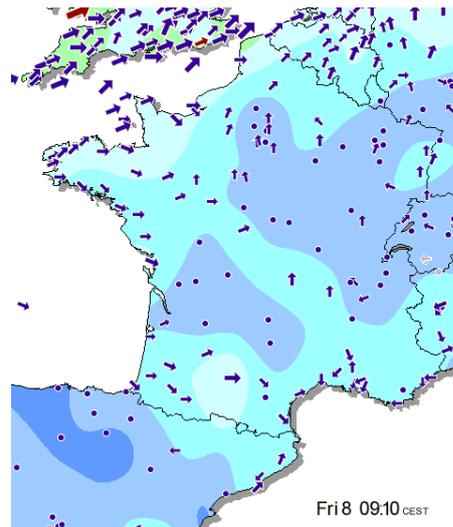
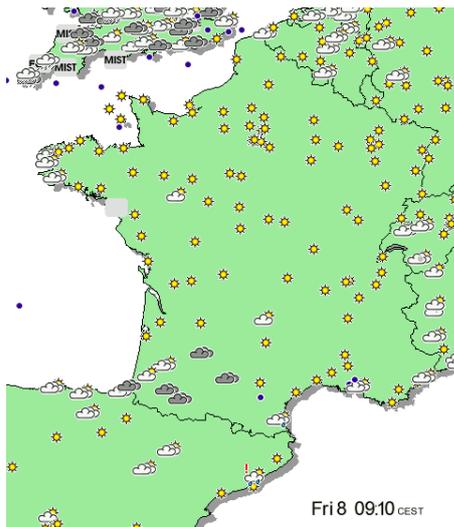




BICC ST VINCENT INTERNATIONAL RACE REPORT.

The location of St Vincent in the far south west of France on the coast overlooking the Bay of Biscay gives UK fanciers the best opportunity of winning an International race IF the wind is in the east as it was in 2015 when Geoff and Catherine Cooper won 1st Open International and a number of other UK fanciers recorded outstanding positions in the International result.

The 2016 event saw 10,647 pigeons line up for the start and this number included 277 sent by members of the BICC. The birds were liberated on the scheduled day – yes you read that correctly, that is a miracle in itself this summer, at 6.15 am GMT to race the 500+ miles back to their home lofts in the UK.



The weather for the course of the race looked fair with plenty of sunshine and a light westerly wind to start, changing to south westerly the further up France the convoy raced.

Pigeons began to be clocked from 16.33 pm onwards these to the north east of Paris and flying 765 kms [460 miles] with German fanciers Kipp & son clocking in South West Germany and taking 1st & 4th Open International vels 1311 & 1295 mpm.

Next we saw pigeons being clocked on the North West coast of France near Dieppe at 17.10 pm and so hopes were high that some British pigeons would have broken away from “the cavalry charge” into North East France, Germany and Belgium and crossed the English Channel before night fall.

This they did, with our own world class superstar, Mark Gilbert of Windsor timing the first of his three day birds at 20.06 pm doing 1041 mpm for 538 miles. Mark clocked two further pigeons at 20.10 pm and 21.06 pm doing 1036 and 971 mpm to take the first three Open

“Southfield Emma”

GB14P08770

**1st Sec CS 1st Open British International
Championship Club St Vincent 2016**

Raced by M Gilbert, Winkfield



©Chris Sutton

*positions [for the second time this year]. He also clocked early birds next morning at 5.19 am and 6.24 am to finish off with the first five pigeons in the Centre section. There are not enough superlatives in the English language to adequately describe Mark’s achievements over the past couple of decades so I’ll use just one **OUTSTANDING**.*

So, taking 1st, 2nd 3rd, 5th & 6th Open are five birds to the Winkfield Windsor loft of Mark Gilbert. This is what Mark had to tell me about his latest triumph:-

“The winner of the St Vincent race was bred for me by my good friend Dean Childs, He is from a son of “Wingdown” and the dam is from Southfield Mellissa when she was paired to a son of Euro Diamond.

The second bird , taking second Open, is from a double grandson of Brockamp’s George and the dam is from Geoff and Catherine Cooper’s Champion breeder George.

The third bird which takes third Open is from a son of Southfield Supreme when paired to a daughter of Brockamp’s George and the mother is a daughter of Euro Diamond .



The fourth bird that takes 5th Open was also 3rd Open BICC Pau International this year and was my all pooler. He is from a Double Grandson of George and the mother is from Southfield Supreme.

The sixth open is from a son Tuff Nutt and the Barcelona hen from Entienne Meirlaen.”

Mr & Mrs Connolley of Marden come in at 1st East section 4th Open with a five year old doing 932 mpm over the 524 mile course. Pat Connolley sends me the following information:-



“First congratulations to Mark and everybody who clocked. Our section winning bird was chequer cock 'Whitenose' he is very consistent winning previously 13th sect 27th Open Agen; 22nd sect 38th Open St. Vincent; 14th sect 34th Open St. Vincent; 27th sect 67th Open Agen plus good positions from Alencon and Falaise all with the BICC. He was bred from “Legend” 1st International Dax for Brian Sheppard and was a widowhood cock given his hen day before basketing. Second bird was also a g. daughter of legend and third bird was from Lowik Brothers.”

Bill Knox flying under the banner of SR & W H Knox comes in with another five year old on 742 mpm for 2nd East section 7th Open.



The cock has now flown the channel 20 times, including Pau twice, 9th and 52nd Open; St Vincent 3 times, 33rd 11th and now 7th Open which qualifies him for a BICC Award of Merit. His sire has also flown channel 22 times his best performance being

1st section 2nd open Pau BICC.

His dam had just 5 channel crossings before being put to stock. Her sire flown Barcelona 3 times her dam flown Marsielle, San Sabastian and Dax.

This is the Solway King line that has served Bill well over the years.

Bill's second bird in the clock taking 6th sect 11th Open provisionally was timed from Pau earlier this year taking 27th open and had previously taken 39th open Pau 8th open ST Vincent and also takes 3rd GDSBNFC to go with his 3rd GDSBNFC from Pau.



So it's a case with Bill of proven long distance winners breeding their like.

Heath Archibald competing as H & P Archibald in respect of Heath's late father Peter, is a previous Barcelona winner and here he comes in with a two year old on 739 mpm to finish at 3rd East section 8th Open.



Heath clocked a round about hen bred from his good Pau hen when mated to a son of Kevin and Lee Buddle's champion long distance racer "Tom". The hen has had a few 100 mile trainers with the Wingham club plus BICC Alencon and Poitiers [returned in basket] plus the EECC Pithiviers race in preparation for St Vincent. Heath has

asked me to thank Don Harvey for looking after the birds while he was away on holidays celebrating his 50th birthday. He also sends his congratulations to Mark Gilbert on yet another outstanding performance.

The outstanding long distance partnership of Spencer and the late John Nicholson of Rochester in Kent take 4th East section 9th Open with a 3 year old on 716 mpm.

The Nicholson bird is a 3 year old light chequer cock, sent to St Vincent sitting 2 day eggs. He flew Pau International earlier in the season, arriving home early on the 3rd morning but not clocked. He was rested after Pau, then given a race from Poole on the Saturday before basketing for St Vincent. He is



also the partners' Greater Distance Single Bird NFC nomination. Last year he was 11th BICC Pau, giving him 2nd Greater Distance Single Bird NFC and was also 43rd BICC St Vincent in 2015. He was bred from a hen that flew Barcelona 3 times, who in turn was out of Jinni the Nicholson's 1st BICC Marseille winner, when paired to Jasper, who was 4th BBC Palamos. His sire is a son of Kate & Plum, who had many top positions at Barcelona, Palamos, etc. Spencer tells me that he arrived home in excellent condition, and may go to Perpignan.

Finishing off the top ten in the Open is the Dover partnership of Kevin and Lee Buddle who look to be 10th & 13th Open on the provisional result.



Here's what the lads had to tell me about their latest successful International race:-

"The provisional 10th & 13th Open are actually a nest pair of 2012 birds and are the same way bred as "Tom" our first bird from Pau International finishing 10th Open & winning a BICC merit award. The sire and Dam to these is "Amoy" 1st BICC Pau 2009 & "BC" 2nd BICC Pau 2009.

First in the clock is a 2012 Hen that flew BICC Pau 3 weeks ago winning 35th Open. She has also won 15th Nat BICC Perpignan 2015 593m, 17th Nat BICC St Vincent 2015 530m, 35th Nat BICC Pau 2016 & 149th Open NFC Tarbes. she's a Dtr of "Amoy" 1st BICC Pau & "BC" 2nd BICC Pau. She was sent back to St Vincent with No training or racing after Pau, sent flying Widowhood. Preparation prior to Pau was 3 short EECC races and 1x BICC Alencon.

Second in the clock is and nest mate to the first bird is a 2012 Cock who was on his first trip of the season to a Long Distance International

race. He has previously won 209th Open NFC Tarbes & 177th BICC Agen. He to was sent on widowhood and may go back to BICC Perpignan in 3 weeks time. His preparation for St Vincent was 4x short EECC races and a BICC Alencon.

They both were fed on VL Superstar plus & Best All Round with added sunflower hearts the last few days before race marking.”

Around the sections now and the first three in both the Centre and East sections have been covered in the Open result, so we'll go over to the West section where we see another pair of superstars taking the premier position, none other than four times International race winners, Geoff and Catherine Cooper way out west in Peasedown St John near Bath. Here's what the Coopers had to tell me about their birds:-

“We clocked a yearling widowhood hen to win 1st West section. She is bred from a son of Kannibal 4th Int. Barcelona when paired a hen bred from Farmer George 1st

International Bordeaux and Wollongong 1st International Pau. She has had several channel races with the last one being Ancensis with the National FC, as were all the other birds clocked.



2nd section was a 2 year old dark widowhood cock. His sire was bred from Farmer George 1st Int. Bordeaux and Wollongong 1st Int. Pau, the dam was a daughter of De Kas, an Ace Barcelona pigeon. This cock made a mistake earlier in the season and many thanks to Ray Bevan and partner and Alen Gibb for helping return the pigeon.

3rd section was a 2 year old dark widowhood cock. His sire was a son of Euro Star and Pipa, a top breeding pair. His Dam was a daughter of Shiraz 2nd Int. Bordeaux when paired to a sister of Farmer George 1st Int. Bordeaux.”

Perhaps at this point I should highlight some of the excellent team performances achieved in this difficult race. Obviously, the stand out performance is that of Mark Gilbert with the following positions won:- 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th, 20th, 21st, 23rd & 36th Open.

Then we have the Khan Brothers with five birds on the result at 17th, 23rd, 25th, 27th & 42nd Open.

Dickie and Steve Pearmain had five birds on the result at 12th, 24th, 37th, 38th & 48th Open.

The Coopers did a demolition job on the opposition in the West section with six birds on the section result at 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th & 7th section plus 19th, 26th, 47th, 51st, 55th & 57th Open.

Mr & Mrs Connolley come in with four birds to take 4th, 41st, 54th & 59th Open, with their first in the clock topping the East section.

Before finishing this report on the St Vincent International race I would like to highlight details of some pigeons that have returned home from Barcelona in race time but were not included in my report on the Barcelona race.



First of these is Alan Annis's timer which finished at 14th Open, this pigeon was also 56th open Pau 2015 and is of Jos Thone x Cyril Wells bloodlines flown on the natural system and fed on Buckton VIP.

It was prepared with a Boves and a Pithiviers with the East of England Continental Club before being packed off to do its best from Barcelona.

Taking 17th Open in the Barcelona race with a velocity of 172 ypm is one to the

Ponthir[Caerleon] partnership of Ray Strawbridge and Johnny "One Punch" Williams. That's all the details I have from my fellow Welshman.

In at 18th Open vel 169 ypm is one to Les Jones of Hitchin in Hertfordshire.

Next we have a pigeon to former Barcelona winner Terry Johnson of Whitstable in Kent. El Tel's bird recorded 166.4 ypm for 19th Open. Terry clocked a Dark chequer cock "0 one 0" four years old and flown to the perch, bred from a pair of



Geoff and Catherine Cooper birds that were bred out of their race team. He was lightly trained throughout the winter in any weather with my good mate John Lane. Since racing started this year and before Barcelona he has flown approx 950 miles. He is a descendant of Coopers 00535 and 00559.

In 20th and 22nd Open are two birds to Mark Gilbert these are bred as follows :-the first is a in bred Brockamp hen from a son of George and a daughter of Euro Damond and the second bird is from Kanibal Barcelona.

Four times Europa Cup winners F Knowles & son of Wingham in Kent clocked one of their entries doing 163.3 ypm to top off the prize list at 21st Open.

Finally we have a bird to the Ashford partnership of D G Watson & son on 157 ypm to take 23rd Open.

Well that's another tough International race over with for 2016. Next up is a "double header" this weekend from Le Mans and Marseille. Good luck to all who have sent.

Gareth Watkins

