

**Zaragoza “Blue Riband” National
1st Open 1st Section J
Nigel Loker from Cambridge
With “Zara”**

Very gallant performances from all the birds timed in from a very testing and hard race and my warmest congratulations to you all.

Our **Winner 1st Open 1st Section J Nigel Loker from Cambridge**. Zara is a 3 year old Southwell hen bred down from the Older Southwell lines from Jimmy Shepherd. She was part of the Team selected for this race at the end of the 2016 season. She is a typical Southwell small to medium well proportioned and with a temper. She was part of a Roundabout Team of 9 pairs housed in their own 16ft x 6ft wooden loft fitted with 2 sections containing 8 boxes in each. The Team were prepared with 8 or 9 inland races with the M11 Club to Poole 139 miles and Purbeck 148 miles no other training apart from around the loft was given. The 12 selected birds were then lifted into Zaragoza 731 miles. Zara was timed on the 4th day at 13.06.39 . Zara was checked over and was found to be in remarkable health with very little body loss and carrying 9 and a half flights. This was my first race with the BBC and I would like to thank everybody at the BBC and at my own Club Newmarket for their help and kindness making this one of the very best experiences that I have ever had within this Sport.



ZARA



Nigel Loker

2nd Open 1st Section G is Calum Edmiston from Horley. I was absolutely thrilled to see my Zaragoza blue cock bird now named "Blue Monday" flash past me and land on my loft on a very blue skied and warm Monday afternoon. I have been dedicated to the long distance for the last twenty odd years and this I feel was the culmination of that learning process. The bird has been to five previous long distance races and previously scored 27th BICC Nat Perpignan, 52nd BICC Nat Pau and come late in three other Internationals in race time but not clocked. This characteristic is where he has learned to handle adversity without his physical ability being compromised. In other words a horse for the course. His sire is a grandson of 1st Nat St Vincent, 1st Nat Mont de Marsan, 1st Nat Tarbes and his dam is a daughter of 2nd Nat Bergerac who is from Cretien Vanoppen's 1st International Barcelona 1987. This line made Wijnands famous and of course was largely responsible for Chris and Jaap Van de Veldens 8 x 1st Dutch National success. The latter fanciers bred the parents of my Zaragoza bird. He was prepared with three short channel races and no training just loft exercise. Fed on a high fat mix near to the race he was flown natural to 12 day old eggs as are all my birds.

My racing lofts are 22ft split 8ft and 14ft. Old birds are housed with young birds and they can nest anywhere. I do clean out but only twice weekly. I do not race young birds as distance birds are generally not at their best until 2 years of age onwards and I've extensively experimented with yearlings to back that up. I train them about five times singled up to 50 miles. Yearlings get a couple more and then go to 3/4 channel races and left. Most will be nest flighted as I generally only breed post 1st June. I then send all old birds (circa 20) to a long National race over 500 miles and move on from there. The base of my loft is Dutch Long distance from good fanciers who fly the Internationals. The birds are starting to blend now and certain lines are predominate.

It's been a good few weeks for me and this season I have bred the 1st BBC Coutances winner and 9th Classic Pau winners for my good mate Tony Leggatt and been 1st Section, 5th BICC Mont de Marsan on the day myself. I am now a three time 2nd National Long distance winner and that is a very good thing we all need motivation! My hearty congratulations to the race winner and to all those friends who have congratulated and supported me in pigeons.



Calum Edmiston



3rd & 6th Open, 2nd & 4th Section is Steve & Sally Rhodes from Aylesham. May we first of all congratulate the winners and all that timed in very game birds on such a testing race well done. Our own two birds were trained many times to 100 miles and one channel race to Alencon, then just short tosses to keep them right before "Zaragoza" we feed breed and wean widowhood mixed from Countrywide grains always very good quality no antibiotics, canker and cocci. Respiratory treated with sliepsenol, Birds were on roundabout system then paired 1 week before basketing, we were very pleased to time our birds, a great effort due to Zaragoza being midway and behind the Pyrenees, also BICC held same day as lib and came back 40 miles due to thick fog.

Our first bird "True Grit" sire is Roger Senicourt x Jan Aarden. Dam is sister to George Bates, Gravesend. "AJ" silver jay "TJ" "Cannon Blood"

Our second bird the sire bred by our very good friend Trevor Shievels of Ashford.

Kyper x Coppenolle dam. Roger Senicourt x Jim Biss and son of "Turban" below is a list of their adventures, up to now they have been around a bit often doing two six hundred miles plus races a year.

"True Grit" GB08N36622 has flown and scored in these race points in his career.

21st section 43rd open Barcelona BICC, 7th section 55th open Pau BICC, 14th section 32nd open Saran, 32nd section 52nd open Perpignan BICC, Flew Barcelona BICC returned hawked, 9th section 13th

open Pau BICC, Flew Barcelona BICC, 49th section 85th open Tarbes BICC, Flew Perpignan BICC,

Flew Tarbes NFC, Flew Marseille BICC, 18th section 19th open Marseille BICC, 3rd open Zaragoza BBC.

“Rocky” GB10N86657 late bred 2011. 2013 flew Tarbes NFC covered in oil, Flew Perpignan BICC, 2014 Flew Tarbes NFC hawked, 2015 14th section 25th open Barcelona BICC, 36th section 55th open Perpignan. 2016 Flew Barcelona BICC, 2017 6th open Zaragoza BBC.



Steve and Sally Rhodes with grand daughters Madeleine and Mia Dawn



4th Open 1st Section C is Stuart Houghton from Pewsey. Firstly I would like to say 'well done' to the other fanciers who timed in.

This 5 year old Tuplin/Barker cock has had five races this season with no previous success.

I joined the sport in the 1970's following my father, who started racing in 1933. Pigeon racing is in my blood and has been a passion of mine all my life.



Stuart Houghton with good friend Phil Hunt

5th Open 3rd Section J is John Lane from Whitstable. Chequer hen GB14H43664. This hen was bred by my good friend Ted Varley from a Denney hen "Tuff Nut" lines when paired to a cock from Fear Brothers pigeons.

Trained as a young bird through out the winter and summer only. She had four channel races as a two year old up to 200 miles. This year four channel races again up to Poitiers 350 miles and then in to Zaragoza. This hen has been raced on the celibate system and has never been paired in her life.



John Lane and Ted Varley

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