

# Droppers

by Luka Kapac

I can give you some of my experiences only. But ultimately you have to make the decision on how to select and train your choice of dropper. I can only tell you what I look for so that perhaps you yourself can determine a program best suited for you.

No two droppers are the same as they react differently to many variables, those being: your loft design, flying position, training of tipplers, training of droppers, the type you keep, even color, feeding method and more I'm sure.

The type of dropper you need largely depends on above variables but more importantly the type of Tippler you fly. Do you need them to go up and fetch the kit or do they need to just flutter about? How many?...depends again on your type of Tippler. Some only need one or two and others an entire team...10plus. My advice....do not have more or less than you need and more importantly...know what you need. Hughes birds probably need more active droppers while Zovich less. I use 8...and they only need to flutter to create the pull...flying with the kit is not required as they drop just with a flutter. But I have 8 because my loft is next to my house...the temptation being great just to plop on the house roof. This year however all dropped to the loft...why?...the numbers...they felt more confident coming to the loft with that many fluttering about.

If you fly in competition droppers are a must...some have done without but I believe this is the long way home if you get my drift. Discipline is stronger and easier with droppers.

I make sure that my droppers know the rules before young or old are let out. I have a stick that I use to maneuver the droppers and keep them active. When I carry the stick they are alert and suspicious, but without, they literally don't care how close I come.

I do not starve them at all but do not feed them on the night before the training fly, very little if I do. Don't want to break them down, and you can if you continue to keep them in a starving state. Experience is a good teacher.

I think all droppers should be dark trained regardless if you fly into the dark. There will be a time that the birds

go longer than you expect. This will also force you to set up proper lighting just in case.

I do not throw the droppers when the kit shows first sign of coming down...meaning they are dictating the

time...instead, I wait until they pass and thus learning dropping is on my terms not theirs. If the kit knows they will get the signal every time they are tired and lower they are the masters, not you. I have flown Tipplers on sheer guts almost an hour after they were ready...or

were they? A few minutes of extra discipline may mean the difference between a record and a personal best or a DQ. Who's the boss...them or you??

Also, I never throw droppers upon approach...I wait until the kit passes ...why?...again, I determine when they land...if they are certain that the droppers will be deployed upon decent or approach they will learn quickly to force the release.

They should never (within reason) land on any other roof than loft. If they do and make this a habit they have to go, no matter their looks. If you don't train the droppers properly you will never train the Tipplers effectively either.

I treat the Tipplers and the Droppers the same in feeding and general care. Each depends on the other for success. I try to wear the same hat or coat when dropping the kit. Familiarity is security.

There are many other little perks and tricks...but your own experience with your birds, flying position and training preference will teach you far more than these words.

