

THE BRUNNER POUTER

By Tim Burke

"The Brunner Pouter presents an elegant and pleasing appearance. It has a lively and vigorous temperament, characterized by much strutting, bowing, and hopping during courting. This courting play is performed by both cock and hen. An erect, upright posture, providing a long, narrow appearance is most desirable." (Encyclopedia of Pigeon Standards)



The brunner pouter is indeed an elegant and pleasing pouter. This wonderful little breed combines intense coloration, a huge variety of markings, a friendly temperament, vitality, and the ability to raise its own young! What more could anyone ask from a breed of pigeons? For me the answer is nothing!

Elegant is truly the best description of the good brunner. Finely boned, an upright stance and a perfectly round globe that gives the appearance of a golf ball all make this bird appear to be an artists masterpiece in porcelain. The brunner also comes in an amazing variety of colors and markings. Special emphasis must be placed on the richness of color in the brunners. Birds with poor color, while they may be useful in the breeding pen, have no place in the show pen. Blacks must have a green sheen, Reds must be a deep red with no bluish color in the tail, yellows must be a rich golden color, blues must have clear dark bars, and on we go. This rich color accents the elegance of this finely boned bird and is an integral part of the good show bird.

Brunners develop quickly physically and many will be blowing nice globes by 10 to 12 weeks. Often these young still have not matured enough to be able to handle the globe so patience must be exercised to not select too early. The same is true with color. Young cannot be selected on color until they have their adult plumage as the blacks will get darker and the blue may well disappear from the tails in the reds.

Slimness and fineness of bone are two very very important traits for a brunner to have. Thick birds, wide birds, and those that give the appearance of being able to carry heavy loads on their backs are not acceptable. These birds are an abomination and have absolutely no place in either the breeding loft or the show pen.

When reviewing the standard we must note that a total of 21 points are allocated for the throat (3 pts), neck (3 pts), and globe (15 pts). These three are all basically one unit which comprises over 1/5 of the total standard points for the bird. The throat should be fine and deeply bent to allow the globe to be perfectly round. The same is true for the neck which should be long and rounded in the back to help

accent the roundness of the crop. The juncture between the back and neck must be very distinct as this also helps to accent the round globe.

The globe must, I repeat must be ROUND AS A BALL. Not pear shaped, not oblong but ROUND AS A BALL. The globe must be set high with a very distinct juncture between the breast and the globe and the back and the globe.(i.e. the breast appears to curve in before the round as a ball globe springs from it).

Color and markings count for 15 points out of the 100 total. 15 points, 15%, still wonder why I said good color is so important? The brunner does come in an amazing array of colors and markings. Standard self colors include recessive red and yellow, white, black, blue, silver, mealy, and cream. Other selfs such as duns, browns, and khakis are also shown. Markings include solid colored birds with white bars, tigered grizzle (every other feather white with solid colored flights and tail), storks (white with colored tail, flights, head, and bib), gansel (magpied), and pied (pigmy marked).

A very important part of the modern brunner is the fineness of bone and long legs. In the past many of us, myself included, bred short squatty birds. We were fooled into believing that long fine boned legs would ultimately lead to problems and that frog legs would develop from this. Nothing is further from the truth. I have 8 year old fine boned, long legged hens that have legs as good as when they were yearlings. Slender fine boned legs do not mean that the bird has to crouch or that the "elbows" will become grossly bent. The legs should be long and the bird should be on its tiptoes appearing to "reach for the sky". When viewed from the side it is permissible to have a slight natural bend at the elbow (i.e. the knees should not be locked straight). When looking at the brunner from the front the legs should be close together, the standard states a "fingers width" Now I am sure that was meant to be a normal persons finger not a football players. A "fingers width" apart would be approximately 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch. The legs should be the same distance apart at the waist, down through the elbow, all the way to the feet. The upper legs on a good brunner is sparsely feathered- this adds to the impression of fineness of bone. (Young brunners just out of the nest often have bare thighs) However, bare inner thighs in the adult bird is a no- no. To emphasize the importance of good legs a total of 15 points out of 100 are allocated towards legs and feet.

The body (breast and back) is also worth a total of 15 points. 10 points for the breast and another 5 for the back. However the two really go together as it would be very difficult to have a bird with a narrow back and a wide breast! The body should be long and narrow, (remember slenderness is the key). The body should be very slender (narrow) especially between the shoulders where the wings (another 5 points) should be held high creating a hollow spot on the back between the shoulders. This hollowness accents both the round as a ball globe and the slender body(which of course accent the long fine boned legs!) If the wings are carried high and close together the flights will naturally cross, which is

exactly what the standard calls for. The flights should be well crossed over the base of the tail. Again, this crossing of the flights accents the slim body which accents the well, you get the picture.

Another important aspect of the good brunner is the shortness of tail. The tail (5 points) should only be slightly longer than the flights and should be carried off the floor. This allows the bird to maintain the desired upright posture which accents the slender body which accents the round as a ball globe which...(here we go again).

9 points for head beak and eye all describe refinement as a prominent feature. A small, narrow head with a fine beak and small smooth wattles all add to the overall picture of refinement.

The last 5 points in the standard are for feathers (condition), again this actually becomes worth more than 5 points as it is very difficult to fully assess a dirty bird with broken or missing feathers. This would destroy the look of slimness, etc. Birds must be in good condition to give the "porcelain work of art" look.

So, what do we assess when looking at a brunner. First overall impression. ALL THE PARTS MUST FIT TOGETHER. The overall impression should be of a slender, elegant, upright, fine boned, beautifully colored, active bird with a crop as round as a ball. Paints a pretty picture doesn't it? Believe me, it is even prettier when seen first hand!