



## **2017 LONG DISTANCE RACE FROM ZARAGOZA SPAIN**

On Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October a Committee meeting was held to finalise everything for 2016 and look towards next seasons racing, which will be with us before we know it.

One of the main topics on the agenda was the race programme and where to race the Club's longest race from.

Earlier on in the year a feedback letter was sent to members who within the last two seasons had sent to either Palamos or Barcelona asking them what their views were on with racing from Palamos or racing from either Zaragoza or Calatayud on the west side of Spain or any other comments.

The letters were reviewed and the consensus was, for the Club to keep our own identity and look at either Zaragoza or Calatayud on the west side of France. Very kindly Paul Addicott from Taunton has taken the time and trouble and found us the perfect liberation site in Alfajarin, Zaragoza. It is a fully secure lorry park on the main route which has situated a Hotel, restaurant, shower facilities and fuel station. To give members a rough idea on distance it is 645 miles to Southampton (Palamos 662m Barcelona 680m) and 763 miles to Walsall, West Midlands (Palamos 780m Barcelona 799m). In line with the Pyrenees Zaragoza it is at one of the lowest points to the mountains. On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank Paul Addicott for all his help. What would be nice now would be to see is the support from the long distance flyers in making a success of this race.

The other comments we have received from members were that the first race at the end of April begins too early with some members only just starting their birds off the week before, some further flyers finding it too far too soon and also the channel still being very cold in April. The other remark was that in June apart from the longest race there is no other race in the BBC. With all this taken on board the Committee have proposed this race programme.

Old Birds: 1<sup>st</sup> Race – Coutances Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2<sup>nd</sup> Race – Messac Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June, 3<sup>rd</sup> Race – Zaragoza Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 4<sup>th</sup> Race – Fougères Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July, 5<sup>th</sup> Race – Bordeaux Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July. Young Birds: Coutances Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

Due to the young bird losses in the last couple of years, the Club's Young Bird Gold Ring Competition has suffered where members lose their "B" rings before we get to the Young Bird Race. For 2017 we are still keeping the Gold Ring Competition but running it as a nomination instead of issuing a life ring. (What this means is, you still pay for your £5 per bird unlimited nomination with your annual subscription but you do not need to nominate the pigeon until the day of marking for the young bird race. So whatever happens however many you pay for is however many you can nominate.

(Example: 5 nominations bought. On the day of marking 5 crosses put against whatever young bird you wish to nominate on Your Part B form). The prize money will still be paid out the old way of £300 allocated to the Gold Ring Nomination Open Prize. The remainder of the total income less deductions still paid out on a pro rata basis to the number of nominations sold in each section.

This year we had a trial run of Ash marking Station to help members on the east to send their birds. Unfortunately apart from the first race Ash was very poorly supported and will no longer be available as it is not cost effective to keep it running.

The Annual Young Bird Sale at the Livestock Market, Salisbury will be held on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2017. If you would like to donate a young bird/s please could you let me know or tick the box on your subscription renewal form which will be with you shortly.

If you are looking for some long distance bloodlines to add to your stock loft, we have remaining 12 young birds from the BBC Stud which are ready to be paired up this winter. In December we will be holding an Online/ Telephone Sale to auction the birds off. More details regarding the sale will be on the website and published nearer the time.

Also the BBC Stud pairings for 2017 youngsters will be on the website for you to view soon. If you wish to purchase any 2017 young birds from the Stud please contact Nigel Rigiani on 01980 619136.

Finally, the Committee have asked me to thank everyone involved at the marking station for your support and help through the season.

If you still haven't booked your ticket for the Dinner and Prize Evening on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November don't leave it much longer as you may miss out.

All resignations must be received by the Secretary on or before the AGM which is on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016. After this date members will be liable for 2017 fees.

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