

Secretary
John Jeffery
6 Brierley Place
Eagle Vale 2558
Tel: 4628.9489
Mob: 0488 048 199



President
Vince Pedavoli

GENERAL MEETING: 6th June 2017.

The meeting opened at 8.00pm.

PRESENT: Vince Pedavoli President, John Jeffery Secretary, Allen Wonson Assistant Secretary, delegates and members as per attendance register.

APOLOGIES: Nil.

VALE: A minute silence was held in respect of the death of Terry Wood MTD Club.

MINUTES: The minutes of the General Meeting of the 1st May 2017 as tabled were received on a motion moved Wentworthville seconded by Smithfield. Carried.

BUSINESS ARISING: Nil.

Adoption of the minutes moved Seven Hills seconded by Parramatta. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

As per Agenda:

1. Various Correspondence from Geraldine Germany.
2. Request from SRPF – members locations.
3. Information from RSPCA re: Rota virus & racing.
4. Letter from McDonnell Schroeder – Rooty Hill Pigeon Club.
5. Letter from RH Freighters & Customs Brokers Pty Ltd – Arrival notice of the new unit.
6. Various information from Paul Gibbs re; 2018 Invictus Games.

Received on the meeting night:

1. Latest update on the Rota Virus from Colin Walker.
2. List of members birth dates from several Clubs.

Correspondence received moved Seven Hills seconded by Mt Druitt. Carried.

BUSINESS ARISING:

The President gave a brief outline of the latest update from Colin Walker. Printed below is the complete text of that update.

Update 6th June 2017

The Brisbane virus ---potential opportunities.

Following our investigations into the Brisbane loft discussed in the previous update it was arranged for some droppings from that loft and another nearby to be sent to Melbourne. These droppings were used to expose the birds in a single VHA loft to Rota virus. As outlined in the previous Update, in the lofts in Brisbane the pattern of disease was very different to what we had become familiar with in Melbourne. The birds had only been unwell for about 4 days, critically they had not developed a hepatitis and the virus had been cleared more quickly but the most outstanding difference was that the mortality rate had been very, very low. In one loft, with about 300 birds, one bird had died while in the other loft, that also contained about 300 birds, no birds had died. We were keen to investigate whether there was some modifying factor in Queensland that affected the disease or whether we might be dealing with a less pathogenic variant of Rota virus. The Brisbane droppings were placed in the water of the VHA loft for 2 days. Nothing happened for 6 days. Some birds started vomiting and developed diarrhoea on the seventh day. Over the next 5 days the virus rolled through the loft with about 10% of birds having diarrhoea or vomiting on any given day but essentially the birds remained well. The birds appetite remained about normal and each day the majority flew for about an hour. On the sixth day following the first symptoms there was no vomiting and the dropping appeared normal. Zero birds died. It appeared that the virus had behaved the same way in the Victorian loft as it had in Brisbane and that we were in fact dealing with a different type of Rota virus that caused a much less severe disease. The identification of this less pathogenic (disease causing) variant presents us with a unique opportunity.

Because of its genetic similarity to the severe form of Rota it is likely to confer cross immunity. Both viruses are G18 P's and are thought to differ in small sections of DNA not tested on the PCR test.

Over the last 2 weeks further cases of the virulent form of Rota have been diagnosed in Melbourne with the least affected loft losing over 40 birds from a loft of 200. Vaccine production is progressing well but with a booster being required the vaccine is now not likely to be available until later in the year. It is likely that the Brisbane Rota, because it is a less virulent form of the virus can be used as a type of "live vaccine" against the severe Melbourne strain of the virus.

Extensive testing was done on the original Brisbane loft (as outlined in the previous Update). This testing did not identify any other health problem in that loft apart from Rota. We are however sending droppings from the VHA loft for testing to AgriBio. We are keen to again confirm the presence of Rota in the recovered birds and also check that no other disease is present. These test results will be available towards the end of this week.

If these tests do indeed identify that no other disease is present other than Rota and because we know that this is a "weak" form of the virus samples of these dropping will be made available to fanciers.

In the past fanciers have tried to stimulate the development of immunity in their birds from Rota virus by taking droppings or birds from other fanciers whose birds had vomiting and diarrhoea and placing these in their own lofts. No testing was done to see if, in fact, the cause of the ill health was Rota. If it was Rota, it was acknowledged that it could be the nasty Melbourne strain and that there was the potential to have 25% of the birds or more die. Also no testing was done on the droppings to see if they contained other diseases. The result was that some fanciers who thought that they had exposed their birds to Rota had in fact not and were surprised when they later caught the disease "again". Some fanciers experienced high losses and at the time accepted this, having been advised that their birds could not catch the disease again and that there was no other long term way of protecting their birds. (Both known now not to be true). Some fanciers introduced other diseases, notably PMV, into their lofts along with Rota, having not vaccinated their birds following advice that the PMV vaccine was harmful. Basically it was a disaster

This week the plan is to wait for the Agribio results and if these are satisfactory, sachets of the dropping will be made available to fanciers. Fanciers will be advised to place the droppings in their birds water for 48 hours. In the VHA trial loft grit, pink minerals and bentonite clay based mineral blocks were freely available to the birds, Probac (a registered probiotic brand) was placed on the food when the dropping were introduced and Electrolyte P180 (a registered rehydration powder) was placed in the water when the vomiting and diarrhoea began.

The use of these droppings is most definitely not an alternative to vaccination. Vaccination provides a protective level of immunity for a known period of time in a predictable way and without making the pigeons unwell. Exposure to this low pathogenic variant is a temporary short term measure designed principally to stop the deaths and disease associated with the ongoing spread of the virulent Melbourne virus until the vaccine becomes available later in the year. Its use does however have the handy side benefit of allowing pigeons from different lofts to mix safely and therefore for racing to occur.

A good way of looking at its use is by comparing it with the pigeon pox vaccine. The pigeon pox vaccine is a live modified vaccine. The pigeons are given a mild dose of pigeon pox by the vaccine. Some birds become mildly unwell but virtually no birds die. These mild side effects are accepted because the result is that all the birds become immune to pigeon pox. The droppings that we are making available are free of other diseases and contain a low pathogenic Rota virus strain identified both through veterinary testing and also through monitoring in a number of lofts in Brisbane and in one loft in Melbourne and can be viewed similarly. It is not ideal but it is a satisfactory "stop-gap" measure aimed to prevent disease and deaths in the short term. I don't think that anyone could regard this as cruel where I know that many flyers regarded fanciers who deliberately put the nasty Melbourne virus into their lofts as just that!

I personally regard the identification of this variant as a bit of a life line. As one fancier mentioned to me, "If I didn't take advantage of this opportunity and subsequently lost a significant proportion of my birds to the Melbourne strain I would be very disappointed."

Western Australia

The PRF in Western Australia started racing 2 weeks ago. About 10 days later (last week) I was contacted by 4 fanciers who had young birds that had been to this race and had developed vomiting and diarrhoea. Most fanciers decided to have birds tested locally at DAFWA however one fancier chose to submit samples to us for testing. He sent to us 2 cloacal swabs from old birds in his race team and 2 cloacal swabs from young birds in the team. The swabs were forwarded to AgriBio for Rota PCR. The 2 old bird swabs were negative while the 2 young bird swabs were positive for Rota virus. On speaking to this fancier he was aware of about 10 fanciers in the 98 member PRF that had birds which were affected. It appears that the young birds, when mixing in the race baskets with birds from many

different lofts for the first time have been exposed to Rota. The most likely source of the exposure would be old birds that are long term carriers of the disease. As all fanciers with unwell birds had previously had Rota in their lofts last year it seems that although it is likely that some immunity is passed from the parents to their youngsters during breeding that it is insufficient to prevent disease reliably. Fortunately only small numbers (less than 10 %) of birds in each loft have become obviously unwell and even lower numbers have died .However, in a typical Rota outbreak it takes about a week (after exposure to the virus) for the birds to become unwell, the birds are sick for about a week and then take about 2 weeks to recover. A flare up of Rota virus in a racing loft during racing therefore has the potential to compromise performance and returns until the virus has run its course.

Vaccine trial

The trial vaccine is made. The trial pigeons have been bled for the first time. Boosters have been given. The birds are due to be re-bled and immunity assessed at the end of June. If sufficient immunity is present vaccine production will progress to the next stage which is adapting the techniques to commercial production.

1. Several delegates commented on the report.
2. VHA is contemplating holding a later race series.
3. Greater Melbourne is also considering the same.
4. Vaccine may not be available until early next year.

Adoption of the Correspondence moved Regents Park seconded by Seven Hills. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE OUT:

1. Names, Addresses and birth dates of 206 members supplied to the Arena Sports Club for membership.
2. Copy of the Minutes 1st May 2017 supplied to the Clubs.

ACCOUNTS:-

• Accounts as per agenda presented for payment. (Period 1/05/2017 – 5/06/2017) Motion moved by Campbelltown City seconded by Regents Park that the accounts as per the agenda be received for endorsement of payment. Carried.

BUSINESS ARISING: Nil.

Motion moved Wentworthville seconded by Parramatta that payment of the accounts as per the agenda be endorsed. Carried.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

The minutes of the Management Committee meeting held on the 1st May 2017 as tabled were received, moved by Greg McLaughlin (MTD) seconded by Phil Murphy (CTN). Carried.

BUSINESS ARISING: Nil.

Adoption of the Management report moved Campbelltown City seconded by Mt Druitt. Carried.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. Marayong Quakers delegate advised that M & P.Cowan complete moving sale will be held on Sunday 2nd July 2017. Blacktown Club room – viewing from 11 am to 12.30 pm.
2. Smithfield Club delegate advised their 2017 Squeaker Sale and Blind Auction race has been cancelled. Donors of pigeons to the 2017 Blind Auction will be invited to donate for the next Blind Auction. Rings are now available for 2018 Squeaker Sale Race.
3. Phil Murphy gave a verbal report on the progress of building the trailer section in Minto.
 - i. All the components have been obtained.
 - ii. Ready to start fabricating.
 - iii. 2 – 3 weeks to assemble.
 - iv. Unit from Germany arrives at Minto 7th June 2017.
 - v. John Jeffery and Phil Murphy will check the unloading for any damage in transit.
 - vi. Tony Perkins from South Australia will be available to give advice on assembling the units. Phil will advise Tony of a date that he will be required.
 - vii. Mark Koulouris has been approached to assemble the second lot of baskets and fit all the baskets out with wire inserts. Waiting for a reply and a quote from Mark.

4. The President Vince Pedavoli spoke on the update from Colin Walker and put forward a suggestion of the CCF holding a late series races. Possibly mid-August to end of October 9 – 10 weeks. At least this will help the Federation cover some of the 2017 expenses. A little income is better than no income.

Several delegates spoke on this matter, some of the comments were:

- i. Cannot count on the 300 flyers as some members are committed to the SRPF for this season.
- ii. Which truck to use the old or the new unit, if the new truck is used to save the cost of running the second liberator's unit, limit will be restricted to 152 baskets – 4560 birds. Decide on the unit once the number of flying members are known.
- iii. Suggestion put forward to earn some income was to hire the prime mover out. Phil Murphy stated that there is no money to be earned by hiring the prime mover out and the main problem is the wear and tear of the unit.
- iv. Cost of such exercise to be made upfront. Secretary to put forward the costing figures as soon as possible.
- v. These races will be conducted on Veterinarian advice.
- vi. Motion was moved by Sutherland Club and seconded by Seven Hills Club that the Federation Management Committee organise a late racing series. On putting the motion to the vote it was carried 7 Clubs to 4 Clubs.

No further business. Meeting Closed 8.20 pm.

Next meeting: 4th July 2017.

Arena Sports Club.

140 Rookwood Road. Yagoona.

Allen Wonson. Minute Secretary

Secretary

John Jeffery

6 Brierley Place

Eagle Vale 2558

Tel: 4628.9489

Mob: 0488 048 199



President

Vince Pedavoli

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING: 6th June 2017.

PRESENT: Vince Pedavoli President, John Jeffery Secretary, Kevin Gambell, Anthony Aguis, Gary Young, Sam Sultana, Milad Bou-Said, Sid Gard, Greg McLaughlin. Phil Murphy, Paul Vassallo.

MINUTE SECRETARY: Allen Wonson.

MEETING OPENED: 8.45 pm.

AGENDA:

A LATE SERIES RACING:

The conducting of a late series races was discussed at length.

The Secretary will now draft a letter to all the Clubs advising them of the meetings decision, along with voting sheets for the members of each Club to sign and vote **yes** or **no** to indicate if they are in favour of lifting the current suspension to allow the Management Committee to organise this series of races. Also indicate if you intend to participate in these races. It is not compulsory. Voting sheets are to be returned to the Federation meeting which will be held at the Arena Sports Club by the 4th July 2017. **N.B: only members who have paid their \$15.00 2017 membership are entitled to vote on this matter.**

Please note if these races are to go ahead the 2018 Season races will still be conducted on the South West Route.

No further business.

Meeting Closed 9.30 pm.

Next Meeting 4th July 2017.

Allen Wonson. Minute Secretary.