

Dubbo Poultry Club

Newsletter

April 2006

The bench night held after the February meeting was a great success. A huge thank you to Ernie and Wendy Coffee for making available some Silkies on what turned out to be a very hot evening. Keith Stewart very capably highlighted the points to look for this breed. As many of our members will not be able to attend this month's meeting (which clashes with the Sydney Royal) our next bench night will be in May, when we are going to almost the other extreme with the feature breed being Modern Game. In June we will be going back to our usual schedule and featuring Pekins

Following the withdrawal of the judging team from Queensland due to unforeseen circumstances we have been very fortunate to be able to

secure the services of some very experienced judges from Bega for this year's club show. Ray Ubrihien will be judging Softfeather Large, Derick Lewis Hardfeather Large, Wayne Galli Softfeather Bantam and Ian Hogan Hardfeather Bantam. Gary Phillips, of Gulgong, will be judging the Junior classes and Waterfowl.

Dubbo PC members have experienced considerable success at the smaller Agricultural Shows recently. Ernie and Wendy Coffee took out Reserve Champion Softfeather Bantam at Gulgong with a Black Pekin hen. This same bird was Champion Softfeather Bantam at Cumnock Show. Ernie and Wendy also took out Champion Softfeather Large at Cumnock with a Light Sussex pullet and were awarded Most Successful

Exhibitor. At the same show, Sandra Ferguson won Champion Waterfowl with a Muscovy Duck and Champion Hardfeather Large (and Champion Bird of Show) with an Indian Game hen while Keith Stewart won Champion Hardfeather Bantam with a Wheaten Modern Game pullet.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, please remember that Keith Stewart is trying to finalise the schedule for the club show as early as possible so it can be distributed at shows in the lead-up to ours. If you sponsored a sash or trophy in the past could you please let Keith know ASAP that you wish to continue, or discontinue, that award. Our extensive awards list last year certainly helped make the show the great success it was, and promotes the Dubbo PC as the premier club in the Central West.

Infectious Coryza

Infectious coryza is a specific respiratory disease in chickens that occurs most often in semi-mature or adult birds. Infection may result in a slow-spreading, chronic disease that affects only a small number of birds at one time, or in a rapid spreading disease with a higher percentage of birds being affected. The occurrence of infectious coryza is not widespread and the incidence is relatively low.

Transmission of the infection occurs by direct contact, airborne infection by dust or respiratory discharge droplets and drinking water contaminated by infective nasal exudate. Susceptible birds usually develop symptoms within three days

after exposure to the disease. Recovered individuals may appear normal but remain carriers of the organism for long periods.

The most characteristic symptoms of infectious coryza include swelling of the face around the eyes and wattles, nasal discharge and swollen sinuses. Watery discharge from the eyes frequently results in the lids adhering together. An adverse effect on egg production usually occurs in proportion to the number of affected birds.

Prevention is the only sound approach in controlling infectious coryza. It usually can be prevented by

management programs that eliminate contact between susceptible and infected birds. In order to prevent the infection, introduce started or adult birds only from sources known to be free of the infection. If infection occurs, complete depopulation followed by thorough cleaning/disinfecting is the only means for eliminating the disease.

A number of drugs are effective for treating the symptoms of the disease although the disease is never completely eliminated.

Sulfadimethoxine or sulfathiazole in the feed or water or erythromycin administered in the drinking water can reduce the symptoms of this disease.

Controlling Rodents

A dry summer and, now, the advent of cooler nights have meant that rat and mice numbers are increasing in poultry sheds. Left unchecked, numbers can increase dramatically.

Rats and mice are potential carriers of

disease; they burrow beneath floors and will gnaw wood, plastic equipment and electrical insulation making a general nuisance of themselves. The most serious problem however is the quantity of food they can consume or foul.

Control of rodents is not always easy. Poisoning is the most convenient control method although this is not always easy in poultry sheds due to the presence of poultry feed and because baits can be attractive to birds

Continued on page 2

Starting with Moderns

To breed and show these magnificent aristocratic birds is a joy to anyone who wishes to keep them. The Modern bantam, because of its quiet disposition, is easy to handle and train for the show bench.

Starting with Modern bantams should, like any breed, be achieved by purchasing the best stock available from a reputable breeder who has a well-established strain. Assuming you have purchased a trio of Moderns, the next step is to breed as many as you can. Now begins the art of good husbandry, as no bird can expect to attain its full potential without good sanitary penning conditions, good food, green feed and fresh water at all times. All birds should be treated for coccidiosis at eight weeks of age and wormed regularly. Remember, a healthy bird inside is able to ward off most other diseases.

As the young mature you need to cull out the rubbish. Start with the feet and cull any bird with duck feet, square shins, lack of spurs in males along with split wings and any deformity.

You should, by now, have thoroughly read the Standard and have a fair idea of what is required in a show fowl. Type is the most important point to look at first, as without type in any fowl you do not possess the breed.

A Modern should be tall and reachy, having a long neck and legs. However the body should be short, broad at the shoulders, tapering back to the tail which should be fine

and whippy, carried slightly higher than the body – not more than a 45 degree angle. The back must be flat right down to the tail.

To get the body of the Modern to be as required by the Standard is a real challenge, as reach in neck and legs does not compute to a short body. However, this is the beauty of Moderns and must be adhered to as closely as possible. The head should be long and narrow with large bright eyes and a long straight beak.

A common fault in Moderns is white in the lobe and although many breeders cut the white out of the lobe it is far more beneficial to the breed to eliminate it by good breeding.

The feather on a Modern should be short and hard, tight to the body. Watch out for high or wide hips as this destroys the shape of a Modern. Deep wings compliment the shape of the body and is a desired trait to be aimed for.

Unlike O.E.G. the colour in Moderns is most important and all show birds should be as close as possible to the colour described in the Standard.



The cockerels must be dubbed, removing the comb, wattles and lobes to leave the head smooth and tight. Any bird to be shown must be trained to stand still and tall when touched and show themselves to the best advantage. Before the show the bird should be washed, legs cleaned and a dressing applied to the heads and legs.

Hopefully your Moderns are now ready for the show cage and will give you hours of pleasure.

Keith Dubber
Armidale, NSW

Controlling rodents (can't from page 1)

as well as rodents. Baiting stations are best placed outside runs, or by establishing stations that allow access only by rodents.

A number of different baits, based on a range of different poisons, are available. It can be advisable to rotate the type of bait used as some mice or

rats might ignore one type of bait but find another attractive. Pulse baiting; feeding bait for a period, withdrawing it and then baiting again is also a good strategy.

No control method will result in 100% control – there will always be a residual population. It is, therefore,

advisable to secure feed stores and make it as difficult as possible for rodents to access feed in fowl runs.

Removing rubbish from around sheds will also minimise the chances of harbouring these pests.