

NATIONAL FLYING CLUB - PRESS RELEASE OCTOBER 2023

The National Flying Club Management Committee's annual Autumn meeting took place on Wednesday 4th of October 2023, at Alverley; the primary objective of this meeting being to discuss the 2024 Race Programme.



Prior to the discussion, our Treasurer provided a detailed overview of our financial position, explaining that following two years of Cross Channel Racing, we now have a better understanding of the costs associated in managing these races.

For the past two years, we have had to use a combination of birdage charges, auction sale proceeds and also call upon our reserves, to fund the races - along with significantly cutting Prize Money to such an extent, that this situation is untenable and will ultimately be the downfall of any organisation should this course of action continue.

His recommendation to The Management Committee, is that we now price the Race Programme to be self-supporting, no longer relying on Club Reserves or auction sales and reducing Prize Money.

All ten Marking Stations will be open: Sheffield, Leyland, Congleton, Alverley, Bristol, Wales, Kingsteignton, Steventon, Saffron Walden and Portsmouth.

The recommended birdage is:

- The first three races to be £6.00 per bird, and also the YB/OH race,
- £8.00 per bird Sigogne,
- £10.00 per bird Tarbes.

In addition, to reduce the financial risk and avoid the repetition of a 2nd transporter being used, carrying only a few birds, triggering a financial loss for the race, (occurring on two occasions in the past two years), only one transporter is to be used for all races.

Unfortunately, the Royal Mail is no longer reliable - many postal Race Entries being received days after the race has occurred.

To manage this process, it will be necessary to stop all postal Race Entries.

All future Race Entries are to be made:

- via our web site, closing Thursday midnight, prior to marking,
- by phone to Jill Webber with a card payment closing Thursday 4.00 pm, prior to marking.

A decision will be made to operate either:

- a first come, first served system - once the transporter is up to capacity no other entries will be accepted,
or
- allow all applications and if oversubscribed, our larger team fanciers would be contacted and asked to reduce their entries (say from 100 to 50), thus impacting only our larger team fanciers, the intention being that all members are able to enter. Realistically this will only occur on the first two races.

The Treasurer then reminded The Management Committee that our remaining reserves, although a very healthy £160,000, are the result of a gift from the late Brian Long, donated specifically to be used for the purchase of a new transporter. This is not to be used to subsidise the cost of racing and it is imperative that we respect both his and his family's wishes.

The Treasurer summarised that his recommendations had not been made without considerable thought and the alternative of not increasing our charges to the recommended amount would be future financial losses, which ultimately would become unsustainable.

The Management Committee discussed the recommendations in detail and agreed to implement the birdage costs and the one transporter strategy; a decision on if we adopt a first come first served basis or a limit, is to be decided at our next meeting.

The 2024 Race programme was agreed:

18th May 2024 – Carentan, (**St Malo as reserve*)

1st June 2024 - Messac

15th June 2024 - St Maixent l'Ecole 5127

5th July 2024 - Tarbes (Friday liberation)

20th July 2024 – Sigogne

7th September 2024 – Young Birds / Old Hens (only) Carentan, (**St Malo as reserve*)

**All Liberation sites are subject to availability on the chosen dates.*

It was agreed that we would continue with auction sales, now directing the sale proceeds to a fund earmarked for a new computer system and website in the future.