

Cricket Legend Bill Lawry Enters Sea Lake's Mallee Classic 1998.



Bill Lawry's entrant in the Mallee Classic

Cricket Legend Bill Lawry has entered the Classic and the Mallee Classic has now reached \$13,560.00 in prizes and interest in the National event is growing with entries from all states. International attention is also gained with every major stud with overseas connections with England, Belgium, New Zealand, Canada and the USA either entering pigeons or being a sponsor of the Event. A company from Germany will be a Sponsor and supplier of the Timing system. The event is shaping up to be well contested with the best of Australia's and Internationally Imported racing pigeons competing.

There is growing interest in an event where all pigeons are housed, trained and compete to a single loft. Pigeon fanciers have the chance to compete against the best Australia has to offer and people who have not had anything to do with pigeon racing have the chance to become involved with the sport by acquiring a pigeon from their local club, Pigeon stud or from someone they know who has racing pigeons.

Melbourne based flyer Keith Sagers operates Hillcrest pigeon stud and has kindly donated pigeons for the Sea Lake Hospital (the entry fee has been paid for by The Mallee Classic), Sea Lake Police, the Tyrrell College entrant "the Tyrrell Bat" and has also donated a bird for a lucky reader of the paper to be drawn after November 1st 1998. Keith has won many Federation placings in Melbourne and sold his pigeons to flyers overseas. He is a well-respected pigeon flyer and breeder and The Mallee Classic is very appreciative of his generosity towards our event and the four lucky groups which will receive his pigeons.

There are now over 20 placings over 3 races which have a minimum value of \$100. Prizes range from \$100 to \$5000. Other prizes have been donated for novelty giveaways on the day of the 300 mile race August 21st 1999.

Once the entry fee of \$100 is paid there are no ongoing costs related to maintaining the pigeon in the race. Costs for food, training, medication etc are all part of the entry fee. This amounts to \$1.92 per week to compete for total prizes worth \$13,560. The current nominations show that 20% of non-pigeon flyers are entering the event. Pigeons are being obtained from local and interstate flyers and breeders.

The remarkable aspect of pigeon racing is the fact that the pigeons will be released at a point where they have never been before and without maps, they will navigate from Cobar NSW back to Sea Lake. They will fly over dry arid outback across the hay plains, cross over the Murray river and maintain their course over the crop lands until they reach Sea Lake.

The pigeons will have to face all aspects of terrain, weather and predators, these being hills, plains, dry, wet, wind, rain, heat, falcons all of which they may see in the one race. Once you realise what these birds are able to achieve, you cannot deny that it is truly amazing! Through their homing ability the racing pigeon has been used throughout history to relay messages, even in every war when they have been badly wounded they have had the courage to still reach their home loft. Many soldiers' lives have been saved due to the efforts of our racing pigeons, some commended with the rank of Captain.

Entries for the Mallee Classic are limited to the first 200 entries. If anyone would like more information regarding the race or would like to obtain a pigeon in the race, please contact Barry Trewin.