

# ● John Schmidt

**Nairne pigeon flyer John Schmidt has been in the sport only four years, but the impact he has made has set him apart as a true champion.**

He has had a number of birds placed in races held by the SA Homing Pigeon Association, and this year finished sixth in overall association placings.

In starting he was helped by members of his own club, and several leading city flyers gave him stock and further advice.

John is very appreciative of this help, and although he could not reveal names through lack of permission and the fear of overlooking someone, he says these people know how much he has appreciated their help.

Nairne club consists of about 12 flyers, and John was the chairman during the 1972 season. The club is hoping to increase its number this year and an all-out drive in the area is underway.

His training points have varied, owing to release points and condition of birds.

Feeding has never presented a problem for John. His main object has been to ensure the birds have plenty to eat and clean drinking water daily.

John says his hardest job is to condition his birds for particular events and fit this time into his busy schedule when work permits.

His loft is not at present based on any one family, but he has hopes of building up one of his own if time permits.

As for strains, John prefers not to mention this, as he thinks it can become a very argumentative topic.

However, he believes "true strains" today belong to present-day proven flyers and to the flyers who came before them, or passed stock along the line.



To say one has crossed a strain as far back in its true form, from original to present day is a big statement in John's book.

From his very first race, John has not looked back. He won the club event from Keith in 1969, and regards his flying career since, as "exceptionally good."

Wins have included the racepoints of Dimboola, Carrieton and Maryborough.

This year his impressive club success tally was Mittyack, Tarcoola, Pimba, Booroorban (2), Morundah, Cook, Temora and Forrest.

A single pair in the Schmidt loft has bred seven winners, plus several placings.

This year he moved into association rankings for the first time with four placings.

John says he had a "lucky year" and that if he ever repeats the performance again the credit should go to his birds, not to himself.

The Schmidt home is located in the centre of the town, and a couple of hundred yards from the main Melbourne road.

About 130 birds — stock and actual racing birds — are housed in the backyard loft at the peak of the season.

As for ambitions, John says he looks upon pigeon racing as a sport and a hobby and attempts to always do his best while helping others out.

He says this is only fair in response to the help he has received.

On association race nights when birds are home, and "have a chance" of a placing, John and members of his family can usually be found at the SAHPA hall awaiting the results. When these are released they start the late-night journey home.

—GRAHAM BADGER

## LOWER NORTH BUREAU

The annual conference of the Lower North branches of the Agricultural Bureau of SA will start at 9.45 a.m. on Wednesday, February 28, in the Wasleys Institute.

Mr. G. S. Wheal, member of the Advisory Board of Agriculture and a 1972