

The Graham Barlow Story

Carol: How did you commence in the fancy? Who was the greatest help and where does your bloodline come from?

Graham: I started breeding budgies as a teenager with my brother but started to get more serious and commenced showing them in the early 1990's. When I started, the late Tom Parker, Graham Smith and Les Percy were the greatest help to me. My birds have a lot of the Topless bloodline in them.



Carol: What is the seed mixture you use in the breeding and non breeding season?

Graham: In the breeding season I use Golden Cob Supreme Budgerigar Mix and in the non-breeding season I use Valentines Budgerigar Mix.

Carol: Do you feed any soft food mix, vitamins, etc?

Graham: In the breeding season the budgies are fed soaked feed oats, wheat, a few Mung beans, a mixture of grated carrot, egg and biscuit and silver beet, which I grow myself.

Carol: Do you give preventative medicine and if so, what is it and why?

Graham: I use Ronivet-S, which is a treatment for canker. I also use Ivomec and Wormout Gel for worming the birds.

Carol: When is the breeding season for your birds?

Graham: During mid to late July, I like to start pairing up the birds for the breeding season.

Carol: How do you pair up – visually or by pedigree?

In pairing up my birds, I use both methods- visually and by pedigree.

Carol: What computer bird programme do you use and what made you decide on this one?

Graham: I do not use a bird computer programme at the moment. Instead, I keep manual records.

Carol: What varieties do you fly at the moment and what is your favourite one?

Graham: At the moment, I fly Normals, Cinnamons, Dominant Pies, Opalines, Albinos, Yellow-faces and Lutinos. My favourite is Yellow-faces.

Carol: What is your history at National level?

Graham: I have shown at National Level on a few occasions and have previously received 7th placings with Albinos and a Yellow face. This year I received a 1st with a Dominant Pied.



Above: Four month old chick

Carol: What made you decide to enter your pied in this year's nationals and were you always hopeful of it winning?

Graham: I decided to enter my Dominant Pied and some Albinos in this year's pre-selection at the suggestion of Gary Menzies. Gary had judged these birds at a show in March. When the bird was selected in the zone team, I thought that it may do well but I knew that the competition would be tough showing at National level.

Carol: What is the breeding history of this bird – how close was the bloodline?

Graham: The winning Pied's parents are first cousins. A photo of the Pieds parents is provided in this article.

Carol: Have you got this bird paired up yet and if so what to and why?

Graham: The bird was paired up about two weeks after the Nationals to its father's half-sister and it bred straight away for me. I have included some photos of the first three youngsters from the pied and there are more youngsters in the nest at the moment. Photo on last page of this article

Carol: Please describe your aviary to me – size, construction, flight area etc?

Graham My aviary is 8.5 metres long and 4 metres wide. It is made of white Colorbond and hardiplank. On the inside, it is lined with cement sheeting and is insulated. The aviary consists of three flights and a breeding room.

Carol: Please describe your breeding cages and nest boxes?

Graham: My breeding cages are made of wire with wooden nest boxes.

Carol: How long do you leave a pair together if they haven't laid and do you put the cock or hen in first or both together?

Graham: I leave a pair together for about three weeks and if the hen hasn't laid within that time I separate them. I normally put both the cock and hen in the breeding cage together.

Carol: You have successfully completed a judge's course - what made you decide to become a judge?

Graham: I received a letter from the Judges Association and decided to have a go. I completed the course because I thought that it would be a good opportunity to learn from others and assist beginners wishing to enter into the fancy.

Carol: What is the most enjoyable part of the fancy to you?

Graham: I enjoy meeting other interested members at shows, as well as the breeding and showing cycle. .



Carol: What is the least enjoyable?

Graham: Cleaning the aviary floor every week. (I believe we can all relate to that)

Carol: Any advice you would like to give to new comers to the fancy?

Graham: The advice that I would give to beginners is to try to go to as many shows and club meetings as possible to meet other breeders and buy your birds from people who do consistently well on the show bench.

Carol: Personal information: Favourite food: seafood.: Favourite drink: cold beer.
Favourite sport: motor racing. Favourite team: Broncos. Favourite music: rock n'roll.



Left: parents of winning Pied which is on the right;



Below: three promising chicks from the Grey Pied



Editors Note: Thank you Graham for taking the time out to answer my questions. By looking at the answers to your favourite food and team – you are a very astute person in my opinion.