

Racing Pigeon Post

Barcelona

(A remarkable achievement)

Those of you that are interested in racing at the distance couldn't fail to notice that Nigel Lane has won the National from Barcelona. I now know his position in the international result is 475th from 25,320 pigeons, well up there.

I met with Nigel to get the low down on him and his birds Nigel is a retired police officer who started racing pigeons in 1987. Like most of the distance flyers in the south, he started racing The North Road in 1 day races.

His interest changed and as a final test he raced only with The North Road Championship Club winning 1st section from Thurso at over 500 miles. His interest then changed again in 2003 to The South Road and the extreme distance. Starting with British distance birds which did not gel with him and were patchy performers, he continued to search for other birds which led him to meeting up with Carlier-Petite, Eric Vanacker and Robert Ben at these meetings he found that they were flying predominately Dutch birds.

Nigel felt that he needed a Jan Arden, Van De Wegen, Van Wanroy type of bird. Researching various fanciers in Holland, he set out to acquire birds from some fanciers there.

He only started the distance in 2005 and has now won the National from Barcelona, a remarkable achievement and one that most people dream of and spend their lives trying to time even a decent one from Barcelona. Few succeed, many try. The winning bird prior to Barcelona had already raced 1393 miles putting in a reasonable performance for Nigel.



The winning pigeon named "EADHUN" is a 2009 cock bred from a cock from Jac Steketeer and a hen from Jelle Outhuijse both excellent fanciers in their own right. (Extended pedigree showing part English origin.)

"EADHUN" will be prepared for his return to Barcelona next year.

Nigel lives in Havering, Essex, not exactly a hot spot for National distance winners and yet this year has produced 4 National Winners, see it can be done.

Preparation

The birds in their first year are only given a few tosses as all of them are late bred. Nigel due to lack of room, only breeds after the racing season is over. The birds are put aside to have their first race as yearlings though Nigel calls this training.

The first race is from 185 miles over the water, he then proceeds as follows, those that return are sent 220 miles with the BBC because most of the birds are flying into the West Country and Nigel is in the East. This is a severe test for them.

At 2 years of age, they go to 3 BBC nationals and a race with The London South East Classic Club as training.

At 3 years of age the brakes are off and they go to 4 National races and finish up racing from Barcelona.

Feeding

Young birds are weaned on a mixture of beans, wheat, barley, maize and a small amount of sunflower seed which Nigel calls his general mix. As yearlings they stay on this mix but when racing the proportions of the grains change but not the type of grains. As the distance increases the fat content of the grains is increased. I asked Nigel if he gave them anything extra and he said no just the fat content.

Treatments

Nigel treats the birds routinely for Coccidiosis and Canker and the normal vaccination against Para.

All in all a very interesting meeting and what a bird, I wonder if it can do the same next year.

Garry Gatenby-Taylor.