

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 50th ANNIVERSARY (Part 14)

Staddon Brothers of Crewkerne.

1st open BBC Nantes (257 miles) 1998.

Staddon Brother's loft in the west of England was one of the leading performers in the UK for many years, by now John and Mike race individually, with the same outstanding success. This BBC tribute is based on an article on Mike Staddon I penned a few years ago, but contains many of the wonderful performances put up by Mike and John when they raced in partnership.

The 2008 season saw Mike Staddon record his 25th 1st Section C winner in the mighty National Flying Club and he did it in great style by winning 1st, 2nd, 3rd Section C, 3rd, 17th, 22nd open Tarbes Grand National (545 miles). Fantastic pigeon flying by a great fancier! Mike's first three birds on the clock from the South of France race point were all raced on widowhood, with his Section winner being a three year old dark cock bred by his good friend, Sheldon Leonard of Arklow in Ireland and says his friend in the Emerald Isle is a very good vet and a master breeder of top class racing pigeons. The dark cock's bloodlines contain Sheldon Leonard and Andre Roodhooft's Lou Wouters lines, with crosses from Hofkens, Flor Engels and 'De Kannibaal' of Dirk Van Dyke. Mike says this game cock has shown good form all season, but was bouncing after flying Alencon with NFC and was confident he would win a major prize with him in the 2008 season. Mike really enjoyed the Tarbes race and told me he was pleased to get two widowhood hens close up behind the dark cock. A great performance!

A while ago I had a telephone conversation with Mike Staddon and he told me that having been very successful on major races up to 450 miles for many years, he fancied having a go at some serious long distance events. That season the British Barcelona Club sent 840 birds to their Palamos National and Mike entered one pigeon, his good five year old blue hen, 'Perrott Birthday Girl'. The convoy was liberated at the Spanish site at 06.30hrs in no wind and the race turned out to be a hard push, with Mick Parish of Essex clocking his winner, 'John's Boy', on a velocity of 702 ypm. Mike Staddon told me 680 miles is a long way to send one pigeon and he was expecting a long wait, but he was only settled in front of the loft for a short while, when his game little blue hen came banging through the open door to record 1st. Section B, 2nd Open. 'Perrott Birthday Girl' was on the wing for just over 29 hours out of the Palamos National and she had a lot of good previous racing form, including 9th open Combine Marmande, 33rd open Classic Lambelle, 28th open Classic Picauville and 75th open N.F.C. Pau / Saintes. A brilliant hen! Since then the Staddon loft has had some more good success in the long distance Nationals, including the N.F.C. Dax International.

Mike Staddon has raced pigeons on and off for over 40 years. He was formerly one of the highly successful Staddon Brothers partnership, having raced with his brother, John, for many years. Their interest began when their father bought them two pigeons from a pet shop in Bristol and housed them in an orange box; fixed onto the wall. At 10 years of age the brothers lived in the village of Sandford, midway between Bristol and Western-Super-Mare and they used to visit local fanciers, Bob Harris and his brother Dave, to see them clock their birds from the north road races. Mike Staddon's present set up consists of four garden lofts, two with tiled roofs and two with pent roofs. One loft has a flight at the front, which is usually used for young birds in the summer and hens during the winter months, with no access to the loft. Although he has room for 62 pairs to race, Mike always tries to have spare boxes, with the emphasis being on quality and not quantity. The 2003 season saw Mike start racing with 30 pairs and was aiming to

start with 50 young birds on the darkness system. The 10 pairs of stock birds are fed on, natural corns for breeding and receive Willsbridge Moulting Mixture for the moult. The racers and young birds are fed a 50/50 mix of widowhood and diet mixtures up to Nantes, then Mike takes out some of the diet mixture and adds maize, pellets and peanuts for the long races. He shuts up all the pigeons for two weeks at the end of the racing season and they are fed Mike's own mixture of 1/3 Red Band, 1/3 Moulting Mixture and 1/3 best canary seed, to kick start the moult, especially for the darkness young birds. Mike never administers preventatives to any pigeon as he firmly believes in natural immunity and good antibodies passed from the parents to the young pigeons. He vaccinates for paramyxovirus as per the rules but would prefer not to and never vaccinates any stock birds that don't race. Mike is convinced that a lot of pigeon ailments are caused by over use of preventatives and certain antibiotics, but he has the droppings checked by a local vet on a regular basis.

Mike Staddon is one of the biggest names in the sport, with a fantastic racing record to prove it. The 2002 season was outstanding for the Staddon loft winning three times 1st open West of England Combine including 1st open Minstead (6,942 birds); 1st open Littlehampton (3,713 birds); both races won with 'Perrott 89', the 2002 Champion Young Bird in the West of England SR Combine. Mike also won 1st open Combine Cognac 370 miles (2,407 birds) with a granddaughter of Champion 'Perrott Nadia', his young bird Sartilly NFC winner and he thinks this yearling has a big future. Mike has won the CSCFC seven times (a record), 1st open Rennes (Young Birds) with 'Perrott Nadine'; 1st open Nantes (Yearling) with 'Perrott Geoff'; 1st open Nantes with 'Perrott Planet Man'; 1st open Pau with 'Perrott Show Girl'; 1st open Ramsgate with 'Perrott Sixty One'; 1st open Bergerac with 'Perrott Paul' and he bred champion 'Uno' which won 1st open Rennes Classic for Tony Haynes of Blandford. The Staddon loft has won the National Flying Club twice, including 1st open Sartilly Young Bird National (8,336 birds) with Champion 'Perrott Nadia' and 1st open Vire Old Hens National with 'Perrott Sam'. Mike and John have won 1st open Nantes British Barcelona Club with 'Perrott Bouncer' and Mike says he is very proud to have won the West of England SR Combine a record 51 times. Mike says his proudest moments were when he won 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th Open Combine Rennes with over 5,000 birds competing in a north-east wind, creating a combine record, and four birds dropping together to win 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Open Combine Saintes. A fantastic loft performance!

Mike races mainly the Houbens, Busschaerts and Van den Bosche bloodlines and crosses of these strains. His loft of pigeons is based on performance and natural immunity only. All the birds are raced hard and the young birds get the whole programme, sometimes five Channel races. Mike maintains you , don't end up with too many birds with this method. He doesn't stop any pigeons but only keeps blue chequers and blues, with the odd pied and white flights and when they introduce a new pigeon, it has to conform to these colours. Mike outcrosses most of his good performers and then line breeds back to the performance pigeon. The racers are mated using love matings only. Mike says he can pair up a section and have them all flying out in 24 hours. Doing it this way, with the right preparation, by introducing the pairs together two or three weeks previously, he gets no trouble. He pairs all the stock birds at Christmas or thereabouts and the breeding pigeons rear an average of four rounds of youngsters. They all rear their own babies and no feeders are used. The stock birds are parted in July but the racers rear one pair of youngsters, then the hens are taken away and housed in the hens' loft, when the young birds are 15 days old. The cocks finish off rearing the youngsters, which are weaned at about 25 days old. Mike believes good, robust stock should have no trouble in rearing a pair of babies on their own. Mike used to pair up the race team on December 7th but is changing his system for the 2003 season and will be pairing up in stages through February and March, so that the pigeons hit form at different times. He tells me that the 2003 season will see changes in loft policy, as he intends to fly only Classic and National races, with just a few club races for training. Mike's main objective will be Pau with the CSCFC and Tarbes and Saintes Nationals. He says he gets his biggest buzz from the National events and has won Section C in the NFC 25 times, after recording 1st Section C, 3rd Open Tarbes NFC in the 2008 season. The Staddon loft races cocks on widowhood and some hens on a celibate/widowhood system, which Mike is perfecting at the present time. Racing hens on this system has been very encouraging with them recording some fantastic results including twice 1st Open South West Classic and many high combine positions.

He exercises the widowhood cocks and racing hens once a day with an open loft for an hour and a half, depending on the weather. Mike leaves the cocks with their hens for about an hour on their return from the races. Old bird widowhood cocks have six training tosses on the days before the first race and the female racers are trained 25 miles most days, weather permitting, to stop them pairing up. The young birds are trained thoroughly starting on 20th May. They begin at about six miles, moving out gradually to 30 miles. He aims to give the young bird team 40 training

tosses before the first race, after which there's no more training for four weeks, just exercise around the loft and then they train three times a week for the rest of the season. The Staddon young birds are flown on the darkness system and having flown it for seven years, Mike believes it is the only way to be competitive with them. He has won 1st open Sartilly NFC and 1st open Classic Rennes with darkness youngsters and maintains that returns from across the English Channel are excellent with these birds. He darkens the loft from 1st March to 1st June and from 5pm to 8am. Mike says you can juggle the system to suit your different work times and the darkness young birds fly excellently, as do the old birds, with no problems. He also says there are no secrets, just good systems of motivation and good pigeons descended from generations of birds that have been tested by being raced hard. The harder the fancier works 365 days of the year, the better his race results will be. The late, Frank Tasker of Wainfleet is rated very highly by Mike, who says he has been a great help to him over the years. Frank was an absolute mine of information on feeding systems etc. Mike maintains that he would like to see members wishing to join any club being allowed to, as long as they live in the club radius. He also thinks that the birds should be able to have one paramyxovirus jab for life. Mike was in London recently on a short break and we had the pleasure of them visiting our home and loft. Mike looked over my team and we had several hours of good pigeon banter. I was amazed when he told me that the only Saturday Club that he was allowed to join is the Crewkerne & Dist HS! He knows that my pigeons and system is based around the Pau National and he says that he likes all his birds over two years old to race from Bergerac or Pau.

TEXT & PHOTOS BY KEITH MOTT (www.keithmott.com)



Mike Staddon of Crewkerne.

Photo by Keith Mott.

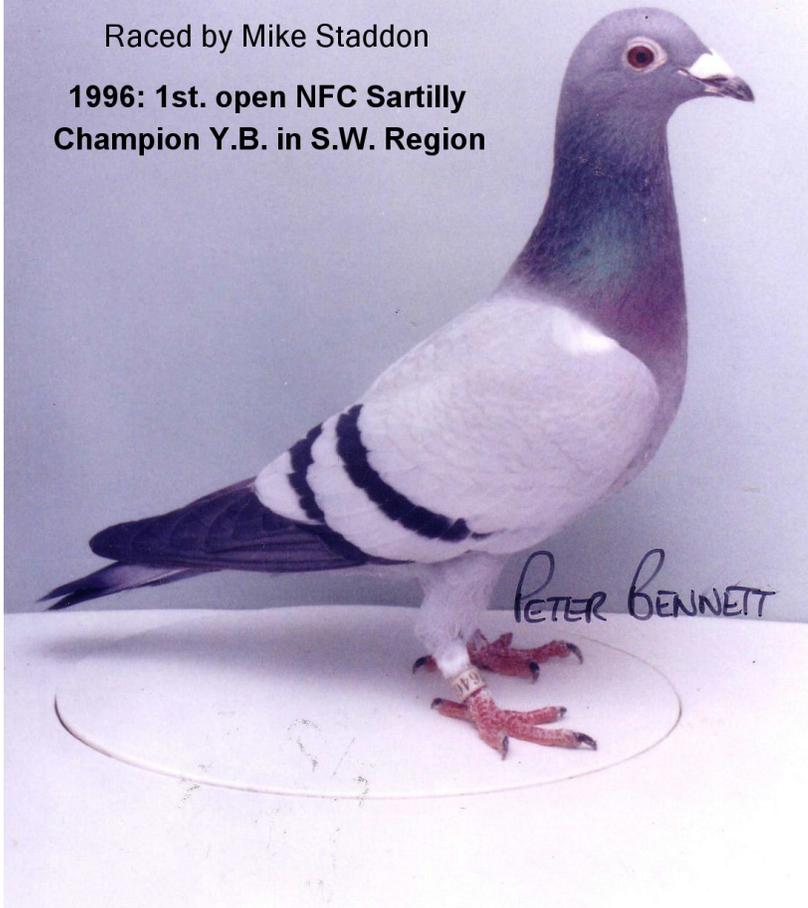


Mike Staddon's loft set up.

CH. "PERROTT NADIA"

Raced by Mike Staddon

1996: 1st. open NFC Sartilly
Champion Y.B. in S.W. Region



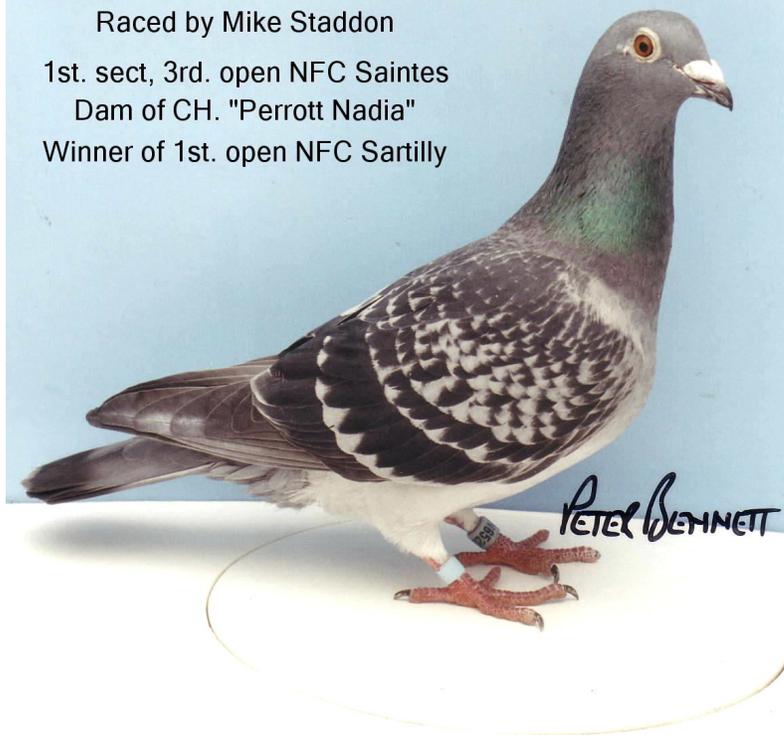
"PERROTT LAURA"

Raced by Mike Staddon

1st. sect, 3rd. open NFC Saintes

Dam of CH. "Perrott Nadia"

Winner of 1st. open NFC Sartilly



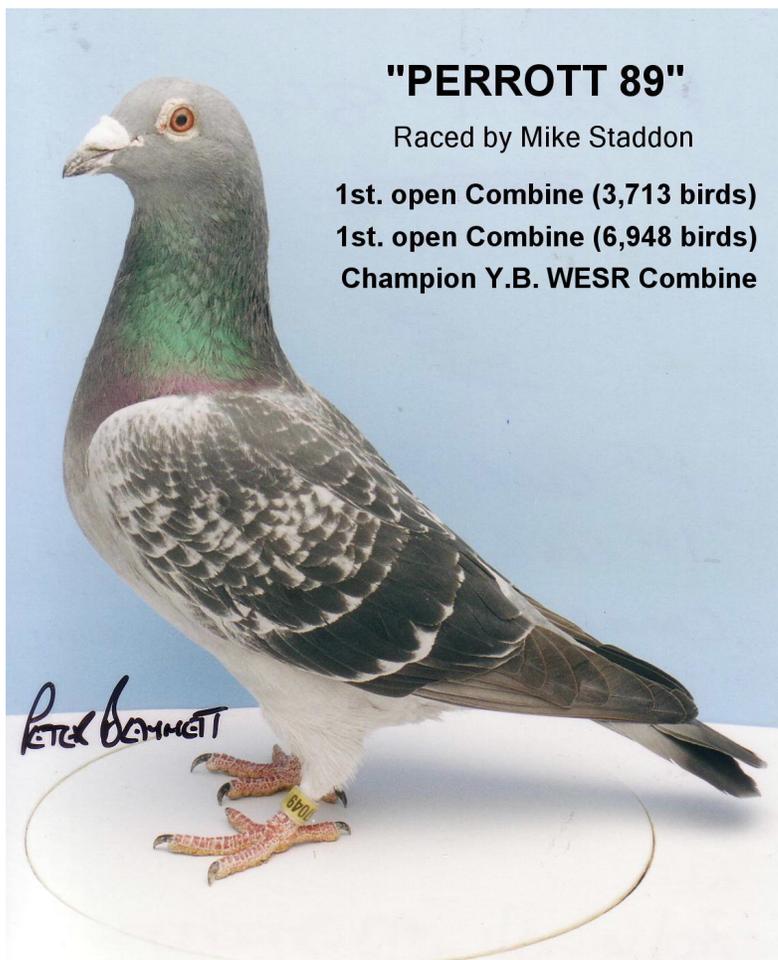
"PERROTT 89"

Raced by Mike Staddon

1st. open Combine (3,713 birds)

1st. open Combine (6,948 birds)

Champion Y.B. WESR Combine



"PERROTT BIRTHDAY GIRL"

Raced by Mike Staddon

The champion racing hen

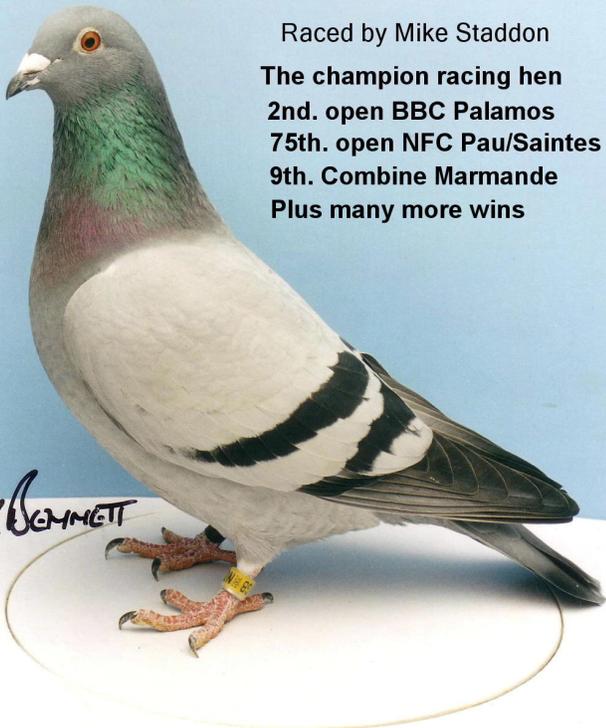
2nd. open BBC Palamos

75th. open NFC Pau/Saintes

9th. Combine Marmande

Plus many more wins

PETER BENNETT



"PERROTT 51"

Raced by Mike Staddon

1st. open Combine Nantes

3rd. open Combine Saintes

PETER BENNETT

