

IRISH NATIONAL FLYING CLUB

YOUNG BIRD GRAND NATIONAL PENZANCE 2015

The Irish National Flying Club Young Bird National was held on Wednesday 2nd September with the birds liberated in Penzance at 9.50am in a light northerly wind. The race was sponsored by Frazer's Animal Feeds and Veterinary Services for Birds. The entry was up on last year with 467 members from across Ireland sending 2,923 birds (last year 401 members sent 2,332) and members were racing for total pools and prizemoney of £21,033.

The northerly wind was something that the birds hadn't encountered in any of their previous races as the majority of the young bird races saw southerly or southwesterly winds. It was 3.56pm before the first pigeon was recorded to Gregory Bros of Rathnew and with the northerly wind it was going to take another few hours for the birds to reach the northern members. The winner was timed at 6.56 in Lisburn to L Magee & Son who had two together to take first and second Open. They were closely followed by Glen and Johnny Buckley who ended up on the same yard. At the end of the day there were 45 birds recorded.

1st & 2nd North Section, 1st & 2nd Open L Magee & Son Lisburn & District, Vels 975.66, 975.57, Flying 302 miles, winning £834, the J.M.K McGugan Perpetual Cup and the De-Scheemaecker Trophy for best two bird average.

The winners of the Penzance Young Bird National are the Lisburn lofts and L Magee & Son who had an incredible race here with two birds together to take 1st and 2nd Open in such a difficult race. The birds wouldn't have been in the same basket as one is hen and the other a cock. The senior partner Lenny passed away three years ago but son Jackie retained the partnership name and no doubt Lenny would have been extremely proud of this result. This loft was bang on form at this time as they were 6th Open in the Fermoy-5 -Bird with the NIPA on the Saturday following Penzance. What makes this result all the more impressive is that Jackie has in modern day racing a very small set-up. He only gets forty rings every year.

Prior to the National both pigeons had all the young bird races including Talbenny. The winning pigeon now known as 'ISA' is a blue hen racing naturally. The sire is from their own Busschaert lines which go back as far as 1977, while the dam is from Conor McManus, Ligoniel, who has had some birds from Jackie. The second bird is again from the Busschaert lines with the dam coming from Ian Donaghy Derriaghy.

Training is three times a week with John Abernethy and feeding is Garvo mixed corn from The Maze Pet Stores.

3rd North section, 3rd Open G Buckley & Son Annaghmore, Vel 975.30, Flying 301 miles, winning £987

3rd North section, 3rd Open are G Buckley & Son Annaghmore, another household name, having been 1st Open NIPA Lamballe in 2004, 1st Open NIPA Portland in 2005 and 1st Open NIPA Lamballe in 2007 plus many other top positions over the years including 2nd Open King's Cup 2009, 7th Open King's Cup 2010 and 8th Open Friendship National 2010. The partnership is Glen and son, Johnny who come from a very strong pigeon family. The pigeon timed here is a blue hen sent just looking at her cock. She had every race except Talbenny and was always a steady racer. Breeding is their own Soontjens lines crossed with a Leo Van Rijn from Kevin Darling. The sire was 1st Open Skibbereen with the NIPA last year when they

were 1st and 2nd Open with two nest brothers. The grandsire is off a son of the Lamballe Open winner in 2004. (This son of the Lamballe winner is the main breeder in their loft now). The grandsire is a daughter of the Portland winner. Glen and Johnny use a mixture of training and flying at home to keep the birds in form. Any training is usually from Newtownhamilton (15-20 miles) while feeding is Beyers.

1st South Section, 4th Open Gregory Bros Rathnew, Vel 959, Flying 199 miles, winning £276 and the William Erwin Memorial Trophy for the section not winning the Open.

1st South section and 4th Open goes to Gregory Bros Rathnew who had a superb race here with four birds in the result at 4th, 52nd, 54th and 86th Open with the first three on the day. The partnership is Tommy Senior who is the 'Financial Controller' and 'Head Trainer', and sons Tommy Junior and Roger. They have had a super year so far with 15 x 1st clubs and 8 x 1st Federations. The sire of the pigeon at 4th Open here is a Gustaff Roodhooft containing the bloodlines from his famous brother Andre Roodhooft., the same lines as his 7 x 1st ACE pigeons. The dam is from Jeff Greenaway Dromore, winner of the De Scheemaeker Trophy in this race last year. The birds are fed the Natural range of corn mainly 'Professional mix' and 'Fitness Energy Corn' from Direct Pigeon Supplies, Arklow. They also use the full range of Dr Brockamp from Sheldon Leonard. The birds have three 12 mile tosses most weeks when they are released in batches of ten with a 50 mile toss with Eric Kennedy every 2/3 weeks. The Gregorys would like to thank everybody who congratulated them on their section win.

4th North Section 5th Open D & J Campbell & Bigger Eastway, Vel 953, Flying 315 miles, winning £169

The Eastway lofts of D & J Campbell and Hugh Bigger are 4th North section, 5th Open. This partnership is made up of Davy Campbell, his late father Jack and Hugh Bigger. In the Young Bird National from Skibbereen in 2013 they were 3rd North section and had other birds placed at 75th, 104th, 109th, 110th and 113th North section. This result here sets them nicely up for this year's Skibbereen where a similar result could see them lift the Jarvis Cup for best average Penzance and Skibbereen Young Bird Nationals. The pigeon timed here is a blue cheq hen sent sitting 14 days on eggs. The breeding is Janssen x Angel Bros but Davy and Hugh have now developed this into their own breed. The sire was one of their best racing cocks. They don't race in the first two young bird races and since that this hen has had 5 races including Talbenny when she was 25th Section C and 105th Open NIPA. The youngsters are generally flown around the house but are given one toss per week either privately from the Border or with Ronnie Williamson. Feeding is from Frazers and is as combination of 2 or 3 different mixes.

5th North section, 6th Open W Gillis & Son Laurelvale, Vel 952, Flying 295miles, winning £518

We go the Laurelvale club for 6th Open to the lofts of William Gillis and his son Steven. The pigeon timed is a blue cheq cock, a natural youngster sent to Penzance paired but not down on eggs. The sire and dam are both from Willie's good friend, the late Trevor Greenaway of Gilford. Willie and Trevor's friendship goes back many years and they often swapped birds. This young cock had all races and the week before from Talbenny he sat out for 25 minutes when he came home and Willie told me he sat out again from Penzance but this time only for seven minutes. The pigeons are trained with Ronnie Williamson and Willie and Steven are very grateful to Ronnie for his help. Feeding is from Frazers and Willie loves his trips to Ballynaskeagh to stock up.

6th North section, 7th Open, Collins & Douglas Blackwatertown WE, Vel 950, Flying 300 miles, winning £408

We go to the Blackwatertown WE club for the 7th Open pigeon to the lofts of Collins and Douglas. This partnership is made up of Sid Collins, a life Vice President of the Irish National Flying Club and Jenifer Douglas, wife of former King's Cup winner Geoffrey Douglas. Sid hadn't raced young birds in 2012 and wasn't going to race any in 2013 either and was on the verge of going out of pigeons altogether. He offered Geoffrey a half a dozen young birds to race for him and Geoffrey suggested that he join in partnership with Jenifer who was racing in Blackwatertown and so the racing partnership was formed. In their first year racing Collins and Douglas were 6th Open in the Penzance Young Bird National. The pigeon timed here is a mealy hen, a gift from John McNeill, Brocksburn, Scotland. She was sent to Penzance sitting 10 days on eggs. This hen had just three races before Penzance, from Roscrea, Clonmel and Fermoy. The pigeons are trained three times a week from Clogherhead and feeding is Van Tilburg from Henry McLaughlin with hormoform, peanuts and sunflower hearts added.

7th North section, 8th Open Kennedy & Lyons Hillsborough & Maze, Vel 1180, flying 302 miles, winning £226

Kennedy & Lyons of Hillsborough & The Maze are 8th Open here. The partnership is Roy Kennedy and Carson Lyons and the lofts are popularly known as the Cherryfield Lofts. The pigeon timed is a dark cheq hen, small in size, racing on the dark and sent to this race just racing to the perch. She was bred by Martin Mulholland of Newry and is a Busschaert. She had most races this year including Talbenny when she was their third pigeon. They had a great Talbenny with 19 home out of 20 sent. This particular hen looked as if she had never been in a race; she was in such good form. As such the decision to send her back was an easy one. She had always been a steady racer up until Penzance when the testing conditions obviously suited her. Training was private training to Dundalk and then with Joe Brown to Clogherhead the week before Talbenny. Feeding is Geryplus and Versele Laga.

8th North Section, 9th Open A & N Lewis Doagh & District, Vel 947, Flying 319 miles, winning £86

9th Open in the Young Bird National goes to the Doagh partnership of Anthony and Norman Lewis. The Lewis partnership are very consistent racers within the Irish National Flying Club. In 2013 they were 2nd Open Friendship National, in 2009 they were 4th Open Skibbereen Old Bird national and 7th Open Skibbereen Young Bird National, winning the Gloria Hunniford Trophy. In 2011 they were 3rd Open Young Bird National winning the Jarvis Cup for best average Penzance and Skibbereen Young Bird Nationals (can they win it again?). The pigeon timed here is a dark cheq cock and was sent to the race sitting 10 days on eggs. He was bred by Wayne Doonan's Cockcrow Stud from the Scheele Bros family which have been an instant success for Anthony and Norman since their introduction to their lofts. Prior to the National this young cock took six club positions including 1st club Mullingar. They timed another two pigeons from Penzance to take 37th and 103rd Open out of an entry of just 5 pigeons.

9th North Section, 10th Open D Dixon Ballymoney, Vel 939, Flying 339 miles, winning £86

We move to the Ballymoney club for our 10th Open bird to the lofts of leading flyer Danny Dixon. Danny won this race in 2010 on a velocity of 1311 yards per minute and is the longest flying winner of the race. Danny is also a former winner of the Skibbereen National and has many excellent results at both

National and NIPA level. Danny timed his arrival from this race at 8.26pm for the 339 mile fly as dark was beginning to set in. The pigeon timed is a blue bar hen racing on the dark and flying to the perch. The breeding is Van loon from Mick McMurchie, Scotland. The sire is a son of 'Triple 7' while the dam is a daughter of 'Miss Perfect'. She had every young bird race except Talbenny and was a steady racer. Training is with Homer twice a week to Oxford Island (40 miles). The rest of the week the birds are flown at home. Feeding is Geryplus.

Thanks again to our race sponsors, Frazers Animal Feeds, and Veterinary Services for Birds. I'd also like to thank all those who helped with photographs.

Brendan McLoughlin

Irish National Flying Club Press Officer