

# BHW/INFC

## 2018 Single Bird Challenge.

The single bird challenge was first ran back in 2002 when I invited 16 people to enter a single bird to compete in that year's King's Cup, unbelievably two of the 16 birds, Joe Doheny's and Alan Darragh's, finished first and second Open. In 2003 we opened the entry to any member of the INFC, the deadline date being the 17<sup>th</sup> of March. Joe Doheny kindly donated a fantastic trophy for the winner and Wesley Sawyers, through his company Sawyers & Co Estate agents, sponsored framed diplomas for first, second and third and nothing has changed since. The full winner list is 2003 McCracken Bros with "Lucy" who finished 3<sup>rd</sup> Open, 2004 H. Gilligan "Kim" 24<sup>th</sup> Open, 2005 M. Maguire & Son "Moonlight Lass" 19<sup>th</sup> Open, 2006 G. Benson "Jean's Girl" 12<sup>th</sup> Open, 2007 and 2008 no race, 2009 J. Robinson 9<sup>th</sup> Open, 2010 P. Dunlop "The Big Hen" 13<sup>th</sup> Open, 2011 A. Morgan "Katie's Lad" 3<sup>rd</sup> Open, 2012 W.G. Neill "Ivy" 2<sup>nd</sup> Open, 2013 W. McCall "Greystone Dawn" 19<sup>th</sup> Open, 2014 W. Scott "Heather's Delight" 4<sup>th</sup> Open, 2015 J. Downing "Kennedy" 9<sup>th</sup> Open, 2016 E. Murtagh "Mammy's Girl" 10<sup>th</sup> Open, and last year we had the first ever open single bird challenge bird win the King's Cup L. McCall "Chloe" 1<sup>st</sup> Open. This year's prizemoney was 1<sup>st</sup> £500, 2<sup>nd</sup> £300, 3<sup>rd</sup> £200, 4<sup>th</sup> £100, 5<sup>th</sup> £80, 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> £50 each.

The 2018 winner of the BHW single bird challenge is Fintan Moran, Malahide and District club with a 5 year old red hen named "Aoife M" after Fintan's daughter. The hen was 9<sup>th</sup> in the 2017 BHW single bird challenge and her sire was 6<sup>th</sup> in the 2014 challenge. The preparation for the old red hen started in February when she was paired and let rear a single y/bird. She was then privately trained and had 5 inland races, the furthest Skibbereen and last race Pilmore Beach on the 16<sup>th</sup> June. She raced celibate and was in great form all through the programme, being in the first few birds to the loft on each race. For the King's Cup she was repaired, given a few 50 mile tosses and sent sitting 9 days. "Aoife M" was clocked at 7.24am on the second day winning 9<sup>th</sup> Open, she was so keen on arrival she went straight on to her eggs and remained there till evening. Her breeding is steeped in the very best of the old long distance English pigeons. Her sire a 2011 red cock was 30<sup>th</sup> King's cup in 2014, when only 40 pigeons were recorded in race time. His sire was bought at the 2010 Blackpool Charity Auction and was presented by David and Joan Glover of Hinckley, Leicestershire. Their family of birds were based on Logans, Mitcheison, Fear Bros and Titmus birds and he contained their very best performance pigeons, 1<sup>st</sup> Section; 8<sup>th</sup> Open NFC Dax 605 miles and his dam won 6<sup>th</sup> Section 69<sup>th</sup> Open NFC Tarbes 2008 (645 miles on the day) and 4<sup>th</sup> Section 6<sup>th</sup> Open Midlands NFC Bergerac 2009 (536 miles on the day). The dam of the 2011 red cock was bred by Sid and Val Miles, Peasedown St John, and was a grandchild of 3 1st NFC Pau winners, "Ashgrove King" (Harding Bros. 1994); "Little Darling" (Miles and Dix 1987) and "Rosemead Abigail" (George Burgess 1988). The dam of the red hen is an 09 silver hen which was bred for Fintan by Sid and Val Miles from their national winning family of pigeons and again contained the above national winners and 2<sup>nd</sup> section 14<sup>th</sup> open NFC Pau 2004 and 2 1<sup>st</sup> Combine Marmandes 485 miles. "Aoife M" also wins a Hall of Fame Award for three times in the Kings Cup open prizes 35<sup>th</sup> Open 2016 and 107<sup>th</sup> Open last year.

Second challenge and just one place behind the winner is P. Campbell & Sons, Armagh 10<sup>th</sup> Open with a 3yr blue w/f cock. With father Pat passing away, brothers Malachy and John now look after the pigeons. His breeding is Cattrysse and Gits which John and Malachy's late father Pat introduced, a sister to the dam won a triple award in the Friendship National. The w/f cock was a natural young bird and had a few races, the same being the case as a yearling. As a 2yr old he homed on the 5<sup>th</sup> day from a very difficult St Malo when only ten birds were recorded in three days. This year he had four inland races and sent to the Kings Cup sitting 10-12 day eggs.

In 3<sup>rd</sup> place 16<sup>th</sup> Open is Cormac O'Hare of Ballyholland club. Cormac timed a 4yr blue hen, this being her fourth time to fly France but her first time in the prizes. Cormac adopted different tactics with her preparation this year having previously lightly raced her she had every single inland race plus two Tallbennys, Dunmanway and Penzance being flown on roundabout all the way. Her dam is daughter of Alan Darragh's Yearling National winner when paired to Aiden McAteer's "54 hen" the dam of Drumcove Alan who in turn is also the sire of Aiden's Gold Medal winner, this hen of Aiden's also bred 8<sup>th</sup> challenge and a gold medal. The sire of Cormac's timer is a son of his Harkness Rose Bowl hen.

In fourth place 29<sup>th</sup> Open is another great hen "Edith" bred and raced by Noel Lusty of Muckamore this hen also wins a Hall of Fame award (three times in the open prizes). This is her fourth time to fly France in 2015 she was just out of the prizes, 55<sup>th</sup> 2016, 104<sup>th</sup> 2017, and this year 29<sup>th</sup>. Her preparation has been the same every year, one inland and no channel races, plus one 70 mile private training toss per week in the run up to the race being sent on 10day eggs. Her breeding is Denis Dall and McCartney. The Denis Dall through Johnny Drearden who Noel got friendly with after reporting a stray and also stock from Terry Hayley the Watford wizard.

5<sup>th</sup> Challenge 30<sup>th</sup> open is E. Murtagh & Sons an individual member who lives near Armagh. Father Eamon has sadly passed away and son Arron is now in charge, the partnership has a fantastic record in the challenge winning it in 2016 and this same pigeon was 5<sup>th</sup> 20014, they have also won a Hall of Fame and a Harkness Rose Bowl. The pigeon they timed this year is 3yr dark Ch cock called "L. J." after Arron's grandson Lochlain James. The sire of "L. J.". Is a Jan Arden, Southwell through Jimmy Shepherd while the dam is Mr. & Mrs. P. Wooliss being inbred to their champion Lona. Now for the interesting part, the partnership does not belong to any club and the birds are only privately trained." L.J." was only trained as a young bird and a yearling last year as a 2yr old he had his first ever race in the Kings Cup where he was 37<sup>th</sup>. This year again privately trained from mostly 90 miles several times a week, then into his second ever race, the King's Cup where he finished 30th Open winning a merit award.

6<sup>th</sup> Challenge 37<sup>th</sup> Open with a 4yr blue Ch hen is E.E. & S. Kavanagh of Arklow, the partnership consist of dad Eddy, son Eddy, who is presently in Australia, and daughter Siobhan. Raced natural as a young bird he had five or six races and as a yearling similar. As a 2yr old she was 2<sup>nd</sup> club St. Malo then last year 89th Open Kings Cup. This year she had all the inland races plus a few single up tosses from Wexford and was sent sitting 14 day eggs. The sire and dam both came from Gaffney Bros Arklow, the sire containing Westcott bloodlines.

7<sup>th</sup> Challenge 44<sup>th</sup> Open timing a 4yr blue w/f cock called "Bella" is last year's Friendship national winner Rev T.A.B, Sawyers & Son. Although Wesley's father has passed away some time ago like a lot of other partnerships he has kept the name the same. Wesley is also a previous Harkness Rose Bowl winner. Although the bird timed is a cock Wesley still called him "Bella" after his first grandchild. "Bella" was an untrained late bred young bird but was timed in the Yearling national being just out of the prizes. As a 2yr he was just raced inland but last year was 201<sup>st</sup> Open Kings Cup. This year he was raced roundabout and had every inland race plus both Tallbennys, he was then repaired and sent to the Kings Cup sitting ten day eggs. "Bella" contains the blood lines of Wesley's own distance family and a full sister was 16<sup>th</sup> Open when Wesley won the Harkness Rose Bowl.

8<sup>th</sup> Challenge 47<sup>th</sup> Open is another Friendship national winner Aiden McAteer from Ballyholland. Aiden's timer "Drumcove Cheeky Boy" is a very special bird as he also wins a Gold Medal, his previous positions bring 107<sup>th</sup> and 162<sup>nd</sup>. This year he had the entire inland programme and was very lightly trained up to the Kings Cup where he was sent sitting 12 day eggs. His sire is "Drumcove Alan", 2<sup>nd</sup> Section 22<sup>nd</sup> Open St Malo and 1<sup>st</sup> Section 2<sup>nd</sup> Open St. Malo, he is Alan Darragh and Mick Conlon breeding. His dam is the Friendship national winner "Drumcove Olympic Gold" which again is Alan Darragh and Mick Conlon breeding.

9<sup>th</sup> Challenge 48<sup>th</sup> open is D & R Turkington, Doagh & District. The partnership timed a 2yr red cock called "Bertie's Boy" after friend Bertie Blair. A darkness young bird he was lightly raced as a yearling as he was injured in the early part of the year then sent to Penzance. This year he had all the inland races plus Tallbenny then privately trained, he was sent to the race sitting 7 day eggs. His sire is a grandson of P. Swindell's "Queen of the Rain" while the dam was through Bertie Blair.

10<sup>th</sup> Challenge 67<sup>th</sup> Open is Tom Cahill, Cork NFC. Tom timed a 2yr red cock called "Graeme" after Tom's late grandson who sadly passed away a couple of weeks before the Kings Cup, aged only 22. Raced north road up to Monaghan as a young bird and a yearling, he had the same preparation this year flying four races up to Monaghan. He was then lightly privately trained from 30mls up to a week before the Kings Cup and sent sitting 10 day eggs. Tom bought "Graeme" as a squeaker at the Cork Federation charity sale, he was bred by Neil Crean containing the blood of King's Cup winning loft G. Reilly & Son, Malahide. Tom was also winner of the coveted Millar Gold Cup in 2009.

Two other Single Bird Challenge birds not making the challenge prizes were timed in the open result, Paul Dunlop's blue hen in 69<sup>th</sup> and Jackie Waring's blue Ch cock 71<sup>st</sup> open, this pigeon was 6<sup>th</sup> Challenge 70<sup>th</sup> open 2017.

David Black