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THE HOME OF LONG DISTANCE PIGEON RACING

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The British Barcelona Club celebrating '50' years 2014

BRITISH BARCELONA CLUB'S 50th ANNIVERSARY (Part 9).

Des Coulter of Worthing

1st open BBC Perpignan (583 miles) 1992.

A few years ago, Eric Cannon and I, had a day out on the south coast visiting pigeon fancier friends and the first loft we visited was the top long distance set up of Des Coulter, who is a specialist at the Classic and National longest events. In 1995 Des won 1st British Section, 260th International (6,844 birds) San Sebastian Open (534 miles); 1st Section, 4th Open Barcelona (British Barcelona Club) 663 miles and 5th Open Barcelona (British International Championship Club), a fantastic performance.

His small loft is set in the Sussex countryside, with rolling fields and hills all round. Like the surroundings the loft is very natural in its looks and its approach to racing the greater distance events. The loft is 14ft x 6ft with bob wire trapping and has bales of straw and nest boxes everywhere. Des uses three inches of straw on the loft floor as litter and said he thinks straw helps combat stress for the inmates. The loft has a small section where Des weans his youngsters, but all the old and young birds are run together in the same section through the summer. Des has an open loft most of the time and the birds are at liberty to run the fields and countryside. All the birds are raced on the Natural system, being paired up in mid-March. Des likes races around the 650 mile mark.

The loft has won many premier prizes in long distance races through the years, the high lights of mwhich are: 1992: 1st open British Barcelona Club Perpignan (583 miles), 1995: 4th open Barcelona, 1994: 3rd open Palamos (650 miles), 1984: two birds on the day from Lerwick (646 miles), 1981: clocked one on the day from Thurso (550 miles) won 2nd open Combine, 1983: 1st, 3rd, 9th Federation Lerwick (646 miles), 1984: 1st, 3rd, 7th, 13th Federation Lerwick, 1983: 17th open Combine Thurso, 1980: 5th. Federation Thurso, 1981: 3rd Federation Thurso, 1982: 4th Federation Thurso, 1982: 2nd. Federation Stonehaven, 1983: 35th. Federation Stonehaven, 1982: 1st. Federation Berwick, 1983: 1st Federation Berwick, 1995: 1st Federation Bergerac, 1990: 1st, 17th, 18th open Perpignan, 23rd open Palamos, 1991: 16th, 24th, 35th open Palamos, 1986: 11th, 12th open Combine Bergerac, 1990: 1st, 2nd club Niort, 1991: 4th open Combine Bergerac, 1991: 7th open Combine Niort, 1992: 3rd open Combine Rennes, 1992: 9th Federation Bergerac, 1992: 3rd, 5th, 7th, 8th open B.I.C.C. Bordeaux, 1995: 5th open B.I.C.C. Barcelona, 1st open B.I.C.C., 160th International San Sebastian. Des' champion 1988 Grizzle cock, 'The Palamos', won 'The Spanish Deploma' in the British Barcelona Club. A wonderful loft record!

The first pigeon we looked at on our loft visit was the handsome grizzle cock which won 1st Section, 1st Open Perpignan (584 miles) BBC for Des in 1994. This cock was a perfect type and is a son of Des's 'Thurso Hen', which flew Lerwick on the day. Des has been in the sport over 50 years and has always been interested in the greater distance races. He breeds 30 to 40 young birds each year and likes them to have plenty of training, starting at 10 miles up to about 50 miles. He trains and races east to west with Sussex SR Federation and uses the inland races as training, if he takes cards this is a bonus. He rarely sends his young birds across the Channel as he thinks the losses outweigh the rewards. He breeds a few late bred from his best bird each year, which he uses to breed from the

following season. The birds are hopper fed on all beans and are trapped on a mixture of smaller grains, including peas and maize.

Star of the 1995 season was Des's wonderful grizzle hen 'Champion Clio' which won 1st British Section, 160th International (6,844 birds) San Sebastian Open (534 miles). She had no other races before winning the San Sebastian Open in 1995. She flew the young bird programme from Chichester to Wadebridge and as a yearling flew Bergerac on the day. This champion hen was wonderful in the hand, being medium appled-bodied and is a daughter of the 1994 Perpignan BBC winning grizzle cock. A truly wonderful family of long distance racing pigeons.

TEXT & PHOTOS BY KEITH MOTT (www.keithmott.com)

Des Coulter of Worthing.

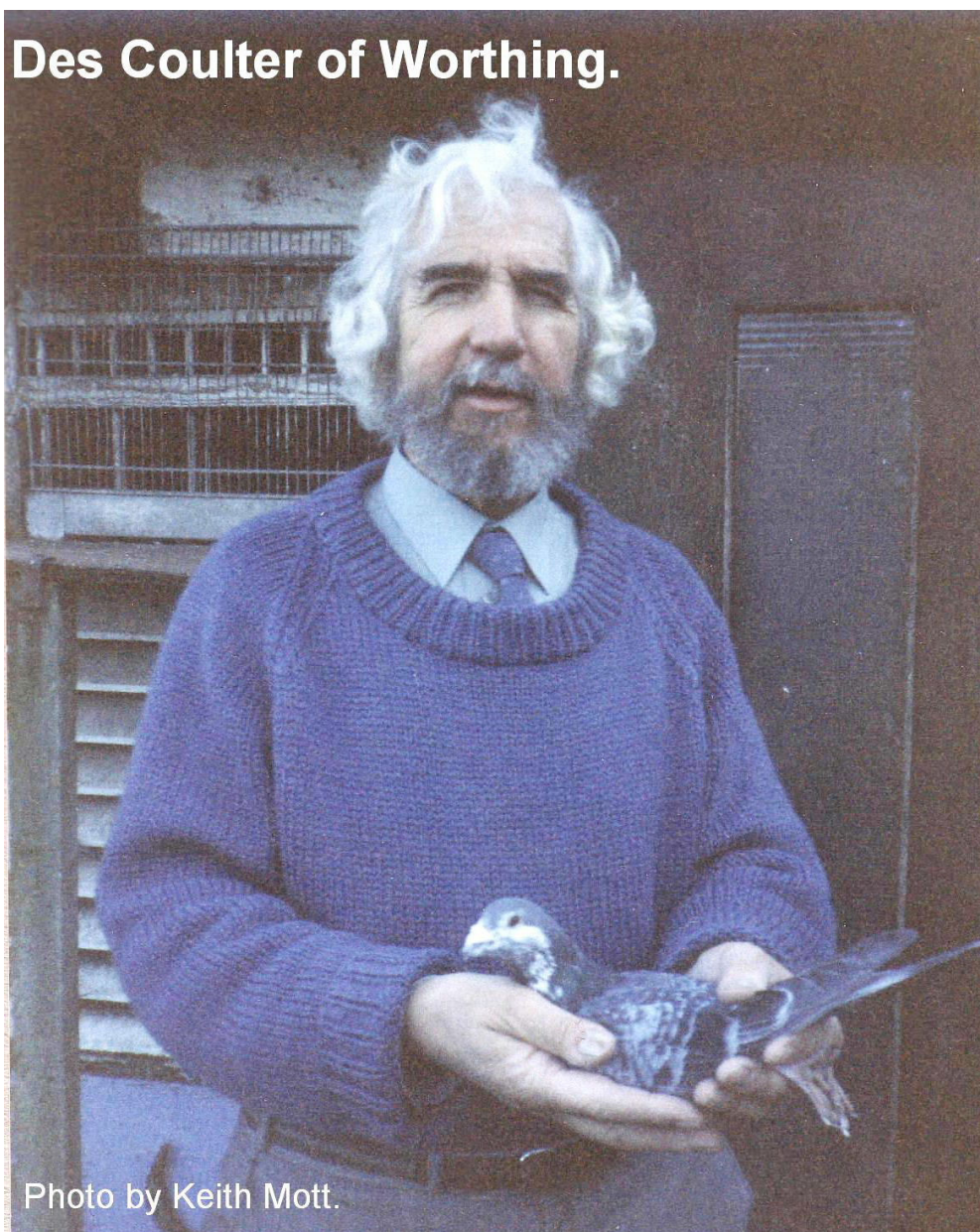


Photo by Keith Mott.