



BICC PAU INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT.

The 2016 Pau International race was the first occasion when fanciers were allowed to enter unlimited numbers of pigeons. Prior to this the entries of each competing fancier had been strictly limited, initially to just five pigeons. So the 2016 entry proved to be a record of 9,932 pigeons entered by the cream of the European fancy. The British entry amounted to 391 pigeons entered by 101 competing fanciers.

As we are all aware, the weather in France over the past month has been pretty shocking and this bad run continued into the weekend of the Pau International. As a result of the bad weather in France and the near continent the convoy was held at the race point for two days and finally released on Sunday 19th June at 7.20 am GMT.

The irony of this decision is that when the weather was bad in France it was fairly good here in the UK and yet when the weather had improved on the continent it was atrocious here in the UK and the English Channel!! “C’est la vie” as they say in France which, roughly translated, means “Sod’s Law” in colloquial English.

Very little hope was given therefore of any of the British pigeons making it across the English Channel on the day, despite the fact that pigeons were being clocked in France to the north of Paris from 6 pm onwards.

Personally, given the atrocious weather conditions prevailing in north west France and the Channel from late afternoon onwards on the Sunday, I didn’t think a British pigeon would be clocked until late morning on the second day.

WRONG!!! One outstanding pigeon was clocked at 4.49 am on Monday morning at the Windsor lofts of Mark Gilbert. This gallant pigeon must have hit the French coast in early evening, which by this time was being subjected to torrential rain and strong winds.

Undaunted, the three year old then forged on alone, into the gathering gloom and driving wind and rain, to take on the English Channel and all that this uncompromising stretch of sea could throw at it, to eventually make landfall in England just before darkness fell. What a pigeon!!!



Mark Gilbert pictured with father Geoff. Mark wins 1st Open BICC Pau International 2016

I spoke briefly to Mark on the second morning of the race and he had this to tell me about his courageous pigeon.

“He’s a three year old blue cock bred from a son of “Southfield Supreme” when Supreme was mated to a daughter of Brockamp’s “George”.

The dam is a direct daughter of Brockamp’s Perpignan 06 that won 1st National 2nd International Marseille.”

The dam is in fact a full sister to 1st International Marseille and has now bred two BICC winners in International races for Mark, including 1st St Vincent International and now 1st Pau International.

A full report will appear in the near future and in the mean time I can tell readers that a comprehensive loft report on Mark can be found on the BICC web site. Congratulations Mark on yet another remarkable performance.

In second spot in the BICC Open result and topping the East section with a velocity of 807 mpm, is a two year old chequer hen to another BICC International race winner from Pau in 2012 – none other than the extremely likeable Herne Bay fancier John Chipperfield.

This hen is also full of International winning bloodlines from Jacobs Brothers, Vertelman & son and Jan Theelen with a 1st International

Perpignan and 2nd International Perpignan from the various sources in her make up. She has been raced on the roundabout system and was allowed in with her mate on the Sunday before basketting for Pau on the Monday. Her preparatory races this year have been two inland races followed by Alencon 1 & 2 with the BICC and then off to Pau for her first bash at International racing.



*John Chipperfield & son Joe 2nd Open BICC Pau International 2016.
Photo taken when John was 1st Open Pau in 2012*

John was telling me that she homed in torrential rain and looked like a “drowned rat” when she landed.

Mark Gilbert clocked further arrivals later in the morning to finish provisionally at 3rd, 6th 13th & 14th Open as I write this.

Alan “Wally” Turner otherwise known as the “nearly man” of International racing as he has had innumerable top ten finishes without yet actually winning one, clocked to take 2nd East section 4th Open vel 706 mpm.



Alan clocked a seven year old cock that was 7th Open BICC Perpignan in 2015 winning 1st in the GDSBNFC. He was sent feeding a big youngster with his hen having laid her first egg at time of basketting. His preparation for Pau was 3 x 60 mile ; 3 x 100 mile trainers and a single race from Boves with the EECC.

Robbie Harris comes in next at 3rd East section 5th Open with a bird on 703 mpm. This 5 year old red cock has been raced on round about in the early part of the season and was sent to Pau sitting 5 day old eggs - his first nest of the season. He was bred by Mark Cowell and has Red



Barcelona and Cyril Wells bloodlines in his make up. Preparation for Pau has been one inland race followed by three BICC cross channel jaunts.

Mark Gilbert's third in the clock takes 3rd Centre section 6th Open vel 701 mpm.

Another of the "usual suspects" – fanciers who invariably clock well up on the result of International races, comes in next at 4th East section 7th



Open with a six year old recording 695 mpm , this to the father and son partnership of Geoff and Clayton Preece.

Geoff and Clayton clocked another 6 year old to record 618 mpm to finish provisionally 17th Open at time of writing.

A B [Tony] Coker of Wickford in Essex takes 8th Open with a bird recording a velocity of 693 mpm.

The timer here is a three year old chequer cock flown on round about and containing Ronnie Evans & son bloodlines from the UNC. The cock has had no club races this season just a Messac race and then privately trained to 80 miles before going to Pau to home in torrential rain.



Yet another BICC stalwart and previous Barcelona winner with the BICC the great John Lane of Whitstable timed on 691 mpm for 5th East section 9th Open.



John clocked a two year old cock which was trained but unraced as a young bird . He had Agen International last year as his only race and this season has had three BICC Channel races in preparation for Pau. Sire is a Mark Cooper Delbar which flew Thurso on the north road and Perpignan south. John's timer was sent unpaired/ celibate .

Lee & Kevin Buddle of Dover are always there or thereabouts with their multi Award of Merit family of long distance diehards and here they clock their great long distance racer "Tom" on 666 mpm to finish provisionally at 10th Open. "Tom" has previously won:-

- 5th BICC St Vincent 2013*
- 15th BICC Pau 2014*
- 22nd BICC St Vincent 531m 2014*
- 27th BICC St Vincent 2015*
- 30th BICC Pau (on the day) 2013.*



Dorin Melinte of Harrow in North west London comes in with a 4 year old for 11th Open on 651 mpm, followed by an 8 year old to the Aylesham partnership of Mr & Mrs Steven Rhodes at 12th Open vel 648 mpm.

Brooks Brothers got the first bird in the West section recording 624 mpm to finish at 15th Open with Geoff and Catherine Cooper coming in next in the west section and finishing at 16th Open vel 619. As I write this in the late afternoon of the second day there are just 18 pigeons home with Calum Edmiston's timer in at 18th Open vel 608 mpm.

Well that's all I have in the Open result as I write this on the second day of the race. I intend to write a more comprehensive report during the next few days as more pigeons home to the various sections. Good luck to all and lets hope that many more pigeons make their home lofts in what has been a hard race flown in difficult, verging on impossible conditions, for the British entrants.

Gareth Watkins

