

## "A LITTLE COMMON SENSE"

by

Florante Lim Bunag

Pigeon racing is full of mysteries or rather miseries to those who can not manage to be on top of their game. Is it the birds? Will buying expensive and ridiculously priced birds do the trick? Will it just be another frustrating breeding season? Mishandling of the race birds even before the training season starts can be the culprit. The bad batch of feed can also be your great excuse, or is it the bad water in the well? There are a thousand more excuses that we can think about, but have you examined your self and asked what you did wrong that leads to your so called "agony of defeat".

Waiting for the empty sky that caused your "stiff neck" on race days is just a part of our beloved hobby. Try to sense your bird's greatest assets. The bar less blue hen likes to sit hard on the nest. Her second clutch just went down the drain. Can she be a contender for a hard 600 mile race ,sitting on 4-6 more eggs than her usual two eggs? The slate cock is a "vechter", a fighter. Can his fighting spirit be a glorifying motivation for him to come home like a rocket come a grueling race day? The red cock was going nuts in his nest box. He is pilling up nest materials one after the other. Will he be part of the widowhood team or semi -widowhood team? The gorgeous blue white flight tic hen in the perch, she just refuses to mate. Can this hen be an excellent candidate for celibacy?

For the birds to thrive well in a healthy environment. Is a 4 square foot space per bird really essential? Proper ventilation is the key to a healthy loft. The loft should be bone dry. Only healthy birds can fly on the top 1% of the race sheets. We will be too naive if we believe that a magic potion can make our birds win races. In this modern era of pigeon racing, we are using far too much antibiotics for our pigeons in return for a healthy bird. A well planned preventive medication and vaccination program is a must to keep our charges healthy and competitive. A good clean grit is essential for the bird's proper nutrition and a good vitamin for the birds should not be too expensive to be effective.

Eye sign is not a consistent grading tool but rather "HLREO" (high level laverne theory rapid eye orientation) is one of the better gauge of grading the bird's breeding and racing prowess. With the hundreds if not thousands of good birds that I have handled through the years. I can conclude that "HLREO" is one of their common denominator. Will most of them that has this trait become champions or good breeders? of course not, but your chances would be better.

It is all written up in the history of the pigeon sports that a "gift bird" in most cases propels a fancier to his greater glory is most likely to be inevitable. Is this another common sense of not spending a fortune in acquiring excellent birds? Are we not always guilty of such action of overcrowding our loft with too many birds , far more than it can hold. And spite of this, we still reached for our deep pockets to buy birds for some more exquisite bloodlines. The logic behind overcrowding my lofts with every well known strain or family of birds money can buy is that I do have a "gut feeling" that in return it would propel me to be the next "champion of my district". It is all "BS", as a great champion of the Netherlands (Ad Schaerlaekens) usually say, that most of us are too "naive" to understand.

Just by using a little common sense, we can propel our beloved feathered friends to be on top of the race sheets week after week, thus proving themselves in the toughest race course they ever flew. We are prone to commit the same mistakes again and again. Why? Simply because we lack the best secret of "champions", a little common sense.