



## 100 years of Pigeon Racing

*President: Jeff Sheppard      Secretary: Julie Hider*

### South Coast Pigeon Federation (SCF) Special General Meeting

held on Friday, 6 October 2023 at 7.00 pm

Venue: Warilla Sports and Bowling Club

Following a letter from Shellharbour City and Lake Illawarra Pigeon Club dated 26 September 2023 requesting a Special Meeting to discuss the direction to be flown in the 2024 race season and numerous contacts to the SCF Committee from concerned SCF Members over the last few weeks given the poor returns from the longer races flying the Northern Racing Route, the SCF Committee decided to hold a Special General Meeting to discuss the direction of Racing for 2024.

**Record of Attendance:** There were 37 signatures on the Attendance Sheet, consisting of:

- 32 full members (including two non-flyers)
  - 4 associates
  - 1 Shoalhaven Pigeon Federation member (non-voting)
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- Jeff Sheppard, opened the South Coast Pigeon Federation (SCF) Special Meeting for information and discussion regarding the proposed change of direction of racing for 2024.
  - Steve Saywell, presented some graphs showing Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales Federations and pointed out how the return numbers dropped when the federations started to fly from 350 and 400 kilometres no matter in which direction they flew. This has happened over the last 10 years and could be caused by several reasons.
  - There was discussion about reasons for small return numbers from the Northern Racing Route:
    - Rota – the SCF cannot force flyers to vaccinate for Rota, however, most members thought vaccination was the best way to go to stop the pigeons from getting sick.
    - When racing from the north it is difficult having to rely on northerly winds to assist the birds to come home. During this year the pigeons were often flying into a southerly head wind.
    - One member thought oxygen levels should be checked in the truck.
    - Smoke from bush fires and burn-offs up and down the coast affecting the pigeons.
    - Increase in Peregrin falcon numbers in the many National Parks on the Northern Route.

- Sydney's Mascot Airport – 80 planes per hour and Newcastle Airport
  - Mobile phone towers, satellites and Wi-fi signals – it is unknown how these communication systems affect our pigeons but they are increasing along with the population.
  - A need for more tosses at the start of the season. Members need to support the SCF tosses to educate their young birds.
  - Some imported pigeons may not have the breeding to race longer distances.
- There was further discussion and suggestions about the way we could alter racing for next year as we want to get as many pigeons home as we can, we are losing quality pigeons, we need to do something different:
    - The SCF Committee propose that it may be easier to divide the Racing Season into nominations for three (3) series.
      1. Short
      2. Middle
      3. Long
    - There was a suggestion that we need to have a young bird series and an old bird series from the same point and a break before the main series.
    - It was suggested we have more Sunday races, however, we use Sunday as a back-up day if we can't liberate on a Saturday and pigeon racing has always been a Saturday afternoon sport.
    - We have to rescind the SCF Bylaws if we race from the south or south-west next year, but we must do the right thing for the SCF Members.
    - Only one member at the meeting wanted to fly from the north.
    - Another wanted to fly from the north-west.
    - Most flyers buy the same number of rings each year whether we are flying from the north or the south.
    - Let the members decide each year which direction we will be flying the following year.
    - The added benefit of flying south was that we could pick up Shoalhaven and Moruya pigeons which assists in our freight costs.
    - If we flew from the south-west we could follow Central Cumberland's liberations giving our pigeons coverage, however, liberations could be delayed for a number of hours because of fog and liberation of Central Cumberland's Toss Pigeons following their Race Pigeons.

It was decided to hold a ballot of the SCF Membership to vote on whether to fly south or south-west in 2024 Pigeon Racing Season. Please record your results on the separate ballot sheet and forward a summary of your ballot results to the SCF Secretary.