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Chairman: Mike Shepherd

THE HOME OF LONG DISTANCE PIGEON RACING

Patron: Mark Gilbert

The British Barcelona Club celebrating '50' years 2014

BRITISH BARCELONA CLUB'S 50th ANNIVERSARY (Part 16).

Joe & Helen Deville of Camberley.

1st open BBC Rennes (228 miles) 1998.

It always pleases me to see one of the sports worker enjoy so good success with his pigeons and I was highly delighted to see Joe Deville win the last L&SECC young bird race from Vire. Joe visited my home in Claygate two weeks after his Classic win to have his champion hen photographed and told me he had had a golden young bird season, which finished up with him recording his fourth L&SECC winner. Joe said on his visit, 'the young birds were pretty average for the first three weeks of the season, not winning very much apart from a few club prize, but on the fourth Saturday they hit brilliant form winning the last five races and on the last three weekends won 1st Berkshire Federation Exeter, 1st, 2nd, 5th Berkshire Federation Kingsdown, 1st, 2nd Berkshire Federation Wincanton and 1st open L&SECC Young Bird Vire (2). On the last Saturday we won the Berkshire Federation and the L&SECC on the same day'. A fantastic three weeks for the Camberley loft!

The final race of the 2012 season for the London and South East Classic Club took place from Vire, in northern France and the birds were liberated at 08.30hrs into a light variable wind. A good steady race was expected and judging by the majority of the fanciers spoken too most had excellent returns. It was to be another game of chess, with anticipated easterly winds in France forecasted and before we had even put a pigeon in the basket we all thought it was going to be a hard job. Although the Saturday was predicted to be a good day, the worry was the east wind at the liberation site, but on the day every thing turned out good and the membership enjoyed one of the best races of the season. A great end to the 2012 young bird Classic season, with our members enjoying a great race with good returns! Joe had a brilliant race by sending ten birds and clocked nine! His Young Bird Classic winner was his blue hen, 'Dame Kelly Holmes', sent sitting 12 day old eggs and was bred from his family of 'TOWIE' / Huybregts obtained from his brother, John Deville of Essex. This game little hen won a couple of prizes in the Saturday club and being sent to the first L&SECC Vire race in August, she made hard work of it, but this set her up for her Classic win in September. Her sire won the Federation this year and the dam won 2nd open Combine from Poitiers. Joe was so impressed with John's family of 'TOWIE' pigeons he obtained some to try in 2011 and they have hit in to his own family of Jan Huybregts straight away. They are winning out of turn from their introduction and

have topped the Federation, with one hen recorded 2nd Combine for Joe, with it being beaten by a loft mate.

Joe normally breeds him self 40 young birds to race each season and these are all put on the 'darkness' system. When I asked Joe about his young bird system, he said, 'it is pretty basic, with the youngster being on the light for office hours, 9am to 5pm and are started on the 'dark' at the end of March, and come off the system the second week in June. They are exercised around the loft for three weeks after coming off the 'dark' so they can adjust to the normal day light and then they start training at ten miles. I give them lots of tosses, working down the line to 25 miles and they are kept at that point until the first race, which is with the Federation. The babies race the programme and I still give them a mid-week training toss during the racing season. I like them to pair up, although I don't purposely pair them up, as I think this is a bit of an incentive for the young racers, especially on the longer races at the back end of the season. I feed the youngster on 'Arrow' mixture, which is a fat diet, which I think is important if the birds are putting work in on the road and I don't like to see youngsters broken down. When they come home from the race they eat as much as they want and from Tuesday until marking night I hand feed the youngsters. As I have already stated my young bird system is basic, but for good results with youngsters they must go on the 'dark' system'.

Joe's racing loft is a self built 16ft x 8ft structure, with drop board trapping for his ETS clocking and during the breeding season he uses Tesco's finest cat litter on the floors to keep them dry. The old birds are raced on the roundabout system, being mated up in late January and the hens kept on poles, and are housed in a different loft. At the beginning of the year the racers rear a pair of youngsters and the hens are taken away, with the cocks being left to finish the rearing in the race loft. Joe uses the roundabout system while training the old birds and he tells me he likes the middle distance channel racing best. Joe has about sixteen pairs of stock birds and these are paired up just before Christmas. The stock birds are all bred from direct Jan Huybregts and some were bred by Alan Ingleton of 'Oak Villa' Lofts, who was one of the first fanciers to bring the Huybregts into the UK. Joe says, he and brother, John have obtained the very best of the Jan Huybregts and they have produced some wonderful results. When I asked Joe what he looked for when bringing in a new stock bird he replied, 'first of all it has to be a good Jan Huybregts bloodline, but having said that it has to conform to what like. I like a real good handling pigeon and it has to have the right type of eye. I don't do the eye sign method, but it must have the rich eye I require. I don't buy to pedigree; I buy to the type I like. I have seen well bred Huybregts in the past that are not my type, so I would not entertain them, but if they are what is right in my mind, they will be introduced in to my stock loft'.

He first had pigeons when he was a young lad and first member of the Deville family to introduce them into the Hillingdon garden was his brother, 'Dodger'. The brother flew north road with some great fanciers in the Heathrow Airport area and he introduced the young Joe to the late great Ken Hine of West Drayton. Joe started racing on his own at the age of eighteen, when he got his own place in West Drayton and the first birds were from Tom, Dick and Harry. Joe's brother was a very good racer on the north road and won the Federation out of Thurso two years on the trot. Joe told me that Ken Hine was the top fancier in the area then and although in recent times he is famous for his great performances on the long distance in the Pau Grand National, in those days he raced north road and competed from 80 miles through to 600 miles. Joe says, Ken was a great man and pigeon fancier! He was Joe's mentor and gave him so much help in the early days. Joe's first club was the

Yiewsley HS and won his first race from Leicester, with a Derek Smith of Great Ayton young bird. Joe was one of the first members of the London & South East Classic Club and won the Classic's first two races from Sartilly and Nantes in 1987. He tells me his first his first two Classic winners were both 'Tom, Dick and Harry' strain! Joe was very successful for many years with different families in his loft, but says he would never go back to that way and for many years has only kept one successful family of pigeons.

Joe lived in Sandhurst for several years and at that time raced in the Central Southern Classic Flying Club and came close to winning it on a couple of occasions and won 1st open British Barcelona Club Young Bird Rennes in the 1998 season. On moving out of Sandhurst in 2004 he had to pack up the pigeons for a brief time and his good friends, Dick Trussler and Peter Sabba looked after his stock birds for him so he could restart when he got relocated. Joe mover into his Camberley address in 2007 and started racing with young birds that year. He is a four times winner of the L&SECC and last won in 2007, when he recorded 1st open young bird Guernsey (1715 birds) with one of his Huybregts. The Deville loft has won 1st Combine three times in the last four seasons, including 1st and 2nd Combine Poitiers in 2012. A fantastic racing record! He is a great worker for our sport, running the L&SECC Sunningdale clock station and is the secretary of his local club at Sunningdale. Joe runs a clock station for the NFC and BBC, and was the secretary of the Berkshire Federation for a number of years.

Joe has a big problem with Sparrowhawks where he lives and has had many pigeons killed by them. He has tried every thing to try and keep them out of the garden and has found nothing works, apart from exercising the birds around the loft at different times of the day. He maintain that if you let the birds out at say 10.00hrs regular every day the hawk will get dialled in and turn up to attack at that time every day. He has found if he lets the birds out of the loft for exercise at different times each day the attacks have reduced considerably. Joe's wife, Helen, is interested in the pigeons and tells me jokingly, she is the person who answers the telephone when he is in the pigeon loft most of the day! Joe has a great admiration for the late Ken Hine and says it a shame their not more fanciers like him, as he was a wonderful worker and pigeon racer. There you have it, the Joe Deville story!

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

JOE DEVILLE



Photo by Keith Mott.

"DAME KELLY HOLMES"

GB 12 E 36371 Blue Hen

Raced by Joe Deville

2012: 1st open L&SECC Young Bird Vire (2)

Plus other premier positions in the club



KEITH MOTT

"BULLS EYE"

GB 12 E 36350 Blue Chequer Cock

Raced by Joe Deville

2012: 1st Berkshire Federation Exeter

5th Berkshire Federation Kingsdown



KEITH MOTT

"DOUBLE TOP"

GB 12 E 36304 Blue Cock

Raced by Joe Deville

2012: 1st Berkshire Federation Wincanton

Deville loft won 1st & 2nd Federation



KEITH MOTT

"SHOWMAN"

GB 12 E 36330 Blue Cock

Raced by Joe Deville

2012: 1st Berkshire Federation Kingsdown

Deville loft won 1st, 2nd, 5th Federation



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