

Selecting for Ideal

I just wanted to share some of my thoughts when it comes to selection based on ideal. As many of you know, I've bred the same family of birds (Zovich) since 1990. During this time I selected birds to my liking which in turn complimented my flying position and preference as far as the look. I might add the type and ideal basically selected itself through consistent flying. In other words, I noticed those that flew well had the same conformation. Because of this, I guess, it eventually became my ideal.

The type of Tippler I prefer is compact, medium to small build, round head, shorter beak and leg, wide chest, medium to shallow keel, tight feathering etc. Of course first and foremost, the birds must be able to fly and fly well in all conditions since the environment we deal with here in Ontario, Canada is varied and varied a lot. Here are a few photos to give you an idea of my ideal. The two hens on the left are half sisters and two cocks on the right are half brothers. By the way, as you can tell I do a lot of inbreeding with my birds.



This year I bred from a pair of birds that I received from my brother as he was leaving the sport. I took a handful of birds including a nice pair of blues that flew really well as young birds and were closely related. Both birds went 16:17 as young. They looked very similar to my family of birds. No surprise there as 90% of the initial birds he started with came from me. The other few he received from another fancier who imported Tipplers from the UK. This other fancier had more than just one strain, how many I am not entirely certain.

Here is the pair that I gladly took from my brother. Cock on the left and hen on the right. I especially like the hen. She is as close to my ideal as I have even though my brother bred her. – ideal described earlier in the article. The cock is just as well put together. So now you can understand why I really liked these two, especially as a pairing. Not only did they have the right look but they were also closely related; aunt and nephew. In addition, they were also proven in the air as young and this did not hurt their chances either.



So from this pairing I was expecting big things. Well they did deliver a nice little hen that was flying really well up until I pulled her out for just cause. She was by far the strongest

bird, without doubt. But, twice she failed to drop and went into the night.

What really did it for me was the fact that now she was affecting the other kit members and if I didn't pull her, chances are, she would spoil the entire kit. Sure enough next fly without the little culprit all came down prim and proper like they were supposed to. This is the young hen below....party girl that likes to spend her nights out. Now if she continued to fly and drop properly no doubt I would continue to fly her this year and next as an old bird. However, I would not breed from her as she is not my type, no pun intended, and she does have a slightly larger beak. Sometimes you may get a Tippler (good and bad) that you need to make a decision on. I pay close attention to what I let through to the breeding program and what I cull. There is no doubt my brother would have bred from her without hesitation and rightly so based on her flying prowess.

But when I look at her she is just not right, not my ideal. The beak is a little too long and not dropping to the lights is a big no, no. I'm sure she will make a good breeder for some other fancier as she is strong as a bull.



For this reason I am not a big fan of the word PURE as it pertains to a strain. I honestly feel once the bird leaves the loft of the creator, that strain cannot any longer be called pure. Why? Because the original breeder of that strain had a selection process that will never be duplicated by the countless others now holding his birds. He alone has this ideal and preference based on his bias and his flying position. How in the world can we possibly predict what and how he would continue to breed?

I understand genetically the makeup of a family remains somewhat the same...BUT...the genetic makeup can easily be altered from one breeder to another. Just look at my example above.

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