

## NFC Early-Closing Single Nomination Competition

It was way back in March when 51 sporting NFC members each nominated a Single pigeon from their Old Bird loft for the Tarbes Grand National, this year to be flown in conjunction with the Tarbes International. The main qualification restriction was that the Nominated Pigeon mustn't already have been timed from a Grand National race, meaning to all intents and purposes that they were all unproven at the distance in NFC racing.

The NFC's website discussion page was then used by many of the competitors to log details of their birds' progress towards the Tarbes race and it was very interesting to see the wide range of race programs set for the birds. Some birds seemed to be sent racing every week, others had very selective race programs. However all Roads Lead to Rome, as they say, and whilst quite a few reported incidents prevented some of the Nominated pigeons making the Tarbes race (including my own), I would reckon that approximately half the Nominated pigeons made it into the baskets.

As it turned out, the Tarbes race proved pretty hard for most of the convoy. Yes, it's true that some lofts seemed to be immune from the poor and erratic returns suffered by many but the facts are that just 17.3% of all pigeons entered were actually clocked with the longer flyers suffering the most (e.g. just 10.5% clocked in Section J).

So, what became of our Nominated pigeons? Eight were clocked, and top-of-the-shop was Litton's Mark Dorrington with "Red 42" with a velocity of 865.908 taking 47<sup>th</sup> Open 6<sup>th</sup> Section G. Here are Mark's own words when first entering Red 52 into the competition ... "1st BICC West Section Falaise Yearlings 2009; 41st Open NFC Fougeres 9696 Birds 2009. This pigeon then flew Tarbes with the NFC in 2009 and sadly lost his way but was reported in Belgium on the Monday, tired. However within 3 days I found this pigeon in my Young bird loft so it had a single flight from Belgium on top of his efforts from Tarbes within a week this is the reason why I picked this pigeon as he has the heart of a lion. Red 42 was bred by Brian Sheppard of Trowbridge from his Red Barcelona bloodlines." Apart from winning this Nomination competition, you might already have ready that Mark bred the outright winner of the Tarbes Grand National flown by Paul Kendal. He also had a pigeon flying for a Certificate of Merit, but just missed out, and he reports that this pigeon arrived home injured. Good luck with that pigeon for next year, Mark.

Next came Mr & Mrs F Birch & Son of Uxbridge, winning 62<sup>nd</sup> Open 21<sup>st</sup> Section E, this bird that I believe had plenty of racing before Tarbes. Here are Troy's own words when nomming this pigeon "We have chosen this Cock because he has always looked and come well. He was sent to Tarbes as a yearling with NFC last year and came the next morning, he would perhaps have been in the first 500 but we never clocked him."

Third place fell to Chris Nelmes of Bristol with a Pigeon that has the added distinction of being the ONLY pigeon to be timed in all five NFC races in 2010, and one of only five pigeons to fly both Tarbes and Saintes this season. Here are Chris's entry words on his nom ... "1st club only bird on the day Marmande 494 miles 12th WESR Combine only 12 on the day "02070" was 14 hrs 59 mins on the wing 2009. His sire is GB01N46697 67th Open San Sebastian BBC, 8th Open NFC Dax, 146th Open Nantes BBC. He was bred & raced by Brian Sheppard of Trowbridge. He is sire of Brian's 1st Sect G, NFC, YB National 2002. He is also sire of my 2009 1st Vire YB. Sire of "46697" is GB98C40839 bred from 2 Fear Bros. birds - one being their NFC Merit Winner. The dam of "46697" is a grand-daughter of Brian's "JINGLES" an NFC Merit Winner. The dam of "02070" is off the late Keith Nethercott's No.1 pair i.e. a son of "Culmer Channel Queen" NFC Merit Winner for Mr & Mrs Cannon when paired to a daughter of Keith's 2nd Open Pau Cock - winning a new car. The 2nd Open Pau Cock is also sire of my no.1 stock cock "FRETTS". "FRETTS" is sire of my 2007 & 2008 NFC bird average winners when paired to 2 different hens. As can be seen "02070" is bred for the job - Let's see if he can do it.

The full result is included with this report, as are pictures of the Top Three pigeons. The Top Three will be sent a special commemorative Diploma, plus a "LoftMate" velocity and timing device to enjoy on their Race Days.

From feedback received from the competitors, this FREE competition was widely enjoyed. You know, it's not easy picking a Nomination pigeon 4 days before basketing never mind 4 months! Injuries, illness, condition, and form are all variables needing to be overcome and I think those who got their pigeon to the race did fantastically well just to do that. In the event, though we didn't get a 'day' pigeon, we got some terrific pigeons! It was a real pleasure to co-ordinate and report on the competition, and I hope that we can repeat the competition in 2011. Those interested should visit the Discussion Pages at [www.nationalflyingclub.co.uk](http://www.nationalflyingclub.co.uk) to keep in touch with all relevant news.