

Progress Toward Standard Revision

From AGHA Standard Committee Report

By 1982 the official standard of the American Giant Homer, adopted in 1958, had then been with us for a quarter of a century. The date 1958 seems a long way off to some of our new and younger members. However, the membership list of the AGHA still carries the names of a lot of faithful giant fanciers who were active in Giants at that time and remember the adoption of the NEW standard of that year. The statement was made at that time (by Amos Hodson I believe) that the new standard would be outmoded within five years. It was indeed. The rangy structure and stature, the lengthy legs and neck, and the thin head soon were under fire. Progressive breeders largely ignored their "ideal sketch" and moved on into the future toward a Giant more compact in body, shorter in leg and station, with a bit shorter and much stouter neck, showing more fullness and strength in head and muzzle, and more often than not reduced an inch in height and length. Most judges also gave only token attention to the 1958 "standard" as they too recognized the emerging ideal and showed great tolerance and respect for the modern Giant taking shape in the show cages before their eyes. Time marched on. So did Giant Homers.

From those earliest years, many fanciers urged a review and revision of the 1958 sketch. Proposals, committees, annual meetings, discussions, articles, and smoke-filled rooms came and went. Many recall the forward looking sketches of Gerald Hobbs and Walter Klann brought before the annual meetings in the 60's that caught the imagination of a great number of fanciers but eventually were laid to rest by a margin of a few ballots from an uncertain opposition. The 1958 sketch remained untouched but ignored. Time marched on. So did Giant Homers.

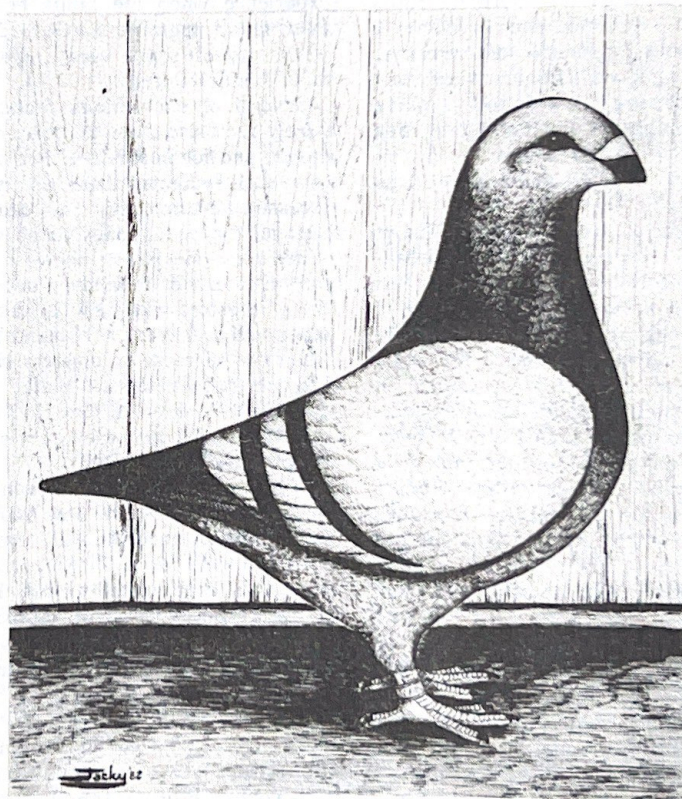
Year after year, through the decade of the 60's and through the 70's and into the 80's the need and desire and demand for an updated standard sketch continued to be expressed. The general style and structure of Giant Homers continued to develop and improve toward the modern Giant of Today. Established breeders tried to explain to beginners that the official standard was simply a cherished momento from an earlier day.

During the 1978-80 administration of President Maurice Durkee a

Standard Study Committee was formed and urged to work toward establishing a more authentic modern image for the American Giant Homer. Hap Beattie, Tom Barnhart and Sam Peavey served with Maurice on that committee. When Hap took over as President during 1980-82, Sam Peavey was asked to head the committee and drive vigorously toward achieving a consensus on a revised written standard and standard sketch before the end of Hap Beattie's administration. Few will ever realize the hours of writing, re-writing, corresponding, phoning, sketching, re-sketching, Jacky revisions, hoping, support, opposition, glimmers of agreement, and dead ends of dis-

agreement.

Without the valuable aid of Diane Jacky's sketches to help us verbalize and visualize what we were looking for, we might still be carrying on our frustrating search for a consensus. A 1980 sketch was studied and approved by some, but was eventually tabled. A 1981 sketch was favored by a larger number but was tabled. It was a 1982 sketch presented at the Cedar Rapids Futurity that proved that "the third time is the charm." You can see a copy of the 1982 approved sketch on the cover of this Giant Homer Special. You may want to compare it with the copy of the 1958 Standard presented herewith. Many forward-looking Giant Homer breeders are already wondering how soon we will be asking for a further revision of our Standard sketch and what it will look like. Time marches on! □



1982 REVISION

In view of the various criticisms of the previous revisions, the discussion and work continued. At the general session of the Cedar Rapids Futurity, a fresh, new revision was presented. Some features pointed out were the emphasis on the fully developed "Homer head", the shorter and more powerful neck well merged with the body, the legs set to coincide with the side view, a bit shorter leg station to reduce the impression of rangy height seen in the 1981 revisions, the lifting of the flights to eliminate the hint of open back in the other sketches and a clear recognition of the 20 year trend toward the compact structure, the balanced profile and the refined lines of the ideal Giant Homer.