

More Prizes This Year

Following its decision to pay more prizes this year, the SA Homing Pigeon Association recently adopted the system of percentages it will use to allocate prizemoney.

Sixty cash prizes will be paid in each of the big derby events and 45 in the other four middle-distance open races.

Last year 180 prizes were allocated to the same six fixtures, but this year 300 will be up for competition, an increase of 120.

The winner of each derby will receive 16 p.c. of the entire stake, exclusive of other prizemoney which can be won if the winning bird is entered in the various specials.

Here is the set of percentages which will be used to determine the derby prizelists:—

1. 16 p.c.; 2. 11; 3. 8; 4. 6½; 5. 5; 6. 4; 7. 3½; 8. 3; 9. 2½; 10. 2; 11-15, 1½; 16-20, 1¼; 21-30, 1; 31-40, ¾; 41-50, ½; 51-60, ¼ p.c.

The number of prizes in the specials will remain very much the same as in former years. Prizes will be paid to the first three birds only.

Here are the values of the various derby prizes calculated on a comparatively low stake of \$1,400:—

1. \$224; 2. \$154; 3. \$112; 4. \$87.50; 5. \$70; 6. \$56; 7. \$49; 8. \$42; 9. \$35; 10. \$28; 11-15, \$21 each; 16-20, \$17.50 each; 21-30, \$14 each; 31-40, \$10.50 each; 41-50, \$7 each; 51-60, \$3.50 each.

The percentage set which will be used for the four open events of between 300 and 400 miles is:—1. 18 p.c.; 2. 13; 3. 10; 4. 7½; 5. 6; 6. 5; 7. 4; 8. 3¼; 9. 2½; 10. 2; 11-15, 1½; 16-20, 1¼; 21-25, ¾; 26-35, ½; 36-45, ¼ p.c.

Based on a stake of \$800, the winner will receive \$142, the second prizewinner \$104, and the 45th prizewinner, the sum of \$4.

Prizemoney, including the specials, paid out in last year's Maryborough derby, amounted to more than \$2,200 and it is likely that last year's records will be beaten if an average season is experienced this year.

The association's decision to make more prizes available was not made in haste, for it was obvious that in order to do this, it would have to be done by cutting down the amounts of the big prizes at the top of the prizelist.

Many owners have spent a lifetime in the sport without ever winning a major SAHPA race and with a membership of almost 400 and a programme of 12 association races each year, the average owner could wait for 30 years before his turn to win a big event arrived.

There is no doubt that the big first prize has its attraction and that it adds interest to the competition, and that the sport may lose a little of its glamor by its reduction in value, but most owners are in

agreement with the decision to make a longer prize list.

While this year's winner of a big race will be a little poorer in comparison with last year's winner, many more owners will receive a little bit back for what it is costing them to remain in the game.

A lot has been said about the cost of pigeon racing and that it is much dearer than it used to be, but the fact is that it is no cheaper, and if the truth is known it is probably cheaper.

When the comparison of today's wages is made with those of thirty years ago, it is found that it cost owners in 1936 as much, if not more to race their pigeons as it does today.

The average owner bred his eighty or so birds each year as he does now.

Rings for his 80 derby birds at one cent each cost him \$8, and his two dozen plain rings at two cents each, another forty cents, and it cost him \$2 to join the association.

His costs for these essentials amounted to \$8.40—a week's wages in 1936.

Our 64 rings at \$1 a dozen, and the SAHPA membership fee of \$3, cost us \$10 last year.

The comparison of costs thirty years ago with those of the present shows an increase of less than 300 per cent—wages have more than trebled over the same period.

Perhaps pigeon racing appears to cost more these days because most of us are enjoying the luxuries of modern living, and we have not got enough cash left to spend on our pigeons after we have met the running costs of our motor cars and other "essentials" we have gathered together.

In any case, pigeon racing in Australia is not a means to a living, it is a sport and should be conducted accordingly.

Although the prizes at the bottom of this year's lists are worth a few dollars only, the owners who receive them will at least be that much richer than they were last year.

BASKET TOTALS

Associated club officials are advised to note the maximum number of birds per race basket which will be enforced this year.

Road transport baskets: Thursday and Friday night hampering, 45 hens and 40 cocks; Wednesday night, 40 hens and 35 cocks; rail baskets: Tuesday night, 16 hens and 14 cocks; Wednesday, 18 hens and 16 cocks.

It is also advised that all SAHPA membership fees, and loft plans for new members, must be in the hands of association secretary, D. C. Green, by the end of April.

To meet the demands of increasing membership 20 more road baskets will be purchased for use this year.

Pigeon Notes By Vin Blanden

Eight hampering centres have been fixed for the middle-distance races.

The Vitesse Club held its third series of races from Mt. Barker—a distance of 19 miles.

A total of 89 birds competed in the events. L. Falkai took the first three positions in the one prize in four birds entered with flying times of 40 min. 47 sec., 40.56 and 41 min. 0.4 sec., and L. Duits took the one prize special event in 41 min. 32 sec.

Notes For Dog-Lovers

Honors To