



BICC DECEMBER NEWS REPORT.

Well, we are at that time of year again when many are actively planning their matings for 2017 and others have already got the process underway and have their stock birds mated in the hope that they will breed that elusive champion. The BICC continues to expand, gaining new members almost weekly. In fact as I was writing this report a fancier from the Harrow area of NW London phoned to tell me that he has 25 prospective new members keen on joining the BICC. Perhaps this renewed interest is because many fanciers throughout the UK are tiring of the monotony of weekly club racing and have started to look beyond their own backyards and wish to take up a new challenge. As I have written on a number of occasions in the past, the BICC is the ONLY National club in the UK to offer its members the complete package of sprint, middle distance, long distance and International racing under one all encompassing umbrella. We have amongst our ranks, fanciers from all of the home Nations plus those in Ireland. Much has been said during the winter months regarding opening up new BICC marking stations in the North of England. I can assure those reading this that the BICC committee have in the past, and will continue in the future, look sympathetically at any applications for new marking stations.



BICC Committee

However, these applications would have to fulfil certain essential criteria such as:-

Viability – would the marking station attract sufficient entries to make it feasible?

Transport – would the marking station be able to open in order that the pigeons would be available for collection by the transporter or pick up vehicle, bearing in mind the very tight schedule that the transporters have to adhere to if they are to board the ferries on time?

Volunteers to run the marking stations – would there be sufficient volunteers to run the marking station and guarantee security?

The crucial word here is VOLUNTEERS as the BICC, or any other organisation, cannot actively coerce people into running a marking station, It has to be done on the basis of their own free will and desire to participate.

In this respect it's a case of "where there's a will, there's a way".

So, it's up to you lads/ lasses. If you have enough keen and interested fanciers, who would like to join with us, in possibly the UK's most progressive National racing organisation, all you have to do is put pen to paper and write to our secretary Carol Francis. I can assure you that all applications for new marking stations will be treated sympathetically in line with the basic criteria outlined above.

As many will know, the BICC can now boast a total of 11 International race winners when competing against the very best fanciers in Europe. The Entente Belge recently held its presentation to the winners of the 2016 International races and once again UK fanciers featured significantly in the proceedings.



Geoff and Cath Cooper along with John Haynes and Mark Gilbert at the Entente Belge PD 2016

Amongst those present were Catherine and Geoff Cooper and Catherine has sent me this brief report plus photos of the revelries:-

“Sunday 12th of December is the date of the Entente Belg presentation day. Mark Gilbert, who won, amongst many others, 1st National Pau and 1st National St. Vincent BICC International and John Chipperfield, 1st National Perpignan BICC International, this with the same hen that also won 2nd National Pau BICC International a few weeks earlier for John, were amongst the British contingent that crossed the Channel to enjoy the Belgian hospitality. The other members of the group were John Haynes, Geoff and Catherine Cooper, John Chipperfield Junior, Jamie Clark, Jimmy Bauress and John Murray both from Liverpool, plus John Black from Hertfordshire.



John Chipperfield and Mark Gilbert with their trophies for 1st BICC Perpignan and 1st BICC Pau Internationals

For many years now the Entente Belge has invited the winners of the British International C.C. to join them on their special day. The day is amazing, starting just after midday with champagne and canapes, followed by half a lobster each, then a spectacular seafood buffet, a fillet steak then finally a dessert buffet. All the wine and beer is included with the meal. As in previous years presentations of the different awards are made in between courses. The guest list reads like a "who's who" of pigeon racing. Rik Hermans, Vandenheede, Etienne Meirlaen, Chris Hebberecht, Hugo Kipp and many others, The members and friends attending give all the prize winners a standing ovation. After the formalities there is a disco for those who are still

able to take to the floor to strut their stuff. We cannot thank Yvan Eckhout and the Entente Belge enough for the invitation to join them, it is always appreciated by the BICC members, their families and friends”



The happy group enjoying the Belgian hospitality

Sounds like a good time was had by all? Many thanks Catherine for the above details..

Next we have a brief outline of the financial situation and other important news prepared by club treasurer Russell Bradford:-

The BICC 2017 rings will be with the secretary shortly before Christmas. This year the prefix letter will be a “B”, and a pack of twenty rings cost £7.00 plus £1.50 postage. Without any further cost, or even the need to nominate a ring, the first “B” ring in each section of each of the two 2017 young bird races will receive £25.00.

The 2016 accounts have just been signed-off, and the club remains in a financially healthy state with a yearly surplus of slightly under £8,000.00; down on 2015 but understandable given all the hold-overs and the loss of the Poitiers race. Membership continues to grow with 40 new applications received since the end of October.

- *Carol Francis is on holiday until 17th, December but one of many jobs on her return is to get one thousand five hundred plus copies of the accounts printed and sent out along with any proposals for the AGM that may come in.*

- ***Proposals for consideration at the AGM must be with the secretary by December 28th, for circulation and the AGM is now planned for February 19th, 2017 at The Lion Brewery, Ash commencing midday.***

That's yer lot for 2016!! It only leaves me to wish all fanciers and their families throughout the UK, a very Merry Christmas and hopefully a prosperous and healthy New Year.

Gareth Watkins