

Joe & Jason Payne & Anna

Len Vanderlinde March 2009.

Joe & Jason Payne had what can only be described as an unbelievable 2008 racing season with the Queensland Racing Pigeon Federation.

Prior to their record breaking year no flyer had ever won more than four Open Federation races in the one season, and this in itself was a record that had only been established in 2006. The old record of 3 Open Fed wins in a single season had stood for more then 60 years until Rod Hatherly, flying the Northern line, won four Open Feds.

Flying our South West route in 2008 out to Thargomindah & Nockatunga the Father & Son partnership won 20 club races, 20 West Section Fed races, and 8 Open Fed races, which is a record that may never be broken. They also followed up their 2007 Open Fed Averages win by again taking out the QPF Champion Flyer Trophy for 2008.

Their wins were so outstanding that many within the QPF questioned whether such racing results were feasible or even possible. Week after week from the start of the season right to the end their birds led the packs home, sometimes so far in front that some members resorted to watching their home loft from nearby streets. Such behaviour can be understood to some extent given the nature of some pigeon fanciers and the fact that winning on such a scale had never been seen before, certainly not in Brisbane and perhaps never in Australia.

The final straw or victory depending on your point of view was to come in the last two long races of the year, Nockatunga 1030 klms followed by Thargomindah 915 klms released the following day. Joe & Jason clocked-in a Blue Cheq Pied hen at 9.24pm on the day of release from Nockatunga and followed this up with a Blue Bar cock at 1.58am in the early hours of the second day from Thargomindah to easily win both Open Feds by a big margin.

As well winning the overall Fed Averages they also took out the short and long distance averages and they bred and raced the bird of the year. This was their clock bird in the early hours of the morning from the Thargomindah 915 klm, winning 1st Open Fed. Two weeks earlier this wonderful Blue Bar cock had been clocked on the day from Cunnamulla 730 klms for 2nd Open Fed. An outstanding pigeon that may well become a future champion stock cock?

Of course all the usual checks during the year were undertaken by the Federation Committee, including tossing the top 5 winners in each section the day after the race to ensure they did in fact home to the fancier's loft. Clocks, tapes and printouts, race rubbers with their secret numbers were all checked and verified but still some flyers had trouble coming to grips with such outstanding results.

So how is it possible for anyone to achieve such unbelievable racing results? I recently asked the partnership that question, and whilst Joe was enjoying a well earned holiday in North Queensland, Jason gave me the following information.

This then is their story.

The Beginnings

Jason has been involved with racing pigeons since he was 6 years old, flying with his father in the Lockyer Valley area, a country region not far from Brisbane. He was one of a large number of junior flyers that competed in the sport back then, along with 50 or so senior members.

In 1998 Jason left home and moved down to the Ipswich area and started out on his own racing his father's line of long distance pigeons. His first year produced two wins, including an Open Federation win from Cunnamulla 730 klms, clocked at 7.40pm on the day of release. Similar good

results were achieved in 1999 in the distance races. These races suited the old Brisbane bloodlines that are the basis of his father's pigeons, but he found that they were too slow in the short and middle distance races.

In 2002 he moved with his wife Anna to their current address at Ebbw Vale, a suburb of Ipswich, which lies to the west of Brisbane. Jason was quick to explain he brought the property solely to race pigeons, because it was on line of flight for the western race routes of the QRPF he said.

His parents also left the Lockyer Valley area about this time and moved down to the Ipswich area to be closer to their children. So Jason and his Dad Joe started their partnership, racing together for the first time in 2004.

Jason is without doubt a pigeon fanatic, highly competitive and motivated; his dream had always been to win the Open Fed averages. But he realised that the line of long distance birds he was racing were not capable of consistently winning the shorter and middle distance races. So in the early 2000s he set about researching and searching what was available in Australia to handle the faster middle distance races. He was looking for speedy birds that would take the shortest route home, and the imported families seemed to fit the bill.

Several different imported lines were purchased and these were mated together as he had been advised by the seller, but to his disappointment they did not race very well at all. So he tried some crosses of his own liking and these raced much better in the 2004 season, although the results were not outstanding he felt they were on the right track with these crosses.

The partnership continued racing the new crosses in 2005 to further test the progeny, keeping very detailed notes and records, every thing was written down, from the type of weather & wind, time on the wing and the position each bird took when homing to their loft. The results were very pleasing, confirming the quality of the birds they were now breeding. The best of them were transferred to the stock loft on a regular basis.

So they purchased a heap of life rings and started breeding these imported crosses on a large scale, but of course they retained their reliable old distance blood lines as well. All of this was in preparation for the 2007 season when the QPF was scheduled to fly their favoured West route. In 2006 they sat out the season as far as racing was concerned, because the North route did not suit them or their birds. They bred up a big team, based on the crosses that had so far proved successful and the ever reliable long distance family. These yearlings were trained out to 80 klms but never raced.

The partnership started the 2007 race season with 150 two year olds plus a similar number of yearlings. These were, as stated a mixture of the imported crosses and a good team of the old blood that they knew were needed to handle the longer and harder races.

The rest as they say is *history*...

In 2007 they won 16 club races (16 Members), 11 West Section Fed races (39 members), 3 Open Fed races (191 members) and also took other top places in the Open Fed, such as 2nd x 3 times and 3rd x 3 times. They also achieved their dream and won the Fed Averages and the Short Distance Averages as well.

These good results in 2007 confirmed the ability of the imported crosses and provided them with a lot of knowledge on how they needed to breed and train their birds for top results in the future.

The Birds

- **The Middle Distance Birds:**

The original imported birds they purchased were three pairs of Houbens from the Blenhaven Stud, based on the Ace's Jewell & 687 lines and a further four pairs of Janssens to use as crosses, these were the Zitter & Marcelis Voss lines.

The best Houben stock cock is a beautiful dark cheq, which they obtained from Blenhaven for \$500 as a 3 year old. This line of Houben pigeons turned out to be so good that Blenhaven wanted to buy the cock back and offered them \$15,000 for him. But Jason realised they was onto something good and refused to sell him, which was the best move they have ever made. He now has 20 pair of these

Houben Janssen crosses in stock, most bred down from this great cock.

Super Houben 1104
Sire & Grandsire of numerous
Federation Winners for
Jason & Joe Payne



As well as the Zitter & Marcelis Voss Janssens a Smeulders Janssen from K Saggars was also tried and while it did not cross well with the Houbens it did cross well with the other Janssens. Other lines that have and are being tried are Marilyn and Sheer Elegance Janssens and also some Van Loons.

Their Import crosses they have found don't like the heat or overcast days and are good up to 8 hours on the wing. *But they are at*

their very best from 6 to 7 hours Jason said. They are straight line flyers and will come home on their own. It was reported that in a pre-season club toss this year, a fellow club flyer saw a pack of 30 or so birds pass over his loft and continue onto the partnership's loft 10 minutes before he got his birds from the same release, the writing as they say was on the wall.

In Jason's own words the Houbens & Janssens that he obtained and blended together *are the best birds he has ever seen or owned at middle distance racing!!!*

- **The Long Distance Birds:**

The long distance blood lines are mainly from his Dad's old family when he raced in the Lockyer Valley; these birds go back over 40 years.

These bloodlines include the old *Balfe Harrisons* bred down from 2220 **QPF 59**, known as the Beasley Cock, who in turn was bred down from the famous Moonlight Hen 1118 **QRPA 46** from Ron Scott. The Moonlight hen was clocked at night from Quilpie 520 miles taking 2nd Open Fed. She was a daughter of Ron Scott's number one pair and went on to be the dam and grand dam of numerous champion distance birds back in the 1960s. In particular when she was mated to 16227 **VHA 46**, a cock brought to Brisbane from Clarrie Latchford, they produced a whole line of champion distance birds. These birds were greatly sort after back then and still are by astute long distance fanciers today.

The old bloodline also contains the Ted Chester *Uncle Sam* lines. Chester brought these birds to Brisbane around 1925, after purchasing American 1000 mile pigeons from the dispersal sale of a Mr Bushell in Sydney. These birds were outstanding in the distance races back in those early days and have formed the basis of what is still known today as the **Old Brisbane Family**.

The **Watson Pies** are another important line in their long distance family. Joe's old family contained this bloodline and more recent purchases of these birds were made at the Chris Wright's clearance sale in 2004. These birds were based around a pied hen that had won the Townsville 700 mile Open Fed race in 1975. Her sire went missing following the tragic death of Jim Watson, who was at the time of his death the President of the QRPF. This pied cock was to show up much later in the pedigrees of many of the long distance winners in the following years, and continues to play an important role in long distance racing in Queensland today.

The partnership have found that the best of the old blood needs to have all three of the above lines to be any good, *they just don't perform without these three lines together*, Jason said. They are particularly good at night flying and have that all important 'will' to keep coming until they reach home.



Of particular note is **1805 IRPA 05**, which was bred by the partnership from the above lines and is the dam & grand dam of their current best distance stock and race birds. For example she is the grand dam of both **407 IRPA 07** the *Thargomindah 915 klm Fed winner* and **359 IRPA 07** the *Nockatunga 1030 klm Fed winner*. Both birds being clocked during the hours of darkness to win. The sire of 359 is **2441 IRPA 04** who also sired 6th Fed Cunnamulla 730 klms this year and he in turn is the grandsire of champion **407**. As they say "*apples don't fall far from the tree*".

The Loft

The racing loft is 10m long by 2.4m deep with five separate sections, it is a standard type of Queensland loft, well off the ground and well ventilated and it has a metal roof with no underlining or insulation. A wire grid under the perches allows the droppings to fall outside the rear of the loft onto a concrete path where they are easily removed. Water troughs are on the outside of loft and they like everything else are clean and very tidy.

There are two stock lofts, one at Jason's home and the other over at Joe's. The middle distance stock birds are mainly housed at Jason's place while Dad breeds the long distance hard day birds. The pairs are bred in separate pens but within the confines of the stock loft.

The two lofts at Jason's place blend in very well with the very neat and tidy lawns and gardens.

They use a Yankee trap and are very pleased with the speed with which they can clock in using this system but are thinking of moving to electronic timing in the near future.

Everything is very simple but very effective.

The Management

Three rounds are bred off the stock birds and these youngsters along with a good team of two year olds usually give the partnership a racing team of 350 birds. Once racing starts all other activities are placed on hold and their attention is focused solely on preparing and racing their birds.

The young birds, when they are brought over from the stock loft are placed in a cage over the landing board to get them use to the surrounds and also to gain experience at entering the loft via the Yankee trap. Once they are settled the youngsters are only let out in the afternoons to start with and they are taught to trap quickly by keeping them a little hungry.

The youngsters are also lightly medicated at this stage to keep them healthy and to get them ready for a good clean moult. No medication is given during the main moulting period unless absolutely necessary.

They partnership cuts the last two flights on each youngster's wing about a week after Christmas and pulls the cut flights 10 days later. This procedure has become a very popular method with Brisbane flyers to ensure the race birds have a full wing ready for training and tossing from March/April.

No greens are given to the birds but plenty of fresh pigeon grit is always in front of them.

The birds are trained and raced with the hens and cocks together for start of year, but are separated when the weather starts to warm up at about the 250 mile stage to stop them from mating up. Jason starts work at 5am each day so Joe lets them out to exercise at first light and feeds them in at about 7.30 to 8am. The birds work very well along with a lot of other local packs in the area, but the partnership is only looking for about an hours work once per day. They have found their imports do not race well if over worked and as well they do not want the old blood to be over-worked before the long races come around.

Jason comes home from work at 3.15pm each afternoon and cleans the loft and changes the water but does not let them out in the afternoons during the race season. They are lightly fed around 4.30 pm.

The partnership likes to send a balanced team to every race and spend many hours assessing and analysing the forthcoming weather conditions for the race day. If it looks like a normal race under 8 hours they will send a full team of the blended import crosses, but if it is doubtful they will reduce these and include some of the old distance hard day birds. For the long distance races they will send a full team of the old blood. Returning race birds are called down by whistling and droppers are used to get them out of the air quickly.

They keep the returning race birds separate from the rest in a sunny section of the loft for a day or two after the race to give them time to fully recover.

- **Medication**

The partnership uses a regular medication program during the race season to control most of the usual problems that may affect the form of their race birds.

They use Dr Colin Walker as their vet and follow a strict weekly routine with medications and health products.

Emtryl is given to control canker for one day every week and for respiratory problems they use Doxy T or alternatively Resfite for one day every week as well.

They treat for worms with Moxidectin Plus for 2 days every 3 weeks and with Baycox to control Coccidia for the same period. Baycox is the only medication they have found may put their birds off-form leading up to a race.

Note that the returning race birds are kept in a separate section of the race loft and are not medicated that week.

Treatments are usually given on a Friday and Saturday but may also be given on the Sunday and Monday if needed, such as when using the four medications in the same week as detailed above.

Vitamins are routinely given the day after medication treatments stop and again on the basketing day. They will use electrolytes on the Wednesday before a race and sometimes use Probac if they think the droppings are not right.

Troy Vitamin B is a product they like to use for the race team on a regular basis and they find it is well accepted by the birds.

They acknowledge that they have a canker problem in the stock loft and regularly treat the youngsters to control this disease. These preventive treatments are given to the young birds at half strength when they are brought over to the race loft and before the main moulting period.

- **Training and Tossing**

The partnership starts pre-season tossing 10 weeks before first race. They select half the race birds and train only these to be ready for the first series. The QRPF has historically raced a first and second series race program for many years, which has enabled flyers to have two distinct race teams.

Their first toss is at 10 klms, three tosses are given from this point before moving on to 30 klms, where 5 tosses will be given. It is then onto the 50 klm point, where they stay until club tossing commences at 80 klms

The birds are lightly fed before tossing and they must be working for an hour around the loft once per day before pre-season training will start.

During the race season the birds that are not racing that weekend are tossed every Wednesday and Saturday. An additional Friday toss (Jason's day off) will be given when a Federation race is coming up the following weekend.

All the birds are raced out to the 500 klms stage, after which the speedy middle distance birds will be selected and the best of them kept for 2 yr olds. The long distance birds are raced right out to the longest race point even as yearlings.

Once racing is well under way and the birds have been somewhat sorted out they will start single tossing the best of them to really get their minds on the job for an important race. They usually pick out 50 birds to give extra training to get them prepared for a Federation race. These 50 will be hand checked and the best 30 will be selected on the afternoon of basketing for the race. A close eye is kept on each bird's racing record and their breeding. It is this close attention to detail which sets them apart from their fellow fanciers.

The really long distance birds are specially prepared for their selected races, which includes night training and tossing. Jason was quick to point out that you must be prepared to lose birds if an attempt is made at this type of training. Their method is similar to that used by Brian Daley. Brian is without doubt the best long distance flyer in the QRPF. He has won every long distance race point on the schedule and some of his efforts have been truly remarkable. Such as homing the first bird to ever

fly Townsville to Brisbane 1100 klms on the day, clocking in at 11.18pm. Brian and Jason have spent a lot of time discussing night flying and long distance racing.

The partnership start out night training by getting the distance birds use to being out and around the loft up until 9pm at night. A close eye is kept on them while they are out after dark, especially for cats. Once they get use to this routine they are taken for late afternoon tosses so that they arrive home a little later each time they go. Finally they are released in total darkness from about 15 klms away and are expected to find their way home. It usually takes them about 30 minutes to cover this distance in total darkness.

Eighty old blood birds were prepared this year in the above manner and of these 26 were lost during the night tosses. A high price to pay and certainly not for everyone but it did produce the results they were after in the final two long races. They clocked both their winners during the hours of darkness.

It is certainly thrilling to see a bird drop out of the darkness and onto the lawn before being walked into the loft and clocked-in as Jason did at 9.24pm with their Nockatunga winner in 2008.

- **Feeding:**

The partnership uses a standard commercially available breeding mix, to which they add extra Safflower when breeding their youngsters. They also use a standard commercially available race mix and add extra maize to this mix once they reach the 350 klm stage.

The birds are well fed but no feed left in front of them.

They will cut the feed back and change to a light mix to get the fat off them and to get them going in the early stages but they are careful not to disrupt the moult. The race birds are also lightly fed before tossing, particularly in the early stages to teach them to home quickly.

The Highlights

In four seasons from 2004 to 2008 (and remember they did not race in the 2006 season) they have won 47 club races, 38 Section Fed races and 13 Open Federation races against thousands of birds.

Below are some of their Open Federation results for the last two seasons only:-

- **2007 won the QRPF Open Fed Averages and had three Open Federation wins.**

2177 IRPA 06 Blue Bar W/F Hen placed **1st Open Federation** Jackson 355 klms 3037 birds. A direct daughter of the Super Houben cock 1104.

1838 IRPA 06 Blue Bar Cock Placed **1st Open Federation** Roma 435 klms 2386 birds. Bred from a Houben cock to a Sheer Elegance hen.

1954 IRPA 06 Blue Bar Pied Hen placed **1st Open Federation** Windorah 1060 klms 558 birds (5 bird limited entry) and placed **3rd Open Fed** Quilpie 875 klms 549 birds. She is a grand daughter of the champion stock hen 1805.

1825 IRPA 06 Blue Bar Cock placed **6th Open Fed** Augathella National 665 klms and **10th Open Fed** Morney 1060 klms. Bred from the best of the long distance blood.

227 IRPA 05 Mealy cock placed **3rd Open Fed** Chinchilla 255 klms 2269 birds. A Marilyn to Marcelis Janssen cross.

2583 IRPA 06 Blue Bar cock placed **2nd Open Fed** Roma 435 klms 1700 birds. A Van Loon to Smeulders Janssen cross.

158 IRPA 05 Blue Cheq cock placed **6th Open Fed** Morven 605 klms 1033 birds. Houben to Voss Janssen cross.

1815 IRPA 05 Mealy cock placed **2nd Open Fed** Chinchilla 255 klms 3270 birds. This cock was raced again in 2008 and won additional club & section races, he is a full brother to **1900** both bred off the Super Houben cock.



IRPA 06 1900 Blue Cheq Cock
1st Open Fed St George 450 klms
3rd Open Fed Morven 605 klms
Raced by J & J Payne

1826 IRPA 06 Blue Bar Hen placed **2nd Open Fed** Jackson 355 klms 2285 birds. Van Loon to Smeulders Janssen cross.

1965 IRPA 06 Blue Bar Cock placed **5th Open Fed** Roma 435 klms 1882 birds. Bred from the old blood and is another example of this bloodline coming to the forefront when the racing gets down to the 1000 mpm mark.

1900 IRPA 06 Champion Blue Cheq cock placed **3rd Open Fed** Morven 605 klms 1965 birds. A direct son of Super Houben 1104. This cock was placed **1st Open Fed** in 2008 and has won three Section Fed races. He also landed with a Fed winner in another race. A super race bird!!!

- **2008 again won the QRPF Open Fed Averages, short & long distance averages and achieved an amazing 8 Open Fed wins**

462 IRPA 07 Blue Bar cock placed **1st Open Fed** Westmar 330 klms 1139 birds. Bred from a Marilyn Janssen to Smeulders Janssen from K Sagers.



IRPA 06 1924 Blue Bar Pied Hen
1st Open Fed Bollon 560 klms
Raced by J & J Payne

1924 IRPA 06 Blue Bar Pied Hen placed **1st Open Fed** Bollon 560 klms 1347 birds. This hen was bred from the old hard day distance blood and was sent because the forecast was for a head wind with showers. She had a winning velocity of 1085mpm, which was 23 mpm in front of the next bird in the Open Fed.

1873 IRPA 06 Blue Cheq Hen placed **1st Open Fed** Westmar 330 klms 2646 birds, a direct daughter of Super Houben 1104 with a Marilyn Janssen cross.

1900 IRPA 06 Blue Cheq cock placed **1st Open Fed** St George 450 klms 2456 birds (1900 was placed **3rd Open**

Fed previous year) A direct son of Super Houben.

327 IRPA 07 Dark Cheq Pied Hen placed **1st Open Fed** Bollon 560 klms 1928 birds, a direct daughter of Super Houben 1104.



IRPA 07 327 Dark Ch Pied Hen
1st Open Fed Bollon 560 klms
Raced by J & J Payne

407 IRPA 07 Blue Bar cock placed **1st Open Fed** Thargomindah 915 klms 987 birds (clocked at 1.58am on the second morning) and two weeks earlier this cock was placed **2nd Open Fed** Cunnamulla 730 klms. For these efforts he was justifiably awarded the QRPF Bird of the Year trophy.

326 IRPA 07 Blue Cheq Hen placed **1st Open Fed** Cunnamulla National 730 klms 415 birds (5 bird limit). She was bred from the old Brisbane blood with a Van Cutsem cross from Peter Condren of the South Coast (Ray Holden bloodlines). The partnership sent the maximum of 5 birds to this race and they only got the

one bird on the day but she was over 30 minutes in front of the next bird and won the Fed National by over 100 mpm.

359 IRPA 07 Blue Cheq Pied hen placed **1st Open** Fed Nockatunga 1030 klms 917 birds. 359 was clocked at 9.24pm to be the only bird on the day, the next bird home in the Fed was clocked at 1.36pm the next afternoon.



**IRPA 07 326 Blue Cheq Hen
1st Open Fed National
Cunnamulla 730 klms
Raced by J & J Payne**

467 IRPA 07 Blue Cheq Cock was placed **6th Open** Fed Cunnamulla 730 klms 593 birds (10 bird limit). Grand son of the champion long distance stock hen **1805 IRPA 95** and a full brother to 359 the Nockatunga Fed winner.

382 IRPA 07 Blue Bar Hen was placed **2nd Open** Fed St George 450 klms 2243 birds. A direct son of the Super Houben cock.