

## IRISH NATIONAL FLYING CLUB

### Kings Cup – Saint Allouestre

After a spring and early summer that brought us unsettled weather making racing difficult, we could not have asked for better weather for our King's Cup weekend. Even the run up to the race brought it's own difficulties when the secretary was informed on 13<sup>th</sup> June that the Nord-Sur-Erdre site was not available on the day of the race. A lot of work went on behind the scenes to secure a liberation site nearby but the nearest available site was Saint Allouestre which is close to Plaudren Vannes.

656 members sent 2332 birds which were liberated at 7am on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July in a light north-easterly wind, and were competing for pools and prizemoney of £30, 316. This turned out to be an excellent race, tough enough to be a test and yet not too severe. 85 birds were timed on the Friday and by lunch time Saturday the positions were filled with many more birds home after that. The race was sponsored by Frazer Animal Feeds and we are very grateful to them for their sponsorship.

When early times started to filter through it soon became apparent that the bird timed by Ron Williamson of the Bondhill club at 6.37pm would be right up there and as it turned out by nightfall Ron was declared winner of the 2013 King's Cup, Ireland Premier pigeon race.

**1<sup>st</sup> North Section, 1<sup>st</sup> Open Ron Williamson Bondhill Vel 1212, Flying 480 miles, Winning £1085, King George V Challenge Cup, NIPA Cup for 1<sup>st</sup> NIPA member, and McCloud Cup for 1<sup>st</sup> Yearling in the Kings Cup**

The winner of the King's Cup this year is one of Europe's top fliers, Ron Williamson, Bondhill. Ron has a terrific record at National racing and has won almost every award that can be won but the King's Cup is one that had eluded him. He came close on several occasions and was 2<sup>nd</sup> twice. Ron has a racing record to be proud of as he is a winner of 57 x 1<sup>st</sup> Opens with the NIPA and is a previous winner of five Nationals with the Irish National Flying Club including winning the Friendship National twice. The winning pigeon is a Blue Cheq yearling cock, (now known as 'Rab's Delight' after Ron's late father) that had only two races as a young bird. This year Ron hadn't planned to race old birds at all, as he had only 28 old birds in the loft at the beginning of the season and these were mostly sprinters. However in the end he decided to give the Nationals a go. This cock therefore had only two races this year prior to the King's Cup as he flew both INFC Inland National Skibbereen and Yearling National from Sennen Cove. Now, on return from the Yearling National it was obvious that the cock had been hawked and that seemed to be him finished for the season. However his increased willingness to exercise well, indicated that he had recovered from the hawk attack and as he had already been paired and down on eggs it was decided to send him to the Kings Cup and the rest as they say is history. In the end he was sent sitting 14 days on eggs.

Bloodlines are from Ron's Champion 'Lady Helen', who won the Friendship National in 2004 when it was the only bird timed on the second day. After 3 days of the race there was only one other bird timed and that was to C & H Beattie who ironically are 2<sup>nd</sup> Open in this year's King's Cup. 'Lady Helen's bloodlines are also in Ron's Triple Crown winner of 2010 and in Maurice Wilkinson's pigeon at 8<sup>th</sup> Open here.

'Rab's Delight's bloodlines also include Greg Bros and McCandless National winning stock and Maurice Wilkinson's King's Cup winning lines. Ron's pigeons were trained daily from Newry weather permitting as he has to travel there anyway to his new lofts. The birds are fed a good general mix and are hopper fed. Ron extends his thanks to his daughter Claire and Gerard Creaney for the part they played in preparing the pigeons for the King's Cup.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> North section, 2<sup>nd</sup> Open C & M Beattie Gilford, Vel 1205, Flying 476 miles, winning £1226 and the Nelson Vase for the 1<sup>st</sup> RPRA member after the winner of the King's Cup**

In 2<sup>nd</sup> open 2<sup>nd</sup> North Section is the husband and wife partnership of Cyril & Hilary Beattie of Gilford. Well known throughout Ireland not only for their success racing pigeons but also because they own a very successful animal feed business. This is their 3<sup>rd</sup> second place in an INFC National having twice been 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Friendship National. Amongst their other recent successes is 2<sup>nd</sup> Open from the NIPA French Derby race of 2010 from St Malo and just the week prior to this year's King's cup they were 5<sup>th</sup> Open again in the Old Bird Derby which this year was from Portland. As running the business leaves little time for training, Cyril and Hilary would like to take this opportunity to thank Sean Curran for all his very valuable assistance with the training of their pigeons

Their 2<sup>nd</sup> Open King's Cup this year is a two-year-old blue cock which the Beatties were racing on the Natural system and this cock went to the King's Cup feeding a 14-day-old youngster and just noticing his hen again. The Beatties bought this cock two years ago at a Charity Sale for 'Tiny Life', the pigeon having been donated to the sale by Tommy Fitzpatrick and contains the bloodlines on both sides of two previous King's Cup winning lofts with the sire containing the bloodlines from Maurice Wilkinson who won the King's Cup himself in 2005 and is never far away from the prizes being 8<sup>th</sup> in this year's race. On the Dam's side it is down from birds of another King's Cup winner Geoffrey Douglas of Wilton Cross. This year this cock had two Inland races followed by the 1<sup>st</sup> Talbenny which was a hard race and from which he returned with part of his tail missing. Originally he was being prepared for the Portland event but it was felt that as his condition was getting better all the time it would be better to wait a few more days and enter him for the King's Cup a decision which has proved to be correct .

### **3<sup>rd</sup> North section, 3<sup>rd</sup> Open Capper Bros Bondhill, Vel 1183, Flying 481 miles, winning £1266**

We go back to the Bondhill club for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Open pigeon to the lofts of Capper Bros, another loft with a fantastic record in this race, with three previous positions in the top ten. In 1999 they were 4<sup>th</sup> Open and followed this a year later with 5<sup>th</sup> Open and then in 2009 they were 7<sup>th</sup> Open, so they are particularly pleased with this one as it is their best yet in the King's Cup. Originally there were five brothers in the partnership but nowadays its only Willie and what a good job he is doing on his own. Things looked good for Willie when he timed on the day out of a difficult Old Bird Derby from Portland to take 31<sup>st</sup> Open NIPA (482/1697) on the Monday before basketing for the King's Cup, a good indication that the loft was in form.

The pigeon timed here is a two-year-old black pied hen timed at 6.49pm. This bird seems to have a liking for the National races as she was in the prizes last year from the Yearling National and then earlier this year from the Skibbereen Inland National. Bloodlines are Soontjens plus Willie's own old distance lines. Capper Bros won an NIPA Open in 2004 from Talbenny and the dam is off this Open winner and a cock from Philip Boyd Annaghmore of the Capper pigeons. In the earlier part of the season this bird was

raced roundabout but paired after the 1<sup>st</sup> Talbenny and sent to the King's Cup sitting on chipping eggs. In the run up to the race the pigeon was well trained as Willie takes the pigeons with him wherever he is working. Feeding is Beattie's Champion Supreme with an odd peanut added as the distance increases.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> North section, 4<sup>th</sup> Open E Mallen & Son Drumnabaddy, Vel 1171, Flying 471 miles, winning £700**

4<sup>th</sup> Open goes to the Drumnabaddy lofts of E Mallen & Son. This partnership is made up of 87 year old Ernie, his son Kenny and grandson Dean, who is proving to be a useful asset around the loft. The partnership is no strangers to success having topped Section 'G' of the NIPA from Roscarberry last year. They have named their pigeon 'Georgie' after Ernie's late wife who passed away about 18 months ago. The pigeon timed is a two-year-old hen sent sitting 8 days and Kenny slipped her a youngster 3 hours before basketing and this certainly had the desired effect. The sire is 'The Fed' a Van Camp from Dave Gardner of Gardner & Rice from Cleethorpes, while the dam is a Soontjens from PJ Lofts, Boston in Lincolnshire. Her dam was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Hens National for Paul Newbold of PJ Lofts so the pedigree is well established. I was interested to hear that Kenny had struck up friendships with both Dave Gardner and Paul Newbold when on holidays in their area. Kenny obviously researched the top fanciers so that he could make useful loft visits while his wife went shopping (sounds like a perfect arrangement).

This year 'Georgie' was raced on roundabout and then paired just after the Skibbereen National. She had four inland races and then the 2<sup>nd</sup> Talbenny. Coming off the roundabout system they decided that the birds for France would need some additional training to keep them ticking over and so she had 4/5 tosses from Skerries and 4 from Castlebellingham. The Mallens race the pigeons on two different widowhood mixes throughout the racing season with added energy mix in the form of hemp and peanuts.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> North section, 5<sup>th</sup> Open W G Neill Bondhill, Vel 1167, Flying 481 miles, winning £766**

5<sup>th</sup> North section, 5<sup>th</sup> Open goes to Willie Neill of Annaghmore, another fancier who needs no introduction and a fancier who has featured regularly in National results. Last year Willie was second in the King's Cup so to follow that up with another top 5 position shows a great deal of consistency at this level of racing. Willie's loft has been in super form throughout the season and he was 1<sup>st</sup> Open NIPA from Clonmel on 25<sup>th</sup> May when 1007 members sent 23,594 birds (winning velocity 1817). Even the race before the King's Cup, a difficult one from Portland saw Willie with 4 birds in the NIPA Open result at 18<sup>th</sup>, 65<sup>th</sup>, 68<sup>th</sup> and 96<sup>th</sup> Open and in this race here Willie had another 3 in the result at 57<sup>th</sup> Open, 110<sup>th</sup> Open, and 206<sup>th</sup> Open., so how's that for top class racing.

The pigeon timed is a two-year-old hen sent sitting 14 days on eggs. On her arrival from the race she went straight to the nest and when Willie went to get her rubber it was obvious that she had been down for a drink. Her dam is 'Queen of the Silver Dollar', winner of the Triple Crown in 2010 having been 89<sup>th</sup> Open Young Bird Penzance in 2008, 62<sup>nd</sup> Open Yearling National Sennen Cove in 2009 and 53<sup>rd</sup> Open King's Cup in 2010. The sire is a grandson of the red hen that was 2<sup>nd</sup> Open in this race last year and also includes 'Iron Lady' lines. As young birds Willie races them all down Ireland, then as yearlings all go to Penzance and the two-year-olds are sent to France without going to the channel races, but only if they are sitting right and never past the fourth flight. Training for the French races is against the wind, weather permitting from the Skibbereen race onwards. Feeding is Champion Supreme from C & H Beattie.

### **1<sup>st</sup> South section, 6<sup>th</sup> Open J Maghery Arklow Utd Vel 1166, flying 370 miles, winning £ 255 and the Gilliland Cup for 1<sup>st</sup> IHU member after the winner**

1<sup>st</sup> South section 6<sup>th</sup> Open is Joe Maghery from Arklow Utd to win the Gilliland Cup for the first IHU member after the winner. Joe is originally from Armagh and raced in Charlemont and Blackwatertown but left Armagh 24 years ago to go to London to work. It was here that he met a girl from Arklow and came back there to get married and has been in Arklow since. He showed canaries for awhile but seven years ago he came back into pigeons and quickly gathered a good team of pigeons around him. The pigeon timed here is a two-year-old Kees Bosua cock from B & G Cochrane Comber crossed with a Vigo from Hilda Reinhart. The Kees Bosua is off the 'Porky' and 'Miss Marabella' lines and according to Bosua 'Miss Marabella' was the hen that laid the golden egg. This is the same lines that was 1<sup>st</sup> Open Skibbereen Young Bird National last year for E & M Curran, Armagh.

As a young bird 'Bernie's Boy', as he is now known, was a darkened youngster that was raced down Ireland. As a yearling he was raced through to Sennen Cove where he was 2<sup>nd</sup> club, 4<sup>th</sup> Open South Leinster Fed. This year he was given every Inland race except the last Skibbereen and then into the King's Cup. Since Skibbereen he was single tossed a few times from Dublin as Joe works there. Feeding is Beyers Base mix and No 47 on Thursday nights with Versele Laga widowhood mixed in. This bird was on full mixture for the last 3 weeks with a few peanuts added in.

### **6<sup>th</sup> North section, 7<sup>th</sup> Open JJ McCabe Newry & Dist, Vel 1164, flying 460 miles, winning £636**

6<sup>th</sup> North section, 7<sup>th</sup> Open goes to Newry & District's John McCabe and what a meteoric rise to the top this has been for John. John came into pigeons in 2011 just as Pat McAteer of Newry was going out of them. A deal was struck and John got Pat's pigeons. It took John a season to find his feet and things took off in 2013. Two weeks prior to this race John was 1<sup>st</sup> Open NIPA Penzance with 814 members sending 9,235 and now 7<sup>th</sup> Open in the King's Cup – what a start for John who does a lot of good work in the Newry area taking photos for the local and national press to publicise the many fine performances from the city.

The pigeon timed is a two-year-old Harthog cock. It was one of a kit of four that Pat McAteer bought at the annual Hospice sale in Ballyholland. This one has been raced hard, having been in Penzance as a young bird and was in the King's Cup last year when only 71 were timed in race time. It took him three weeks then but just 12 hours this time. John timed a second bird here to take 43<sup>rd</sup> Open. Again this one was from Pat and was a yearling cock that John managed to break. John raced the pigeons on a semi roundabout system for the early part of the season but paired them for the channel. The pigeon at 7<sup>th</sup> Open was sent sitting on eggs that were chipping on the day before basketing. He was just given the first couple of races, then 1<sup>st</sup> Talbenny. After that he was just flown at home. John feeds Natural feeding from Donnelly Bros and adds his own mix to this which includes maize

### **7<sup>th</sup> North section, 8<sup>th</sup> Open M Wilkinson Wilton Cross, Vel 1148, flying 478 miles, winning £2273**

We move to the Wilton Cross club for 7<sup>th</sup> North section, 8<sup>th</sup> Open to Maurice Wilkinson and contrast this to our previous fancier who was competing in his second Kings Cup race as Maurice is a former Kings Cup winner having collected the coveted Cup in 2005. He has a great record from the longer French events. Added to the above in 2012 Maurice won the St. Malo Old Bird Derby with the NIPA and as we saw earlier his bloodlines are in both Williamson's winning pigeon and the Beattie's 2<sup>nd</sup> Open pigeon

from this year's King's Cup. The pigeon Maurice timed in this year's King's Cup is a three-year-old blue hen and she is a grand daughter of his 2005 King's Cup winner and also has the best of this year's King's Cup winner Ron Williamson's Bloodlines being a granddaughter of 'Lady Helen'. This hen is no stranger to the prize sheet having been 17<sup>th</sup> open in the 2012 Friendship National from Quimper and in 2011 she was 35<sup>th</sup> in the NIPA's Yearling Hens National. She was racing Natural for this year's King's Cup and was feeding a 4 day old youngster for this event. Preparation for this race this year included flying Skibbereen and the 1<sup>st</sup> Talbenny and then regular training with Ivan Mawhinney to whom he is very grateful. Interestingly the second bird Maurice got from this years King's Cup was the cock the blue hen is paired to. It is worth mentioning that Maurice does not keep a large team of birds his old Bird Loft being 12 and his young bird loft 8 foot.

At the time of going to press the Provisional result of the Friendship National shows that Maurice is back in the top ten again from a very difficult race but more about that in next week's report.

### **8<sup>th</sup> North section, 9<sup>th</sup> Open, B & M Gilmore Ballyclare, Vel 1138.56, flying 494 miles, winning £471**

Brothers Brian and Mervyn Gilmore of Ballyclare are 8<sup>th</sup> North section, 9<sup>th</sup> Open with a two-year-old Blue Cheq hen named 'Easton Minstral'. This is a partnership which likes to compete from all distances with Brian managing the sprinters and Mervyn the birds for the longer events.

'Easton Minstral' on the sire's side was bred by Martin Graham of Ballymena and is Frans Van Wildemeersch and Norman Thompson(Dundonald) bloodlines whilst the dam is off the Gilmore's NIPA Gold medal winner which has bloodlines from N Black & Sons of Dromara and was paired to an Alan Darragh pigeon .

For the 2013 King's Cup 'Easton Minstral' was sitting 14 day old eggs and in fact had not reared a youngster this year. Having flown the Yearling National in 2012 preparation this year consisted of 4 inland races and at this part of the season the birds were raced roundabout. She then was trained regularly from Skerries and various other points in the South. Again this is another loft getting a second bird which was the mate of the first and in the Gilmore's case 'Easton Minstral's mate is in the result at 100<sup>th</sup> Open.

### **9<sup>th</sup> North section, 10<sup>th</sup> Open Mark Maguire & Son Millvale, Vel 1138.20, flying 459 miles, winning £288**

The top ten report for the King's Cup is completed by Millvale's Mark Maguire & Son who are 9<sup>th</sup> North section, 10<sup>th</sup> Open. Mark is a son of Malachy Maguire also of Millvale in Newry, who just happens to win the Friendship National this weekend from Quimper and this bird is actually related to Malachy's Friendship National winner.

Mark's bird at 10<sup>th</sup> Open is a yearling Jan Arden cock and is a grandson of Malachy's 'Home Alone', winner of the NIPA Old Bird National from Fougères, when he was the only bird timed on the day, flying 15½ hours. 'Home Alone' then turned out to be a prolific breeder in breeding over 30 x 1<sup>st</sup> prizewinners for the Maguires. Mark's pigeon timed here was raced naturally last year and only got three young bird races as Mark isn't really a big lover of young bird racing. This year he had every single inland race, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Talbenny and Penzance where he was in the Classic result before being sent to the King's Cup. Work commitments meant that Mark didn't get much chance to do much private training but didn't see this as a problem in any way, as the birds were getting plenty of racing and were flying well at home. In the

earlier part of the season this yearling cock was raced on the roundabout and was then paired in preparation for the Kings Cup when he was sent sitting on a big youngster. At the end of the day Mark can reflect on a successful King's Cup with five birds home in race time.

I would like to thanks Clifford Browne for his help in preparing this report and to all who helped with photographs. I would also like to thank all those who helped at the marking station and the clock centres, and Frazer Animal Feeds for their sponsorship of this race.

Brendan McLoughlin

INFC Press Officer