

LEE BASTONE of BURNHAM ON CROUCH, ESSEX

1st Open BICC GUERNSEY 2 YOUNG BIRDS 2017.

The recent two Guernsey young bird and Any Age racers held by the BICC both proved to be highly successful affairs to finish off what has been an excellent season's racing for the members of this fast expanding and highly progressive club.

The second race from Guernsey highlighted yet again, the foresight of the race advisory team who decided early in the week leading up to the race weekend, that weather conditions would not be good enough for a race from the scheduled race point Falaise, and so the decision was taken to reschedule for a second race from Guernsey. The outcome was that the birds simply romped home, especially in the eastern side of the country.

The Winner of the young bird event proved to be a young blue Staf Van Reet cock entered by Burnham of Crouch fancier Lee Bastone.

The following article is based on an interview with Lee shortly after his latest National win with the BICC.



Lee Bastone with his first two birds from BICC Guernsey 2 YBS

Lee started in the sport as a young lad in the 70's and 80's helping his Dad around the loft. So you could say that his Dad was his first major influence in the sport. Lee's initial loft was a simple 6 ft x 4 ft affair that housed a small team of Busschaerts.



Later on in his pigeon racing career, he obtained a great deal of help and advice from the late, great and much missed Frank Tasker. Lee set up his own loft at his present location in 1995 and the present loft set up consists of a 16 ft x 6ft loft which houses a small team of just 12 widowhood cocks. There is also a separate 16 ft x 6 ft loft for Lee's small team of 30- 40 young birds, plus an 8ft x 6ft stock loft which has an aviary attached and houses 10 pairs of stock birds.



Lee Bastone outside his range of lofts

All lofts are thoroughly cleaned daily during the racing season and as regularly as possible during the off season as and when time allows. All birds are mated at the same time which is usually on Boxing Day at the end of December. This mating date ensures that all the babies are weaned by the beginning of March. The widowhood cocks are then exercised once daily and once the early season cobwebs have been disposed of they are expected to do a full hour's exercise once daily throughout the season.

The cocks are trained before the first race out to 40 miles and Lee is happy if he can get five or so of these trainers into the cocks before the first old bird race of the season. The widowers are all fed individually in their nest boxes on a variety of mixtures such as Depurative, Gerry Plus and Super widowhood mixtures supplied by Versele Laga. In the build up to a National race Lee likes to increase the amount of the heavier super widowhood mixture to ensure that the birds have ample supplies of energy giving food in the tank.



Lee Bastone's racing lofts

The young bird team is raced exclusively on the darkness system and Lee likes the youngsters to go to every race if fit and well. The babies are also expected to train daily in addition to their home exercise.

BLOODLINES.

Lee has enjoyed great success over the years when racing his family of Staf Van Reets and Soontjens that he obtained from his Dad. The SVR's coming via his Dad from Tony Mardon stock. However, the stock loft now houses a number of other strains including Vandenabeeles from Mick Watts and the newly acquired Frans Zwols. Nevertheless, it is the Van Reets that have supplied him with his two BICC National winners and this family have proved to be extremely reliable over the past 21 or so years since their introduction. Lee has crossed the SVR's with various introductions and has also inbred them with success and Lee has a preference for the bigger, stronger pigeon.

Over the years Lee has enjoyed a great deal of success at club, Fed and National level and probably the performance that gives him the greatest satisfaction was winning 1st Open BICC National followed by 2nd Open NFC National with the same SVR widowhood cock.



Lee Bastone 1st Open BICC Guernsey 2 YB

"Burnham Lad"

GB17B19515

**1st Sec ES 1st Open British International
Championship Club Guernsey Y/B 2017
Raced by Lee Bastone, Burnham on Crouch**



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MEDICATION & SUPPLEMENTS.

All birds are treated for worms, canker and respiratory problems on a regular basis and Lee likes to use Gemthepax, OregoStim, Matrix and Hormoform at the appropriate times of the year but sets great store by the use of the anti canker product Ronidazole.

That then is a brief insight into the methods of a highly successful, yet extremely modest fancier who is also a double National winner. Congratulations Lee on your latest National win with the BICC. Here's wishing you many more successes in the future.

Gareth Watkins