

Pair Time

Genetics or Not-That Is the Question!

By: Ross Hunt

Do you want to increase your percentage of winning or just win without a top breeding program? Both work but to be consistent in the trip to the Winners Circle, you must establish a breeding program with line breeding or creating a family of Giant Homers whichever way you prefer to describe it. For example, If you have a Champion Cock that is an outstanding example of the breed and you do not line breed, in a handful of generations he and his genetics will be gone. By line breeding father to daughter his genetics will carry on. Next would be father to granddaughter and can, if desired, carried even further. Here at H & H we have used this type of program with our Indigos for many years and the result is evident. Genetics is where its at!

Getting your Giant Homers ready for mating is a must, second only to your breeding program. A round of 4 in 1 powder for 7 days is always good. Another is turning on the lights o both cocks and hens November 1st. This is a month ahead of the usual masting time of December 1st in the Deep South but has seemed to help getting the birds ready. You can also put a couple of your most lively cocks in the hen for one hour two times a week. This really gets the hens stirred up.

When mating time finally rolls around, if you choose the way of line breeding the Record Books must be brought out. A reminder in line breeding you must be a ruthless culler so the birds you have available for pairing are all top enders. Even through using the line breeding program two things must be kept in mind when pairing. The body is almost half of the Standard points and the Giant Homer head is the hardest to get and the easiest to lose. After you have been into line breeding for at least a handful of years, all of your Giant Homers should have both of these qualities.

Have you put much thought into production(a number of pair a pair of birds will produce in a season)? Here at H&H we pair to produce winners period. Many years ago I had this conversation with long time Master Breeder Stu

Austin. After talking a while about production, Stu asked “Which would you want-a pair that produces ten mediocre birds or a pair that raises only one but that one is a Champion?” End of Conversation, enough said!

Does size matter> You bet it does. An overly large bird will never win and a smaller bird will not win, or will they? This is where it gets tricky. A small bird if it has a really good body and type can be as they say- Dynamite in a small package.

Years back, we had a Blue Bar hen that was pretty small. We mated her to a strong cock. He wasn't a big bird either. When we put them together told Ruthmary that this is a mistake. The pair raised a Futurity Champion which was a fair-sized Giant Homer. When using small cocks or hens, you can consider them “hen matings” meaning that the hens produced will acceptable size-wise, to your program and /or show team while the cocks may be medium or a little less in size.

Always remember, breed for “Good Giant Homers” plus genetics will more than likely lead to the winner's circle. As I already said-Genetics, Genetics, Genetics!

We hope that you raise that CHAMPION!!!

Ross Hunt

H & H Lofts