



Swallow Brae At Last.

Brae Star, was a blue cheq cock sent with a full wing and coming down from Koopman x van Dyck pigeons I had liked at John Wheatcroft's loft in England. John kindly let me have a few of them and they have been successful from the time I got them, not only breeding the National winner, but his nest mate, a cheq white flight cock who had 3 x 1st, 2 x 2nd and a 3rd in inland racing, also won the Mid Antrim Combine twice. They are probably the best pair of nest mates I have ever owned. Many thanks John.

When I see pigeons I really fancy during my travels, I like to bring a few of them home with me to race, and at the end of the season if they are still there I take a pair of young birds from them, with the result I finish up with a lot of crosses. They are never paired into my own family of birds until they have proved that they can beat my own, so it is easier to call them 'Darraghs', than listing all the different names of the fanciers who bred them. If I have any success with these birds I let the fanciers concerned know how they have done. Swallow Brae Warrior, the second arrival, is a blue pied cock bred from my 6th Open in the Hens National. She is a daughter of the 32nd Open King's Cup hen, and a granddaughter of Richard's Pride, the three-time Section winner when he was paired to the dam of the 2nd Open Dinard winner, The 101 Hen. The sire was a grandson of Richard's Pride, again when he was paired to the 2nd Open Dinard hen herself, Swallow Brae Lass. My third pigeon, Swallow Brae Prince, is a blue cock bred from a daughter of the 2nd Open King's Cup cock, Swallow Brae Dawn, when paired to the 3rd Open Lamballe hen. The three National cocks all went to the race without throwing a flight. These are my thoughts on pigeon racing and how I got the birds ready for the Yearling National and even though this is my sixth National win, the excitement of racing a good pigeon, or in this case, three good pigeons, is



Swallow Brae Lad.



Swallow Brae First Lady.

something that is hard to explain. I am sorry for putting this in my article again, but I thought it would be interesting to some of the readers. Perhaps the Norban products are now not available, but I am sure there will be something similar.

In the King's Cup race of 2011 I had another good result, being 16th, 79th, 105th and 218th Open from Plaudren-Vannes and winning a Hall of Fame Award with a blue cock bred by my clubmate Sammy Steele. Another good Yearling National was had in 2012, when I clocked seven birds in the Open result from Sennen Cove, and was also in with two birds in the Friendship National from Quimper. The first of these birds was 30th Open and the other 41st Open, in fact he turned out to be the sire of my 11th Open in an INFC Young Bird National. The 2013 King's Cup was from St Allouestre and I was 126th Open, and in the Friendship National 20th and 44th Open. In 2014 I was 11th Open in the Old Bird National from St Allouestre and in 2015 I got a Merit Award, which is awarded for a pigeon clocked twice in the prizes in the King's Cup race; also in 2015, 68th and 98th Quimper Friendship National. In 2017, 136th and 211th Open King's Cup and another Merit Award, and in 2018 I was 38th and 82nd in the Friendship National.

I have enjoyed over 50 years in pigeons with a lot of ups and downs, and with my share of success, but when we see the loss of life to this pandemic it doesn't seem that important, but I hope that we all keep safe and well and free from this virus and who knows, perhaps we will enjoy racing again before the end of 2020.



Swallow Brae Dawn.