

Welsh South East National Flying Club Aachen National

Here we are then, our National from Aachen which is near to the border between Germany and Holland. Many years ago, when we lived in Germany, we used to travel back and forth to Britain by car and the ferry. Being a member of BAOR, we used to have an allocation of petrol coupons which were much cheaper than normal fuel prices. These could only be used within Germany, at BP fuel stations so we used to put in only sufficient fuel to get from Britain across the border into Germany where we could fill up with the coupons. Many is the time we have sat for some hours, outside the BP station, waiting for opening time. The crossing point for us was very near Aachen, so we have been to this city many times.

Aachen was heavily damaged during World War 2. The city and its fortified surroundings were encircled from 13th September to 16th October 1944 by the US 1st Infantry Division and 3rd Armored Division in conjunction with the US 2nd Armored Division and 30th Infantry Division during the prolonged Battle of Aachen, later reinforced by US 28th Infantry Division elements. Direct assaults through the heavily defended city finally forced the German garrison to surrender on 21st October 1944 and Aachen was the first German city to be captured by the Allies. The city was partially destroyed, and in some parts completely, during the fighting, mostly by American artillery fire and demolitions carried out by the Waffen-SS defenders. Damaged buildings included the medieval churches of St Foillan, St Paul and St Nicholas, and the Rathaus (city hall), although Aachen Cathedral was largely unscathed. Only 4,000 inhabitants remained in the city, the rest had followed evacuation orders. Its first Allied-appointed mayor, Franz Oppenhoff, was murdered by an SS commando unit.



View of the German/Dutch border at Aachen.



Brown, Jones & Garland.

While the Emperor's palace no longer exists, the church built by Charlemagne is still the main attraction of the city. In addition to holding the remains of its founder, it became the burial place of his successor Otto III. Aachen Cathedral has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

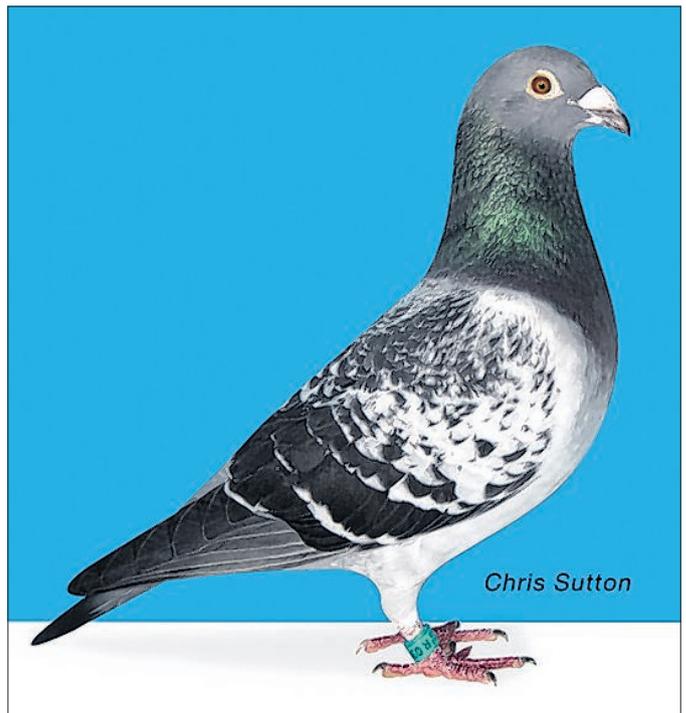
This race was scheduled to be flown on Friday, but owing to indifferent weather en-route, the controller and convoyers consulted with our weather advisor and in the interests of the birds held for a better weather outlook.

The birds are now home, and what a good race it has turned into. Most members reported good returns and although the birds into the North Section were wet, they homed in excellent condition. Very well done to our convoyers for the way the birds were cared for, and to the controllers whose decision to hold the birds and liberate today was a very wise one.

The early times are as follows. **Probable 1st Open Winner and 1st Centre Section** Brown Jones & Garland 15.25.16; R H Webb & Son 16.14.43; G Thomas & Son 16.12.00; H Jones 16.26.15; J H P David 16.49. **East Section:** H Minett 16.14.51; W T & B J Paton 16.25.28; Morris & Lucas 16.38.56; G Edwards 16.42.28; D Flowers 16.42.58. **West Section:** R Davies & Daughter 16.01.26; Payne & Davies 16.07.33; Mr & Mrs Diamond 16.25.46; K Griffiths 17.46.01; W M Thomas & Son 17.49.13. **Far West Section:** W L John 18.09.53; Austin & Rees 18.07.16; D James 19.44.26. **North Section:** Mr & Mrs J Hughes 17.04.56; A Murray & Son 17.24.53; Jones & Cowley 17.40.05; E O Jones 18.30.53; W Thomas & Son 18.45.10.

On to our Open and Section winners now. Everyone I spoke to was really excited about their pigeons' performance and so they should be. This was a real old fashioned National race, and the birds really worked hard to get home.

The honour of winning **1st Centre Section, 1st Open WSENFCAachen** was timed to the loft of **Brown, Jones & Garland from Ynysshir** in the Rhondda. When speaking with Phil Garland I was saying that I knew his late father Ivor very well, and he must be so proud looking down on this fine achievement. Phil was saying that most children inherit money, keepsakes or a house when parents pass away, he inherited 100 pigeons! This rekindled his boyhood interest and so another person returned to the sport. What I didn't realise until the photographs arrived was, that I also knew the son, as he has sat behind us on the coach when we go on our trip to the Spring Fayre in Holland with our mate Tommy



1st Centre Section, 1st Open WSENFCAachen for Brown, Jones & Garland.

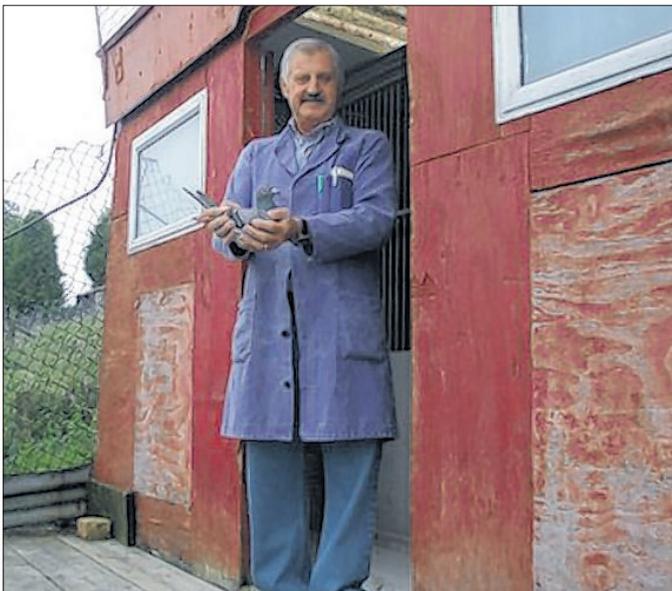


1st Far West Section WSEN for W. L. John.

Harris who, by the way, gives us an excellent great value trip. Here are the details of the National winner now named Treherbert. This Janssen cock was raced on the widowhood system. He was lost as a young bird on a 10 mile training toss and was reported to us by a flyer up in Treherbert, five miles further up the valley than he should have been. The flyer told us not to let him out straight away as he would go back to his loft so we let him out the next day and thankfully he went nowhere, but when he's behind on a race day we joke that maybe he has stopped off in Treherbert for a visit, hence the name. He had a good start to the season taking 3rd Club Swindon. He has flown all the Nationals being: 266th Section, 601st Open Folkestone; 92nd Section, 224th Open Lillers; 4th Club, 15th Section, 22nd Open Brussels and 1st Club, 1st Section, 1st Open Aachen (possible). Our four arrivals on the day came home in fantastic condition and we would like to say 'Job well done' do the conveyors. We also had our fifth of five entries the next day but he had had a disagreement with a peregrine en route but lives to fight another day.

We would like to thank everyone for their congratulations, it has been quite overwhelming. A very big thank you to our wives and families for putting up with us doing a hobby that takes up so much time. Mary, Liz and Sam. You'll get an extra night out now. To win a National is the ambition of many but only achieved by a few. Collectively the three of us have been trying for over 130 years and it's a magical feeling. Let's hope number two isn't quite so long.

1st Far West Section is the very well known **W L John from Llanelli**, a fancier who really excels at the distance and has won many Open and Sections. 'Firstly I'd like to thank the organisers, race controller and the conveyors for giving us such a very good race. A lot of thought and care must have gone into achieving the final outcome, and it is much appreciated. Well done to all. I am well pleased with the race, as I had three home from four, all yearlings with two on the day. My first bird was



Hadyn Minett holding his 1st East Section Aachen.



W. L. John holding his Section winner.

bred from direct stock obtained from Robert Venus in his sale at the Seaman's Mission Club in Newport. The sire is from the Fantast x Golden Lady line and the dam is of Klak 108 -108 breeding. The Fantast won 20 x 1st prizes and three motor cars. The cock was only trained as a young bird and this was only his third or fourth ever race. He was sent on chipping eggs and returned to a three day old youngster. I am really pleased that the bird came after more than 11 1/2 hours on the wing. I also believe that the other two day birds in the our Marking Station deserve a mention, first to Les Austin and the other to Derek James out in Pencader. Very well done both. Also many thanks Geoff and all credit to yourself for what you are achieving with our National and the also with the mighty NFC.

To Port Talbot now for **1st West Section**, and to the loft of a very good friend of ours, **Roy Davies & Daughter**. We have known Roy for some years now, and once again, meet him at the Spring Fayre in Holland every year. Many thanks Roy, for your patience trying to email the photos and details to me. It is very much appreciated and when I see you in Utrecht next March, the beer is on me. Roy says 'Here are a few details of my Aachen Section winner. A 2y cheq cock flown on widowhood. On the day of basketing he was on his second flight half up, given his hen all day, he worked hard and a nest was built by basketing. Perfect. We bring birds in every year from different good European lofts. I have raced pigeons over 50 years from this address. This pigeon goes back generations with us. A full brother won over £5,000 from the Somerset One Loft race two years ago.'

The **North Section** was won by the husband and wife partnership of **Mr & Mrs J Hughes**. I often mark these fanciers birds at our station in Halkyn. The partners sent a single entry, a 3y mealy cock and their confidence was repaid with this excellent Section win. The sire and dam are Sixsmith Janssens from the late M F Johnston of Clwyd Lofts. Full brother to this cock won 1st North Section and 13th Open from Bonn and was the only bird on the day in the Section.

1st East Section goes to the loft of **Hadyn Minett** who has a host of Open and Section wins to his name. An excellent flyer and very well respected. I telephoned Hadyn to congratulate him on this fine win and



1st North Section WSEN for Mr & Mrs J. Hughes.



Mr & Mrs J. Hughes.

he said he had done very well with six home out of an entry of eight. He had been hoping for a particular bird but he hadn't come. As we were talking I heard a pigeon, and believe it or not, it was the very pigeon that we were talking about. I must ring Hadyn about the time the Bonn birds are due. Haydn's winning bird is a 2y cheq roundabout hen who has already scored 2nd Section, 3rd Open Welsh National Flying Club Lillers 662 birds, 2nd Section 710 birds 4th Federation 1,661 birds Lillers also racing with the Welsh North Road Federation this year. This hen was bred by Mr & Mrs M Murphy from Phillipstown, Haydn having exchanged a pair of young birds with them in 2010. She is a Soontjen bred down from stock obtained via Frank Sheader.

There we are then. Another great National race. Congratulations to all who timed in on this difficult race. As I said earlier though, returns were really good. Thanks must go to the conveying staff for once again looking after their charges so well. Of course these birds must have been well prepared when sent, but the conveyors saw to it that they retained that form and were able to give of their best once liberated.

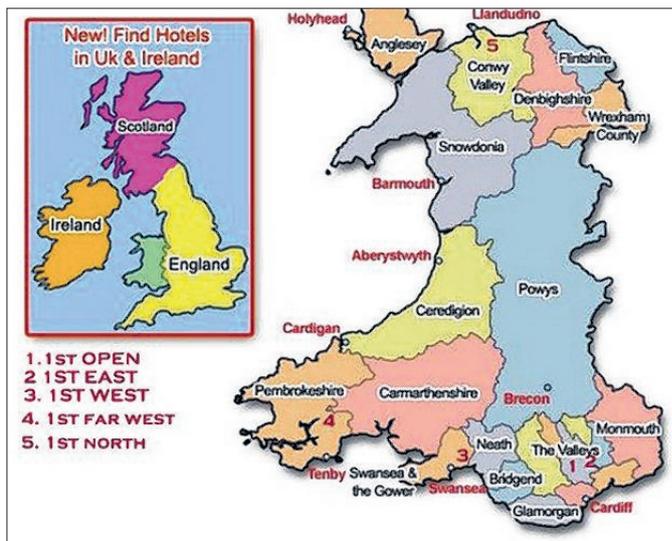
We look forward now to our longest race for 2012, namely Bonn. This will be a real test of stamina and only very fit and well prepared birds will win glory for their owners. Good luck to all members entering, and once again, look out for my contacting the Open and Section winners. As I have said before, I will be asking you for a photo of the Section winner, a photo of the fanciers holding the winner in front of the loft, and full details of strain, how sent, previous performances, any interesting story etc. Please make a note of my email address. I have difficulty in giving the address over the phone. It must have something to do with my Geordie accent.

Anyway here it is. geoffblackhall@virginmedia.com and phone numbers are 07891 831831 or 01513 568204.

GEOFF BLACKHALL
Welsh South East National Press Officer



Roy Davies holding his 1st West Section Aachen.



Map of Wales showing Open & Section winners location.

SILVER HEN Reports

Dick Paddick, Press Officer for **Croxley Green** has sent me their latest results. The last weekend in May the Club raced from Falaise with the UBI Combine (6/52) liberated at 0645hrs in an east wind. Steve Buckle swept the board taking all four positions with his loft's best Soontjens, The winner, taking her second red card, was a 2y mealy Soontjen x Janssen hen on 1199. She was followed by a yearling mealy cock on 1182, homebred out of Alan Jenkins stock, and two 2ys, a blue and a mealy, on 1162 and 1151 which have a few top cards between them including 1st Falaise and 3rd Blandford plus well-placed cards in the NFC.

The following week the Club raced from Kingsdown with the Combine (9/100) liberated at

1000hrs in a south-east wind. Ken Rowe took 1st with a yearling blue Vandenaabeele cock that stormed home on 1200, leading the convoy by 62ypp. Dick Paddick's 6y stalwart blue cheq pied Demeester cock on 1138 took 2nd to add to the numerous Club and Fed positions he had taken previously. John Adams was just a yard behind on 1137 to take 3rd with a yearling red cheq cock which won 1st and 4th as a young bird, the dam from Mark Gilbert x John's Combine winner. Marion Iranmanesh took 4th on 1129 with a yearling blue cock.

The Le Mans Combine race was next and the Club had five members send 26 birds liberated at 0715hrs in a south-west wind. John Adams on 1391 took 1st with a yearling blue Hofkens x

Janssen cock which won 4th Combine in 2011, he was bred out of Sheldon Leonard stock. Jim Smith was 2nd on 1327 with a 2y blue hen bred from clubmate Dick Paddick's stock. Dick himself took 3rd with a 2y blue cheq Jan Aarden x Bricoux that was 1st Carentan earlier in the season; 4th Paul Latchford with a 7y blue cheq cock which Dick tells me is a great pigeon. This bird has during his racing career won 2 x 1st Saintes and Fougères and 3rd Poitiers.

For the Inter-Counties Fed race from Honiton on 16th June the Club had seven members send 64 birds liberated at 0730hrs in a south-west wind which resulted in high velocities. Press Officer Dick Paddick took 1st and 2nd on 1835 and 1831 with two of his best 3y blue cheq cocks, a Jan Aarden x Keith Rowe's Combine lines and a Demeester x Hartog, both have won Club and Fed cards before, the bird in 2nd was 1st Blandford this season. Keith Rowe's yearling blue Vandenaabeele cock on 1772 took 3rd having been 2nd Minstead earlier in the year. Mario Iranmanesh was 4th on 1759 with a yearling Staf van Reet cheq cock which had 2 x 1st from Blandford as a young bird and yearling plus 2 x 3rd this year. Well done the Croxley Green lads.

My thanks to Dick Paddick for his report.

JANINA JENKINS