A Guide to Practical Breeding

By Rey Bajenting
The Author

The author, Rey Bajenting, is founder of RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology. He is a gamefowl columnist, author and editor. He writes for Pit Games and LLamado magazines; Global Cockfight Live, Roostertech Int'l and Roosterman Int'l.

He is also the author of the game fowl column Llamado Tayo that for 2 years was carried daily by the defunct Tumbok, a tabloid of the Philippine Daily Inquirer group. He has been editor of the weekly Dyaryo Larga.

He is also author of several publications about game fowl and cockfighting. He is the founder of Masang Nagmamanok (MANA), a nationwide movement for the welfare of the common chicken man. He is founding director of Central Visayas Breeders Association (CVBA) which is an affiliate of the National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders (NFGB).

Through his life, Bajenting has been a chicken man, being a handler, conditioner and now a breeder. He started getting involved in cockfighting at age 9.

In between, he has been a newspaperman and editor; legislative staff chief to a member of the House of Representatives and Consultant to a Governor of Cebu. His last job in government was executive assistant at the office of a deputy executive secretary in Malacanang.

He quit in year 2000 to go back to his true love, cockfighting, and started breeding the game fowl. It was at about that time that he started writing for the game fowl industry.

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By Rey Bajenting
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There is no better form of relief than the pleasure of caring for your own private strain of game fowl. It is a challenging sport that will give you much pleasure and excitement of competition that comes with a win over competitors when you realize that you have produced birds superior to others.

One should never hesitate to enter into such a program because he does not feel he has the facilities to actually compete with others having a larger operation. Some of the very best game fowl come from a backyard operation. It is possible to produce winning fowl with the crudest of facilities, as long as basic rules of nutrition and sanitation are followed.

— Floyd Gurley
Foreword: Making the Hard Easy

In pursuit of the objectives of this book to make breeding the game fowl as simple to the layman as possible, we cite our experience in creating our own bloodline, the blakliz, as example, demonstration and guide to practical breeding.

What is practical breeding? Practical breeding of the game fowl concerns with practicality. It tries to make the complicated simple and the hard easy. Let’s not confuse ourselves with too many technical matters. Practical breeding does not deal with in-depth genetics. Rather it sets realistic desirable objectives and try to achieve these goals as economically as possible in terms of time, money and effort.

The role of a practical breeder is to learn the many methods but not to strictly adhere to any. A practical breeder will adopt any of the methods as long as it fits the requirements of practicality. All practices and systems might be both good and bad depending on the situation. If carried to hazardous extreme any of them can be counterproductive. If done moderately and wisely, all of them may be effective. Observe moderation. Keep your program simple. Don’t inbreed too much as it is dangerous and tricky. Don’t cross too many lines as it will result to cross up individuals. Bear in mind, however, that in breeding there are no fail-proof formula. There never will be.

This book is a guide toward this aim and more. However, breeding the game fowl is full of possibilities, many of which unexpected, that no matter how hard we try success is never a foregone conclusion.

In pursuit of the objectives of this book to make the complicated art and science of breeding the game fowl as simple and intelligible to the layman as possible, we cite our experience in creating our own bloodline, the blakliz, and the breeding techniques we applied as example, demonstration and guide to practical breeding.

We hope it will help.
The Author

Foreword: Why the Name

Introduction: How It Came into Being

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Chapter II: Creating Something Different

Chapter III: Keep "em Dark, Keep "em Deadly
A Guide to Practical Breeding

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In his book Lihim sa Pagbuo ng Sariling Linyada (Llamado Publications) Dr. Andrew T. Bunan, the Philippines leading authority on gamefowl genetics, recommended the creation of new bloodlines, different from the common and ordinary (nakasanayan).

He cited three such distinctive Filipino bloodlines—the Zamboanga white of Boy Primallon, the Parawakan of Speaker Ramon Mitra, and...

the BLAKLIZ...

A blakliz brood cock and blue face hens in their semi-wild environment at the RB Sugbo organic gamefowl farm in the mountain ranges of Agsungot, Cebu City.
Naming a Bloodline

The blakliz, a bloodline of excellent game fowl created and developed by RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology, is named after my wife Liza. I felt she deserved the honor for being such a good hen to our five children. The play of words also reflected our breeder’s dream that someday the bloodline will be so dreaded that it would be blacklisted from the cockpits. Dreaming is one thing, facing reality another. We knew there would never be such much- feared a bloodline of game fowl. So after years of developing the Blakliz, we were more than happy just to find the blakliz as the best among our humble repertoire of not so great but decent bloodlines that could compete with dignity in the country’s tough derbies.

Only now that we were fully convinced that the blakliz is the best in our arsenal that we decided to breed the blakliz extensively. It was just recently, in years 2010 and 2011 to be exact, that we concluded that the blakliz was ready for the toughest battles after testing the bloodline in the stag seasons year after year. Beginning 2012 we would be fighting more blakliz stags, and making available to buyers and client sets of blakliz brood fowl. We are confident the blakliz will live up to expectations. We see it as one of the bloodlines of the future. It seems everybody is ordinarily breeding sweaters, roundheads, kelsos, hatches, buliks, golds and other common bloodlines. So why be just ordinary when you may breed the blakliz.

This book then is written not only for those who want to be a practical breeder but also for those of you who may dare to be different and breed the blakliz. This will familiarize you with the bloodline and will enable you to continue its desired development and enjoy the challenge of breeding something different.. By different, we mean not only in looks, but also in fighting ability. In looks, the original blakliz is actually just sort of a combination of the brown red and the mug. However, they are very much unlike the sweater, roundhead, kelso that fill the pits. They are also dissimilar from the now popular off-colors buliks, golds and whites. The midnight grey is more distinct. It is nearer the dirty grey except that it has more solid black feathers rather than in patches and splashes. The difference is more in the fighting ability. The blakliz has no particular fighting style. It is neither typically angat, nor flier, nor rusher, nor shuffler. But it might be able to do any or all of the above if the situation requires as the blakliz has intelligence, agility and speed. It is intelligent enough to discern what ought to be done in a certain situation. It is agile enough to execute what it thinks ought to be done. And, it is fast and quick enough to do it ahead of the opponent.

So welcome to the world of the Blakliz.
Year 2000 when I decided to quit my jobs from government and the media. I went back to my true love, caring for the game fowl. After all I had been in the rooster game long before I became a newspaperman, PR practitioner and public affairs consultant. I was a professional feeder and handler in Cebu for nearly two decades in the 1970s and 80’s. Thanks God, for my success as a professional rooster man that enabled me to lay the foundation that have supported my growing family.

On my come-back to sabong, I had wanted to produce just a few head of chickens for my personal satisfaction and for fighting. But, later, on suggestion by a very good friend Erning Panuncillo (deceased), to make available to ordinary sabungeros and upstart breeders high quality bloodlines at affordable prices. At the time I had no experience in breeding, so I did my homework.

First I studied the intricacies of breeding by devouring all the reading materials about the subject I could get hold of. I also drew a lot of ideas from my experience as rooster fighting man through most of my life and incorporated them with what I learned from my research. Also, at about that time, books, magazines and tv shows on sabong started proliferating, thus, it did not take long for me to acquire a wealth of knowledge on breeding the game fowl.

I also visited long time and old friends in the sabong world to consult with them. It is on one of such visits that I found the inspiration to breed the blakliz. I was at the place of an uncle, Ebing Kintanar, a lawyer, who had been a famous cocker in Cebu. At the time of my visit he was already on semi-retirement from cockfighting. Among the few remaining stock at his yard was a brown red cock that caught my attention. It turned out to be a Richard Bates black cross that had already won 6 times. It was already more than four years old then, but was still set for another fight. When we sparred the cock, I was impressed by its fighting ability. I asked my uncle if I could have him. Being a 6-time winner and with good looks and excellent fighting attributes, the old cock deserved to be a brood cock. After all, in a fast sport like ours, a three time winner is already hard to come by, let alone a six-timer.

The problem was my uncle had already committed to join the fiesta derby in our hometown and he was somewhat short of chickens, so he had to include the old cock in the selection. He told me though to come back after the derby, because anyway the brown red would surely win, he quipped. True enough it won. And, I got my first brood cock. My uncle also let me have an imported blue face hen given to him by a client. I brought the pair home, already toying with the name blackliz for the bloodline they will found. Black because I anticipated producing black
chickens and Liz, after my wife Liz. Much later, I changed the spelling from blackliz to blakliz. Removing the letter “c” somehow sharpened the name.

Thus, the blakliz started with a cross between a 7-time winner 5-year old Richard Bates black and an equally aging blue face hen. That was in 2001. The mating only produced 2 pullets and no stag. The health of the brood cock started deteriorating after the first season, apparently, due to the many wounds sustained in battle, so I was not able to breed it again. The following year I acquired ponkan, the original brood cock that eventually founded our ponkan bloodline. On the sidelines, ponkan was then also bred to one of the black pullets of the brown red x blue face mating. The following year a couple of the black offspring were then bred back to ponkan in a back-to-father line breeding.

Despite being 3/4 of ponkan’s blood, there were still some black pullets and brown red stags among the offspring. There were eight stags in all. Five of the stags were dark red and only three were brown reds. Since I was after the dark plumage, I gave away the reddish stags to friends and relatives. I kept the three brown reds and single mated them to their black sisters. I also discarded the reddish pullets.

Two of the brown red stags I bred were named “sipsip” and “butsukoy” (Cebuano slang that roughly translates to smart or naughty). Butsukoy was called as such because every time I open the door leading to feed stock room, he immediately rushed in ahead of me to partake of the feed inside. On the other hand, sipsip made it a routine to fly to my shoulder, as if to please me to gain some favor in return or to make sipsip, every time I emerged from the stock room carrying the pale of feed. As result sipsip always got the first peck at the ration.

At the end of the breeding season I conditioned and fought the three brown reds and fought them in a 3-cock derby despite their tender age of just 13 months. This was in order to test the mettle of the brothers and in effect the bloodline I am trying to set. Sipsip and butsukoy won handily and quickly. The unnamed one lost after almost 8 minutes despite being crippled in the opening buckles. I was happy with what happened. The two winners proved that the bloodline can kill quickly. The loser showed that there might be some endurance and gameness in them too.

In 2004 I fought eight sons of sipsip, butsukoy and the unnamed one as stags. Of the three sons of butsukoy only one won and two lost. A son of the unnamed one won, another lost. All three of sipsip sons won. The total was five wins three loses. Not bad, especially considering that they were in-bred products of already in-bred brother-sister matings.
What was not good was the fact that of the five winners four died due to mortal wounds inflicted during the fights. The other one was too badly blemished that it had to be euthanized. Therefore, not one of the eight sons of sipsip, butskuoy and the unnamed one managed to survive to fight another day. Another alarming thing with the result was the downturn of the pit performance from the preceding to the current generation. While sipsip and his brothers won a total of six fights against two loses, their offspring only won five out of eight.

Two things were immediately clear: First, sipsip, with all three sons winning their fights, was the better producer among the brothers. (The mother was also marked as the better producer among the sisters); second, that the current generation was no better, or even worse, than the previous generation, so it was not worth keeping. So no further testing was necessary. Already, this early, something had to be done about the bloodline. Clearly, this early, something had to be done about the bloodline. Clearly sipsip and his mate had the better offspring, thus I kept all the black pullets out of sipsip and discarded the pullets out of butskuoy and the unnamed one. I further concluded that the line characteristic absorbed blows because regardless of the fights’ outcome, win or loss, they invariably came out of the pit badly damaged. With Erning and other friends we diagnosed the problem as lack of speed. They packed some power and cut well, but they were not fast enough to follow through on their advantage or to evade the opponents counter blows. Our solution was to infuse a speed bloodline.

Opportunity came in 2005, when Jessie Ledesma won the PAGBA stag derby. His last fight was a black bonanza stag that clinched him the championship in spectacular fastest kill fashion. Through the intercession of my friend and cocking buddy Raul Ebeo, who was at the derby, I managed to acquire said champion stag. This stag was then bred to the pullets out of sipsip. The result was satisfactory so I set them as a bloodline. They were the first blakliz. This became the foundation and the composition of the blakliz for some generations. Somewhere along the way I infused the Aguirre grey to the blakliz. This accounted for the dirty grey version of the blakliz I called midnight grey. Recently majority of mating of the blakliz were between midnight grey and the original blend sipsip blakliz. The mating produced the better performers in the 2010 and 2011 stag seasons during which we performed creditably in Rambulan 1, Heritage Cup and Bakbakan.

Currently the composition of the blakliz came from the bloods of five exceptional brood cocks—ponkan the original; sipsip; the Bonanza of Ledesma; black vest, the best among the first midnight greys; and a new blue face that came from my “migo” Jason Garces. Out of them evolved three main families of blakliz; the midnight grey (infused with Aguirre grey); the blakliz plus (plus the blue face) and the original blend (the Ledesma-sipsip line). By blending the three lines we got the best

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of the blakliz battle pure.

As a bloodline, the blakliz is still very new. It has not yet passed the ultimate trial, which is the test-of-time. Although lately it has contributed to our humble successes, the blakliz has yet to win a major title on its own. At present, all the blakliz got are an acceptable winning percentage (Almost 70%, whereas our passing grade is 60%) and lots of promise. Indeed enough promise to keep a practical breeder like me to keep on breeding the blakliz. For some years, I kept the bloodline for myself. Now I have gained enough confidence on the blakliz to make them available to friends, clients and buyers.

But the blakliz is not for ordinary breeder. It is for those who dare to be different.

Clockwise from left:
The original blend (the original Ledesma-sipsip line); the blakliz plus (plus the blue face) and the midnight grey (infused with Aguirre grey). Out of five outstanding brood cocks evolved three families of blakliz;
Gemuel Labrador, RB Sugbo ace handler and a midnight grey version of the blakliz. This particular line scored magnificently in the hands of Gemuel.
The Way of the Practical Breeder

And when I tell you these are pure sweaters, pure gilmores, pure stuarts, it is a term, not a fact. Because none of my fowl, that I have ever had, has been of one blood only.

— Carol Nesmith
Game fowl breeding is not only complicated, it is also time-consuming and expensive. Thus, it is tagged as domain of the rich. Small timers may be able to challenge the big timers for supremacy in other aspects of cockfighting such as selection, knife tying, conditioning and handling, but not in breeding. Because breeding, supposedly, does not only require substantial capital investment in breeding stock, land and facilities, it also demands quality time from one’s self, as well as, paid manpower and expensive technology that are beyond the reach of ordinary chicken lovers. Plus the fact that game fowl breeding is a hit and miss affair, meaning it is like lottery wherein we always hope to hit some prizes but more often than not end up with nothing. In this regard, the more advantage the rich breeders enjoy, because they will have the luxury of more brood fowl which is same as buying more lottery tickets, thus, improving their chances of hitting a jackpot.

Most books on game fowl breeding begin in discussing the huge amount necessary to start up, therefore, disqualifying outright the ordinary aficionado who dreams of someday producing game fowl of his own creation. Well, this is proper and true. But that’s when talking of nothing but the ideal situation. It doesn’t, however, mean that those of us who could not afford the ideal situation, could no longer try. Otherwise, this would mean that ordinary chicken lovers no longer have the right, or chance to face the challenges in game fowl breeding and experience the enjoyment in trying, or the satisfaction in reaping the fruits of their labor?

Maybe, we can still pursue breeding even under less-than-ideal conditions? Anyway, in cockfighting, each one of us, like water, seeks his own level. Maybe we could just set our breeding goals to the demands of the level and the standards of circuits we intend to compete in? Maybe less expensive but acceptably good breeding materials will do. For after all, breeding is so complicated that one could not ascertain the outcome. Sometimes, the most beautiful brood stock produce mediocre offspring while average parents produce outstanding progeny. The reason for this is that we only judge the parents based on the traits we see or phenotype. It may not be enough, because, there are characteristics we could not see, the genotype. Therefore a beautiful and superb fighter for a brood cock does not guarantee success.
Likewise, maybe a small land will suffice. We don’t need hectares of ranging area when we only raise a few dozen stags a season. And, with target production of just a few dozen stags, certainly we don’t need millions in operating capital.

RB Sugbo chickens enjoyed moderate successes in our own circle as well as those in which our clients competed. They were also competitive in stag tournaments such as Bakbakan, Heritage Cup, Rambulan and local GBA competitions. But, I have yet to see a chicken of mine pitted in these so-called big events with hundreds of thousands of pesos in entry fee alone. Maybe I did not have the right connections. Or, I might have not been able yet to produce rooster in the caliber of the most expensive bloodlines in the country, but I enjoyed consolation in the knowledge that the sugbus may compete with dignity in the toughest derbies anywhere.

The first thing is to set a realistic goal. For example, the goal of RB Sugbo was to produce quality chickens that could be competitive in small and medium sized derbies and make them affordable to common sabungeros. The fact that RB Sugbo has produced some chickens that were competitive in some top derbies didn’t hurt. We considered it success beyond expectation, thus a bonus.

Many successful breeders started up small and ended up big. On the other hand, I have known of big shots who started breeding with all guns ablaze. Unfortunately, after many years, their guns were still firing blanks!

For all we know, all it takes for one to experience the enjoyment and satisfaction of breeding the game fowl are a realistic goal, corresponding capital to back it, and determination to succeed. This is what we call practical breeding. This is our first guide in our breeding of the blakliz—practicality.
Start right

Whether you are a dogmatic (traditional) or pragmatic (practical) breeder, it is always wise, however, to heed the advice of Mayor Juancho Aguirre, the legendary breeder of the lemon guapo and the Aguirre grey, that there is only one way to start it right. Mayor Aguirre meant: Start right by getting the best materials from reliable sources because it will cost about as much to produce and raise mediocre chickens as real good ones. And, that the greatest reward in breeding the game fowl is in knowing you are doing it correctly.

Basic genetics

What the good mayor said was the rationale or why we should start with good materials. To do it, however, aspiring breeders of game fowl should first possess knowledge in basic genetics. This comprehension of fundamentals will help us determine what a good material is and be able to acquire them as Mayor Aguirre and other authorities on breeding suggest. Genetics, the science that governs reproduction of genes, is a complicated study on how genes are passed on from one generation to the next. The complexity of genetics is one reason why game fowl breeding is not a simple matter. No breeder, regardless of ability and resources, can be certain of the outcome of a mating. Because of this, breeding is regarded as the highest form of involvement in the chicken sport. It is not easy to become a successful breeder. But this should not discourage us from taking up the challenge and perhaps the satisfaction in creating bloodlines of our own name and liking.

In cockfighting breeding is of utmost importance. It is the chickens’ foundation. Other factors that will contribute in enhancing the good traits set by successful breeding are environment, nutrition and exercise.

This book on how we bred the blakliz is also a guide to the ordinary chicken raiser. It is in line with one of the objectives of RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology which is to design and transfer technology suited to the means of common sabungeros in order to narrow down the gap between the big and the small timers. The point is even small chicken raisers have the right to enjoy every aspect of sabong, including breeding. Also, because at any rate, breeding the game fowl, may it be for big time or backyard, can be a source of additional income. Genetics is important. But it doesn’t mean we have to earn a master or doctorate in genetics in order to be able to breed the game fowl. Basic knowledge in genetics and a lot of common sense would be enough. We need fundamental knowledge in genetics in order to enjoy and get satisfaction from what we are doing. We cannot enjoy doing something we are ignorant of. Basic knowledge will enable us to set genetic objectives that we can use
as yardstick to determine whether we had succeeded or failed. Such objectives could be simple like producing chickens with straight comb. Or complex like combining different fighting traits to produce roosters with power, speed, flight and shuffle—attributes that might be opposites but might yet converge in a bloodline. Without essential knowledge or if we are ignorant of genetics we will not know how to start toward our goal, or we will not even be able to formulate a goal. Basic knowledge and common sense are enough to set one up as a practical breeder of a breed of game fowl such as the blakliz.

**Phenotype-genotype**

First, let us tackle phenotype and genotype because they will be the basis and foundation of the standards we will set in choosing our brood cocks and brood hens. Phenotype comprises the characteristics and traits that we can see in an individual chicken such as the type of comb, plumage and leg color, body conformation, height, weight and the likes. Some of the phenotype of the blakliz are dark plumage, dark legs, and intelligent, fast and agile fighting traits. An individual’s phenotype were set by its genes, and enhanced or ruined by other factors such as environment, nutrition, and the general conditions under which this particular individual was kept.

On the other hand, we cannot see the genotype of the chicken, but genotype consists of the genes that dictated and set the chicken’s phenotype. Likewise, the success or failure of the genotype in constituting the phenotype of a chicken depends on the manner how this particular chicken was raised. A rooster may have inherited genotype for superb fighting ability but if raised under miserable conditions, this genotype for good fighting skills would not reflect in its phenotype.

**Dominant-recessive gene action**

Each of the individual traits and characteristics in a chicken’s body is being constituted by a set of two genes. One of the genes came from the father, the other from the mother (For our purpose we will use the term gene, but sometimes colloquial usage of the term gene e.g. "good gene", "leg color gene" may actually refer to an allele). Combined, these two genes would form a trait in the said individual. Example the simple feature of comb type whether pea or straight is determined by the type of gene contributed by each of the parents. If both parents contribute pea comb genes, then the offspring will have pea type comb. Because both of its genes are pea comb, this individual then is pure
pea comb or homozygous. If both parents throw straight comb genes, then the offspring will be straight combed. This individual is also homozygous or pure for straight comb genes. But what if one parent throws a straight comb gene and the other contributes a pea comb gene? Then the offspring will be heterozygous, neither pure pea comb nor pure straight comb.

Here comes the dominant-recessive gene action. Although the genotype of the said chicken is heterozygous for having one gene for straight comb and another gene for pea comb, its appearance or phenotype will be pea combed. Why? Because when it comes to comb types, pea is dominant to straight. Meaning every time one parent throws pea comb gene and the other straight comb, the offspring will always manifest the phenotype of a pea comb. If this, half pea comb-half straight comb chicken is mated, then it will probably throw gene for pea comb half of the times and gene for straight comb the other half of the times. If mated to pure pea comb individual, all its offspring will be pea comb in looks because the pure individual will throw pea comb genes all the time. No matter what type the heterozygous individual throws, it will always be paired with the pea comb gene coming from the homozygous individual, which is dominant (pea + pea = pea comb; pea + straight = pea comb).

If the heterozygous individual is paired with another heterozygous individual then the probability is that ¾ of the offspring will be pea combed and ¼ will be straight comb (pea + pea = pea; pea + straight = pea; straight + straight = straight). If one parent is heterozygous while the other is pure of the recessive gene, then the probability is that half of the offspring will be pea combed the other half straight combed (pea+straight = pea; straight + straight = straight). Remember that the only time the recessive gene of a kind will manifest in the phenotype or appearance is when it is paired with co-recessive gene. Because of the absence of another gene that will dominate it. Dominant-recessive gene action also applies to other characteristics such as color of plumage and color of legs. For example grey is dominant to red. Light leg color is dominant to dark colored leg. For purposes, of practical breeding, to which this book is devoted, essentials will suffice. Further learning in the science of genetics will be, however, helpful and useful to more serious students of gamefowl breeding.

**Single mating**

Throughout the development of the blakliz, we employed a lot of single mating. Single mating is when we mate a brood cock to a single hen. A brood cock can be single mated to different hens at a time. But we
cannot single mate a certain hen with more than one brood cock at a time. We can single mate a brood cock to many hens by separating the hens individually and rotating the brood cock among the hens. The eggs should be marked individually so we can later on determine from which hen the egg came and mark the chick accordingly.

We could also do single mating even if we put a cock over many hens in a yard, provided trap nests are used. Trap nest as the name implies, are designed to trap the hen that lays the egg inside the nest where it will remain until a caretaker will have identified the egg accordingly. But we cannot allow a hen to be mated with many brood cocks during a given span of time for we could not tell from which brood cock came the sperm that will fertilize the egg. In order to ascertain the father, we should leave the hen without a brood cock for at least ten days before we put together the cock we intend to be mated to the hen.

By separating hens individually, we can single mate a cock to nine hens. On the first day we put the cock over hen no. 1 in the morning; hen no. 2 at noon; and hen no. 3 in the afternoon. On the second day it will be hen no. 4 in the morning, no. 5 at noon; and no. 6 in the afternoon. Consequently on the third day it will be the turn of hens 7, 8 and 9 respectively. Then back to hens 1, 2 and 3 the following day and so forth. An interval of two days in between copulations will still be enough to inseminate all the hens.

If we resort to flock mating, the area should be big enough or the brood cock should be tie-corded to prevent it from chasing a particular hen all over the yard. A cock has the tendency to go after a favorite hen most of the time unnecessarily over inseminating said hen to the exclusion of the others.

**Flock mating**

Flock mating is the presence of a brood cock and several hens together in a single yard or compartment. It is best if all the hens come from the same family, preferably sisters, so we can determine the composition of the offspring both from the male and female sides. If the hens are of different bloodlines, we will only be certain of the bloodline of the father but not the bloodline of the mother unless we employ the trap nets method. If we resort to flock mating, the area should be big enough or the brood cock should be tie-corded to prevent it from chasing a particular hen all over the yard. A cock has the tendency to go after a favorite hen most of the time unnecessarily over inseminating said hen to the exclusion of the others. Once on a tie cord the brood cock can only mate with the hens that come near. Hens that desire insemination will go near the cock.

**Flock-single mating**

As already stated, we could do flock-single mating if we put a cock over many hens in a yard, provided trap nests are used. Once the hen that lays the egg is trapped, it will remain inside the nest until someone will mark the egg accordingly. Like in individual single mating
method, in flock – single mating, we could still correctly identify the eggs of the hens individually.

**Controlled natural selection mating**

This is a system we devised for practical and innovative reasons. It is said that when chickens are left alone in the wild, the male will pick from among the flock a few favorite hens to mate. Likewise, hens, when allowed to roam freely in a yard of cored roosters, will also have preferences. Meaning, chickens, when left on their own, rely on instinct to choose their own mates which they believe are best to insure the continuity and improvement of their genetic line. This is part of what is called natural selection process.

When it is man who picked which brood cock to mate with which hen, it is called controlled selection process in forming, improving and/or propagating a bloodline.

Naturalists believe that nature endowed cocks with the instinct to determine which hens, and vice versa, possessed the right genes to combine with their own in order to produce better offspring in the succeeding generations. In short, they believe in the theory that nature knows best.

On the other hand, others believe that man can always improve on nature. They maintain that human intervention is paramount to improving breeds and producing superior individuals, as science proved true, time and again, through the years.

We, at RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology, believe in both. We recognized the evidence of remarkable progress that abound in the various fields of breeding as result of man’s intervention. At the same time, we acknowledged that nature might have endowed chickens with deeper instinct that man might never be able to fathom.

Thus, we experimented with what we called “controlled natural selection” mating method. The process involves putting a number of brood cocks, say three or four, in the same yard along with a number of hens, say a ratio of five hens or more per brood cock. The brood cocks are corded far apart from one another. The hens are let loose in the yard. The hens will now have the choice of which brood cock to go for mating. The brood cocks may also have the pick of which hen to mate among those who came nearby. In this sense, it is natural selection process at work. However, we see to it that the brood cocks are full brothers coming from one family. And that all the hens belong to another particular line that is as far related to the brood cocks as possible in order to avoid in-breeding. Therefore whichever brood cock mates with whichever hen, the outcome or the genetic composition of the offspring, at least by bloodline, is the same. In this sense, it is controlled.

We only apply this method to produce some of our battle fowl,
not all. Some lines do not result in uniformed offspring if mated this way. This is because some lines are not characteristically pure as the others. We never do this to produce our brood fowl. We only single mate to produce brood fowl. This method was never applied to the breeding of the blakliz as we took extra care when it involved our favorite bloodline.

We have considered our experiment with this method a success. The offspring out of this method performed as good in the pit as the other sugbos. It is noteworthy, however, that chickens out of controlled natural selection had a higher survival rate as chicks and in the free range than the others. This could be because nature indeed gifted the chickens with the instinct necessary in the survival of the fit environment.

**Corrective mating**

Examples of corrective mating are when you mate a tall brood cock to low stationed hens or a high flying brood cock over hens from a bloodline known to be grounders. The idea is to correct whatever limitations exist in a certain individual or flock. If we have a bloodline that lacks power we shall correct it by introducing some blood from a power strain. A line of slow cocks should be corrected by introducing speed blood into it as what happened when we acquired the bonanza from famous breeder Jessie Ledesma to introduce more speed to an early version of the blakliz. Shortcomings can be and ought to be repaired. There are however two defects that we should not even attempt to remedy. One is lacking in gameness. The other is poor cutting. These are the two most important attributes of a fighting chicken. If you have a line that lacks either of the two, then this line is not worth saving anymore. Do not even attempt to correct them.

**Upgrading**

Corrective mating is an effective tool for practical breeders. Another is upgrading. Upgrading is the introduction of new bloodlines that are deemed better than our existing ones. This fits the principle of practical breeding. Whereas, dogmatic breeders may find it hard to regularly introduce new blood to avoid disturbing the present composition of their beloved bloodlines, practical breeders will freely do it. Upgrading is a pill hard to swallow for traditional breeders because every time a new blood is introduced, the next...
generation will only be able to retain half of their old bloodlines. But practical breeders would not mind such a drastic change provided improvement is achieved. In the development of the blakliz we did this when we put in the bonanza and later, the Aguirre grey and the blue face and form new families.

**Infusion**

Infusion is the bringing in of a new blood and then slowly breeding it out. Say you will introduce a kelso blood to your bloodline of sweaters the resulting generation will be $\frac{1}{2}$ kelso $\frac{1}{2}$ sweater. You will then breed out the kelso blood by mating the $\frac{1}{2}$ kelso $\frac{1}{2}$ sweater generation to a pure sweater. The next generation will then be $\frac{3}{4}$ sweater $\frac{1}{4}$ kelso. If you breed another pure sweater to this generation, the next generation will only have $\frac{1}{8}$ kelso blood. This generation will have individuals with blood composition that is almost back to the original. Some breeders will go as far as $\frac{1}{16}$; or even $\frac{1}{32}$ left of the infused bloodline.

Traditional or preservationist breeders find infusion a useful technique. But, to practical breeders infusion is very time-consuming. And the idea of spending for a new bloodline that you will breed out eventually, sounds silly from the point of view of a practical breeder.

The purpose of infusion is what is called “shot in the arm.” After generations of keeping a bloodline pure, the genetic variation will become limited and dormant, such that an injection of new genes will awaken the bloodline. By slowly breeding out the new blood, the original bloodline will be restored. This idea is very enticing to dogmatic breeders but unappealing to practical breeders.

The difference between upgrading and infusion is that in a series of upgrading the old bloodline will eventually be phased out, while in infusion the object is to restore the old bloodline with a little change in the genetic composition.

**Intervention**

Intervention is a word we coined at RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology for another sort of a breeding-in-breeding-out technique. Because we did not know what the proper genetics term was, if any. There might be times that we will desire a new look in a bloodline we want to maintain. For example we have a family of hatch that we want to keep, but at the same time we desire to make them black in plumage. What we do is breed the hatch to a black family. The offspring will have $\frac{1}{2}$ blood of the hatch but will be black in plumage. If we breed these blacks back to the hatch family we will get some blacks that are $\frac{3}{4}$ hatch. Continuous
back breeding to the hatch side will produce chickens that are almost pure of the hatch family but are black in plumage. Intervention differs from infusion in purpose. In infusion, we want the new blood to perish without trace. In intervention we want to keep in the old bloodline the new trait we introduce. When we put in the bonanza blood in the blakliz and keep a large dose of the blood, it was upgrading. When we put in the blue face and slowly bred it out, it was infusion. When we put in the Aguirre grey and retained the dirty grey plumage while slowly breeding out the grey blood, it was intervention that led to another version of the blakliz—the midnight grey.

Like infusion, intervention would not be tempting to practical breeders as it is likewise time-consuming and will not serve any practical purpose. At any rate, however, it is fun to give it a try. As stated, we did it to the blakliz when we introduced the Aguirre grey. Although we slowly bred out the grey blood we kept the grey plumage in the midnight grey family of the blakliz.

**Pure cocks over 2-way hens for a 3-way cross**

There are experienced breeders who believe that fighting ability of a stag will likely come from the mother. We have time and again heard such story. One time Philip Neri, a breeder and renown author; Dr. Andrew Bunan, also author of books on breeding and acknowledged leading authority on gamefowl genetics; and yours truly had written in Pit Games a series of connected articles related to the matter. Our discussion started when Neri wrote in the article “The Hen Factor.” That based on his observation fighting style is being passed by the cock to the daughters and by the hen to the sons. This theory is called criss-cross inheritance and which is often credited for the so-called generation skip wherein the traits of a cock are more often seen in the grandsons rather than in the sons. *(This has been established when it comes to some sex linked traits like color of leg or plumage, but not yet with regards to fighting style.)*

In the succeeding issue of the Pit Games, I wrote that if it is true then I could “steal” the fighting style of his hulseys, a bloodline of Neri’s with brilliant fighting skills and which I wanted to acquire. But, unfortunately for me, he was not willing to sell his pure hulseys. Thus I would “steal” it by buying a single kelso-hulsey cross stag that he was willing to part with. Since the mother of this stag was hulsey then this stag carried the hulsey fighting style. If I would breed this stag then the coveted hulsey style would go the daughters. I would then breed this daughter back to the kelso-hulsey father. As result, both the stags and pullets of this mating would carry the hulsey fighting style. This was what I referred to in my article “Creating pure out of crosses” as the critical mating. Why?
Because at this point the father had the hulsey style that it would pass on to the pullets and the mother also had that style that it would pass on to the stags. In effect I would have created a bloodline of which both the stags and pullets should have the desired fighting style. After this critical mating, I could breed the members of the family among themselves and still maintain the fighting style.

Then followed the article of Dr Bunan which said that what I wrote was possible under some circumstances, not all the time, because it could still be subject to the dominant --recessive genes action. Nonetheless, based on the discussions between the three of us, it appeared that there is some grain of truth to the theory that fighting style of the stag is inherited from the mother.

This hen factor is one of the aspects we at RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology consider in our methods of creating our triple crosses. Almost all the time we triple cross, we use a pure brood cock over two-way hens. The first, although not the compelling, reason for this is the theory that fighting style is inherited from the mother. We know that mostly crosses are better all-around fighters than pures so we hope that these ability would be inherited by the stags.

Then there are practical reasons. Usually there are more crosses than pures in a gamefowl farm and in breeding we need more hens than brood cocks because a single cock may have as many as ten hens. Thus, since in breeding we need many hens it is just natural that we use crossed hens because there are more of them than pure. Another practical reason is that except for a few exceptions, as a rule crossed hens are better layers than pure. More eggs means more chicks and subsequently more stags to harvest. However, the factor that we gave the most important consideration is that because we can spar cocks we can choose a brood cock based on fighting style, something we could not do with hens. We are aware that pure individuals may either be very good or very bad in many aspects, including skills in fighting. If we use pure hens in triple crossing there is no way of telling which of the hens are skilled and which are bum when it comes to fighting ability.

**Double lock**

When we desire to create a new bloodline or set a strain, we have no choice but to lock the genes at one point in our program. This is to lock and maintain the blood composition of the line, otherwise if the genetic composition would keep on changing, then no bloodline or strain would have been created. The only way to lock the genes for the first time is by brother-sister in-breeding. Our method in RB Sugbo is to double lock. We lock not only the genetic composition but also the traits of a favored individual, mostly a cock. Usually we do it by breeding an outstanding stag of an outstanding mating to its sister hereby locking the genetic composition. Then we breed back the pullets out of this mating to the father (the outstanding stag in the original mating) to lock the traits of
the outstanding stag. If we believe in the theory stated in the discussion on the hen factor above, then the presumption is that in the original brother-sister mating the traits of the father would have been passed on to the daughters. By breeding back the daughters to the father then we could achieve the critical mating we have discussed earlier. In short our devised method of double locking involves the application of both inbreeding and line-breeding.

**Breeding is not simple**

Breeding is never simple. This is best underscored by the fact that breeders could not even agree on what the best methods of breeding are. Some breeders maintain that intense inbreeding is the only way to keep the integrity of a bloodline intact. Others said intense inbreeding is too risky and they advocate as better alternative milder form of inbreeding, mostly involving line breeding. Still others avoid any form of inbreeding, intense or mild. For them the only way is cross breeding.

The role of a practical breeder is to learn the many methods but not to strictly adhere to any. A practical breeder will adopt any of the methods as long as it fits the requirements of practicality. All practices and systems might be both good and bad depending on the situation. If carried to hazardous extreme any of them can be counterproductive. If done moderately and wisely, all of them may be effective. Observe moderation. Keep your program simple. Don’t inbreed too much as it is dangerous and tricky. Don’t cross too many lines as it will result to cross up individuals. Bear in mind, however, that in breeding there are no fail-proof formula. There never will be.

**Blaklitz**

Favorite: *This blaklitz broodstag (2011) which belongs to the original blend blaklitz family is a favorite. In 2011–2012 breeding season, it was bred with sisters right at the backyard of Rey Bajenting instead of his breeding farms.*
Creating Something Different

What does it matter whether a cat is black or white as long as it can catch mice, said Mao Tse Tung.
Breeding Concepts and Techniques

Our concept of practical purity

Practical pure is a term coined by RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology applied to some of our breeding materials. A practical breeder doesn’t have to be an expert in genetics. It is enough that we know some fundamentals such as that inbreeding aims at purifying desirable characteristics and traits so that individuals become homozygous of these traits and thus will be able to pass these on the next generation. This is why we inbred by mating relatives to relatives even at the risk of experiencing in-breeding depression that may result in offspring that are small, weak, and even cowards. Inbreeding is delicate and tricky. It will take precise and accurate skills in selecting which among the inbred individuals to mate in order to produce the next inbred generation that will continue to carry on the line and avert a breakdown.

Is there no other way to do it? If our aim is to produce a generation of individuals that is pure of the desired traits, is inbreeding the only way? The answer is: probably no. There might be another way. Take for instance the example of the simple hereditary trait of comb type. We can produce pure pea combs or pure straight combs even without resorting to inbreeding. We can produce pure straight combs by pairing a pure straight comb individual with another pure straight comb individual even if these two individuals are not related to each other. We can do the same with plumage and leg color. On the other extreme, we might also be able to do it, with complex characteristics such as cutting ability, flight, speed or power. We might be able to do this by mating a cock with excellent cutting ability over hens whose bloodlines are also known for excellent cutting ability; by breeding flight over flight, speed over speed, and power over power. If we do this enough number of times, we may be able to purify these desired traits even if we will not use related individuals. We may be able to purify desirable attributes, not bloodlines. We may not have in our hands pure of a certain family but we have pure cutting chickens or pure speed strain or pure power cocks. What does it matter whether a cat is black or white as long as it can catch mice, said Mao Tse Tung.

I got this idea from Antonio Hidalgo, author of a trilogy on sabong—which is among the best, if not the best cockfighting literature I
ever read. But allow me to add a piece of advice. To me it is, however, wise if we take extra care of the phenotypes of the individuals we will use in the process. It is perhaps better if we see to it that the individuals we use in the process of purifying traits, although coming from different bloodlines, have similar phenotypes as this will result in consistency in the appearance of the offspring. Of course, we can say there will be nothing wrong as long as they are good fighters and can catch mice. But consistency in appearance is a must in a bloodline.

Appearances also contribute to the general image of our farm. Consistency will also redound to better commercial value for our chickens. Buyers would love the sight of uniformed feathered warriors more than that of a bunch of rag-tag feathered mercenaries. It will be entirely different story if we don’t intend to sell our chickens because we will fight them ourselves, as then the rag-tag look will become an advantage. The absence of consistency will make our chickens harder to remember, identify and avoid in the ulutan or matching area even by the time they have won a sizable number of fights at a certain sabungan.

In the process of creating the blakliz we were already applying our own theory on practical purity, when we set in motion the process of purifying the traits we desired in the bloodline long before we began inbreeding them and setting them as strain. In effect the blakliz was already heavy with the desired traits such as cutting ability, intelligence and speed even before we started inbreeding them in accordance with the process of forming a new bloodline.

**Forming a bloodline**

The process of forming a new bloodline we can call our own invariably involves inbreeding at some point but maintaining said new bloodline calls for out breeding, no longer inbreeding. The process advocated by Dr. Bunan is as follows:

- Cross breed until you hit a cross that possesses the qualities you desire for a new bloodline.
- Inbreed in order to purify the desired traits and promote consistency.
- Separate the inbred into different families. Over time or after six generations these separate families will become unrelated to one another.
- Mate or outbreed individuals from one family with individuals from the other families in the process maintaining the bloodline’s composition but avoiding inbreeding.

This is the best process, a model on how to form a new bloodline. Individuals produced in this manner are not only pure as far as traits are
concerned but also pure as far as bloodline composition. The process will, however, take time. It may take at least seven years, often more--too long for practical purposes. Traditional breeders do this. They would say “to protect the integrity of our bloodline.” Another phrase oft-repeated by traditional breeders is “I have kept this bloodline for so many years without any infusion.” As a practical breeder, I doubt if it could be done without severe deterioration or breakdown of the line. But true or not, right or wrong these phrases always add significance to their bloodlines to the eyes of a potential buyer or newcomers to the game.

But again, for practical breeders, what is important is to purify the desired traits, not the bloodline. If purifying attributes and characteristics will do the trick, why bother doing for so many years what you could achieve in one or two? My personal opinion is that what Dr. Bunan presented was a perfect model for traditional and serious breeders. But, the Hidalgo model will also work, particularly for practical breeders. In RB Sugbo, we came up with some sort of a happy compromise between the two methods, particularly in breeding the blakliz. Our brood fowl are at least twice inbred. But we don’t go to the extent of going the full route of five to six generations of inbreeding. The longer you inbred, the higher the risk of depression and the lower the increase in the degree of being pure.

After two or three generations of inbreeding we already consider our fowl practical pure as far as the genetic composition is concerned. But we will not use or pass them on as brood fowl unless we are satisfied that they are also practical pure as far as our purifying traits and characteristics is concerned.

In breeding the blakliz, we followed both the process advocated by Dr. Bunan and the techniques of Hidalgo. First we started by crossing a Bates black cock and a blue face hen. Then we tried another cross this time the pullets from the first cross were mated to ponkan, a sweater brood cock, from Doc. Ayong Lorenzo. Then, because we felt ponkan was a superior individual, we mated back to him his daughters in a back-to-father line-breeding. Subsequently we attempted to set the blakliz as a bloodline by applying the brother-sister mating of the stags and pullets that were products of the back breeding to ponkan. That was our first try to set the blakliz as a bloodline. After the stags of the first attempt were pit tested and the results were deemed unsatisfactory, another crossing was applied. A black bonanza blood was introduced. It was sort of an upgrading and corrective mating.

Afterward, another series of brother-sister and other inbreeding techniques were resorted to in order to set the blakliz as a bloodline. In 2007, after three subsequent inbreeding we considered the blakliz a set
bloodline. In the process we always took into consideration the Hidalgo concept of breeding individuals with same attributes, in the case of the blakliz, speed-to-speed as this was the main fighting trait that we aimed at in creating the blakliz. Of course, cutting ability and gameness were also of vital importance. Thereafter there were a couple of infusions with a couple of bloodlines known for cutting prowess and gameness. First with the Aguirre grey that led to the Midnight grey version of the blakliz, then with the blue face.

**Cross breeding**

Crossbreeding is the mating of entirely unrelated individuals or individuals without any common ancestor for the past six generations. The object of cross breeding is to combine the good traits from both parents to produce better off spring. The beneficial effects of this genetic variation is called hybrid vigor. The more varied the genes in the individual the greater the chances for hybrid vigor, provided that vast majority of these genes are desirable. Although, not entirely proven, I am inclined to support the theory that more often than not, good genes for particular traits are more dominant than bad ones. This is supportive of the Darwinian theory of survival of the fit enough. I surmised that attributes that have everything to do with increasing the chances for survival such as strength, intelligence, speed and vigor must be dominant, otherwise species will be endangered and eventually become extinct.

There are various kinds of cross-breeding. There is the two-way cross or breeding say a pure lemon to a pure sweater. There is also the 3-way cross like a mating between a pure kelso and a lemon/sweater 2-way cross. There are 4-way, 5-way, 6-way crosses, so on and so forth. Crossbreeding combinations are practically limitless. But, in the same manner that too intense inbreeding may result in inbreeding depression, too much genetic variations may result in genetic confusion rather than in hybrid vigor.

Let’s not confuse ourselves with too many technical matters. Practical breeding does not deal with in-depth genetics. Rather it sets realistic desirable objectives and try to achieve these goals as economically as possible in terms of time, money and effort. Let us just keep in mind that inbreeding is designed to reduce genetic variations to increase the chances of an individual passing on to the next generation the desired traits; while cross breeding encourages more varied genetic composition to take advantage of the better-genes-are-dominant theory. Therefore as a rule, an inbred individual is better for breeding, and the crossbred individual is better for fighting.
In the breeding of the blakliz, RB Sugbo has put these principles to test. We might have been breeding the blakliz pure for some simple traits such as plumage, leg color, and perhaps comb type. But we will be going for more genetic variations for traits that have something to do with fighting ability. Because unlike simple hereditary features, the ability to fight well is determined by several attributes such as power, speed, flight, cutting ability and others. And, each of these attributes is separately dictated by a number of genes in a number of locations. In this regard we will cast our lot on the better-genes-are-dominant theory.

Inbreeding

Inbreeding is the mating between individuals with a common ancestor or ancestors within six generations. In short, the mating of relatives. Examples of inbreeding are the mating between full siblings or brother to sister mating; son to mother; father to daughter. These are intense forms of inbreeding. Less intense forms are half-brother to half sister; nephew to aunt; uncle to niece. There are also milder forms of inbreeding using far more removed relatives. Inbreeding is done in order to purify succeeding generations for certain desired qualities. The object of purification is to increase the chances that these traits will be passed on the succeeding generations. For example a flock of chickens pure of the feature of straight comb, when mated, will pass on nothing but gene for straight comb. So if we desire to have chickens with straight comb then we ought to breed individuals that are pure of the straight comb trait. This is the reason why inbred or purified chickens are preferred as breeders.

Breeding the gamefowl is not always as simple as that. Comb type is a simple hereditary trait, even trivial, but fighting ability and other attributes are not. Thus there is always the possibility that inbreeding will result not only in purifying desired traits but also undesirable ones. When this happens, the results are called inbreeding depression. As a rule, the more intense the inbreeding, the higher the chances of depression. The intensity of inbreeding is measured by what is called inbreeding coefficient. But for practical purposes we don’t have to master the inbreeding co-efficient of every mating combination between relatives. It is enough that we know inbreeding is resorted to in order to purify good traits for our brood fowl to pass on these traits to the succeeding generations. It also helps that we are, as well, aware of the dangers thereof.
Line breeding

Line breeding, usually a form of inbreeding, is a program which is anchored on a favored individual. This type of inbreeding is a favorite of preservationist or in-breeders who constantly work for the preservation of their bloodlines. The common notion is that line breeding means the continual breeding back to an individual, may it be male or patriarchal; or a female or matriarchal; or to both sides (see chart on this page). But this method although the best known, is by no means the only way to effect line breeding. Continual breeding back to an individual is only one way of effecting line breeding. There are various other ways. For instance breeding a favored cock over several hens and then breeding the offspring among themselves is another method of line breeding as, no matter what, the influence of the favored individual remains substantial, in this case half of the blood of all resulting offspring will still come from the said favored individual. As long as the object of the exercise is to keep the influence of a favored individual substantial in the genetic composition of a flock, then that is line breeding. Let us repeat here that line breeding is usually a form of inbreeding, but not all the time. We can line breed without inbreeding if the appearances of the favored individual in the pedigree of the breeders we currently use are more than six generations ago, although its influence remains significant.

In creating and developing the blakliz, we at first, applied several line-breeding programs. There were actually five-favored individuals, all males, in the blakliz program. It was not pure coincidence that all the favored individuals were males. The main reason for this, was we could pick the best among the males more conclusively than among the females. First, we could pick the males through sparring and even by actual pit-testing. Something we could not do with the females. Second, since males could be mated to several females at a time, it follows that a breeder would get more sampling from the brood cock’s offspring than of any single hen, thus, the conclusion would be more accurate.

After a series of line breeding, we occasionally stumbled upon some superior generations. When this happened we immediately locked the genes by brother-sister mating and started setting them as strain. When we have decided to stick to a particular composition, we observed moderate in-breeding in maintaining it. Our favorite was the rolling type of mating wherein the best performing brood fowl of the previous year were bred to the best performer of the current year within the same family. Except for a few instances, we preferred uncle x niece or nephew x aunt mating over the back to parent method. In creating the blakliz, our main considerations, in its looks, were to keep the line dark in plumage and dark legged.
We always wanted to keep them straight combs too. But we discovered that many of our good mating were between straight and pea combed parents. Sometimes we resort to this because we could not sacrifice fighting performance for a trivial phenotype such as type of comb. For fighting attributes we aspire for cutting ability, speed and intelligence. Power was not of utmost importance but the blakliz also packs enough power. It is also very game because of the blue face and grey bloods.

More than anything else selection is important. Particularly when we have to select among in-bred members of a family or intra-family selection. We have to know how to select. Selection is the key to success. Selecting brood cock is much like selecting a battle cock except that in selecting for breeding we also have to consider the capability of the brood cock to pass on the good traits to its offspring. A brood cock or hen that could do this is pre-potent. Prepotency is the ability of an individual to pass on its attributes to the next generation. We can have an idea of prepotency of an individual chicken if we know how this individual has been produced. There are cocks that look beautiful and fight well but they are heterozygous or not pure. They look good and fight well because it so happened that the better genes dominated the bad ones. When made to mate, it is possible that the genes these cocks will pass on to some of their sons and daughters will be the bad ones that were hidden in the genotype instead of the good ones that were manifested in the phenotype. Whereas a brood cock that is pure of the desirable trait, has nothing to throw but the good gene. This will make this individual pre-potent of the desirable characteristics, thus, it will be a valuable brood cock.

It will help if, in selecting a brood cock based on sparring or fighting ability, we also take a look at the skills of its full brothers. If the fighting styles of all the brothers are similar, then we can say that these characteristics are fixed in the said generation and most likely can be passed on to the next.

It will help if, in selecting a brood cock based on sparring or fighting ability, we also take a look at the skills of its full brothers. If the full brothers approximate the skills of the potential brood cock or if the fighting styles of all the brothers are similar, then we can say that these characteristics are fixed in the said generation and most likely can be passed on to the next generation. If the brothers fight differently from the potential brood cock, then it may be that the skills of the brood cock are distinct and the said brood cock has them only by chance because of favorable interactions of genes. Then chances are it will not be pre-potent for these attributes.

The situation will become more complicated when selecting brood hens. Unlike the cocks, we cannot spar the hens and select based on fighting ability. We can only judge the hens by their looks. Since we cannot select hens based on its individual fighting ability, we have to rely on the collective and average fighting ability and pit performance of the family, specifically of their full brothers. For the same reasons as in the case of selecting brood cocks, select hens with full brothers that are uniformed in beauty and superb fighting skills.
Keep ‘Em Dark, Keep ‘Em Deadly

The blakliz is meant for intra-family breeding. In fact, we recommend that you do it this way because battle pure blakliz is already an all-around fighter. There are only two rules in breeding the blakliz: keep them dark, keep them deadly.
Breeding the Blakliz

**Raising the blakliz**

If you want to be different, raise the blakliz. The bloodline is a proof that there are beautiful and good chickens aside from the common red, yellow legged, pea comb fowl. There are only two rules in breeding and raising the blakliz, and these are “keep them dark and keep them deadly.”

Raising the blakliz is also economical. You don’t need a second bloodline. You can fight the blakliz in its pure state.

As far as the blakliz is concerned, we designed them to be bred intra-families and produce battle fowl. Thus, we can have what we call battle pure. These fowl are composed of nothing else but of the blood of different blakliz families. Technically, they are pure blakliz. But, genetically they are not inbred.

Talking of pure, there are three kinds of pure blakliz. First is the foundation stock. Second is the parent stock and finally, the battle pure.

When we say pure we mean that there are no other bloodlines in its genotype except of the blakliz. We consider the fowl pure blakliz whether its composition consists of one family or several families of blakliz, and whether or not it is pure of certain less important traits. What we are after is their pre-potency in passing on the more important traits such as intelligence, speed and cutting ability.

Foundation stock comes from a single family. Foundation stock can produce foundation stock and parent stock. They are the most inbred of the blakliz. You may start breeding the blakliz with a set of foundation stock that consists of a trio or a pair each of two blakliz families. The first year you may breed the male with the female of the same family to produce more foundation stock and/or parent stock. The following year if you want to produce more foundation stock and/or parent stock you continue breeding the males and females of one family. However, if you want to produce battle pure you simply breed the male from one family to the females of the other or vice versa, or reciprocal.

You may take a short cut by acquiring parent stock trio or pair. In the case of parent stock, the male comes from one family of blakliz, the female from another. They will only produce battle pure, not foundation stock nor parent stock. The parent stock themselves are inbred, but the resulting offspring are not or just out-bred. The offspring are the battle pure. You may take a short cut by acquiring a trio of parent stock and breed them. The offspring are battle pure and ideal for fighting.
Battle pure are pure blakliz that are not intensely inbred. They may be distantly related but they are very safe to fight.

The blakliz is meant for intra-family breeding. In fact, we recommend that you do it this way because battle pure blakliz is already an all-around fighter. But if you are inclined to breed the blakliz crossed with other bloodlines it is best to blend them with lines with considerable flying ability without sacrificing cutting and speed. Preferably choose the high flying individuals among blacks, brown reds dark legged hatches or dark legged greys to avoid too much variation in the phenotype.

**Preparing the blakliz for mating**

About a month before the start of mating, breeders should be de-loused, de-wormed, and immunized. Hens can pass on to her chicks what is called passive immunity. The chicks can take advantage of this for a few days while they have not been given yet the active immunity through vaccination. We may also subject the breeders to bacterial flushing by antibiotics to kill bad bacteria in their system. However, it is known that among the bad effects of antibiotic is that it cannot distinguish good bacteria from the bad, thereby killing both. It is therefore necessary that we give pro-biotic to the breeders after bacterial flushing to replenish the good bacteria killed by antibiotic. We also advice that you incorporate in the nutrition program pro-biotic and organic feeding methods.

Then at this point we should start feeding the breeders with appropriate layer feeds. Some layer pellets should be mixed with the hens feeds. And conditioning ration for the brood cocks.

A cost saving program suggested by RB Sugbo involves the mixture of laying mash and pigeon pellets, plus a very small portion of flax seed, instead of the expensive breeders pellets. Coupled with regular provision of pro-biotic, the program results in high laying rate.

For brood cocks use your maintenance pellets instead of the expensive high protein conditioning pellets. To increase the protein value just increase the proportion of pellets vis-à-vis the grains.

Instead of 50-50 or 60-40, make it 80-20. Then give pro-biotic and regular vitamin-mineral supplement mixed in the water an occasional dose of injectable b-complex and ADE will greatly help. The better if you can find an affordable injectable b complex with amino acid. For the ADE there are affordable injection and also some water soluble brands.

The breeding yards or pens must be provided with artificial light to extend daylight hours. Provide the hens or pullets 14-16 light hours per day starting about a month before breeding season.

Also always remember to keep first class sanitation at all times.

**Hatching of eggs**

Tips in incubating eggs.

- avoid eggs that are either extremely large or small
- Do not set misshapen eggs
- discard thin or cracked shells, 
- do not wipe the eggs before incubation, 
- reject dirty eggs.

Proper care is necessary and important. Gathering your eggs on a regular daily basis is advised, even twice or three times a day especially during hot days. Keep the eggs in cool dark place, with humidity not less than 70%.

The two most common types of incubators are still air and forced air. The smaller of the two is the still air incubator and it has no fan for air circulation. The larger and better type incubator is the forced air style that includes a fan to circulate the air inside. When using the forced air incubator the recommended temperature is 100 degrees F. If this temperature is not followed or rises and lowers during the incubation period, chances are the eggs will be ruined and will not hatch. The improper temperature is the most common cause of poor hatching. The other common reasons are poor sanitation, lack of proper ventilation and neglectful egg turning.

The still air incubator requires an internal temperature of 102 degrees F for good hatching conditions.

The control of the humidity is also important during the incubation process, and is an extremely important factor in the eggs development. Should the humidity be too high or too low, proper development of the embryo is not possible and will result in poor hatching.

In addition to temperature and humidity, another important factor is oxygen supply. Proper amounts of oxygen for the embryo's growth and development is necessary. Still another factor for good hatching is the turning of the eggs. In the still air incubator, this is done manually and requires eggs to be turned three to five times a day. In an automatic incubator, this is done automatically, but still requires monitoring.

After 18 days in the setter, the eggs are transferred to the hatcher and no turning is done anymore.

**Incubation and brooding**

At RB Sugbo, incubation is either by natural or artificial. Mostly by artificial method of setting and hatching eggs by electric incubators. Our hatcheries are by GLITech, of Gilbert L. Inisin. RB Sugbo and GLITech have been collaborating and working together in discovering the better systems and designs in incubation technology.

Brooding is also both by natural—hen brooding, or artificial. In this respect, we find natural hen brooding as the better method. Thus, blakliz chicks
are hen brood.

Once a hen gets broody and set to start setting eggs, we put back some of the stored eggs on the nest for the hen to set. At the same time, we also place a number of eggs in the artificial incubator, whether hers or from other hens. The naturally set eggs and those in the incubator will hatch at about the same time. At night we put in the nest the artificially hatched chicks along with the hen hatched. The following morning, the hen will be misled into believing all the chicks are hers and will take care of all of them. However, care should be taken that the chicks are of similar color as some hens kill different-looking chicks. Of course, blakliz chicks would be of the same dark looks.

Brooding is both by natural—hen brooding, or artificial. In this respect, we find natural hen brooding as the better method. Thus, blakliz chicks are hen brood.

This method will save time for some hens. Some of the hens will not have to sit on their own eggs as the eggs are artificially incubated, thus they can be prepared immediately for the next clutch of eggs and insemination. These hens are also spared from brooding chicks, a process that will take at least a month of their time.

In the first two weeks, hen and chicks are kept in enclosures that will protect the chicks from rain and bad weather. These little houses are floorless and movable. The hen is tethered so it cannot partake on the feed for the chicks.
After two weeks, the chicks may be allowed outside by opening a door. The hen remains tethered inside so the chicks will not venture too far away. Soon the hens shall likewise be allowed outside so mother and chicks can now roam farther. At night hen and chicks get back to the house for protection from weather and predators.

**Free ranging makes the blakliz vibrant**

When the chicks are separated from the hen, they go to the range area. Here is why it is primordial that we range the chickens.

In the 1960s to the 70s, imported game fowl from United States completely dominated cockfighting in the Philippines. The main reason was chicken quality. Another reason was while our roosters were kept in coops, the American game fowl were country walked or free ranged.

It was also the case with cocks from Negros at the height of their popularity. Negros breeders enjoyed advantages in bloodline quality and free ranging.

What makes ranging so advantageous?

Free ranging allows foraging which enables the birds to eat all the varied plants, grass, and insects they can find. Eating large proportions of living greens, seeds, insects and myriad other natural commodities, makes ranged chickens more vibrant than those raised in limited space.

The advantages are clear. Ranged chickens get better nutrition and more suitable exercise. They are also mentally healthy and physically hardened after being exposed for months to the mercy of the elements and predators in a survival of the fit manner.

Proper ranging of game fowl starts when they reach about 10 weeks of age. By that time vaccinations have been completed; the chicks strong enough to survive in the open; and banding already done, whether for personal recording purposes or for qualifications in stag derbies.

Feed at free range are more economical. You may give feed three times a day. In the morning give about 15 grams/head; another 15 grams/head at noon and about 30 grams/head in the afternoon. The reason why we don't feed bulk on daytime is that hunger encourages the young chickens to venture far to find or scavage for food. It will provide them much needed exercise and develop their survival instinct.

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Feed pigeon pellets with a little grains and BSC to balance the protein. Branded stag developers are much more expensive with too little difference in benefits. The reason is marketing related. A very substantial portion in the difference between the price of “premium” gamefowl feed and that of the ordinary chicken feed constitutes the maker’s additional expense for advertising and has little to do with improved feed quality. The other reason companies may have also taken advantage of the chicken lover’s urge of providing his beloved fowl anything that is perceived to give it some advantage over the opponent.

Continue to give some pro-biotic, although at lesser scale because at the range the chickens may also take advantage of other natural and organic inputs. Never use antibiotics unless necessary, that is when an outbreak occurs. Afterward, resume the use of pro-biotic to replenish the good bacteria lost. Antibiotics also destroy some vitamins in the body so it is also wise to provide vitamin supplement after every application of antibiotics. We may de-worm chickens in the range. Maybe once, that is in between the time they were released and the time of harvest.

3 months old

The most critical age for ranged chickens is when they are still about 3 months old. This is because they might not be hardened enough for exposure to the elements. Also, they are out on open ground for yet a short time, they are still susceptible to coccidiosis. We may consider deviating from no antibiotics for prevention policy at this point. We may give dosage of anti-coccidia a few days after the chickens are released in the range. Say, give the medicine for 3-5 days, two days before and three days after the chickens are out in the range. However, it has been established that chickens that regularly take probiotic are less prone to coccidiosis.

For late hatches, this period is more critical as it will coincide with the onset of the rainy season. Chicks hatched in March and beyond will still be 3 months old or less by June when rainy season begins. Make sure that there are safe roosting places in the range area.

Harvesting the blakliz

Harvest time is the time of the year that breeders harvest the stags in the range. It is one of the most satisfying moments of the season. At this time, caretakers should give attention to the range area. They should be watching for aggressive stags that have to be harvested right away. Extra measures should be taken very early in the morning and late in the afternoon. Stags tend to fight during these times of the day. Because of limited light, specially with dark fowl like blakliz, some stags cannot recognize stags higher in the pecking order and will decide to fight back.
when attacked. This reasoning also applies during rainy days when stags are wet and may look unusual.

It is also at this time of the year that we have to prepare the facilities and activities necessary when stags have been harvested. If we don’t intend to fight the stags in the stag derbies it would be much better to leave them at the cord area for maturing. All we have to do immediately after harvesting the stag is to delouse, de-worm (better with natural de-wormer) and put them in a small enclosure to tame them. A false tie-cord put alternately on the legs will accustom the stags to the tie-cord. When the stags have been tamed and ready, you may transfer them to the cording area.

Stags left alone to grow naturally are better suited for bull stag fighting than stags that were conditioned for fighting while still stags.

If we intend to fight our newly harvested stags in the stag competitions, then these are the things to remember and do:

Prepare the facilities for harvest.

- Small pens, usually the 3x3’ folding wire pens available in poultry supply stores. It is better to place the harvested stags first in small pens to tame them sooner. In smaller confinement it is easier to catch the stags when administering the post harvest care such as delousing, de-worming, injection of supplements and bacterial flushing.
- Hardening pens. Hardening pens should be spacious enough to accommodate the stag and pullet and high enough for the pair to roost. Adequate measurement will be 5x5x5’ or 6x6x6’ although of course the bigger the better.
- Tie-cords. Aside from the regular tie cords, you may also prepare some high cords and long or running cords. High cords will exercise the stags’ wing and breast muscles. Long or running cords will exercise the legs and thigh muscles. The stags may take turns in occupying the different types of tie cords.
- Scratch boxes. The stags should also be placed in scratch boxes regularly.
- Lights. An area with available artificial lights will be very helpful in pre-conditioning and conditioning the stags.
- Pullets. Prepare enough pullets to accompany the stag in confinement.

When the stag is caught it should be placed in the small pen to tame it and also for easier application of immediate post harvest care. After a while the stags will be rotated from the hardening pens with pullets to the different tie cords and back.
Dubbing may be done 30-45 days after harvest. This is approximately also 45-60 days before the fight. Straight combs should be dubbed earlier to give more time for recovery because straight combed stags suffer bigger wounds and lose more blood when dubbed. Also stags with combs that interfere with the eyesight. Preconditioning may begin after dubbing. Stags may be sparred more frequently at this point, 2 or even 3 times a week. But sparring should be limited to 3-4 buckles. Stags should be placed in the scratch box at least once a day and immediately every after sparring. Scratching will loosen up the muscles that were stressed by sparring. During the days stags are not sparred they should be trained by kahig and sampi. Always take care that in the midst of all these exercises you don’t overwork the young warriors.

Immediately after harvest, delouse, de-worm and give the stags some antibiotics for bacterial flushing. From this point on, vitamin and mineral supplements may be given regularly. There are natural de-wormers that are effective. For the blakliz and our other fowl, we use a set of natural de-wormer, probiotic and flax seed for cardio vascular care that is very beneficial to chickens particularly during pre-con and conditioning. Others give some steroids and androgens. But unless you are familiar with the use or willing to study the intricacies of the application, it is advisable to stick to natural means of enhancing the stags testosterone level. The company of a female may do the trick.

Pound for pound, stags ought to have more nutrients than cocks. Because, whereas cocks need nutrients just for maintenance of bodily functions and locomotion, stags require additional nutrients essential for growth. For stags crude protein contents of the feeds should be around 17-18%. You may feed pigeon pellets and a little grains but add occasional whole eggs and beef liver to raise the protein level. This is more economical and efficient than feeding with expensive hi protein pellets. Stags also require more calcium and other minerals. Immediately after harvest we at RB Sugbo provides stags access to flax seed to compensate for proteins and omega 3 that were readily available to them while they were in the range but not when already confined to pens and tie cords. Probiotic is also necessary to replenish the good bacteria that were killed along with the bad with the application of antibiotics for flushing. One of the negative aspects in using antibiotics is that antibiotics cannot distinguish good bacteria from the bad and will kill both.

Most important, in the care of stags for fighting, is to keep in mind that in stag fighting we are trying to hasten the development of the chicken. We are trying to accomplish in a few months what would normally take 2 years or more. We want to have a chicken mature enough for fighting at about 9 months of age. It is for this reason, that I am not so excited on fighting stags. I might be a sentimental fool, but, I don’t like the idea of seeing my very young chickens sent to mortal combat. It is akin to sending kids to fight a war.
Starting up with the Blakliz

Of course, the best way to start breeding the blakliz is to acquire authentic blakliz materials from the originator, RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology. When you get authentic blakliz you also get all the technology and guidance. You will instantly become not just a client, but a friend and even become part of the RB Sugbo family with access to everything RB Sugbo may come up with in the future from technological advancements, products of research, new publications and even to later versions of the blakliz that you might need in order to continue invigorating your stock.

There are two ways of starting up with the blakliz. You either get foundation stock or parent stock. There are three kinds of blakliz. These are the foundation stock, the parent stock, and the battle pure. Blakliz crossed with other bloodlines is no longer a blakliz. It then would be a blakliz cross. Blakliz is pure blakliz, nothing else.

Foundation stock or foundation trio is a trio that comprised of a blakliz male and females that come from the same family of blakliz. They are called foundation stock because if bred among themselves they would produce pure of the same family. They can exactly reproduce their breeding composition.

Parent stock or trio are a set of blakliz wherein the male comes from one blakliz family and the females from a second blakliz family. To recall, there are three blakliz families namely the blakliz original blend, the blakliz plus (with infusion of the blue face from Jason Garces) and the blakliz midnight grey (with infusion of the Aguirre grey). The male in a blakliz parent stock would come from any one of these families while the females would come from another of these blakliz families. The parent stock, if bred among themselves would produce battle pure blakliz. Parent stock cannot produce parent stock of a particular blakliz family because they cannot reproduce themselves as parent stock come from different blakliz families. They can only produce blakliz battle pure.

Blakliz battle pure are blakliz whose father come from one blakliz family and the mother from another blakliz family. By bloodline or technically, they are pure blakliz but genetically, they are not inbred. They are the ideal blakliz for fighting. However, RB Sugbo does not sell blakliz battle pure. We at RB sugbo encourage breeding, but not buy and fight operations. We produce battle pure blakliz for our own fighting requirements. Starting in 2012 we will be selling blakliz foundation and parent stock for those who may love to breed the blakliz. We will not sell blakliz battle pure to those who will only love to gamble on the blakliz.
Blakliz
Brotherhood

When you acquire the blakliz direct from RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology, the originator, you will not only get all the post-transaction support such as access to new developments in technology, information and advancements but also access to future blakliz materials to invigorate your stock.

Your direct acquisition will be authenticated by the following: 1) Certificate of authenticity; 2) Inclusion and access to Blakliz registry; 3) An autographed hard copy of the book “A Guide to Practical Breeding” with your name and photo of the particular blakliz you have acquired on the cover; and, 4) a Blakliz Almanac and Guide Book (owner’s manual).

These will certify that you have acquired your foundation or parent stock of the blakliz from the originator itself, RB Sugbo Gamefowl Technology. It will be proof that you will be capable of producing F1s of the originator’s stock. Otherwise, without such authentication, the most you can say is that you can produce F2s, that is if you acquired your stock from someone with the authentication papers.

The authentication will also entitle you to all the services, guidance, stock evaluation, suggested matings and attention by RB Sugbo with regards to your breeding the blakliz—an assurance that you will not be left alone in midstream.

You will be also entitled to enter in the Blakliz Registry all the pure blakliz you may produce. Every time you fight a pure blakliz you may enter the result, win, loss or draw. This is designed so all of us can monitor the progress of the different blakliz lines that will be fought anywhere by anybody who have an authentic pure blakliz. This will help RB Sugbo GT in its further research and development of the bloodline. All owners of authentic blakliz will then have access to this research and study.

In effect you will not be breeding the blakliz on your own alone. You will be joining us, in RB Sugbo GT, and others who will also breed the blakliz in a Brotherhood of Peers.

However, we will not be a big brotherhood at the start because in the year 2012, the first time we offer in the market the blakliz, we will not be having many stock to offer at once, moreover since we will be very strict in our quality control. Only the best and those that deserved to be called blakliz shall be released. For 2012 we will be able to make available about a few dozen trios of blakliz, this after all the selection and culling we will do to ensure that only A1 stock will be released. Say, A1 blakliz trios will be available on first-come-first-served basis starting July, 2012. So, reservations will apply.

For comments and/or reservations click:
http://blakliz.wordpress.com/reservation/
The team: The three musketeers of RB Sugbo-LT farm in Leyte are shown in photo above, l-r Gemuel, Willy Villanueva and Butsoy Cortes. At right photo with Gemuel is his father Elmer Labrador holding a Sugbo lemon. Along with the blackiz, the sugbo lemon figured pretty well in their campaigns in Leyte-Samar area and in Manila.
Interactive Section

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Dynamic duo from RB Sugbo

The blakliz
Watch:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBYrlpW66Eo&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL

Sugbo lemon
Watch:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aoBXExQqRNU&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL
Everyone is breeding sweaters, roundheads, kelsos, hatches, buliks, gold and other ordinary bloodlines. But...

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