

Coober Pedy Open Winner

Stewart Hodgson won the Coober Pedy Open with his BC hen SA09 19314. The breeding of the winning bird is Kakoschke / Graham Goodridge x from hen that Stewart bought from Peter Mavros sale which is Kakoschke / Pryor. This is Stewart's first Assoc win. He also won the Sires Produce race from Booroorban in 2006.

He became interested in pigeons as a school boy when he would trap scrubbers from farm buildings, his father John then said "if you're going to have pigeons you may as well get some good ones."

They were living at Maitland at the time so he joined the Ardrossan pigeon club, then the Maitland club started up so he joined that club. They then moved to Karoonda in the Mallee. He commenced work and the pigeons went by the way side.

When he moved to the city he saw some birds flying around which sparked his interest once again. He started flying competitively in 2003.

The lines he keeps are mostly Goodger based with a few Kakoschke's and Pryor's with some of his brother Aaron's birds.

Stewart usually pairs the certain strains together but this season he has gone back to crossing these strains. The birds in the stock loft must be performance based with a good pedigree.

He does not take into consideration the birds eye colour when pairing up.

He tries to breed about 120 young birds, along with 30 to 40 two and three year olds left from the previous season make up the race team.

Stewart takes the age of the birds into account when pairing up, he will put an old cock to a young hen and a old hen to a young cock, trying to keep the vitality.

Training starts about four weeks prior to the start of the first race, the first toss is a little spot between Two Wells and Mallala a distance of sixty to seventy kilometers. The birds must be ranging well around the loft before the first toss.

Stewart prefers racing hens but he will send the cocks right through the program.

He prefers the East / South East lines. He thinks it's a huge challenge when top flyers can get their birds home not just one or two, he would love to do well on those lines.

Peas and wheat are purchased from a farmer on York Peninsular though Paul Springett. He then buys the John Pryor small seed mix from Gilbertsons to mix with the peas and wheat.

He thinks grit and minerals play a big part in the pigeon's diet. The grit he uses is from Paul Springett which comes from Belgium.

Garlic is used in the water throughout the race season.