

Pigeon Notes

By
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Too Much Positional Value

There are too many newcomers to pigeon racing today with the false idea that success in the sport depends more on geographical position than it does on quality of pigeon, and the knowledge required to condition the race team.

Years ago, when the hard man to beat was consistently near the top of the list with his early birds in the clock it was a case of:—"We would like as many good birds in our lofts as he has at the moment, and know as much as he does in the way of preparing his pigeons for the race."

Now it is too frequently a matter of:—"We would like to live where he does," which, in fact, is a poor excuse and completely devoid of sportsmanship.

While it is true that "position" on the day of the race often decides the winner, it is also a fact that the winning pigeon is a good one which is in top physical condition.

The good position on the day is useless without quality birds in proper racing form, and this should be realised by all novices if they are ever to become successful.

The time to worry about position is after the loft is stocked with good birds, and the knowledge of how to condition them has been gained.

Can't Win

The fact, is that no matter where we live, we should not win, cannot win and don't deserve to win if our birds are not good enough.

If the young fancier is wise he will forget about his so-called "bad position" and devote his energies to building a sound family of pigeons, and learn how to look after them.

Once this is done, he will soon find that his bad locality has turned into a good one, with plenty of the opposition only too eager to exchange places of abode.

He will find that he will derive more pleasure in the sport if he flies a good race week after week, without winning one, than he will get if he wins a race and then performs badly in many events before winning another.

When the late H. R. (Rocco) Horrocks amassed his record SAHFA aggregate score of more than 150 points, he failed to win a race, but it was the most successful year in the whole of his brilliant career.

It is impossible for any club, group of clubs, or association to frame a programme, or devise a system which will provide everyone with an equal chance of winning every race.

Even the distance of 50 yards between two owners' lofts is enough to decide the winner when both birds arrive together.

The main thing is to use a programme which gives the owner a chance of making the prizelist if his pigeon is worthy.

Such a programme was used this year, when every race flown provided all owners with the chance of winning a prize—a proper survey of the result sheets will prove this claim beyond doubt.

Let's face it, those of us who failed to win a prize were just not good enough. We can't blame our position for our failures if we are half an hour behind our opponent residing in the next block.

To cite position as the reason for success deprives the winner of his glory and the pigeon of its merit.

ing achievements was by a US Army bird in 1939.

According to Otto Meyer, then chief of the Army's Pigeon Centre at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, the record military flight by an Army pigeon was made in that year, when a bird flew with a message from Maine to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, a distance of 2,300 miles.

It is interesting to note that pigeons each year fly from Augusta in Maine to Marion, in Texas, a distance of more than 1,860 miles.

Prior to this year's Kalgoorlie race of 1,044 miles, the longest race held by the SAHFA was from Alice Springs (830 miles).

It is also on record that the Whyalla club once flew a race from Boulder, WA, about 980 miles.

The distance from Barton, SA, to Perth, about 30 miles less, than the Kalgoorlie to Adelaide event, has been flown in WA.

It is probable that the Kalgoorlie race is the longest race ever flown in Australia.

Fastest Time

The fastest time record for Alice Springs is held by the late Walter Read, who landed two birds together in the flying time of 16 hrs. 48 mins., to record 1,459 yards a minute in 1951.

Mr. Read flew his race in the Gardens Club, which was affiliated with the SAHFA.

Fine performances were also recorded by three members of the Millswood club (also an affiliated club in 1951) when Messrs. J. Langley, T. W. V. Richardson and A. Phillips clocked fast birds.

Although the affiliated clubs' birds were released with the Association entries, the SAHFA winner was clocked by V. Pape, several hours behind Mr. Read's arrivals.

Despite the fast flight, only 12 birds were clocked in the Association race in the five days of race time.

"Aussie Maid" was one of the best performed pigeons in Alice Springs events.

Her record for the late "Spot" Sellick was a remarkable one—unplaced in 1936, fifth in 1937, second in 1938, and first in 1939, to record 1,340 yards a minute.

The longest races held on the South to East route have been flown from Goulburn, Orbost, Cootamundra, Canberra and Junee—all considerably shorter than Alice Springs.

None of these race points has provided a good, consistent return of pigeons.

Even Junee (510 miles) which has been used as the long event for a number of years, has contributed a poor result for its last two races.

Bendigo Bird

Mr. R. M. Dorward, Box 49, Tumbay Bay, advises that blue bar Cock (race rubbered) and metal ring 92 B.G.O. 64 is nesting at the Goodsheds.

The bird belongs at Bendigo (Vic).

Mr. J. Brown, 33 Brister st., Angle Park (45 6135) has a young bird with a foreign ring, 48 N.S.O. 65, and will care for it until claimed by the owner.