance from along established long distance family who have won the SNFC overall West Section Averages and an SNFC Nantes national.

2nd Sect E, 27th we have **Ken Buchanan of Hamilton**, Ken timed his 3 year old dark hen at 21.08 flying 565 miles and recording a velocity of 1090. This hen is the star of Barncluith Lofts this year, as she went on to be 2nd Sect E, 8th Open SNRPC Lessay a few weeks later. She had also won 2nd club, 9th section in the strong west section of the Lanarkshire Federation and has also won in the mid week club from Dunbar. She also scored in the SNRPC in 2005 taking 40th Open Falaise. She had four races prior to Reims 62, 81,178 and 248 miles and made the prize list. The sire and dam are from George Brownlee of Carluke blood lines. Ken timed another 8 birds in the morning taking the following positions 58th,64th,65th,92nd,93rd,101st and 103rd having 12 birds home out of 16 entries.



Ken Buchanan's 3 year old dark hen

3rd Sect E, 32nd Open we have **Mr & Mrs David Elliott of Newbigging**, The Elliott's timed a blue chequer hen at 20.57 flying 550 miles and recording a velocity of 1067. The hen had all the races to Newbury and is from a grandson of the partnerships good Rennes hen which was 10th,12th, 26th and 62nd SNFC Rennes. The dam a chequer hen bred from the Aristocrat cross, a sister of Sparky also involved in these blood lines is Syd Newcombe's Blue Kilpatrick Nantes Cock. The Elliott's had two other positions 8th Sect E, 59th Open and 17th Sect E, 86th Open. This partnership are never far away and very rarely not on the Open result.



David Elliott of Newbigging

1st Sect F, 37th Open we have **Ian Lowe of Glasgow**, Ian has won the Sect F again having been 1st Sect F, 79th Open SNRPC Newbury and he wins his 2nd Bronze Medal. Ian timed a dark chequer hen at 21.45 flying 573 miles and recording a velocity of 1056.

2nd Sect F, 40th Open we have **Joe & Jean Gormanly of Lenzie**, Joe & Jean timed a blue pied hen at 22.10 flying 577 miles and recording a velocity of 1037.



Joe & Jean`s blue pied hen

3rd & 4th Sect F, 42nd and 43rd we have **Ian Ross of Glasgow**, Ian timed two pigeons within six minutes at 22.17 and 22.23 flying 577 miles recording velocities of 1028 and 1022.

It would seem to have been a good race with all of the sections timing at least 3 pigeons on the night, the only exception being Section A where the 3rd section was timed next morning at 05.59 by Crombie & Mechan. But overall I am sure most members will be happy with the race.

The Scottish National Racing Pigeon Club are indebted to the following sponsors who help the Club. Mr & Mrs A Forrest for their £250.00 for the 1st pigeon in the Race, The BHW for publication of the result, Carr's natural Feeding for all section winners, Harkers to our race winner and to Woodside Farm Feeds (Tom Law) for the feeding for all our nationals.

Whilst we try to include as much information on the winners and their pigeons it is very difficult to get information on all of the pigeons. If you would like to send information on your winners i.e. Digital Photos or info on breeding, or general info or if you would like to become a

contributor for next season please give me a phone on 01324 555888 or e mail me the address is

I would also like to thank all of the people who contributed photographs and sent in information to make this article about our Gold Medal Race possible.

Ian M Brown P.R.O. Stuart Bowman, Duncan Knox, Stuart Malcolm, Norman Dixon, John Mechan, Ken Buchanan and anyone else who helped in any way.

John Gray for the **Scottish National Racing Pigeon Club**