

**Messac National  
1st Open 1<sup>st</sup> Section A  
Gordon & Pat Emm From Downton  
With “Blue Lightning”**

Due to the overcast skies in France which didn't clear early enough on the Saturday we were unable to release the 1,616 birds. But with much better conditions on Sunday, Nigel cut the strings and away they went at 7.30am with no wind on site and changeable winds on route.

Our continued thanks and gratitude to everyone who assists at the marking stations. You are all worth your weight in gold.

It gave me the greatest pleasure to telephone the winners of the Messac National **Gordon & Pat Emm from Downton, Nr Salisbury**. This lovely couple are an asset to pigeon racing. For years now they have volunteered their services to not only the BBC but the CSCFC too. You will normally see Gordon and Pat at Salisbury for the BBC and Southampton for the CSCFC.

I have been racing since breaking my leg 44 years ago and I race in the very competitive Salisbury Club who compete in the Wiltshire Fed. One of my highlights from racing over the years was when I won a car with the National Flying Club.

I only have a small team of pigeons and this year I am racing 11 cocks on celibate.

This 2 year old blue cock is of Heremans Ceusters strain and the parents were purchased from Ponderosa UK Stud.

His only other previous performance was that he won me a Club race last season.

All in all I have had a very good weekend, winning my Club and probably the Wiltshire Fed and then to be told I had won the BBC from Messac left me feeling over the moon.



In **2<sup>nd</sup> Open 2<sup>nd</sup> Section A** is **James Fulford from Salisbury**. First I want to congratulate Gordon Emm on winning the race, well done.

Two years ago I moved house and had to start a fresh with a new team of pigeons, I am proud of my pigeon that achieved this great result for me.

The breeding of this fine pigeon is a Gaby Vandenabeele cross a Barker / Smit Van Winkel from my good friend Les Stuckey from West Normanton, Yorkshire. I would also like to thank John Halstead of Gillingham for selling me the Gaby Cock that has become the foundation stock Cock of my loft that I have called crazy John.

I want to thank Nigel Rigiani for looking after and transporting the birds and making the decision to hold birds and release in finer weather conditions.

Finally I want to thank Dave Day for all the help and advice he gives me on the pigeons.

In the picture is my daughter Katie holding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open winner and my son Ben holding crazy John the big bold cock and my very good mealy hen.



Katie Fulford



Ben Fulford

**1<sup>st</sup> Section B** we have **Mr & Mrs Johnny Cooper from Bournemouth**. This pigeon is a 4 year old blue cock which was 2<sup>nd</sup> Section 3<sup>rd</sup> Open from this race point with the CSCFC last year. His breeding is an Eric Cullerman pigeon raced on the widowhood system.



Johnny Cooper

**2<sup>nd</sup> Section B is Vincent McConnell of R & V McConnell from Ferndown.** I would like to congratulate the winner and Club member John for his Section B win.

Having moved house 3 years ago this is my first big race here having only raced babies and yearlings with the Club and Fed, so far.

New loft, new birds and new Club...as they say.

It shows the strength of our Club when we we've 3-4-5-6-7 and 11<sup>th</sup> Open.!!

The result was made special as it was my daughters birthday and after all our problems, it's a great pick me up.

The blue cock came back from his 3<sup>rd</sup> race injured as a yearling and was left to mend.

This was my lofts 3<sup>rd</sup> race this year and they are only just getting going after hawk, rat and neighbour problems.

Sent 10 and had 7 on day, 1 next morning.

The cock is off Mark Gilbert lines who I'd like to say is not only a nice bloke but flies a great pigeon and is not scared to send them.

Can I thank the Club and its hard workers as sometimes we forget them and forget to have fun racing.!! Good luck next race.



R & V McConnell



**5<sup>th</sup> Open is Mick Johnson & Sue Bell from Bournemouth.** The pigeon we timed is a two year old dark chequer widowhood cock. I bought the parents from a fancier in North Wales for my late husband, Bob Bell. He was bred from a Flor Engels/Wildemeersch Sire and a Vandenabeele Dam. He was hawked last year and had to miss a few races and he still bears the scar.

After my husband died, I struck up a pigeon partnership with Mick Johnson to continue looking after our pigeons and we have now been in partnership for 4 years. However, I would not have been able to continue if it were not for my new partner, Art, who Mick describes as his 'Loft Manager'.



Mick Johnson & Sue Bell

**1<sup>st</sup> Section H is Glen Moon from St Helier, Jersey.** Glen timed his old stalwart a 4 year old blue cock bird "True Grit". This pigeon was bred from a blue hen gifted by Glen's good friend Mick De Carteret from Guernsey off a Reg Venner blue hen and a Belgian cock bird which Glen acquired from the late Lawrence Le Ruez from Jersey.

"True Grit" will score for Glen whatever the distance. This is his 4<sup>th</sup> Section win, in 2014 as a 2 year old he won the Section twice, once from BBC Niort where he was 3<sup>rd</sup> Open and BBC Fougères Old Bird race. In 2015 he won 13<sup>th</sup> Open 1<sup>st</sup> Section BBC Bordeaux. He has also won La Roche – Yon two years running and Jarnac which are his local Clubs two longest Club races being transported by the French.

He also flew BBC Palamos last season but arrived 1 yard out of race time. Glen is now lining him up for Barcelona International this year.



Glen Moon



Glen's medals

**Peter Quainton from Chippenham is 1<sup>st</sup> Section C** with “Little Blue” his 2 year old blue hen which won BBC Coutances only two weeks ago. She is bred from blue Jansen Van Loon on the sire’s side and the Dam is a blue Vandenabeele. As reported when she won Coutances, she has raced all programmes from a young bird in 2015. Won 3<sup>rd</sup> Messac & 5<sup>th</sup> Niort as an old bird.



Peter Quainton

**Runner Up** to Glen is **Paul Davies from St Clement, Jersey** with his 6 year old chequer cock. This Jan Aarden x Janssen cock has now been placed 5 x 2<sup>nd</sup> Section for Paul and does have some history. As a youngster he was sent to St Malo where he was lost for a year and returned home in April 2011. 2012 as a 2 year old he won 1<sup>st</sup> Club Messac and 1<sup>st</sup> Club Saintes by 40 minutes. In 2013 he was 14<sup>th</sup> Open 4<sup>th</sup> Section BBC Niort, 2014 - 5<sup>th</sup> Section 107<sup>th</sup> BBC Niort and 2<sup>nd</sup> Section BBC Fougères. 2015 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Section 140<sup>th</sup> Open BBC Messac and 2<sup>nd</sup> Section 18<sup>th</sup> Open Bordeaux.



Paul Davies



**2<sup>nd</sup> Section C is Mr & Mrs Steve Robinson from Marlborough.** My first bird was a 2 year old Gaby Vandenabeele, a hen from stock of my late father, Jack Robinson. She is raced on the roundabout system and only 2 weeks ago she was 31<sup>st</sup> Open and 9<sup>th</sup> Section from Coutances in the first BBC race. I want to say a big thank you to Chris Howse of Devizes for his advice and also a big thank you to Nigel Rigiani the convoyer for an excellent race. Here's to hoping for a few more winners this season.



Steve Robinson

**1<sup>st</sup> Section D is Joe Deville from Camberley.** Joe timed a yearling hen who breeding comes down through “The Duke” Joe’s top Van Dyck stock bird. Last season as a young bird she flew the channel about 4 times taking 96<sup>th</sup> Open from BBC Coutances YB race. This was her third race of the season. Joe has had a good weekend as it also looks like he has won the UBI Combine from Coutances as well who also liberated on Sunday at 9am. Both pigeons arriving within ½ a hour of each other.



Joe Deville

**Runner up in Section D is John Haynes from Fifield** timing a 2 year old chequer hen.

**1<sup>st</sup> Section G is Mike Armitage of Ash.** This hen has already won a Club race and has had other minor positions as a young bird. The father of the pigeon was 1<sup>st</sup> Section 4<sup>th</sup> National last year. She was racing semi-widowhood.



Mick Armitage with Lexi and Paul

**Derek Reid from Weybridge is 2<sup>nd</sup> Section G.** This cock was my second pigeon clocked from BBC Coutances 2016. He is a full brother to my Three Borders Federation winner 2016 and a cousin to my 3<sup>rd</sup> Combine Winner in the SMT Falaise race 2016.

The sire is bred from Adrian Duggins pigeon paired to a full sister to my NFC Winner 2005. The dam is a De-Rauw Sablon pigeon which I bought from M and D Evans. These Sablon pigeons have bred 7 winners for me in two years. I had 12 out of 16 on the day looking forward to the next race to get my revenge on Mike. Congratulations to the winners, great workers for the BBC.



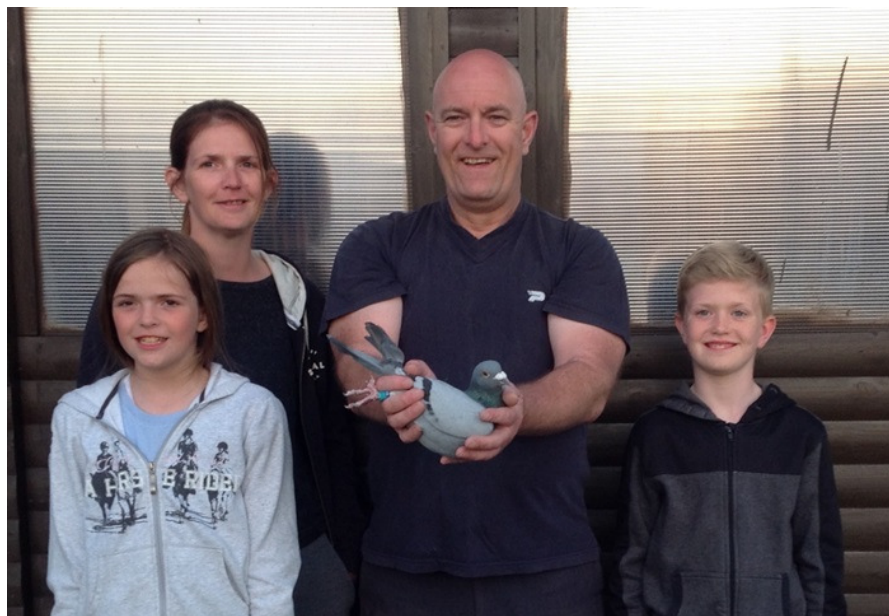
Derek Reid



**1<sup>st</sup> Section E is Dave Harris from Newport.** "Dessie" is a six year old Blue Cock flown on widowhood, he is a Soontjen cross and has been a consistent performer over the years, 2015 he was 5<sup>th</sup> Open Carentan, 2014 he was 23<sup>rd</sup> Open Carentan and 20<sup>th</sup> Open Messac all in the BBC, plus other positions in both the MNFC and NFC, he is a long standing pupil at the Chris Whittington school of training, well educated for the challenges ahead ( well done Chris being second section) and has now flown his last race being retired to stock.

Dessie is bred from a cock purchased at Des Phillips sale by Karen and paired to a sister of the 2<sup>nd</sup> MNFC Lessay cock, from my old line of Soontjens, a tried and tested family.

Pictured with me are Megan, Karen and Kyle, he has his own team of darkness young birds that he aims compete with later this year, watch out the Bell (Tong) Flying Club, all help me in some way to achieve these results, thank you all.



Dave Harris with Megan, Karen and Kyle

**Chris Whittingham from Wheaton Aston is 2<sup>nd</sup> Section E.** There's a little story to Chris' 3 year old chequer pied cock. Chris had a phone call from a friend in Llangollen, Wales who needed some pigeons removed from a listed building, so Chris went a long with a friend and collected the birds. There were some unrun birds but he managed to report 10 pigeons with rings on them. The owners offered them to Chris so he transferred them and started training them along with his other birds. This chequer pied cock has now had 10 channel races coming really well for Chris. He was bred by a fancier from Lancashire.



Chris Whittingham



**1<sup>st</sup> Section J is Tony Coker from Wickford.** I have recently semi-retired and I am building a team of long distance pigeons and this pigeon is of the Hugo Batenburg family and this was his first race of the season.

His Sire is the brother to the broken keel cock that I loaned to the late George Humphrey of Croydon which sired 'Georges Girl' 18<sup>th</sup> Open from Tarbes on the day in the L&SECC 560 miles and went on to fly Bergerac 2 weeks later. The broken keel cock is also brother to my pigeon that has flown Pau 3 times, twice on the day and the third time on the winning day.

The Dame of this Messac pigeon is 50:50 House of Arden/Batenburg. He came home in lovely condition and I am hoping to send him to Tarbes or Pau.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Section J is Trevor & Adrian Wilson from Manuden.** We are Trevor and Adrian Wilson a father and son partnership. Our lofts are at Adrian's home located in a village called Manuden which is near Bishops Stortford on the Essex/ Hertfordshire border.

We fly in the Cambridge Grantna in the Intercounties fed and Stansted M11. Our bird is a LEO van Rijn cheq cock, a gift bird from our Cambridge club mate Billy Maples (thanks Bill). The bird is known as Pink as he's got a pink ring (we colour code our birds)! He has flown the channel 3 times as a young bird and this was his second crossing this year, his others being Falaise with the B.I.C.C 2 weeks ago being our second bird home. He may be rested next week as we both have a lot of work on, but then again if we both have to work hard than so does he!! - ( yeah he's going next week LOL) we sent 2 birds and got our second 19 minutes later, both birds looking good.

We are really pleased with the result as with the birds only being at Adrian's for 2 years and trying to build a team. Our season has started badly with Sparrow Hawk attacks then our best pigeon 'Miss Money Penny' who won us near on £1000 last year got caught by a Peregrine Falcon and so badly injured, try as we could to save her died 3 days later.

We have 15 birds to race, several different strains that we hope to build in the strain of our own. All 15 raced over the weekend. 9 flew in different channel races Sunday and all home by 6pm.

We would like to congratulate Mr and Mrs Emm on their First Open and congratulations to all section winners. Finally thanks to all at the Walkern marking station and clock stations who work so tirelessly for the sport.



Trevor & Adrian Wilson

## **Convoyers Report**

We reached Portsmouth docks at 19.15 and after signing in the birds were fed and watered before sailing at 22.45.

We arrived at Caen at 05.30 where the birds were watered before the three hour journey to Messac. The entire journey saw low cloud and thick mist, visibility of about half a mile and very cold for early May. All day long this weather lasted with temperatures at mid day of 11 degrees. The birds were fed and re watered by 4 pm. At 5.30 I called Steve Appleby telling me that Saturday would see no improvement at all.

Saturday dawned very cold 4 degrees with full cloud cover and visibility of about quarter of a mile, a call was made to Steve telling me that things would not improve in time for a liberation and that the weather on site was the same all the way to the northern coast of France with poor visibility in the channel so a decision was made to hold.

The birds were fed and re watered by 15.30 before making a call to Steve telling day me that things would improve by early evening and Sunday would give clear blue skies and a light SW wind.

As predicted Sunday dawned with not a cloud in the sky and absolutely no wind at all, after a call to Steve giving me very good weather all the way to England with SW winds in the channel. With sun now high in the sky and warming up nicely the decision was made to liberate at 07.30 with no wind on site at all. By the time all the crates were checked all the birds had cleared the site heading North.

At the time of writing this report I am now aware of the race result so I would like to offer my congratulations to Pat and Gordy Emm provisionally 1<sup>st</sup> Open 1<sup>st</sup> Sec A BBC Messac former members of the BBC committee and a nicer couple you could not wish to win this race.

Nigel Rigiani

## **Weather Report**

The forecast for Sunday was spot on as the heavy leaden skies that plagued northern France on Saturday moved away over night south eastwards. At first light the picture now was one of blue skies over Messac for Sunday's race. In fact these conditions extended over the channel and England presenting an excellent flying day. Our convoyer Nigel reported a chilly start to the day but temperatures rose very quickly resulting in an 07:30 liberation. Wind direction light and variable over France and over the channel veered from direct westerly to WSW. At 09:00 hours wind speed centre channel was recorded at 15 MPH with endless visibility.

Steve Appleby (race / weather advisor)

Clare Norman. Tel: 023 8057 3919 Email: [secretary@britishbarcelonaclub.com](mailto:secretary@britishbarcelonaclub.com)