

The
Australasian Racing Pigeon.

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NCE more we are in the thick of racing, and still another season finds the Sydney fancy split in twain, all because of an ancient feud about which many present-day fanciers have little knowledge, but with true British obstinacy stick hard and fast to the section to which they belong. Why cannot the hatchet be buried, the pipe of peace smoked, and a happy, united fancy face the rosy future that is in store for pigeon racers and pigeon racing, if we only have the brains and ability to make the most of our opportunities?

During July the military authorities have despatched two consignments of homers for active service, 800 from Melbourne and Adelaide, and 1200 from Sydney and N.S.W. clubs. Should this experimental shipment prove successful, we may be asked to supply more birds for the same purpose, and it goes without saying that all the birds required will be willingly supplied by members of the fancy, and there need be no fear of the birds supplied not being good enough for the purpose, as every fancier I have spoken to has sent of his best, fully realising that the lives of many of our sons and brothers may depend on the courage and stamina of any one of the birds sent.

The first races of the season in Sydney all proved blow homes, and resolved themselves into trapping matches, but on Saturday, 20th July, the races from Orange and Gunning told a different tale, and many old hands showed up in the prize lists, as is usually the case when the birds have to work home. We are pleased to see this change in the weather conditions, for many blow homes early in the season usually mean many empty perches when at last a hard day is struck. In our opinion, the earlier in the season we strike headwinds, the better are the prospects of good results right through, for having to work their passage helps to put the condition on the birds so necessary when they have to negotiate the longer distances.

Mr. A. K. Penry, 30 Hilton-street, Clifton Hill, has undertaken to look after the interest of the A.R.P. in Melbourne, and will be pleased to accept subscriptions and arrange advertisements, etc., with Melbourne fanciers.

Mr. W. E. Greaves, Churcher-street, Prospect, will act in a similar capacity in South Australia.

And Mr. J. A. Weaver, 85 Alma-road, N. Perth, in Western Australia.

Sydney fanciers will one and all regret to hear that Mr. C. F. Munford, President of Leichhardt Flying Club, has been notified that his son, Charlie, has been killed in France. We wish to convey our own and the sympathy of the fancy generally to Mr. and Mrs. Munford.

THEORIES AND QUERIES.

I have been expecting P. John to take me to task over my notes on training in July issue, and I must confess that they could be construed to convey a meaning contrary to my ideas, inasmuch as I appeared to counsel giving the birds practically no training prior to the first race. That is not what I wished to convey to my readers; what I have found answers with my birds is to train often and well over a short course. I give them about 20 miles first toss, but repeat this a number of times, with a few tosses at about 30 miles, thus teaching them to know the last lap well. Then I find they can be safely jumped into the first race. Of course, the case of the untrained birds quoted was different, but that was fluking it, and not a proceeding I would advise others to do, and I only quoted it to show what birds will do, and how our pet theories are upset at times. To win short races, I am sure birds require plenty of short tosses. Give them a toss as often and as many times as you can, and feed them into the loft on arrival home.

I always envy the man who can arrange to be at home to feed and attend to his birds personally, and I am sure he has a great pull over the fancier who has to rely on others to do this for him, or who has to leave the food continually in front of the birds. He is able to keep his birds in that state of nippyness so admired by "De Lacy," and so necessary for smart trapping on arrival home. A bird in this state is always on the move, anxious to get out for exercise. When out exercises at top speed with that swing and dash so envied, and when exercise is over anxious to get into the loft for the next meal.

Given good, healthy birds, the man on the spot who can fly them two or three times a day, feed them in after each fly, and gives them plenty of short training tosses, must do well in the short races.

My system quoted last month only goes to show what can be done to mould birds to whatever treatment their owner is forced through circumstances to adopt, for, as I said, then I am sure any rational treatment will bring a certain amount of success after the birds have become acclimatised to it.

TRIER.

ADVERTISERS' NOTES.

Messrs. Kurtz and Ashton-Hansen are giving fanciers an opportunity of obtaining some squeakers from their imported stud of Vassarts, as well as the good W. E. Lowe Grooter blood.

Already the Vassarts are coming to the fore, one from No. 1 pair in last year's list, winning in the Glebe Club from Gunning on July 20th, the first hard race of the season.

Mr. Jules Vassarts founded his famous strain of racing pigeons in 1890, built up principally on the great strains of Janssens, Grooters, and N. Barker, and his wonderful work in long races quickly earned him the title of "The Champion Spain Racer of Belgium." He twice won the long race from Barcelona, in Spain, and from 1894 to 1909 engaged somewhere about 106 pigeons in the longest races, such as Dax, St. Jean de Luz, Lectoure, and St. Vincent, and 70 of them gained prizes, and four of them important premier prizes. From 1901 to 1909 he engaged 52 pigeons in the long races from Espagne (Spain), and won 25 important prizes, including two first prizes and a host of specials.

At one time M. Vassarts had no less than 15 700-milers in his loft, and his strain has long been recognised as the sort to face successfully any kind of weather and long distance, winning prizes in the hottest competition.

Many Belgian lofts owed their success to the introduction of a cross of the Vassarts blood.

This strain of pigeons have made history wherever they have gone, and I am sure history will repeat itself as far as Australia and the Vassarts are concerned.

It will be remembered that Mr. Kurtz won the hard 500 mile race from Cunnamulla to Sydney, with a game little hen bred from some of Mr. Hansen's Lowe Grooters strain; in fact, Mr. Hansen bred both parents. The reader will also find some of the best of these famous Grooters listed from which Messrs. Hansen and Kurtz are prepared to book squeakers. Mr. Hansen's "Trafalgar," which won the Mildura race for him in the Sydney Club a few years back, and which has since then bred a number of prize winners, figures on this stud list.

If you are able, call in and see these grand birds; if you cannot do that, drop a line to the partners, you will find them anxious to please, and most courteous. You won't be disappointed in the birds, and I am sure you will not come away without leaving an order for something good behind you.

When Mr. T. Booth, of Palace-street, Ashfield, made up his mind to stock his loft with the best birds obtainable, and try them out for himself, he did the thing properly, and did not begrudge expense. After buying up the best of the 1916 Sydney long distance winners, he decided to get some of England's best to try alongside them, with the result that representatives from the lofts of Oliver Dix, E. E. Jackson, etc., soon found a new home at Ashfield, and after two seasons of negotiations and importing, practically the whole of Oliver Dix's famous stud has been transferred to