

BENZING TECHNOLOGY

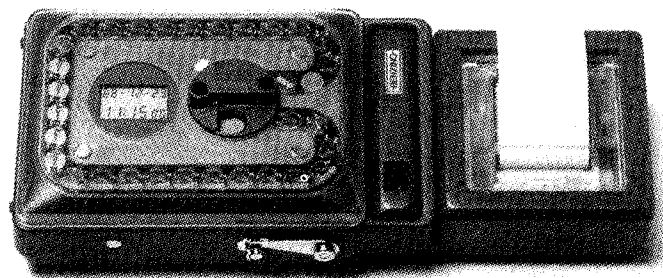
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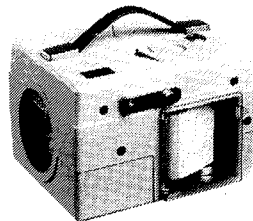
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THE ART OF BREEDING

PART FIVE

by Steve Van Breeman
Leeghwater Straat 68,
1221 BH Hilversum Holland

SPEED AND INTELLIGENCE, HALLMARKS OF A CHAMPION. HOW DO WE RECOGNIZE AND BREED?

This part in our series about breeding techniques deals with two very important characteristics; which are closely related to character; intelligence and speed.

Many a fancier tries to determine the degree of intelligence in a pigeon by observing its behaviour in the loft and the expression in its eyes. The shrewdness and ingenuity with which a pigeon is able to find independently its way back home, or with which it is able to adapt to changes in the weather, are the signs of intelligence. When you look a pigeon in the face, and in your minds eye you not only see the nose, but rather the whole (this is also referred to as an 'owl face') you are looking at a 'smart' pigeon. It takes a bit of training before you get the hang of this, but after a while you notice how much you are able to tell about your feathered friends, by just looking at their face and eyes.

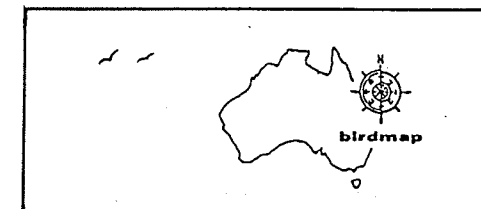
The genetist, Professor Alfons Anker, once wrote a whole article on the subject. In condensed form this is what he said: if you mix ten class pigeons with a flock of ordinary birds and you line them up, sticking their heads through a hole in the wall, you very likely will be able to pick out most of the ten. But these class pigeons have to have *real* class! As I remember, Jan Aerst thought this to be exaggerated. Still there is a lot of truth in that story and I believe in it because it does deal with fundamental aspects.

There's something in the facial expressions of a class pigeon, which

although unexplainable, is a definite character trade-mark; it is glowing with intelligence, fighting spirit, experience and mordant. It is next to impossible to try and explain the differences in expression. Every class pigeon represents his own unique qualities. In one bird, intelligence domineers in such a way that time after time he is able to find the shortest way home. In another pigeon something else domineers, like the amount of endurance, the willpower or the drive to fight on till the last breath to get back home. What I'm trying to explain here is that every class pigeon is in 'a class in itself', different from all others.

Continuing with this line of thought makes me realize that a high degree of intelligence and a large amount of perseverance is needed to turn an average pigeon into a class pigeon. Other qualities, such as muscles, body weight, vitality, etc. only promote the unfolding of a pigeon's class.

This last statement is an important one.

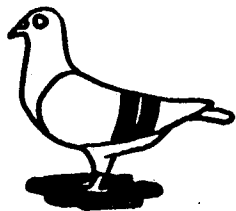


"birdmap" is the central office for
airline - distances and loft - locations

Vitality can be discovered by close observation. The quality of the muscles can be determined by careful touch. But mordant and intelligence can only be detected from the facial expression of a pigeon or by its achievements. To be able to read the facial expression is something I'm not able to teach you. But there are many text books around: *for example all the class pigeons themselves*. Whenever possible, take the opportunity to visit them and compare their facial expressions with those of ordinary pigeons. After a while you will get the hang of it.

SPEED

This quality presents itself in a wide range of variations; from a superfast pigeon way ahead of the rest, to the slow but consistent prize-winner. This quality is also transmitted intermediaire (see *previous article for meaning of this expression*). The Janssen-type of pigeon is a very famous line that Excels in speed. This quality is solidly grounded in the Janssen-type by inbreeding, and by qualitative intermediaire inheritance.



When cross-breeding with these types of pigeons the off-spring are always faster, or as fast, as the parents used for breeding Plenty of evidence to prove this can be found in the international pigeon press. When we cross-breed two slow types of birds, we get pigeons who eventually show signs of exceptional vitality or the ability of *being in shape* qualities, but they will never fly any faster.

In case we need to add speed to the overall condition of our flock, we have to purchase birds who are faster than our own. But don't forget to take into account that the speed of pigeons is also influenced by other factors such as the shape of the wings and the disposition of the bird. But alone, without the quality of speed, these will not suffice.

TALENT FOR A CERTAIN DISTANCE

This quality (which I almost forgot to mention although it certainly belongs to this chapter), is a typical representative again of group 2 and in many ways is tied to the quality of the muscles. The talent for a certain distance is a quality which is transmitted to the off-spring intermediaire and inbreeding does have some influence on it.

In the next article we will talk about the muscles of a pigeon. Muscles can tell us to what degree a pigeon is able to perform, which makes this quality a very interesting one.

To be continued

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41772 (Clwyd)

A nephew to SUPERMAN. He won 3 x 1st, 3 x 2nd, 2 x 3rd, 3 x 4th, club. 1st, 7th, 9th, 10th, Fed.

CHAMPION 66 (Clwyd)

Winner of 17 x 1sts.

Further information is available from Ian Daniel.

RANGEVIEW BREEDING AND RACING STUD.

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