

## National Notes - Blackpool 2016.

Good afternoon folks. I sit writing this fresh from my weekend in Blackpool, and I have to say that I think someone was looking over me on the week end as on my journey home I missed the accident on the M6 at junction 31 by a few minutes and avoided the tailbacks and delays that resulted. I have to admit that I am not a regular attender to the Show of the Year, and as such I can see the changes that are creeping in. Personally I was disappointed at the experience, some stall holders I think had a raw deal being stuck down dead ends and the show was spread over too many levels. For those of you who have been lucky enough to visit the Spring Exchange show in Houten you will appreciate how these types of shows can be done properly , all on one level and in modern exhibition halls. I think there is still a buzz about the show and as always I went straight to the show pens to look at the entrants in the many classes and especially the birds that made the top table. I marvel at the condition that the fanciers have managed to get on these birds and to keep it on them as Blackpool comes at the end of the show season. Some fanciers never manage to get to see the birds in the show – mind you some fanciers never manage to get to The Winter Gardens but that's a different story!! – and I think this is a shame because after all it is a show.

I did eventually manage to get to the NFC stand and it was a tight squeeze, being perched on the balcony with little room for people to congregate or stop for a chat without causing a logjam. This was a problem encountered by all the stall along the balcony and I don't know if this is a regular occurrence but its not something I would be happy with as a paying customer. The weekend provided a perfect opportunity to get talking to fanciers from all corners of The British Isles and I have to say that there is a general buzz about the 2016 season from NFC members I have spoken to and from fanciers who are joining is for a new challenge. The recent section changes that were brought in at the AGM seem to have lit a fire in the bellies of quite a few fanciers who are now in these new sections and for the short while I was at the stand on Sunday I spoke to several fanciers from the North East who have joined up to compete. I would like to echo the thought of The Apprentice writing in the BHW recently, and say that we as a committee believe that after looking at the needs of our members in the top end of our radius we needed to be brave, hence the section changes. We want to promote proper distance racing at a classic level and hope that fanciers see the developments for what they are and grasp the opportunity. From a practical point of view, we appreciate that the marking stations are a bit of a distance away, but as in other areas fanciers could pool their resources and collectively get the birds to the marking stations at either Congleton or Sheffield. We are only willing to help where we can and if demand grows in these three new sections we will look at having marking stations that make it easier for the members, but these may have to feed in to a main station. I think the key here is communication amongst fanciers and I know from personal experience that distance men are a different breed and will help each other out, so lets make this happen gentlemen, lets give me something to write about during the 2016 season, and that goes for you Welsh men as well. There will doubtless be the naysayers and the knockers moaning about small birdages in these new sections but the potential is there to grow bigger and that is what we want. These new sections will require delegates, so if you are reading this and think you might fit the bill or have any questions about the role then give myself, Paul Naum or Phil Curtis a ring.



**Some familiar faces waiting for an ice cream from the new chairman.**

In my last set of notes I mentioned a few changes at the top but did not introduce our new chairperson. This was due to them awaiting security clearance from the highest source( his wife). I am glad to say that the clearance was given and I can now inform you that the new chairperson of The National Flying Club is Mr Phil Curtis from Section K. Phil has spent a lifetime in pigeons having learnt his trade at his grandfathers feet. He is distance through and through and this can only aid his new role on the committee, so have no fear. One fancier said to me at the show that Phil had only been on the committee for a couple of years and questioned if he was experienced enough to take up the chain. My reply to him was that my mate had two kids by the age of 17, so you don't have to be experienced to be good at something! My only concern about the appointment is that we now have 2 Yorkshire men on the top table, not sure if there is anything in the rules about this. If there isn't then we might see some propositions next year. Good luck Phil and enjoy your 60th birthday present, and I hope you appreciate that I knocked the VAT off for you!!!

Right, that's all for me for now. As always I am on 01926 817796 or if you are shy [weebu@hotmail.com](mailto:weebu@hotmail.com)

Drew Callan

NFC PO