

# Why test a Tippler to the max?

Well, flying ones birds in the teens of hours on competition days, or an even greater 20 plus hours, you discover various thresholds of stamina, endurance, fatigue and behaviour that you normally would not uncover while in training. Here is where one determines the soundness and worth of ones competition Tipplers. When pushed to the extremes I quickly notice the limits my birds may or may not have. Consequently, you develop better birds of endurance which then, hopefully, propagate themselves to even greater heights, so to speak.

To give you an example....I had a kit of 3 hens and 1 cock in 2006 that flew well for me. They went over 15 hrs in the spring and over 16 on Long Day. All is well, right? No, not really! In the first fly I noticed a grizzle hen doing fine at the 14 hr mark but by the time 15 hours rolled around you could see her struggle to keep up. But, she was well disciplined and dared not drop until the droppers were shown.



*This is the actual photo of the kit dropped just as it turned dark when they flew the 15:15. Notice the grizzle hen marked by the arrow in the back. This is where she stood for about 5 minutes before she entered the trap.*

All landed fine including the grizzle hen but then she just stood there, in one spot, for about five minutes and no movement whatsoever. I observed this the entire time....even though I was throwing seeds on the roof she did not budge. After 5 minutes she looked no worse for wear... very odd I thought. I did lock it in the back of my mind. Long day approached and I pulled out the cock bird...thinking 3 hens would fly better as a unit, if for no other reason than being hens. Sure enough, she started hurting again at the 14 hr mark but did

not dare drop. By the way, they flew so well and high that day that I had a terrible time finding them. In the afternoon I could not locate the kit within the 1 hour mark...thus a DQ. Seven minutes later (appearing at the 1hour 7min mark) there they were motoring through the sky extremely high. Oh well, so I thought, at least they are still on the wing.

Back to what I was saying earlier and the 14 hr mark....the same grizzle hen again started turning the kit. The change was so sudden that I didn't believe it considering how well they flew to that point. For curiosity's sake I kept them going until the 16:05 mark, by this time she was visibly hurting. But like before she waited for the droppers and all landed as they had done many times prior. Once again, she went into that crouch position as in the last comp. Two things I found out that day....she had the heart and the will of a champion but not the strength.

Reluctantly I sold her....could not see myself breeding from her....just bothered me too much. Never would have uncovered this unless I pushed her to the limits. It is always interesting to see a kit fly on competition day as compared to a training fly....I notice so many subtle things that normally I would not pay much attention to. I don't know about you but I still remember most flies like they were yesterday...go figure. That is why I enjoy them so much...for the memories that kind of stay with you.....good and bad I might add ☺  
*Luka*



*2006 mixed kit made up of 3 hens and one cock which flew 15:15 and a 16:05 DQ. Lost the fifth member, a dark checker hen, on the very first release to a hawk.*