

President: Nigel Rigiani



Chairman: Mike Shepherd

THE HOME OF LONG DISTANCE PIGEON RACING

Patron: Mark Gilbert

## **The British Barcelona Club celebrating '50' years 2014**

### **BRITISH BARCELONA CLUB'S 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY (Part 6)**

Mick & Pauline Worsfold of Bisley.

1<sup>st</sup> open BBC Rennes (228 miles) 1985 / 1<sup>st</sup> open BBC Rennes (228 miles) 1988.

Mick Worsfold had always raced in partnership with his father, George, until his death in the early 1980's. This was a very unsettling time for Mick and his family, but he decided to carry on with the pigeons although he had to travel several miles to George's garden, where the lofts were sited. George and Mick loved long distance pigeon racing won many premier positions, including 1<sup>st</sup> open British Barcelona Club (twice), 1<sup>st</sup> open London & South East Classic Club (twice) and 1<sup>st</sup> open Combine (twice). The partners certainly lived up to their nicknames, 'The Bergerac Aces', winning countless major prizes in the Combine and National events, including twice 1<sup>st</sup> open Combine Bergerac (450 miles). Their first Bergerac Combine win was in the S.M.T. Combine in 1975, with 4,027 birds competing and the star bird was a 1973 bred blue chequer hen of the Kirkpatrick and Bricoux strain. This great hen previously won several top prizes, including 1<sup>st</sup> club Exeter, but pigeon racing being what it is, with ups and downs, she was lost from Pau.

The pigeons were situated at George's home, at the bottom half of his garden, which was like a field and an ideal site for the four lofts. The main racing loft was 18ft. long, in three sections, with the birds being trapped through open doors and drop holes. 'A good trapping system and good ventilation are the main factors in good loft design', says Mick. The main family was Kirkpatrick with Bricoux crosses, and he bought in the old fancied pigeon now and again to try out. A firm favourite at the Worsfold loft was an mealy cock called, 'John Courage', and what a great pigeon he was! He flew the channel over 20 times. In his prime he flew in five Nationals and was never beaten by a loft mate in those five races. This wonderful old timer was also an outstanding breeder, siring many good racers including a yearling which won 2nd club, 23rd open S.M.T. Combine Bergerac. 'John Courage', on his many channel crossings chalked up many major positions including: 1<sup>st</sup> club, 3<sup>rd</sup> Federation, 5<sup>th</sup> open S.M.T. Combine (7,003 birds) Avranches, 1<sup>st</sup> club, 3<sup>rd</sup> Federation, 5<sup>th</sup> open S.M.T. Combine (4,234 birds) Niort, 8<sup>th</sup> section N.F.C. Nantes and 1<sup>st</sup> club Guernsey.

Mick keeps about 20 pairs of racers and 10 pairs of stock birds, which are paired up ant time after 14th February. He says he tries to compete with the 50 youngsters he breeds each year, but he races young birds only really for educational purposes and some do race up to 200 miles, with yearlings racing through to Niort (350 miles). Mick is a great believer in sending young birds across the channel to France. He likes to give the youngsters as many training tosses as possible before their first race and the old birds have two 35 mile tosses every week, during the racing season.

The 1976 season saw the Worsfold partnership win the combine from Bergerac for the second time, but another highlight of that year was when they won 1<sup>st</sup> club, 1<sup>st</sup> Surrey Federation, 5<sup>th</sup> open S.M.T. Combine (3,801 birds) Laval, with the blue chequer cock, 'Vacation'. This Kirkpatrick / Bricoux was a brother to the 1975 Bergerac Combine winning hen. Behind every great racing team you normally find a good stock team and the Worsfold's stock loft was no exception. At one time Mick turned down a very good offer for his Kirkpatrick red pied stock cock, 'Sir

Duke', which was the sire of countless winners, including 'John Courage'. The old Bricoux blue chequer cock, 'Fall Guy', was another great racer. When he was retired to stock, he bred 'Vacation' and the 1975 Bergerac combine winning hen. Mick said that George's favourite pigeon was the grizzle Kirkpatrick stock cock, 'Sidney', bred by Sid Allcock, which had flown the channel 20 times in his racing career, but had excelled as a breeder. On the road he recorded: 1<sup>st</sup> club, 12<sup>th</sup> Federation (1,628 birds) Weymouth and 3<sup>rd</sup> club (beaten by two loft mates), 8<sup>th</sup> Federation, 40<sup>th</sup> open S.M.T. Combine (4,003 birds) Bergerac. At stock he bred many winners, including, 'Rowdy', the 1978 Bergerac B.T.B. Combine winner.

The late George Worsfold had kept pigeons for many years, but at one time he had a long spell in hospital and young Mick had the job of looking after the birds. Mick was about 15 years old at the time and had to sell the pigeons because of a shortage of cash. Two years later, when things sorted themselves out, George and Mick started up again as partners. The original birds were Bricoux / Sion, which Mick obtained from Amos Foster of Chertsey and in the late 1960's the Kirkpatricks were brought in from J. Johnson of Larne, Northern Ireland. Mick says he looked up to Les Davenport and the late Eric Cannon of Wormley as his ideal fanciers and maintained, if he had been to be second to any fancier in the National result, it would be Eric Cannon. He was 100% channel minded and maintains that if he couldn't fly the channel he would pack up pigeons, as inland racing doesn't give him any thrill whatsoever.

The 1978 B.T.B. Combine Bergerac winner was the Kirkpatrick grizzle cock, Rowdy', and in his build up to winning the combine that year he had six channel races. This champion cock's full racing performance was 1<sup>st</sup> club, 1<sup>st</sup> Three Borders Federation, 1<sup>st</sup> open B.T.B. Combine (1,852 birds) Bergerac, 1<sup>st</sup> club, 7<sup>th</sup> Federation Exeter, 4<sup>th</sup> club Angers, 6<sup>th</sup> club Niort and 27<sup>th</sup> open London & South East Classic Club.

The early 1980's saw many fine performances from the Worsfold's Kirkpatricks but one season they did an amazing double, winning two Bergerac races in seven days. They sent a team to the B.T.B. Combine Bergerac race and recorded their mealy hen, 'Bunny', on the day, to win 1<sup>st</sup> club, 3<sup>rd</sup> Federation, 8<sup>th</sup> open Combine (3,417 birds), with only 17 birds home in the combine on the day. One week later they hit top gear, sending a team to the S.M.T. Combine Bergerac race and clocking four birds on the day, with the club recording only five game pigeons on that day of liberation. The Worsfolds clocked three birds in a minute to win 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> club, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> Surrey Federation, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> open S.M.T. Combine, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Surrey Championship Club and their fourth bird clocked about an hour later to win 47<sup>th</sup> open S.M.T. Combine. A great loft performance!

The birds were raced on the natural system. Mick bought his corn in bulk when it was at its cheapest and fed beans, peas and maize, with wheat replacing the peas in the winter. Red Band was used for trapping and linseed for the moult. Mick doesn't show his birds much in the winter months, but does a lot of judging, which he enjoys very much. His favourite condition for birds being sent to the long races is sitting ten day old eggs. Most of the training is off the south coast, with the longer channel racing in mind and all the birds, old and young, get as many tosses as Mick and his wife, Pauline, can give them. Since George's death, Mick has continued racing the Kirkpatricks with outstanding success, winning 1<sup>st</sup> Federation inland and many times from France. In recent seasons he has won 1<sup>st</sup> open British Barcelona Club (twice) and 1<sup>st</sup> open London & South East Classic Club (twice). Mick said that his loft is more or less all Kirkpatrick now, with the Bricoux greatly reduced. His 1985 1<sup>st</sup> open B.B.C. Rennes winner was the Kirkpatrick dark chequer hen, 'Darkon', which was a granddaughter of 'John Courage'. The old mealy cock, Champion 'John Courage', was also the grandsire of the Kirkpatrick blue hen, 'Wombat', winner of 1<sup>st</sup> open L. & S.E.C.C. Guernsey in 1987. The following season this fantastic hen won 1<sup>st</sup> open L. & S.E.C.C. in the Poitiers Yearling Derby, which was a very hard race and her dam was a Kirkpatrick blue hen that chalked up 2<sup>nd</sup> open S.M.T. Combine Nantes in 1986 for Mick.

In recent years Mick's wife, Pauline has become his pigeon partner and is a major factor behind his continuing success, with her help with training general loft management. Mick has been a good friend of mine for most of my time in the pigeon racing sport and he is a great guy. With Mick, a spade is a spade, and what you see is what you get. No flannel. There you have it, Mick Worsfold, a brilliant channel racer!

Mick and Pauline Worsfold



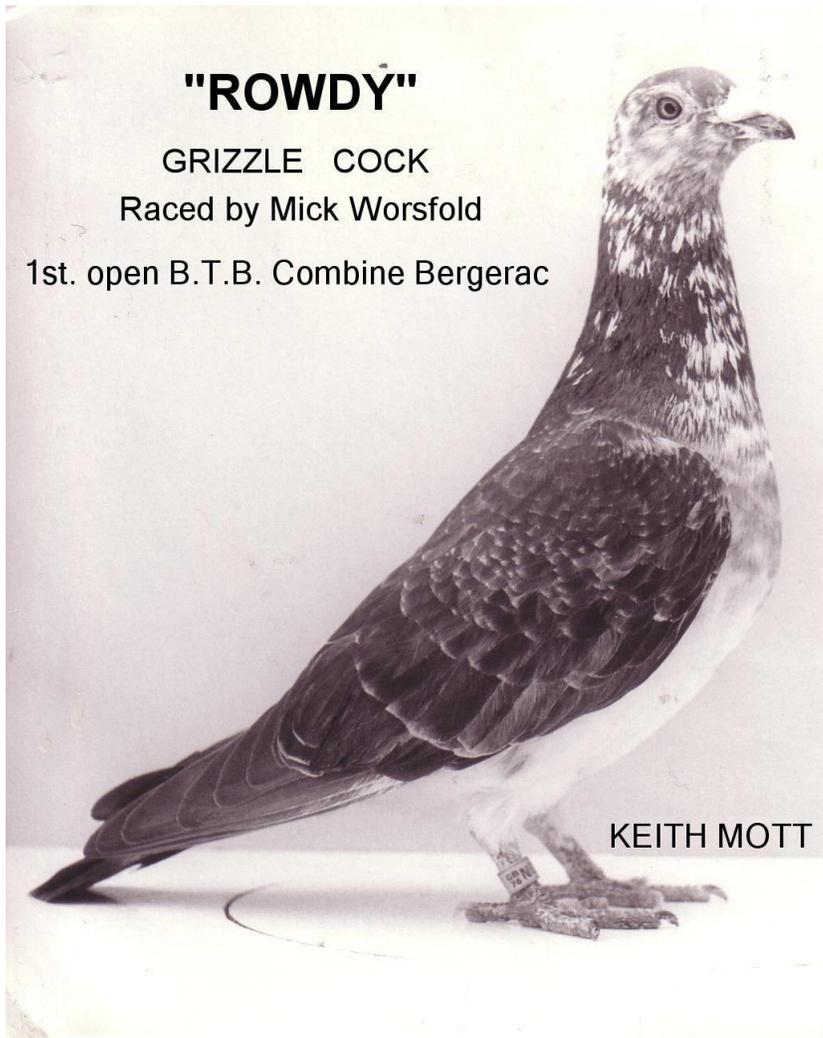
Photo by Keith Mott

## "ROWDY"

GRIZZLE COCK

Raced by Mick Worsfold

1st. open B.T.B. Combine Bergerac



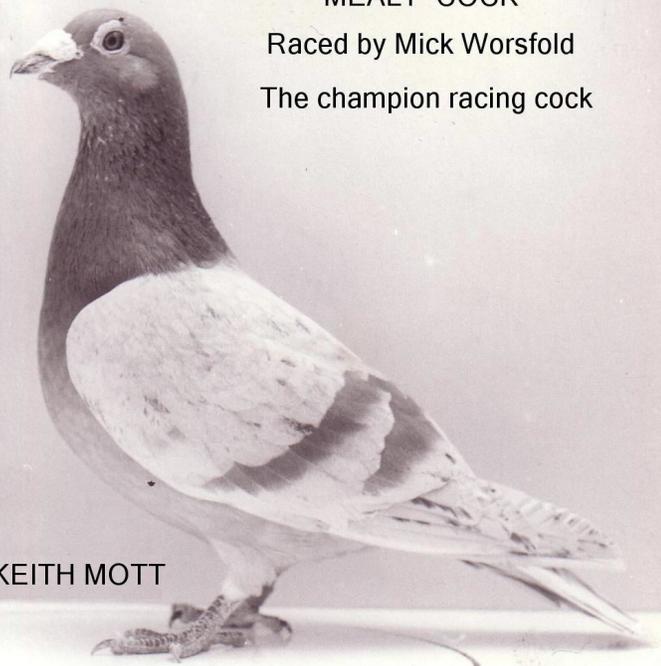
KEITH MOTT

## **"JOHN COURAGE"**

MEALY COCK

Raced by Mick Worsfold

The champion racing cock



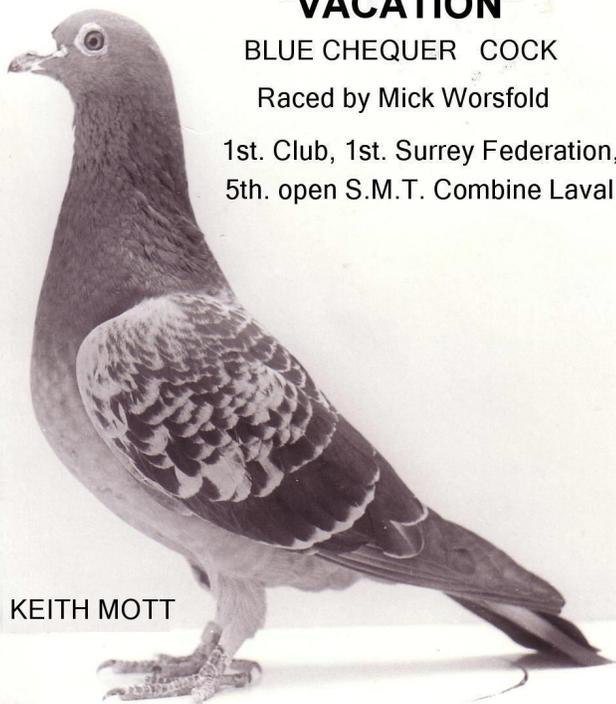
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## **"VACATION"**

BLUE CHEQUER COCK

Raced by Mick Worsfold

1st. Club, 1st. Surrey Federation,  
5th. open S.M.T. Combine Laval.



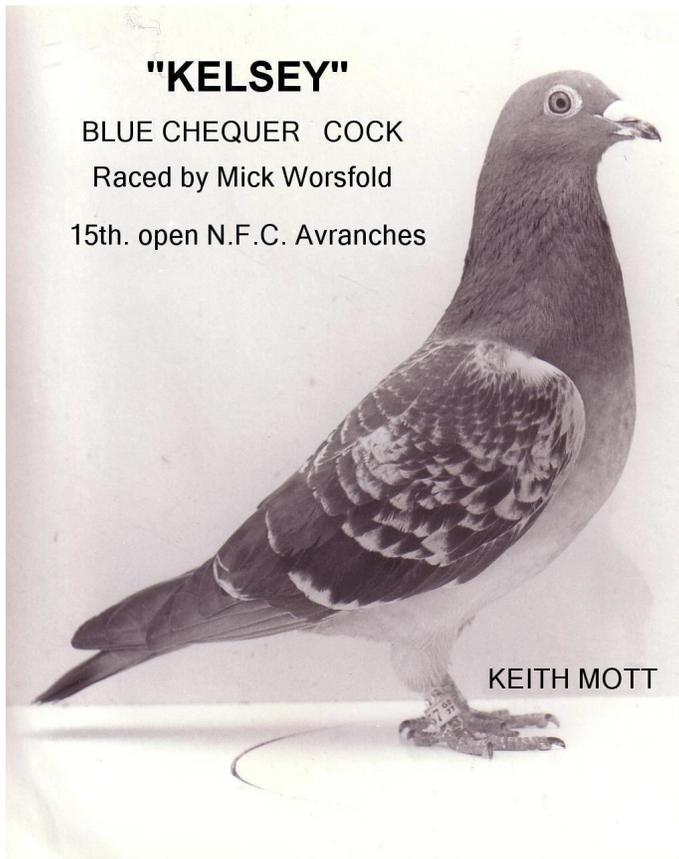
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**"KELSEY"**

BLUE CHEQUER COCK

Raced by Mick Worsfold

15th. open N.F.C. Avranches



**"SIR DUKE"**

OWNED BY MICK WORSFOLD

THE CHAMPION KIRKPATRICK  
STOCK COCK

