

The Pride of the Potteries One Loft race

‘The new Kid on the Block’

The newest UK One Loft race has been taken on by the Loft Manager and a few of the back-up team who helped the MNFC hold their successful race series in 2018 after the decision was made not to continue with the race and to put the loft up for sale.

What was the reasoning behind Ian’s idea to purchase the loft and it was quite simple really because it was entirely due to the number of phone calls from old entrants urging him to continue with the race which in 2018 paid more prize money out £ for £ and pigeon for pigeon than any other similar race series within these shores. Additionally it is worth pointing out that the ‘Hotspot’ prizemoney that I believe we offer of £500 to each winner is greater than that of our competitors. It is planned that with the support of the fancy that the amount of the prizemoney will not only be equalled but actually increased in 2019. This though will depend on the level of support achieved by the new One Loft venture. Ian has been greatly encouraged by the number of early booking deposits that have fallen through his letter box since advertising the ‘Pride of the Potteries’ race in the pigeon press a couple of weeks ago.

No doubt readers will wish to learn about what makes this new One Loft race different to many of the other similar ventures? Well first of all though entrants are more than welcome to come and watch both the hotspots and final events. There is just a free buffet and light refreshments on offer because the welfare of the birds is paramount and Ian feels that any large and expense on food and entertainment would put pressure on the decision to hold the birds back or release if the weather is inclement. To put it bluntly the pigeons welfare comes first with Ian who is better known to many as ‘Snooker’. This is the reasoning behind the fact that he also chooses to train and hold the races on a Saturday when the weather conditions allows simply because Snook believes that races and the longer training flights benefit from taking place when there are other large numbers of birds also in the air. He learned this painful lesson a couple of years ago when due to poor weather the birds were liberated on a Friday morning in good conditions but the hawks had a field day

killing and injuring a large number of the One Loft entry and a very poor race resulted. As the old Chinese proverb says 'Fool me once shame on you, fool me twice shame on me' Well Snooker certainly isn't planning to make the same mistake twice!

I asked what he felt was the reason why on days when so many suffered high losses the One Loft inmates homed with minimal casualties. His reply was good health was the key and not because of the need for medication. He told me "I think that the main reason is because the lofts which I and Alan Windsor built were purposely designed for One Loft racing, with an aviary running along the full length of the lofts. This means the birds can get plenty of the best free medicine of all 'fresh air' and the birds just love to lie in the sunshine when not at exercise".

"One thing that I have learned" he continued "is that managing a loft full of One Loft birds is very different to managing an ordinary team of young birds". This new acquired knowledge stands both him and the birds in his care in good shape and entrants can be confident that their birds are in good, capable hands.

The aim isn't to be the biggest but to be right up there with the very best One Loft races on offer.

Mike Lakin