

THE REVERSEWING POUTER, GUSTAV PRUETZ 1886
Photo from Guenter Wenzel, Grant Park, Ill.

The Reversewing Pouter

by GUENTER WENZEL, Grant Park, Ill.

The Reversewing Pouter with a history of some 150 years has made this most beautiful Pouter, the International Pouter of today!

G. Neumeister in his book, **Everything in Pigeon Breeding**, made mention in 1837 and called them muffed Gansel Pouter.

Please see accompanying picture by Gustave Pruetz 1866. It shows a Reversewing at left and a Gansel Pouter at right. The Reversewing then was called Saxon as most of its later development was achieved in that part of Europe. The Gansel, on the other hand, is now known as the Elster Kropfer. The Reversewing at that time, as you will note, was far off from what we have today. It had much shorter legs, short muffs and all came with the flesh colored beak.

Around 1870, more and more English Pouters were being offered at the pigeon markets, especially in the vicinities of Bohemia and this was sure to slow down the growth of the Reversewings. But at this same time, the Reversewing found many admirers and serious breeders in Saxony and continued a steady growth in its popularity and improvements of quality.

By today's standard, the four major show colors to be mastered to perfection are black, blue, red and yellow. The markings are to be most precise, giving the bird a dress of the softest look in feathering. Along with the taller legs, good hook feathers and good full set of muffs, combines powerness and beauty all in one bird and makes the Reversewing Pouter

one of the loveliest Pouter Pigeons that was ever born.

As a breeder, sitter and parent, I would have to rate them as No. 1 in the family of Pouters. Naturally because of their large size, we must furnish them with a larger loft, mating and nesting compartments, etc. You cannot expect 100 per cent success if your loft is set up for a small breed of pigeons. I have heard of fanciers that did have some good results in very small quarters, but would say that this is an exception of rule and does not do justice to this beautiful breed.

The Reversewing Pouter is no easier or nor harder to breed for a perfect marking or splendid wanted color. It may take some breeders many years before they can tell the difference between show and breeding stock. As we all know the four show colors are to be to perfection that is what gives this breed its true beauty. At times color crossings have been made, I have made these myself among some of the four colors.

Such a color crossing is only necessary if you find need of improvement in one of the other colors, may that be height of legs, length of muffs, more power in globe, etc.

Now your first offspring may come out an odd color, especially if you are crossing black to blue or blue to red. You may be delighted with the quality of the offspring (other than the offshot color) and that is good, as your reason for crossing was for bringing over the quality of Pouter performance. And now you have some good quality stock birds out of such color crossing and your birds are nearly halfway in what you set out to do.

Now when such cross matings are put back to whatever color you were trying to improve, the structure and performance, then you following generations may prove to produce you some perfect show birds again. That is in structure, performance, marking and most important good coloring.

You may breed and show whatever colors you like but you can't breed away from the Standard and expect this to be accepted by all. Any one that can't comply with the four show colors, should then go on breeding Racing Homers or such, as an alternative for more variety of color. In our show Reversewings we don't need more colors, but we need to pay much attention, so we don't lose the good coloring that we have, and many of them could use a lot of improve-

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ment (not different color but better color is the motto).

Always remember that a stock bird is always a stock bird and no matter how pretty it may look, this will only make it a much better stock bird. A show bird must be balanced in every respect within the Standard and if settle for anything less than striving toward perfection, then we no longer have the need of any Standard!

I have found the Reversewing to do best when kept to themselves and not mixed with other breeds. For their large size, they are a rather gentle breed but like all Pouters, the Reversewing too, is very flirty, so it is best to keep them with their own kind and prevent any cross matings that could occur. Before the breeding season, it is wise to clip their muffs and extra long toe nails. Also the soft fluff feathers of the vent may be clipped away for better contact. The first week or so there may be a little

scuffle over the nest boxes, but if only mated pairs are permitted in the loft and enough nesting arrangements have been made available for the amount of pairs, then they will soon settle down in perfect harmony and you are off to a good breeding season. A Pouter as large as the

Reversewing will take much longer to develop than a small breed of pigeon and it will take several months before you should do any culling out. Naturally your later clutches will take much longer to develop and you should give them ample time. Some that are not perfect but otherwise good in many respects, may serve you well as stock birds or perhaps some one else can use them to improve some quality that they may be lacking. The show birds are the ones that really make us proud of being a breeder of the most beautiful Pouter, the Reversewing!



LOFT INTERIOR

Breeding pens of the loft of D. Haight, Nampa, Idaho.

Reversewing Pouters

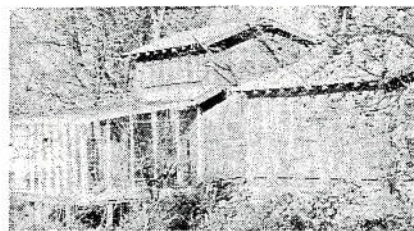
by D. HAIGHT, Nampa, Idaho

I received my first pair of pigeons as a boy of 10. They were white, small and quite dove-like. Having no loft, they lived and did quite well in the horse barn, where at times their number presented a problem. My father did not like messy harnesses.

It was not until after World War II when I was at Hidenhime, Germany, that I saw my first Reversewing Pouters. I could not believe that a pigeon could be so beautiful. I spent a great deal of time that summer with the finest old gentleman I have ever known. I was astounded at his love for these birds. We had quite a

language barrier that was somehow overcome and I learned a lot about real pigeon keeping. Due to the trying times he had only been able to keep a few pair and had raised hardly any young for several years.

Now home after the war, things had changed; but I never lost my desire to have birds like his. Then when I retired from the mining camps in Wyoming and bought a small acreage near Nampa, there was an old six room house that had to come down. Here was my chance to fulfill a lifelong dream, build a young bird loft on the style of the old horse barn, a



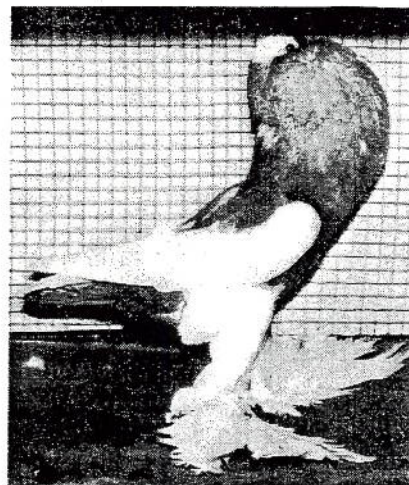
REVERSEWING POUTER LOFT

Young bird and breeding loft built on the style of an old horse barn.—Photo from D. Haight, Nampa, Idaho.

breeding loft like my friend in Hidenhime had. The young bird loft is 12' by 18' with two stories with lots of rafters and with a 10' by 18' fly pen. The breeding loft is 12' by 20' with 10 breeding pens 4 x 4, fronted with an 8 x 20 odd bird pen.

My old friend in Hidenhime would only use individual breeding pens—less fighting, less stress, better care of the youngsters and known parentage. He also stressed one breed, one color and never over 10 pair. If you see a better bird than you have, get him, if it takes your poorest six pair.

I have been very fortunate in obtaining my stock birds from some of our best known breeders. I think I have raised some nice young and wish to thank them one and all for their kindness. □



REVERSEWING POUTER

This young Reversewing Pouter cock was Best Yellow at the National Pouter and Cropper Club Lawn Show held August 31, 1980.—Bred by Guenter Wenzel, Grant Park, Ill.

