



## Ace Pigeon Fancier Q&A Series

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# The PIGEON RACING Formula

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Interview with,

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## **1. What qualities do you look for in a racing pigeon?**

High quality breeders are essential in today's sport. I select well bred pigeons from high performance families. Strong bodied well structured breeders with strong immune systems are a must. I find similar characteristics common among champion breeders. I select for these traits.

## **2. What in your opinion is the most important aspect or quality of a champion loft?**

Many things must come together in order for a loft to be successful. It's like a house of cards. One fault will cause the undesired result. Good pigeons, a well structured loft for it's climate and environment and a sound management program need be put together in order for a loft to be successful.

## **3. How do you section your loft?**

My breeders are separated by sex until the breeding season. The flying loft also has separate sections to separate the sexes when desired. It's best to also separate the 1st round of youngsters from the other rounds until they can all fend for themselves. This keeps the stress level down and allows the youngest pigeons to develop nicely.

## **4. How do you select birds when pairing?**

I like to line bred pigeons. I believe too closely bred pigeons can be weak in both health and strength. Performance is always at the front of my decision making. I like to breed from pigeons who have many multiple winners in their pedigree.

## **5. What is the best breeding strategy in your opinion? and why?**

Selecting a tough performance family proven to perform on the course you want your pigeons to compete on. It's all about horses for courses. Not all racing pigeons can win on any course. It's best to start with what works and then add either speed or endurance to the bloodline to get the desired effect.

## **6. How do you select birds for breeding?**

I have been fortunate to have handled some of the worlds top racers. Some of these pigeons go on to produce generations of winners. I find that these few special pigeons have some very similar and definite characteristics. I try to select the pigeons that show these characteristics and pair them to their counter parts using a line breeding program. It takes many hours of searching, handling and studying pigeons to select the birds I prefer to breed from.

## **7. How many young birds do you breed each season?**

I breed three rounds of youngsters each year as of late. The first two rounds are for competition. The third round of late hatches are for breeding purposes.

## **8. What racing system do you use most?**

The young birds are flown under the light system.  
Old birds widowhood or natural.

## **9. How do you train your birds?**

The birds are trained out to 125 miles before the start of their season. Shorter tosses are done on a weekly basis to maintain their condition.

## **10. Do you have any feeding and nutrition tips?**

I prefer to feed the racing team generously using the highest quality grains available.

## **11. How do you get your birds ready before a race?**

I use a good health and training program making sure the birds are in top physical condition.

## **12. Do you have any tips for pigeon health?**

Healthy youngsters are bred from healthy breeders. Your breeders must be in top condition and have strong immune systems themselves in order to produce competitive youngsters. Select breeders that always look sharp year round. These pigeons have the best chance to produce good racers. During the racing season, there are many products on the market to help maintain the health of your race team. It's best to use a Veterinarian to diagnose your pigeons before medicating.

### **13. What do you like to race more, cocks or hens? and why?**

I prefer to race young bird hens. On the average, with out the chance of loosing it's edge, the hen is easier to motivate to return to the loft quickly.

### **14. What do you think fanciers can do to promote the sport better?**

We need to introduce the sport to people and find a way to make it more affordable to get involved. We need volunteers to visit schools, girl and boy scouting troops and county and state fairs. Displays of small portable pigeon lofts and clean healthy racing pigeons at these functions are needed to attract interest in the sport. We need to show people who are oblivious to the sport how they can easily get involved. Donations of our time and some of our better pigeons is the only way to help ensure the continuation of the racing pigeon sport.

### **15. Where do you think the future of pigeon racing is headed?**

The sport has long been going in the wrong direction. There is too much enfases in flying young birds. Many lofts in the USA only participate in young bird flying to the determent of the sport. You can not truly test the ability of good racers by merely entering them into a short six month race season. We look to Europe to purchase their high quality performance pigeons willing to pay tens of thousands of dollars for their multiple winners and discard their possible equals because we are unwilling to test them again before they have reached one year of age. This makes absolutely no sense at all! Given the chance, many of our discarded youngsters would become multiple race winners in their own right. If only the futurity races were flown with yearlings during the old bird series, they would have a chance to show their worth and earn a nest box to be flown and tested for several years. In the USA, young bird races are not always won by great pigeons but rather by great systems. Take away the light and dark systems that many use

to claim the top prizes and let the quality of the pigeons create the champions. Push the futurity racing to the old bird season and let us enjoy housing the champion racers for several years to come. This is how I feel we need to perpetuate the sport.

## **16. What are the 5 most important things you think every fancier should know?**

Having good Pigeons, a good loft management program, a good health program, a sound game plan and good sportsmanship are 5 things that are essential in order to enjoy this sport.

## **17. Can you give us an idea of what a year in your loft would look like?**

In the course of the year, the breeding loft is combed through selecting only the fittest specimens for breeding. Fresh water, minerals and a proper diet is made available year round without the use of vitamins or medications to bolster health. The use of some natural ingredients and acids are the only remedies used in my breeding program.

## **18. What do you like best about pigeon racing?**

I find most rewarding the time spent admiring those pigeons who would be champion racers or breeders.

## **19. What are your views on eyesign?**

I house several pigeons who have been selected "Champions" at Local and National Shows including this years Best In Show Eye Sign Class 2008 White Plains National Show. They are not always my best breeders. If it were that easy to select pigeons that breed winners we would all have them. The most important tool a racing pigeon has is not visible to the untrained eye.

## **20. What in your opinion makes a successfull pigeon racer? (both in terms of the bird and the fancier)**



Dedication and a competitiveness is essential to be a successful pigeon racer. In the pigeon you need a bird that has the ability to win but more importantly wants to.

## **21. What are the most important elements to pigeon racing? (ex. breeding, training... etc)**

In order to be successful you need to understand what your dealing with. These are not machines but rather little creatures with the same perspective as any other living creature. You have to learn what they need and what they want. What makes them willing to travel great distances against all odds and conditions to return to their home. You need to learn how to prepare them for the type of challenge they are facing the coming event. When all things have gone according to plan with the breeding and training, we then need the good health, motivation and a bit of luck to capture the prize. This is not a game of science and it's never 100% but more a labor of love of the pigeons.

The  
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