

Grant Brereton presents...

## Breeding for Production



- Many people feel let down by the underperformance of today's modern pure breeds, especially the show stock which has so much emphasis placed on looks, size and shape that very little thought is given to utility purposes.
- I would like to expand on the word 'Utility.' Quite often the old trap-nested strains of utility breeds such as Light Sussex, White Wyandotte, Buff Orpington and Rhode Island Red, for example, aren't as pretty as their show cousins - but this doesn't make all 'unpretty' birds useful, or mean they will be good layers.
- It is easy to label a chicken which is not good enough to show, as 'utility.' This, to me, is as crazy as saying: "You haven't got the build to be a Rugby player, you are a footballer!"
- The above picture is of exhibition Light Sussex in the UK. It is a Nick Smith strain that once became exhausted as it got too inbred (inbreeding depression). The show-features remained, but production dropped right down to a very disappointing level.
- To fix this (before he retired), Nick introduced utility Light Sussex to his exhibition stock - a cross that is unlikely to have been made in the past, but did him a lot of good. He retained the brilliant egg-laying capabilities of the utility line while progressively breeding back to his show birds and selecting for looks and production. He created a very good strain that does well on the exhibition circuit as well as in the nest box. It can be done!