

SAHPA Resurrects Long Distance Flying

By Tim Fawcett-SAHPA

Like most aussie pigeon flyers, ive always been an enthusiast of good long distance racing and being from the heartland of the distance race and having had some good successes over the years at the distance. I am proud to report that the SAHPA in conjunction with the Special Races Committee of the SAHPA have set about resurrecting long distance racing in SA which began last year 2009. The Special Races committee is lead by chairman and tireless worker for the SAHPA and all around good bloke Gavin Harris and his hard working team which I wont name all of them because I don't want to offend anyone is miss out! The Special races committee do a huge amount to keep long distance racing going in SA and also organise the annual SAHPA Sires Produce event which has seen the 1st prize of a new motor car and \$6000 cash in the past two yrs and also resurrected an event which had become what some what call a little tired...

The 2009 SAHPA Long distance championship which combined the four longest races in the SAHPA-Marla 1000 km, Nyngan 880 km, Cooberpedy 740 km and Cobar 730 km with the marathon Alice Springs 1320 km was won by Angle Vale fancier Greg Hamilton. Greg won with 124 points from a possible 150 a truly outstanding effort upon asking Greg for some information of the 5 results this is what he provided me with and breeding details of the birds with flying time.

6th SAHPA Coober Pedy 740klm BBH 27208 Van Loon **10hrs 25min**
8th SAHPA Cobar 770klm BCH 36357 Pryor-Goodger **15hrs 27min**
14th SAHPA Marla 945klm BCH 13530 Van Loon **16hrs 24min**
5th SAHPA Nyngan 880klm BCH 66 Pryor-Goodger **16hrs 33min**
3rd SAHPA LDC Alice Springs 1300klm RCH 519 Pryor-Goodger **20hrs 28min**

I also asked Greg what winning the SAHPA long distance Championship meant to him and this was his reply:

"I regard this award as one of the highest honours I've received in the pigeon racing sport. To score consistently over the 5 longest races means you must have real top pigeons in super form. I was also very proud to win the SAHPA long distance trophy for Nyngan and Marla in 2009 but the LDC award is something very special to me. The greatest feeling you can possibly experience comes when you receive congratulations and acknowledgment from long distance greats like Greg Kakoschke, Jim Marafiote and Lee Abbott. When you receive acknowledgement from these guys you know you've done something pretty special. All the hard work is well worth it for sure to have this feeling."

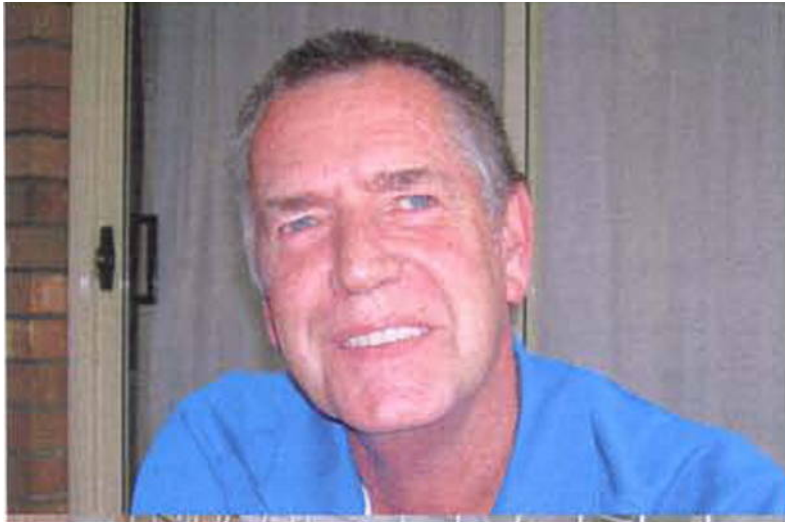
The runner up in the award was the ever consistent team of Buxton & Snyders with 75 points, I believe Dave Buxton is relocating to Sydney this year so if the Rev gets revved up in Sydney with pigeons you CCF boys better watch out as Dave has really flown some fantastic seasons in the past few yrs in Adelaide in what would be regarded as a difficult position. Third place in the Long distance championship was champion SAHPA fancier Jim Marafiote with 67 points. Jim is a continual model of consistency and one of our top fanciers within the SAHPA (Jim is listed below in the article)

Photo of Greg Hamilton (right) being presented the long distance championship trophy by Gavin Harris, Chairman of SAHPA SRC (left)



There is also a trophy awarded to acknowledge distance racing on the two longest SAHPA races for points being Marla and Nyngan which was won jointly by Wynn Vale fancier Hans Devries and Greg Hamilton, it was a very proud achievement for Hans who is a small team flyer who prides himself on gaining top results from the distance.

Hans Devries pictured below



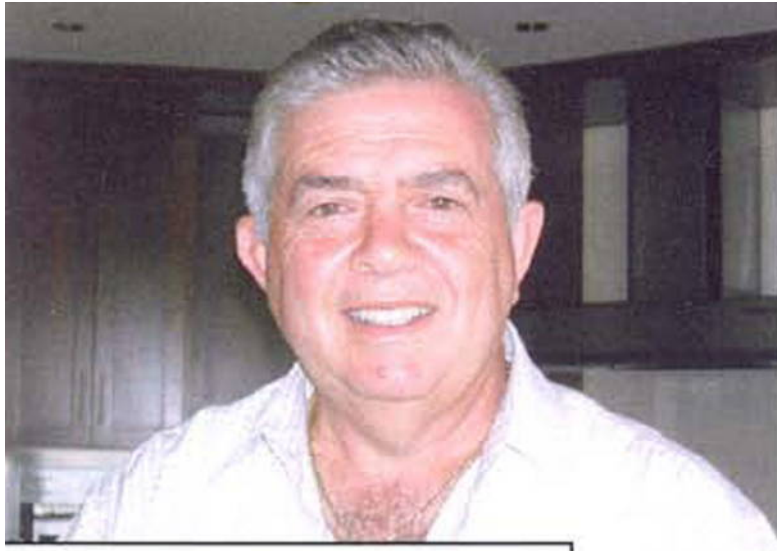
The SAHPA with the SRC are planning to revamp distance flying for the state of SA with plans for a National distance event and additional events other than Alice Springs. Alice Springs is the annual 1320 km event conducted by the SAHPA SRC, there are strict entry guidelines for the event which include being for old birds only and the \$30 entry fee almost certainly guarantees only the cream of the crop go to the race which generally sees a good overall result. The 2009 winners Rod & Judy Billing as reported in an earlier version of ARPJ were extremely proud to win this event as they also pride themselves on being competitive at the distance and have had many fine results over the yrs from long distance flying.

Rod & Judy Billing with winning Mealy Hen 1st SAHPA SRC Alice Springs 2009



The Marla event this year from 1000 km or 600 miles in the old school..was won by champion SAHPA fancier Jim Marafiote. A massive thrill for Jim and his first SAHPA win from his relatively new address. Jim's winning BCH SA 07 10837 was from Jims family of Goodger, Webber, Watson and Les Jeffries to whom taught Jim as a young bloke the finer points of pigeon racing. Jim has blended this fine family for many years and timed his hen around 9am on the second day in a fairly tough Marla event.

Pictured are Jim Marafiote and the winning bird



Jim and SA07 10837 BCH



The winners of the other long distance events were Ross Hocking from Cooberpedy 740 km with a good bird on the day. Dennis Shaw of Adelaide Race Loft won the Cobar event by over 2 hrs a fantastic achievement clocking in at first light, this hen also won the slowest winning velocity, the Vin Blanden memorial event and the SAHPA Bird of the year. Unfortunately I don't have photos of the Cooberpedy or Cobar winners, the Cobar hen was sold to Sydney shortly after her victory.

The Nyngan event was the final event of the year in the SAHPA Long distance championship and was also won comfortably by Charlie Forbes of Salisbury Club, Charlie's hen was a Janssen bred by Rod Carslake of Renmark so well done to both Charlie and Rod on a fantastic achievement.

Charlie is pictured holding BBPH 1st SAHPA Nyngan



I hope to be able to continue to report the ongoing growth and success of distance racing in SA which has seen over the years many of the "Eastern state" brigade seeking pigeons down from these champion birds to improve their own distance pigeons within their lofts and states.
Good luck to everyone in the 2010 season.
Cheers Tim

