

DISQUALIFICATIONS TO WATCH FOR

by Bob Vaughn

In the August 2010 newsletter we discussed some of the more common defects to watch for. So what is the difference between a defect and a disqualification? A defect is an undesirable characteristic that can be tolerated to varying degrees and should be eliminated with your breeding program as much as possible. A disqualification is an undesirable characteristic that is not allowed period.

Which disqualifications should we be watching out for? ALL OF THEM! However there are a few disqualifications that crop up more often than others in Jersey Giants that we need to be on the lookout for. Especially when doing out crossing of different bloodlines. Birds with the following disqualifications will be disqualified from competition in the showroom, and should NEVER be used in the breeding pen. It is hard to cull out an otherwise excellent bird because of one disqualification, but using birds with disqualifications in the breeding pen will only ingrain the disqualification in your bloodline and cause heartache in years to come as it keeps popping up and it becomes harder to eliminate with each passing year.

The following lists some but not all of the more common disqualifications as listed in the American Poultry Association Standard of Perfection that pop up periodically in Jersey Giants. We need to be on the lookout for them all, but these seem to be the most common ones we see in Giants. () are my comments added.

- Side sprigs or split combs
- Stubs
- Twisted wing or tail feathers
- Red hackles (Some breeders claim that using males with some red in their hackles intensifies the color and sheen in Blacks. Others say no and that it just carries on a disqualification in their birds. I have not dealt with this myself so can not comment one way or the other)
- Split tails (A defect in Cockerels – a disqualification in Cocks)
- Eye Color (Light-bay in Whites is a disqualification, a defect in other varieties)
- Leg color (Definite color other than black or willow. Watch out for pure yellow legs in Whites)
- Underfoot color (Complete absence of yellow and tinted pink. When stressed or laying yellow pigment can be extremely faint)
- Weight - Any bird that deviates more than 20% either up or down from the weight listed.

<u>Jersey Giants Standard Weights</u>	<u>(Range within the scope of the Standard Weight)</u>
Cock: 13 lbs	(Cock: ----- 10.4 to 15.6 lbs)
Hen: 10 lbs	(Hen: ----- 8 to 12 lbs)
Cockerel: 11 lbs	(Cockerel: - 8.8 to 13.2 lbs)
Pullet: 8 lbs	(Pullet: ----- 6.4 to 9.6 lbs)

(While we need to be vigilant in watching for underweight Giants, I have never heard of a Giant exceeding these maximum ranges actually being disqualified. It should also be noted that even within the standard weight range that points are cut for variance from the set standard weight, and again I have never heard of a Giant being cut points because of exceeding the standard weight.)