

**FIELD TRIAL RESULTS FOR NWCC SPONSOR BAYER:
PRODUCT-" FLIGHT PATH" – by Chris Knowles**

Results of Trial with Flight Path for the 2004 Racing Season.

I am writing this article to show the results of my trial with the product Flight Path. I have used the product as a part of my general management and race preparation for both the Old and Young Bird seasons. I will explain how and when I used the product and the results obtained from racing. I will also express my opinion and evaluation of the product and any benefits that I believe have been gained from its use this season.

For me the OB season tends to be a short one, where the number of races flown is concerned. I had one specific target race, which was the National Flying Club race from Nantes; this is 428 miles to me. I competed in 3 races as preparation prior to Nantes and these races were at 132 miles, 162 miles and 188 miles. These were local club races and my positions were 3rd, 2nd and 5th in those races. I should add that my birds had only 3 training flights at 20 to 30 miles prior to these races. Then I entered my 3 first choice candidates into the N.F.C. Nantes race.

At this point, I think it is appropriate to relate how I used your Flight Path as part of my system of preparation. I used it twice before the N.F.C. race. Once before I began my training flights, where I used it after administration of Lincospectin for 5 days to clear the bird's respiratory tracts. I did this as advise by your Company, allowing elapsed time before giving the Flight Path, having used medication. I then used the product again 1 week before the race. What followed has been well documented and publicised, with my first pigeon into the clock "Tracey's Red" winning 2nd Section L 639 Birds and 62nd Open from over 8,112 pigeons when the winner was on the South Coast flying over 248 miles and the vast majority of pigeons beating me flying less than 300 miles. In the race, my winnings were £2,433 in pools and prizes, which was more than any other pigeon in the race by over £600. To pool my pigeon as I did, when the odds in such a race are stacked in favour of the Southern pigeons, I obviously believed that his health and fitness were as good as you could get. As you can see above, training was minimal; it was health and fitness, which were the differentiators.

Due to work and a general lack of time, my YB preparation is much less than most fanciers are able to put in and as a result I was not able to race until my Fed. was at 132 miles and having its 4th race. As usual nowadays, YB sickness was rife in this area early in the YB season. My youngsters were not affected by YBS, despite neighbouring fanciers having the problem. I commenced my YB training in late July. My YB's had 8 training flights up to 20/30 miles and then into their first race at 132 miles, the following week 162 miles and then 188 miles.

I have used Flight Path from the start of their life flying out. I used it once per month at the beginning of the YB's life after weaning. I then gave it one week before their first race and I gave it on the Wednesday before the longest Inland race at 188 miles. Once my YB's enter race baskets, I use a disinfectant in their water on Sunday and Monday a.m. This is Virkon at 5mls to 6 pints of water. I have in previous seasons followed it with multivitamins and natural yoghurt. This season I have done the same except that I have replaced the yoghurt with Flight Path to ensure that the gut bacteria is replenished, just in case any of the good bacteria have been destroyed by the Virkon. I have used the Virkon for several years with great success but previously followed it with multivitamins and then live yoghurt as mentioned.

The results have been that I have seen no signs of YB sickness at all and my YB's won their first three races with good margins and were 5th Open Fed first race, then 6th Open Fed second race and probably in the first 25 of the Open in the third race, which is pleasing when I am flying 30 to 40 miles further than the short flyers in the South Section and the races have been in both tail and head winds. The Federation races have averaged around 1,800 to 1,900 birds. My main target for YB racing in 2004 was the National Flying Club YB race, which took place from Fourgeres 354 miles and The North West Classic YB race and Gold Ring Race from Picauville 281 miles. My YB race team were given Flight Path on the Monday before marking, for both of these races, when the marking was on Thursdays. The races were on consecutive Saturdays, i.e. 4th and 11th September. From 10 entries at the NFC, I timed in two birds and finished 411th Open from 5,530 birds countrywide. At the NWCC from my 4 entries I finished 14th and 18th Open in the Club's race and in the Gold Ring Race from my 2 entries finished 3rd Section 4th Open.

There was an interesting factor regarding Flight Path, on these two long distance YB races where the total flying distance for the two races was 635 miles in 8 days. I refer to a young hen, which was sent to both races and clocked in both races in good time. In fact she won 7th Section 10th Open at the NWCC and was my second timer at the NFC where she flew for over 11 Hrs. I firmly believe that the Flight Path greatly assisted this super young hen to overcome and recover from the stress of the first ordeal and her condition was such that she was able to achieve a great result just one week later.

I could go on but I hope that you can extract something of value from my notes above, which I believe will serve as valuable reference material to any thinking fancier that may have any doubts about the product.