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PIGEON FANCIERS SOCIETY OF NSW INC

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SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2018



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THE PIGEON FANCIERS SOCIETY OF NSW SOUTH WALES INC.

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- PUBLICITY OFFICER:** LISA WEEKES
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RENEWAL – PENSIONER – Emailed - \$8.00 or Printed - \$23.00
RENEWAL SENIOR & COMBINED FAMILY RATE – Emailed \$15.00 or Printed - \$30.00

Please note that the renewal of membership falls due on the 1st July each year. Cheques and money orders must be made payable to the PFS of NSW Inc. and can be mailed to the Membership Co-Coordinator, Derek Garland, address as indicated above, New Membership enquires and membership forms can be obtained from the secretary, either show secretaries or from the PFS website – www.pfsnsw.com

CLUB MEETINGS: ARE CONDUCTED ON THE THIRD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM, VENUE BEING THE PIGEON & POULTRY PAVILION, FAIRFIELD SHOWGROUNDS, SMITHFIELD RD, FAIRFIELD. VISITORS ARE WELCOME.

CLUBS NEWSLETTER: THE EDITOR INVITES SUBMISSIONS AND ARTICLES FROM MEMBERS, INCLUDING REPORTS, ESPECIALLY FROM COUNTRY AREAS.

RINGS: PIGEON RINGS CAN BE PURCHASED FROM OUR RING SECRETARY FOR \$0.45 EACH, ONLY AVAILABLE IN LOTS OF TEN. (COST \$4.50 FOR TEN RINGS) PLUS \$5.00 POSTAGE.

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Pictured Cover: Blue Bar Fantail – 100th PFS Show



PRESIDENTS REPORT

John Hickman

Welcome to our first Newsletter for 2018. I hope you all had a successful breeding season with your birds. Unfortunately the Rota Virus is still a problem in many lofts around Sydney. Our committee has made the decision NOT to have Shows during 2018. We could have a vaccine for this disease shortly but the people involved in its production and distribution are basically arguing over the cost and how the profits are to be divided. They seem to have forgotten the interests of the fanciers in our hobby and only have self-interest and greed in mind. Walter Hitchell our secretary, has an article on the Rota Virus position in this newsletter.

Our hard working Ring Secretary and Membership Coordinator Derek Garland has had to relinquish this position. I would like to thank Derek for the tremendous work he has carried out in these dual positions for our club, he will be sorely missed by club members and our committee. It looks like I will be temporarily taking over this position until we can fill these vacancies.

Any members of ANPA in our club should be receiving a voting slip in the mail to elect 4 NSW State Representatives to the ANPA Committee. Please give your top two preferences to Walter Hitchell and Fred Frendo, who our members of our Club. Walter was already on the committee and standing for re-election and Fred is applying to be elected for the next 2 years. If these two members are elected, they will do a great job for ANPA and also for our Club.

Thank you to our old committee for their great work during 2017. I welcome our new committee members for 2018. We are working in difficult times for the hobby but I am sure we can progress the hobby. I must make an **URGENT APPEAL** to any concerned and interested members to apply for the three vacant positions in our Club. These positions are

1. Treasurer, 2. Ring Secretary and /or 3. Membership Co-ordinator. These last two positions were usually combined. They are a constant job as people regularly apply to become new members and require rings.

I sincerely hope some of our great members will step up to assist our committee by filling these vacant positions and help our Club survive into the future.



**WE NEED
YOUR HELP**

Three vacant positions in our Club
Treasurer, Ring Secretary and
Membership Co-ordinator.
for more information

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WHEN WILL THE ROTA VACCINE BE AVAILABLE?

Dr Mark White – Revised By Walter Hitchell

The question everyone is asking is “When will the Rota vaccine be available?” Everything is explained below but it is principally Dr Mark White of Treidlia Biovet (who is making the vaccine) who can answer this question most accurately. In correspondence with Mark dated the 24th January he advised that once the vaccine contracts have been signed and the final manufacturing details have been released by Latrobe University to him it will then take 3 to 4 months to have a vaccine available, if everything goes smoothly. He, however, goes on to explain that things may not run smoothly and there is the potential for delays. This means that although the exact time that a vaccine will be available is unclear, it will be at least 3 to 4 months from now. This means that the absolute earliest a Rota vaccine will be available is May or June and it certainly has the potential to be later.

Once the vaccine is available the birds will then need to be vaccinated and develop an immunity. A time line can be found at the end of this Update My personal involvement with vaccine availability finished with the completion of the (successful) vaccination trials at the end of August. The matter was then in the hands of the Australian National Racing Pigeon Board (ANRPB) , Latrobe University (LTU) and more recently a vaccine manufacturing company, Treidlia Biovet (owned and run by Dr Mark White). In early September we were on the cusp of going to commercial production and were well on track to have a vaccine available by late 2017 or at the latest March/ April 2018.

The urgent need for a vaccine was supported by the issuing of letters supporting the granting of an emergency permit by the APVMA by both the Victorian and NSW Chief Veterinary Officers. Unfortunately it was in September that matters were derailed. How did this happen? How have we found ourselves in this situation? How has the opportunity of having a vaccine almost certainly available before racing this year apparently just disappeared?

There are pages of reports on non progress from September.

At this time a vaccine had been thoroughly tested and the holdup got down to Latrobe not agreeing to release it due to commercial considerations.

To provide a solution – Dr Colin Walker – as a leading pigeon industry figure and industry representative has kindly stepped in to undertake the contract. The rota vaccine is urgently required. The science is done. The CVO’s are awaiting, the pigeon industry is waiting, the production house is poised, Dr Walker is ready to sign the contract, ANRPB is ready to pay the first payment (from donations from fanciers and federations) – so it’s LaTrobe now in my opinion that needs to respond here quickly. There is a duty of care on all of us now to deliver this vaccine. Many thousands of racing and fancy pigeons are at risk with the new breeding season upon us. “

Stephen was doing all he could to get the contract signed. Dan Grant repeatedly stated that it was the University’s preference to sign with a national Board rather than a private company. In his one phone call to me he explained how it would be “more prestigious” for LTU to sign with a national board rather than a private company.

What no one could have predicted, including Stephen, was how long it would take to negotiate the new contract. In effect we had “gone back to square one”. Stephen and Greg repeatedly contacted LTU as the weeks slipped by and were told by Dr Craig Patch (also an employee within the commercialization department) and Dan Grant that Rota was top priority. Mark White did not receive the draft of the new contract until 20 November. I personally wondered how long low priority matters would take. The contract outlined an initial payment of \$66,000 plus 50% of all profits. A more usual figure in such contracts is 5%. Mark made some recommendations and returned the contract to LTU promptly.

The new contract was not returned to Mark until 12 January 2018. Four months had been lost from September to January and with this 4 months lost (so far), the opportunity of having the vaccine available by early 2018 was gone. I will leave fanciers to imagine how I felt after all our hard work up until September. The returned contract was reviewed by Mark. LTU had agreed to most of Mark’s recommendation.

Further updates: Mark White and I have discussed the ongoing research into Rota virus and feel that some other institution apart from TU may now be better suited to do this work for us.

The impact of Dan's decision and the resultant delays mean that-

- 1) More pigeons will die.
- 2) More birds will be permanently damaged and have their subsequent race competitiveness compromised
- 3) It is now looking less likely that the vaccine will be available before racing this year with all the issues that that entails
- 4) No ANPA National show again this year?
- 5) People's income compromised - Loss of income for squab producers as abattoirs will not process birds from lofts that have previously had Rota
- 6) Pigeon sales by studs compromised
- 7) Club incomes compromised - ability to have squeaker sales and one-loft races compromised
- 8) The same issues that saw the Victoria Cup, Australia richest race with first prize of \$100,000 abandoned last year may apply again
- 9) Exporting birds- although fanciers have been asked not to export birds, there is nothing legally in place to stop them. Even though vaccinated birds may have the potential to still carry the virus, unvaccinated birds that are exported are more likely to be carrying the virus and therefore spread Rota to the world!!
- 10) Commercially and genetically valuable birds imported into Australia will not be able to be protected from Rota virus
- 11) Declining membership as members cannot race or show their birds
- 12) The altered royalty arrangements may result in the vaccine being more expensive for fanciers.

Fanciers' reactions to being told that it is a possibility that a vaccine will not be available before racing have ranged from being speechless to surprise and disappointment through to frustration, annoyance right through to anger.

Approximate Time Line: Just to clarify the timeline

1/ Mark advises vaccine available 3-4 months after 1/ the contracts are signed - first the contract between ANRPB and Mark has to be signed, then the contract between Mark and LTU has to be signed, then the money has to be paid and 2/ LTU releases the final manufacturing details – we don't even know if all this has been done. Let's say optimistically that all this takes just 4 weeks then we have 1 month plus 3 – 4 months

In an email dated the 24th January, Dr Mark White explains

“Hi Colin. When we get the materials we would have to do our own R&D to make sure it's all working smoothly in our hands. Hard to say how long that will take. Could be smooth, might not be. If smooth could have vaccine in 3-4 months.”

2/ In the vaccine trial we vaccinated the birds, waited a month and vaccinated again, waited another month and drew blood which showed the birds were immune. We had drawn blood about 4 weeks earlier which showed they were not yet immune. So this means it will take 2 months after the first vaccination (and also only after a second vaccination) before we can, with any certainty, say the birds are immune and therefore can safely mix with birds in race units from other lofts

This means it will be 3-4 months plus 1 month plus 2 months = 6-7 months before birds are immune if everything goes well. This is July or August. The VHA starts racing in June

Locally speaking - On a more local level 2 fanciers within 2 km of my loft have had Rota in their lofts in the last 2 weeks. One lost 60 of 156 birds. The other has had about half of his 80 stock birds die and deaths have just started in the racing loft. This fancier was 4th in his fed averages the last year he raced.



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AFRICAN OWLS

The African Owl is one of the most attractive breeds of pigeons, and perhaps the smallest. Believed to have originated in the East, it has been bred for centuries in the northern part of Africa, specifically in Tunis; hence, it has also been referred to as the "Tunisian Owl".

Pigeon writers had described this dainty bird as early as 1735 and W. B. Tegetmeier recounted the first introduction of African Owls into England around 1829. He wrote: "One great character of African Owls is its extreme diminutiveness a pair will weigh only 7 ounces each."

J.C. Lyell in 1887 described the Owl as the "smallest domestic pigeon known. It is short in neck, broad chested, short in flights and tails, the legs long enough to make the thighs visible in profile; the back rather hollow and the rump rather full."



And in 1939, Professor Carl Naether wrote about the African Owl's head as "the most valuable property of the Owl." In 1941, a foremost authority on pigeons, Wendell Levi wrote: "Today in profile the head of the African Owl, with the eye as the center, describes almost a complete circle. The beak has been so developed that it is a small continuation of the curve of the frontal. For the beak to protrude, "mousiness" or "mousy face" is most undesirable. From the front view, the head should be broad and it is important the cheeks be full, so as to give the head a round, ball-like appearance."



The Owl family, which includes the so-called English Owl, African Owl (also known as Foreign Owl) and Chinese Owl, is believed to be the progenitor of all short-faced Frill varieties. Many fanciers describe the African Owl as a miniature English Owl.

However on careful and analytical study, it is apparent that there are marked differences between the two; the most apparent being the size and the contrast in the head properties.

The profile of the Owl's head is the first thing that 9 out of 10 fanciers inspect when examining this breed. The word PROFILE, when used in connection with the African Owl, exclusively pertains to the outline of the head as viewed from the side, from the tip of the beak, over the top skull and onto the neck.

To determine the profile, the head should be held in such a position that only one of the two lobes of the wattle can be seen, i.e., exactly parallel to the viewer's eyes. The profile should form a complete semi-circle starting at the beak, over the frontal, to the top of the skull, then the back skull and terminates in the neck. There should be no breaks whatsoever; no indentations, corners,

bumps, lump, flatness. etc.

BEAK: There are two important factors to be considered when dealing with the beak. The African Owl's beak should have the correct structure and it should have the proper setting. The correct beak should be essentially short and stout, deep and wide transversely, though not so thick as to over-balance the rest of the headpiece. The lower mandible should possess

depth and stoutness in proportion to the upper one, and they must fit perfectly together. The line between the upper and lower mandibles should be straight and should, if carried forward, in imagination, pass through the centre of the eye.

This line should slant just enough from the eye to bring the end of the beak into such a position that it is a correct continuation, or commencement of the line of profile, for the curve of the upper mandible forms part of the profile of the head. It should have the appearance of being somewhat under the wattle and frontal. The surface of the beak itself must be of fine texture and free from dents or ridges of any kind.



and lacking the desired substance is an abomination and totally spoils the "owly expressions" of an otherwise good specimen.

The mandibles should fit correctly whether viewed from the front or the sides.



The two worst faults in beaks are thinness and bad curvature. Occasionally, one sees African Owls with very fine upper mandible while the lower mandible is approaching the standard strength. A very thin beak is often too long, thus becomes out of proportion to the size of the bird's head. An African's beak must neither be long nor thin and the upper and lower mandibles should be of equal thickness. A poor beak, that is thin or weak

When viewed in profile and the upper mandible stands out over the lower one, the bird is said to be over-shot, if the lower mandible stands out in front of the upper, it is under-shot. Both are nasty defects.

WATTLE: The wattle should be very small and heart-shaped when the head is viewed from the side. It should form part of the desired head-piece outline and lie close at either side of the frontal. The wattle which commences at the top of the upper mandible of the beak, should be as white as possible, smooth and free from any serrations, ridges or the like. It comes down along both sides of the beak until it reaches the corners of the gape or mouth.

One of the most prevalent defects in wattles is its being too large and when it extends too high up the frontal. What Owl fanciers should endeavour to obtain is not a large wattle which hides a



deficient frontal, but a very small wattle which acts as the terminus to a fuller, longer frontal. Even presuming that the frontal is fairly full, a wattle which 'creeps up' will cause a break at its (the wattle's) highest point. Such a break, of course, disturbs the general contour of the African Owl's head.

The lobes in some wattles are set away from the face instead of lying closely upon it; this fault also breaks the line of profile. Wattles of this type, especially when too large, are very undesirable. "Whole Wattles" are occasionally found in Africans. This is a wattle which is not divided centrally into two lobes, thus it is not the desired heart-shape. This is totally unacceptable. The wattle, if it is to be correct, should actually appear as part of the skull itself rather than an addition to it.

GAPE: The gape or the mouth does not in itself aid or interfere with the regularity of the sweep of the profile, but it is closely related to the beak. It should be as wide as possible. A wide gape usually accompanies a wide skull, a wide front full cheeks which are desirable in the African Owl.

FRONTAL: This is perhaps one important property of the Owl and one which should carry the most weight in the show pen.

The frontal is that portion of the bird's head which extends from the top of the skull downwards to the wattle and down either side of the face as far as the mouth-line, forming an unbroken perfect semi-circle when viewed in profile. The tiny leathers immediately behind the wattle should grow out of it, preventing a gap to form between the wattle and frontal meeting points.

A very prevalent fault is found when the frontal fails to form the perfect semi-circle caused by a sudden change in line of profile from the top skull

to the beak. Another fault, though not commonly seen, is the somewhat Turbit-head appearance whereby the line encompassing the frontal extends straight out from the top skull and then falls quickly to the wattle. The head should essentially be circular and not elongated.

When viewed straight on, the frontal must be round and full and almost as wide as the gape at that point where it meets the top skull.

TOP SKULL: The top skull is obviously that part immediately above the eye, also referred to as "crown". A good top skull is an essential qualification and where many fanciers often fail.

The crown or top, when viewed in profile, should be definitely high and round, and a perfect continuation of the upward frontal curve, resulting in a well balanced head. If the top skull has proper height, the eye will appear to be low-set in the skull rather than close up to the crown. If the top is low, the bird will appear to be oval-headed even though the crown is not actually flat, but curved. This, of course, is undesirable.

A well-rounded top skull, looking at it from every point of view, is a great embellishment to an African Owl.

BACK SKULL This is the final part of the head which assists in the formation of the African Owl's profile. It should extend far behind the eye in order that it (the eye)

becomes the central focal part of the head. The eye is, therefore, equidistant from the front and top to the backskull. Some back skulls extend too far before merging into the neck, but a more common fault is when the back skull drops off quickly, thus spoiling the contour and rendering the head unbalanced.

EYE: The bolting appearance of the

African eye is one characteristic which gives it the 'Owl' classification and gives it that "finish". An eye of the correct colour, large and bolting and centrally placed is most desirable. The four considerations in an eye are (1.) Placement; (2.) Size; (3.) Fullness and (4.) Colour. The eye should be located exactly at the center of the side of the head. Apparent incorrect placement of the eye is often caused by lack of space between the eye and the gape, low crown or shortness of back skull.

The eye of the African Owl should be large, alert and bold; the appearance of flatness of eye because it is embedded in the head can take away the charm from an otherwise excellent headpiece.

The feature of the eye is its colour; a brilliantly coloured, intelligent eye often has a happy knack of impressing the judge. The colour varies according to the variety and plumage of the bird. In Whites, the eye is bull or claret, in Blacks and Blues they are red; in Mealies, Reds and Silvers, it is reddish-gravel and in other colours, yellow gravel.

Gullet: This is one property often lacking in high-quality birds, and its absence detracts from the appearance of a good headpiece. A perfect gullet, when viewed from the side, should be wide, thin in front, full and well developed. It should extend from below the beak well down to the breast and terminates at the frill. The frill is an essential requirement of the breed and absence of it is a disqualification.

A perfect frill consists of a number of feathers with reverse formation, starting at the base of the gullet down to the breast in the form of a rose pattern. It should be as ample and well developed as possible.

COLOURS: The standard colours in the African Owl are: White, Black, Dun, Blue, Silver, Red, Yellow, Powdered Blues and Powdered Silvers. All colours should be clear, sound and even. In the Duns, three shades exist; the light, medium (or golden) and dark. Lustre in feather throughout the bird is most desirable. Bars of Blues should be black; Lavenders do not have bars. Checker pattern should be clear and even. To all the



above African Owl features, add correct size, body shape and the upright, bold, sprightly carriage and you have one of the most attractive breed of pigeons.

**WEALTHY
CHINESE PUSH
RACING
PIGEON
PRICES
SKYWARDS**

By Tom Hancock

Fanciers who pay nearly \$500,000 for top birds reflect exuberance among the rich

Tom Hancock in Yiwu, China FEBRUARY 9, 2018 16 An elite group of Chinese pigeon fanciers have pushed the prices of racing birds to record highs, reflecting a mood of exuberance among China's wealthy following a pick-up in economic growth and asset prices that has buoyed luxury spending. Xing Wei, a property tycoon, paid €400,000 (\$490,000) to purchase a Belgian pigeon called Nadine, in what is thought to be the largest deal on record.

He followed that with a Rmb3m (\$475,000) purchase of a champion bird called Extreme Speed Goddess at a Beijing auction in December.



Above: Pigeon fancier Chen Shiyi at his loft in Yiwu, eastern China

“When rewards are high, brave men must emerge,” said Chen Shiyi, the latter bird’s breeder, fresh from a visit to a loft at his cosmetics company’s headquarters in the eastern Chinese city of Yiwu, which houses hundreds of cooing pigeons. Higher property and equities prices helped the wealth of China’s 2,000 richest people increase nearly 13 per cent last year, according the country’s top rich list. The number of people known to possess assets above \$300m grew faster last year than any other in the previous decade, said Rupert Hoogewerf, the compiler of the list. After years of declines following the anti-corruption campaign launched by President Xi Jinping in 2012, sales of luxury goods in China grew 20 per cent last year, according to business consultancy Bain. Art auction sales in Shanghai saw 42 per cent growth last year, according to consultancy ArtTactic. Pigeon industry insiders say just half a dozen enthusiasts are responsible for largest sales. “Five years ago Rmb300-Rmb400 was a very high price for a pigeon,” said Zhang Wangbin, who runs a club in the central city of Wuhan whose auctions this winter saw several birds sell for 10 times that amount. “It’s the result of economic development,” he added.



Above: Pigeon prizes - Chen Shiyi with some of his trophies

Pigeons are not the only animals to catch the eye of China's business elite, with Japanese Koi carp prices also seeing a China effect. Kentaro Sakai, president of the Sakai Fish Farm, Japan's biggest Koi breeder, said a single fish could sell for up to ¥42m (\$380,000). "Chinese buyers are now most important for the market as they are the biggest buyers and they're willing to pay high prices," he added. Soaring pigeon prices are matched by bigger prizes for pigeon-racing competitions.

China's premier 500km "Iron Eagle" race series held by the Pioneer International club in Beijing boasts a prize pot of Rmb450m. The club takes a 30 per cent commission on sales at its annual auction as membership fees.

"People have money but have nothing else to do," said Su Quanlin, club president. "Most [club members] liked pigeons when they were young.

Now they have time and money so they've

picked up the hobby again." The tournaments are often venues for gambling, illegal in mainland China, and winnings are often untaxed, according to industry insiders. "Tax and gambling will be a problem sooner or later. It's a grey zone," said one Beijing-based pigeon breeder. Even Mr Chen cannot compete with the top-tier enthusiasts. "I didn't want to part with the pigeon, but couldn't afford to bid that much," he said. Mr Chen, whose bird scooped the Iron Eagle trophy this year — reaching speeds above 80km per hour — said he earned more than Rmb10m in prize money and proceeds from Pioneer's auction and insisted the high figures were justified by his birds' pedigree. "The pigeons I raise here are descended from national champions in Europe," he added. "In the end, what is Rmb10m compared with the cost of a house?"

POUTERS AT THE 4th AL NAWADER GOLD SHOW IN OMAN

By Scott Sharp, Scotland



Above: Judges and guests leaving for the show. (Scott is the tall man in the middle)

March was pretty mild in our part of Scotland this year, but on the morning of the 23rd when we left for the airport at 2.30 am it was minus 3°C! When we arrived in Muscat at 11 pm it was 25°C.

Once again I was invited by Dr Issa Sabeel Al Bulushi to judge the Reversewing Croppers and Pomeranian Pouters at the Gold Show in Oman. We were met at the airport by Jabr Alrawahi, who was the cheeriest person we've met for ages! He kept us laughing all the way to the Gulf College, where we met Issa. Around 2am Jabr drove us to Dr Issa's beautiful farm, where we were to stay for the 5 days in Oman. The next morning Peter Harvey from Australia arrived and joined us at the farm. Peter was to judge the Oriental Frills.

This is one of the best-run pigeon clubs I have attended. They have committees for the general organising, security, receiving (collecting at airport), food, final ceremony, judges, receiving birds, media and veterinary team. Each committee have their own jobs to do and are in constant contact with each other by phone and everything runs like clockwork.

This is the third time I have judged the Gold Show and I have seen a great improvement in the birds each year. The breeders take heed to what you say and listen to your advice. The show was once again held in the Indoor Sports Hall of the Gulf College, a great venue.

I started with the Reversewings. They had all the colours entered.

Unfortunately, a few very nice birds were knocked back because they were not quite finished the moult. The weather in Oman had been a bit indifferent for a few weeks before the show.

But there were some outstanding birds in Red, Yellow and Black especially. I picked a Red cock belonging to Said Al-wadhahi as the best. It was in lovely condition, great colour, perfect station and had lovely markings and good muffs.

Second was a Yellow hen belonging to Faisal Al-Hesani, again a lovely bird in top condition.

Third went to Khalid Al-Oufi with a Black cock.

All three of these birds were of a very high standard and their owners should be very proud. After stopping for lunch I started with the Pomeranian Pouters. Again, there were some outstanding birds. The Omani breeders really like their big Pouters! I judged the Blue Selves first, then all the rest were put together, which included Whites, Blue Pies, Black Selves, Chequers and a couple of Reds. Perhaps another year they could split the classes into Whites, Blue/Blue Pied, Blacks and Chequers, depending on the entry.



Above: Black Pomeranian Pouter and Champion Reversewing Cropper, Said Alwadhahi

For the best in the adult classes I went for an outstanding White hen belonging to Imad Al-Abri. She was a huge bird, good condition, very nice station and good muffs and she displayed for me the whole time she was in the judging cages. A credit to Imad. In these classes there were some fantastic Black Selves and Chequers. Huge birds with lovely globes. A few were knocked back as they were either carrying lice or had pin holes, but not many, I might add. On the whole, the condition of the birds I judged were very clean. A few also were knocked back with broken muffs, but overall, I was very impressed with the adult classes.



Left: Champion Pomeranian Pouter Young Hen, Mabarak Alamri.

In the young classes, where the winner would win the Gold Coin (hence the name Gold Show), there were also some fantastic birds. Considering they were young birds, some were huge. The one bird that took my eye early on was a Blue Chequer hen which had the best muffs of any Pom in the show. Very long and most importantly, very thick, wrapping around perfectly. A White also was very close, but was just a little moulted in the globe. After a long

deliberation, I went for the Chequer hen belonging to Mubarak Al-Amri. A really fantastic bird which the owner should be very proud of.

This year the class winners were awarded beautiful medals for first, second and third places, which were presented at the show. Then the best three birds overall in each breed were awarded shields at the presentation ceremony in the evening. And of course, the winning young bird in each section which qualified won the gold coin.

At this time I would like to thank Ibrahim Al-Bandari, my steward, who did a fantastic job of so many breeds. We worked very well together. Another thing that has always impressed me with this club is the great atmosphere and how everyone is so happy, whether they win or lose.

The following day we were back at the College where I was asked to give a talk on judging and Peter discussed the standard of the Oriental Frill.

Others gave talks on genetics and the origin of the Oriental Frills It was a good day and hopefully the

members who attended will have learned a lot.



Above: Medals given to class winners. And Champion German Beauty Homer of Dr Issa Sabeel.



Best Old Pomeranian Pouter, Imad Alabri. & Brown Norwich, Hen at Dr Issa Sabeel's farm.

On the Sunday, the Organising Committee had arranged a trip for the judges and others to Nizwa, the ancient capital of Oman. We had a lovely meal, then visited the old Fort and then spent some time at the souk. A very enjoyable trip. In the evening, back at Dr Issa's farm, we had another big meal of goat and all the trimmings. You never go hungry when you are over in these countries!

On Monday before taking us back to the airport, Issa drove us around Muscat and then went to visit the Wadi Daygah Dam. This was very spectacular and as I've found on my previous trips to Oman, immaculately presented.

Peter and some of the other Gulf judges were leaving around 7 pm. As we were not leaving until 11.30 we had another meal with Issa before going home to meet his lovely wife and family. Ahmed took us back to the airport and another fantastic trip to Oman was over. My wife, Donney, and I would like to thank Dr Issa Sabeel for being such a fantastic host and inviting us out to Oman again, and also all the members of the Al Nawader Club who always make us so welcome.



Some Champions
from 2017 - Italian
National Show



More updates in world
of pigeons in the next
Issue....