

COCKS OR HENS: WHICH HAVE THE ADVANTAGE?

By Bob Prisco

We can all agree that the rules and regulations are strict and fair for pigeon racing in Taiwan. The rules are necessary so no fancier can have an unfair advantage before the race series starts. All fanciers start equal, and all have the same chance to win the large prizes and pools. However, this may not be true. Some fanciers may have a big advantage over others because they have selected to fly HENS in the race series instead of COCKS.

I decided to go to the last 9 issues of one of the Taiwan magazines and look at all the published results for the most current completed race series (RACE SERIES CAN BE AS MANY AS 7-9 RACES WITH FIRST RACE STARTING WITH AS MANY AS 10,000 BIRDS). There were 175 different completed race series published with pictures of the birds in the last 9 issues. In a total of 175 completed race series, of the top bird or champion bird 105 were hens and 70 cocks. Hens won 60% of the 175 series and cocks won 40%.

In a total of 175 series we studied the top 10 birds in each series (IMPORTANT NOT ALL SERIES HAD 10 BIRDS FINISH THE SERIES). There were 1,489 positions in the 175 race series: 865 were hens, 624 were cocks. Hens scored 58% and cocks 42%.

Looking at the top 2 positions in the 175 races series, there were 343 possible positions.

205 positions were won by hens (60%) and 138 positions were won by cocks (40%).

In the 175 series, we looked at the top 10 positions and found 99 times more hens were in the top 10 positions. 47 times there were more cocks in top 10 positions. 29 times it was equal. Therefore, in 57% of the completed series races more hens were in top positions. 27% of the time more cocks were in top positions. 16% of time it was equal: 5 cocks / 5 hens, or maybe the race had only 6 top positions (3 cocks / 3 hens).

In the 175 race series, there were 6 series that had only 1 bird finish the series – 3 were cocks and 3 were hens.

We looked at the top 2 birds in each series and found 62 times hens won the top 2 positions and 30 times cocks won the top 2 positions. We looked at the top 3 positions and found hens won the top 3 positions 39 times and cocks won the top 3 positions 12 times. Looking at top 4 positions, hens won the top 4 positions 25 times and cocks won top 4 positions 4 times. Looking at top 5 positions, hens won top 5 positions 16 times and cocks only 4 times.

From the above results, it sure seems that a fancier that sends HENS to the races has a BETTER CHANCE TO FINISH IN THE TOP POSITIONS.

How can we band hens instead of cocks? Is there a way to select which bird is the hen in the nest? Better yet, can we tell from the eggs which will be the cock and which will be the hen?

There have been several types of devices on the market that claim to be able to select the sex of YBS, and even fertile eggs. Many fanciers have used the "SEX INDICATOR", a sensitive pendulum device weighing less than an ounce, to determine the sex, not only of squeakers, but also of fertile eggs.

Based on our success, it is my belief that hens are more dependable in the longer, tough races. Also, they are able to fly week after week with more consistency. I also believe that hens are more important than cocks in the breeding loft. Many famous families of birds started with great hens as their foundation.

NOTE:

Taiwan racing is unique in that they only fly young bird races and for a bird to continue to race in the series it must score a minimum speed in the race it is competing in or it is eliminated from the next race and series. Many clubs in Taiwan fly as many as 3 YB. RACE SERIES A YEAR. The bands for each race are sold in a controlled period of time to insure all birds will be banded at the same time and be the same age for each race series. Depending on the club many birds must be banded at 4 days old, because 2 bands must be placed on the bird. One band is plastic and is extremely small. The other is metal and can be placed on bird at 7-8 days old. Both bands are numbered the same and the plastic band is cut off at the club when the bird is brought to club to insure it is correct age and banded at the proper time for this race series (usually at 30 days old).

Here in the USA, it has been our experience that a quality racing hen that has proven herself for several years on the race team at various distances and conditions usually becomes more valuable in the breeding loft and "Is worth her weight in gold". Hens of this quality that are able to produce with several different cocks are "FOUNDATION QUALITY". Thus, we look for birds with a "GOOD COMPASS" and "HOMING INSTINCT" in tough races especially in distance races for several years. If this bird also shows excellent health throughout its racing career - this is all the signs we need to believe that it will produce healthy young that will race competitively.

Looking at the final race, JAN.28, 2012 "SUN CITY MILLION DOLLAR PIGEON

RACE”, (PIGEONS SENT 3,479 at DISTANCE 359.15 MILES , WITH 2,308 BIRDS RETURNING AS OF 1/30 /12).

Listed for the “SUN CITY SUPERBOWL AUCTION” were the top 100 birds from this race to be auctioned. 73 BIRDS WERE LISTED AS HENS IN TOP 100 . The top 5 birds are listed as hens , with 8 of the top 10 listed as hens.

It has always been my opinion that fanciers that do not fly hens after their YB. SEASON are at a definite disadvantage in selecting top quality stock hens for their breeding loft.

WILL YOU SEND HENS or COCKS TO YOUR NEXT RACE SERIES or FUTURITY ?