

Rainier Gueco Springvale VIC

by Barry Trewin

THE MAN THAT LOVES HIS PIGEONS.



I had heard of a young guy in Dandenong who was flying quite successfully in Young Birds, so Duncan MacGregor arranged for us to visit. We were greeted by Rainier (Butch) Gueco and his family. We were welcomed into the house and had the chance to meet a true pigeon fancier in real terms of the word, very friendly and quite taken back as to the fact that we wished to discuss his recent success in pigeon racing. Considering the fact that he shifted from the Philippines to New Zealand and then seven years ago to Australia, we can only admire his achievements.

As kids, they had a few pigeons, but not racing pigeons. When in Australia his brother Winston spotted some birds flying, watched where they were landing and approached fancier, and from there they were referred to the Springvale Club.

In the beginning they had to learn for themselves and picked up ideas from being very observant, clever and intuitive. They also listened and were able to pick up some hints from conversations and the people around them. They were also lucky to get help at the start from the mad baker of Hallam, Carlos Vincente.

Winston is not flying at present so all the birds are kept at Butch's place. The loft thanks to Butch's handyman ability is neat and functional. A loft most fanciers would be proud to call their own. The master plan for the loft, was again a result of both Butch and Winston's observations as they visited various flyers

Butch has approx. 20 pairs of stock, which are made up from Van Loon's and Janssen's. He likes the imports! The pigeons in the stock loft were of top quality and he stated, "You need good birds to win". He breed 100 birds to race, which includes both young and old birds. This YB season, starting with forty birds he managed to gain good fed positions in five races including a second in the derby. The VHA is a very competitive association and to do this is remarkable. Butch finished the season with good numbers in the loft and although he normally races on the natural system, he is now trying some motivation methods on the pigeons so as to race the King Island races.

He said that although he has always enjoyed his pigeons if he wanted to improve he had to change his ways. He decided that he needed to try to beat his performances from previous years, so feeding and training was altered. He was always a hard trainer, but decided to still train hard but to assess the birds and only train when the birds needed it, but still likes to keep the birds working. He would toss each day and when the racing started he would drop back to every other day. He also began hopper feeding using Ian McKay's sprint mix. He would then give the birds only maize on Thursday to increase energy levels for the weekend event.

During racing Butch maintains the birds on a fortnightly program of Turbosole and Doxy-T to preserve their racing condition. I had the chance to handle his 2nd Fed YB Derby cock, which was in excellent condition still with good balance and feather. In the past few years he has been able to get into the Fed around 14 times, including a few 10 bird Feds. When asked what he considered as vital when beginning in pigeons he again stated, "You must get good pigeons"!

I must say that it was great to meet someone who not only loves his birds, but has great enthusiasm towards pigeon racing in general. If more people were like Butch

then pigeon racing as a whole would only go forward in leaps and bounds, and get back to being fun!

Duncan and myself thank Butch and his family for their hospitality and look forward to our next meeting.





