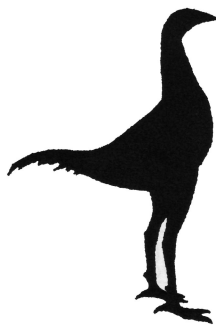


MODERN GAME BANTAMS

“A BREED FOR THE JUNIOR EXHIBITOR”

By Jim Sallee

Mr. Sallee is an APA-ABA Sanctioned Judge and President of the American Bantam Association. He is breeder of these exquisite, gentle and tolerant bantams.



When choosing a bird for a junior project, one of the breeds that always seems to surface to the top is Modern Game Bantams.

Generally speaking, they are a healthy breed that tends to be fertile and will hatch relatively easy in most incubators. They come in many attractive colors and many varieties can be crossed to produce additional colors as well. Stock can be purchased fairly easily and they are very affordable when it comes to the financial investment.

Moderns are also an ideal bird for the showmanship class, as they are very tame and train quite easily. Whether you are from an area where rules require walking and posing the bird on a table, or just posing it in order to show the judge the quality of the bird, Moderns do well and the time spent in training will pay off when it comes to performing.

One limitation that should be discussed is that Moderns prefer warm climates and do look a lot better when exposed to limited sunlight and outdoor elements of green grass and fresh air. Birds raised in closed barns and colder climates tend to lack in face color and luster of feather which will affect the way they place in the show room. Climates with higher humidity also tend to promote a nice sheen on the feather which gives them a nicer finish for the show room.

Heated buildings are almost a must in the northern areas of the country. If you don't have a heated building, an area out of wind and drafts should be prepared. There are many types of warmth that is affordable to keep these little birds comfortable.

When breeding Modern Games, it is important to always work on the proper type. That mainly means short bodies with long legs that are well set and wings that show protruding wing butts that fit onto the body, almost as if they were glued on, and be short in length. It is desirable that wing length not exceed the length of the body of the bird. A general thing to strive for is shorter bodies and longer legs if you want to consistently improve your flock. The heads also should be long and have a 'gamy' appearance. Like the Old English breeds males must be dubbed to be shown. The owner must feel comfortable learning to dub their birds, or just show females and miss half of the fun of showing the breed.

Are they smart? Oh yes! Something you hear consistently from a new breeder of Modern Games is how they grow on you after you have had them for awhile. Their curious nature and very friendly temperament readily attracts the owner to them and it is easy to become attached to them. You actually have to watch where you step when walking around in the pens as you may step on them by accident. Cage training takes only a few minutes a day for a few days and they tend to remember this training forever.

Another *big advantage* for Modern Games is they seldom get mites and also other external parasites. This is mainly because of their short, tight feathering and their love for taking dirt baths. It is nice not to have to do the constant dusting and checking for mites that some breeds require.

These are just a few of the basics of the Modern Game breed that you can use when trying to decide what breed to choose for your next youth project.