

King & Ellen - Mitiamo Winner - 35032 SA05 MlyH

Don began racing pigeons some 40 years ago in the Strathalbyn club as a junior with his brother Tony. He recalls a much larger and competitive Strathalbyn racing club in those days and winning in strong company was very difficult. He has raced in partnership with Christine Ellen since 1991.



His highlights to date include two association winners (1st Little Topar 2002 and the 2007 winner, 1st Mitiamo). In addition he has gained 4th SAHPA Maryborough SAD, 29th SAHPA Maryborough Open 2000, 6th & 7th SAHPA Holbrook 2001, 3rd Little Topar 2002, 8th & 17th Alice Springs (2003 & 2004), 17th SAHPA Mitiamo 2007 and 24th Berrigan SAHPA Berrigan CBS 2007.

Don uses 30 Pairs of stock birds (some as feeders) and aims to breed around 100 youngsters. His birds are Goodger, Wickham and Janssen based with some recent Doug Green additions

About 8 weeks from racing Don begins the loft flying programme which consists of limiting feed and twice a day loft flies. This can be difficult at Callington as hawks and falcons are a continuing menace. Race birds are fed on peas and wheat (from the local farmers) plus some small. Early in the season he adds barley to assist in fat reduction and adds maize later in the season to assist energy and condition retention. He provides an iron tonic in water plus grit and pink powder at all times. Up to 40 older birds are used in the race team, and this includes cocks. He notes they can be a nuisance but reckons the extra birds flying in the team assists the confidence of the group when falcons and hawks turn up.

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He begins tossing about Anzac day and starts at 10kms and gets out to 100kms after 12-15 tosses. Once racing begins the birds are given twice weekly training - 50kms on Mondays or Tuesdays and 100kms Thursdays or Fridays. Tossing is generally line of flight. He cleans the loft about once a week and birds are wormed twice a year - pre breeding and pre racing. Turbosole is provided about 4 times a year. Breeding birds are mated 2 weeks after racing is complete and are fed peas and wheat from hoppers. Don likes to linebreed for stock and cross breed for racing as a general rule. In addition he flies the line bred stock to ensure vitality and

consistency in breeding stock. Crossbreeds are sometimes used for breeding. He notes that one Janssen cross line he has produces blue bar hens of excellent racing ability. From an original Janssen hen the daughter was 3rd in Adelaide 10,000, and a daughter of this daughter was 8th in the Adelaide 10,000. This family has provided club winners and association placings.

He chooses the better performed 2 year olds to race from Alice Springs and notes that one of his Janssen Goodger cross hens gained 8th Alice Springs in 20hrs 26mins at 1110mpm. The Sire of his Mitiamo winner is Mealy Janssen cock from Tony King and the Dam a Blue Bar hen (a G'grand daughter of the \$4,000 Wickham cock). As a yearling she had three races (Pinnaroo, Ouyen and Moulamein SAD) and was nothing special. In 2007 she raced Keith twice, Nhill twice and Mitiamo (1st SAHPA).

Tony would like to see fewer club races and more SAHPA racing. He feels the '6 competing fancier' rule will force flyers out of racing sooner and would like the SAHPA to provide flyer friendly policies to keep flyers in the game for as long as possible. He congratulates the SAHPA on the 2008 Wilcannia Sires promotion and says this is a good template for SAHPA racing.