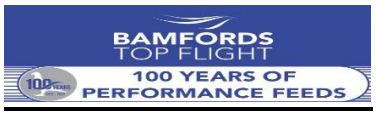
British International Championship Club







Perpignan / Castres International Provisional Race Result
1st August 2026

The Perpignan/Castres International marked the fifth and final international race of the season. It had already been a challenging campaign, with hot weather affecting both the continent and the United Kingdom, and conditions once again required careful consideration before liberation. The original liberation point at Perpignan had to be changed because parts of France were facing serious wildfires, alongside weather conditions that were unsuitable for a safe release. Smoke, unstable air and reduced visibility all posed risks to the pigeons' ability to navigate safely, while the forecast around the original race point increased the possibility of disorientation, heavy losses or delayed returns. After taking these factors into account, Perpignan was considered unsafe, and Mazamet–Castres provided a clearer, more stable and secure alternative for the birds.

The Perpignan/Castres International race was liberated from Mazamet–Castres at 6:00am BST on 1st August 2026, following the decision to move from the original race point.

A total of 10,658 pigeons were basketed. This included 2,953 from Belgium, 3,827 from the Netherlands, 3,042 from France, 660 from Germany, 168 from the United Kingdom and 8 from Luxembourg.

Within the BICC entry, 39 members sent a total of 168 birds. The South Centre Section had 10 members sending 60 birds, the South East Section had 18 members sending 67 birds, the South West Section had 6 members sending 30 birds, the North Centre Section had 1 member sending 3 birds, and the North East Section had 3 members sending 8 birds.

Thanks go once again to Andrew Hitchcock for sponsoring a photo of the winning pigeon.

The Provisional Open winner, Catalin Olaru of Romford



1st South East Section, 1st Open, Catalin Olaru of Romford on 879.238. I am absolutely delighted with this win. To time the first pigeon in a race of this calibre, competing against some of the best fanciers in the UK and across Europe, is a tremendous thrill and a moment I will always remember. I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has helped me along the way and also thank the BICC for organising the race and giving UK fanciers the opportunity to compete on this international stage. Congratulations as well to everyone who timed in from such a great race. My winning hen is bred 50% Florin Balogh and 50% Verweij-de Haan. She was raced on the natural system and sent sitting a seven-day-old youngster. In preparation for the race, she had several outings with the North Thames and Southern clubs, as well as Nort-sur-Erdre with the BICC from France. Her sire was bred and raced by Florin Balogh, while her dam is from Red Messi x Izzy, bred by Verweij-de Haan.



Catalin Olaru

The Provisional South East Section Winners

2nd South East Section, 2nd Open, F Knowles & Son of Wingham on 878.563. Simon's hen is bred down from Mick Parish bloodlines, with her sire having flown Barcelona four times. She was sent sitting three-day-old babies, having previously been 301st from Nort-sur-Erdre on 23rd May 2026, and was also just outside race time from BICC Pau before receiving six tosses from Brighton. Simon was delighted with her performance and would like to thank the BICC race organisers for arranging the internationals, allowing fanciers in the UK to compete with the best in Europe.



Simon Knowles

3rd South East Section, 14th Open, L & K Buddle of Dover on 782.439. Our provisional 3rd South East Section, 14th Open pigeon from Perpignan (Castres) is a three-year-old hen who has been raced on our Chaos Widowhood system throughout the season. In preparation for BICC Perpignan, she had races from Chale twice, BICC Nort-sur-Erdre, BICC St Philbert and BBC Messac, along with a number of inland races ranging from 64 to 149 miles. Her sire carries the very best of Mark Gilbert's bloodlines, including Southfield King, Southfield Golden Barcelona and Southfield Ironman.

Her dam is a daughter of two of our National/Open winners: 'Triple Two', 1st Open BBC Barcelona 2019, and 'Daphne', 1st National BICC Marseille 2020 and 3rd National BICC Perpignan 2019.

We had a good race from Perpignan clocking 3 of our 6 entries on the winning 2nd day and all 3 of these birds carry the bloodlines of our best race birds over the years: Triple Two 1st BBC Barcelona, Daphne 1st BICC Marseille, Elsa 1st BICC Narbonne, Amoy 1st BICC Pau, Mike & Tom. With some crosses from Mark Bulled 'Legacy' and Mark Gilbert bloodlines. They are fed on Versele Laga Superstar Plus with added fats in the required days prior to race marking. Congratulations to Catalin Olaru on the win and also to our great friend Simon Knowles (F Knowles & Son) on 2nd Open.



Lee & Kevin Buddle

The Provisional South Centre Section Winners

In the South Centre Section, Mark Gilbert of Windsor took the first four positions, winning 1st South Centre Section, 3rd Open on 871.713; 2nd South Centre Section, 4th Open on 844.524; 3rd South Centre Section, 5th Open on 842.677; and 4th South Centre Section, 6th Open on 827.631.
Liberating approximately 70 miles shorter this year meant it was around 566 miles to us. Perpignan weekend is always one of the toughest tests of the season being late in the season and this year proved no different, with no day birds recorded into the UK. The long wait continued into the early hours of the next morning before the first arrivals finally broke through. Once they started coming, our loft had a phenomenal day. We clocked 19 of our 36 entries and delivered one of our strongest team performances to date. The details of our first three timers are:

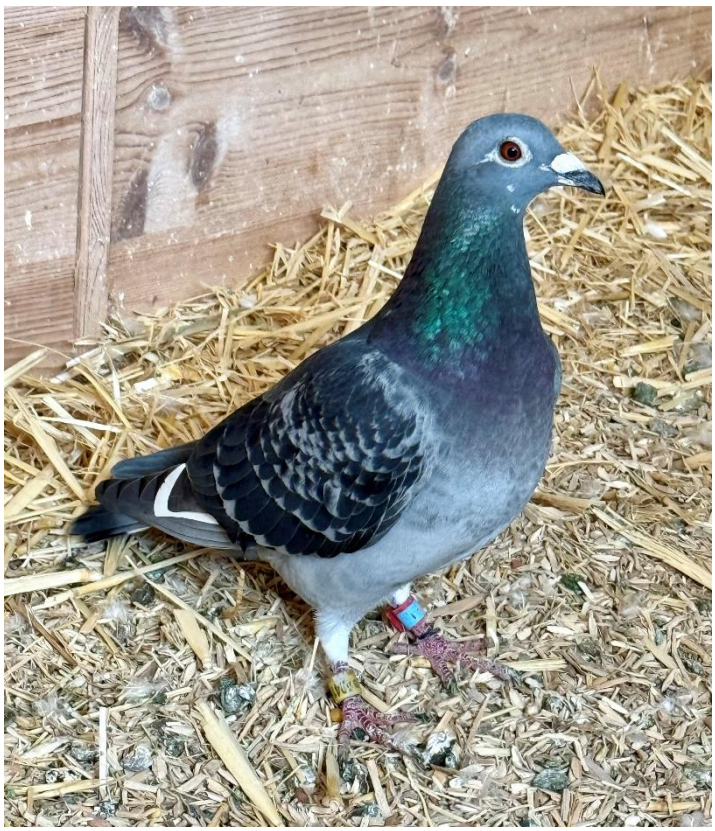
GB24B02410, Mark Gilbert's first timer, took 1st South Centre Section and 3rd National. This pigeon had already shown its quality earlier in the season, having been 4th Section and 9th National in the BICC Agen race of 2026. Its sire is a son of 'Southfield Darran' when paired to a daughter of 'Sumerian Fighter', winner of 1st International Barcelona against 17,094 birds in 2017. This same Sumerian Fighter daughter, 'Sumerian 690', is also the mother of 'Southfield Crystal', winner of 1st National BICC Agen 2025 and the only bird clocked on the day in the UK. The dam is a daughter of 'Southfield Hugo' when paired to 'Special Narbonne', winner of 2nd National Narbonne and 2nd International Yearlings against 6,287 birds in 2017 over 964 km, making this a line proven to excel in the hardest marathon conditions.

GB24B02315, Mark Gilbert's second timer, took 2nd South Centre Section and 4th National after previously finishing 3rd Section and 12th National in the NFC Tarbes race of 2026. The sire is a full brother to 'Southfield Hugo', winner of 1st National BICC Barcelona over 1125 km in 2018, 1st Centre Section Barcelona 2018, 104th International Barcelona from 15,700 birds, 1st National BICC Perpignan

over 1014 km in 2017, and 1st Centre Section Perpignan 2017. Southfield Hugo is also sire of 'Southfield Palace', winner of 1st Section, 1st National BICC Perpignan 2025, and 4th Section, 6th National BICC Agen 2025. This line goes back to the legendary 'Golden Barcelona', the 2014 Barcelona Gold Wing winner and one of the most influential breeders at Southfield Lofts, being sire of 'Southfield Hugo' and 'Southfield Gold Lady', and grandsire of 'Southfield Gold', 'Southfield Palace', 'Southfield Knight' and 'Southfield Duke'. The sire is paired to a daughter of 'New Laureaat', the 2013 International Barcelona winner, while the dam is a daughter of 'Southfield Darran' paired to 'Orange Queen', bringing in the winning lines of 'GoldPlay' and the exceptional Barcelona hen 'Orange Oil'.

GB24B02369, Mark Gilbert's third timer, took 3rd South Centre Section and 5th National. The sire, 'Southfield Melissa's Star', is a proven international racer and winner of 1st National BICC Pau and 2nd National BICC St Vincent. He is a son of 'Starlight', winner of 2nd International Tarbes against 12,549 birds, 9th Montauban against 7,203 birds and 21st Montauban against 5,438 birds, and is also a son of 'Melissa', winner of 1st International Agen/Bordeaux against 11,444 birds in 2011. The dam is a daughter of 'Golden Barcelona' paired to 'Miss Gilbert', dam of 1st National Agen 2018, 11th National Agen 2019, 1st Section and 5th National Barcelona 2022, 11th National Perpignan 2022, 2nd Section and 3rd National BBC Barcelona 2023, and 3rd Section and 5th National BICC Barcelona 2023.

It was a brilliant team effort from start to finish, and one we can be extremely proud of. Our birds showed real heart in a demanding race, and their performances spoke for themselves. Looking ahead, these pigeons have gained valuable experience that should stand them in good stead for Barcelona next year, building both confidence and stamina for the biggest challenge of all.



Mark Gilbert's first bird

7th Open, 5th South Centre Section, Adrian Ghetes of Stanmore on 821.949. My pigeon needs no introduction now. He is the same pigeon that, on 3rd July, won 2nd National Barcelona and was once again my nominated pigeon. He fully deserves his place in my breeding loft, having now finished three times in the top 15 in National races, which earns him a very well-deserved Diploma of Merit. He is

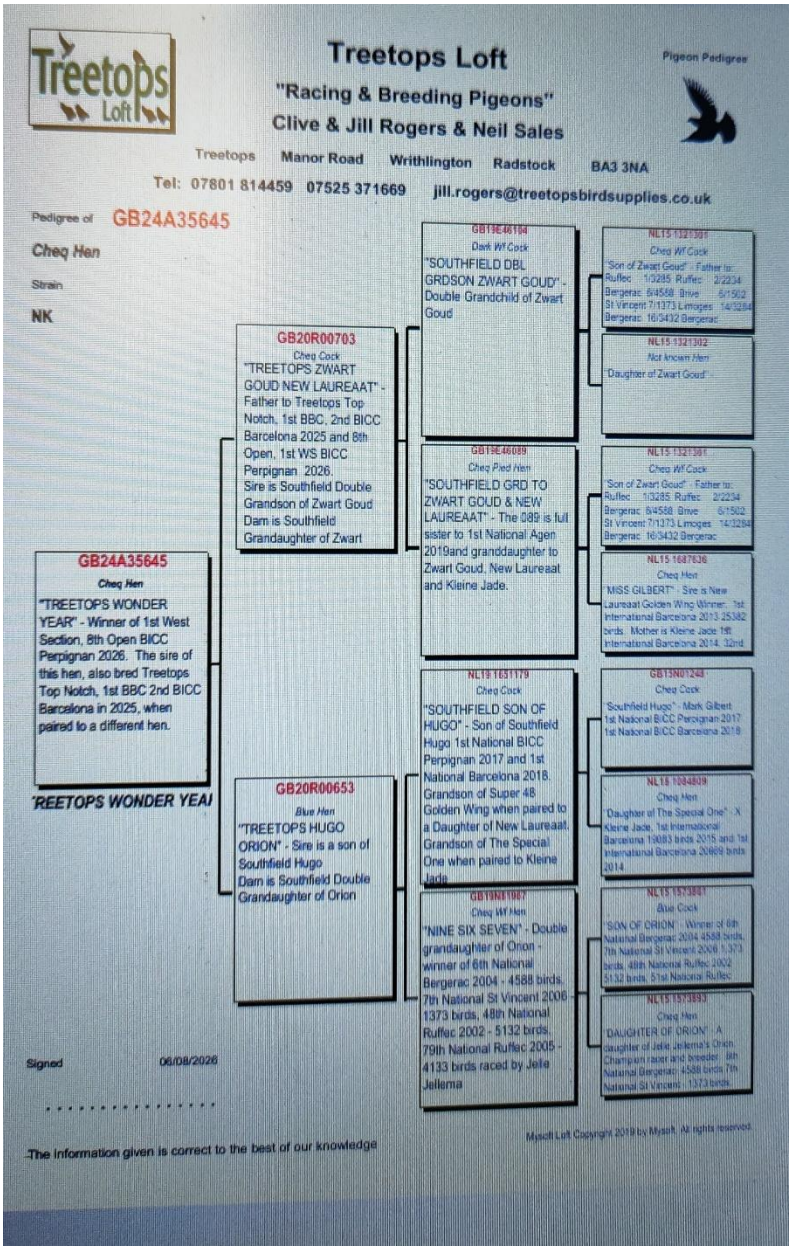
also a strong candidate for the podium in the International Ace Award. I am extremely proud that all five pigeons from my Barcelona team have also returned safely from Perpignan. Many congratulations to Catalin Olaru on winning the race, and well done to everyone who timed in. My thanks also go to all the marking station workers and BICC race organisers; to be able to compete on an international stage is very special.



Adrian Ghetes Doploma of Merit winner

<u>The Provisional South West Section Winners</u>

1st South West Section, 8th Open on 813.465, and also 3rd South West Section, 15th Open on 782.406, Clive & Jill Rogers & Neil Sales of Radstock. Our two-year-old hen, GB24A35645, was clocked on the second day of the race at just after 10am. We have named her Treetops Wonder Year. She had already flown Pau International this year, where she was our fifth bird timed from the race, finishing 55th Open and 19th Section, giving her plenty of wing time and experience in looking after herself. She is bred from the same cock bird that sired Treetops Top Notch, winner of 1st BBC and 2nd BICC Barcelona in 2025. He is proving to be an excellent breeder and is a double grandson of Zwart Goud, while his mate is a double granddaughter of Orion, all brilliant distance bloodlines. We would like to thank everyone involved in the International races this year. It has been a wonderful year for us, and we would like to say to everyone involved in pigeon racing: have a go at these long races. They are challenging, but they can be won, and dreams can come true.



Pedigree Treetops Wonder Year

2nd South West Section, 13th Open, Nick Stevens of North Perrott on 784.861. For the final international race from Perpignan, I sent 16 birds, which is a large team for me. Having decided not to send to Dax and Bordeaux because of the heat, I felt this was the right opportunity to send a stronger team. Not sending was one of the hardest decisions I have had to make in racing, but while I have been many things, being a lemming is not one of them! My first bird, 149, was 74th Bordeaux last year. I had a really enjoyable race, with 8 home on Sunday, 3 early on Monday and 1 more on Tuesday. They are not elite bloodlines, just unfashionable pigeons with plenty of grit. People worry about holdovers and birds being in the baskets for a long time, but the more I see of Mr Martin's Belgian convoying team, and their attention to detail and care of the birds, the fewer worries I have. The birds prove this by the condition they return in. Congratulations to everyone who timed and to the BICC machine. I would also like to add a big thank you to Christine Frost for doing my clock.



Nick Steven's first birds



One of Mr Martin's convoying team

<u>The Provisional North Centre Section Winners</u>

1st North Centre Section, 64th Open, Mircea Liviu Dehelean of Wellingborough on 416.436. My 1st North Centre Section winner is Tarzan, and he was raced sitting eight-day-old eggs. His sire is from Harold Zwiers bloodlines, while his dam is from Dan Nitoiu and carries the bloodline of Jan Polder. I would like to congratulate the Open winner and everyone who timed in from this International race. My thanks also go to the BICC for organising the International races and giving UK fanciers the chance to compete on such a special stage.



Mircea Dehelean

The Provisional North East Section Winners

Kelvin Sharman of Syleham took 1st North East Section, 9th Open on 810.842, and 2nd North East Section, 34th Open on 685.363. His first timer, winning 1st North East Section and 9th Open, was a very consistent cock bird bred by Alan and Tommy Wright from Norwich. This was the pigeon's fourth 1st Section win in the BICC from long distances. His second timer, taking 2nd North East Section and 34th Open, was the hen that won 1st North East Section in the BICC from Perpignan last year. She has Euro Diamond bloodlines in her breeding, and returns were fair, with 4 of the 5 birds home by Monday lunchtime.



Kelvin Sharman

This brought the curtain down on the 2026 International race programme and marked the final International race of the season. It has been a challenging year, with difficult weather conditions and demanding races, but once again the fanciers and their pigeons showed tremendous commitment, patience and determination. Congratulations to all who timed in throughout the International season. The club would also like to thank everyone involved in organising, convoying, marking, clocking and supporting the races that made the 2026 programme possible. A special thank you also goes to Nick Stevens, who convoyed the birds from Southampton to meet the International convoy in Belgium.

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