

Modern Blue and Game Bantams

by Charles Schullen of St. Louis, MO

Since time immemorable the old Cocker has bred Blue Games and dead game at that. The Old Brown Red Games and Old Irish Greys sported a white bird occasionally and accidentally this white sport was bred back to the Brown Red and a Lemon Blue Game resulted and in England today among the exhibition fancy the Blue Game is considered one of the most "catchy" variety.

Like the Old English Game breeders the Modern Game Bantam advocates experienced a white sport from their Brown Reds as well as from Birchen Game Bantams and as the Old English Blue Game was evolved from breeding back to the white producing the Blue Game likewise the modern fanciers employed the white sport, crossing same with their Brown Red Game Bantam with the result that we have today the Modern Blue Game Bantam.

Some of the greatest breeders of Brown Red Game Bantams in England: Entwisle, Dan Clayton, Fred W. Smith and others all bred Blue Game Bantams and these in the "know" are aware of the beautiful lemon top color those strains were noted for, in fact each of the gentlemen mentioned above were supreme in their time when it came to producing Modern Brown Red Game Bantams and the secret of their success was their ability to infuse the Lemon Blue blood into their strains of Brown Reds. Most of you are acquainted with the proper methods of infusing Black Red blood into the Red Pyle Game Bantams to produce that beautiful top color that many strains of Red Pyles are noted for and the infusion of Black Red blood into Silver and Golden Duckwing strains.

As you all know the top color in the Red Pyle when breeding Pyle to Pyle invariably will fade and in time become nearly white which fact is due to the law of pigmentation. The white pigment predominates and in time asserts itself in destroying the red pigment of the Red Pyle. Now it is just as much a matter of pigments in the breeding of Brown Red Game Bantams. The black predominating destroys the lemon pigment and Brown Red strains bred without new infusion of blood experience the calamity of the beautiful lemon top color turning to orange and deep red and if continued long enough to self blacks. How to overcome this is but to take a lesson from the Red Pyle and Duckwing breeders. Use a cross that will rehabilitate the lemon top color and this is done by crossing a Brown Red with a Lemon Blue. Blue is not antagonistic to lemon and blends with black so the procedure is to infuse Lemon Blue blood into your Brown Red strain in the manner the Red Pyle fanciers conserve their variety.

The Blue Game Bantam in itself is pleasing to look at and really "fills the eyes" for its beauty is singular inasmuch as the variety is rare and seldom seen. There are from ten to fifteen variations in color that the blues enjoy among- which are principally self Light Blue, self Dark Blue, Honey Blues, Honey Duns, Lemon Blues, Lemon Blacks or Brown Reds, Brassy Wings, Blue Duns, White and Black Game Bantams. Most strains, of course, are not on a par in type, balance, carriage, fineness of feather and shapeliness with the high class Black Red Duckwing, etc. There are, however, one or two strains in America and England that can compete with the best at the classics and in England they have been awarded the much coveted "Best in Show" championships and the American fanciers of the variety are hopeful of duplicating the honor on this side of the "Briny."

Anyone seeking a variety of colors can satisfy their desire by breeding a Modern Blue Game Bantam cock to the following hens: Black Red, Golden Duckwing, Silver Duckwing, Brown Red, Birchen, Wheaton, White, Red Pyle and Black and from this pen produce: Blue Reds, Blue Duns, Brassy Wings, Honey Duckwing Blues, Silver Blues, Lemon Blacks or Brown Red with beautiful lemon top color, Blue Wheatons, Blue Pyles, self Light and Dark Blues, Whites and Black Modern Game Bantams. As all the hens are standard in type and shapeliness naturally the Blue offspring are enhanced in these qualities and it is with this view in mind that the Modern Blue Game Bantam fanciers of this country employ the above mating.

Breed the Modern Lemon Blue Game Bantams to the same wonderful standard of perfection that our best strains of Game Bantams now enjoy and use this Lemon Blue in our Brown Red Game Bantams and our problem of producing Modern Brown Red Game Bantams will take the place of perfection which has been so long denied them. The writer will be amply repaid if these few remarks relating his experience and knowledge assist even in a small way the Modern Game Bantam fancier who is seeking the light of proper breeding methods employed by the leaders in the Brown Red and Lemon Blue Game Bantam Fancy.

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