

Solent South Road Federation

O'h what a long winter this has seemed. But at last we're off with the first race of the 2008 season being a warm up coastal dash from Kingsdown. Well, actually, I say warm up figuratively. The dismal weather was sufficiently dire to deter all but the most determined from sending as a holdover was virtually guaranteed at the time of basketing. Nine of the 31 Solent Fed clubs decided that to have their birds in the baskets for two days for a race that was for some only 60 miles was a non starter.

135 intrepid members sent 1,635 birds. Yes it was a Sunday Lib. Yes, it was into a North East wind. But yet again the great convoying/race controlling team delivered a first class race. Deciding to wait until 11.45, that extra hour after other federations had let go at the same liberation site certainly paid dividends with many fanciers reporting good percentages of returns and fair velocities.

The members of Wootton & Bashley WMFC enjoyed an outstanding end to the last season with members winning top prizes in many of the Classic/National Young Bird races. Don Ellis, Club Secretary has proved that he certainly is well prepared to start this season where he left last.



Having won two young bird 1st Feds in 2007, he was 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Fed Kingsdown posing an unbeatable velocity of 1298.56 ypm, a grand way to christen his new Unikon ETS. His first pigeon was a 2 yr old blue hen GB06J18522. Raced as a youngster, this hen was then last year only lightly raced in the Old Hens Classic race as during the old bird season she was a widowhood hen. She is bred as the majority of Don's birds from a blend of original stock birds gifted from his good friends. Janssens from Ron Ayres of Highcliffe and Tony Adams, race controller of the Solent Federation and Mardon Staf Van Reets from the late Ray Hoare. His 2nd Fed was also a yearling blue pied hen bred this way on 1297.56 ypm. GB07X41003, what a great little hen! This is her second x 2nd Fed, also scoring the same position as a YB. His 3rd Fed GB07X41020, a blue white flight hen raced well as a young bird. You may well ask how does Don do it? In this race he had six pigeons in the top thirty of the fed. Well he is no mob flyer that's for sure! Starting each season with approx. 12 pairs, he is now flying his little team on a very simple, yet fine tuned routine. The hens are either trained on the road, or flown at home for one hour just once a day, fed on their return to the loft and then boxed and left to rest quietly until the next day. Simple, but hey it works!!

Camrose FC again shown their strength this week with G Moody & F King taking 1st Club, 4th Fed with a yearling chequer hen flown naturally, sent sitting. This hen is bred from their very strong stock of Maurice Matthews pigeons. Her sire won the Solent Fed out of 4,700 Birds. The Dam is a daughter of his Central Southern Classic FC Winner of 2001. 2nd Club, 8th Fed was a blue pied hen of the same strain from this very strong partnership, sent 10 days sitting. 3rd Club, 16th Fed was their yearling blue pied cock. Moody & King had a super race all round with six birds in the top 26 Fed positions. Congratulations!

One of the largest and progressive clubs of the federation Milton HS saw 17 members send 184 Birds. The 1st prize winner was A Webb & Son clocking a two year old widowhood cock on 1220 ypm. This pigeon due for a win, having been 2nd club, 7th Fed from Truro previously. This partnership obviously had their birds on the button for this first battle, taking 2nd position on 1219 ypm as well with a red yearling hen also flown on a widowhood system from their own family, bred from their good pied cock. 3rd place saw Mick & Sue Betteridge on 1217 ypm clocking a yearling chequer hen that was sent sitting 10 days.

Camrose (Basingstoke) had 9 members sending 88 pigeons. Former press officer Peter Campbell was the victor with a yearling blue chequer hen flown on roundabout on 1146 ypm. This hen is a strain of pigeon not particularly well known, being 'Silver Toy'. Last year this bird was 82nd Open BICC YB Guernsey, her dam was the section winner of NFC Old Hens, with the sire a winner of 1st prizes also. Peter freely admits to being totally besotted with his pigeons and encourages his daughter, only four years to take a really active part in the loft. Mary has her own pigeons, and although Peter catches them when the return to the loft, Mary takes the rubber and is competent in putting it in the thimble and clocking it. Keep it up Mary, I for one, am all for we females showing the guys how its done! 2nd prize was taken by Fred Reed & Son clocking in a yearling Dk Ch Cock believed to be one of this partnership's very good Van Reets on 1121 ypm. Fred Reed & Son also are partly responsible for the third placed pigeon, a two year blue hen, raced by Zac Richards on 1117 ypm, also a 'Reed' Van Reet. Congratulations to this club as these are very respectable velocities for a club north of the fed whose birds had the wind on the nose all the way.

Romsey SR sent 87 birds for this first race. Club Chairman Colin Edwards topped their result achieving 1109 ypm with a yearling Van Reet flown on widowhood. This pigeon flew well as a youngster, was bred from the winner of last years 1st race, and is a grand daughter of the very renowned 'Tranquility Boy', the multi prize winner of the Scottish National Flying Club. Taking second place was Martin & Claire Norman of Mannor Lofts on 1103 ypm with a yearling Van Loon cock bird flown on widowhood. This pigeon was a very consistant YB. Claire Norman is acknowledged as being one of the hardest working administrators in the South. Now in her first season as secretary of the Central Southern Classic Flying Club, all who know her have full confidence that she will not only show efficiency second to none, but will be single minded into the promotion of and ensuring the continued success of this very popular organisation. Good Luck Claire! Bronze Medal position went to Brian Basham of North Baddesly. His 2 yr old Chequer cock on 1073 ypm was flown on widowhood. This is from Ponderosa Janssen stock with which Brian has competed very well in the past, including 1st sect. NFC YB Guernsey. This is the first card for this bird, who, although has flown well in the past, has been just out of the prizes. Colin wrote a small postscript on his race report form ' Hope this is enough info, will try better this week' Come on Colin you're retired now! You should have enough time on your hands to write a sequel to 'War & Peace' !

Convoyers Report - Kingsdown 19th April 2008

Birds loaded at Portsmouth by 19.40, at Southampton by 21.15. Left for Kingsdown arriving at 23.40. Unable to attain entrance to site until 08.00 Saturday Morning. Watered Birds. Weather heavy overcast skies, misty rain, bitterly cold east wind. Tony called as we got on site to say it would be very unlikely we would get a liberation, which it proved to be. We sat in the lorry all day trying to keep warm and dry. Tony rang to say holdover so birds given a light feed at 13.30 and water replenished. Better weather Sunday particularly late morning. Birds liberated at 11.45 into broken cloud and sunshine into a light north-east wind. Birds cleared well.

Please send all club press reports with your birds to the lorry the following week. Or send to Mrs Claire Mills. Malwood Walk Stables, Newtown, Minstead, Nr. Lyndhurst, Hants. SO43 7GD. Or e mail to c.mills59@btinternet.com. Or ring 07806627754

When writing this, my first venture into journalism, I toyed with the idea writing under a different name. Over the past months I have been called many.....only in this last week I have been referred to both as 'a lady' (as in 25 gentlemen and a lady), andwait for it..... 'a bit of rough'!!!! How brave some men can be when their tongues are lubricated by a few pints. I think I'll just stick toClaire.