



The National Flying Club

THE NATIONAL FLYING CLUB'S 2025 TARBES GRAND NATIONAL BRINGS KING'S CUP GLORY FOR MARK GILBERT, 1ST AND 2ND OPEN

It is said that behind every pigeon is a fancier who believes in the impossible, and ever since the sport's inception, the captivating, mystical union which has echoed down the ages betwixt man and pigeon, has continued to explore, push and redefine the boundaries of sporting excellence. There can be few who would dare to challenge that, for many fanciers the length and breadth of our land, the ultimate prize in pigeon racing is the prestigious King George V Cup. This is a race in which victory turns individuals into instant icons whose names will be forever inscribed upon the National Flying Club's most renowned race reward! For this the 2025 NFC Blue Ribbon Grand National Race, approximately 252 members sent a convoy of 1,010 birds to the race point of Tarbes. Tarbes is a commune in the Hautes-Pyrénées department in the Occitanie region of south-western France. It is the capital of Bigorre and of the Hautes-Pyrénées. It was known as Turba or Tarba in Roman times, has been a commune since 1790 and is part of the historical region of Gascony.

The pigeons were liberated at 1400hrs on Thursday, 17th July in a north-easterly wind. Along the route, the wind turned westerly around the Nantes region and was forecast to be westerly across the Channel, becoming south-westerly in England on Friday, 18th July. The decision to liberate on Thursday was undertaken after careful consideration of the poor weather conditions forecast for both France and England on different days, as well as the high temperatures at the race point. Holding the birds any longer would have meant a significant delay. This decision was made for the welfare of the pigeons which is paramount. Taking these matters into consideration, on Thursday afternoon, the committee discussed the current verification rule. It was decided that, 'For Friday, the verification rule would be relaxed during working hours. Any pigeons timed in before 6pm may be verified up until 7pm. After 6pm, the normal verification rules will apply. Additionally, there was to be no limit to the number of pigeons that could be verified. We hope this adjustment supported working fanciers during this exceptional situation'.

Without question, the 2025 Tarbes Grand National will be written in the sporting almanacs as one of the most arduous racing events in our Club's long and illustrious history, proving to be the ultimate challenge for fancier and pigeon alike! All who clocked are worthy of the highest praise, but there is only one NFC King's Cup and as they say, 'To the victor go the spoils'.

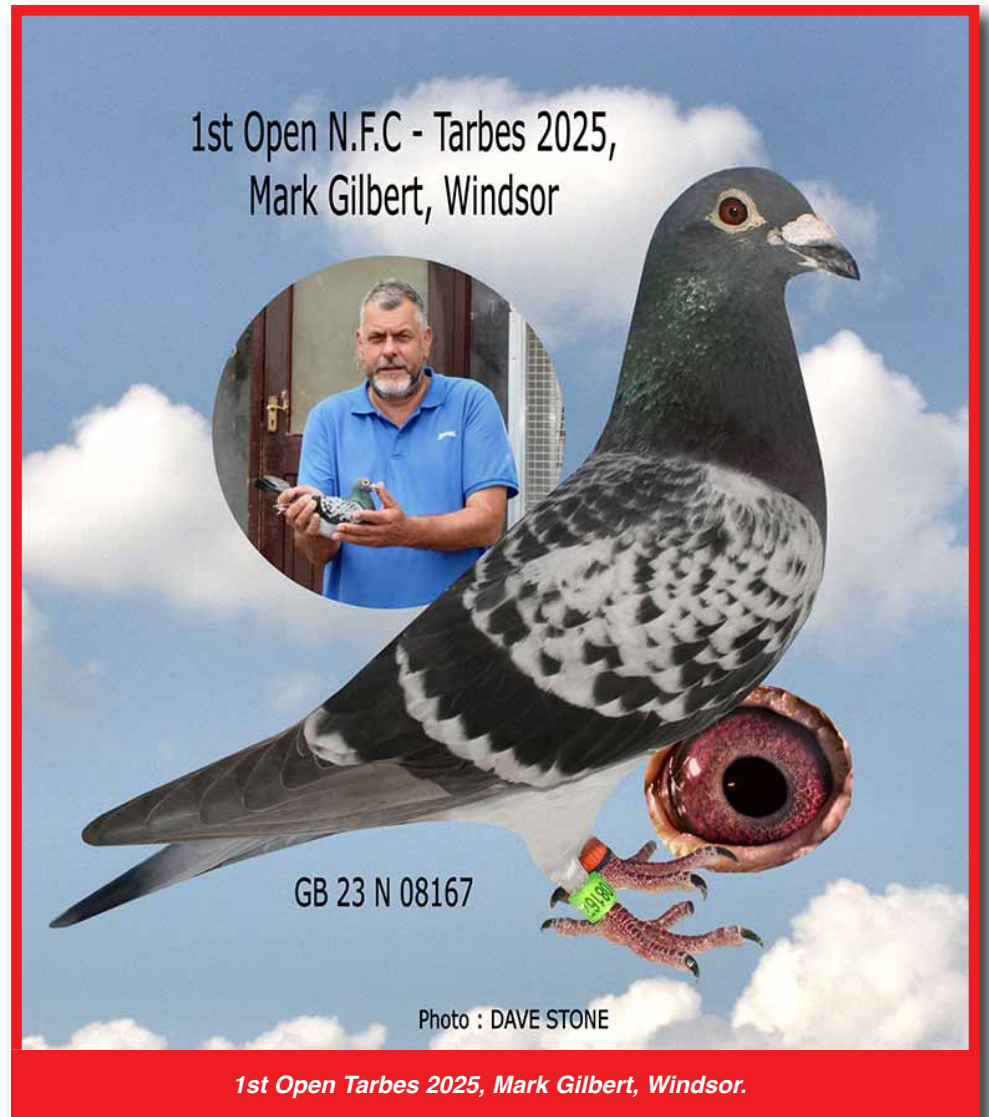
Over the years the name of Mark Gilbert has attained iconic status both at National and International level, indeed he is probably one of the most famous, respected and recognised British fanciers of the 21st century, gaining countless accolades to which he can now add 1st and 2nd National Flying Club Tarbes Grand National 2025, a race which truly

demonstrated and defined the sheer class of the long distance colony housed at the world renowned Southfield Lofts. Flying 570 miles into Section E, Mark timed a 2y pigeon on a National and Section winning velocity of 858.336.

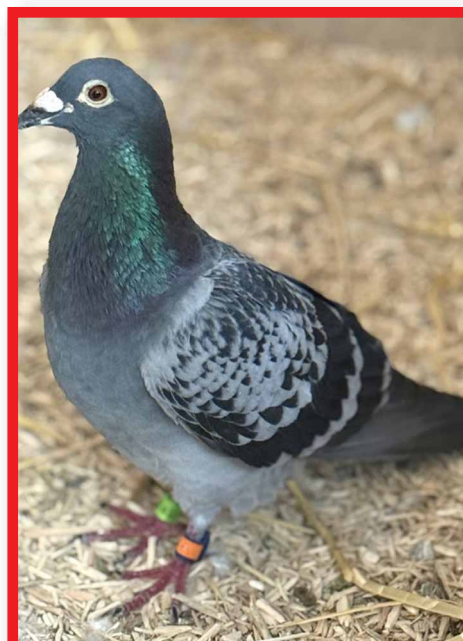
Speaking of his outstanding team performance from this race of races, Mark explained, 'We sent a total of 27 pigeons, eight 2y cocks which previously went to Pau a few weeks ago, topped up with three yearling cocks and 16 yearling hens to see how they would handle the 570 mile journey. The eight Pau cocks were what we expected to time first, but the yearling hens went well, so you never know if one of them could step up. At the very least we were hoping the yearlings would gain some valuable experience from this ready for the International campaign next year.

We worked out that we could expect to see the birds between 1-2pm, but it was getting warm out there so it could be a tough race. As it turned out, it was a grueller with only eight birds making it home by nightfall. By 4.30pm we were getting complacent and all stood around talking when at 4.39pm we suddenly realised we had missed a pigeon and just saw its tail going through the trap. The only one who saw it was Roger who was sitting in the shade near the loft when it went in. Six minutes later we had another arrival which luckily was our pool pigeon and with another at 7.28pm that was all we were getting today. We had another arrival at 6.11am next morning and this was the first of our yearling hens who had arrived in very heavy rain. During the day another three made it home bringing our total to seven.

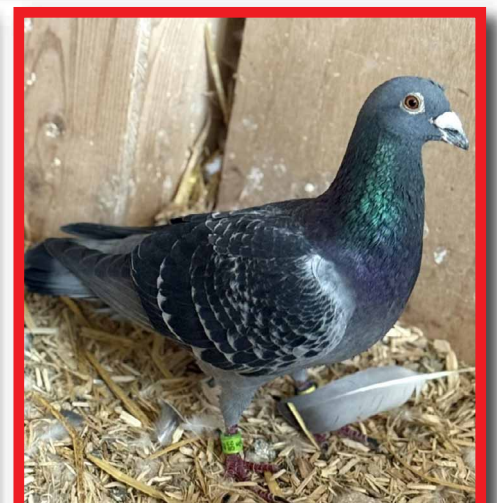
These seven pigeons managed to score 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th Section E, 1st, 2nd, 5th, 9th, 16th, 23rd and probable 29th National and all their breeding details are shown to the right.



1st Open Tarbes 2025, Mark Gilbert, Windsor.



Southfield Knight, winner of The King George V Cup Tarbes Grand National, 1st Section E 2025 for Mark Gilbert.

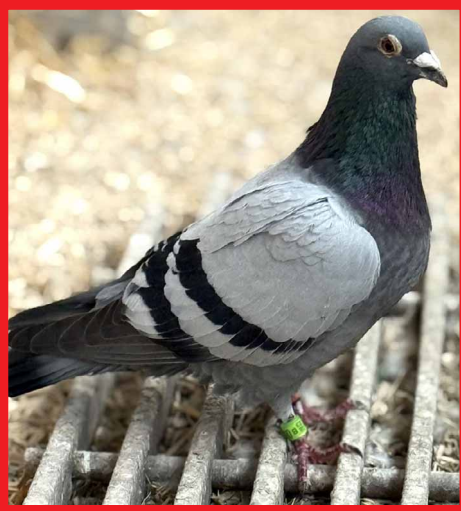


Southfield Duke, 2nd Section E and Open for Mark Gilbert.

National Agen, herself being a daughter of New Laureaat, 1st International Barcelona 25,382b 2013 and Kleine Jade, 1st International Barcelona 20,669b 2014. His dam is a daughter of Special One, 1st International Barcelona 19,083b 2015 when paired to Romee, 3rd National Bergerac 10,327 birds, 3rd National Orange 4,302 birds and 3rd NPO St Vincent 1,365 birds 2013.

Taking 1st National, GB23B08167, a chequ cock, Southfield Knight. Knight was raced widowhood. He was our second pigeon on the clock from the BICC Pau International a few weeks ago. He was given his hen the night before basketing. The sire of this cock is a son of Golden Barcelona, the 2014 Barcelona Gold Wing winner and sire of Southfield Hugo, 1st Nat Barcelona, 1st Nat Perpignan, Southfield Gold Lady, 1st National Barcelona and grandsire of Southfield Gold, 1st National, 6th International Pau when paired to Miss Gilbert, dam of 1st

Taking 2nd, GB23B01360, a dark chequ cock, Southfield Duke. Duke was raced widowhood but he was given his hen the night before basketing and she laid an egg in the bowl so this may have helped motivate him. Again he went to the BICC Pau International a few weeks ago and was our third pigeon clocked and was our fancied pool pigeon for this race. The sire of this cock is a full brother to Southfield



'266', 3rd Section, 5th Open for Mark Gilbert.



'414', 4th Section E, 9th Open for Mark Gilbert.



2025 NFC King's Cup winner Mark Gilbert (centre) with Darran McFadden and Troy Birch.

Gold Lady, 1st National Barcelona and is a son of Golden Barcelona, the 2014 Barcelona Gold Wing winner when paired to Romee. The dam is a daughter of Southfield Hugo, 1st National Barcelona, 1st National Perpignan when paired to Yvette, the dam of 1st International St Vincent 10,623b 2019.

5th National, GB23B08266, a blue cock on 749.925 for 3rd Section E. '266' was raced on widowhood and had his hen the night before. He also went to the BICC Pau International a few weeks ago and he was the fifth pigeon clocked from there. The sire is a son of Golden Barcelona when paired to a daughter of Silke, 1st National, 2nd International Barcelona 14,589b 2020. The dam is a granddaughter of Romee, 3rd National Barcelona, New Laureaat, 1st International Barcelona and Kleine Jade, 1st International Barcelona.

Taking **9th National, GB24B02414, a blue hen** on 648.938 for 4th Section E is the 2025 King's Cup winner Mark Gilbert who timed his '414' on the velocity of 648.938. '414' is a widowhood hen and her last race was the NFC Sigogne race three weeks ago. Her sire is a son of Jef, 1st International Barcelona 16,051b 2019 when paired to a daughter of New Laureaat, 1st International Barcelona and Kleine Jade, 1st International Barcelona. Her dam is a daughter of Golden Barcelona when paired to a daughter of Zeus x Silke.

Taking **16th National, GB23B01346, a dark w/f cock**. '346' is a widowhood cock and was given his hen the night before basketing. He also went to the BICC Pau International and was the sixth pigeon on the clock from that race. His sire is a son of Southfield Hugo, 1st National BICC Barcelona 2018 when paired to Special Narbonne, 2nd International Yearlings Narbonne 6,287 birds. His dam is a daughter of Southfield King, 1st Grand National NFC Tarbes 2020 when paired back to his dam.

Taking **23rd National, GB23B08263, a cheq cock**. '263' is a widowhood cock which was given his hen the night before basketing. He also went to the BICC Pau International and was the seventh pigeon on the clock from that race. His sire is a son of Jill, 2nd International Perpignan for Jelle Jellema. His dam is a daughter of Southfield Hugo, 1st National Barcelona, 1st National Perpignan when paired to Yvette, the dam of Willeke, 1st International St Vincent 10,623b 2019.

Probable 29th National, GB24B02219, a blue cock. '219', the first of our yearling cocks to return had his last race at Sigogne with the NFC three weeks ago where he had a 10½ hour fly. His sire is a daughter of Golden Barcelona, the 2014 Barcelona Gold Wing winner when paired to a daughter of Silke, 1st National, 2nd International Barcelona 14,589b 2020. His dam is a daughter of New Laureaat, 1st

International Barcelona 25,382b 2013 when paired to Romee, 3rd National Bergerac 10,327 birds, 3rd National Orange 4,302 birds, 3rd NPO St Vincent 1,365 birds 2013.

It was a very tough race overall but the Golden Barcelona and Southfield Hugo lines have shown their grit and determination yet again to put up a team performance on a very hard day'.

My thanks to Mark for this comprehensive rundown of his winning birds.

Ipswich fancier **Jonathan Palmer** secures **3rd Open, 1st Section H** with a 3y pigeon on a Section winning velocity of 835.073.

Taking **4th and 7th Open, 1st and 2nd Section B**, the long distance stalwart **Andy Parsons of Salisbury**. The winner was a 3y on 812.275. This pigeon was 31st Open Tarbes back in 2024. The Section runner up was a 2y on 706.541.

6th Open, 1st Section F on this occasion is awarded to the Reading loft of **Mr D J Clark** who timed his 2y Tarbes Challenge Nomination bird on 711.265.

8th Open, 1st Section P, the Dover loft of **Don Harvey** with 3y on 690.663

The brilliant Bolton fancier, **Frank Kay** takes **10th Open, 1st Section L** with a truly outstanding yearling pigeon which flew a staggering distance of 728 miles to attain the well deserved Section winning

velocity of 592.880. Frank sent me the following information on his pigeon, GB24N06607, Just 07. This bird has won 5th Section, 248th Open BICC and 46th Section, 520th Open NFC from North-sur-Erdre, 429 miles, now getting a great result from Tarbes at 728 miles, plus all land races bar two. This yearling has flown 3,048 miles in race distances, in reality many more. To quote Brian Tattersall, former President of the RPRA, 'When the going gets tough, the tough get going'. How true. Well done Frank.

Once again, huge congratulations to Mark Gilbert on winning the race with an outstanding team performance which will certainly be remembered for many years to come! To all who made the provisional top ten I salute your skill and the courage of your warriors of the sky.

Now we move on to the provisional top three in each Section, and having studied the results there are some truly courageous pigeons the length and breadth of our shores that have really earned their perch!

Section A

Taking **1st and 3rd Section, 22nd Open** is **Martin Watson of Angmering** on 496.633 and 397.818. Martin writes, 'The sire of my 2y Section A winner is a son of Fred Hall's 1st Open BICC Agen 2017 winner when paired to my 9th Open Tarbes Grand National 2017. The dam is a John Puddephatt stock hen, the last pigeon



The sensational Andy Parsons who dominated Section B.



Martin Watson, 1st and 3rd Section A.



Neville Spracklen, 1st Section C, 43rd Open.



Lanahan & Gerard.



Joe Raeburn, 1st Section G.



Richard Chambers, 2nd Section I, 50th Open.

John ever bred for me back in 2013. My second bird is bred from my Geoff & Clayton Preece stock birds and is full sister to Joe 90, my 2nd Open Tarbes Grand National 2024. Just a sidenote, I do think that we really need to be having early morning liberations, 5 or 6am for the Tarbes race there would be better returns all round and by changing it back to its original date as close to the longest day as possible, would also help. Finally, many thanks to all the volunteers at the marking stations who make it possible for us to race.

Taking **2nd Section, 32nd Open** is awarded to the Bordon-based partnership of **D Matthews & Culverhouse** with a yearling doing a velocity of 452.890

Section B

The sensational **Andy Parsons of Salisbury** dominates the top places clocking a 3y on a Section topping 812.275 for 4th Open, this pigeon was 31st Open Tarbes in 2024. Andy's second pigeon is a 2y, 2nd Section, 7th Open on 706.541. The third bird was a 2y, 24th Open on 492.536, 61st Open Tarbes in 2024, Andy had this to say, 'I would like to congratulate all who clocked on what turned out to be one of the hardest I've known, especially Mark on his win. My team of 28 birds were all sent on eggs of between five and ten days and had 10 return in race time but sadly none since. My leading pigeons are as follows: 1st

Section B, 4th Open was previously 31st Open, she had a 60 mile club race as prep, followed by two short Channel races, then rested for six weeks with no training. Her sire was 5th Tarbes in 2018, the dam being my No1 stock hen. Her sire is the Five Times Cock, the dam, my Red Merit hen. The Section runner up, 7th Open had the same preparation as the first but had one extra race. Her sire is the Five Times Cock, her dam being a daughter of the 5th Open cock as above and my 2nd Open hen. My third bird had the same prep as the first bird. Her sire is a son of 5th Tarbes and my 2nd Open hen, the dam being a good hen supplied by good friend Keith Bush. Although this was a very tough race it is worth noting that all the birds clocked were from my family developed over the last 35

years and most from the above line'. Well done Andy on another excellent team performance!

Section C

At the time of writing there were only two valiant pigeons recorded into Section C. The Dorchester husband and wife partnership of **Neville & Diana Spracklen** take **1st Section, 43rd Open** with a courageous yearling on 433.039. Neville writes, 'Firstly, many congratulations to Mark and his team and all the other members of the NFC who clocked from this very tough Tarbes National. Our Section winner is a little cheq yearling hen sent to the National after sitting 14 day old eggs.



1st Sec J, 11th Open for the Chambers Family.



Peter Prinold, 2nd Section J, 13th Open.



Andy Holland, 1st Section K, 55th Open.

She had been a roundabout hen but was allowed to stay with her new mate after Nort-sur-Erdre. Her sire is a grizzle cock which I purchased from Elimar because he reminded me of my first ever pigeon, a grizzle cock I called Tank, the colour was identical. His sire is Grizzle Mick's Pride, a son of Ernie's Blue Star x Queen Mary, both winners of 1st NFC Tarbes. Dam of Mick's Pride is Dark Diane, a sister to Katie, 1st Section, 2nd Open NFC, her grandam is Olivia Rose, 1st Section, 1st Open NFC Tarbes 2014. The dam of our Section winner is from a hen purchased from Dave & John Staddon. Her sire is Mealy Miracle, a winner of countless top prizes including 1st GDSBNFC Bordeaux, her dam is Stardust, a tremendous racing machine, winner of 47th Open Thurso as a yearling, 2nd Section, 18th National Agen and 2nd Section, 7th Open NFC Tarbes etc.

Taking **2nd Section, 88th Open** is the partnership of **Lanahan & Gerard from Poole** with a 3y on 290.671. John sent the following, 'Firstly, congratulations to Mark Gilbert and team, a super result in a very bad race. The sire of this blue hen was our super breeder and racer Porsche, raced in Holland by John Gerard, 1st from 10,500 birds, 4,000 birds, 3,000 birds and 1,200 birds plus many more prizes. He comes from the old van Loons. The dam of our 2nd Section winner is a direct daughter of Ower Bros' Thurso cock, being the furthest flying bird on the day'.

Section D

The Plymouth partnership of **Lee & Dyer** take **1st Section, 12th Open** with a 2y bird on 549.278.

2nd Section, 36th Open is the Plymouth loft of **R Prettejohn & M Underhill** with a 2y on 442.085.

Securing **3rd Section, 39th Open** is the Barnstaple loft of **Peter Reilly** with a 2y on 435.262.

Section E

The 2025 NFC King's Cup winner **Mark Gilbert** takes the top three in the Section.

'Congratulations Mark on another outstanding performance for which you have nothing but my admiration and respect along with that of all true pigeon men and women everywhere' (Chris).

Section F

The Reading loft of **D J Clark** takes **1st Section, 6th Open** with his 2y Tarbes Challenge Nomination bird on 711.265, his sole entry at a distance of 587 miles.

Taking **2nd Section, 18th Open**, the partnership of **Mr & Mrs A Webber & Son** from Abingdon on 505.774. They wrote, 'Our bird is a 2y blue chequer cock, and was our only entry for Tarbes. He is raced on the chaos system, and has had five overseas races this season, Fougères with the CSCFC and then all four NFC races. His sire is a Roger Lowe cross Ouwerkerk Dekkers, his dam a direct Ouwerkerk Dekkers'.

Taking **3rd Section, 19th Open**, the Didcot fancier **Ven Segesdy** with a 2y on 504.836. This pigeon was 86th Open from Nort-sur-Erdre in 2024. This dark chequer cock was bred out of a Dutch rung Jellema cock and a Belgian long distance strain hen. He was sent sitting 12 day eggs. He has been consistent from overseas races, and returned in excellent condition from this race. He previously had some decent performances with the CSCFC and the NFC as a yearling.

Section G

Taking **1st Section, 27th Open**, Melksham's **Joe Raeburn** with a 2y on 483.463. Joe writes, 'Firstly, I would like to

congratulate Mark on another top performance, and a big well done to Frank Kay on winning Section L with a yearling, brilliant flying, and to Jonathan Palmer on taking the first three in Section H, and all the other Section winners. My Section winner is a small-to-medium 2y dark chequer cock who has been a reliable pigeon from the Channel races. He had three prep races, from Fougères twice and Nort-sur-Erdre. He was raced on widowhood and fed on Versele-Laga Champion Plus and Bamford's Staddons' Chaos mix. His sire won 1st Section, 3rd Open Bergerac and flew Thurso, and the Pau National twice. He is a son of my Barcelona Cock, 1st Section, 3rd Open. The dam is a full sister to Mark Gilbert's Ironman that I purchased from Paul O'Leary's Auction site.'

In **2nd and 3rd Section, 91st and 92nd Open**, the Bristol loft of **D Wyatt & M Gray** with two 2ys on 277.353 and 277.172.

Section H

Taking **1st, 2nd and 3rd Section, 3rd, 20th and 28th Open**, **Jonathan Palmer from Ipswich**. The winner is a 3y on 835.073. This was followed by an incredible 5y on 504.741. This experienced pigeon has been in the clock three times now from Tarbes having previously been 179th and 166th Open. This fancier rounded off an excellent team performance with a 3y on 478.738, all at 621 miles!

Section I

Taking **1st Section, 47th Open** is our good friend and a true gentleman of the sport, **Cliff Sanders of Atherstone** with a 3y on 423.643. 'Well done Cliff, I am sure our old friend 'Watto' will be up there raising a glass to you!'

Taking **2nd Section, 50th Open**, **Richard Chambers of Rugeley** with a 2y on of

404.542. Richard writes, 'I timed the same cheq cock that was 2nd Section in the last race from Nort-sur-Erdre on 15th June. This cock went to BBC Fougères 306 miles on 17th May, coming 17th Section, then I sent him back to NFC Fougères on 31st May when he came 23rd Section. This week, on 17th July he went the 664 miles to Tarbes and has achieved the positions listed above. To say I am very happy with this pigeon is an understatement, he has proven blood in him as all three of the Chambers Family pigeons who have provisionally come 11th, 14th and 17th Open in this race are related to this cock in some way or another. He is from a son of the Quiet Man, 1st Section, 9th Open BICC Agen, he also won West Midlands Region RPRA Award for 450 miles and over. He was paired to a pigeon called No Surprise who won the 0-800 mile West Midlands RPRA Award flying five Channel races in six weeks, including 2nd Section and in the top 25 in the Open from BICC Agen. All four grandparents are also multiple Tarbes performance pigeons for the Chambers Family in the NFC. His dam is out of a pigeon I call the Tarbes Hen, last season she came 4th Section from Tarbes, she is out of two pigeons who are starting to make a real mark on our lofts, Jack Smash that has van Ouwerkerk Dekkers pigeons in him and The Impett Hen which is out of pigeons from Dave Impett of Blackpool. The plan would usually be to move the Tarbes pigeons to Barcelona next season but considering the 2 x 2nd Sections he has had, I will keep him on the same programme next season and hopefully go that one better and aim to top the Section. I would like to congratulate Mark and the team Troy, Darren and Nigel for winning the race on such a tough weekend and also all those people who timed in and won Sections. Every pigeon that returned home has done exceptionally well and I am sure in years to come you will either see these pigeons or their children in the result.'

Taking **3rd Section, 77th Open**, **C Bush of Alfreton**, with a 2y on 322.824.

Section J

Taking **1st and 3rd Section, 11th and 14th Open, the Chambers Family, Cannock** with a 4y and 2y on 582.588 and 534.621. This pigeon was 238th Open Tarbes in 2023. Craig Chambers has sent me the following, 'Our first arrival was a 4y hen who we have called Miss Fortune. Her name is a play on words as after scoring from NFC Tarbes as a 2y, in 2024 she was destined for the Barcelona International. Preparations for Barcelona had gone perfectly until the final training race before basketing when she arrived home injured from a hawk attack which retired her for the rest of the season. In 2025 she was once again prepared for the Barcelona International where she got as far as being paid for and entered with the BBC before laying an egg the day before basketing. Not wanting her to lay again in the basket, plans were changed at the eleventh hour and she was switched to the NFC Tarbes team where she would be sent sitting 14 days in the section with the race cocks. We will never know how she would have performed at Barcelona but sometimes things do happen for a reason. She is bred from an inbred half brother to our previous 1st Section, 7th Open Tarbes cock, Dutch Thunder which goes back to our MNFC Merit Award winner, the Bergerac Hen and her sire The Dutch Cock, 1st National Bergerac for us in 1997. On her dam's side she is descended from David Impett pigeons and is a half sister to our hen, Disaster Girl who, as well as scoring twice from Tarbes, is also dam to the Quiet Man, 1st Section, 9th Open BICC Agen and also grandam to our two time Barcelona hen, Unbreakable who this year secured 1st Section E, 16th Open BBC Barcelona and 1st NW Section, 37th Open BICC Barcelona flying just under 800 miles. Our second and third arrivals were both sent to Tarbes racing their fourth Channel race of the year having previously been entered for the first two MNFC races before flying Sigogne with the NFC, 487 miles in preparation for Tarbes. Both our second and third arrivals are grandchildren of Dutch Thunder meaning all three of our hens are very closely related. We were especially pleased with our third arrival given that she is only a yearling yet has managed to score from both Sigogne and Tarbes during one of the most challenging Channel seasons we can remember. All our birds are exercised just once per day as, with raising a young family, this is all my time can allow for. All birds are raced on a chaos sty system except the occasional pair which I will put together racing either to eggs or a small young bird for a selected event, as ended up being the case with our first arrival this weekend. I would like to pass on my congratulations to all who timed in, but especially to Mark Gilbert and Jonathan Palmer who not only took the first three positions between them but who both managed to pull off impressive team performances during a very difficult race'.

In **2nd Section, 13th Open, Peter Prinold of Telford** with a 4y on 540.381. This sole entry was previously 109th Open Tarbes in 2024. Peter writes, 'My 4y chequer Padfield cock is a very consistent bird being 208th Open Sigogne as a 2y and 4th Section, 109th Open Tarbes as a 3y'.



S. Franklin, 3rd Section L.



Les Stock, 2nd Section P, 30th Open.

Section K

In **1st Section, 55th Open**, clocking his 8y sole entry, flying a distance of 739 miles on 387.533, **Andy Holland of Shipley** who writes, 'Firstly I would like to congratulate all the winners on such a difficult race. I would like to dedicate my performance to my best mate Jim who sadly passed away at the beginning of the year. My single entry, known as The Pau Cock, was 4th Section K, 25th Open Pau in 2020 and 16th Section K, 173rd Open Tarbes in 2022. Last year he came back injured out of race time, he healed well and flew Messac with the Midlands National three weeks previous to the race where he was 11½ hours on the wing. He looked in great condition so I decided to send him one more time to Tarbes, to hopefully win a Certificate of Merit. On Sunday evening in atrocious weather conditions and heavy rain he came back wet through but I was really pleased to see him. He is bred from a direct Brian Denney and an Auke Smid hen who flies 840 miles from Barcelona so he is bred for the job. The Pau Cock was already in the 5,000 miles club so you can see what a great pigeon he is. He has a total of five diplomas in the top 20 Section and he was raced on widowhood. I would like to thank Mark Oliver for coming and cleaning my birds and helping me basket due to my lung condition. Also thanks to Brian Holland for taking my birds to marking and Darvill's Pets & Gardens for supplying my pigeon corn and supplements. Finally to the conveying team for looking after my birds this year. I luckily have not lost a single bird with the National this year although I have only sent a few'.

In **2nd Section, 75th Open, F Widdowson & Sons of Doncaster** with a 5y on 334.540.

Taking **3rd Section, 130th Open, J Finlay of Leeds** with a 4y on 227.923

Section L

In **1st Section, 10th Open, F Kay, Bolton** on 592.880

2nd Section, 44th Open, D J Harrison, Southport with a 4y on 431.679. He sent the following information. This blue pencil cock is a Barker x Busschaert. He has flown NFC Tarbes, 736 miles to win: 13th Section L, 237th Open 2023; 3rd Section L, 140th Open 2024 and now 2nd Section, 44th Open. Other achievements include 5th 500 Mile Blackpool Show 2024 and 7th 500 Mile Blackpool Show 2025. He is fed on Bamford's Corn.

Taking **3rd Section, 85th Open**, the Chorley loft of **Steve Frankland** with a 3y on 306.168. Steve has sent the following. 'Hi Chris, I just thought I would send you some information for your NFC Tarbes report. I always read your articles in the BHW and find them informative and interesting. Congratulations to all those who timed in at Tarbes which proved to be another tough race, in fact most of the Channel races this year have been difficult races. My first bird is a blue 2022 cock that was sent looking after a large young bird having lost his hen the week before from Bordeaux. He was obtained direct from Guy Reed and is from his long distance family. This was his third Channel race of the season and he arrived with half his tail missing so I was even more pleased to see him'.

Section P

In **1st Section, 8th Open, Don Harvey of Dover** with a 2y on 690.663.

In **2nd Section, 30th Open, Les Stock of Romford** with a 4y cock on 454.764. Speaking of his performance Les told me the following. 'After north road racing for 55 years I thought I would seek a new challenge on the south on retirement. It's certainly that, I started off well enough with 4th Open BICC from Agen and Bordeaux. Now each race seems to be harder than the one before. My Tarbes bird is a 4y red cheq cock sitting 12 day eggs, lightly raced this season with three inland races plus Fougères NFC. Both parents were bred by Mark Bulled from his old family. The sire being a grandson of Isla's Rainy Day B, 1st International Pau. Mark obviously exchanged youngsters from 'Legacy' for the offspring of Bulled's champion. The same can be said for the dam of my pigeon, as she is bred from a granddaughter of Monty, three times in the first 100 NFC Tarbes for Andy Parsons'.

In **3rd Section, 31st Open, J Underdown of Basildon** with a 3y on 454.377.

Section Q

In this Section **Terry Luscombe from Looe** was the only fancier to time in. His valiant 2y was also **106th Open** on 191.453.

Section W

1st, 2nd and 3rd Section, 41st, 51st and 58th Open, Derek Nicholls of Premier Stud, Barry on 433.395, 399.468 and 374.972 with three 2ys. Well done Derek.
CHRIS WILLIAMS