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Dax Provisional Race Report

12th July 2026

1st Open, Cristian Dumitru of Harrow

The fourth International of the season took place from Dax, the most westerly race point of the Internationals. Dax is known as a spa destination and for its bullfighting culture, especially during the August ferias, one of the most crowded festival events in France, with 800,000 people attending over five days.

Following a two-day holdover, the birds were liberated on Sunday 12th July. From the BICC, 42 members sent 192 birds to join 3,426 birds from Belgium, 3,450 from France, 1,920 from the Netherlands, 489 from Germany and 24 from Luxembourg. The total birdage of 9,501 was liberated at 6.15 am BST.



Dax winner

1st Open, 1st South Centre Section, Cristian Dumitru of Harrow, timed GB24B00301 on 557.012 ypm over 548 miles. Cristian was absolutely thrilled to time his two-year-old chequer cock and win the Dax National after such a demanding race, flown in hot temperatures throughout France and the UK. It was a fantastic moment for Cristian, and he was full of praise for the bird's determination in getting home to take the top honours. Cristian would also like to thank the BICC and everyone involved at the marking station and in transporting the birds to meet the International convoy.

2nd Open, 2nd South Centre Section, Paul Basham of Bursledon, timed GB24S06185 on 421.557 ypm over 499 miles.

3rd Open, 1st South East Section, Heath Archibald of Dover, timed GB20V88880 on 356.188 ypm over 526 miles. What a race Dax was. Congratulations to Cristian Dumitru on a fantastic win and to all who timed in. My six-year-old cock, which was 3rd Open and 1st Section, is a stock cock bred by my good friend Mark Bulled, from a son of Legacy, 1st Open Tarbes NFC, paired to a full sister of The Proof, 2nd and 3rd Open Tarbes NFC. I only started racing him in 2025 in a few inland races. He is now flying to my new loft location at my own house, as I am moving from the old loft I flew from with my dad for 47 years. Dax was only his third Channel race, having been sent to Nort-sur-Erdre, where he was over ten hours, and then to St Philbert, from where he returned early the next morning. He was then rested until Dax, where he was sent playing up to his hen and was really keen. It was nice to win the section while flying my first International to my new loft. I hope a lot of the birds have returned for everyone over the weeks.

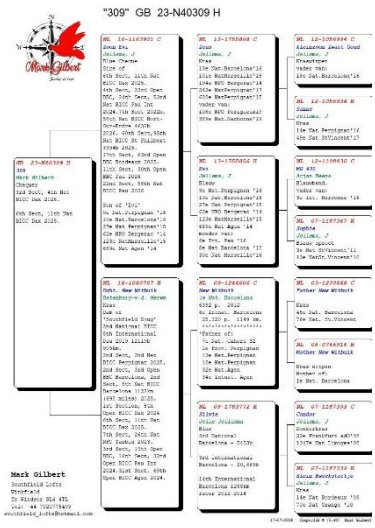


Heath Archibald with grandson and helper, Remy

4th Open, 3rd South Centre Section, Mark Gilbert of Winkfield, timed GB23N40309 on 354.800 ypm over 537 miles. Mark timed a three-year-old hen of Zoom Evi, Jellema and a daughter of New Witbuik of Batenburg v.d. Merwe bloodlines.



Mark Gilbert's bird



Pedigree

5th & 8th Open, 2nd & 4th South East Section, Darius Dumitrascu of Basildon, timed GB24A02374 on 294.031 ypm over 549 miles. My hen is two years old. The father is 50% Catalin Olaru from Romford, Verweij-de Haan pigeons, and 50% Florin Bodale, granddaughter of his 3rd National Agen. The mother is inbred "Schwerin Lady", Varga Lehel from Romania. I sent the hen on eggs of about four days only because she had lost her nest position in the previous race.



Darius Dumitrascu

6th Open, 3rd South East Section, Lyden Bros. of Sandwich, timed GB22N30041 on 319.248 ypm over 536 miles. This four-year-old cock was prepared this year with three East England CC races: Chale, Roye and Gien. The Gien race was particularly difficult, and he was our first bird, flying just under 14 hours on the day. He recovered so quickly and was roaring about the loft the next day, so sending him to Dax and making him our nominated single entry in the Greater Distance Single Bird NFC was an easy decision. However, we never expected the Dax race to be so difficult. I cannot remember a Dax, St Vincent or Lourdes BICC race that had so few arrivals in race time. There are many very good pigeons missing from Dax, which is further testament to those that did make it home through constitution and

determination. This cock has flown in two Internationals, Barcelona and Agen, in previous seasons but was always out of race time. It is not the first time that pigeons which initially struggled with International races have improved with experience. So, those of you who get one or two home in the coming weeks should not despair: treat them with respect, prepare them well again next year, and you have a fighting chance of a good performance. This cock was a gift bird, an August-bred latebred, in 2022 from our old friend Alan Annis. We did have the pedigree but cannot find it at the moment. We do not have much regard for pedigrees until the pigeon has achieved something worthwhile. Like most of our latebreds, he was only lightly raced as a yearling and then pushed on as a two-year-old. We have found that patience pays off with latebreds. The weather conditions, particularly the heat, made this a very difficult race for the birds, and I hope club committees will implement ways next season to mitigate, as best they can, the losses such conditions can cause.



Lyden Bros' cock bird

7th Open, 1st South West Section, Clive & Jill Rogers & Neil of Radstock, timed GB25B04398 on 310.167 ypm over 530 miles. GB25B04398 was timed towards the end of the third day to become 1st West Section and 1st Yearling in the BICC race from Dax. The chequer white-flight hen was bred from a cockbird purchased from the final Alwyn Hill sale in Blackpool, a son of Lloyd, 1st International Barcelona 2018, when paired to Dena, daughter of Sumerian Fighter. The dam was a daughter of Southfield Supreme Junior, 1st Open National Pau 2016, when paired to a daughter of Monar, 1st International Narbonne 2011.

The hen had raced this year from CSCFC Isigny-sur-Mer, CSCFC Fougères, BBC Fougères and BBC Messac. These races were spread out over several weeks, as she was not always home on the day of liberation and was therefore left at home the following week, or sent inland instead, while waiting for the next Channel race. Treetops sent 12 yearlings, six pairs, to Dax. All had the same type of preparation races and had made mistakes before, proving that they could look after themselves if they had nights out. They were paired up in preparation for this race and were sitting on eggs. Clive, Jill and Neil would like to congratulate Cristian Dumitru on winning the race, and all who timed their birds.



Treetops' Lloyd Dena Supreme

9th Open, 1st North Centre Section, Brian Clarke of Hitchin, timed GB22B00824 on 273.934 ypm over 577 miles.

10th Open, 4th South Centre Section, David E Farr of Bognor Regis, timed GB24N40321 on 242.300 ypm over 492 miles. First of all, I would like to congratulate Cristian Dumitru on winning the BICC Dax race in what proved to be a very hard contest, and also the other competitors who clocked in one of the hardest Dax races on record. My chequer cock, GB24N40321, finished 10th Open and 4th CS Section, recording a velocity of 242 ypm. He is bred from my John Wills' stock, with a touch of Bert Shepherd's Ko Nipius Jan Aarden bloodlines, from his 2nd Open NFC Pau pigeon, the only bird on the day.

By the way, the cock should have gone to Agen, but I got lost on the M25 and arrived too late for marking, much to the amusement of a few. I did have another chequer cock verified, but he was 2 ypm out of race time at 218 ypm. He was bred the same way as the other cock. Best regards to all at the BICC, and thanks to the marking committee for all their hard work.

11th Open, 5th South Centre Section, Adrian Ghetes of Stanmore, timed FR24 273706 on 241.656 ypm over 552 miles. First, I want to congratulate all fanciers and pigeons that clocked from this very tough contest, and especially the winner on an outstanding performance. All pigeons that managed to fly and arrive home are true warriors, and they are definitely a base around which anyone can build a strong family. I clocked the only experienced pigeon I sent for this race. He is "De Dax Primus", and he managed to clock from this race for the second time, having been 1st National Dax last year as a yearling. He has now confirmed that he is a pigeon worthy of a place in the stock loft, and I hope he will become a future base for my loft. His origins are a mix of Chris van der Velden and Ben Robert. He was sent on a two-week youngster, as I decided to send him just days before marking day. Many congratulations to Clive, Jill and Neil Rogers for clocking the only yearling in the UK — a fantastic performance!



Adrian Ghete's bird

The 2026 Dax International proved to be one of the hardest races of the season, testing both pigeons and fanciers over a demanding course and in challenging conditions. With a two-day holdover, high temperatures, every arrival was a credit to the preparation, patience and determination behind each loft. Congratulations once again to Cristian Dumitru on a superb 1st Open performance and well done to every member who timed from what will be remembered as a truly testing Dax race.

The next and final International is from Perpignan. It is all to play for in the final race of the old bird season, so good luck to all.

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