

## **SOME BASIC ITEMS WHEN STARTING OUT RACING PIGEONS WITH THE VRPU**

As a beginner there are a few points that you should be aware of.

- On behalf of the Board we welcome you as a new member of one of Victoria's oldest racing pigeon organisation. The Board promotes the sport of pigeon racing and represents the interests of all its members. It is important that you get to know the members of the Management Committee and do not hesitate to ask them for any assistance you may need.
- You need to be a member of a Club affiliated with the VRPU and it is best if it is in your neighbourhood or closest to. Clubs are Broadmeadows, Craigieburn, , Northcote, Northern Suburbs, Pascoe Vale, Regent, Thomastown, Glenroy and Kilmore.
- An important place for information is our website [vrpu.com](http://vrpu.com).
- You need to fill out a membership form (available on the website) and apply to a Club to become a member.
- Following approval by the Club, your application will be forwarded to the VRPU committee for acceptance.
- If accepted, a joining fee is required of \$50 and a yearly membership of \$100
- You will need to buy pigeon life rings (\$1.00 per ring), once a member, through the Club via the VRPU. The number of rings will depend on the size of your loft and hence number of birds.
- Your loft needs to be inspected by your Club for approval and should be built in line with the "Code of Practice " which is available in the year book or on the VRPU website.  
It should be noted that flyers can race their team from another member's loft, up to a total of 4 flyers per premise which can be of great value if your property is confined and a race loft on your property is not practical.
- You will need to buy a pigeon racing clock either a mechanical (thimble/thimble less) type or Electronic. Your Club can advise. We recommend a second hand maybe best for starting.
- If you purchase an electronic system your pad set up/location needs to be approved by the VRPU.
- Breeding is usually anywhere from starting in July to finishing in February and racing commences the last week of June going through to the end of October. A race programme is on the VRPU website and in the VRPU annual report.
- It is important that your birds are vaccinated against PMV1 and Rota Virus and this should occur when the birds are at around 20+ days old and again one month later. Old birds are done once a year at the end of the breeding season. This vaccination for PMV1 is compulsory and a signed and witnessed form of your vaccination dates is to be submitted prior to the commencement of racing.
- Your young birds also need to be vaccinated against pigeon pox and this should be done once in the bird's lifetime at approximately 2 months prior to racing or earlier.
- Your birds should be separated from their parents at about 28 days old.
- Your birds should be trained to trap into the loft from about 30+ days old by having them caged over the trap during the day on the board or aviary.

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- At some 40 days old the birds will want to try and fly. One can now leave the cage off and watch the birds take short flips from here to there. Allow them the time to take flight when they want. Do not force them to take flight.
- When they have started flying be regular as to when you let them out and within time durations written in the Code of Practice.
- When all the rounds of birds are flying the loft, leave them to fully moult.
- You may lose birds off the roof or during training or during racing. Some will be reported and it is your responsibility, when notified of a lost pigeon that is yours, to collect or arrange to have collected. If this is not done fines apply. Similarly if you find a lost pigeon you must report the birds ring number to the ring secretary .Contact is on the website.
- Approximately 6 weeks before the first race tossing should commence from say 10km and this is built up gradually over the weeks to 60 – 80km before their first Race. Note that it is illegal to toss birds in the vicinity of airports.
- You will need to obtain baskets or training baskets prior to the commencement of training. It should be noted that it is illegal to carry basketted birds in the boot of a sedan car.
- In the early Races a flyer can send up to 50 birds (Sprint series) and after the first 6 races up to 30 birds (Distance series). **YOU DO NOT NEED TO SEND THIS MANY.**
- A new first year flyer has two choices of racing for the season, **Club Races**, which is strongly recommended for first year flyers, or **Federation Races**.
- **Club Races.**  
Each race that the flyer participates in for those wishing to race only **Club Races**, the weekly costs are;
  1. \$0.50c per pigeon
  2. \$10 convoyer and room clean fee.This entitles the first year flyer to receive results within their Club only, not Federation or entitlement to any Federation prize money.  
A first year flyer taking this option is not entitled to participate in the following Federation Classic races:
  1. H.Parkinson Produce
  2. Betty Clarke Memorial
  3. Geo Whaley
  4. S. Prior Cup – National
  5. P.Stoke Memorial
  6. Union Cup.
- **Federation Races.**  
On the first night of basketing costs are;
  1. \$350 transport fee.
  2. Birdage costs per bird as per Race schedule
  3. \$10 convoyer and room clean feeFor each week thereafter only items 1. and 2. apply.  
The above costs entitles the flyer to full Federation results, Section results, prize money for both (if successful), Club results and various Federation awards (if successful) for the seasons racing.
- On race day you will clock your first pigeon only and bring your clock to the clubrooms within 2 hours of clocking. This applies to Races up to 600km.If in

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the Kilmore Club you can produce at their nominated place within the same time frame.

- It is advisable that you read the VRPU Rules to gain a further understanding of the workings of the VRPU. These are on the VRPU website and in the VRPU annual year book.
- It is a good idea if you can to “team “ up with one of your Club flyers to question and learn about racing pigeons noting that the VRPU Committee is available should the need arise to assist.
- The VRPU is an incorporated company and is required to hold an Annual General Meeting where Operational and Financial reports are presented. All members are invited and encouraged to attend this meeting. The AGM provides an opportunity for members to raise any new business items and vote. Presentation of federation trophies is also made at the AGM.