

OH Carentan 2023

The NFC race team had the old hens away in a simultaneous liberation with the young birds for the last race of the 2023 season. I have done a separate race report for the old hens as I have done in past years as I feel it should be given the prestige deserving of a national race.

Taking top spot winning 1st open is the all conquering loft of Mark Gilbert. Mark once more had a cracking race and had a bit of a cavalry charge to the loft of both young birds and old hens. His latest NFC winner is called **Southfield One Two**. His first 2 hens over the pad were good enough to claim the first 2 open positions and Section E and a third to claim 5th Open. This was a team that was prepared by a master at the top of his craft to do a job, and they definitely delivered - and on a day when the wind was really against them. From looking at the breeding of the birds that Mark has been clocking up the front in the short/middle distance national races recently it is clear that he has done his homework. As is to be expected of a fancier with his expertise, Mark has pulled together the very best of the best from several sources that have been put together with the sole purpose of competing in the bet completion available at classic and national level. He prepares them to get to the front and they have not let them down. Make no mistake about it, this is top drawer flying from a top fancier on a day when the wind and weather did him no favours. Well done Mark. This is what he had to say about the performance:



Mark Gilbert getting sage advice from an old hand.

So happy and surprised to win 1st Open National Flying Club in the Old Hens race from Carentan on a much tougher day than we have had in the last couple of weeks. We were not expecting to go very close in a northeast wind but our game widowhood hen had other ideas and returned home bringing two young birds with her. She has been a good hen for us this year and earlier in the season won the BB&O Fed from Honiton and then two weeks ago scored 2nd National British International Championship Club Guernsey. Her father is a double grandson of 'Gold Dust' a direct Marcel Sangers bred from his original, vintage Bulks and one of the best ever breeding sisters of 'Kittel'.

Her mother is a daughter of 'Grizzly Wonder' x 'Bulck 113' who are parents of 9 x 1st BB&O & Berkshire Fed winners as well as scores of top 10 positions etc.

We stay in Section E for 3rd Open and Section - which fell to the Reading partnership of Mr and Mrs Noakes. At the time of writing the report I have not been able to successfully contact them. Please get in touch when you read this.

Taking 4th open the top spot in Section J and having another close up for 9th open and 3rd section is the loft of Louis Yemm. If memory serves me right Louis flew in the South Stoke/Newcastle area of Staffordshire, if he still races here then given the day and the loft position, Louis had a great race on the day. I was unable to get any info from him in time for this report, but he arrived on the pigeon racing scene a few years ago with a bang. I remember first writing about him back around 2014 when he was still at school and raced a very small team to his parents back yard - but raced them well and right through to National level. It is good to see that a few years down the line he is a bit older and hopefully wiser, and still up with the lead birds on the day. Well done Louis.

6th Open and 2nd Section K is the Staffordshire lot of MJ Burden. This is what Michael had to say: I started with birds when I was about 10 years of age and flew in partnership with my father at Uttoxeter until I joined the Royal Navy and served on Nuclear Submarines until 1988 when I restarted in the sport. Due to personal circumstances I packed up the birds but always retained an interest in them and about 11 years ago I moved to Blythe Bridge and started up again.

This hen was a two year old late bred and hatched about the 1st of September. Her sire was a cock who had topped the federation for Andrew Hargreaves and is a Lambrect line which is closely related to his MNFC winner. He leant him me for 12 months but as I was being treated for cancer I had lost interest in the birds hence the very late bred hen taken. Her mother was a hen who was a big winner for the late Ken Pettitt who died recently and is of the Vandanabeele strain.

This year she was flown on the roundabout system and paired to another hen. Then sent to the 1st Guernsey race 240 miles which was a sticky race where she won 1st club 21st Federation. She went back about 2 weeks later then stopped for next year. About 3 weeks before the NFC race I decided to send every hen I could because I want to send most to Tarbes 680 miles next year and experience is needed, so I have been told, to get a good result from there. The birds by now had been left to run together and some paired up. This hen remained paired to her hen and an older cock joined them to make a trio of birds all sitting 4 eggs in the same bowl. The eggs had hatched on the day of the race and I think this suited the hen. I knew what time I needed to time to win the race and was very surprised when she was seen on the loft roof. I knew she was a good one straight away. She trapped quickly and that was it all done. I named the hen **Lady Trixie of Blythe** for good measure.



2nd Section J for Michael Burden

Claiming 7th Open and topping the hard fought Section K is the loft R and C O'Shea. This is what Conor had to say about it: After a successful OB sprinting season, winning 9x1st Fed, the rest of the year brought 2 strange Guernsey races for us in the YND combine so we selected 7 middle distance old hens to keep going and target the NFC race. They were flown on widowhood and raced the OB and YB programme before entry to Carentan.

The first hen and Section K winner is bred from a good pair of stock pigeons from Maurice van der Kruk of Tiel, Holland. She is a yearling hen that's had a tough season having returned injured on two separate occasions and had to miss several races. She did us proud and showed what she can do at this distance on a 1200ypm day.

Our 2nd pigeon (3rd Section K) is a yearling Cheq Pied hen bred from my grandad, Terry Smith's blood lines, sadly he passed away at the end of July this year and I hope he was looking down on the loft on this day, he'd be proud.

My Dad Dick deserves the credit for this performance, he puts endless work in with the pigeons all year round. We'd like to congratulate all the other winners and thank the Convoyer's for looking after them so well.



R and C O'Shea

8TH open and topping Section W is the Wrexham loft of Derrick Jones who had the team on song as he was up with the leaders in the young bird race as well. In the OH race Derek did the double top in Section W - another great performance.



Section W Derrick Jones of Wrexham.

Rounding of the top 10 from the Carentan old hens national is the second Section K loft in the frame - Brian Holland of Keighley in West Yorkshire. Brian makes no secret of his love of channel racing and definitely has the tackle to race up in to Gods own Country from the French race points. This is what Brian had to say about his hens great performance:

My pigeon named "**Little Mo**" that was 1st 700 mile club, 2nd sect K, 10th open NFC Carentan was a gift bird from Mark Oliver of Leeds. Her sire was bred by Nick Adshead from a Kipp and Sohn cock paired to a gdtr of Milly. Her dam is a direct Menne & Dtr and is a Dtr of Pauline. Her preparation for the race was four club races to 168 miles and then NFC Fougères, another inland race and then MNFC Fougères winning 7th NC Sect, 134th Open. Three weeks later it was NFC Tarbes 742 miles, 14th Sect K 233rd open. Three weeks rest before 3 club races with the Y/B's and into Carentan feeding 7 days on her first Y/B's of the year.

Read that again folks- Brian kept this little lady going after a fly of 742 miles from Tarbes and set her up for Carentan 2 months later.in fact, his second hen from Carentan was his first arrival from Tarbes. When I spoke to him about it he said 'champions aren't made in the loft' – very true, but it takes a brave man to do that.

Around the Sections

Section A

Taking the top 2 spots is the partnership of J May and Son. This is a team with great pedigree stepped in performance stretching back many years. Now located on the south coast they have gathered around them a proper bit of tackle that is bred for the job being asked of them and they have made their presence felt in a few of the national races this year.



Darren Ede

Section B

Top of the heap is the loft of P Priddle who claims bragging rights for Section B from the OH Carentan race.

Runner up is Darren Ede and family, following on from their performance with young birds from the same liberation. This is what he had to say: 2nd section old birds is a granddaughter of John Crehan's Prodigy, as you know I've started again at a new location so this hen was broken in & trained with my young birds, having no racing & put straight into the any age race, this hen has been 2nd section 4th open CSCFC Wakefield at my old address so I'm looking forward to racing her here again next year. The father of this hen was a top racing cock 43 left to me by my good friend Dave Johnson before he passed away so I'm glad his blood lives on at my new place, well done to the winner & all section winners



Lanahan and Gerard.

Section B

The top 2 fanciers in the OH result were also in the shake up in the YB race, so both teams were sent with a job to do. Top spot goes to the partnership of Lanahan and Gerard - and they finished the season with the NFC in the same style that they started and maintained throughout.



Mel and Sue King - born to win.

Claiming the Bridesmaid spot is the ever present team of Mel and Sue King. Their first bird was a yearling hen out of their well established Vandebeele based family. She is bred from a son of their N.F.C Coutances National Winner when paired to a daughter of their BICC Le Mans National Winner . The yearling hen missed most of the old bird race season after returning from N.F.C Fougères National missing most of her tail and some wing flights with nasty talcon gashes to her underside from a Peregrine Falcon strike. She was 2nd Section B last week from The British Barcelona Guernsey any age race before being basketed for Carentan. The partnership would like to express their thanks to all the markers and officials and congratulations to all the winners.



Richard Goodier

Section D

Again, we have the top spots represented by partnerships that were up at the top with the young birds in the YB national. Top of the heap is the ever present Richard Goodier . This is what Richard had to say: 1st Section was a Blue WF , Hereman Ceusters hen , her Sire "The Boss" is responsible for many prize winners to include 9 x 1st feds . Her Dam was a half sister to "The Boss" and a multiple fed winner

4th Section is a Blue WF Van Den Bulck hen , her Sire is "Blauwe Titus" 5 x 1st Feds , 1st RPRA Region Award winner 2021 , 2nd RPRA National sprint 2021 , 4th Titan Games Sprint 2021 , 13th FCI World Sprint 2021

6th Section was a CH Cock bred by multiple National winner Andy Mabin , from his Hereman Ceusters , "Man O Chester" lines , his full brother was 3rd BICC ybs
As with the all my birds , they are raced on the roundabout system and fed on Versele Laga Corns to suit the up and coming race. They are kept fit and healthy with Cesc Parma & Shroeder Tollosan products , droppings are sent off to the pigeon testing centre every 3 weeks and are treated if anything is found.

Runner up is the partnership of Cordery and Roast - well done again gentlemen.



Cordery and Roast

Section F

Topping the section in the OH Carentan national is the Hungerford lofts of Mr and Mrs Brown. Mark and the team are no strangers to success at national level and are past winners of the NFC from (I think) Messac or similar. They had a second bird on its tail to claim 2nd section.

Section G

Topping the Section is the loft of W G Harris, with the runner up spot going to the Radstock loft of Rogers and Sales.

Section H

Top spot in this easterly section was claimed by the loft of Phil Lane. Taking the next 3 spots in the section with a barnstormer of a performance is the loft of A Talmer located in Woburn -a great bit of flying from you both.

Section I

Taking double top on my own section is the Matlock lofts of S Hardy. Well done that man.

Section L

Sunny Widnes is the location of the section L topper belonging to G Unsworth and Sons. Taking runner up spot is the Congleton loft of NFC committee member Roger Sutton.



Section topper for A Cousins

Section P

Another Loft wrapping up the season in the same style that their birds demonstrated throughout is the loft of Andy Cousins. Having raced successfully in his native South Wales before relocating and eventually starting up again, Andy has an incredibly small set up that oozes quality. This is what Andy had to say: Again another hard race into a hot dry NE wind. My first bird is a Yearling blue hen who was sent to Carentan feeding 2 18 day old babies. She was a kit of 6 Martyn Buck De Cruiff birds I bought off Steve and Lesley Wright from their House of Arden stud last year to try. She could of won 4 races on the trot as a baby BBLM in the Stanstead club and the same in the M11 open but they only sent first 2 pigeons on the result On the velocities my other 2 clocked should make top 10 as well in the section and top 100 in open. I am very happy with this result given my location and the heat and wind. I would like to thank all the people who run the marking and clock stations and the team behind the conveying and race controlling - my birds are always in excellent condition on return.



Lee Jackson and son

Runner up spot is the loft of P Jackson and Son. The partnership made history last year when they won both YB and OH nationals from the joint liberation - a phenomenal

result that is unlikely to be equalled, or at least not my many. Lee has had some health problems this past year and hopefully this will be a tonic to him. Well done gentlemen.

Section Q

As always the ever reliable Chris Boyce has gathered together information for the Section Q lofts and this is what he forwarded to me:

I had been away on holiday for the week of the race, on my return I saw that Chris Cleave of Bodmin club had won the Old Bird race and I rang to congratulate him and get some details. Typically Chris was playing the win down as he was the only Old Bird flier, until I pointed out to him that yes he was but did he realize that his bird had actually beaten all of the birds in Section D as well as Section Q. No he did not know this, I think I put a smile on his face. His winning bird was a Light Chequer Jan Aarden a Grand Daughter of Padfield St Vincent flying to a 7 day old youngster. Chris clocked a second bird a Dark Chequer Cock which was a grandson of Padfield Jack. This family of Padfield birds are proving a clever investment for Chris and this sort of racing clearly suited them.



G Treharne and Son.

Section W

Following behind the phenomenal flying of Derrick Jones to claim 3rd Section is the top national winning loft of G Treharne and son. The partnership have had a cracking season again and clinched The Ace pigeon award in the NFC this year after being in the shake up right through the national programme. The old hen is a two year old and is bred from a direct daughter of special kain a direct Eijkerkamp hen, when she was paired to a son of 'Alans lad', who is the father of the cock that scored 1st section, 7th open NFC Messac earlier this year. She was sent sitting eggs and Stu gave the hens two races the two weeks before the race prior to that they had been locked in after old bird racing finished. He admits that he hadn't really planned to send old hens but decided to send a few hens as he had not sent to this race before and they looked ok so they went. Well done Stu, you finished as you started.



Team Kenny and Armstrong

Kenny and Armstrong

In the young bird race report I did not have the information from the Kenny and Armstrong team in time to include it, but I have since received the details on the 3 cracking birds that were 3rd, 4th and 5th Open from the YB Carentan national. first across the pad was a Gino Clique x Soderland and Maddison followed by an L and S pigeon x Leo Hermans. The third of the trio to score in the top 10 is another L and S pigeon x Frans Zwols. As I said before this is a real top drawer performance from a partnership that was only formed this year, and the 2023 young bird team were bred at Highfields breeding lofts. A great start to their racing career - well done again folks.

Right folks, as always I am at weebu@hotmail.com.