



# ● Don Briggs

**Pigeon racing is a real family affair for the Briggs family of Novar Gardens.**

And 48-year-old Don Briggs is patriarch of one of the top South Australian Pigeon Union teams.

He is ably supported by his wife, Betty, and 15-year-old son Greg.

Don races pigeons under the title of D. Briggs and Son, but he says he may change this to D. Briggs and family, as his wife plays such an important part in the success of their loft.

They are members of the Oaklands Club, and formerly members of Hyde Park Club in the South Australian Homing Pigeon Association.

Don has been racing pigeons since 1954, and he comes from a long line of pigeon racing ancestors.

His father Joe was keenly interested in the sport, as were his uncles, the team of Williams and Voysey.

They too flew in the SAHPA and were listed among the top flyers.

Early in his career Don joined with one of his uncles to form the Williams-Briggs partnership — and this proved highly successful.

Originally the Briggs family lived in the heart of the city and it was from that old loft that foundation birds for the present one came.

The Briggs family have lived at Novar Gardens for the past 11 years.

Main strain used by them is Barker-Logan-Jurion-Harrison, with outcrosses

Don, who does sub-contract work in the garage field, has also flown as a member of the Millswood (union) club in the past.

Highlight of the 1972 season for the Briggs family was first place in the first Oodnadatta race.

This was followed by five race wins in the western section of the union.

They flew a deadheat with a fellow flyer in one Marree event, a rare occurrence in the sport. The man with whom they tied, Don Foster, is secretary of the Oaklands.

Don is a firm believer in tight boundaries, saying that such give clubs an excellent ingredient for success.

Generosity in the game pays off too, he says

He has bought only one



pigeon in his life. The rest have been given him by friends.

Among these have been Ron Colmer, former Hyde Park flyer, Colin Copeland (Hyde Park), and Eric Hampton (Hyde Park).

Outcrosses to these birds have "clicked" and champions have been the result.

In training, Don finds his wife is the hardest worker.

When he is away from home she puts many hours work into looking after the birds, checking that they have enough feed and water, and are exercised correctly.

Don openly admits that his wife knows the pigeons better than he does.

Greg is valuable here too, doing his set assignments and chores each day.

The Briggs house is "out of position" in relation to the location of other lofts in the union.

However the Briggs family believe that they are better off in relation to their own club members' lofts.

This year they finished equal top with Kevin O'Connor in the overall points at Oaklands.

In order to keep champions coming the Briggs family breed about 80 youngsters each year.

They are looked like "children" as much as the special for just peas, green feed, and water.

All birds are given morning training when they are being prepared for long races.

GRAHAM BADGER