

Mark Rothwell - Alice Springs Winner - SA06 12600 BBH

Mark has been involved in racing pigeons since 1988. At that time he decided that it would be a good idea to have a common interest with a close friend in the area. He is an ex Yorkshire boy having emigrated with his parents in the 1950's and since getting into the racing pigeon game he has been fascinated by the long distance races and in particular the Alice Springs races. Consequently Alice Springs racing has been his racing focus for most of the 20 years he has been in racing pigeons.



Mark & Charlie Carter

His career highlight is winning Alice Springs in 2008 with SA06 12600 - a small BBPH.



SA06 12699 BBPH

The sire SA04 08443, the first to return on the Friday following release from the 2006 Alice Springs race when no birds returned in race time. He is a breeding mix of Charlie Carter and Brian Dawson. Charlie is a now well retired 82 year old who flew pigeons in the UK and from the Southern Districts of Adelaide. In 1992 on a return trip to the UK, he purchased one pair of Busschaerts, and one pair of 'distance birds' from the loft manager of Louella Pigeon World, Mr Dave Wilken. These were imported into Australia on his return. The best of the Charlie Carter birds came to Mark Rothwell.

The dam is a ten year old unrun Charlie Carter hen. She was destined to become a stock hen for a young lad just starting in pigeons, however he lost interest, and she ended up with Mark Rothwell. SA06 12600 was the last pigeon rung in 2006 and never raced in 2007 because she 'went missing' early in the training period. She returned just prior to Christmas 2007, raised a pair of young and then started training with the 2008 youngsters. She generally returned with the early birds in all the tossing and racing. She raced Peterborough, Glendambo, The Twins, then Alice Springs. All Mark's pigeons are raced with long distance races in mind.

He breeds around 100 young from 16 pairs of birds and includes 15-20 from the previous year in the race team. The loft is based on birds from Charlie Carter with other birds from Peter Millay, Morry Kakoschke, Buxton & Snyders and Alan Brown. He only flies the N/NW route he is non competitive on all east line races and his work takes a lot of his spare time.

Race birds are handfed once a day early in the season and this generally moves to twice a day late in the season. Feed is from Yankalilla Fodder and is a commercial mix to which he adds maize and or peas as he sees fit. Turbosole is used as required. No other medicines or additives are used.

Breeding birds are hand fed twice a day on the Yankalilla commercial mix. The breeders are paired in August/September as soon as the weather begins to warm up.

Birds are only bred from Alice Springs returnees, or from birds with excellent connections to Alice Springs races. There is no deliberate inbreeding and performance is the base criteria for getting a breeding position.

Mark finds his greatest difficulty is getting the time to spend with the pigeons to get the best out of them. His other interests include work, family and the surf life saving club.

If it were possible he would like the SAHPA to provide cheaper racing for all flyers. He acknowledges the work done by the SAHPA and reckons it is a well run organisation.