

Amalgamated/Melville 8/80 - C Christensen 868.05, R Wilkins 859.43, J Daniels 856.25, G&L Azar 842.51.
Mandurah/Murray 5/37 - D&J Cunningham 808.98, R Hancock 804.89, Patterson & Sons 755.43.

CHARLES E POUBLON.

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DAVID W. STYLES WINS 1993 FED. OPEN RACE FROM SOUTHERN CROSS

As most Sandgropers know the east line is a line not for the faint hearted but for the very, very experienced flyer and the last time it was raced was in 1988 and again this year after a 4 year lapse.

By a ballot, members of the Fed. at the AGM two years ago voted on a motion to fly in rotation the three established lines i.e. The North East, ending at Newman (just north of the Tropic of Capricorn) - The East Line ending at Cocklebiddy (on the Eyre Highway into South Australia) and the North Line ending at Barradale (North of Carnarvon) or only the North and the North East lines. By majority vote the three line proposal was accepted.

Well, there must be many who have forgotten how to treat the pigeons for the East line and first Southern Cross which was nominated to be the Federation Open really showed how this line can be at certain times. An experienced flyer tells me a kind of smash race happens two to three times per year on this line. Whilst the distance of approx. 340km seem to deceive flyers in particular in W.A. However, for the benefit of our fanciers in the Eastern States who must be wondering what the fuss is about this race at this relative short distance, the rest of this article would, I hope, make interesting reading to all racing pigeon fanciers.

The results of this race and the usual preamble has already gone out to the pigeon press around the country, but I have taken the liberty to visit the winner's loft last Sunday. This was an absolutely glorious day, bright, full of sunshine and surprisingly very little wind. We have not seen such weather in a long time specially when one compares this with the day the Fed. Open was raced on June 26, 1993.

As usual, our race coordinator, in this case, our President G Buchanan, phone the Meteorological Institute for the latest on the weather prior to the birds being released and we were assured that it would be okay.

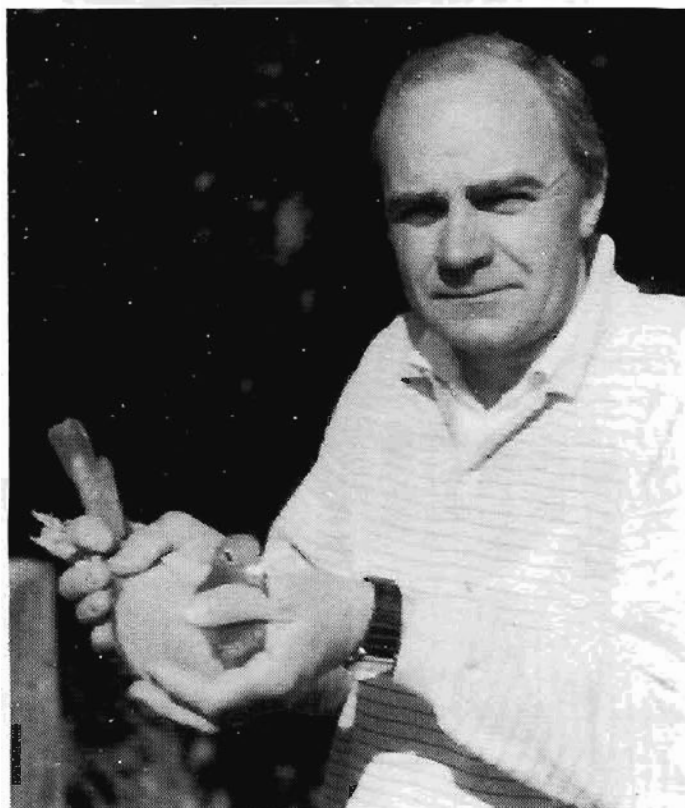
Our West Australian Newspapers reported on the weather, in part, as follows the following Monday June 28.

"Heavy showers caused minor flooding in a Kelmscott street and a spate of traffic accidents in Perth yesterday morning. The State Emergency service was called to Wakehurst Place, Kelmscott about 9am after reports that the street was flooded after a heavy shower. Ambulance and Police Officers were kept busy attending accidents caused by wet roads but no serious injuries were reported. The suburb of Jarrahdale had the highest recorded rainfall, 64mm in the metropolitan area in the 24 hours to 9am yesterday. Rolleston received 62mm, Jandakot 59mm and Gosnells 48mm in the same period. Perth Airport recorded 21.6mm and another 4mm from 9am to 3pm."

David, who flies with the Riverton Pigeon Racing Club came out victorious on this very bad day indeed and it must be a

very, very fit and a very determined pigeon who comes through such weather. David lives fairly close to his Club in the suburb of Lynwood, the back yard space where he keeps his pigeons is very tight indeed.

David, who hails from Essex in England, and all his family, still lives around these parts, being single shares in a nice and tidy home with a mate, and he works for SIGMA, the pharmaceutical Company, in the distribution area. He has flown as a Junior in Essex, England in the club Stamford-Le-Hope. He joined his present club in 1987, prior to that year he flew with Canning Districts Pigeon Club for some 8 years. When he started out at Canning Districts, the secretary Bob Powell suggested he send over some life rings to his mate in Victoria, Bob Anson, who bred some young birds for David, a strain of Hansennes, amongst which a Black hen, the grand-dam of his winner in the recent Fed. Open. This family of pigeons seem to enjoy hard races he has noticed, and whatever the weather, these are the family of birds who come through first.



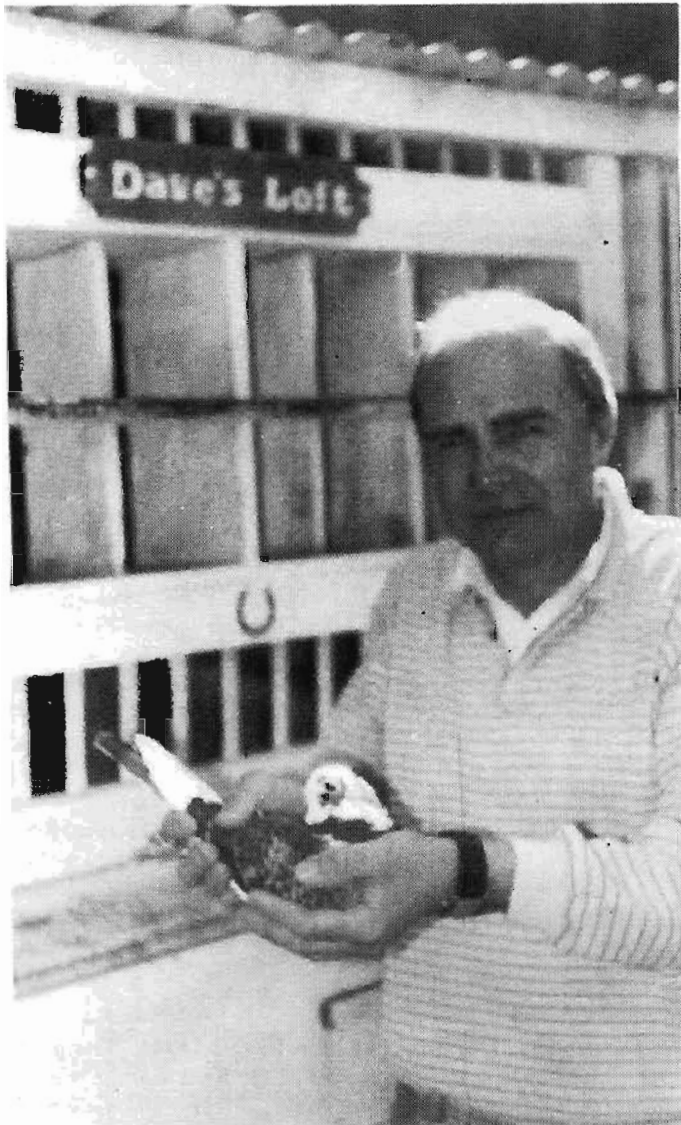
His winning bird, a Blue Bar Hen PRF92 13344, flew only 779.27mpm but to give you an idea of the hard work it was, is to note the following stats. There were 123 flyers who took part with 1283 pigeons being released. Only 28 flyers clocked in a pigeon and most only had one bird home on the night. A number of flyers had only a few pigeons home well after close of the race and a lot did not see a feather. It was roughly estimated that some 1000 birds were lost in this race. David received \$500.00 for winning and the trophy will be presented at the Federation windup at the close of the season.

He has built his current loft himself with a yankee trap and also has an open door trap, the latter methods he has found to be working very successfully in view of the space shortage. Due to work commitment he has not had too much spare time to spend with the birds so does only a few private tosses and thereafter relies on the Fed. truck tosses.

As his loft is only 24ft long and 8ft deep, in 4 compartments - two are occupied by the stock birds. He flies them lean and mean! That is, he sends away only a small team each week and finds that more birds means more work and more illnesses in

in the loft. He mainly linebreeds and has not introduced new blood into the loft for about 5 years. He races the birds to the full programme and does not save the hens for the long distance races. He confidently hopes to be able to complete the season with the balance of pigeons now in the loft.

In 1988 when he last flew the east line he had 5 birds left on the completion of that season and naturally these went into stock. He generally has about 10% old birds left to race the following year.



A simple approach is taken with the feed, mainly wheat and peas and smaller quantities of Kalo, Sunflower, Safflower and Maize. Feeds greens only sparingly, about once a month but they get picking stone as a mineral supplement.

Eyesign is not his speciality, he only checks that the eyes sparkle prior to races, clear throat, feels good in the hand, then he considers them ready to go. Of course a check on the flights is done also prior to races but he has not specific wing theory.

As for medication, he does not seem to need much of it but he treats the birds with epsom salts, worm treatment prior to the start of the season. No vitamins are administered.

Asked if he will consider trying flying the widowhood system, he thinks that the season are so different here compared to Europe he feels aside from more time to spend with the birds it will not be the ideal system in Australia. Hence the widowhood system is not for him.

Regards imported pigeons, he believes that the local birds are as good as any as really the imports still have to show their potential in an entirely different surrounding and weather conditions in Australia, he said.

Asked what would be the best way to promote the sport he said, "Assist any newcomer to the sport in every possible way so that he does not get discouraged when he does not get anywhere in the races."

We wish David more wins with the family of birds related to the original birds he got off Bob Anson, the originals have since passed on.

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