



2014 Moulamein Open

Gavin Harris – SA13 07219 BBC 1st SAHPA 30/08/2014
- 126 owners, 1987 birds.

I bought the BBC at the North Suburban Squeaker Sale. It was a unique auction lot as Andrew Muirhead had put three young cocks bred in his race loft (off unknown matings) into one sale pen. My logic was that any birds left in the race loft of a top flier like Andrew must be well tested and therefore their progeny are likely to be good.

I use Progeny software for pedigrees and as I use foster parents for rearing I need to keep very accurate records of pairings, date eggs laid and which nest the eggs were transferred to in the foster cage. For racing

I keep a spreadsheet, each race bird has a row and each race is a column and I record the relevant position of each pigeon within the loft returns, plus highlight any club, group and SAHPA results.

I tend to mate certain lines and try proven crosses. Over the years I have done a lot of inbreeding and line breeding but now tend to try proven crosses, such as Dangerfield to Pryor. Have had a lot of success breeding off birds gifted to me by my friend, Mark Bruggemann.

Feed, vitamins and medications:

I use products supplied by Toploft such as Vite13 and Ioford. Great believer in using probiotics, I use Protexin powder on the grain once a week.

On a 3-week rotation, Turbosole, Resfite and Baycox are used. Apple cider vinegar in the water after wet days. I still believe in the use of peas at least 50% although over the last few years I have increased the percentage of barley.

Training and racing:

First toss is from Morphettville racecourse which is around 20 km. Work commitments do not allow me to single toss although in the past I have single tossed Whyalla in preparation for Alice Springs. Hens and cocks are separated after the derbies but I let them mix after tosses and races for a few hours. Long distance racing is what I look forward to. I also have high regard for birds that perform on the east line. I would only breed off a north line pigeon if it was an extraordinary performance.

Imported birds can perform in long distance races, but as a percentage in results I believe the Australian families are better.

Wind has a major influence on the results but I do my own calculation to see how my birds fared.

Training tosses twice a week and the odd short toss if possible. If I was retired I would try to do very early morning tosses and some just on dark.

I race both equal numbers of cocks and hens, I find that cocks often give me good performances. I have won 3 SAHPA races, Emmdale with a cock, Marla with a hen and Moulamein with this cock - so I would have to say cocks do a good job.

In general:

I don't believe in eye-sign. I review all the other theories i.e. wing / throat but do not follow any one theory.

In my first season as an adult member back in 1984, racing in the SARPF before we rejoined the SAHPA, I had two birds arrive from Benalla. One of the birds - a bbph had been a consistent pool bird and the other (a moziac cock). The moziac went in the traps first but I hesitated, waiting for the pool bird to come in. I eventually clocked the cock and then a minute or so later the pool bird. It taught me a lesson as I came 2nd and 4th in the SARPF and it could have been 1st and 4th if I had clocked the first bird when it first came in.