



NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

with Irish Rover

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INFC GOLD MEDAL WINNERS - PART 2

The fifth INFC Gold Medal was won in 1994 by the brilliant loft of Ronnie Williamson of Bondhill. The Gold Medal winner is a blue chequer hen bred in 1987 and named 'Five Times A Lady'. This super hen has been a good one since she left the nest. As a young bird in 1987 she won 17th Open INFC Skibbereen YB National and as a yearling 21st Open NIPA Penzance Classic. The Gold Medal winner is well named as she had to go to the Kings Cup five times before she won her Gold Medal, her first attempt at the Kings Cup as a 2yo in 1989 and she did not disappoint winning 22nd Open. In 1990 she was back at Rennes for a second time and clocked once again but was to miss out in the Open prize list as she was placed 202nd Open. The Open prize list then was 200 but now it is 250.

In 1991 she was hurt and Ronnie was unable to get her ready in time for the Cup. In 1992 she was at her best and after a good training programme she was sent to Rennes for the Kings Cup. There were 1,052 members sending 2,442 birds and the race winner was Jimmy Cullen of Malahide. The Williamson hen was clocked to win 126th Open.

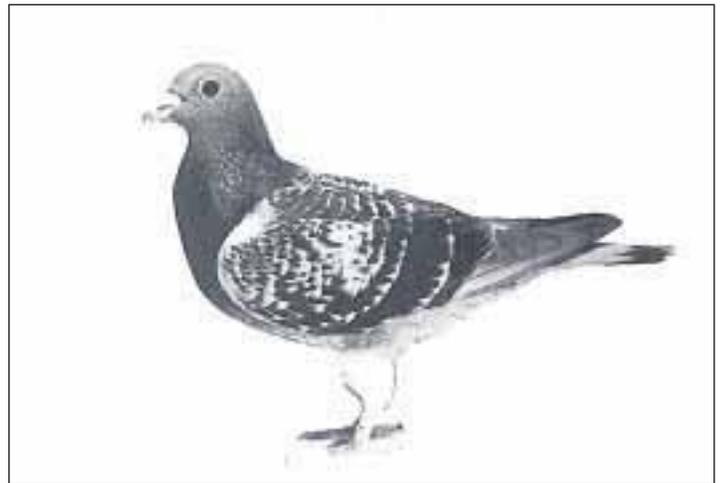


'LUNAR QUEEN'.

The Hall of Fame Diploma was the next target for the hen. In 1993, 947 members sent 2,218 birds to Rennes and in a very hard race the hen won 113th Open velocity 513yppm and collected the INFC Hall of Fame Diploma (three times an Open prize winner). Now the decision had to be made, would she be prepared for the Gold Medal attempt – four times. Ronnie had her sitting eggs for her previous Kings Cup races and as she was in the best of form at seven years of age, the decision was yes! This time she was prepared for the race and sent feeding a YB.

The 1994 Kings Cup race was a fast one from Rennes when 1,032 members sent 2,420 birds and the Kings Cup

winner Henry Beattie of Laurelvale on a velocity of 1309yppm. 'Five Times A Lady' was clocked on the day and was placed 147th Open on a velocity of 928yppm to win the much coveted INFC Gold Medal.



'FIVE TIMES A LADY'.
Hall of Fame Award INFC
Gold Medal winner INFC.
Bred and raced by Ron Williamson.

This hen has gone on to be one of the most important pigeons in the Williamson loft. John Catherwood loaned his Gold Medal winner 'Rainbow Warrior' to Ronnie and he was paired to 'Five Times A Lady' and from this mating a son went on to breed Ronnie's 'Lady Helen' 1st Open INFC Friendship National. 'Five Times A Lady' is grand dam to Williamson's 2nd Open INFC Kings Cup from Redon when she was beaten by a decimal point and grandmother to 'Classic Lady' 1st Sect, 1st Open NIPA Penzance Classic. 'Five Times A Lady' has earned her place as one of the great hens in the history of the Irish National Flying Club.

The Gold Medal is one of the most coveted awards in the INFC and Ronnie Williamson is only the second Kings Cup winner to also collect a Gold Medal, the other being N Black & Son, Dromara.

The third Gold Medal won in the golden year that was 1995 went to a blue pied hen bred and raced by Frank Scott & Son, Dromore, this is a hen I know very well having handled her many times. Bred in 1988 she was a super hen from day one and as a YB flew the Penzance INFC YB National on the day being an Open prizewinner. In 1989 she flew three inland races and then was sent to the INFC Yearling National Penzance to be clocked on the day and again an Open prizewinner.

In the 1990 season, Frank gave her two races to Wexford and had her ear marked for the Dinard Derby as a 2yo – two races to Wexford and then prepared for Dinard by plenty of



'MOURNEVIEW HELEN'.

Red chequer hen, 107th Open Messac Kings Cup 2005, vel 309; clocked Messac Kings Cup 2006, just out of prizes; 134th Open Plaudren Kings Cup 2010, vel 851; 58th Open Plaudren Kings Cup 2011, vel 1052; 41st Open Plaudren Kings Cup 2012, vel 481; Gold Medal, Hall of Fame and Merit Award winner; 10th Gold Medal winner in history of INFC. Half brother 41823 won 73rd Open Quimper Friendship National 2012, vel 560.

tosses from Dundrum along the Down Coast. The pied hen went on to win 10th Sect, 71st Open. Frank knew that he had a very special hen in the loft but then he had a set back as in 1991 after two inland races he was not happy with her condition and decided that she would not be raced for the rest of the season.

In 1992 she was back to her normal self and the Kings Cup was her target, two inland races and then trained down the coast before she was hampered for the Kings Cup flown from Rennes with the winner being Jimmy Cullen of Malahide. The pied hen won 31st Open, velocity 637ypm, 2,442 birds. Frank named her 'Lunar Queen' and already had the 1993 Kings Cup as her target.

The programme for 1993 was three inland races and then private training on the coast at 30 miles. Rennes was the race point and only 147 birds were recorded in race time (three days). 'Lunar Queen' was clocked to win 67th Open, velocity 596ypm. In 1994 Frank was looking to get her ready for her third attempt at the Kings Cup. This was a quick race with a lot of birds clocked on the day and the Cup won by Henry Beattie on a velocity of 1309ypm. 'Lunar Queen' was clocked to make a velocity of 1045ypm and was placed 62nd Open which saw her win a Hall of Fame Diploma – three times an Open prizewinner from the Kings Cup.

In 1995 it was crunch time, the coveted Gold Medal was now only one race away, but 'Lunar Queen' was now seven years of age and had already flown France four times. Rennes '95 was a special year with a record entry of 3,259. Jackie Patience 1st & 2nd Open and 'Lunar Queen' flying her best ever race to win 8th Open, velocity 983ypm and the coveted Gold Medal was won by a truly great hen. 'Lunar Queen' flew five races from France, Penzance YB, Penzance Yearling and was an Open prizewinner in all seven races.

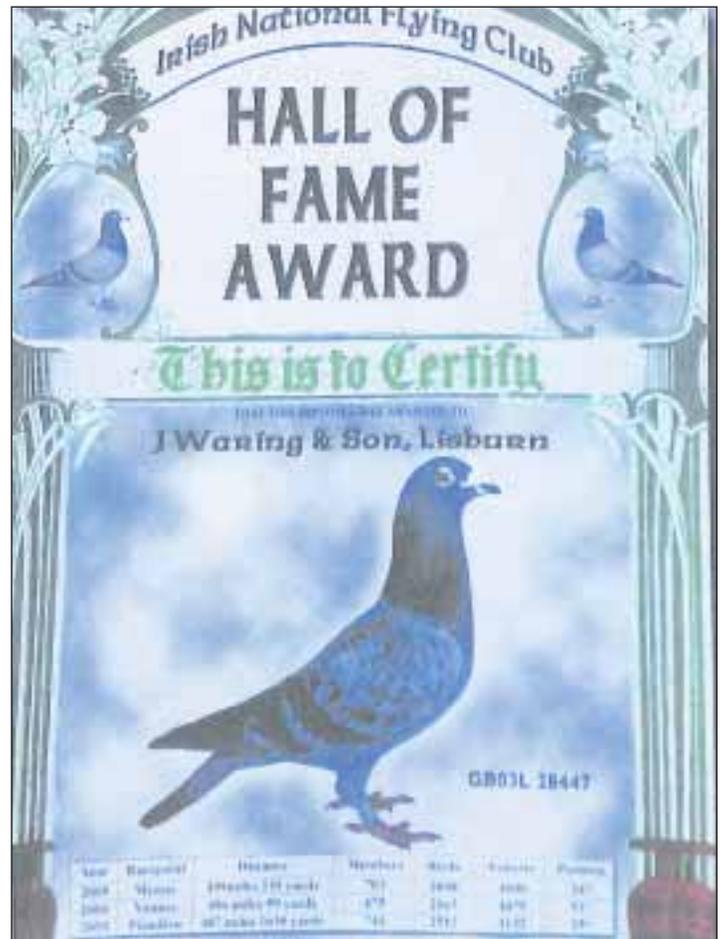
Frank Scott also won 1st Open Friendship National with the INFC and was a top flyer from the Nationals. 'Lunar Queen' was always sent to the Kings Cup sitting 10/12 days on eggs. No direct children of 'Lunar Queen' made their mark but many grandchildren flew France.

If 1995 was a record year when three Gold Medals were won, the club went through a lean spell of some 16 years before the next one was won. I have no doubt that the Irish pigeons fly one of the hardest routes in Europe.

In 2011 the Gold Medal was finally won again when that outstanding fancier Jackie Waring of Lisburn won the Gold Medal with a blue chequer cock named 'Endurance'. This outstanding pigeon was bred in 2003, his sire a blue cock inbred Walkingshaw, son of a blue cock 3rd Open INFC Friendship National St Malo 1998. Dam a blue hen bred by Norman Thompson, a former winner of the Harkness Rose Bowl with the INFC. 'Endurance' was trained 70 miles as a YB and then as a yearling flew Talbenny and Penzance.

As a 2yo Jackie gave him two inland races Thurles and Rosscarbery and then into the INFC Grand National from Messac. The Kings Cup winner being Malcolm Wilkinson of Wilton Cross. 'Endurance' was up with the leaders and clocked to win 24th Open. The same preparation for 2006, two inland races Thurles and Mallow and then basketed for the new race point Vannes – 'Endurance' was to fly another great race winning 53rd Open.

The INFC was to suffer a period in their history, that we don't want to see repeated – no race 2007 and 2008 for



'ENDURANCE'.

different reasons. In 2007 he was sent to Roscrea and returned on the Monday with half a wing and no tail. In 2008 'Endurance' recovered and Jackie sent him to Pilmore Beach twice before basketed for the Kings Cup – the birds were brought back – no race.

Now what was going to happen after missing two years. In 2009 on a training flight he was hawked again and after that would not leave the hamper – training stopped!! In 2010 he was now a 7yo, Jackie thought he was almost back

to his best so the Kings Cup was now the target – after his training he was sent to Fermoy with the club and then Fermoy 5B before hampered for Vannes Kings Cup with the INFC.

The National winners were Reilly & Martin Bray and 'Endurance' flew a brilliant race to win 25th Open and the Hall of Fame Diploma. Jackie then had a decision to make – should he prepare him one more time and go for the Gold Medal – the answer was yes. The same as 2010, Fermoy Club, Fermoy 5B and then off to Vannes for the Kings Cup, the National winner Dan Campbell of Gilford. 'Endurance'



became the ninth Gold Medal winner by being placed 163rd Open. He was usually sent sitting 15/16 days but once he was sent sitting two days over due.

Three weeks before the Kings Cup he would have three tosses per week – Drogheda or Balbriggan. This once in a life time pigeon is now making his mark at stock. A son 48th Open St Malo Friendship National; granddaughter 73rd Friendship National, both in 2011; grandson 15th Open Kings Cup; grandson 23rd Kings Cup, blue chequer cock bred from a sister to 'Endurance', 41st Kings Cup all 2013.

In 2012 two Gold Medals were won by N Black & Son of Dromara and Rev T.A.B. Sawyers & Son, Banbridge. We start with the Black pigeon known as 'Big Darren'. This blue cock bred in 2007 and named after the NI golf star Darren Clarke who won the British Open, was given the name by Ian and Andrew Black.

This top pigeon is bred in the purple as the saying goes. His sire is a son of Black's 1st & 2nd Open INFC Kings Cup Grand National winners paired together while the dam is

from the '23' cock the sire of 'Annie Mary' when paired to a half sister of 'Mothers Pride' 2nd Open Kings Cup Redon 2000. 'Big Darren's half brother named 'Rocky' was 8th Open Kings Cup Vannes 2001 and 5th Open Kings Cup Vannes 2012, winning an INFC Merit Award.

Raced Natural as a YB, 'Darren' flew two races from 122 miles and 155 miles. As a yearling he flew two inland races and then Talbenny. In 2009 as a 2yo he raced Fermoy 190 miles and then Talbenny 187 miles before going to the Kings Cup for the first time and clocked to win 241st Open. As a 3yo 'Darren' raced from Clonmel, Fermoy and Talbenny (2), then it was the Kings Cup from Vannes for a second time, flying a great race to win 153rd Open. The Kings Cup winner Reilly & Martin Bray, 2,512 pigeons again competed in the race.

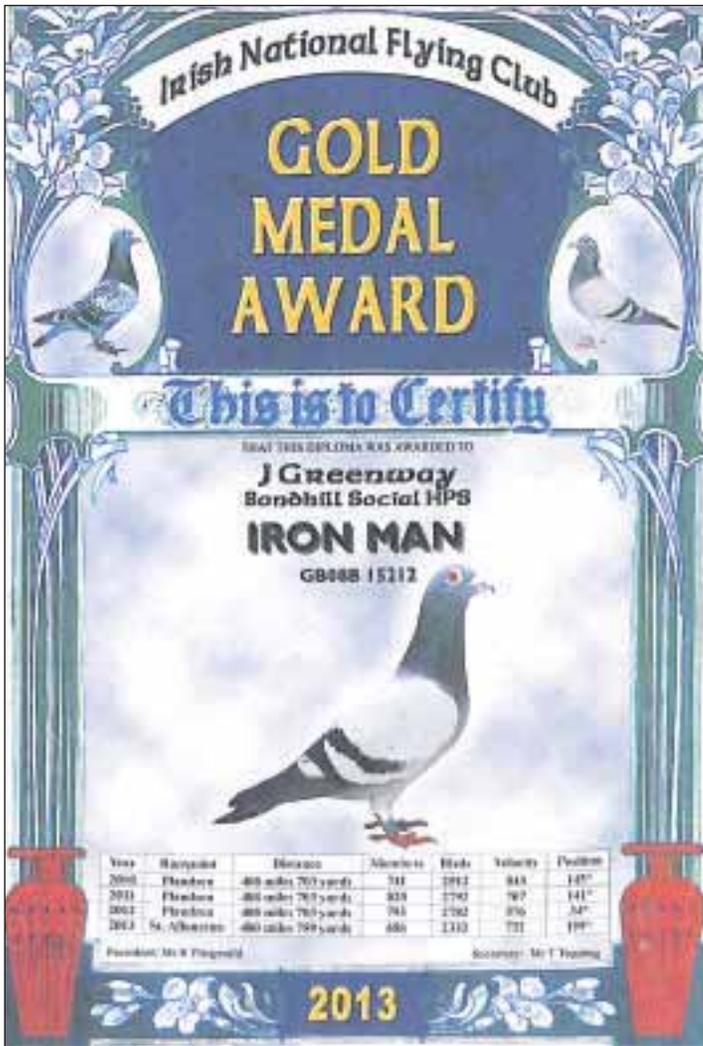
In 2011 he was prepared for another attempt at the Kings Cup, the programme was much the same, three inland races, Talbenny and then the Kings Cup winning 200th Open and the Hall of Fame Diploma. In 2009 and 2010 he was paired to the same hen that was 6th Open 2010 and send sitting 12 days on eggs. In 2012 he took a new hen of his own accord and this hen had already won 51st Open Kings Cup. 'Darren' was this time sent on a one day old YB and flew his best ever National race winning 52nd Open and the coveted INFC Gold Medal.

'Big Darren' is now making his mark at stock having already bred 17th Open Friendship National 2011, 30th Open Vannes 2012, 55th Kings Cup 2013 and three other birds in the National prizes. In 2011 he returned with the right hand side of his back torn by a BOP and believe it or not returned in 2012 with the other side torn out. The Black family are former Kings Cup winners, National Champions 2011 and 2012, they have also won a record four Harkness Rose Bowls. The feeding is all Frazers – continental Widowhood plus high energy just before basketing.

The 11th INFC Gold Medal was won in 2012 by a red chequer hen bred and raced by Rev T.A.B. Sawyers & Son of Banbridge. This hen named 'Mourne View Helen' was nine years old when she finally won her Gold Medal. Bred in 2003 she had only three inland races as a YB and two races as a yearling Tramore and Talbenny. Wesley Sawyers is only interested in National races and his pigeons are allowed to mature before they are asked the question from France. The birds would be trained from Balbriggan and then a single up from St Johns Point so that they come through the Mourne Mountains.

In 2005 as a 2yo she flew three inland races and Talbenny before going to Messac for the INFC Kings Cup, winning 107th Open. The following year she was sent after the same training programme and clocked to be just outside the Open prizes. In 2007 and 2008 no Kings Cup was flown for various reasons and Wesley thought her chance had gone. In 2009 she hit wires and Wesley decided no racing for her and it looked pretty bad as she was now a 6yo. Come 2010, and it was back on the road with three inland races and Talbenny before going to Vannes for the Kings Cup, winning 134th Open and a Merit Award.

In 2011 Wesley was more than pleased with her condition and after three inland races and Talbenny she was hampered for the Kings Cup to record her best race, winning 58th Open on 1052yppm and collected the Hall of Fame Diploma and one step away from the coveted Gold Medal. In 2012 Wesley was determined to treat her like any other pigeon and not single her out as special. 'Helen' had five inland race then Vannes for the Grand National and the Kings Cup, at nine years of age 'Helen' recorded a super result and in fact her best yet winning 41st Open, vel 481yppm. She has never been ill, never exhausted, always looks immaculate but has a dropped feather in her tail



The twelfth (12th) Gold Medal was won in 2013 by another of N Ireland’s top distance fanciers, John Greenaway, Bondhill. The Greenaway loft has enjoyed a purple patch these last few years being a major prize winner from all National races, NIPA and INFC. The Gold Medal winner is a 5yo blue cock named ‘Iron Man’, as a YB he flew three YB races. In 2009 at the yearling stage he flew two inland races and then Talbenny. As a 2yo John picked him out as a National prospect mainly on his breeding, more on that later. In 2010 he had two inland races and then Talbenny before he was hampered for the 2010 Kings Cup and a top result 145th Open. As a 3yo he followed the same programme as 2010, sent sitting 14 days he just made the Open prize list (250) winning 241st Open the Kings Cup winner Dan Campbell of Gilford, 2,792 pigeons competed.

The blue cock had been previously known as ‘Medicine Man’ as John caught his leg in the door and for some time thought he would not race again. During the winter months he made a good recovery and the plan was come July it would be the Kings Cup again. John decided no Channel racing would be needed and in 2012 he was sent due to hatch and went on to fly a super race winning 34th Open and the Hall of Fame Diploma. The Kings Cup winner G O’Reilly & Son, Malahide, 2,782 pigeons competed.

‘Iron Man’ wintered well and John prepared him for a crack at winning the Gold Medal. The same preparation as 2012 when hampered for the new Kings Cup race point Saint Allouestre. Ronnie Williamson of Bondhill was the Kings Cup winner with 2,323 pigeons competing and ‘Iron Man’ won 159th Open and the coveted Gold Medal. His sire is a grandson of John’s first Hall of Fame winner ‘Iron Lady’ and the dam a granddaughter of ‘Iron Lady’. ‘Iron Lady’s dam was bred by James Cleveland of Annsborough and contained all James’s best National pigeons, 24th Kings Cup, 26th Kings Cup, 26th Lerwick Kings Cup, 10th Avranches and many more pigeons to fly France. The dam’s side contained Alan Capper’s five times Section winner, a Soontjen through Frank Sheader.

12 in 31 years.

which is passed on to her best children and grandchildren. The bloodlines are Geoff Hunt, Burns Bros ‘Dolly’ and the Jim Biss cocks ‘Amigo’ and ‘Bartholomew’, gifted to Wesley by the late Jim Biss.

I hope the history of the magnificent 12 you have found interesting.

‘Irish Rover’

Yorkshire Progressive Notes

With Nigel

Sorry for the delay with the results for the young bird season. I hate playing catch-up but time hasn’t been available to sit down and write a report. The old bird season flew by and now 2014 has come round just as quick. The young bird season went as follows.

Melton Mowbray flown on 27th July, 11 members sent 273 birds, 1st & 8th Garry Hill; 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th & 7th Tik Jobs; 9th & 10th H Bloor. A big well done to Gary, this loft is in to the North West of our club but it just goes to show when the birds are right and the weather suits, every man has his

day. Well done also to Tik, six prizes and carrying on where he left off with the old birds. Kettering 3rd August saw the club send 564 birds, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th & 8th Tik Jobs; 9th & 10th N Laycock. A top performance from the man of the moment Tik Jobs, well done mate. Buckingham 10th August, where the club sent 309 birds, 1st, 2nd & 3rd Tik Jobs; 4th & 5th C Howard; 6th M Pooley; 7th & 8th A Bainbridge & Son; 9th & 10th H Bloor. Marlborough 17th August, with a send of 296 birds, 1st & 7th N Laycock; 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th & 8th T Jobs; 5th Brian Johnson; 9th Mr & Mrs Burtoft; 10th Les Noon.

Buckingham 25th August, the club sent just 96 birds, 1st & 7th H Bloor; 2nd & 3rd T Jobs; 4th, 5th, 6th & 8th Gary Hill; 9th M Pooley. The club’s Chale race with the MNFC 31st August, 1st C Howard & Son; 2nd, 3rd & 7th B Johnston; 4th E Jones; 5th S Gill & Son; 6th & 8th S Field. Newbury 7th September where the club sent 107 birds, 1st, 4th, 5th, 7th & 10th Tik Jobs; 2nd & 8th Mr & Mrs Burtoft (I can only think that Kath has taken over from John); 3rd, 6th & 9th N Laycock.

Another season over, from a personal point of view, thank goodness. The young birds this last season have had a problem nationwide resulting in bad races and losses. Herpes virus I think has been one of the culprits.

From the Yorkshire Progressive, thank you to everyone who has followed our season, we are a new club with big ambitions that I am sure with each year are coming to light. The next write up will the presentation night, so until then, it’s bye from the Pro.