

## 2014 Lyndhurst YBC 2015 Pedy



Leo Duits first started racing with Hampstead in 1965. After that season finished, he and others founded the Vitesse Racing Pigeon Club and Leo is not only a founding member, but a life member as well. Leo married and moved to Broadview in 1982 and restarted with Hampstead until it closed, then moved to North Suburban. While at North Suburban he has been Chairman for two years and treasurer for four years.

Highlights of his racing career include the camaraderie and good fellowship he enjoyed with Hampstead and Vitesse – something Leo believes is missing from the SAHPA and Club racing today.

Leo has enjoyed winning three races prior to this year –

Nundroo, Cobar and Benalla. The biggest thrill was getting up early on the Sunday for the Benalla race and finding his winner sitting on the landing board!

The 2015 Coober Pedy No. 1 winner was Coober Pedy with a 5 year old hen SA07 18253 BBH. Her sire is a van Loon cock from Jack Vanderlinden and the dam was a mealy hen bred by Leo and which gained 11<sup>th</sup> Marla and became BOY for North Suburban. The Sire of the Dam was a mealy cock from Dennis Shaw and the dam was dark blue checker hen of Kakoschke lines bred by Jack Vanderlinden. The 11<sup>th</sup> Marla hen gained other SAHPA placings and in the year of winning Marla was sent to the last three races on the north line programme – The Twins, Coober Pedy and then Marla – a fine effort.

**Performances of the 1<sup>st</sup> Coober Pedy winner:** 2008 – flew the programme and gained 13<sup>th</sup> Emmdale, 2009 – flew the programme and gained 5<sup>th</sup> The Twins and 13<sup>th</sup> Coober Pedy, 2010 – flew the programme, 2011 flew the programme and 2012 flew the programme and gained 29<sup>th</sup> Roxby Downs 10BS, and 1<sup>st</sup> Coober Pedy #1.

Prior to the start of the race season Leo gives his birds two days on Turbosole. He worms his birds with one day of Ivermectin and every week he gives them apple cider vinegar which he buys from the central market if a birds get sick. Leo does not believe in giving medication all the time and says he doesn't believe the pigeon pox medication isn't working as well now.

Leo uses 25 breeding pairs to breed 130-150 youngsters each year. In previous years he has used Goodger based birds, but has added Gaby Vandenabeele, Heremens Ceuster and Schaelaekens. So far the Heremens Ceuster matings have made a good start.

Race birds are hand fed once a day for club races and twice a day for SAHPA racing. He feeds a 70% pea / 30% wheat diet with a little barley added as he deems necessary. He provides pink powder, feed sulphur, common salt, shell grit and multi vitamin mix in separate jars for all birds ad lib. Birds are wormed once a year and he provides Turbosole as a preventative twice a year (pre racing and pre SAHPA racing).

All youngsters are weaned to a centre loft, broken in then set aside till around February. Once all youngsters are flying well the old birds are added to the race team.

Hens and cocks are housed, trained and tossed together for the whole season. Leo aims for 30-40 two year olds from the previous year and this includes 5-10 2 yo cocks. Returning race birds are provided with epsom salts in drinking water – 2 teaspoons to 5 litres)

Toss training starts on Anzac day with a 60 km toss. He completes 3 of these 60 km tosses then increases to 80 kms (4 tosses) then 100 kms (2 tosses). In all he aims for 10-12 tosses before racing starts. Once racing starts birds are tossed twice a week.

The race loft is cleaned once a day during racing and loft training is am daily for up to an hour. Breeding birds are hopper fed peas, and once a day Leo provides a hand feed of wheat and other

small seeds. Breeding birds are paired in October and the best are mated to best plus other birds are either bred for stock or gifted by friends for stock. Leo inbreeds for stock and outcrosses for racing.

His best source of good pigeons has been by gift from friends (and he notes that his friends have been the recipients of gifts from Leo).