

American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.

AU Racing Homer Show Standard 10/29/2019

AU Show Standards ~ Racing Homer Derived Breeds ~

(As developed for exhibition from competition stocks.)

This standard does not apply to show racers, show homers, saddled racing homers or the non-flown exhibition classes of those groups of pigeons.

The racing homer is not, as most of our breeds of pigeons are, a bird of pure lineage genetically speaking, nor is it one that has been bred consistently overall for size or shape, feather or crest, color or pattern. Being a performer of the highest caliber, the racing homer has been bred for one purpose—speed—almost to the exclusion of all other factors and traits. Homing and orienting ability (intelligence) are important requirements, too, but those traits seem to have followed the speed. In other words, fast birds seem to exhibit more intelligence.

That being so, it is completely understandable that in the crossing and inbreeding of the various sub-species of these birds to enhance their speed, certain physical characteristics do not develop consistently as, for example, the top notch in the turbits, or the huge wattles of the carrier families. These physical features then do not contribute to the specific genetic pool, and seem to take a back seat to the most desired qualities—again, the ability to orient, do it quickly, and fly straight toward home.

It would, however, be logical to assume that after so many years of breeding for homing instinct, speed and stamina, that a particular physical type would have evolved to dominate or be predominant, as it were, but that is not so. The racing homer is not a bird of one singular body type, and, again, it is completely understandable, given the wide variety of birds bred, and the isolation of their breedings, in many cases. Some members of the racing fraternity have been breeding from the same basic family of birds for over 50, 60, and even 70 years. Again, this isolation (in the genetic, reproductive sense) tends to guarantee diversity as to shape, size and overall comportment.

Show Standards ~ Racing Homer Breeds ~

A. Categories: Racing homers are shown in two defined categories of Flown and Unflown. The classes are often divided into record classes (birds with diplomas) and non-record classes (birds with no diplomas or awards). In practice, then, the record classes are generally considered to be for birds that have flown in competition and which may have achieved a position of distinction, as evidenced by a diploma or other certificate. An official diploma or other historical

evidence of the record may be required by the show secretary to qualify a bird or birds for entry into a record class. An entry sheet or race results sheet, in general, will qualify a bird for entry in any simple flown, non-record class. This proof may also be necessary to prevent cloistered birds from being fraudulently entered in flown/record and flown non-record classes. Propriety of entry and class will be solely at the Show Secretary's discretion.

Color and Feather Pattern Classes and Notes

B. Judging and Specific Points

1. Values. The number of points listed is the maximum for any bird that would acquire a total score of 100.

Birds that are sick, malformed, grossly parasite infested or obviously injured should be refused entry into exhibitions and will not be judged. During certain times of the year the show secretary and judges should take the natural progression of the moult and the general feather condition into consideration; however, any allowances or exceptions from the standard must be reasonable, justifiable and made across the board for the entire group or class of birds.*(see note in feather and feather quality.)

The specific criteria below allow a judge to make an objective point evaluation. Point values given are the maximum for any trait. Judges are reminded to be objective and not to inflate or overstate a quality and assign excessive points.

a. General Impressions and Overall Appearance (15 Points) — regardless of color or pattern class, flown or unflown background, the racing homer should immediately give one the impression of an athlete primed for competition. It should be alert and aware of its surroundings. The bird should exhibit health, vigor, strength, intelligence, a calm demeanor and confidence. Due primarily to their genetic diversity, racing homers tend to vary in length and size, however, the bird must be proportional, appear balanced, and the body must be smooth, with no apparent bulges or lumps, except as may be noted within this standard.

b. Skeleton, Keel and Vents (20 Points) — the entire skeleton should exhibit a feeling of balance, and its structure should be strong and firm, medium in weight, proportional to the pigeon, and strongly resistant to any pressure of the fingers at any point. There should be no obvious signs of irregularity, such as lumps and deposits (a common characteristic of older birds with arthritis). Bones of the wings and legs should be straight. The keel should be straight and strong, of medium depth and length, in proportion to the size of the pigeon. It should slope gradually upward from its deepest point to its rear extremity, forming a smooth, unbroken line to the touch along its length, with no suggestion of rising, to the extent that it narrows down or pinches the abdominal cavity. It should almost

form a union with the vent bones. The vent bones should be strong, resistant to the fingers when pressed in any direction. They should be close together at their lower points, and close to but not touching the end of the keel. Note: somewhat wider vent bones in a laying hen are not a disqualification.

c. **Overall shape and size** (15 Points) — the racing homer's size will vary from one family of birds to another; however, in general, the bird should be of medium size, with developed cocks weighing approximately 15-1/2 to 18-1/2 ounces, and developed hens weighing approximately 14 to 16-1/2 ounces. The body must be oval shaped, flattened on top, but smooth all over, and well filled out. It should not be too deep below, and should smoothly taper back from the front to the stern and tail.

d. **Breast and Overall Muscle** (10 Points) — the breast should be strong throughout, firm, and amply broad in proportion to the size of the pigeon, setting the legs well apart. It should be slightly curved, especially as it descends, without any useless weight or puffiness. It should be thickly and smoothly covered with fine, silky feathers. The muscles should exhibit a sense of strength, being firm and well developed, particularly those of the back and the chest.

e. **Feather and Quality** (10 Points) — In general, the entire feather surface should be even, smooth, with a high sheen throughout, except in white birds. It should overall be dense, thick, firm and soft. There should be an added, iridescent luster clearly visible along the length of the neck and the bird's hackles. The feather should cover evenly, with a feel of silkiness, free from roughness of any kind. "Fret marks" in record class birds are to be expected and their presence should not be counted against a bird. *Note: Please see the earlier note referring to moult anomalies and feather condition.

f. **Head, Face, Eye, Beak and Neck** (10 Points) — the head and neck should indicate strength. The head should be round and sit smoothly on the neck, with no visible bulges at the ears. The eye should attract with its fullness, richness, clarity and fiery glance of intelligence, and should be placed in the head with the center of the beakline pointing to the center of the eye. The pigmentation of both eyes should be of the same rich, clear color. The iris and pupil should be unbroken and very responsive to changes in light. The forehead should make a clean transition to the face in younger birds and hens, but will naturally take on a broken line as the bird ages and the cere develops, especially in cocks. The cere should be clean, white, almost powdery looking, and should not cover the mandible or be of such a size so as to obstruct straight on vision. The beak should be dark in dark colored birds and somewhat pink in lighter colored specimens, but always matching the color of the toenails, which must all be the same color. The beak and mandible should close smoothly together, with no sign of overgrowth, crossed tip or other obvious defect.

The tongue must not protrude. The neck should be proportional, of medium length and taper smoothly and roundly to the chest and back.

g. **Back and Rump** (10 Points) — the back should be broad, strong and smooth, the muscles readily felt with the thumbs, firm and resistant, with minimal pressure. It should be rather flat, forming one plane to the tail. The rump should be firm and smooth. Beginning broad, it should run well back, tapering into the tail. Both rump and back should be covered with fine, silky soft feathers, the feathers of the rump covering the quills of the tail tightly and running well back, both over and under the tail, providing a cushion both above and below.

h. **Tail** (5 Points) — the tail should be of medium length, extending approximately 3/4 of an inch to not more than 1 inch beyond the tips of the outermost primaries of the wings. The quills should be finely textured, strong and free from defects. At rest, the 12 (twelve) tail feathers should fold evenly and closely together, giving the impression of one feather.

i. **Wings** (5 Points) — the entire wing should be abundantly dressed with fine, silky smooth feathers, the surface of which appear and feel like a piece of fine velvet. When spread out by hand the wing should feel soft, as though the pigeon had laid it there, with no fear or tendency to “snap” it back. (Some birds may have as many as 11 or 12 flights, however, as long as each wing has the same number of flights it is not a disqualifying factor.) The wings should be proportional with the size of the pigeon, when together over the tail, the tips coming not more than one inch from the end of the bird’s tail. When it is spread, the primary and secondary flights should fit well together, forming an even overlap to make one unbroken, smooth airfoil, without a break between feathers. All quills should present a fine texture. The primaries and secondaries should be wide to medium wide in the web, clean and free from pinholes or other imperfections—either genetic or parasitic in origin. At the butt, the wing should be strong and muscular, thick, without exaggeration to any degree.

The point values assigned in the traits above can be assessed using the sample judging sheet on the following page of this standard.

Please direct any questions, suggestions or comments concerning the AU Show Standard or program to:

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American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.
AU Racing Homer Show Standard 11/11/2006
American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.

Racing Homer — Sample Judging Score Sheet

SHOW ASSISTANTS WILL ENTER BAND NUMBERS ON THE SCORE SHEET! TO AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF FAVORITISM, JUDGES MUST NOT READ BAND NUMBERS.

Club: _____ Show _____
Judge: _____ Date _____

BAND NO: _____ Class: OC OH YC YH

General Impression..... _____ (up to 15 Points)
Skeletal Structure, Keel and Vents... _____ (up to 20 Points)
Overall Shape and Size..... _____ (up to 15 Points)
Breast and Overall Muscle..... _____ (up to 10 Points)
Feathering..... _____ (up to 10 Points)
Head, Face, Beak, Eye and Neck..... _____ (up to 10 Points)
Back and Rump..... _____ (up to 10 Points)
Wing _____ (up to 5 Points)
Tail _____ (up to 5 Points)

Total Score for this entry _____

ONCE SCORED, THE JUDGE SHOULD HAND THE BIRD TO THE SHOW ASSISTANT TO ENTER THE BIRD'S BAND NUMBER OR OTHER IDENTIFICATION ON THE SCORE SHEET.