

Birmingham Roller



Type

Type determines if a Birmingham Roller is representative of its breed. Type is mainly determined by the outlines of the pigeon, in other words, the form of the body, head, wings, tail and feathers. Type is also determined to a large extent by the skeleton and muscular development of the pigeon. Type constitutes those characteristics which represent the specific pigeon breed, in the judging of Birmingham Rollers, and is of the utmost importance. The ideal Birmingham Roller must be viewed as a dual-purpose breed in its entity, in other words as a roller and a working pigeon in the air, and as exhibitor in the walking-pen, therefore it is of the essence that the Birmingham Roller should be handled thoroughly when it is judged. All the parts of its body must be in proportion and in harmony with each other. The entire standard (inclusive of everything) describes the type. One should strive to breed the right type. Breeding should be directed at ensuring the type concerned. The end result of breeding must represent the standard as a whole.

Physique

The Birmingham Roller is of medium size, gracious, and a well balanced short pigeon. Viewed from the side, the pigeon should not appear too thick. Viewed from above, the pigeon should appear wedge shaped from the shoulders (widest part) to the rump and tail (narrowest part). The breastbone runs through far to the back and cuts in sharply to the ventbones, so that when the pigeon is handled, it feels as if the breastbone forms an integral part with the ventbones. In other words, no space or hole should be felt between the breastbone and the ventbones. The ventbones of the pigeon must also appear solid and should not become depressed with handling. The ventbones should be placed solidly next to one another. Watch for pigeons whose ventbones are deformed or of which the one ventbone is solid and the other one is soft and flexible, so that the pigeon will also roll unbalanced in flight. The length of the Birmingham Roller is approximately 21cm in the male and 20cm in the female.

Head

A head full of character of which the topskull appears neither round nor visibly flat, is ideal. Viewed from the side, the forehead rises from right behind the wattles with a sharp curve directly to the top and to the back, so that the highest point is reached just in front of the eye. From there it re-

veals a straight line only for a short distance and then slumps down with a gradual curve until it flows into the neck. Viewed from the front, the forehead must round out immediately behind the wattles and appear relatively broad and clearly rounded between the eyes, not flat or angular. A thin, pinched appearance must be avoided. The male must have a characteristic male head and the female a characteristic female head. The beak of the Birmingham Roller must be strong, but fine, with the top bill slightly bent. The beak of the pigeon must, however, be suited to the head of the pigeon and approximately 18 mm in length in both sexes. The colour of the beak is irrelevant, because the Birmingham Roller is not bred for a specific colour. The wattles of the Birmingham Roller must at all times be fine in texture and of a clear white colour, irrespective of the age of the pigeon.

Eye

The eyes of the Birmingham Roller must be situated slightly to the front of the head and the pupil must be precisely in the middle of the eye - not to the front or to the bottom. The eyecere must be small, fine and prominent. The eyes must be clear, clean and sparkling and speak of health and energy. The eyes can be any colour, e.g. pearl-coloured, grey, orange or yellow. A Birmingham Roller's eyes must both have the same colour. The dark eyes which are found in white-head pigeons, are admissible, but both eyes must have the same colour. Pigeons whose eyes differ in colour, as well as those whose eyes are broken, will be disqualified.

Neck

The neck of the Birmingham Roller must be of medium length, neatly rounded off, with smooth, soft feathers. The neck must flare out from underneath the ears of the pigeon up to the shoulders, without lumps or irregular curves.

Shoulders and Back

The shoulders of the Birmingham Roller must be broad and strong, but must nevertheless suit the pigeon. The back must be flat and feel strong and solid when someone pushes with his thumb on it. A weak, humped or skew back will be viewed as serious defects.

Breast

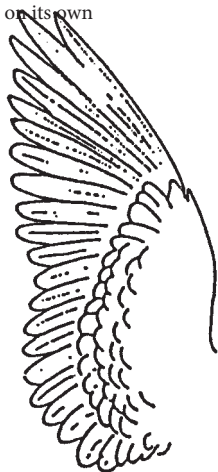
The breast of a good Birmingham Roller is full, well-muscled and well rounded off. The breastbone must stretch through far with no deviating curves and must cut in relatively sharply to the ventbones. The breastbone of a good Birmingham Roller must be flexible and jump back when it is slightly depressed. The point of the breastbone must preferably end between the ventbones, so that the point cannot be felt.

Wings

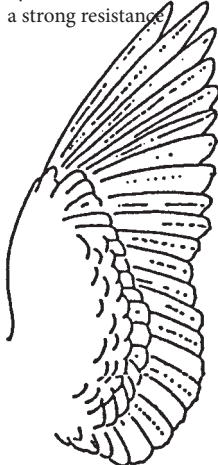
When the pigeon is in a resting position, the wings must be folded stiffly against the body and it should appear as if the wings form an integral part with the body. The wings must rest on the tail and the covering feathers must cover the back completely, so that only the tail of the pigeon is visible

among the flight feathers. The tips of the flight feathers must join up neatly and may not cross each other in any circumstances. The main flight feathers, as well as the additional flight feathers must have solid, buoyant cores and must overlap one another far, so that there is a strong resistance when the wing is spread open. As the Birmingham Roller is bred to roll, the wing muscles should also be well developed, especially the biceps muscle, i.e. the muscle which can be felt in the part of the wing where the wing joins the body. The Birmingham Roller must hold its wings on top of its tail at all times when judged.

Unwanted type of main wing-feathers every feather forms a unit on its own



Feathers overlap one another by far and therefore indicate a strong resistance



Rump

The rump must be narrow and suit the general symmetry of the pigeon.

Tail

The tail of the Birmingham Roller consists of 12 feathers which are packed

tightly onto one another. The tail must not extend more than 15 mm past the wingtips. The tail must seem to be one feather when the pigeon is sitting. The tail must not hang down or show an upwards inclination, but be carried well in line with the bottom part of the body.

Legs and Feet

The legs and feet must be richly red in colour, solid and well-placed. The legs and toes must be well spaced out. The legs should be relatively short and when the pigeon is in a resting position, the lower legs must stretch to the front and not right down, so that it appears as if the pigeon can fly away without effort. Viewed from the front, the legs must be parallel and relatively widely placed, approximately 30mm from one another, and the pigeon must not trample on its own toes. Viewed from the side, only the pigeon's lower legs must be visible, which will indicate how short the Birmingham Roller's legs should be and the part which show, must be completely free of any feathers.

Feathers and Condition

The Birmingham Roller must be covered from head to tail and on the upper legs in firm, thick and smooth feathers. The feathers must have a healthy and full-grown appearance. The condition of the Birmingham Roller is judged by more factors than just the shine or development of the feather system. A certain

firmness of muscular tone and solidness of built, especially in the area of the ventbones, are essential. The pigeon's reaction should be quick and his/her system should be healthy. He/she may not show any sign of tiredness or a lack of energy. A pigeon which is fully covered in feathers, has a better appearance and is therefore preferable. Nevertheless, a pigeon which appears good in its own right, should not be penalised on the basis of a few lacking feathers. An efficient judge should be able to estimate its true value, even when it is moulting and therefore has to take a backseat in comparison with most other fancy pigeons. Birmingham Rollers who have external parasites or pinholes, must be disqualified immediately.

Expression

The facial expression of the Birmingham Roller betrays its inherent characteristics such as perseverance, balance and alertness. The eyes are a reliable measure for the pigeon's ability to perform and maintain stability in the sky, and must therefore be exceptionally attractive, and reveal an eager, alert nature and an own individuality. The clarity of the eye must be apparent and leave the judge with the impression that the pigeon is an exceptional bird. The facial expression must encourage admiration on its own, irrespective of other characteristics such as form, plumage, colour and marks.

Colour Description of the Birmingham Rollers

Blue

Any barred or checkered pigeon with any marks or self-coloured, so that 75% or more of the pigeon's body colour is blue.

Red

Any barred or checkered pigeon or solid red pigeon with any marks or self-coloured so that 75 % or more of the pigeon's body colour is red.

Yellow

Any barred or checkered pigeon or solid yellow pigeon with any marks or self-coloured so that 75% or more of the pigeon's body colour is yellow.

Tortoiseshell

These pigeons are also known as tri-coloured pigeons. The basic colour is red, black/blue and white and the three colours must appear on every feather. The body creates a tortoiseshell effect, as the name indicates. These pigeons are genetically related to those with a checkered pattern and can be used to breed checkered (blue) pigeons. Marks such as white heads or head marks can be exhibited in this class. 75% or more of the pigeon should be tortoiseshell and shown in the tortoiseshell/sandy class.

Sandy

These pigeons are also known as blue "grizzle" and are in reality blue pigeons with the blue colour interspersed with white. These pigeons normally show bars, but should not be exhibited in the tortoiseshell/ sandy class. 75% or more of the pigeon should be sandy.

Silver

Pigeons with a light grey body colour are found in the silver class. The males normally have black specks on their feathers. The neck has a silvery shine and these pigeons are genetically blue pigeons. True silver pigeons also exhibit a slightly barred or checkered pattern, but this is not always clearly visible, because of the light colour. True silver pigeons are relatively scarce and lavender pigeons are often erroneously classed as silver. 75% or more of the pigeon should be silver and shown in the silver/dun class.

Lavender

These pigeons are also light grey in colour, but a red colour is noticed in the feathers. The pigeons' necks also normally show fine red marks. These pigeons are also exhibited in the silver and dun class. Lavender pigeons are actually redbar or checkered pigeons in disguise, and this phenomenon is called the spread factor. Black pigeons are the lavender pigeon's blue match. Lavender males sometimes show large black spots in their feathers. 75% or more of the pigeon should be silver and shown in the silver/dun class.

Dun

The dun colour is widely known among fancy pigeon breeders as silver as it appears in Croppers. Dun pigeons can also be barred or checkered or self-coloured without any of these patterns. Males in this colour are extremely scarce. Dun is genetically related to yellow, although the pigeons are exhibited together with silver. The

scarcity of these two colours is the reason for this. 75% or more of the pigeon should be silver and shown in the silver/dun class.

Black

Black pigeons normally do not have a barred or checkered appearance and are actually bluebar or checkered pigeons in disguise. The body should be pitchblack, but the pigeons may wear any marks such as white heads, head marks, white wingtips and tails. Just as in the case of the lavender class, the phenomenon is known as the spread factor. 75% or more of the pigeon should be black and shown in the black class.

White

White self-coloured pigeons are not common, and another colour is often dominant on such pigeons. Because white pigeons are scarce, those with a few differently coloured feathers can also be classed as white, provided that more than 75 % of the pigeon's body colour is white.

Pinkbar

Pinkbar pigeons are those with clear red bars. The neck of the true pinkbar is red grizzle, which may also sometimes appear in the wings. These pigeons are, however, exhibited in the white class.

Red grizzle

The basic colour of the body is white and this colour is interspersed with a red grizzle pattern. These pigeons are exhibited in the red class, as the pigeon exhibits a 50/50 appearance of

red and white.

Red/Black Mottle

The basic colour of the body is respectively red or black which is interspersed with white. The body appears to be covered in large red/black and white spots. The pigeons are exhibited in the red or black classes.

Description of Marks

Baldhead

This pigeon has a snowy white head with a slight bib. The wingtips are white and the tail should also be white, but sometimes a few coloured feathers could appear in the tail.

Badge

The head is the same colour as the body and is interspersed with marks. The rule for wingtips and tail is similar to that for baldhead pigeons.

Self

These pigeons have a solid body co-

lour and white does not appear in the body at all.

Barred/Chequered

These pigeons have a solid body colour with bars or chequered markings on the wings. The tail should also show a bar at the tip.

Pied

This phenomenon is usually found among bluebar and redbar pigeons where large white patches appear at random on the body.

Saddle

The pigeon's body is white and a saddle in any of the colours discussed, appears on the back.

Oddside

These pigeons can be either checkered or barred, but the pigeon's wings appear differently. One wing could be solidly checkered or barred with the other wing white with a saddle.



"The breeding of pigeons is generally accepted as a simple hobby providing many hours of pleasurable relaxation at small cost, but also goes further than that, since we have many fanciers among us who take the hobby very seriously and they consider their efforts something of a duty to mankind. It is to these fanciers we owe a deep debt of gratitude, because by their skill and love for high class stock we are able to enjoy the product with which to further and extend the high traditions of breeding livestock, even of so small a significance as pigeons, and enjoy a place in the sun which only men who know the value of a hobby can enjoy."

William H Pensom

