



# HUNTER BULLETIN

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## L O'Brien Canary Notes

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### TALKING ON THE FIFE.

Fifes are a variety of bird that is different to most other breeds, the object is to breed small, other varieties in the majority of cases, is to lean towards the bigger bird.

Even in Finches, and Budgies, that little bit of extra size counts and if all other points are equal the bigger bird will win.

Our Fife is different, one of the main targets here is to breed a small bird, after all that's what it is all about. If we were to settle for a bird larger than four and one half inches, we may as well stay with Borders.

In pairing the Fife we must go in the opposite direction to breeding the Border, a cock smaller than the hen must be used to reduce size. All of the other main aspects of the bird remain the same, a good back, round head, round body, short tail, feather, colour etc, etc.

It is better to use a small cock bird, (and I know they are not easy to come by) with a number of hens, in doing this you are boosting your chances of obtaining smaller birds, by breeding birds of equal size (unless small) or where the cock is bigger than the hen, your chances of breeding small birds are lessened.

I was breeding Fifes for four years before first showing in 1993, even after starting with reasonably small birds it took me this long to get them down to a presentable size, small birds do not just come along, they have to be worked at.

One vital point to remember is that an oversize Fife is an under-size Border, something that should not be encouraged, a bird of five inches or more should lose the whole twenty points allotted in the standard of perfection.

Some fanciers expect champions to come overnight. These people are living in a dream world. I have found over the years that people who expect to breed top class birds from the onset, after they suffer a few losses, soon drift away from the Fancy. There are others who do not have any idea of how to reach the goal set, and will try to alter rules to suit.

Patience is necessary with this, and any other variety of birds, and if you wish to reach the top you must be prepared to use a fair amount of common sense in pairing your birds. If you should strike any problems, there are many fanciers around who will go out of their way to assist you.

As for rearing young Fifes, if ample amounts of the correct foods, plus greens are given, this should be the least of your problems, as this bird is a prolific breeder and excellent feeder.

This article is to give a few points on my view of our Fife, a little on pairing them, plus a little whinging. Something to keep in mind at all times, if we house our birds, feed and look after them in the correct manner, they will always be happy. We only feel happy when we win.

LEO O'BRIEN.

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