

2011 NFPA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW



by Yassiem Khan.

Understanding the rainbow is physics, but delight at the rainbow is morality. Understanding does not, and should not, and cannot, destroy the delight. We live in a world of simple beliefs, requiring no theology and no hypothetical rewards and punishments. It should be enough that our hearts are still touched by beauty and goodness and justice and kindness. Undoubtedly, one must be religious and have deep reverence for the NFPA, the Pigeons we keep and for our Fellow Members - only then, can we experience a sense of mercy, a sense of shame, a sense of respect and a sense of right and wrong. 2011 embraced our organisation with instincts of nobility and ignobility. Without believing that ignoble instincts are attributable to Satan working in us, we crossed the Rubicon and made a resounding success of the challenges that faced us.

After honest and persistent negotiations with the City of Cape Town, The Department of Culture and Sport and the Western Province Sports Council for adequate funding to stage our 4th National Championship Show in Cape Town, it was the City of Cape Town who came to the party. It was the Department of Sport, Recreation and Amenities under the watch of Noore Nacerodien, supported by Miranda Lakay, who invited us to their offices, to pledge a partnership between the City of Cape Town and the NFPA. This is the second time in the History of Fancy Pigeons and in the world, where a City had partnered and sponsored a Fancy Pigeon Show. I have to list their generosity so that one can realise that all our efforts initiated by our President Fadiel, our Vice-President Otto, our Secretary Yassiem, our Trophy-master Donald and our PRO Reggie, was to benefit every member of the NFPA and bring to the community of Athlone and surrounds a Fancy Pigeon Show par excel lance.

And did the City of Cape Town deliver...! The City provided us with all of the A4 posters, all our Breed Champion & Reserve Champion Certificates, all the Mugs for the Exhibitors and Breed Winners, all the tables, trestles and 'bökkies' we needed to place our show pens on, the Itinerary for the Prize-Giving Function, the Sound & Music for our Opening & Prize-Giving Functions, Food Platters for 120 people attending our Opening Ceremony, a 3-course catered meal for 150 people attending our Prize-Giving Function and the free use of the Athlone Civic Centre for the duration of our National Show and the free use of the Rylands Civic Centre for our Prize-Giving Function. The City's contribution to the Fancy Pigeon Sport is important in the light of history, but before God the greatest is he who shares his resources and in so doing penetrates most deeply the lives of others. The City, most certainly, made such a contribution. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to all in the City, from the Mayor to the Caretakers at the Civics, who made it possible for us to have one of the best National Championship Show in Cape Town.

Other committed sponsors were Kurt Stassen of Panorama Pet Shop, Lourens Muller of Pigeon World who donated all the pigeon food for the show and Kampress who prints and donates all our Pen cards for all our major shows. Our sincerest gratitude is extended to all of them.

Tuesday, 12 July 2011, was spent setting up and trimming the show hall. Under the watchful eye of our Show Manager – Koos Botha, things evolved from an empty space to a majestic Show Hall. Koos, guided by Johnny Renda, most certainly gave us an impressive and well-laid out Show Hall. Many members helped set up. Special thanks to Otto and Grant for getting all the equipment to the show hall. What can I say – truly dependable, always getting the job done.

Wednesday, 13 July 2011, was the day NFPA Exhibitors started penning their prized fancy pigeons. A total of 1 016 pigeons were entered for the Championship Show. Unlike previous shows, members made an extra effort to ensure that their birds were well prepared and groomed to compete. Feather quality was good. Birds were pest free. Faried Rajaal came all the way from Port Elizabeth with his Birmingham Rollers. Neil Raw had to cancel coming from Kwa-Zulu Natal due to some personal setbacks. He did, however, fly his birds down to us for the show. Neil's 'stepson' Anthony managed the collection, penning, showing and return of his birds.

Thursday, 14 July 2011, saw the completion of Penning and at 10h00 we commenced with the judging. The NFPA uses Panel Judges to judge. 7 Teams of Judges judged 81 Senior Breeds and 17 Junior Breeds. Morné donated his set of Breed Standards to the Club which we used on the day. We successfully completed the judging of all breeds with the exception of the Old German Owls. Otto had the invidious task to once again judge this breed and did he take his time. By 18h00 he was not done.

At 19h00 we commenced with the OPENING CEREMONY. It was well attended and we had members of the City of Cape Town present, including Noore Nacerodien, and our local Ward Councillor Suzette Little. The catered meal was the highlight. The food was most scrumptious. Speeches from both Noore Nacerodien and Suzette Little endorsed the successes the show imparted to all.

Friday, 15 July 2011, commenced with Otto calmly completing the judging of the OGO's. Despite following the Breed Standard closely, and having selected the best 2 birds, it seems that the OGO Exhibitors still remained unhappy with the result. At some stage it is important that one realizes that winning is not the end goal and that we must accept the outcome. To heighten the tension we did not reveal the results till the prize-giving function.

At 16h30 Donald and I went over to the Rylands Civic Centre and set up the prizes and certificates to be awarded that evening. As Master of Ceremonies, I had to ensure that everything would run like clock-work. The hall decor was stunning and the aroma of Seafood Paella, Roast Lamb & Chicken, Veggies in white sauce, and Malva Pudding permeated the venue. The scene was set for a most delectable and inspiring prize-giving function. The atmosphere set the stage for an enchanting evening.

At 19h00 the PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY was graced by all of the participating NFPA Members, their spouses, their friends and Dignitaries with their spouses. Dignitaries included Cllr. Tandeka Gqada from the Mayor's Office, Noore Nacerodien, Miranda Lakay, and other officials from the Department of Sport, Recreation & Amenities, Cllr. Suzette Little and Advocate Lyndon Bouah –Our Director of Sport from the Department of Culture and Sport. We also had Ahmad Al-Dhubaib – the Director of Public Relations of the Kuwait Fancy Pigeon Association who had come all the way from Kuwait to attend our Nationals. There was an exchange of gifts between Ahmad and Fadiel. Ahmad, who is an avid Jacobin & Bokhara Trumpeter Breeder, promised me that he will help me acquire some decent stock from him. I look forward to this acquisition.

The presentation of Awards went like clock-work. The evening was also graced by a young musical group who played instrumental music. They were most talented and enjoyed by all. As usual, Fadiel surprised many of us, including our dignitaries with Special Awards for outstanding commitment to the Sport. I was overwhelmed when Fadiel bestowed upon me the gift of a painting of a collection of Fancy Pigeons with my favourite Jacobin Pigeon on it by Jean-Louis Frindell. What a beautiful gift - something I will treasure.

Saturday, 16 July 2011, began with the AGM which commenced at 09h00. Farouk Gameeldien brought along 2 platters of koeksisters, doughnuts and pies. Members enjoyed this before the AGM was underway. The AGM saw many good decisions taken. Fadiel was re-elected President for another 4 year term. Otto now has the position of Vice-President and Treasurer. Cassie Carstens is now our National Ring Master. Donald was re-elected our Trophy-master and Anthony was elected National Editor. It was unanimously agreed that the 5th NFPA Nationals will be staged within the municipality of the Cape Town.

The public attended the show throughout Saturday and were most impressed with what they saw. They had never imagined that there would be such a variety of Fancy Pigeons right here in Cape Town. Donations were made to the NFPA and many positive comments, by the public visiting, were recorded in our Journal. Questions of all sorts were entertained and many left more enlightened about Fancy Pigeons.

Hajjera (my wife), Julaiga (her sister) and Abeeda (sister-in-law), ran the Tuck-shop and provided NFPA members and the public with refreshments for the duration of the show. Refreshments included Mince Salomies, Steak & Chicken Pita's, Pies, Samoosas, Cool drinks, Chips and Sweets. They also managed the tea & coffee for NFPA members. Chances are they may become our preferred caterer at our shows.

Sunday, 17 July 2011, was when the final curtain came down on the show. The public visited till 14h30. At 13h00 Donald was commissioned to buy 3 KFC Barrels, 5 dozen rolls & cool drinks. Members were then invited to enjoy lunch before the task of disassembling the cages began. By 16h00 we had secured all our pigeons and the hall was cleared. The hired help made a huge difference. The final removal of our pens would be done on Monday. As usual, Majiet, with Koos, worked the hardest and were the last to leave.

Thoroughly exhausted, I found my way home. The physical and mental strain and drain only hit home when I realized it was all over. Despite this exhaustion, I would do it all over in a flash. I know the passion that drives me. It is this very passion for my Fancy Pigeons and the members I serve that is so vital to cementing our progress and success. It remains my fervent hope that we continue to hold hands, put aside petty differences if they exist, supplement our principles with faith, live life and enjoy this great sport of keeping Fancy Pigeons. I am convinced that of all our strivings, only those are good or worthwhile which contribute to the upliftment of the NFPA, under whose shelter and sway, we should huddle and seek solace. I realize that no romantic conflict or tragic dualism is inherent in the above, but rather a fruitful and engaging combination of destiny and free choice. Let us choose to be tenacious in our resources of personal courage and good will. Let us always put the NFPA first.

Well done to all for being part of a great show!

Yassiem Khan

National Secretary 2011

NFPA