

# Looking Uniform

By Dave Cooke

This is what people have been saying for the last few years; Dave your birds all look uniform. Whether this is all good or bad, I do not have a clue. I have been working on this family of Modenas for over fifteen years. I was like many other breeders who would go out and buy a bird here and there from people all over the country but only to find out that one just spins his wheels for a long time. I set out to develop a family of Modenas that had the qualities I like and strive to the standard as much as possible. I have had Modenas since I was a kid and in 1982 and in my twenties I decided to start this family of birds. I got a pair of whites and blacks from Willie Richert at the 4th district show in Mason City, IA. I got two pair of whites from Larry Bowles and a white hen band # 84 from Paul Ober. I also got some Bronze from Rex Arnold later on to work into my whites.

From my main pairs I would keep all the young that I raised and then take the best and breed back to their parents, brothers, sisters and other relations. From this, I got up to breeding from thirty-seven pairs and my line of Modenas was starting to take shape as to how I like them.

In 1993 it was time for us to relocate to NW Iowa because of my job and family. It was then I had to cut down on the pairs to fifteen and with this, it did take a toll on my program I was working on. After going through this shock, it was another step that was good for my line. I was able to raise and hold back only the best of the best, which forced me into keeping a strict elimination program.

I feel keeping about ten percent of my youngsters to put back into my breeding program and keep up the pace of my birds having the uniform look.

I do try to introduce an outcross once in a while. With accurate record keeping and using individual breeding pens, I can use this bird on different matings. Out of these matings, I only keep the youngsters if they are what I am looking for whether it is legs, head, feather quality, etc. After trying a bird on several mates, if they do not produce what I am working towards then I eliminate all the young and the one I bought.

I feel with this setup I have been able to get a good line of Modenas of my liking. I only have black and reds in my bronze and white backgrounds. Well, this will give you an idea as to how I have accomplished my line of birds that I am still trying to perfect to this day. I just would like to thank the people that have helped me develop the Cooke family of Modenas throughout the years.