

Extracts from the meeting of the Pigeon Branch of the EE held at Pula/Croatia on 2nd May 2008

The Chairman, Dr Werner Lüthgen, opened the meeting at 8am. Present were delegates from 19 countries (Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, France, Germany, Great Britain, Croatia, Italy, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, as well as from Bulgaria and Macedonia, which became members of the EE the next day). Apologies were received from Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands but no response had been received from Sweden and Russia, although the latter had been invited. The Minutes of the Meeting in Piestany/Slovakia, published in German on the internet with summaries in English and French, were approved. Delegates were again reminded that as, in future, all papers would only be published on the internet they would all need internet accounts.

The Chairman informed delegates about the meetings of the EE Board in Prague (CZ) on 9 February 2008 and on 1 May 2008 in Pula/Croatia. A problem had arisen because some countries had more than one organisation dealing with small animals that were willing to become a member of the EE, but this was contrary to EE rules that only permitted membership by one Association from each Branch (Country). The President had repeatedly tried to persuade these Associations to present a united front but without success. Therefore the Board must explore other options that would allow all small animal breeders in Europe to participate in European Shows.

The President of the EE, Urs Freiburghaus (CH) and Prof Dr Schille (D), who was the Chairman of the Group that dealt with animal health and welfare, had attended and presented at an Animal Fair in April in Barcelona (Spain) where small animals had been in the forefront and some lectures had covered the importance and the size of the EE.

Some days previously at the EU in Brussels the EE had made a presentation in three languages to members of the European Council about the importance of the EE that included the many animals of all five branches of EE. Special thanks were given to the German BDRG for their Stand and to his assistants as well as to the pigeon museum in Nuremberg which provided many books, pictures and data. At the Welcome Evening more than 100 people had attended, including 62 members of the EU Council and many EE Board members who represented 2.5 million members. As part of the costs of this presentation could be raised by sponsorship this process needed to be improved for the benefit of the EE.

From reports from national shows it appeared that not all judges held the necessary qualifications despite the EE's clear rules, which had to be observed. The judgement by an unqualified judge would not be recognized. The very positive presentation by Hans Zürcher (CH) on his job as the EE Webmaster was much appreciated. This website would be presented in the three official languages and gave a good overview about the work of the EE and it was therefore necessary that all Branches presented timely information about their work.

From 2009 all poultry and pigeon rings used in Europe will bear the two letters "EE". Thereafter, in European Shows, birds without this sign should not be judged.

For the EE-meeting in Pula 134 people from 24 nations are announced. At Pula the Contracts for the 26th European Show in Nitra / SK were signed. For that show to be a success, it would be necessary for all countries to publicise this event so that 20.000 entries of animals

and birds could be achieved. The 27th European show in 2012 would again take place in Germany, either in Nuremberg or in Leipzig.

The re-election of the Vice Chairman, Jaroslav Kratochvil (CZ), and the Secretary General, Gion Gross (CH), during the General Meeting would be supported by the Pigeon Branch. The election of a new member for the European Standard Commission would be deferred until next year because Alois Kirchhofer (CH) had decided to continue in his post for a further year.

In a retrospective view on the European Exhibitions for special breeds in the last season 2007/08 it was noted that all these events had been successful. However, some shows had either not produced detailed reports or had sent them in too late. For the season 2008/09 fourteen shows for special breeds were approved, to take place mainly during the German National Pigeon Show. Further information would be provided on the EE Website (www.entente-ee.com). For the 26th European Show in Nitra / SK during the 2009/10 season no shows for special breeds would be approved.

The report on the work of the European Standard Commission for Pigeons (ESKT) was given by the Chairman of this group, Jean-Louis Frindel (F). Previously the breed-list of the EE had been revised by Hans Schipper (NL), Jean-Louis Frindel (F) and Dr. Werner Lütthgen (D) with special reference to the British section. Some new breeds could be accepted, which were shown during the meeting in Warsaw/Pl or during the great German Shows to the German BZA of the BDRG for approval. The sizes of some rings were also changed. The list was now up-to-date and had been sent to all delegates by email on 1st April 2008. The list could also be found on Pigeon Branch section of the EE Website. The only correction related to the name of the former Serbia-Montenegro (YU), where the logogram for Serbia was now "SRB". Some other regulations would be revised but were not yet ready for dissemination.

A short presentation about the Refresher Course in Warsaw/Pl in September 2007 was given by Dr. Werner Lütthgen. The Polish breeders had prepared an excellent meeting where about 220 birds from many Polish breeds were shown. Special attention had to be given to rare breeds which required more publicity. The next Refresher Course would take place in Chambéry /F on 12th - 14th September 2009; more information would be posted on the Branch website.

The addresses of the delegates and lists of the Presidents and the Treasurers of the associated countries were updated and distributed to the delegates. All changes and complete listings should be passed on to the Chairman of the Branch immediately. Previously many details had been collected from National scientific periodicals but, despite reminders to delegates, many details were still missing. This information should also include details of Chairmen of the National Union of Judges and of the National Standard Committees. Internet addresses of the National Associations were examined by the Chairman and found to be correct; Associations must link their websites to that of the EE.

The overview on the important national exhibitions in Europe for the coming season was not yet complete. Missing details should be sent to the Chairman of the Pigeon Branch immediately and would be put on the internet after the 1st July 2008. The Association of the Czech Republic informed the Branch that in 2009 no national show would take place because the members of this Association would support the 26th European show in Nitra (SK).

Within the scope of presentation of the National Associations, Graham Giddings (GB) presented the situation in Great Britain. The NPA covers England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The earliest form of a federation dated back to the mid 1700's and the oldest present club was the Archangel Club, founded in 1884. From the list of pigeon breeds in Europe, about 20 breeds are British. Today the NPA has about 750 members, some who show pigeons at many agricultural shows, especially in summer. The average number of birds at a Championship show is about 1000 birds. 3000 pigeons are expected to be shown at the BPSS/NPA National Pigeon Show at Pickering this year. The system of judging in Great Britain was done by gradation. For the best birds, rosettes were presented. Currently in Great Britain no quarantine is necessary for import of pigeons, unlike the situation two years ago.

The delegates from Romania (Cornea and Hadarau) informed the meeting about the situation in their country and distributed maps in three languages. Breeding of pigeons has had a long tradition in Romania and many breeds have been created, especially tumblers. The Association had about 700 members, of which many are older breeders, but today many young people had come to this group, giving a very good mixture. The National Union of Judges had 40 members who had undergone intensive instruction in recent years. Most members of the association were pigeon breeders, but some members also bred poultry or rabbits. A specialist newspaper would be produced.

In the coming year the Associations of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria would be presented. This harmonious and productive meeting was closed at 12.30 hours. The delegates met afterwards for the traditional group photo.

Prepared by Dr. Werner Lüthgen, Chairman