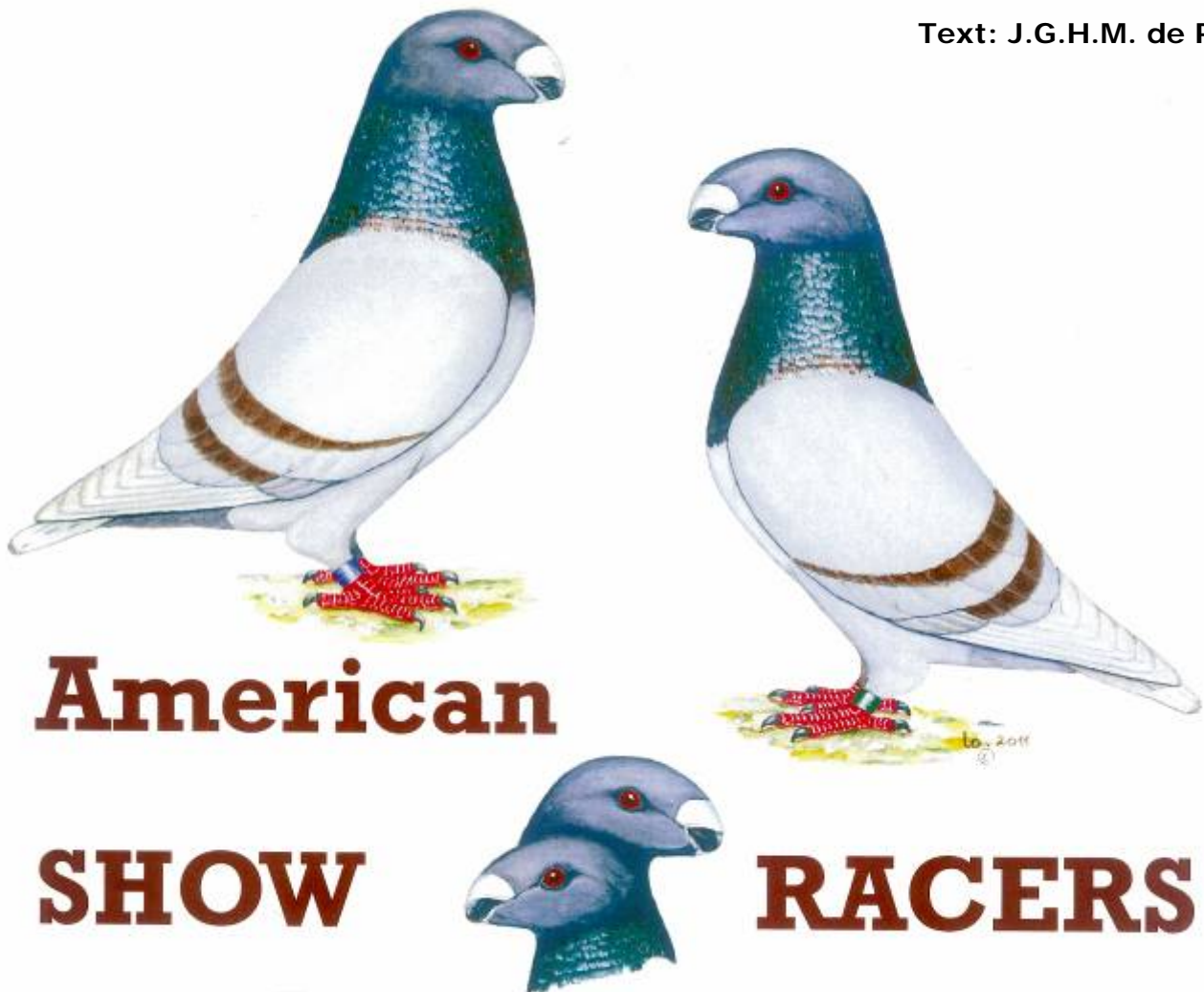


Developments at the Show Racer

Text: J.G.H.M. de Poel



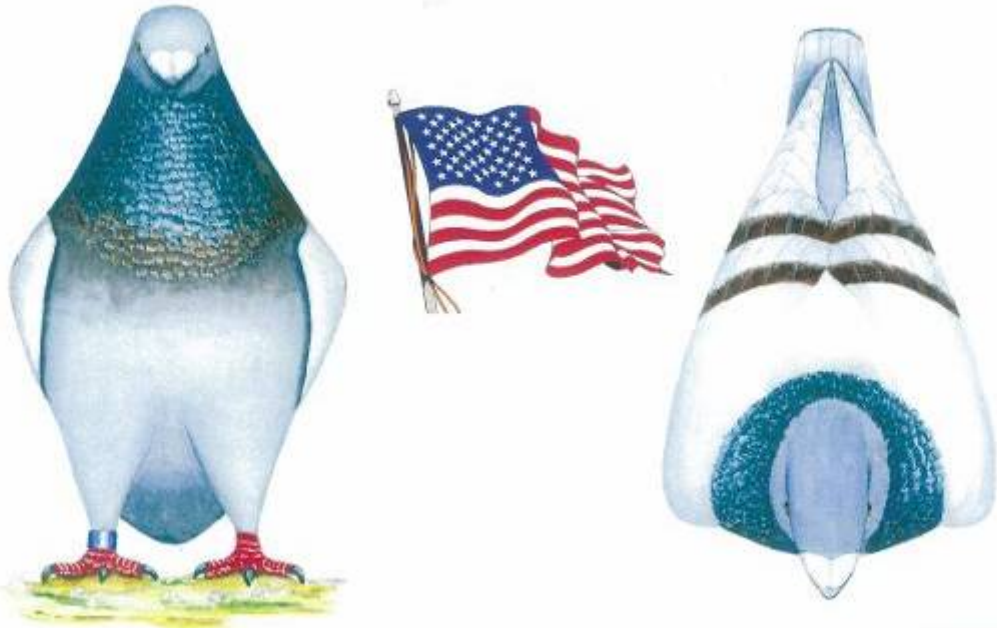
The above drawing was made on request of the German Specialty Club of the Show Racer, by the German illustrator Volker Lortz. It was made according the recent USA standard drawing.

After the 15 years we have had the breed in Europe, I have unfortunately come to the conclusion that we have made little progress, in fact we have stood still. For some time it even seemed that our neighbors in the East(Germany) had 'their own' Show Racer type developing, with the Top Breeders, Becht, Bosch Meyer, Bauer and Teuchert, occasionally having animals approaching the type in the US, but in general the gap between Europe and America, as the Country of origin, was becoming wider and wider.

All the birds obtained from Germany, that seemed to fit the Standard as far as Head, Body type and posture, did not give the offspring that was expected of them, too many young with round or pointed heads, and not the correct show posture and bore no resemblance to the Parents. How this is possible has already been speculated, but the true facts can only be surmised. The most obvious is that with the huge boom in the breed, the breed no longer having stability, due to many crossings being made in Germany.

It appears now, after 15 years in Europe, some effort is being made to follow the American Standard of Ideal.

American Show Racer



© Volker Lortz

Here we are talking mainly about the 'look' (the Balance of the Bird) with emphasis on the Head, retaining the head substance and facial length, width above the Eye's, with long unbroken lines and barely narrowing to the Beak.

Left: At the 2011 Delta Show, this Show Racer, blue checker hen young, won Best of Breed with 97 points.

Photo: Sytze de Bruine.



Right:

Head study of the above bird. If we compare this hen with the present USA Standard drawing, it is obvious that in the coming years we will have to breed for more head substance and facial length.

Photo: Sytze de Bruine.



In the Future, in this blue chequer hens written evaluation, the remark: "Should be more elongated and fuller in foreface, with a shorter and a more blunt beak" would lead to a definite reduction in the Birds grading, so a 'Fault'- not a 'Wish'. However, at this present time, such remarks will only be written on the comment (grade) cards as a 'Wish for improvement'.



Left: Dominant opal check hen. One of the Best Show Racers today in de USA.

Photo: Bill Robinson (USA).

This means a head that – different from the (slightly outdated) Standard drawing, has a slightly flattened portion between the beak and the eye, similar to the heads we know with the Show Homer. Note: we don't want a flat head!

The ideal facial length is 40 mm in males and 38 mm in females. The beak should not be too long but blunt and powerful, with a fairly wide 'gape', this would be impossible on a small, round head, and would be judged as: beak too pointed!

Until now, in Holland but also in most European countries, American Show Racers with round or pointed heads have been far too highly assessed.

The head profile should always

be an unbroken curve at which the beak form - blunt and heavy - plays an important role, as in the American Standard.

The American breeding practice has shown that the desired length and substance can only be achieved if at least one of the Parents has the desired head shape and substance, not both with rounded or snipy (pointed) heads. The width between the eyes may narrow slightly towards the base of the beak and the head should not be down faced; an almost horizontal head position is the ideal in the American Standard.

Right:

Show Racer, brown almond cock, by D.J. Morris.

Photo: Bill Robinson (USA).

Regarding the body, the width of the chest is more important than the depth, the body form triangular, seen from all sides.

It is not so that the most upright Show Racers are also the best, as it will not show the desired show type, although this upright posture is often very appealing to many judges! Quite simply put, we want no Banana in the Show pen!





Left: Show Racer, blue black barred cock.
Photo: Bill Robinson (USA).



Right: Show Racer, dominant opal check hen. Photo: Bill Robinson (USA).



Left: Show Racer, reduced spread black opal cock. Photo: Bill Robinson (USA).



Right: Show Racer, spread black cock.
Photo and Owner: Bill Robinson (USA).



Left: Show Racer, ash red, opal barred cock.
Photo: Bill Robinson (USA).

Aviculture Europe





**Drawing by the German
illustrator Volker Lortz.**

**A pair of American Show Racers
in barred ash red (mealy)**

**Drawn from the present USA-
standard.**

**Drawing by the German
illustrator Volker Lortz.**

**A pair of American Show
Racers in barred ash
yellow.**

**Drawn from the present
USA-standard.**



**Drawing by the German illustrator
Volker Lortz.**

**A pair of American Show Racers,
in blue black barred.**

**Drawn from the present USA-
standard.**



A 45% sloping, not too hollow back will give the correct body position, the chest depth is simply less important than the chest width. A Show Racer that is too upright in posture will have its tail touching the cage floor and should be excluded from any high grade; it is simply too long in back!

A note for the Judges: In the assessment of the American Show Racer, first take the bird in the hand for the physical assessment; when put back into the cage, it should return to the desired correct Body position quite naturally without any problem.

Take it from me, the most Show Racers currently in our country, are 'stock' birds, that as a judge, it takes some perseverance to find the correct type and posture.



**Left: Show Racer, black cock.
Photo: Bill Robinson (USA).**

The essentials to highlight at the moment, is no longer 'Type and Leg position' but 'Type and Body stance', as this better reflects what we are talking about.

Regarding the eye and beak cere, many judges in our country are happy to judge the old cock birds and are lenient on such when the cere structure is a little too heavy in this breed.

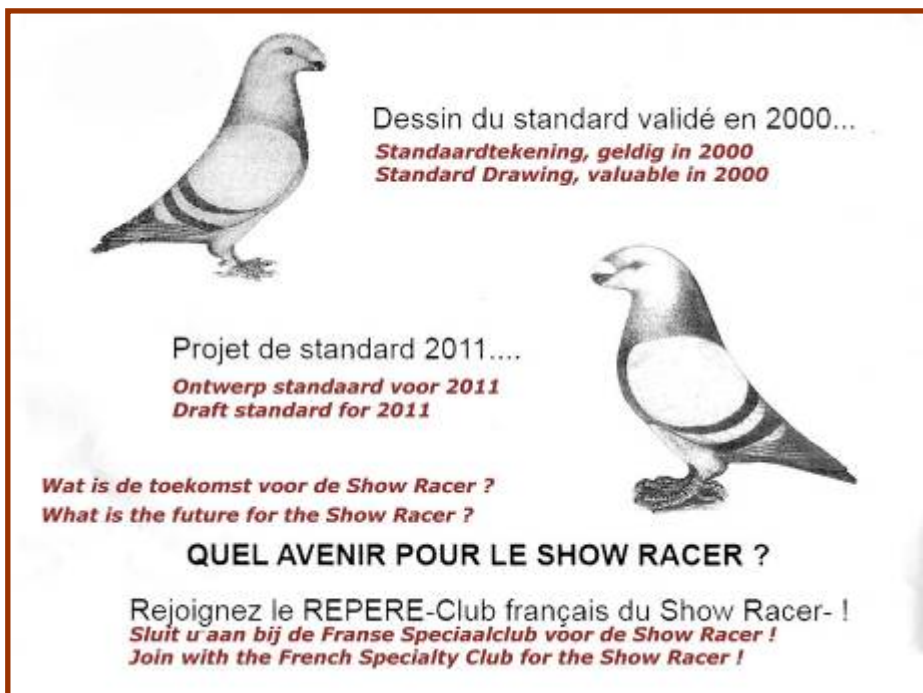
The eye and eye cere colour should match the plumage but is often too dark.

In Germany, they are more lenient on this subject and the Eye colour doesn't really matter, except in case of severe faults.

Other findings from recent years are poor wing carriage and pigeons often too fat! The German 'Fanciers' have the ideal remedy for this last finding, fasting 1 day in the week, they do get water though!

**Right: Show Racer, dominant red checker hen.
Photo and Owner:
Bill Robinson (USA).**





Left:

The French Show Racer specialty club in 2011 launched a project from that year to meet a new ideal image for the Show Racer, and adopted the Australian standard drawing.

In the German 'Geflügel Zeitung' (Poultry Magazine) Gerd Becht, the Breeds spokesman, wrote - and I quote: "A round pointed head can in the practice, no longer be tolerated, when well trained and experienced breed judges are called upon to judge, this would be of more worth and this problem could lay in the past in just a couple of years."

You have to be willing as a breeder, to search for the right birds to start with.

The death of Clemens Christain Mayer in North Germany, in Brebel, gave a once in a lifetime opportunity to obtain birds from one of the better German Breeders and bring these birds into the Netherlands. In a co-operative purchase from 8 Fanciers, 30 pair of quality American Show Racers came to Beuningen, the Netherlands, and were shared amongst the Fanciers. Without exception these were birds with the desired head length and profile, which should give the complete Breed basis a great leap forward. Some Dutch fanciers also purchased Show Racers from German fanciers as Dirk Quade, Friedel Bosch Meyer, Gert Becht and Dieter Bosl.

We now seem on the right path of the long awaited 'European Norm' to stabilise in this breed.

This year is the Europa Show in Leipzig. The Judges will hopefully choose only one 'Type' of American Show Racer and I can offer my contribution to this end.

The Exhibition of the German Breed Club in Alzenau-Michelbach December 2011 showed that the majority of Pigeons present were bred to this Standard. Birds with pointed (snipy) heads seldom over the 94 grade and definitely not in the higher grades.

The Good Type animals in the larger classes that were offered for sale, were all sold, for the older type birds, where found, there was no interest.

At the French Club, 'Club Français du Show Racer' in Chambery, where 3 Judges from the Netherlands were invited to officiate, on the walls were hung Pictures of the Australian Standard drawing for the American Show Racer, that the French Fanciers want to adopt as the Standard picture. That many of the Show Racers in the exhibition were a long way off from this drawing was clear to see but under the inspired leadership of Thierry Jung, they should very soon see a great improvement in overall type in the breed.

Some of the Show Racer Clubs in Europe:

Nederlandse Speciaalclub voor Schoonheidspostduiven, Secretary S. de Bruine, E-mail sdebruine1@zeelandnet.nl. Website: <http://spc.sierduif.nl/>

Germany: Show Racer Club von 1996, Chairman Luzia Mouris: luzia.mouris@o2online.de

France: <http://show-racer.forumactif.com>