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Pau International Provisional Race Report

Friday 20th June 2025

1st Open BICC, Mr & Mrs S Rhodes of Aylesham

1st Open BBC, Mr & Mrs S Rhodes of Aylesham

1st CSCFC, Mike Hathway of Bristol

Pau is one race that almost needs no introduction, it is an iconic race point that fanciers have tried to win for generations. Pau is located 62 miles from the Atlantic Ocean and 31 miles from Spain. This was the first International of the season, and the second joint race with the BBC and CSCFC.

In total, with the 3 clubs, 147 members sent 689 birds, which was up on last year, when 131 members sent 659 birds.

They were joined by 3,609 from France, 3,028 from Belgium, 4,314 from the Netherlands, 1,062 from Germany and 32 from Luxembourg. A total of 11,906 pigeons were basketed. The birds were

liberated at 6.00am on Friday 20th June. The weekend weather was hot in both the Uk and on the continent, with lower velocities recorded than anticipated. There were no day birds in the UK, with the winning pigeons being timed on the second day.

This report is based on member's verifications and the final result may differ.

1st Open BICC, Mr & Mrs Rhodes of Aylesham

1st Open BBC, Mrs & Mrs Rhodes of Aylesham

1st South East Section, 1st Open BICC & 1st Open, 1st Section G, BBC, Mr & Mrs S Rhodes of Aylesham. The Rhodes' family timed Mia's Girl, to take 1st BICC Pau and 1st BBC Pau. We were delighted to time our game hen on very sticky day. She is a Hooyman, from Crehane O'Connor. A granddaughter of Cees' Brother of Harry x Frieldenhoffen – a granddaughter of Forest Gump and Forest Junior, the Pau International winner. She had previously flown two short BICC races and Bordeaux, from 450 miles. We train with the Wingham lads on their beautiful Geraldy Transporter, down the coast. After the two short water races with BICC, she was loft sent to this Pau Race, sitting 14 days. She was in great condition when she arrived. We feed Country Wide grains and as many beans as they can eat! That's a little joke for John Chipperfield, who actually weaned me off feeding beans - cheers John you were right! Thanks to my brother and son who both have kept us going through a very rough time. Also, thanks to all the people who phoned and text congratulations and who shook our hands. And thanks to Wally for taking our birds to the marking station. We are over the moon with this result.



The Rhodes Family



BICC & BBC National winner on her return from the race

1st CSCFC, Mike Hathway of Bristol

1st Open, 1st NW Section, CSCFC & 1st South West Section, 2nd Open BICC, Mike Hathway of Hartcliffe, Bristol. Mike timed a four-year-old blue cock bird just before 10 am on Saturday over 569 miles, to win the CSCFC and take 2nd Open BICC. Mike races hens and cocks on widowhood, and the only change to his usual routine, was to let his winner have his hen all day long, the day before basketing. Based on his own family of Janssen pigeons, Mike has been very successful in middle distance racing, from his small back garden loft, with minimal losses. So, Mike tried the longer distance last year and sent yearlings to Bordeaux. He had them back on the night! Encouraged by his wife, Bet, to try and keep the numbers down, so she can get the washing out on the line, Mike sent

to Pau. Mike's bird's love of his little back garden loft proved a great draw, and he timed from 569 miles, the furthest he has had a pigeon from. It looks like Mike may be set for continued success on the long distance as well as the middle distance. Mike races with the West of England Combine and High Littleton FC and was very grateful to Clive and Jill Rogers for taking his pigeons to the Southampton marking station. Mike sends congratulations to all who timed on a very testing day.



Mike Hathway



Mike Hathway's winner, on the left, defending his box

BICC - 2nd South West Section, 5th Open, Rob Brooks of High Littleton. I timed a 3-year-old red widowhood cock which approached the loft from the west, across Grey Stokes Wood. In all the 40 years I have raced, as Brooks Brothers, I can't remember ever having birds from Pau come from this direction. Needless to say, he was well received and in fine condition. This cock was 86th Open BICC National Pau 2024, returning home at 6pm on the 2nd day. This year he got a shift on. His sire is bred by Mark Bulled, a son of OLD 60 who was a grandsire of Legacy, 1st Open NFC Tarbes. This pigeon was purchased in the Champions Auction in the Savoy at Blackpool, conducted by my friend Stuart Wilcox. The dam of the red cock goes back to of our original Brooks Brother's family of pigeons which were Fear Brothers, Vic Priddy and Kieth Nethercotts based. The dam is a daughter of Chuckles, 9th Open NFC Pau, on the day, which in turn is a grandson of Knocker, 1st Open CSCFC Pau, also on the day. It was a hard race for all, but a special mention to Mike Hathway for winning the Classic and the Rhodes family for winning the BBC & BICC.

CSCFC – 3rd, 9th & 11th Open, 2nd NW Section. BBC – 1st Section C, 6th Open 3rd South West Section, 12th Open BICC, Clive & Jill Rogers & Neil Sales of Radstock. Whew! What a hot day Friday was, the day of liberation, for the Pau race. Although we were all hopeful, because of the east in the wind, that the International could be won in the UK, (and more especially in the west country of course!) it was not to be. We went to bed on the Friday night knowing that no-one had a bird in the UK and it was all to play for the next day. And, with returns few and far between on the other side of the Channel it was obviously a very hard race.

At Treetops we were up and about shortly after 4 am, a little bleary eyed but still hoping to get an early bird. The hours went by, and the temperature rose by the hour, and still nothing arrived on the loft. It was gone midday when the two-year-old chequer cock bird flew down onto the trap. We were so relieved to get one home! This plucky bird was bred from a pairing of the following birds: sire a double grandson of Zwart Goud and double great grandson of Snelle Jelle and dam a double granddaughter of Orion - the dam was bred from a son of Hugo and a daughter of Golden Barcelona. The condition of the cock was amazingly good, considering the length of time in the basket and the duration of the flight. We were fortunate enough to also get three hens return home that day. Three out of four of our birds that came home all had Southfield Hugo and Double Orion blood in their pedigrees…We hope that everyone gets some more birds back over the next few weeks.

CSCFC – 4th, 8th & 10th Open, 3rd NW Section. BBC – 8th Open 2nd Section C. BICC – 4th South West Section, 15th Open, Geoff & Catherine Cooper of Peasedown St John. We clocked a three-year-old chequer cock who was destined to go to the Barcelona International, but at the time of basketing for Pau he was the fittest bird in the loft, so he went to Pau instead. Two weeks ago, he was 4th section BICC St Philbert. Last season he was getting prepared for the Pau International but was missing for a month from a short training toss, where he returned badly hawked and couldn't race anymore that season. His sire is a full brother to Grafter who is retired in the stock loft, after winning several top prizes racing north and south. His dam is bred from a son of Farmer George x Ivy when paired to a Jellema hen.


Rob Brooks


The Treetops partnership


Catherine Cooper

CSCFC – 1st & 2nd SW Section 5th & 12th Open. BBC – 9th Open & BICC 16th Open, Dave & John Staddon of Ditcheat. Firstly, congratulations to Mike Hathway on his fabulous win. Mike is a lovely man who has been flying a red-hot pigeon in recent seasons. Well done, Mike.
We are thrilled to win the first and second SW Section. We sent 4 birds to the race. It proved to be a very difficult race with all countries in Europe struggling due to the high temperatures in France. It is easy for us to sit in England in 28/30 degrees and just assume the birds can cope with 35 degrees in France, but the truth is, even without the Channel, it makes it a very stern test. Our two birds are paired together and are raced on Chaos Widowhood and fed our own Staddon Chaos Mix from Bamfords. The section winner is a beautiful chequer hen bred from Portrait Boy, the pigeon we bred for Dave Young to be 2nd BICC 66th International Agen 22,000b. The dam is a daughter of Dave's Diva, bred and raced by David Hales/Duncan Goodchild. Dave's Diva won 4th Nat Perpignan 631 miles, 4th Nat Agen 534 Miles, 6th Nat Agen, 8th Nat Narbonne 595 miles and the much-coveted BICC Merit Award.
Our second pigeon is named Kelvin and is from our own family of long-distance pigeons we have been cultivating for a few years. Kelvin was also our GDSBNFC pigeon, where he won 3rd Open. He has already scored from BICC St Vincent International, where he homed on the day for 11th Open but was disqualified as we didn't have a temporary evaluation after our first two birds were timed. This was in 2023 as a yearling. He then won 39th Open Pau 2024 and 22nd Dax 2024. So now he has been to four International races and scored in all four. We hope we can get him ready for Dax. His breeding is in the purple. His sire is Centigrade, a son of our own Fahrenheit 2nd BICC Nat Reiux Minervois 592 miles & 23rd BICC Pau when paired to Celcius, 15th BICC Pau & 3rd BICC Rieux Minervois 592 miles. His dam is Sapphire, direct from Gemstone 1st Sec 7th Nat NFC Pau, 47th Nat Agen, 9th Nat Falaise, 1st Sec 3rd Nat BBC Pau. Her dam was Miss St Vincent, 1st Sec, 3rd BICC St Vincent, 520 miles as a yearling. We have always been trying to build our own family of marathon champions and now we are starting to see the results.

BBC – 1st Section J, 4th Open & 2nd South East Section, 6th Open BICC, Mark Bulled of Harlow. Well done to all that timed on a very tough day. I timed a widow cock bird, line bred on both sides to my old Legacy family. He was bred from two birds that flew and scored from Thurso on the north from

500 miles on the day. He was very dehydrated on return and took some coaxing in but was fine after a drink.

BICC - 3rd South East Section, 7th Open, M Connolly of Canning Town. Mike timed a blue cock bird to take 7th Open, 3rd Section. A 2-year-old, having only his third ever race from across the Channel. He was sent sitting 15-day eggs. He is through pigeons I had from Dean Childs and Michael Symonds. We are also 19th Open, 5th Section and 39th Open, 10th Section on a very hard race.



Dave & John Staddon



Mark Bulled's bird



Mike Connolly's cock bird

BBC – 1st Section B Danny Lanahan & John Gerard of Poole. The hen that won the section is a top hen for us. I think this is her third section win from the BICC, BBC and CSCFC. The bloodlines of this three-year-old is from Figo. Figo won 1st National Bourges 12,000 birds plus around 12 x 1st positions. Also, a super racer and super breeder all over the World. At one time we had 12 direct children from Figo. What a hard race this was, good luck to all the winners.



BICC - 1st South Centre Section, 3rd Open, BBC – 2nd Open 1st Section D, Mark Gilbert of Windsor. It turned out to be a tough ask and given that so few timed in France by nightfall, it was no surprise nothing made it back to the UK on the day. So, it was back at the lofts at 4 am next morning with the expectation that the birds could work back in the cool of the morning. We sent 21 widowhood cocks, with 20 being 2-year-olds and most having their first crack at an International. Not an ideal start to their international careers.

At 10.08am our first cock bird hit the loft from the 563-mile journey. He scored 1st Section, 2nd Open British Barcelona Club, 1st Section, 3rd National British International Championship Club. This cock is a full brother to Southfield Abigail's Star, winner of 1st National BICC Agen. He is also brother to 6th Section, 8th Open BBC, 9th Section, 14th National BICC Barcelona, 38th National NFC Tarbes, 38th National BICC Pau and 9th Section, 29th National BICC Dax. The father is a son of Sumerian Fighter, 1st International Barcelona 17,026 birds 2017 and the mother is a daughter of Romee, winner of 3rd National Bergerac 10,327 birds, 3rd National Orange 4,302 birds and 3rd NPO St Vincent 1,365 birds in 2013.

The race turned out to be a very tough race and the birds took all day to make it home. We managed to get 5 on the day and another 2 were waiting on the loft the following morning so a total of 7. We

are hoping a few more make it home, as are a lot of fanciers.

BICC - 2nd South Centre Section, 4th Open & CSCFC – 2nd Open 1st & 2nd NE Section & BBC - 3rd Open 2nd Section D, Owen Abery of Reading. Firstly, I'd like to say a massive well done to the winner and everyone who clocked birds from this race. I've been told it has been one of the hardest Pau races people have known. My first bird is a chequer hen placing her 1st NE section 2nd Open CSCFC, 3rd Open 2nd NE Section BBC and 2nd Section CS and 4th Open BICC. She is bred from a grandson of Southfield Melissa x a granddaughter of Kannibal Barcelona and Forrest Jr. She has previously been placed 3rd NE Section, 9th Open Thurso 2022 and 1st NE Section, 19th Open CSCFC Pau in 2024. She was given 2 preparation races over the Channel at Fougeres, 214 miles, and rested for 3 weeks before Pau. She was let in with the cocks on the Sunday before marking Monday. They always have food in front of them 24 hours a day and the mix was adjusted for the race ahead. I was delighted to see her come in and was amazed how much body weight she still carried. Hopefully this can qualify her for the Blue Riband Certificate Merit which would be amazing as it would be my first.

My second bird was a blue hen, placing 2nd NE Section 17th Open CSCFC and 18th CS, 42nd Open BICC. She was bred from a Jelle Jellema cock gifted to me from Mark Gilbert when paired to The Northern Dream 1st Open CSCFC Thurso 2021. She was prepared the same way as my first bird and her sister placed 2nd NE Section, 26th Open Pau 2024. A pairing to look out for. I'd like to say a massive thank you to Mark Gilbert for helping me all these years and giving me advice and help when I need it.

BICC - 3rd South Centre Section, 10th Open, Bogdan Luca of Harrow. Bogdan Luca a Romanian pigeon fancier, is from the Great Harrow South Road Club. He took 3rd Section, 10th Open and 6th Section, 17th Open from Pau. He timed GB23D60992 and GB23V42307, who were paired up together and sent sitting 10-day eggs. He timed the hen first. In preparation for the Pau International, they were sent with Harrow Club for a few inland races and with the BICC for all the National races. Bogdan was very satisfied with the result because these two pigeons are the only long-distance birds he has and both returned home on a very hot day from a hard race.


Mark Gilbert's first bird


Owen Abery


Bogdan Luca

BICC- 1st North West Section, 8th Open, Martin Williams of Hereford. For my first International race, I chose two 4-year-olds, both pure Jellema hens on the roundabout. My 1st Section, 8th Open bird was prepared with races from Nort sur Erdre with the BICC and St Philbert with the BBC, taking 3rd Section, 83rd Open. She was my first bird home from Tarbes last year, taking 3rd Section, 90th Open. She is a half-sister to my Tarbes 2022 winner and the sire is a son of Sarr, 2nd Open Barcelona. Having flown 612 miles plus, she was still very fresh. My second bird arrived on Sunday morning. This one has similar breeding to my Tarbes hen, having the same sire. I would like to thank good club mates and rivals, Trevor Booth and John Roper, for kindly taking my birds to Southampton for marking.

BBC – 2nd Section 5th & 7th Open G Doug Gatland of Hookwood. My first bird was a two-year-old widowhood cock, he raced to Bordeaux 440 miles as a yearling and this year flew had 1 x 30 mile training toss before the season followed by 3 inland races to 130 miles, he then flew the BICC

Alencon and Nort-Sur Erdre races and one week before basketing was back inland at 130 miles, no other training was given. He is a small cock of predominantly Jellema bloodlines, his father being a grandson of Zwart Goud bred by Marco Meijer in Holland. The dam is home bred and again from a grandson of Zwart Goud, this time from Kees Droog x with a Zeus / Evi hen from Mark Gilbert.
My second pigeon is also a two-year-old widowhood cock, who had the same preparation as my first bird, with the difference being, he was my first bird from both Alencon and Nort Sur Erdre, so had some form going into this race. His breeding is again Jellema, his sire being a grandson of Romee and Joe Frazier, bred by Luuk Becker, this time crossed with a double granddaughter of Golden Barcelona from Mark Gilbert. He was one of three brothers' home on the winning day with his full brother being my fifth pigeon home and my 3rd pigeon being his half-brother, from the same sire. I had 8 pigeons' home by the end of the 3rd day and send my congratulations to Mr & Mrs Rhodes on winning the race with a great pigeon on a hard day.

CSCFC – 1st SE Section 6th Open, Jim Wearn & Erik Neilson of Ramsdean. Jim and Erik timed a 4 year old dark chequer cock at 11.57.04

CSCFC – 7th Open, Mr & Mrs Mark Hancock of Winchester. This pigeon was bred by my good friend Ian Smith from Eastleigh. A bit of a Heinz 57, the sire a Jos Thone x Busschaert and the dam, Jan Hooyman Harry lines x Vandenabeele. He flew the Pau International last year and was found in the loft. Well done to all those who clocked, a very tough race.


Martin Williams


Doug Gatland's first bird


Mark Hancock

BICC - 1st North Centre Section, 70th Open, L A Smith of Wellingborough. This pigeon was gifted to me as a young bird, by my good friend Greg Perkins - thanks mate! He was 2nd Section from the last BICC National but wrongly labelled as a Breeman, he is actually bred from K Zafera stock and was sent sitting 8 days.

BICC - 2nd North Centre Section, 71st Open, Petre Daniel Graur of Peterborough. This was the first International that Petre sent to and he was really happy with his results and the way the race was organised. He timed a 2-year-old cock that was raced with BICC at Nort sur Erdre before being sent to Pau. He also raced from France as a yearling on the natural system. The breeding is full of long-distance bloodlines. The sire was bred by the House of Aarden with Champion De Gas, 1st International Barcelona Ace Pigeon 2009-10 and Padfield's Invincible in the pedigree. The bloodlines of the dam are through a direct daughter of Invincible Spirit, the famous Jan Aarden 10 times National and International winner.

BICC - 3rd North Centre Section, 74th Open, Dave Lyden of Yardley Gobion. The bird that Dave took 3rd NC Section, 74th Open with, was a 2-year-old cock bird of Tornado lines. He was sat contentedly with a big youngster that he raced home to. Day 3 does not always sound credible, but to have anything home in the savage conditions that this lad came through is not only credible but exceptional. Congratulations to the winners and everyone who clocked.


Andy Smith's bird


Petre Daniel Graur's cock bird


Dave Lyden's bird back on the nest

BICC - 1st North East Section, 14th Open, Kelvin Sharman of Syleham. This pigeon was part of a group of 4 swapped with A&T Wright of Norwich. The breeding is of the Jelle Jellema family. Last year the pigeon went to Barcelona and has been consistent across the Channel this year. Well done to all who clocked from this very hard race.

BICC - 2nd North East Section, 37th Open, Jonathan Palmer of Ipswich. Jonathan's first bird home was bred by David Fisher of Ipswich. He's been a great pigeon, previously taken 8th Open, being the only bird on the day in the North East Section from St Maxient Ecole with the BICC. I timed him at 9.20pm the evening and the following race he was 22nd Open NFC Tarbes, 2nd Section BBLM. In 2024 he had an off year, but I'm pleased to report he's back to his usual self and returned in great condition.

His sire is a son of Islas Rainy Day Boy, and his dam is a daughter off Joe Raeburns 3rd Open BICC Barcelona, when he was paired to a daughter of Litton Glory. Congratulations to the winners and all those that timed in on a very testing race.

BICC - 3rd North East Section, 65th Open, A & T Wright of Norwich. A & T Wright took 56th Open with GB 18 S10182, timed on day 3 at 6.36am flying 644 miles.


Kelvin Sharman


Jonathan Palmer's first bird

CSCFC – Second loft in the SW Section Alfie Harp & Nick Pearse of Poole. The hen I timed from Pau is a six-year-old who has been a good pigeon for me. She has flown the Channel time and time again, and also the north road too. She is bred from a Kees Bosua stock pigeon which I purchased from Nigel Langstaff when Ian Crammond passed away. She was sent to Pau sitting 12-day eggs.

CSCFC – second in the NE Section, G & M Bicknell of Reading. Our bird was a 5-year-old chequer pied hen sent sitting for 10 days. She was 49th Open Tarbes with the NFC last year.

BBC – 10th Open, Sallis, Rushman, McGee and Cipriani. My pigeon is a grandson of Lloyd Laureate of Ad Foutain and he is a very consistent pigeon being my first bird last year from Bordeaux. He came back in great condition as can be seen from the photo of him, taken just 10 mins after he returned.



Sallis Rushman McGee and Cipriani's cock bird



Gary Bicknell with granddaughter Phoebe

And that concludes the first International of the season. The next race is from Agen, and that will be followed by the Blue Ribband race from Barcelona. Who will make history this year? We will soon find out!

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