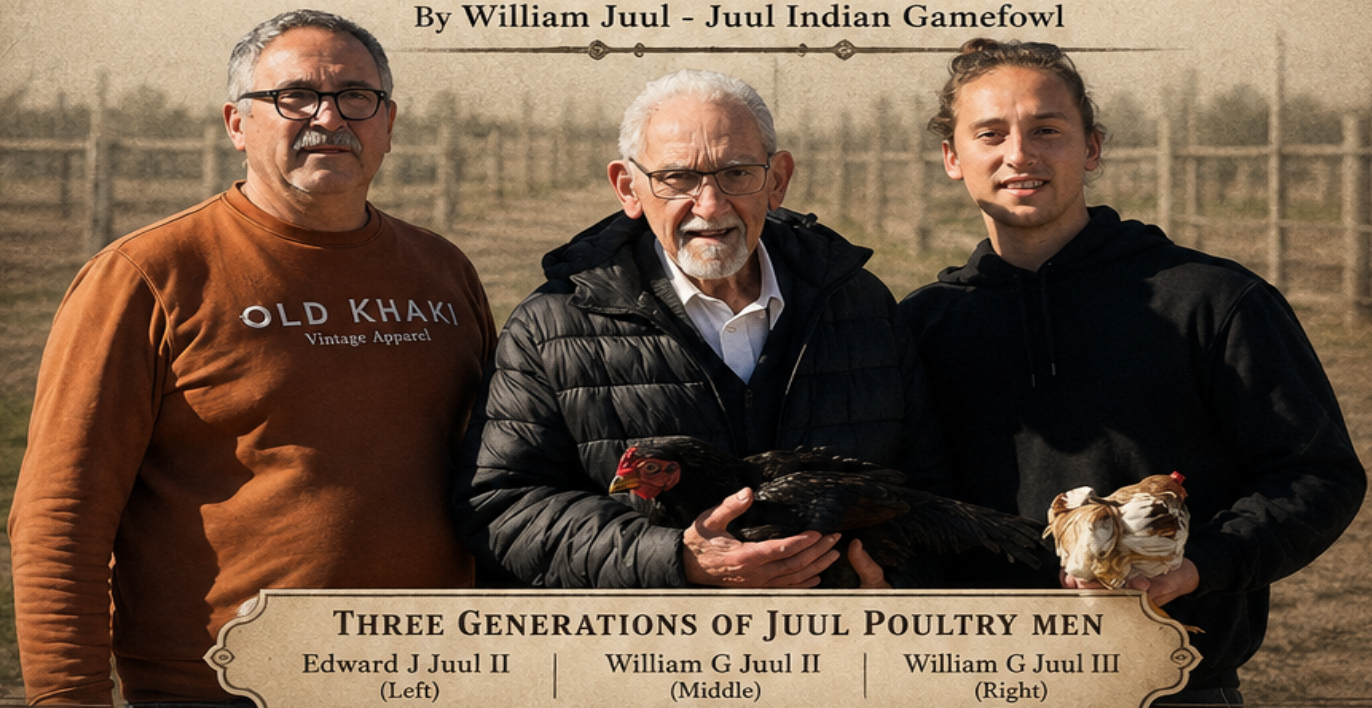


JUUL INDIAN GAMEFOWL.



THE BREEDER'S GUIDE to INDIAN GAMEFOWL

By William Juul - Juul Indian Gamefowl



THREE GENERATIONS OF JUUL POULTRY MEN

Edward J Juul II
(Left)

William G Juul II
(Middle)

William G Juul III
(Right)

The Breeder's Guide to Indian Gamefowl

A Breeder's Manual for Type, Line, and Colour

By William Juul

Juul Indian Gamefowl

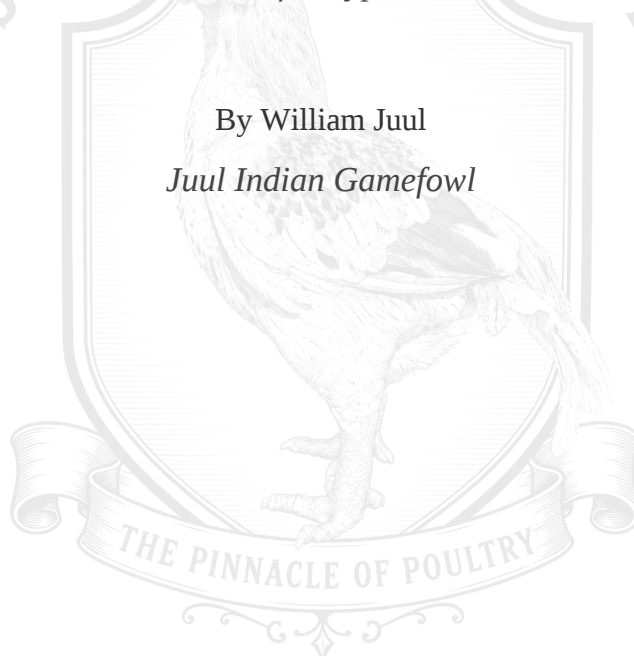


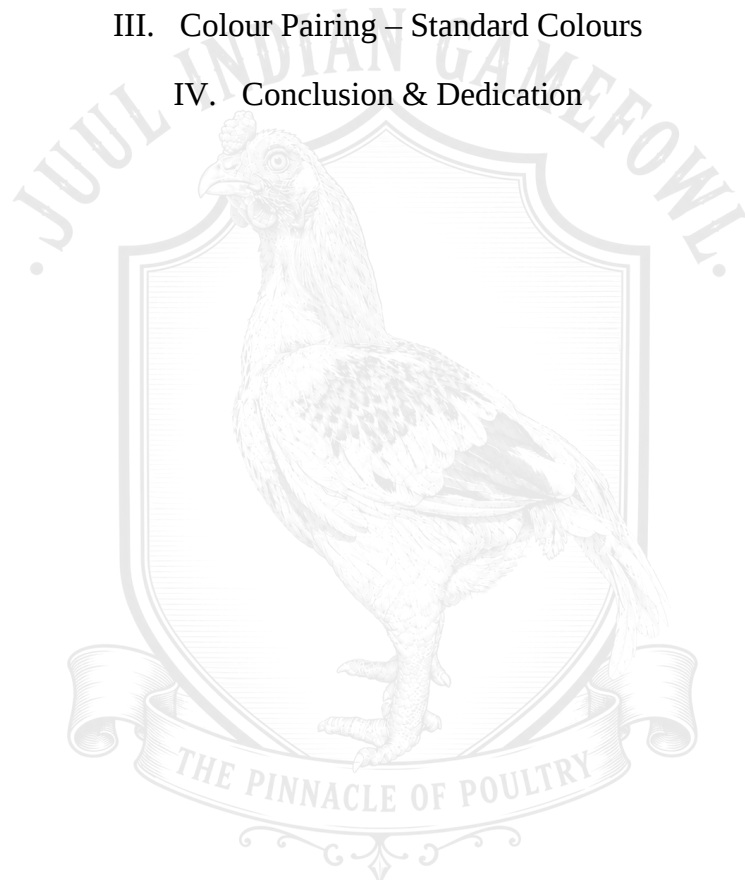
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As the days get longer and hotter, and as your birds finish their moult, the excitement of the breeding season begins to creep up on you.

For some, this time of year is always a pleasure, but for many Indian Game breeders it can also be somewhat daunting.

The aim of this article is to make the breeding season easier and more understandable. Take note that this document is based on passed-down and shared knowledge, and is by no means the so-called “gold standard”, but rather the system that has worked for me.

That being said, there have been many years where I have had to go back to the drawing board, reduce my breeding pairs, and essentially start over. But, in a nutshell, that is Indian Game breeding — a journey of ups and downs, constant learning, and continual refinement.



CHAPTER II

PAIRING METHODOLOGY

Breeding can be made very simple, but the results of simplified breeding do not always yield the same level of success. What is simple breeding? Simply running hens with cocks and hoping for the best. This quantitative breeding method may produce large numbers of eggs and offspring, and from time to time you may hit the proverbial jackpot, but the goal should always be to breed the best quality chicks without the need to produce hundreds.

I will focus on two aspects of breeding, the first being line breeding. The term is often overused, but if you can perfect it, it can open doors that will set you apart from other breeders.

Line breeding can be divided into two categories: patriarchal and matriarchal line breeding. In simple terms, your line will either be based on a male or on a female bird. Selecting the male or female to build the line will depend on the qualities that the chosen bird possesses.

If you have a hen that boasts great type, strong bone, and overall powerful features, while your male is lacking, then your goal should be to build the line around the hen. The same applies when a male presents better qualities than the female.

For the purpose of this example, we will use a male. Let us call him Male A, and the female paired to him Female A. From their offspring, you will select the best possible female (Female A1) that displays the strongest desired features, and pair her back to Male A.

You will then repeat the process by pairing Male A to Female A1, again selecting the best female from that mating (Female A2). By breeding Male A to Female A2, you will have established a line originating from Male A.

By continually selecting females that show the most desirable traits and breeding them back to the foundation male, you reinforce the qualities you wish to preserve. Take note, however, that just as desirable traits become fixed, undesirable traits can also become fixed. For that reason, the selection of breeding birds must always be done with great care.

When line breeding, it is generally best to maintain three or more separate lines. This allows third-generation birds to be bred back into different lines and helps prevent excessive inbreeding.

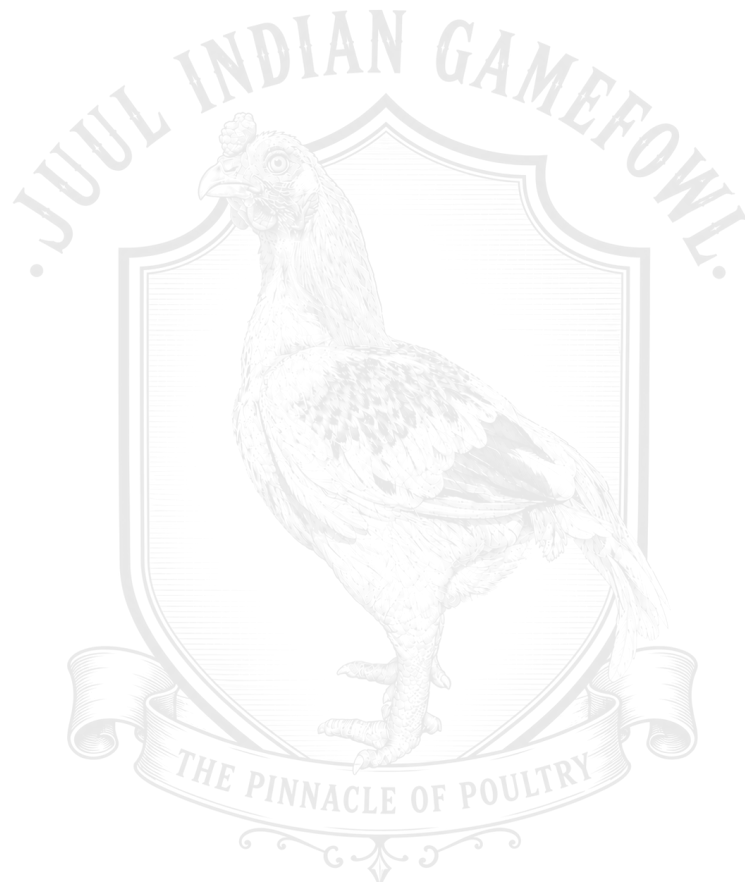
It is also important to note that line breeding is primarily the foundation for establishing type rather than colour, as it may require multiple single-colour matings to achieve the desired result. Colour selection will be discussed later in this article.

The second breeding methodology is group breeding. In this system, you keep separate breeding groups rather than individual pairs. The method I have traditionally used is breeding in quartets — one male with three females — although it can also be done in pairs, trios, or larger groups.

The method is straightforward. You select the best male offspring from the quartet and use that male back over the three hens. At the same time, you select the three best female offspring and breed them back to the original male.

Additional male and female offspring can either be used to form new breeding pairs or to establish new breeding groups.

This method is much simpler and carries less risk of close inbreeding, but certain traits may take longer to become firmly established because the gene pool remains somewhat more open than in line breeding.



CHAPTER III

COLOUR PAIRING

The three standard colours for Indian Game are Dark, Jubilee, and Double Laced Blue. It is important to note that all females should be double laced.

When selecting for colour, the goal should always be to maintain a strong ground colour combined with clear, detailed lacing. In Dark birds, maintaining a strong green sheen is equally important.

Dark Indian Game can be bred with Dark birds or over any of the standard colours, and should generally serve as the base when breeding Jubilee and Blue.

Dark × Dark

This pairing can be maintained over many generations with excellent success, although it may gradually darken the ground colour over time.

Males that tend to show more lacing as youngsters are ideal for producing strong lacing. From time to time, males will also appear with slight redness in the neck hackles and back. These birds are often highly desirable and can produce excellent lacing in females.

Dark × Jubilee

Pairing Jubilee with Dark is my preferred breeding method, and I believe this colour combination should become the gold standard once type has been properly established.

The two colours complement one another and help maintain a strong ground colour. I have also found that breeding well-marked Dark males to well-marked Jubilee females often results in excellent laced thighs in the Jubilee offspring, something that can be difficult to achieve consistently.

Dark × Blue

When breeding Dark over Blue, the goal should be only to build your Double Laced Blue stock.

Any Dark offspring produced from a Blue × Dark pairing should never be reintroduced into the Dark breeding programme. Blue-bred Darks will negatively affect the green sheen in Dark birds and often produce a purple sheen instead.

This can lead to weak lacing, loss of ground colour, and, if such birds enter the Jubilee programme, odd colours such as pile, splash, or washed-out Jubilees.

Jubilee × Jubilee

Breeding Jubilee is a topic on which many breeders disagree. Everyone seems to have their own method, and if it works, it works.

Generally speaking, I prefer to breed Jubilee to Jubilee when I have dark Jubilee males and females with single lacing but a deep, dark ground colour. The offspring from such matings can later be used back in Dark pairings without issue.

Some breeders also use this mating to clean up dark spots in the necks of males and females, but I have not found it particularly effective in my own breeding.

In my experience, Jubilee × Jubilee tends to wash out lacing after a few generations rather than improve neck colour.

Jubilee × Blue

If you want to get a group of Indian Game enthusiasts talking, this is the topic to raise.

You will hear many opinions and beliefs, but my general rule of thumb is to stay as far away from this mating as possible.

I have tried it in the past with very good first-generation results, but I began to notice strange colours appearing in the second and third generations.

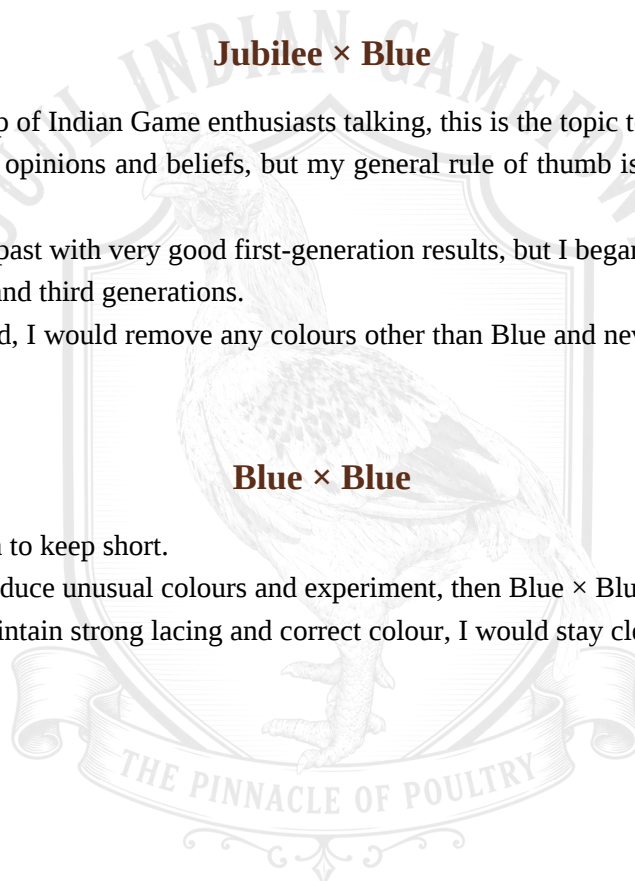
If this method is used, I would remove any colours other than Blue and never reintroduce them back into established lines.

Blue × Blue

This is the easiest section to keep short.

If your goal is to produce unusual colours and experiment, then Blue × Blue is the way to go.

If your goal is to maintain strong lacing and correct colour, I would stay clear of it.

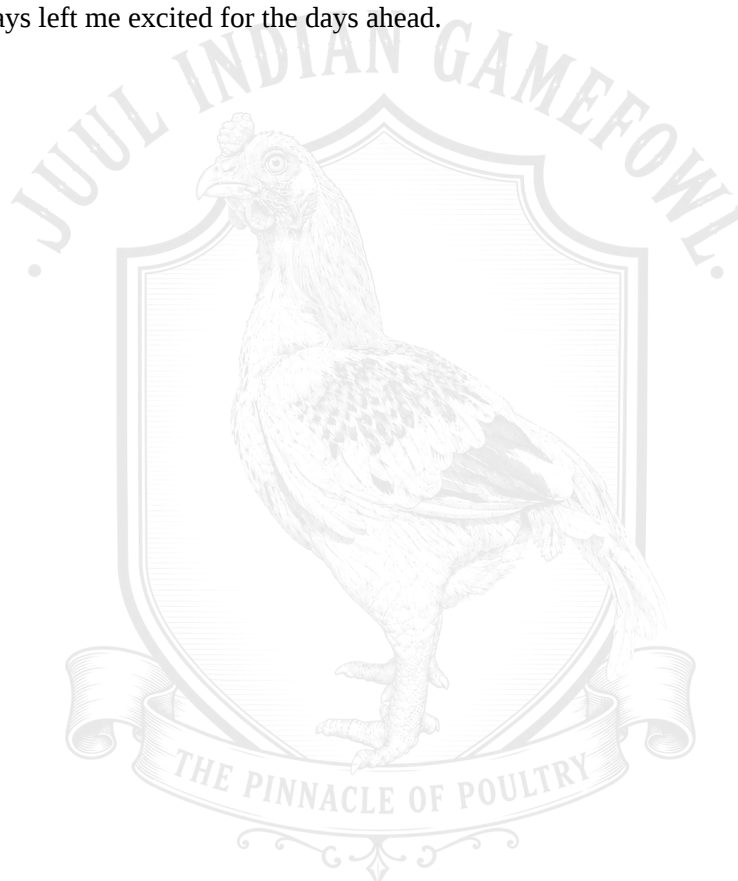


CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Breeding Indian Game is a lifelong pursuit, filled with ups and downs, good years and terrible years, but never a dull moment.

Over the years, it has allowed me to build friendships that will last a lifetime, connected me with people across the globe, and, at times, probably given my wife a few difficult days. Yet, when all is said and done, it has always left me excited for the days ahead.



Dedication

I would like to dedicate this article to my great-grandfather, Edward J. Juul I, for ensuring that Indian Game has been in our blood since the 1920s.

I would also like to thank my grandfather, William G. Juul II, and my father, Edward J. Juul II, for their constant support of me and my passion for Indian Game.



Edward J. Juul I



William G. Juul II with a Dark Indian Game male