

## **IRISH NATIONAL FLYING CLUB NATIONAL**

## **SKIBBEREEN YOUNG BIRD**

The Irish National Flying Club held their Young Bird Inland National from Skibbereen in Co Cork on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September. 255 members sent 2,275 birds to compete for £9,211 in pools and prizemoney. This was well down on last year's entry which saw 310 members send 2,966 and the 2015 entry which saw 385 members send 3,623 birds. One of the reasons for the reduced entry maybe that many of the racing organizations were racing on the same weekend due to the bad weather from the previous weekend. As with the Old Bird National the race was divided into 3 sections and I will cover the top 5 in each section in this article.

The birds were liberated at 8.30am in a light westerly wind which was to turn north northwesterly on the route home. It was widely anticipated that the Open would be won in Wexford but as it turned out it was actually won north of Wexford by Leonard & De Ridder from Arklow, with Derek Tierney of the Sarsfield club in Dublin winning the Middle section and Skibbereen Supremo Mr & Mrs Delaney from Dromore winning the North section.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Open, 1<sup>st</sup> South section, Leonard & De Ridder FBI Individual South, Vel 1417, Flying 157 miles, winning £78 and the Tom Marshall Trophy**

The winners of 1<sup>st</sup> Open and 1<sup>st</sup> South section are Sheldon Leonard and Yannick De Ridder from Arklow. Now in a westerly wind you would expect Wexford to dominate the result and while they did for the most part this was an exceptional pigeon for Sheldon and Yannick to win the race by four yards per minute. In 2017 Sheldon and Yannick formed FBI (Flanders Breeding Ireland). They thought they would combine their breeding pigeons to form a team in Ireland based on the Van Den Bulck, Leo Heremans, Andre Roodhooft, F & J Vandenheede and Daniel Aeren's pigeons for the distance. Their first youngsters were weaned in April this year but they still managed to darken them successfully. The young birds were only released around the loft in May and were training three weeks later. The Skibbereen National winner was a very consistent pigeon and flew every race winning the following positions; 11<sup>th</sup> club Dungarvan (363 birds), 11<sup>th</sup> club Pilmore Beach (429 birds), 5<sup>th</sup> club Dungarvan (480 birds), beaten many times by loftmates. The birds were split at the beginning of racing but then paired up coming up to the Nationals and the pairing was staggered over a two-week period. The same weekend as the National Sheldon and Yannick also won the IHUNFC from Barleycove (178 miles), a race in which they took 8 of the top ten positions. Both National winners are now at stock in the breeding loft at Yannick's where they will be mated together, and they will bring some back to race next year. They have named the Skibbereen National winner 'Herbie's White Kittle' and his brother was 5<sup>th</sup> IHUNFC on the Sunday. Understandably they are thrilled with the way the 'Kittle' lines have gone this year. Training was Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday by road together with flying at the loft.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> South section Billy Cullimore Wexford North & South, Vel 1413, Flying 130 miles, winning £178**

2<sup>nd</sup> South section goes to Billy Cullimore, a winner of five Irish National Flying Club Nationals from Skibbereen. 2010 was a superb year for Billy when he was 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Open in both the Old Bird and Young Bird Nationals from Skibbereen. He also won back to back Old Bird Nationals in 2006 and 2007, and was 3<sup>rd</sup> South section in this race last year. The pigeon timed here was a chequer hen sent to this race sitting 12 days on eggs. She was 3<sup>rd</sup> the week before when Billy had 5 birds together. The sire, a winner of two South Leinster Feds is a son of 'Stitch' who won 8 x 1<sup>st</sup> clubs and Feds. He was Champion Old Bird in both club and Fed in 2005, 2006 and 2007 and was runner up in 2008. The dam is a daughter of 'Rocket Ronnie', a gift bird from Gerry O'Mara, Dublin, which was 5<sup>th</sup> Open Skibbereen Old Bird National in 2012 and topped the Fed three times. Breeding is mostly Van Loon and she has produced eight Fed winners. Billy trains the birds hard before racing then from Monday to Thursday up until the fourth race. After that they are flown at home twice a day and go to every race.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> South section Adam Hillis Wexford North & South, Vel 1404, Flying 126 miles, winning £54**

3<sup>rd</sup> South section goes Adam Hillis of Wexford who won the Old Bird National from Skibbereen in 2015. It's great to see this young 18 year old doing so well in the sport at a time when we are struggling to recruit new members. Of course, pigeon racing is in Adam's blood as his grandparents Robert & Mary Hillis are also terrific racers in the Wexford club. Indeed the pigeon timed here is a Van Reet from Robert & Mary's old bloodlines as was the 2015 National winner. A blue tipped cock he was sent to the National sitting 14 days on eggs. While a steady racer before earlier on this was the first prize for the blue tipped cock. Adam only trains up to the first race and then the birds are flown at home. He might change this routine for next year as he is due to sit his driving test in the coming months.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> South section Dobbs Bros Wexford North & South, Vel 1395.98 and 1395.55, Flying 130 miles, winning £80**

Dobbs Bros Wexford, winners of this race last year are 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> South section this time. This partnership also won this race in 1999. At that time the partnership was made up of brothers, Willie, Mattie and Leo but following Willie's death a few years ago the lads found it hard to get going again. Nowadays it is just Leo but the partnership name remains intact. Leo has been back racing five years now after a break of six years. He still had the pigeons all this time but with work commitments and with his heart not being fully with the pigeons they weren't raced. Leo's first bird here was a cheq tipped hen racing to the perch which had previously won a couple of minor prizes. She had nine races this year including this one. Breeding is Van Loon x Maris with both parents being direct from these top lofts. Leo's second pigeon taking 5<sup>th</sup> Open is a blue hen, also racing to the perch. This one had the same races as the first one and again had a few minor prizes. The breeding here is Flor Engels x Maris with the Flor Engels just introduced in 2015. Dobbs Bros had another super race here with other birds at 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> South section against some stiff opposition. Leo is very grateful to his "lovely" wife Muriel, and to Richie Butler and Patrick for all their help throughout the year. In closing Leo asked me to formally congratulate Sheldon and Yannick on their great win here.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Middle section D Tierney Sarsfield, Vel 1358, Flying 174 miles, winning £317**

The winner of the Middle section and a coveted Irish National Flying Club Diploma is Derek Tierney racing with the Sarsfield club in Dublin. Derek has had a terrific Young Bird season winning 5 out of 11 races in the competitive Sarsfield club. Derek is the proverbial small loft fancier with just a 20ft loft to house all his birds, and only keeps three pairs of stock pigeons. This bird wasn't on Derek's original team for this race but when he went to basket the birds she got in past him and went to a nest box with his trapper. When he went to catch her she nearly beat his hand off. Realising how keen she was he quickly added her to the team. A blue hen she was bred by Kevin Rooney, Son & Dtr from Annalong from their Hereman Ceusters stock. The sire is a full brother to their number one Ceusters hen while the dam is a full brother of 'De Jan', while the dam is a granddaughter of 'De Jan'. This blue hen has previously been 11<sup>th</sup> club (840 birds), 46<sup>th</sup> ISRF (9,000 birds) and 3<sup>rd</sup> club (741 birds, 22<sup>nd</sup> Fed (9,000 birds). Derek has named his section winner 'Pearl's Angel' after his mother-in-law who sadly died two years ago. Derek had two more birds in the result here taking 9<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Middle section, and ended the season with a 10<sup>th</sup> Open Irish South Road Fed from Dunmanway.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Middle section, N & N Smith Greenhills, Vel 1354 and 1288, Flying 175 miles, winning £216**

Noel Smith and his son Noel from the Greenhills club in Dublin had a super race here with two birds in the top five in the Middle section at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Staunch supporters of the Irish National Flying Club they were 3<sup>rd</sup> Middle section in the Skibbereen Old Bird National in 2013 and in 2015. As it happens both birds timed here are related to the pigeon that was 3<sup>rd</sup> section in 2015. The youngster at 2<sup>nd</sup> section here is a daughter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Middle section 2015 bird. She was a latebred hen that was hatched on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014. She had also been 19<sup>th</sup> Open Irish South Road Fed from Barleycove two days before basketing for the 2015 National and the previous week she had been 4<sup>th</sup> club, 23<sup>rd</sup> Irish South Road Fed from Skibbereen with approximately 10,000 birds competing and the week before that she was 4<sup>th</sup> club, 70<sup>th</sup> Open from Mallow. The breeding is Van Winkle with the sire from Noel's good friend Val Flood, Dublin North East and the dam from clubmate Brian Brady. The 2<sup>nd</sup> section bird here is a dark cheq hen racing to the perch. The

pigeon at 4<sup>th</sup> section here is a blue hen also racing to the perch. This dam of this one is a bird that was 3<sup>rd</sup> section in 2015. Breeding again is from Val Flood and Brian Brady. Noel Senior does most of the training to Greystones (20 miles) and over the last two weeks of the season training was with John Flynn to Blessington (15 miles)

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Middle section Brady & Burton Sallynoggin, Vel 1293, Flying 175 miles, winning £50**

We go to the Sallynoggin club in Dublin for our 3<sup>rd</sup> Middle section bird to the lofts of Brady & Burton, a partnership of John Brady and Vivienne Burton. They have had a great Young Bird season winning the Young Bird Average in the Sallynoggin club. They had 3 positions in the club from every young bird race including Penzance Young Bird National when they timed the only bird in the club. The club rule is that a member can only take three positions in any race. The pigeon timed here is red cock that was sent to the race sitting on eggs between a week and ten days. Breeding is Lambrecht and it was one of a kit of six obtained from Ian Wheatley. This bird had most races this year and was in the prizes four times including 4<sup>th</sup> club from Castletown (157 miles) in its previous race. Throughout the season John and Vivienne train two or three times a week depending on the weather and over the last few weeks the youngsters are flown an hour a day at home.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Middle section Boylan Family Cabra, Vel 1283, Flying 176 miles, winning £50**

5<sup>th</sup> South section goes to the Boylan Family from the Cabra club in Dublin. No further details available at the moment

### **1<sup>st</sup> North Section, Mr & Mrs G Delaney Dromore, Vel 1193, Flying 234 miles, winning £441**

The winners of the North section are Mr & Mrs Gerald Delaney from Dromore in Co Down. Gerald & Pat need no introduction as I doubt anybody can match their record from Skibbereen/Rosscarbery from where they have accumulated over 80 first prizes. Their pigeons were obviously in tip top condition as they were 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Open NIPA two days later (303 members sent 3023birds). They did something similar in 1980 when they won the NIPA Derby one week and followed that up by winning the Skibbereen National the following week. The pigeon timed here at 1<sup>st</sup> North section is a blue cheq hen sent sitting 10-12 days on eggs. She had only two races prior to the National. The sire is 'Diamond Prince', a nestmate of 'Diamond Princess' who was 1<sup>st</sup> Open Fermoy and 1<sup>st</sup> Open Fermoy 5 bird in 2016 for Delaney & McCambridge, Harmony. 'Diamond Princess' is the mother of the pigeon that was 3<sup>rd</sup> Open NIPA for Delaney & McCambridge. The Grandsire was 'Ace of Diamonds', ACE pigeon in 2010 and 2011 for Willy Jacobs while the granddam is a direct daughter of Chris Massenhoven's 'Box 2' pair and is a Van Den Bulck. Training is usually from the northern side of the border (18 miles) and they had only three tosses from Ardee (30 miles) as they had been flying so well at home.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> North section, Herman McAvoy Harmony, Vel 1192, Flying 236 miles, winning £139**

We move to the Harmony club outside Ballynahinch to the lofts of Herman McAvoy for our 2<sup>nd</sup> North section pigeon. This is Herman's first full year racing in the Irish National Flying Club at this address and he was particularly pleased to have won the Charles Hunniford Trophy for best average Old Bird and Young Bird Skibbereens in the North section. The pigeon timed here is a blue cock flying to the perch. The breeding is Kees Bosua and Vigo with the parents direct from these two top lofts. Herman had seven of these Bosua and Vigo pigeons in the result at 2<sup>nd</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 37<sup>th</sup>, 67<sup>th</sup> and 87<sup>th</sup> North section. Darren Aiken of Dromara was 10<sup>th</sup> North section with another one similarly bred. In 2015 Herman was 2<sup>nd</sup> Open NIPA Young Bird Rosscarbery, beaten on that occasion by a yard as well with another Bosua x Vigo. These birds have also performed very well for Herman's partner Bernie Cochrane.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> North section, Delaney & McCambridge Harmony, Vel 1191, Flying 234 miles, winning £293**

We stay in the Harmony club for our 3<sup>rd</sup> North section bird to the lofts of Delaney & McCambridge. I'm sure they don't need an instruction at this stage but they are 14 year old Jack Delaney and 12 year old Ronan McCambridge and they are grandchildren of Mr & Mrs Gerald Delaney winners of the North

section here. These young lads have had another great season and thoroughly enjoy the family competition. They have been the RPRA's Young Fanciers of the Year 5 times in the Irish Region as well the overall title. The sire of the pigeon timed here is 'King of Diamonds', a brother of Wily Jacobs' 'Ace of Diamonds'. 'King of Diamonds' has bred 6 x 1<sup>st</sup> Open winners. The sire of the young bird timed here is a full brother to Andy Cooke's bird that was 4<sup>th</sup> Open NIPA Rosscarbery and 22<sup>nd</sup> North section in this race last year. The Dam is a direct Gustav Bouckman and is a Dirk Van Den Baulk. Jack and Ronan had a great race here with other birds at 27<sup>th</sup>, 46<sup>th</sup>, 47<sup>th</sup>, 63<sup>rd</sup>, 91<sup>st</sup> and 96<sup>th</sup> North section. They also won £700 in the Harmony club's Gold Ring race. Jack's father Stephen is a great help to the boys and does all the training.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> North section John F McCabe & Son Newry & Dist, Vel 1176, Flying 219 miles, winning £75**

John F McCabe & Son Newry & District are 4<sup>th</sup> North section to improve on last year when they were 16<sup>th</sup> North section. John and Conor have had a great year this year having topped the NIPA from Gowran Park in the Old Birds (878 members sent 25,206 birds) and then in the Young Bird race from the same race point they were 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Open (723 members sent 21,931 birds) and from Fermoy were 1<sup>st</sup> section G (51 members sent 1,263 birds), 9<sup>th</sup> Open (534 members sent 11,180 birds). This is great racing from a loft that starts off with 50 young birds and which had 3 x 1sts in the Young Birds. The pigeon timed here is a blue hen sent to this race just racing to the perch. She missed the Area Liberations and started in Roscrea and had only Gowran Park and Fermoy before the National. Her sire is a Soontjens from Davy Hutchinson Ashfield while the dam is from Jacob Poortblijet, Holland.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> North section Donnelly Bros Newry, Vel 1173, Flying 221miles, winning £220**

5<sup>th</sup> North section goes to the Millvale lofts of Donnelly Bros who win the De-Scheemaecker Trophy for runner up best averages all INFC races. They are former winners of the Friendship National, and Richard and John have the great distinction this year as being the only loft in Ireland to time in all three French races. They were 2<sup>nd</sup> Open NIPA St Malo, had three in the King's Cup result at 90<sup>th</sup>, 119<sup>th</sup> and 147<sup>th</sup> Open and 7<sup>th</sup> Open Friendship National. The pigeon timed here is a blue bar cock that was sent to this race driving his hen to the nest, having lost his original hen in Talbenny. He is a double grandson of 'Scarecrow', a pigeon that won 3 x 1<sup>st</sup> Open NIPA and no less than 6 RPRA awards. He twice won the 0 – 250 category in the Irish Region and was also Best All Round in the Irish Region. In the overall RPRA competing against all regions he was voted, Best Sprint, Best All Round and was 3<sup>rd</sup> in the All Round Category the previous year. The young blue bar had most races this year except Talbenny, and while consistent he hadn't won any prizes. Training is three times a week to Ardee or Castlebellingham with Ivan Mawhinney.

The committee of the Irish National Flying Club would like to thank all those who helped at the marking station and all who helped at the clock centres and I would like to thank all who helped with photographs for this report.

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