



National Rifle Association Journal

Winter 2004

Volume LXXXIII

Number 3



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Cover photo: Henry Jeens (GM) by Karen Robertson

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Spring Last week in February
Summer Two months after the Spring General Meeting
Winter Between end of October and second week in November

NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



*by
Glynn
Alger*

Home Office Firearms Consultation Document

As you will be aware the debate over the future of firearms legislation has continued of late.

The National Rifle Association has been working with the other national bodies to present a co-ordinated approach to the proposals from the Home Office.

However, we also believe that the views and concerns of our members should be contained within the document.

In addition we firmly believe both the current and proposed legislation does nothing to improve the lot of licensed shooters, being increasingly restrictive and not targeted at the unlawful use of firearms.

We enclose a full copy of our submission for your consideration with this Journal.

Ranges - The Future

I recently wrote an article for Target Sports outlining some of the strategic issues that in my view are likely to need addressing within the sport of target shooting in the future.

It should be evident to you all by now that our sport will find it increasingly difficult to continue nationally without some investment in ranges. Spiralling costs, difficulty in getting range space and closure of ranges with nil notice are indicators of a future decline in target shooting as a sport unless immediate action is taken to reverse the trend.

At a recent meeting of the National Rifle Association General Council, those present agreed with the principle of investing in a network of national ranges to future proof our sport. How this is to be achieved in detail has still to be worked out.

As an early indicator of the Association's commitment to this purpose we have held a meeting with the MoD regarding this issue. Outline agreement was reached

that the military would give the NRA early notification of any proposed range closure or mothballing to enable us to carry out feasibility studies to assess the viability of the ranges and whether the appropriate finance could be sourced.

In addition to working with the MoD the Association hopes to work with commercial organisations and clubs who run ranges to assess what capacity there is and where it needs to be improved or developed within a national plan to support target shooting.

Youth Shooting

Having worked for the NRA since April this year, I have been constantly surprised by how few young people graduate from cadet/school shooting to compete as adults. The answer is simple, we at national and club level generally fail to make it easy for youngsters to remain in the sport, in that there is no co-ordinated planned transition from youth shooting into club shooting.

At school and cadet level there is a high degree of support for individuals from their respective organisations. However, there appears to be no routine method of accrediting these young people as having passed the probationer course, bearing in mind they have been coached and have shot for up to four or five years.

If young people were qualified via their schools or cadet unit, they would be an easier resource to subsume into the club environment and the NRA are in a position to offer them free membership for three years, enabling them to get a Firearms Certificate. At present a youth has to be very determined and well-financed to remain in the sport because he or she needs to fund a probationers course, probably unnecessarily from an experience and coaching point of view, to be able to continue. This is at a time when, in most peoples lives, they are either involved in further education or are starting out in work when money is at its most tight.

The National Rifle Association will be looking to put together a proposal that routinely qualifies young people from the cadets and schools associations so that they achieve a probationary pass qualification, with the NRA supplying the pass certificate and giving three years free membership of the Association.

The NRA needs clubs and associations to support youth for the future good of the sport. It is difficult for a young individual to confidently join a club. They need support, encouragement and to be able to socialise with people of their own age and interests. The NRA will need to work with clubs for them to create youth sections enabling a smoother transition from youth to adult shooting. In this way we may be able to retain young people in shooting and improve membership levels within clubs.

Currently the Association does support young people in shooting in a minor way in terms of its overall effect on the sport. However, in the future this support may need to be more ambitious and wider spread than previously. The current Millennium Fund which was specifically set up to assist young shooters will probably need to have a large scale injection of funds to support those clubs that are willing to run youth sections. In the future I would hope to see a vigorous national youth shooting structure at club level supported by the NRA in terms of competition, equipment and facilities.

I believe if this were to happen, this type of initiative would also kick-start the ability to recruit youths locally who have no interest in joining the cadets but want to shoot.

If we are successful in gaining the support of the clubs, we are preparing to introduce a new club finder service using the Association website running from our Membership Department. In this way young people should either be able to find a local club willing to provide youth support for themselves or Membership will do it for them.

Membership and Funding

A truly national approach to supporting shooting in the future will of course demand that the NRA creates more income. The National Shooting Centre at Bisley is being intentionally commercialised to increase the level of support that can be given to the regions, potentially to update, improve or lease/purchase ranges, while pressing forward with an effort to expand the membership through a youth strategy as outlined previously.

As you are aware, the National Rifle Association has focussed recently upon dealing with what was a situation of mounting debt. In the last three years this trend has been reversed with the debt being reduced from a high point of two million pounds to seven hundred and fifty thousand at present. Good management and the generosity of our members has resulted in this position and created a mindset within the NRA that we cannot only invest in Bisley if we are truly to be a national body in a real sense.

Ambition of this nature needs to be supported and funded. Without doubt the National Rifle Association needs to expand its membership to be able to fund a better future for target shooting. Those who become members of the NRA from this point in time are not just joining an organisation or gaining a benefit to shoot on range facilities, they are making an investment in the future of shooting as a sport for themselves and others who will follow.

In the future we will not only be trying to increase membership, we will be more proactive in trying to raise money by appeals for particular causes, such as

the purchase or upgrade of a range and support for young members via the Millennium Fund.

Regarding membership in particular, we will soon be entering the renewal period for 2005. We need to be able to promote full membership of the NRA better than we do at present to support the new strategies. We will be asking clubs for details of affiliated members so that we can market membership and inform them what the future looks like with their support by becoming a member. At the same time we will need more information from clubs to enable us to direct or place new members with them. It is appreciated that this is potentially an onerous task but by helping the NRA in this way club secretaries in particular are investing in the future of shooting.

I am aware that there is a view that the only reason for this action is to be able to wring more money from clubs via the capitation fee. However, this is not our primary motivation, the NRA needs to know who its members are so that it can market the benefits of full membership both now and in the future. If we fail to gain the support of club secretaries and current members on these issues, we are restricting our ability, jointly, to develop and expand our sport.

I would ask all members of the National Rifle Association to suspend their natural cynicism at this point in time and start to consider a brighter future for our sport if we work together and adopt a can do philosophy.

BDMP 25th Anniversary

If the National Rifle Association needs any encouragement as to what can be achieved, they need look no further than our friends the BDMP (Bund der Militar und Polizeischutzen). On their 25th anniversary they are able to boast a membership in excess of twenty four thousand and represent the interests of target shooters in Germany.

The Chairman John Jackman and myself represented the NRA at the anniversary celebrations held in



John Jackman and Dr Volkmar Schilling, President of BDMP.

Paderborn, Germany on 12 August 2004. It was a warm sunny summer's evening. Friends, with whom we have had long and fruitful relationship since the inception of the BDMP, made us extremely welcome.

John Jackman was one of a number of speakers. He impressed all those present with his kind words and his 'fluent' grasp of the German language, never having spoken it before, which was most appreciated by our hosts.

The NRA congratulates the BDMP for its great success in both promoting target shooting in Germany and supporting it internationally. We look forward to a continuing close relationship for the next 25 years and onwards.

Membership Department

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Nick Halford who has just joined the Membership department as Membership Assistant. He comes from a marketing background and is the secretary of a fullbore rifle club. He will be running the day to day business in the office. Nick can be contacted by telephone on the usual extension (138) and by e-mail on membership@nra.org.uk.

Disciplinary Findings

Cadet Sanderson of RGS Guildford was banned from shooting at Bisley from 8 May until 1 July 2004 for breach of Rules 274 to 277 of the Range Regulations as set out in Part II of the Bisley Bible.

Dr Peter Hicks was banned from shooting at Bisley from 8 May until 31 December 2004 for breach of Rules 274 to 277 of the Range Regulations as set out in Part II of the Bisley Bible.

Mr Graeme Matthews has been fined £200 for breach of Rule 4 of the Camp Standing Orders set out in Appendix 1 of the Bisley Bible.

The 2004 Committee Election process is now complete and the following appointments announced.

The members of the General Council have re-elected John Jackman to be their Chairman and Charles Brooks to be the Vice-Chairman.

Therefore, in accordance with the Rules of the Association, John Jackman is also appointed as the Chairman of the Association and Chairman of the Council (Board of Trustees).

Members of the Council (Board of Trustees) have re-elected Michael Walton to be their Vice-Chairman.

Members of General Council elected David Young as a Member of Council (Board of Trustees).

Mr Doug Watt was successful in a ballot of the Eastern region. As a result he will serve on General Council as their Regional Representative.

Membership of the Council (Board of Trustees), General Council, their Committees and Sub-Committees are shown on pages 26 to 28 of this Journal.

Team Captaincies

The following are congratulated on their appointment as Team Captain for the following teams:

Kolapore 2005

Keith Pugh

GB Under 25 Team Bisley 2005

Richard Jeens

NRA Team to the Channel Islands 2005

Dominic Harvey

NRA Team v Continental Palma Council 2005

Iain Robertson

Nominations

Nominations are required for a Captain for the following teams. Nominations should be addressed to the Secretary General and received by 5 January 2005.

NRA Team to the Channel Islands 2006

GB Historical Rifle Team to the Fourth World Historical Rifle Long Range Championships in South Africa in April 2006

General Notices

Spring General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Spring General Meeting of the National Rifle Association will be held in the NRA Pavilion Bisley, National Shooting Centre on Saturday 26 March 2005 at 5.00pm.

And finally . . .

NRA Fees 2005

The good news for members is that the cost of individual membership of the NRA will reduce by a further 2% this year, clubs will see no increase in fees and range costs at Bisley will be held at their present level.

To help the various shooting disciplines develop their events at Bisley further the NRA will be looking at ways of promoting existing arrangements for discounted entry fees and Membership to 'first-timers' in 2005 so that more shooters can experience shooting at the National Shooting Centre and the great social scene that runs in parallel.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SHOOTING



*by
Martin
Farnan*

General

Communication with the Shooting Division

It would be appreciated if the main means of communication with the Shooting Division was by e-mail where possible. Since secretarial support is not available five days a week it is likely that response times will be shorter if e-mail is used, rather than letter or fax format.

Marksman's Calendar

The proposed 2005 Calendar of Major Events at Bisley has been produced and has been sent to all Club Secretaries. It is based on historical precedent and many of the dates shown are simply the equivalent dates to those in 2004. As usual I would ask Club Secretaries to check this calendar carefully and let me have their own Club fixtures list as quickly as possible.

May I also request details of any other Club Championships or Meetings whether held at Bisley or elsewhere. These will be included in the final version of the Marksman's Calendar which will be published in the Spring Journal. Please do not include minor events such as practice sessions. Details should be with me by the beginning of January. Since the Marksman's Calendar is of fixed size (A3) I must reserve the right to edit entries where necessary.

Ranges Targets and Markers

Inspection of Civilian Ranges

To date no letter has been received from the MoD stating that they will no longer provide this service. Major Frank Compton, OC TAS, has stated that as far as he is concerned it is "back to normal" except that he does not yet have a fourth Warrant Officer (his normal staff entitlement) to allow "on range" visits for civilian ranges. He has stated, however, that he is happy to answer and deal with telephone or written queries.

Electronic Target Systems

These systems are excellent for the style of shooting for which they are designed to cater, normally at short range only, using static targets and static firing points. The fixed display boards which are set up behind the firing points are also excellent and give running scores and information about the competitors.

The style of shooting at Bisley is, however, very different from that in most countries which use electronic targets, with changes of distance being a regular feature of a typical Bisley shooting day. On four days during the Imperial Meeting up to six changes of distance occur.

It is therefore unlikely that electronic targets, as currently designed, can realistically be installed on all targets on Century or Stickledown ranges. There is, however, considerable scope for installing a smaller number of targets for use during (say) the winter season. These may be linked to the provision of covered firing points.

Covered Firing Points

The NSC has agreed to purchase two (or, if available, three) marquees to be used to cover firing points during the winter season on Century and, if possible, on Stickledown. It is hoped that these will encourage more shooters to come to Bisley in the winter months. It is thought that more schools might be encouraged to come since, in winter, the shooting afternoon is short on a schools sports afternoon and any protection from the weather will be welcome.

Booking In at the Range Office

Club secretaries and individuals are reminded that they must be in possession of their club or individual membership card when booking in at the Range Office. Failure to do so may entail a delay in processing your booking.

Time or Distance Banding

A study by the Range Office has confirmed that time or distance banding, as forecast in the last Journal, will not contribute significantly to additional range space on busy weekends. It has therefore been decided that programme banding will be used where necessary, particularly on busy weekends where a particular club or association has a large number of targets booked for a particular programme of shooting.

In this case all other clubs, associations and/or individuals shooting on that day (or weekend) will be required to fall in line with the shooting programme of the major club or association. Notification of such programme banding will be sent to all clubs, associations and/or individuals as soon as possible.

Range Safety

Despite repeated warnings, breaches of range safety continue to occur. You are reminded that the design

of any particular range, and the associated Range Safety Certificate, are dependent on the type of shooting permitted on that range. Range users should take particular notice of the Range Regulations published in the Range Office which have been updated to take account of all recent changes. I emphasise paragraph 12 in particular, which explains the duties and responsibilities of the Range Conducting Officer (RCO).

Melville Bay A

Plans are in hand to install four more advancing targets in Bay A in Melville during the winter months in addition to the four lanes installed last year.

Use of Stickledown during the Winter Months

New initiatives have been proposed for this coming winter period to increase the use of Stickledown, and the range will again remain open under the following conditions:

- only the line of flags between targets 36 and 37 will remain up;
- targets to be used will be from target 37 upwards, ie Butts 3 or 4;
- the required targets will be placed in the frames on Friday and covered as weather protection;
- no target shed staff will be called in on Saturday or Sunday to repair or replace targets in the event of inclement weather.

Midweek bookings and shooting will continue as during the rest of the year. It will, of course, be necessary to make advance bookings as normal.

Gallery Rifle and Pistol Ranges Bidding Conference

Since no "horse trading" was necessary last year at the annual Gallery Rifle and Pistol bidding conference it was possible to accept all bids. It was therefore decided that a conference would be unnecessary this year and bids that have been received are now being processed.

Rubbish on Bisley Ranges

Range users are earnestly requested to take all their litter, especially of the edible sort, home with them. It has become increasingly evident that foxes are delving into more and more litter bins on the ranges, and the resultant mess, of all sorts, has to be cleared away by the ground staff. This is unnecessary and time wasting, so you can greatly help by removing all your litter and taking it home with you for disposal. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Range Office Target (ROT)

You should know by now that the Range Office has been arranging for a ROT to be available at as many ranges as possible, as often as possible. This target is available by the hour and may be booked in the Range Office at a rate of £6 per hour. This is ideal if you are

testing ammunition or running in a barrel. Since this is often provided due to the cancellation of an existing booking the distance cannot be guaranteed in advance.

It is planned that a ROT target for newly qualified members (Tyro ROT) will be made available alongside Probationary Courses at distances of 300 and 600 yards only. Bookings should be made through the Range Office stating that the requested booking is for the Tyro ROT.

Range Closure Dates

To allow for proper setting up of the ranges, all ranges that will be used for the 2005 Phoenix Meeting (26 to 29 May 2005) will be closed to other users on the previous day, Wednesday 25 May 2005. Please take note.

The 136th Imperial Meeting will be held on the same relative dates as this year (see below). The Service Skill at Arms Meetings will therefore start on Friday 24 June 2005. For this reason the annual deleading of the butts, the Inter Counties Meeting and the obligatory services practice period will have to be held before this date. As a consequence there may be some disruption during this period but we will do our best to minimise this.

So that the Estate staff do not have to work excessive hours cutting grass on other days, it has been decided to continue the arrangements made this year, ie that there will be no shooting on Mondays in late May and early June. I am sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

Markers

You are again reminded that markers are likely to remain in short supply and that there is no guarantee that a marker, or markers, can be supplied on any particular day. Individuals and, in particular, club secretaries, are therefore again advised to make alternative arrangements where possible.

Bisley Range Charges for 2005

At a recent meeting of the Board of Trustees it was decided that range charges for 2005 should remain as for 2004. These charges are available from the Range Office and will apply from 1 January 2005.

Club secretaries or individuals making bookings for corporate days are asked to indicate, when making a such a booking, that the targets are being booked for a corporate day.

Firearms and Ammunition

Ammunition Problems

- a Radway Green (RG) have agreed with our report that a reduction in accuracy standards has occurred.
- b RG have formed an investigation team to establish reasons and to rectify the problem.

- c This team is meeting daily and, whilst some progress has been made, they have not (at the time of writing these notes) solved the problem.
- d RG is trying to finalise the matter by the end of October.

Shooting Matters

400 Yards League

Traditional short range distances for TR are 300, 500 and 600 yards. However, with a fully constructed and maintained firing point at 400 yards, and with 400 yards targets printed and available, a new 400 Yards League will be run as from 1 March 2005. This will be run along the lines of the present British 50 Roll, each entrant receiving eight cards to be shot at 400 yards. The completed cards, nominated and witnessed, should be returned to me and the best four scores of each competitor will be aggregated to give a score out of 200. Prizes will be List D, awarded depending on entries, and are likely to include reserved prizes for newly qualified members of the NRA.

Christmas Guest Day 11 December 2004

The annual Christmas Guest Day will be held on Century and Melville ranges on Saturday 11 December 2004. This day was extremely popular last year, and attracted 76 competitors who enjoyed the variety of novelty targets for both TR and Gallery Rifle, with a Christmas buffet and mulled wine afterwards. A range of seasonal prizes were available in both categories. NRA members are again invited to attend and to bring their friends. Full details will be on the NSC website shortly. Details of all guests must be notified to the Deputy Director of Shooting no later than 7 December 2004.

Open Days 2005

The Home Office have given permission for two NRA Open Days in 2005, on Saturday 30 April and Saturday 3 September. Please make a note of these dates. More information will be given in the Spring Journal.

Lenses in TR Rear Sights

In response to a particular request, the Shooting Committee have considered the use of lenses in TR rear sights which are for the correction of astigmatism only. It has been agreed to recommend that a small amendment to Rule 235 will suffice, which will therefore read:

In TR, as in Rule 150, a magnifying lens is permitted in the foresight which may be used in conjunction with spectacles, eyeglasses or contact lenses but NOT in combination with a magnifying lens or system of lenses in the rear sight. A non-magnifying lens for the correction of astigmatism may, however, be used in the rear sight.

Imperial Meeting

Prize Lists

The Prize List is about to be sent to the printers and should be ready for distribution, along with your medals, bars and prize money, by late November.

Dates for 2005

The 136th Imperial Meeting will be held from 9 July to 23 July 2005. These events will be preceded by the Services and Cadets Meetings which will start on 24 June.

Programme

With the exception of the Schools Meeting the programme of events for the 2005 Meeting will be similar to that for 2004.

Entry Forms

Entry forms will be included in the Spring Journal, due for publication at the end of February 2005. The form is being redesigned to make it easier to complete and is likely to be in the form of an A3 folded form. Page 1 will be full personal details, block entries and financial summary, page 2 will be for entries to individual matches and aggregates, and pages 3 and 4 will be the present Notes. Only pages 1 and 2 need be returned, meaning that the competitor will retain the notes (which are currently returned to the NRA on the back of the entry form).

Service Rifle

There will be some changes in individual match conditions next year. Practice 2 of Match 4 (the ARA Association or NRA Queen Mary) will now be fired on a Triple Fig 11 at 500 and 400 yards, scoring 5, 4 and 2 as in Practice 1. This will also apply in Practice 6 of the International SR Team Match.

The final two days of the SR Meeting will be interchanged in 2005, with the Methuen reverting to the Wednesday and the United Service and the International SR Team Match reverting to Thursday.

Target Rifle and F Class

There are no known changes to date, but I will give an update in the Spring Journal.

Schools Meeting

The Schools Meeting has been completely revised and, in outline, the main changes will be as follows:

- a all GP matches (other than the D and D Falling Plates on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings) will be held on First Monday only;
- b the Ashburton will be held at 300, 500 and 600 yards, and Schools Prize Giving will therefore revert to 5.45pm;
- c 300, 500 and 600 yards will be shot with the CTR on First Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday;

- d there will be more individual and team competitions, including daily aggregates and single distance aggregates;
- e the Schools Hundred will be based on the aggregate of the best scores at 300, 500 and 600 yards on both Tuesday and Wednesday and prizes will be awarded on-range on Thursday;
- f a new Cadet Grand Aggregate competition will be introduced, based on the aggregate of the Schools Hundred and the individual score in the Ashburton;
- g entry fees will be reviewed and it is hoped that they may be lower than this year.

Full details will be sent to all schools early in the New Year.

Match Rifle

The Any Rifle Extras at 1000, 1100 and 1200 yards will again be held on Pre-Friday, 9 July 2005. The Any Rifle 1200 Yards will again be held on First Thursday, this being 14 July in 2005.

Gallery Rifle and Muzzle Loading Pistol

There will be some changes to make the Gallery Rifle and Pistol Meeting more popular and relevant, and these will be notified in the Spring Journal. The entire programme of events will be held on Melville Range only, and will be shot between First Wednesday and Second Wednesday, 13 and 20 July 2005, both dates inclusive.

McQueen B (Target or Match Rifle)

With the introduction of the McQueen F (Any Rifle) last year it is no longer necessary to have the McQueen B open to calibres other than 7.62mm. The McQueen B (TR or MR) will therefore be restricted to rifles conforming to Rules 150 and 156.

Trade Stands

If you wish to set up a trade stand during the Imperial Meeting please contact the Assistant Director of Shooting, Brian Thomas, as soon as possible. A standard space will be £30 plus VAT per day, with larger sites in the region of £60 plus VAT. Space is limited, and early application is advisable. It is likely that these trade stands will revert to Bazaar Lines, running from Fultons' Block down towards the 500 yards firing point.

Imperial Meeting 2006 and 2007

For advance information the 2006 Imperial Meeting will be held on the same relative dates as 2005. First Saturday will be 8 July and Queen's Prize Final will be 22 July 2006. In 2007, however, the Meeting dates will jump by one week, and will run from 14 to 28 July 2007.

Notes from the Deputy Director of Shooting

NRA Courses

It is intended that NRA Courses will offer progression in terms of knowledge and training throughout the year for members of the NRA and its affiliated clubs. An outline of the proposed courses for 2005 is shown below.

Probationary Members Course

This course is primarily a course in safe handling and provides an introduction to target rifle. Each course consists of five separate lessons. The Autumn courses are now in progress and a new course will start in February. Probationary courses are run from February to May and from September to November. All applications for probationary membership should be made to the NRA Membership Secretary.

New Members League

In conjunction with the probationary course this will be a TR competition for newly qualified members to encourage them to begin to shoot competitively. The competition will consist of the best four scores made at 300 yards and 600 yards (two scores at each distance). It will be run over two time periods each year, Period A from February to May and period B from September to December. Competitors will be able to use the Tyro ROT target. Entry Fee: £5.00. Prizes will be List D.

Target Rifle Skills Course

The next weekend course will be held on 19 and 20 March 2005; it is aimed primarily at those who have recently taken up target rifle shooting to help them to develop their individual skills.

Wind Coaching Course

This course is for more experienced shooters who wish to improve their individual and team coaching skills. The proposed date for the next course is 19 and 20 March 2005.

Club Instructor Course

This is the first step towards a coaching qualification and is for experienced shooters who wish to assist with training at club level. Applicants should ideally have completed an NRA Skills course. The proposed date for the next course is 23 and 24 April 2005.

National Governing Body Coaching Qualifications

The Shooting Committee has recommended to Council that the NRA should reintroduce the NGB Coaching Qualification of NRA TR Coach at both Club level and Regional level. The Director of Shooting will consult with the GBTSF Director of Coaching concerning the possible transfer of qualifications. If this proposal is implemented a NRA Club Coach course is planned for 15 and 16 October 2005. More details will be given in the Spring Journal.

RCO Course Instructional Days

From January 2005, an **optional** instructional day will be held at Bisley before each RCO course. The intention is to provide additional guidance for those who wish to obtain the RCO qualification but whose previous experience of range management may be limited. It is intended that the instructional day will be held on a different weekend to the RCO course so that candidates will not be required to stay overnight at Bisley. A maximum of 30 candidates will be able to attend each instructional day. Candidates are strongly advised to attend this pre-course instructional day, but they may still elect to attend the RCO course only. The cost for the optional instructional day is **£15** per person. The dates for these instructional days in 2005 are: 20 February, 15 May, 18 September and 20 November.

Range Conducting Officer Courses

These one day courses are run regularly throughout the year at Bisley and can also be run regionally. Successful candidates will be qualified to conduct live firing on MOD or TAVRA Ranges. Due to demand, an additional RCO course will be held at Bisley on 28 November 2004. The RCO course at Bisley costs £50 per person. Course dates for 2005 are: 26 and 27

February, 21 and 22 May, 24 and 25 September and 26 and 27 November.

The cost for a regional RCO course is £25 per person payable to the NRA, but in addition the club concerned must provide suitable range and classroom facilities and must pay the expenses of the regional RCO Assessor.

To arrange a regional RCO course or for application forms and further information on all NRA courses please contact the NSC Deputy Director of Shooting e-mail phyllis.farnan@nra.org.uk or tel 01483 797777 ext 150.

RCO Renewals

The RCO qualification is valid for six years and may be renewed on application to the NSC. Please send the following documentation: your old mini certificate, three passport photographs (name on back), a letter of endorsement from your club secretary or chairman and a cheque for £15 (payable to NRA). Please allow two to three weeks for processing of renewals. However, if your RCO qualification has already run out it may be necessary for you to retake the course.

Details and updates concerning all courses can be found on the NRA and NSC websites.

THE NEW NRA AND NSC WEBSITES

by James Watson

Since I took on the task of co-ordinating the development of new websites for both the NRA and the National Shooting Centre, I have received many comments from individuals as to what they expect from our websites. Over and above all, the comments have referred to the ease of navigation and being able to find what they are looking for. Additionally, with more of a focus on the commercial side of the National Shooting Centre, and the need to raise money through corporate events, there has been a need to give the sites a clean, corporate image. Often the website is the first interaction that people have with the NRA so it is important to set a good first impression as well as promote our sport.

It is with this in mind that we have set about designing the sites. Much effort has gone into the administration side allowing NRA staff to add content to the site whilst maintaining the same common look and feel.

Initial sections include a news section, an online version of the marksman's calendar, a clubs section, and a section on Bisley including an interactive map of Bisley (as well as the information you are used to getting from the existing site).

The website will be expanding over time – the first phase is to produce a site with the required basics but you will see this grow over time as new sections are added. Future sections will include capabilities for club secretaries to update details and make and view range booking requests online. A club finder facility with a listing for all NRA affiliated clubs and the disciplines they support will help new shooters find someone to shoot with. In the longer run, details of all the competitions shot for at Bisley and the winners will be included.

The new site is expected to be launched in November – there is a feedback section so please let us know what you think, as your views and ideas can influence the design.

www.nsc-bisley.co.uk



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NOTES FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BISLEY



*by
Jeremy
Staples*

Short Siberia Access Road

This project was finally completed in the early summer and has proved to be very popular with all the shooters on Short Siberia and for disabled shooters wishing to access Century Range at 300 yards. We have been able to lock off the former access to Short Siberia from Queen's Road improving security on the site.

In addition we are upgrading the access way from the new car park at 300 yards and improving the network of bridges to enable heavily laden and disabled shooters better access to Century Range.

Estate

Verbal confirmation has finally been received from Guildford Council that consent has been granted to extend the caravan season with immediate effect. This means that the caravan and hut season now extends to the end of November and starts again at the beginning of March.

We will endeavour to keep all ablution blocks open through these additional months but there may be some necessity to shut a number for refurbishment work or to prevent frost damage. New boilers are being installed into ablution blocks 6 and 7, over the winter period, to provide more reliable modern systems.

Please note that we will start to turn off water to individual huts during November. If hut occupiers wish for their water to remain on until the end of November please let me know in writing. The NRA/NSC accept no responsibility for any damage caused by frost that may occur if the water supply remains on.

We are also reviewing the 'in/out' signs and following discussions with the fire service it is likely that a compromise situation can be agreed whereby the existing alarm/siren systems will be adequate to meet the Health and Safety requirements.

Ranges

Extensive drainage work has been undertaken on Cheylesmore Range during September and a pea shingle finish will be installed early in the spring. This will result in a much better drained range.

Due to the popularity of the advancing targets in Melville, four additional advancing targets will be installed in Bay A during November and the present casual shooter will benefit from the upgrade of Cheylesmore Range.

Detailed work is still being undertaken into the possibility of providing a number of electronic targets. We understand that tests are still in progress in Germany at up to 1000 yards and we are endeavouring to obtain a number of trial targets during the course of this winter.

We have acquired heavy duty mini-marquees to provide a number of covered firing points over the winter at both 300 and 600 yards.

Staff

I am very pleased to welcome back Sarah Bunch, who has taken up a new position as Commercial Director of the National Shooting Centre. Her brief is to maximise both the shooting and non-shooting events at Bisley and she will be very happy to talk to any members who wish to bring corporate guest days to Bisley.

Clare Alger has been appointed to the administration staff of the Clay Pavilion and Peter Woodford has joined as an apprentice electrician.

Finally, Libby Gendall is moving from the front office reception to work four days per week as my Personal Assistant. Please contact Libby if you have any questions or comments.

Security

We have experienced a number of security issues on site, particularly at the rear of the Century Range and on the new Short Siberia road.

As a result, and on the advice of the police, we are installing a number of gates on this road and looking at CCTV at the entrance to the Estate. Hopefully this will not cause any inconvenience.

Suggestion Book Matters

'Have a go' Targets

A number of requests were received to provide a 'have a go' target at 200 yards during the Imperial Meeting for guests and friends to use. Clearly, by law, we are not able to do this but if there is sufficient interest pre-confirmed for a specific day, then it would be possible to arrange to have a guest day. Alternatively, we recommend that all members bring their friends and relatives to try out their sport on the two Open Days to be run each year.

Ablution Blocks

Hopefully, all members will have seen an improvement in the cleanliness of the ablution blocks. I appreciate that we did receive a number of complaints but for the most part the new cleaning contractors seem to be doing a first class job. We are currently looking at the possibility of upgrading the ablution blocks to the rear of Century Range.

Firing Points

There were a number of comments about the quality of the firing points. We are continuing to work on the firing points but if members have a particular issue, could they please inform me which firing points need additional work.

Finally, the staff do appreciate the positive, appreciative comments within the Suggestion Book.

HOG Rally

Over the weekend of the 6 - 8 August Bisley was filled with Harley Davidson motorbikes and riders.

The numbers grew rapidly in the week preceding the event and over the weekend we had approximately 800 motorbikes and 1200 visitors staying predominantly in tents on the Military Field.

The superb weather contributed to the success of the weekend, which comprised a number of 'ride outs' together with live bands in the Bisley Pavilion, a fireworks display and silly games! The whole weekend was a major success with the HOG riders leaving the Camp in pristine condition and contributing significantly to the Estate income over a traditionally quiet shooting weekend.

The event was very much enjoyed by the Harley riders, staff and shooters who were on site during the course of the weekend and there are ongoing plans to host a similar event in 2005.

NRA Open Day – Saturday 4 September

Following the successful Open Day in May, this year a second NRA Open Day was run on Saturday 4 September.

Once again, we were unsure of the likely numbers that would attend an Open Day and we were expecting between 500 to 600 people.

As it transpired, 875 people registered to shoot over the course of the day, with possibly another 250 people just wishing to take advantage of the opportunity of looking at what Bisley has to offer.

Most people managed to complete a reasonable amount of shooting which included target rifle, snap shooting, F Class rifle, practical rifle and classic rifle on Century Range. On Melville there were black powder pistols and .22 target rifles together with gallery rifles as well as the opportunity to try air rifles on Winans Range. Other events included clay shooting, Airsoft, archery, laser clays and a helicopter simulator.

Thanks are due to the large number of coaches who gave up their time to help with the Open Day together with the NRA and NSC staff who all worked very hard to cope with the very high turnout.

There will be two further Open Days next year, the first on 30 April; if you are able to volunteer some time to assist, particularly with the coaching, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Clearly the response indicates that there is significant interest in shooting, numerous membership packs were taken out and a number of people have already booked on to probationary courses. We do need all members to help us encourage and promote these Open Days which gives you the chance to bring your friends and relatives to try out all that shooting has to offer.

New NSC Website

The NSC website is due to launch very shortly. This site will contain information on all things Bisley together with details of regional events as advised. Please visit

www.nsc-bisley.co.uk

If you would like anything to be included please contact Sarah Bunch at commdir@nra.org.uk.



Just some of the eight hundred Harley Davidsons that turned up for the recent HOG Rally.

(Photos: Fred James)

SCENES FROM THE NRA OPEN DAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2004



Some of the many shooting activities on offer at the recent NRA Open Day including a Wild West Show for the kids where Alex Laredo demonstrated his award-winning lasso act.

(All photos: Karen Robertson)

FORTHCOMING TOURS

GB Rifle Team to Australia 2005

The following have been selected for the GB Rifle Team to Australia 2005:

Captain

Reg Roberts GB, England and Sussex

Vice-Captain

Nigel Ball GB, England and Norfolk

Adjutant

Stu Williamson GB, England and Sussex

Coaches

Rich Stewart* England and Norfolk

Martin Townsend GB, Ireland and Hertfordshire

Shooters

Mary Boston GB, England and Lincolnshire

Nick Brasier GB, England and London

Jon Cload GB, England and Sussex

Ed Compton* Sussex

Dave Dyson GB, England and Yorkshire

Peter Holden GB, England and Norfolk

Jon Holmes GB, England and Northumberland

Andy Luckman GB, England and Somerset

Erica McMullan GB, Ireland and Ulster

Kip Morton GB, England and Hampshire

Hamish Pollock* England and Hampshire

John Pugsley GB, England and Devon

Jacqui Rankin* Scotland and East of Scotland

Steve Thomas GB, England and Hertfordshire

Jeremy Thompson GB, England and Hertfordshire

Reserves (alphabetically)

Paul Charlton GB, Ireland and Wiltshire

Gary Childs GB, England and Devon

Peter Griggs GB, England and Kent

Toby Raincock GB, England and Surrey

* Denotes New Cap

GB F Class Team to South Africa 2005

The following have been selected for the GB F Class Team to South Africa 2005:

Captain

Mik Maksimovic

Vice-Captain

George Barnard

Adjutant

Jim McAllister

Assistant Adjutant:

Pete Campbell

Shooters

John Campbell

Chris Cuthbert

Hugh Forgie

Peter Hobson

Peter Jackson

David Kent

Peter Medhurst

Howell Morley

Charles Oliver-Bellasis

Des Parr

Colin Shorthouse

Darren Stewart

Roger Wood

Jo Wright

NRA Team v CPC and Germany - May 2005

I am honoured to accept Council's offer of the leadership of the NRA team which will compete against the Continental Palma Council and Germany at Bisley. Provisional details are for a Palma course of fire over the weekend of 6 and 7 August. I am pleased to announce that Dorothy Hume has agreed to be my Vice-Captain and Simon Cleveland my Chief Coach.

We intend to select a team with the capability to win and the commitment to compete with honour. Applications will be welcome from all shooters and coaches, although I hope to field a team mainly composed of those with county, Service, Home International or junior representative experience who aspire to higher levels.

Please send expressions of interest to me either by post or e-mail, to reach me not later than 20 December 2004. Application questionnaires will be distributed shortly after, and should be returned completed to me by 28 January 2005.

Iain Robertson

36 Baker Avenue

Benson

Oxon

OX10 6EQ

iain@bang.u-net.com

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NRA Team to the Channel Islands 2005

I am honoured to have been appointed by the NRA to captain their team to Guernsey and Jersey in May 2005. I am delighted that Peter Bromley has agreed to be my Vice-Captain and Alex Pilgrim my Adjutant.

We intend to take a balanced team that will represent itself with distinction both on and off the ranges. Applications will be welcome from all shooters of good county and/or junior representative level who are looking to take the next step up. The provisional dates for the tour are 25 May to 1 June 2005.

Please send any applications to me either by post or e-mail to the contact details below, to reach me not later than 15 December 2004.

Dominic Harvey
7 Greenwich Academy
50 Blackheath Road
Greenwich
London
SE10 8DZ
dominic.harvey@nortonrose.com

England Rifle Team to Canada 2006

I am very pleased to announce that I have been chosen to be Captain of the England Rifle Team to Canada in August 2006. The tour will last about three weeks. Richard Britton has agreed to be Vice-Captain of the TR side and Peter Smith has agreed to be Adjutant. It is intended to take a team of about 20 shooters and a small team of F Class shooters; Mik Maksimovic will be Vice Captain of this section.

I would like to request that any English Twenty Club members who feel they are at the standard required for such a team, to make an application in writing to me at the address below. All team members chosen will be required to help in fund raising. I propose to take at least five under 25s.

Please apply in writing (*no verbal applications*) to
PW Medhurst
24 Queens Road
Knaphill
Woking
Surrey
GU21 2DX

HELP THE AGED - SEARCHING FOR SPORTING LEGENDS

Does your club have someone who deserves this award? It does seem ideally suited to the shooting sports as age is no barrier to competitiveness or success. If you would like to nominate someone please follow the instructions below. If you or your club should nominate a worthy candidate, please could you also inform the Secretary General, Glynn Alger, of your nomination.

Help the Aged, in association with BT, is calling for people to nominate their sporting heroes from around the country as part of its Living Legend Awards. Nell McAndrew, Help the Aged Sport and Events Ambassador, is supporting the call for nominations for the Living Legend Achievement in Sport.

This award is open to individuals, aged 60 years or over, who have shown that age need not be a barrier to physical pursuit or who have devoted their time or sporting talent to the benefit of others. It is these people who deserve recognition for their commitment and Help the Aged is giving everyone the chance to nominate someone they know for the Achievement in Sport award.

Nell said: "Today there are so many awards for various sporting achievements, but the Living Legend Awards acknowledge the contributions made by the older people of our society. There are a large number of older sporting heroes who deserve to have their achievements recognised. Now is the time to nominate anyone whom you know is worthy of this legendary award. With your help we can celebrate the real Living Legends in sport."

The winner of the 2004 Living Legend Achievement in Sport award, Arthur Keily, was presented with his award for his achievements in sport and in his charitable work in his local community. Arthur competed in the 1960 Olympic Games' Marathon in Rome, breaking the English World Olympic Record and at 70, he went on to win the World Cup London Marathon for his age group. Arthur's achievements earned him several awards, and when he wasn't competing (and winning!), Arthur channelled his efforts into raising funds for charity. Arthur was nominated by his wife and went on to win the award, which was presented by Nell McAndrew at the glittering awards ceremony.

All Living Legend finalists will be invited to the awards ceremony at London's Dorchester Hotel in March 2005. You can place your nominations by obtaining a form from the awards hotline 020 7239 1922 or by writing to Living Legend Awards, Help the Aged, 207-221 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ. Alternatively you can log onto the website www.helptheaged.org.uk/events or visit your local Help the Aged shop. The closing date is 28 January 2005.



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SHARING OUR WARMTH WITH THE WORLD

SHOOTING DISCIPLINE MATTERS

Classic Arms

by Rae Wills

Now, at the time of writing, only a couple of weeks before the Trafalgar Meeting, the summer is already a fading memory, but a lot has gone on, much of it behind the scenes. Remarkably, most of it has been good news, but that does not mean everything in the garden is guaranteed to come up roses.

Certainly the most significant was the document 'Consultation on the Control of Firearms'. I hope you have all read it, and made a reply, for if all within is in fact draft policy, and any changes are to be a merely matters of detail, then all shooting would be in very real difficulties. But there does seem to be a very real possibility that the Government is indeed listening, and the most significant matter for those interested in Historic Arms is the growing recognition of the needs of the collector, and especially those who wish to be able to shoot a particular item from time to time.

Also there is a growing appreciation of what is happening in Europe, and the need for uniformity as far as possible. However, the needs of each country have to be taken into account and, for example, it is unlikely that if a set cut-off date was introduced on an EEC scale for the definition of antiques, we would abandon our obsolete calibres list as a criteria for our licensing purposes.

I also commend the NRA submission to the Home Office. To say that in the past I have been critical of the performance of the NRA with regard to looking after our interests would be putting it mildly, but this document is truly excellent. That is not to say I have a few reservations, but overall it stoutly defends our sport, and gives some well thought out plans for the future.

One of my few concerns is that having governing bodies such as the NRA as arbiter of what is acceptable would

be fine with regard to the personalities there today, but what if they were some of the characters of the past, who cheerfully sent others down the river to protect their own narrow interests?

Casting back to the Imperial Historic Arms Meeting, I was pleased to see quite a number of new faces coming forward to take on range duties, and this is very welcome as for a good number of years it has been the same old faces, mostly like me who are not getting any younger. Thank you all.

Yet this was where yours truly in the guise of Match Director did, if not falling flat on his face, at least stumble. The results posted, I had congratulated myself that there had been no alarms, alleged offences, or other disasters, but a few days later David Mumford spotted me and hailed me through the open window with the dark statement, "There are some letters for you to see". These turned out to be complaints about rulings on dress and equipment; I hope the people concerned were satisfied with the replies and we will see them again, but I have a lesson to digest. It is all very well if you have a set of rules neatly set out in your head but these are useless unless you adequately explain them and, in particular, ensure the newer and less experienced officials understand them and know what to do if a competitor seems upset by their ruling.

I finish with a final plea; if any ruling from a Range Officer upsets you, do not wait until the Meeting is over, ask for the Wing Officer and, if that does not deal with the problem, ask him to call for the Match Director. Things can then be dealt with on the spot and my experience is that on such occasions most of my rulings have been in favour of the competitor. Above all, remember it is "in the spirit" and not a game of rule bending.



James West contemplates his efforts in the NRA Percussion Revolver Championship.



John Higgs has the black powder shooters all in order as usual.
(Photos: Rae Wills)

F Class

by Paul Monaghan

The Imperial Meeting this year saw another increase in the numbers of F Class shooters entering, including a strong contingent from Germany. This year was the first time for the 'F Class issued ammunition' category and those who entered said they thoroughly enjoyed it. As ever, the competition for the F Class Grand Aggregate was close and it was finally won by a South African shooter, Carel Taljaard on his first time at the Meeting. Just one point behind was Ted Hobbs from Wales and Peter Medhurst was just two points behind Ted. Clearly the GB F Class squad to the World Championships next year will have stiff opposition.

The F Class Meeting was held this year on the second Thursday of the Imperial Meeting; this was a chance for shooters to air their views on all aspects of F Class shooting in GB. There were no serious F Class concerns about the Imperial Meeting. There was long discussion about the best way to deal with the number of perfect scores that F Class shooters are now achieving and whether tie shooting should be introduced. It was agreed that if possible, the Queen's and St George's F Class finals should be shot on

Stickledown. The F Class International, contested at 900 and 1000 yards on the second Friday morning saw six teams entered - the four Home Countries, Germany and Continental Palma Council. Shot on the Palma target, there were some superb scores with the victory finally going to England.

The NRA Open Day on Saturday 4 September was a great success. There were two targets with F Class rifles (7.62 and 5.56) and four F Class shooters generously donated their time for the day (Peter Medhurst, Darren Stevens, Patrick Stevens and Paul Monaghan). We were coaching non-stop while a large number of people tried and enjoyed F Class shooting. F Class shooting is an approachable way of shooting for beginners and this is an excellent advertisement for both F Class and shooting overall. The NRA is allowed just two days a year for these events and the next one will be on 30 April 2005. Please try to make yourself available for this event. It is actually good fun as well as an excellent way to show the public that shooters really are normal people.

The GB F Class Goodwill Team has just returned from the Spirit of America match at Raton in New Mexico. The team of Chris Cuthbert (Captain), Des Parr, John Campbell, Alan Canavan and Tony Williamson put on a good show with several top medals and an aggregate win to show for their efforts.

ICFRA News

The rules for International F Class shooting are almost complete (at last). This has been a long drawn-out process, but it looks as if the F Class World Championships in South Africa in April next year will have a coherent set of rules governing it.



Paul Monaghan coaches a potential beginner on the recent NRA Open Day.
(Photo: Karen Robertson)

Norman Clark

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300 Metres

by Ian Shirra-Gibb

Our year is at an end apart from the friendly match versus Clermont (France) at Bisley in mid October; results of this will be in the next Journal.

We have had a busy year and since Simon Aldhouse's individual gold medal win in Italy in May, we have been to four other European countries; Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden with the Final in France. Since the Italian win, scores have been steady but not quite enough as a team to get into a medal position; we have found ourselves the bridesmaid on several occasions coming fourth with equal bronze medal scores but being counted out on last strings etc. However it is pleasing to see one member of the squad, Simon Aldhouse, retain his second position in the European ranking right to the end of season. This by our records is the best placing to date and his year's overseas score average the highest on record at 594.55 for nine matches or 99.9 a string ex 100!

On the home front we held the NRA British Championships in May on electronic targets for the first time since the event started. This has led to more interest from TR shooters who have an event they can shoot in these Championships and we look forward to a bigger entry in that competition in May of 2005.

The ladies have been a little in the background of late but Mary Pugsley has made an end of season push,

making the European Championships Final in France, finishing a creditable fourth with 592. A week later at the same range, she shot well in the French Championships with a team score of 593 on the Saturday and an individual score of 596 on the Sunday which happened to be second highest score on the day.

Training throughout the season has definitely been enhanced with the use of electronic targets and this has allowed the shooter to get the event shooting rhythm correct to what he or she will experience outside Britain. We have had more weekends and odd days available to us which has helped everyone balance their training over the competitive season without the normal marker shortage. Work continues to improve the interior of the firing point and hopefully it will be completed by early part of next year.

We still welcome those TR shooters who may wish to sharpen up their short range V bull average for the start of the 2005 season on Saturday or Sunday afternoons, firing points permitting. A full list of available dates of when the 300m range (butt 10) may be hired will be published in the next Journal; this should allow members or clubs to organise other shoots the same weekends. Should you have an interest in using our facilities next year please contact the Director of Shooting.

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REGIONAL MATTERS

Home Office Approval

The Membership Department would like to let all affiliated clubs know that the Home Office does not send out reminders when Home Office Approval renewal is about to expire. The Approval lasts six years and renewal applications should be set in motion about six months before the expiry date of the existing approval.

Do You Work for a Bank?

Inter-Bank Target Rifle Shooting

For over a century, in fact since 1897, there have been regular competitions between the Bank target shooting clubs based in the United Kingdom. These competitions are managed through the United Banks' Rifle Club.

They consist of a fullbore individual prize and team competition held at Bisley during the first weekend of October each year; small-bore short range deliberate and time limit postal leagues, and in April of each year, a long range small-bore individual prize and team trophy meeting. The individual competitions are divided into classes and cater for all standards. Some of the individual results from the recent United Banks' 2004 fullbore meeting, shot over the weekend of 2 and 3 October, follow:

Willis Trophy for the best individual score ex 150

1st	Martin Parker	Lloyds TSB	150.20
2nd	Dave Davies	Lloyds TSB	146.17

Old Hands Trophy

1st	Dave Davies	Lloyds TSB	146.13
2nd	R Pool	Bullet Lodge	140.7

The Inter-Bank Team Trophy competition held on Sunday 3 October was won by Lloyds TSB with a score of 387.43 ex 400.

All of the Bank clubs would be very pleased to hear from bank employees who are shooting for a local NSRA, NRA or County affiliated club, but who were not aware of the inter-bank competitions organised through the United Banks' Rifle Club.

You may be located anywhere within the UK, and if you wish to find out more, please contact, Huw Curtis-Lewis or Linda Smallbone (details below) who will put you in touch with your bank's club representative.

Huw Curtis-Lewis

Tel: 01737 554473

E-mail: huwcurtislew@aol.com

Linda Smallbone

Tel: 01323 768959

E-mail: L.Smallbone@btinternet.com

Chobham & District Rifle Club Centenary Competition – 2009

Chobham and District Rifle Club will be celebrating its centenary in 2009. The club would like to organise a competition with other clubs celebrating their centenaries around the same time. The format has yet to be determined. Would any interested clubs please contact Chobham Rifle Club's Secretary either by post or e-mail:

Chobham & District Rifle Club

Station Road

Chobham

Surrey

GU24 8AL

E-mail: secretary@chobhamrifleclub.org.uk

South West Champion of Champions

All secretaries of clubs in the South West region are requested to inform the South West Regional Representative, PR Coley, c/o NRA, by 31 March 2005, of the name of their Club Champion for 2004 for entry in the South West regional heat of the Champion of Champions to be held in 2005.

STOP PRESS

Scottish Championships 2005

Unfortunately due to military requirements the dates of the Scottish Championships in June 2005 have had to be changed.

The new dates are

**Saturday 25, Sunday 26
and Monday 27 June 2005**

Hopefully this early warning will allow possible competitors to adjust their diaries.

Entries will be limited to 108 shooters and with a Canadian team visiting early entries are advisable to avoid disappointment.

Entry forms may be obtained in due course from Allan Mabon by telephone 0141 942 2390 or by e-mail at mabooonscotland@ntlworld.com or by visiting the Scottish Rifle Association website at

www.scottishrifleassociation.org.uk

YOUR REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

A new e-mail system for contacting your Regional Representatives has just been set up; this will mean that all Regional Representatives are now contactable by e-mail, post or fax. Below you will find a list of the Regional Representatives, the counties they cover and their new e-mail addresses. They will be taking a more active role within their regions and will be able to answer questions on many aspects.

Should you wish to contact your Regional Representative by post or fax please send all correspondence c/o the NRA and all mail will be forwarded onto them



Northern Ireland

Richard Bailie
e-mail nireland@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

Northern Ireland
Eire



Scotland

Tim Kidner
e-mail scotland@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

All Scottish counties
Scottish Islands



Wales

Paul Gray
e-mail wales@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

All Welsh counties



Southern

Paul Quilliam
e-mail southern@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

Berkshire
Hampshire
Isle of Wight
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



Eastern

Doug Watt
e-mail eastern@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

Bedfordshire
Essex
Hertfordshire
Norfolk
Suffolk
Cambridgeshire



North Western

David Young
e-mail northwest@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

Greater Manchester
Isle of Man
Lancashire
Merseyside
Cheshire

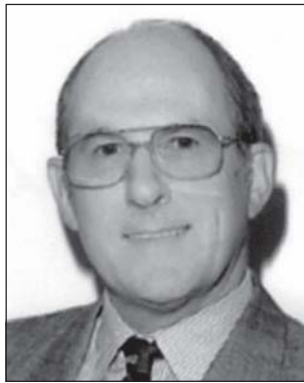
**East Midlands**

George Barnard

e-mail eastmidlands@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

Derbyshire
Leicestershire
Lincolnshire
NE Lincolnshire
North Lincolnshire
Northamptonshire
Nottinghamshire
Rutland
Milton Keynes

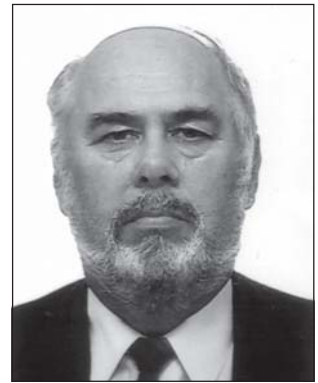
**Northern**

Michael Black

e-mail northern@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

Co Durham
Cumbria
Darlington
Hartlepool
Redcar & Cleveland
Tyne & Wear
Middlesborough
Northumberland
Stockton-on-Tees

**South Western**

Peter Coley

e-mail southwest@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

Bath & NE Somerset
Cornwall
Devon
Dorset
Gloucestershire
North Somerset
Somerset
South Gloucestershire
Swindon
Wiltshire
Bristol

**West Midlands**

Iris Bennett

e-mail westmidlands@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

Hereford & Worcester
Shropshire
Staffordshire
Stoke-on-Trent
Warwickshire
West Midlands

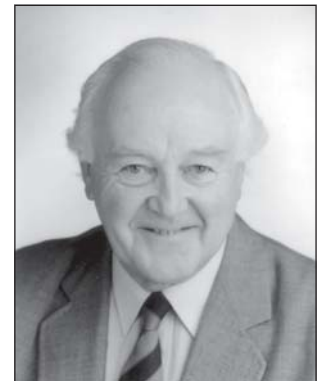
**Greater London & SE**

Chris Law

e-mail gtrlondonse@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

East Sussex
Kent
London
Middlesex
Surrey
West Sussex
Brighton & Hove

**Yorkshire & Humberside**

Colin O'Brien

e-mail yorkshumb@nra.org.uk

Region comprises:

East Riding
Kingston-upon-Hull
North Yorkshire
South Yorkshire
West Yorkshire
York

THE 2004 SCOTTISH RIFLE CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD AT BARRY RANGES

by Bob Aitken, Chairman Scottish Rifle Association

Firstly I would like to thank all of the competitors who attended the event this year and trust that they enjoyed the fellowship and friendliness of their fellow shooters coupled with their own level of success. Following my appeal for additional attendance in the NRA Spring Journal we achieved an entry of 104 shooters over the weekend of whom 86 shot target rifle and 18 shot F Class, with eight shooting the competitions for honours only. Not only was this the largest entry for over five years but F Class exceeded their combined entry over the same number of years. In addition there were 12 cadets and juniors (including some of the 2004 Athelings) all of whom gained valuable experience. However I should like to apologize to our visitors for the weaknesses in the administration of the event which led to unacceptable detail delays and the cancellation of one event. These failings are already noted and will be considered in detail by the Scottish Rifle Association Council and a remedy found. As a gesture of goodwill and appreciation we are considering issuing vouchers, to be set against next year's entry fee, for the overpayments made.

The weather was dry throughout and the wind lived up to the challenge of past years, changing in both direction and strength each day which was a real test throughout. I must congratulate all the winners and I am sure even those from the South will acknowledge the fine achievement of Iain Robertson in winning the Grand Aggregate for the third successive year by one V bull from James Watson in second place and four V bulls from Chris Weeden in third place. James Watson won the Scottish Championship with a score of 149.17 with an excellent possible at 1000 yards. Scotland gained a fine win in the Lawrence International Match but acknowledge that a rifle malfunction in the English team may have been partly responsible.

We also had occasion to welcome a number of F Class shooters from England and to introduce an F Class International Match alongside the Lawrence, which England won and for which a token trophy was awarded which will be superseded by a more substantial one in due course. Likewise commemorative badges or medals for F Class in the Championship will follow.

Angus District Council again kindly hosted a reception for all shooters on the Friday evening in Forfar which is much appreciated by all present and is now a regular feature of the Championship weekend.

This is the first time we have held the Championships at Barry since Landmarc took over the running of the ranges and whilst the cost of our weekend is still an unknown quantity, the quality of service and willingness to help we received from the Barry range staff was exemplary. To run an event of this calibre at Barry requires a considerable amount of voluntary work in the setting up process, including the delivery and making up of our own targetry, range toilets, wind flags, results, ammunition issue facility and of course the problem of supplying markers and the posting of five sentries around the range area. A special word of thanks has been given to the members of the SRA Council who assisted so ably in this procedure in the weeks before and during the weekend. We lost the use of our usual RAF cadet markers on the Friday before the meeting (adult supervision under the Child Protection Act being cited as one of the reasons) and as a result we had to revert to competitor marking on the Friday. On the other two days willing volunteers had to be found to assist the Army Cadet Markers who found the targets simply too hard to raise and lower as the wind was blowing down range and onto



Iain Robertson, winner of the Grand Aggregate for the third year running, receives his badge from Bob Aitken.



James Watson winner of the Scottish Championship and the Stock Exchange.
(Photos: Karen Robertson)

the target faces - I know because I was there and am just about of an age to qualify for exemption from the NRA from such duties!

The large entry which, all thing being equal, should ensure that we hold our Championships at Barry again next year also brought with it some administration problems which will be considered by the SRA Council over the winter. Examples of some of these are: to book the range for a longer shooting day; to allocate the required set up duties to members of the SRA; to relocate the toilets to the car park area; to consider and control disabled driver access and to squad F Class competitors in threes as for TR. Such additional assistance should ensure that the start times can be adhered to more easily. All members of the SRA will therefore be expected to accept that they each have a responsibility towards our guests to ensure that everyone more fully enjoys our Championships in the knowledge that they individually helped make it happen.

I should also personally mention our debt of gratitude to Allan Mabon who gave up his opportunity to shoot in order to act as RCO over the whole weekend except for his coaching duties during the Lawrence - thanks Allan from all of us. I also thank Tim Kidner who

operated the computer (till after midnight on the Saturday night) to produce the results, whilst at the same time shooting to a winning standard. We were also complimented by the Barry range staff for the quality of our RASP files.

I have written letters of thanks to the Barry range staff and to Landmarc Scotland and will continue to maintain active dialogue with the appropriate persons at Landmarc to ensure that target shooting on Army ranges in Scotland can continue to be enjoyed by future generations. Hopefully this can be achieved at reasonable cost with an understanding of what we do and what we require to be provided at and on the ranges we use. There is still too much uncertainty of what we are actually paying for at present. This is partly caused by the fact that the range orders and facilities at all ranges are not the same - so why are the charges?

As Chairman of the Scottish Rifle Association I reasonably expect my Association to be kept right up-to-date on such matters by the NRA. As an Association manned solely by volunteers we do not enjoy the luxuries of permanent staff nor the time regularly to access a website to scan through for such important information.

Results

Scottish Championship

1 James Watson	Uppingham Vets	149.17
2 Tim Webster	Central Bankers	148.19
3 Tim Clarke	Central Bankers	148.13
F Mike Barlow	Fife & Kinross	166

First Stage Medal

1 Tim Kidner	West Atholl	248.35
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Grand Aggregate

1 Iain Robertson	RAFTRC	466.56
2 James Watson	Uppingham Vets	466.55
3 Chris Weeden	NLRC	466.52
F Mike Barlow	Fife & Kinross	540

Caledonian Shield

1 Tim Kidner	West Atholl	322.44
2 Iain Robertson	RAFTRC	320.37
3 Dorothy Hume	West of Scotland	318.44

Stock Exchange

1 James Watson	Uppingham Vets	99.15
2 Mike Barlow	Fife & Kinross	99.14
3 Simon Glen	West Atholl	99.12
F Mike Barlow	Fife & Kinross	117

Bannockburn

1 Tim Kidner	West Atholl	75.10
2 Alastair Speirs	City of Newcastle	75.08
3 Jeremy Thompson	Central Bankers	74.11
F C Shorthouse	NRA	88

Presidents

1 Tim Kidner	West Atholl	75.10
2 Steve Green	RAFTRC	75.10
3 James Dallas	NLRC	75.09
F Peter Medhurst	LMRA	87

Faculty of Procurators

1 Tim Webster	Central Bankers	75.11
2 Alwyn McLean	Comber RC	74.11
3 Dorothy Hume	West of Scotland	74.10
F Mike Barlow	Fife & Kinross	85

Association Gold Medal

1 Chris White	City of Newcastle	147.20
---------------	-------------------	--------

Association Silver Medal

1 Alwyn McLean	Comber RC	149.19
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Darnley Plate (*Club teams of four*)

1 Central Bankers	977.104
2 City of Newcastle	976.114
3 RAFTRC	973.108

Lawrence Trophy (*Teams of twelve*)

1 Scotland	1770.211
2 England	1755.204

F Class Lawrence Trophy (*Teams of four*)

1 England	598.106
2 Scotland	581.088

NRA COUNCIL AND GENERAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Mr MWT Walton	<i>Vice-Chairman</i>
Mr MJC Hasztrakiewicz	<i>Treasurer</i>
Mr CM Brooks	
Mr JEM Hartwell	
Mr PN Hinchliffe	<i>Chairman Disciplinary Body</i>
Dr NJ Jeffs	<i>Chairman Membership Committee</i>
Mr CS O'Brien	<i>Chairman Shooting Committee</i>
Mr CAJ Oliver-Bellasis	
Mr DG Young	
Mr GWJ Alger	<i>Secretary</i>

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Mr MJC Hasztrakiewicz	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr DG Young	
Mr CAJ Oliver-Bellasis	

Remuneration Committee

Mr MWT Walton	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr CS O'Brien	
Mr CAJ Oliver-Bellasis	

Investment Committee

Mr MJC Hasztrakiewicz	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr JEM Hartwell	
Mr MWT Walton	
Mr MJ Blythe	<i>(in attendance)</i>

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Mr CS O'Brien	
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Mr MJ Blythe	<i>Secretary</i>

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Mr CM Brooks	<i>Vice-Chairman</i>
Mr MJC Hasztrakiewicz	<i>Treasurer</i>
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Mr GV Barnard	
Mr S Belither	
Mrs ID Bennett	
Mr MJM Black	
Mr JPS Bloomfield	
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Flt Lt DP Calvert	
Mr AR Campbell-Smith	
Mr JH Carmichael	
Mr ARK Clayton	
Mr PR Coley	
Cdr IG Danbury	<i>Royal Naval/Royal Marines Rifle Association</i>
Mr PS Gray	
Mr C Higginbottom	<i>Muzzle Loaders Association of Great Britain</i>

Lt Col JD Hoare

Wg Cdr CJ Hockley

Lt Col RT Hoole

Prof AR Horrocks

Mr P Hunter

Mr S James

Dr NG Jeffs

Mr N Jones

Mr MD Jones MP

Mr TLW Kidner

Mr JM Kynoch

Lt Cdr T Lapage-Norris

Mr CD Law

Mr JA McAllister

Mr CN McEachran

Mr HJ Malins MP

Dr P Monaghan

Sqn Ldr D Niblett

Mr CS O'Brien

Mr CAJ Oliver-Bellasis

WO2 PJ Quilliam

Mrs KD Robertson

Mr AJD Saunders

Mr I Shirra-Gibb

Brig JR Smales

Wg Cdr M Symonds

Brig JAJ Thomson

Mr MWT Walton

Mr JA Watson

Mr DD Watt

Mr RHF Wills

Mr DG Young

National Small-bore Rifle Association

Welsh Target Shooting Federation

Army Rifle Association

Royal Naval Reserve Rifle Association

Scottish Target Shooting Federation

Royal Air Force Small Arms Association

English Target Shooting Federation

Council for Cadet Rifle Shooting

Royal Auxiliary Air Force Target Shooting Committee

Territorial Army Rifle Association

Committees of the General Council

Disciplinary Body

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Mr HRM Bailie
Mr JPS Bloomfield
Flt Lt DP Calvert
Mr DGF Evans
Miss MF Gooden
Mr JM Holmes
Lt Col RT Hoole
Mr RM Mott
Flt Lt IW Robertson
Mr RHF Wills

Bisley Facilities Advisory Group

Mr RHF Wills	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr HRM Bailie	
Mrs ID Bennett	
Mr I Shirra Gibb	
Mr ND Anderson	

Shooting Committee

Mr CS O'Brien	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr GV Barnard	
Mr JH Carmichael	
Flt Lt DP Calvert	
Maj SH Cox	
Maj SB Fraser	
Wg Cdr CJ Hockley	
Lt Col AR Hoole	
Prof AR Horrocks	
WO2 PJ Quilliam	
Mr JPS Bloomfield	<i>Target Rifle</i>
Mr AR Campbell-Smith	<i>Match Rifle</i>
Mr N Jones	<i>Gallery Rifle & Pistol</i>
Mr JM Kynoch	<i>Sporting Rifle</i>
Dr P Monaghan	<i>F Class</i>
<i>vacant</i>	<i>Muzzle Loading</i>
Mr P Hunter	<i>Practical Rifle</i>
Mr I Shirra-Gibb	<i>300 Metres</i>
Mr RHF Wills	<i>Classic Arms</i>
<i>In attendance</i>	
Maj MG Farnan	<i>NSC Director of Shooting</i>
Mr GWJ Alger	<i>Secretary</i>

Target Rifle Sub-Committee

Mr JPS Bloomfield	<i>Chairman</i>
Lt NJ Ball	
Maj MG Farnan	
Mr JDI Hossack	
Dr JDS Langley	
Mr CS O'Brien	
Mr WCP Richards	
<i>In attendance</i>	
Mr GWJ Alger	<i>Secretary</i>

Match Rifle and Sporting Rifle Sub-Committee

Mr AR Campbell-Smith	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr JPS Bloomfield	
Mr JH Carmichael	
Mr JS Collings	
Mr JM Kynoch	
<i>In attendance</i>	
Mr GWJ Alger	<i>Secretary</i>

Schools Sub-Committee

Maj S Cox	<i>Chairman</i>
Lt Col ARK Clayton	<i>Co-opted</i>
Maj MG Farnan	<i>Co-opted</i>
Capt PJ Farnan	<i>Co-opted</i>
Mr JP Hakim	<i>St Johns</i>
WO1 J Jones	<i>Sedbergh</i>
Lt Col VF McLean	<i>Ampleforth</i>
Maj SJ Pattinson	<i>Co-opted</i>
Maj AR Penfold	<i>Tonbridge</i>
Lt JWR Postle	<i>Epsom</i>
Mr O Shepherd	<i>CCF Association</i>
Capt CA Stewart	<i>Dollar Academy</i>
Brig JR Smales	<i>Chairman CCRS</i>
Lt Col NS Suffield-Jones	<i>Athelings</i>
Capt NE Topham	<i>Oratory</i>
<i>In attendance</i>	
Maj SB Fraser	<i>Secretary</i>

Pistol and Gallery Rifle Sub-Committee

Mr N Jones	<i>Chairman</i>
<i>Details of the members of this Sub-Committee were not available at time of publication and will be notified in the next Journal.</i>	

Classics Sub-Committee

Mr RHF Wills	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr A Claxon	<i>Northern HBSA</i>
Mr A Dagger	
Mr DD Glaister	
Mr P Godliman	
Mr I Grimble	
Mr R Hankey	
Mr J Higgs	
Mr M Hodgins	<i>HBSA</i>
Mr A Kirk	
Mrs O Lamont	
Mr D Lloyd	<i>VAA</i>
Mr D Minshall	
Mr H Pearce	
Mr D Robinson	
Mr V Rogers	
Mr R Seddon	
Mr C Smith	
Mr I Stanyon	
Mr AB Wiffin	<i>MLAGB</i>
Mr P Wikeley	
<i>In attendance</i>	
Mr DK Mumford	<i>Secretary</i>

Teams Finance Committee

Wg Cdr CJ Hockley	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr PN Hinchliffe	
Mr RM Hodgins	
Mr JDI Hossack	
Mr JWE Lewis	
Dr P Monaghan	
Miss J Rankin	
Mr I Shirra-Gibb	
Mr RWH Stafford	<i>Secretary</i>
Mr MK Townsend	
Mr CN Tremlett	
Mr JA Watson	
Mr CP Weeden	
<i>In attendance</i>	
Mr GWJ Alger	<i>NRA Secretary General</i>
Maj MG Farnan	<i>NSC Director of Shooting</i>

Membership Committee

Dr NG Jeffs	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr CD Law	<i>Regional - Greater London & SE</i>
Prof AR Horrocks	
Mr JM Kynoch	
Mrs KD Robertson	
Mr JA Watson	
Mr GV Barnard	<i>Regional - East Midlands</i>
Mrs ID Bennett	<i>Regional - West Midlands</i>
Mr DG Young	<i>Regional - North West</i>
<i>In attendance</i>	
Mr HRM Baillie	<i>Regional - Northern Ireland</i>
Mr MJ Black	<i>Regional - Northern</i>
Mr PR Coley	<i>Regional - South West</i>
Mr PS Gray	<i>Regional - Wales</i>
Mr TLW Kidner	<i>Regional - Scotland</i>
Mr CS O'Brien	<i>Regional - Yorks & Humberside</i>
Mr PF Quilliam	<i>Regional - Southern</i>
Mr DD Watt	<i>Regional - Eastern</i>
Mrs HL Webb	<i>Membership Secretary</i>
Mr GWJ Alger	<i>Secretary</i>

NB The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council and the Treasurer are all ex-officio members of all committees.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND GENERAL COUNCIL

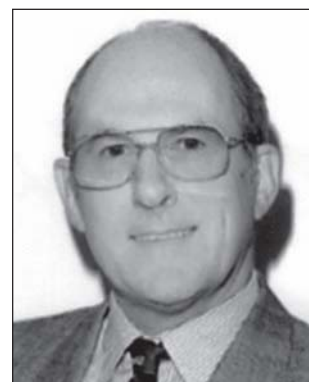


David Young - Elected to Council (Board of Trustees)

Aged 53, David is a self-employed architect in Manchester. He is involved with projects large and small; he designed and project managed Wigan Rifle and Pistol Club's new £750,000 range complex on time and budget, which was completed in January 2003. David has been the NRA Regional Representative for the North West region since its inception many years ago and has served on the Council/General Council over the recent transition in structure. His principle discipline is target rifle, and he is Treasurer of the City of Salford SC and County of Lancaster Rifle Association. David wishes to see the incentives for NRA membership develop so that membership can be sold more successfully and the NRA can tap into the large number of shooters who are not members. To this end he will continue to seek opportunities for more competitions for F Class and he is keen to see development of NRA competitions and events in other classes also.

Michael Black - Northern Regional Representative

Michael is a retired surgeon who started shooting in 1958 at school with the cadet force. He has represented school, club, Northumberland, England and Great Britain in fullbore target rifle but has found that new opportunities in veteran shooting have become available since retirement. He has been Honorary Secretary of the City of Newcastle Rifle Club since 1982. His principle aim as Northern Regional Representative is to foster the target shooting sporting disciplines in the area. Over the years the difficulties entailed in relying upon military ranges, and the effects of legislation have taken a heavy toll. Recently the ever present fear of extinction has appeared to recede, thanks to an influx of those attracted to F Class, and the upsurge of high quality shooting within the local cadet associations. He is seeking to encourage both those trends, but secretly hopes that many will take up TR shooting, which has challenged him and given him so much satisfaction over the years, and continues to do so.



Tony Clayton- Elected Member

Tony is a retired schoolmaster now self-employed as a private tutor who first came to Bisley in about 1974. In 1972 he was appointed Master i/c Shooting at Wrekin College in Shropshire, and moved to Charterhouse in 1978, where he ran the school team until he took early retirement in 1997. In 1987 he was Commandant of the Athelings, and followed this with an Ashburton win in 1988. In his time his team members won most of the silverware available during the Schools Meeting. He first became an NRA Range Officer during the 1985 Meeting, and was first appointed Chief Range Officer on Century in 1994, a post he has held since. He was also Chief Range Officer for the Commonwealth Games in 2002 and the Palma Match in 2003. He is Secretary of the British Schools Small-Bore Rifle Association, Vice-Chairman of the Old Malvernian Rifle Club, Captain of the Farncombe and Godalming Rifle Club and a qualified RCO Assessor.

Doug Watt - Eastern Regional Representative

Doug started service rifle shooting in 1957 and won the Royal Air Force Queen's Medal in 1974. He was Vice-Captain and Adjutant of the Great Britain Service Rifle Team in 1983 and has since toured extensively with the RAF Target Rifle Club to Kenya, Hong Kong, Namibia and South Africa. After an eleven year stint as Deputy Chief Range Officer on Century he has recently been promoted to Chief Range Officer on Stickledown. He is a qualified RCO Assessor, Regional Coach and Police Liaison Officer for two rifle clubs in East Anglia. Besides target rifle Doug has recently taken a keen interest in match rifle and F Class shooting. Doug has retired from a life of engineering and now has plenty of time to put something back into his sport and to represent the interests of shooters in the Eastern region.



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392: three push-fit colour filters to suit	£32	530: iris and 1.5x magnifier only	£105	522: appears as perspex element	£75
500: iris and snap-in filters & polarisers	£89	551: iris, 1.5x and twin polarisers	£125	525: iris and fine crosshairs	£70
510: iris only	£40	570: iris, 1.5x and 6 colour filters	£139	591: spirit level, fits under clamp ring	£39
566: iris and 6 colour filters	£89	568: iris, 48 colours, twin polarisers	£159	581: as above but radially adjustable	£35
575: 1.5x diopter, 5 cols & polarisers	£155	507: 6 snap-on col. rings for alignment	£13	586: 1.3x magnifying lens	£23
577: adaptor, allows use without diopter	£10	508: as above with 6 coloured filters	£33	524: iris to restrict white round bullseye	£40

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CENTRAL SKILL-AT-ARMS MEETING 2004

by Lieutenant Colonel Richard Hoole Royal Signals, Chairman Joint Services Shooting Committee

The continuing high levels of operational deployments of Her Majesty's Armed Forces affected the Services shooting programmes again this year. However all Services were able to run successful meetings, although attendance at the Royal Navy/Royal Marine, Territorial Army and Royal Air Force Skill-at-Arms Meetings were down again at below capacity. The Regular Army fared better with a record 240 UK competitors and 49 Internationals coming from Brunei, the Irish Republic, New Zealand, Oman and a solitary representative from Canada. The vital MILFORCE support task fell this year to a local TA Battalion, the Royal Rifle Volunteers, from Reading who, with a small but dedicated team of individuals, shouldered the burden of the administration of the 3000 or so competitors and support staff.

As in 2003, the three Regular Forces SAMs were closely co-ordinated to make best use of the available range space at Ash, Bisley and Pirbright, and to ensure that the Tri-Service finale to the Queen's Medal, which was a great success last year, could be repeated. Thus the Royal Navy, Regular Army and Royal Air Force ran their own SAMs between 25 June and 1 July, coming together on Friday 2 July to compete alongside each other on Century Range in the final match to decide the winners of the three Queen's Medals for Shooting Excellence for 2004. It is worth repeating here (from last year's article) that Her Majesty The Queen's Medal¹ is the only shooting medal that can be worn by Service personnel on their uniforms.

Regular Army

The Regular Army Championship ran at full capacity and attracted an entry of 34 five-man unit teams, of which six were B teams, and some 70 individuals. The Unit Team Championship was fiercely contested between Gurkha and Royal Irish units, in the main, with 1st Bn Royal Gurkha Rifles proving far too strong for the opposition finishing with 362 match points; these are given for each team beaten in the five matches which make up the Championship. The Gurkha Demonstration Company RMA Sandhurst was second with 330 match points, 2nd Bn RGR (329) third, 4th Bn R IRISH (296) fourth and 3rd Bn R IRISH (295) fifth. The Inter Command/Division Team Match for the Western Command Cup, fired this year in a revised format with the best six scores from a nominated team of eight, was taken by 4th Division, wresting the title from Northern Ireland who had held it for the past three years.

The Individual events were also dominated by Gurkha and R IRISH firers; of the top ten firers in the Army

Championship eight were Gurkhas and two were from the R IRISH. After a fiercely contested individual championship, Sergeant Beindrakumar Magar from 2 RGR won his second Queen's Medal by a 12 point margin. He was chased home by newly promoted Warrant Officer Class 2 Lalitbahadur Gurung 1 RGR with 1132 points and this year's Captain of the Army VIII, Major Krishna Gurung BEM QG SIGNALS from 2 Signal Regiment with 1128 points. The International Class was dominated by the same three individuals with the top overseas competitor finishing in seventh place. Of the 240 UK firers 143 were competing at Bisley for the first time, 102 had less than five year's service, only 77 had qualified for the top Army 100 before; there were 36 newly qualified Army 100 shots on the final day, of which one was female.

This year the Service Pistol Championship was fired at the beginning of the meeting, a week before the Queen's Medal Final. It was won by Private Cameron Carson 4 R IRISH, for the second year running, with Private Darren Alexander, also 4 R IRISH, second and Warrant Officer Class 2 Nigel Hodgson QLR third. The Champion Gunner in the LMG/LSW Match was Rifleman Harikanta Siris 1 RGR with Corporal Devprakash Gurung 2 Sig Regt second and Signaller Halton, also 2 Sig Regt, third. The Champion-at-Arms, based upon the aggregate score in the first stages of the Rifle and Pistol Championships, along with the LMG/LSW match, was won by Major Krishna Gurung with 1268 points, ahead of last year's third placed Private Paul McClure 4 R IRISH (1225) and Sergeant Morgan Cook Intelligence Corps (1224).

For the first time since 1992, the Sniper Team match, in a revamped form, was reintroduced into the central meeting. It attracted an entry of 44 Sniper Pairs from 14 Infantry Battalions with top honours shared between 3 R IRISH, overall Champions and Long Range winners, and 4 R IRISH, Short Range winners and Team Champions. The Short Range Match (600, 500, 300 and 200 yards) was won with a 88.7% of HPS score, whilst the Long Range Match (800, 900 and 1000 yards) was won with a 76% of HPS score. Most of the sniper pairs fired with the L96 (7.62mm) but the two pairs from 1 PARA, who came second and fourth in the overall Championship were firing with the .338in calibre L115. Both the L96 and L115 are manufactured by Accuracy International.

In the International events, honours were spread across the nations with the British Army Combat Shooting Team winning the concurrent Service Rifle Team match for the Connaught Cup, ahead of the Sultan of Oman Armed Forces and the New

¹ The history of this medal is contained in David Owen's book "The King's & Queen's Medal for Shooting 1869 – 1998", ISBN 0 9535609 0 2, published by Sharpshooter Books, 1 Broadlands, Farnborough GU14 7ER.

Zealanders, as well as the Fire Team and Combat Snap matches. The Omanis won the Parachute Regiment Cup, with its testing two-mile approach march, and the Falling Plates match. The New Zealanders took the individual LSW title, the Irish Permanent Defence Force's Corporal Walsh the Moving Target match and the Royal Brunei Armed Forces, firing with borrowed SA 80s, finished a very well deserved third in the Falling Plates.

Royal Navy and Royal Marines

In the Royal Navy Service Rifle Championship Air Engineering Mechanic Jim Stead added a bar to his Queen's Medal, once again beating off a strong challenge from Warrant Officer Class 2 Dave O'Connor and Sergeant Mick Cole. The Royal Marines once again took the lion's share of the trophies in the inter-unit competitions but could not quite manage a clean sweep. The Royal Navy Pistol Champion was Sergeant Mick Cole, winning the competition with a scratch pistol and his glasses held together with masking tape! The Royal Navy Pistol squad was coached this year, for the first time ever, by a non-UK national; Gunnery Sergeant Doug Kirkham USMC, who has been on exchange with the Royal Marine Marksmanship training team at CTC Lymestone, undertook the challenge as non-shooting coach. The fact that the RN fielded two members of the Great Britain Service Pistol Team, for the first time ever, is testament to his excellent coaching. He was presented with a medal of appreciation by the RNRMRA at their prizegiving.

Royal Air Force

For the second year running RAFSAM recorded a competitor shortfall. Even so, the competition was fierce in all events. As has become the traditional precursor to RAFSAM, a meeting of the University Air Squadrons produced an entry of more than 80 competitors taking part in Target Rifle and Service Pistol events. The TR team match was won by Cambridge and the SP team event by Southampton.

The main period followed in which Flight Lieutenant David Calvert (RAFR) beat Flight Lieutenant Neil Moxon (RAF Lyneham) by a small margin of two points in the TR Championship. The SP Championship was won by Sergeant Tony Crowe (RAF Marham), who, with a total of 720, had a clear lead of 27 points. But it was during the final of HM The Queen's Medal that the most hotly contested event took place. A cross fire by the 11 times previous holder of the RAF QM, Chief Technician John Pricor, early on in the week allowed Flight Lieutenant Conrad Allen (RAF Wittering) to take the lead. The next stages over the following days were crucial and it was clear that a steady nerve was required for the final practice in the final match. The result was a win for Conrad Allen with a score of 1189, a mere four points ahead of his rival.

The three Queen's Medallists were presented with their medals by Rear Admiral Mark Kerr, the Naval Secretary, before being chaired off Century range behind the Band of the Light Division.

Territorial Army

TASAM again had a reduced entry, mainly due to operational pressures with some units who would normally participate having to take Post Op Tour Leave. Sadly there were no international competitors with both the US National Guard and the South Africans withdrawing due to funding and other pressures. Despite the difficulties experienced by TA units in forming teams to participate, a very high standard of competition was possible with 21 teams participating and, in a repeat of last year's top three Order of Merit, 3rd Battalion Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment were once again victorious in the Unit Championship. They held off the challenge of the 51st Highland Regiment and 151 Logistic Support Regiment RLC. In the Queen's Medal competition Corporal Mark Sherman 151 Log Sp Regt, just beat off the efforts of Captain Peter Cottrell 3 PWRR, last year's runner-up, and Sergeant John Chapman also from 3 PWRR, to take top honours.

NRA Service Rifle Events

During the NRA part of the meeting the various Inter-Services events were again hotly contested. The Regular Army beat off strong challenges from the Royal Navy/Royal Marines to win the United Services for Service Rifle and from the Territorial Army to take the FIBUA rifle team title, whilst the Royal Air Force retained the Whitehead for Service Pistol. Once the results of the Short and Long Range Target Rifle events were added to those for Service Weapons, the overall Burdwan Cup was won by the Regular Army by 28 points to the RAF's 22, the Navy's 14 and the TA's 11.

This year the three Services provided trophies, on loan to the NRA, for the Open Class in the Inter-Unit Service Rifle Team matches, so that the existing trophies could revert to being awarded to the top UK team in each of the five matches. The overall Unit Champions were the Royal Corps of Signals, just ahead of the Royal Irish Regiment. Royal Signals also took the Canada and the Mappin, whilst the R IRISH took the Brinsmead and Hythe.

In this year's International Service Weapon matches, Great Britain won both the ten-man Service Rifle Team Match from Oman and New Zealand, and the eight-man Service Pistol Team Match, which was a straight two-way contest between Great Britain and New Zealand, with a team of Allcomers shooting alongside.

The Methuen Cup, a six man rifle team match between Army Infantry Divisional and Other Arms and Services Corps teams, as well as RN and RAF Command teams, was once again a very closely contested affair with the lead changing several times.



Concentration . . .



. . . and control.



The Omani team in action.



John Prictor (*QM11*) congratulates Conrad Allen (*QM1*).



The Royal Irish win the Methuen (again!).



The three Champions.



Sergeant Beindrakumar Magar, Air Engineering Mechanic Jim Stead and Flight Lieutenant Conrad Allen are chaired from the range.
(Photos: Courtesy Soldier magazine, Karen Robertson, David Niblett)

Top honours in the International Class went to Oman with a score of 1423 ex 1500 with the New Zealand Army beating the Royal Brunei Armed Forces team. The Sultan's team were the overall highest team beating the top three UK teams by a considerable margin. In third place was the Royal Corps of Signals with 1326, who also took the top Other Arms and Services honours. Second were the Royal Gurkha Rifles on 1357, eight points behind this year's

Champions, the Royal Irish Regiment, who won, for the third year running, with a score of 1365.

Next year's programme will largely be the same as this year. The principal change will be a reversal of the last two days at the end of the NRA Service Weapon week, with the Methuen Cup reverting to Wednesday and the United Services and International Service Rifle Team matches being fired the next day.

CIVILIAN SERVICE RIFLE 2004

by Paul Hunter

This year's Civilian Service Rifle Meeting was blessed for the most part with some good shooting weather, was well attended, and provided some challenging courses of fire. Given that the event is open to a whole range of firearms, both iron and optic, it is hoped that more shooters will take advantage of this unique and historic opportunity to shoot alongside not only the best of the UK military but also other nation's armed services. It is without doubt one of the best opportunities to socialise, and also learn from each other. With the potential impending review of firearms laws, putting our case across to as many people as possible cannot be a bad thing. There were many occasions this year where the military were taking tips from the civilian shooters and vice versa. There are four classes of entry; SMLE, No 4, any rifle iron sights and any rifle optic sights. So there are opportunities for every type of shooter, even single shot TR!

The shooting was rearranged this year to accommodate the requests from international teams. However, this proved to be in our favour as it allowed a couple of extra shoots to be included. The first day is centred around the stand-alone competitions; the Standing, Sitting, Wantage, Kinnaird, Stevens and of course the Bisley Bullet. There was a great deal of competitive spirit and hope of a good start to the meeting, but in the end the day is mostly decided on the Standing at 100 yards; the scoring on the figure target is harsh and there is very little room for error. So after the first day out of 300 points:

1	SMLE	Richard Seddon	195
1	No 4	Bill Ellis	156
1	Iron	Bob Wightman	232
1	Optic	Paul Hunter	285

Tuesday is the day of the Queen Mary, famed for the long distance deliberate shoot and that oh so lovely rundown from 500 yards to 100 yards. A changeable wind at 500 yards was the undoing of many shooters as they happily watched their two sighters impact into the centre target of the triple figure target. Then wept, as the ten rounds to count drifted into either the left

or right hand figure. Shooting at 500 yards with the ex-military iron sights is very hard, so the range staff must be thanked for cutting the excess foliage off the mantlet so the targets could be seen - your work was very much appreciated. The rest of the shoot was similar to the Monday events, so with zero positions taken from the day before the scores began to rise and the competition intensified. So out of a possible 200 points:

1	SMLE	Bill Ellis	93
1	No 4	Richard Seddon	104
1	Iron	R Harwood	148
1	Optic	Steve Sheldon	199

Steve Sheldon was just one point off a possible, something that raised a few eyebrows in military circles. Don't wobble at the 400 yards sitting next time Steve!

With the completion of the second day the Civilian Service Rifle individual competition was at an end. It was great to see that 5.56mm and 7.62mm ammunition was provided this year - that made a substantial difference to shooters' finances, and we all hope it can continue next year.

At this point, a word must be added about the military support to the Meeting. In case some of you are unaware, the SASC (Small Arms School Corps) run the military element of the Imperial Meeting, which encompasses the Civilian Service Rifle matches and the Methuen Cup matches. They are the Army range and weapons specialists and are nicknamed the 'Range Police' and some other unprintable names; they enforce range and weapon safety policy, as well as overseeing new kit and equipment into service and overseeing the training of all military RCOs. The meeting is quite an eye opener for them, both in the level of marksmanship skill civilians show and in civilian procedures compared to military. It is quite a shock for them to find a civilian shooter with a couple of hundred rounds in his possession, and not at the ammunition issue point. Likewise, they soon learnt that picking up someone's prized Lapua cases and

putting in them in the empty case sandbag results in some strange tantrums but, in all honesty, they are a great bunch. Each butt on Century is allocated a Warrant Officer from the SASC; he or she controls their point and reports back to the CRO at the centre of the range. This year the Army swapped the teams over, so more of the staff got to meet the civvies. All the shooters were impressed by the professionalism of the team and Lt Col Hall SASC and his staff must be thanked for an excellently run meeting.

So back to the results. After the two days the Civilian Championship places were:

1	SMLE	Bill Ellis	249
1	No 4	Richard Seddon	299
1	Iron	Bob Wightman	379
2	Iron	R Harwood	362
1	Optic	Paul Hunter	483
2	Optic	Steve Sheldon	480
3	Optic	Martin Camp	461

A very close Meeting indeed but that was not the end. This year thanks to Martin Farnan and Lt Col Hoole, two extra matches were shot alongside the Military, the Practical Rifle Short Range Match and the Practical Rifle Long Range Match. Shot alongside the Armed Forces Inter-Services and International Match respectively, they are similar to the Methuen Cup and the Queen Mary, but with enough subtle differences to make them harder. Due to the nature of these matches competitor marking was not possible so markers had to be bought by the competitors. This did not go as smoothly as all would have liked, but rest assured it will be addressed for next year. The formats for the Long and Short Range Matches were as per the Individual Championship with the same four classes of entry. The results for the Long and Short Range Match, counting towards the Practical Rifle League were:

Short Range Match

1	Matt Greenall	215
2	Mark Dougan	211
3	Steve Oakland	211

Long Range Match

1	Dave Green	244
2	Bill Ellis	242
3	Paul Hunter	238

The final event of the programme, and the major service rifle and practical rifle event of the year was the Methuen Cup. A strongly contested match by teams from all units of the Armed Forces, it is our privilege and honour to be allowed to compete alongside in this important historic match. The favourites going into the match were the Highpower

Rifle Association (HRA) team, having won the event for the past three years, but hot on their heels this year were the London Practical Shooting Club (LPSC) and members drawn from the Practical Rifle League (PRL). In the first stage, the 300 yards harassing fire saw a stage win for the HRA team beating the Sultan of Oman's team and the Royal Irish. However all was to change for the run down match where the Armed Services fitness came to the fore. The HRA came in 12th ahead of the Royal Marines, with the PRL 16th and LPSC 26th following behind. The 100 yards snap saw a change of fortune with the LPSC obviously conserving their energy during the run down and leading the stage for the civilian teams, albeit in 18th place - more practice is obviously required for all the civilian teams in this event! The 200 yards rapid saw a strong resurgence of the HRA finishing second in the stage behind the Sultan of Oman's team. Two civilian teams with the HRA and LPSC finishing first and second respectively dominated the final 300 yards snaps. Overall, a strongly contested competition, with the lead changing constantly during the match.

1	<i>Sultan of Oman's Armed Forces</i>	1423
7	HRA A Team	1310
14	PRL	1234
20	LPSC A Team	1168
21	The Saluza Scouts Association	1153
23	HRA B Team	1099
25	LERA B Team	982
27	LPSC B Team	928
30	LERA A Team	684

The lower scoring teams were not poor shots, they were competing with 'as issued' iron sighted Lee Enfields, and they did not finish last! We suspect that there were some serious questions being asked in some Corps and Regiments once the results were published!

Overall, a very successful, enjoyable and challenging meeting. Thanks again to the ARA and NRA for allowing the civilian teams to compete, at what is the premier Armed Forces marksmanship event.



The Highpower Rifle Association team - winners of the Civilian Methuen Cup.
(Photo: Karen Robertson)



SCENES FROM THE SCHOOLS MEETING 2004

Top four photos:
Scenes from the Wellington and
Marlborough Cup at 300 yards.
(Photos: David Pollard)

Bottom four photos:
The Ashburton
Epsom at work at 300 yards.
Mik Maksimovic heads the queue for
ammo.
The leader board.
Epsom - victorious again!
(Photos: James Postle)



SCHOOLS MEETING 2004

by James Postle

A new competition open to teams of four at 300, 500 and 600 yards was started this year. The ABRO Trophy, in its inaugural year, was won by Dollar Academy, ahead of Wellington College and Greshams School. The Army Base Repair Organisation (ABRO) have fast become the coach's best friend as we have all become accustomed to the second generation L81 Cadet Target Rifle. The advice and work on our rifles, given by ABRO throughout the week, was much appreciated by their many visitors. As more 600 yards shooting for cadets in the schools week is being considered, this competition is likely to attract an ever larger number of entrants in years to come.

Victoria College A were the winners of the trophy which bears their name - shot at 600 yards using the Cadet Target Rifle but with any jacket allowed and self coached. Sydney Boys' High came an admirable second with Dollar Academy B one V bull behind for third. The individual Silenta Trophy was won by Sgt Firman of Greshams with a 35.4.

Sedbergh and Campbell College were at the fore of the Snap competitions with the GP Rifle. Sedbergh proved the victor in the Schools Snap, nine points ahead of Campbell College, with the Oratory School in third. Sedbergh and Campbell tied for first in the Marling both scoring 310, sharing the trophy for six months, with another tie for third between Ampleforth and Oratory on 300 apiece. With the Cadet Pairs and Ashburton results added, Sedbergh proved deserved winners of the Schools Aggregate trophy, with Campbell College again in second place and Uppingham in third. However, the individual marksman of the Meeting with the GP Rifle must be Sgt Ritchie of Sutton Valence who achieved a rare double in winning the Financial Times with a 47 and the Marlborough Cup with a 49 – an excellent achievement!

By the Wednesday of the Meeting, the results for the TR competition thus far showed that a number of schools were performing well. LS McCorkell of Fettes had shot the only 35.7 at 300 yards to win the Wellington, whilst Cdt Makepeace of Marlborough and Sgt Stearn of Greshams had tied with 35.6 at 500 yards for the Iveagh - Makepeace winning the tie and the trophy. Cdt Sam Hunter of Epsom, 14 years of age, won the Cadet Rifle Aggregate with two 35.4s much to the chagrin of his Atheling elder brother! Stamford School looked to be on form as ever, winning the Devon three points ahead of Epsom, with the Oratory in third place. For the staff it was good to see Tom Adams of Cheltenham College shooting two good 34s to win the Challenge Cup.

Thursday was overcast but the rain never really threatened, although there was a pretty stiff wind which kept the coaches on their toes. Sgt Chai of Fettes won the Reserve with a 47.4 ahead of Sgt Wong of Sedbergh and the 2003 winner Sgt Lee of Epsom. The Cadet Pairs match was again won by Oundle with a good score of 125.6 with Cheltenham A in second and Epsom in third. The Cadet Fours was retained by Epsom with 252.13, seven points ahead of Cheltenham College in second again and the Oratory in third. In the Spencer-Mellish, Sandy Walker of Framlingham College coached himself to an excellent 49.2, whilst Cdt Dickson of Oundle (one of their winning Pair) topped the Schools Hundred with an impressive 68.5.

As the teams fell back to 500 yards, there was a delay for the ammunition to be issued and this gave the lengthy queue ample time to peruse the leader board for the Ashburton. Epsom College had established a significant lead, posting a score of 260.17 to win the Kinder. Uppingham were leading the chasing pack with 249.16, with Marlborough two V bulls behind them and Sedbergh on 248.10. Stamford and the Oratory were both on 245. As the 500 yards shoot began, it became obvious Marlborough were closing on Epsom, and they went on to shoot 259.18 to win the Green Howards Country Life - a tremendous fight back, with Uppingham just behind them. However this was not enough to catch Epsom who finished with 511.31 to win the Ashburton Shield, three points ahead of Marlborough and six ahead of Uppingham, with Oratory, Dollar and Stamford occupying fourth, fifth and sixth places. This was the tenth occasion Epsom has won the Ashburton Shield; nine of those wins have been in the last fifteen years, whilst in the last seven they have recorded four wins and been runners up on three occasions.

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MATCH RIFLE 2004 - THE TREMLETT SHOW

by Keith Haskell

With TR inexorably creeping earlier and earlier into the first week of the Meeting (TR competitions now start at 0830 on First Thursday), MR is extending more and more into the pre-Meeting Thursday and Friday. Practice, ad hoc team matches and the Any Rifle Extras ensure that the firing points are well occupied for two days before the Hopton starts to roll.

So it was this year. The highlight on Friday (9 July) was a 12-a-side match between the GB MR team, which Colin Hayes was due to take to Australia two months later, and a team organised by Allan Campbell-Smith. On a difficult day, with changing light and a capricious left wind, the GB tour party ran out easy winners:

	1000x	1100x	1200x	Total
GB tour party	878.99	841.72	832.56	2551.227
Allcomers	858.82	827.59	790.46	2475.187

For the GB team Guy Blakeney was top scorer with 219.24, closely followed by Will Meldrum with 218.20. The average score of over 212 was a credit to the coaching team. Top scorer for the Allcomers was Mike Barlow with 214.20.

With so many top shots engaged in the teams match, the entry for the Any Rifle Extras was down on 2003. Most competitors were looking for MR practice and only two shot in F Class. John Knight topped the lists at 1000 yards with 74.7 and 1100 yards with 70.6, and also the aggregate with 214.18. Chris Law did best at 1200 yards with 71.8.

And so to the Hopton. The weather for the first three days was typical of an English summer: leaden skies, brisk, cold winds and occasional rain. Global warming? Not in this corner of Surrey! We've all heard of King Ethelred the Unready, and the Whitehead had its full complement of Ethelreds. But one non-Ethelred was Adrian Abbott - a good friend to the increasing number of MR shots who've recently visited Australia. There was no Australian MR team at Bisley this year, but Abbott arrived, as an individual, a month early, accompanied by his own personal marker from Tasmania.

To spare his blushes, I won't name the newcomer* who found himself shooting 1000 yards in the Whitehead by himself with another novice as scorer. Noting that his squadding card had spaces for 20 shots, he

conscientiously fired enough to fill them all. For a brief, glorious moment he was leading the Hopton by a street, until the ever-vigilant Stats noticed the discrepancy.

With a fickle wind from ahead, scoring was not especially high. The Whitehead was won by David Calvert with 148.19 (74.10 + 74.9), counting out Nick Tremlett with 148.16. However Tremlett got his revenge in the Halford, winning with 147.19. Hugh Butcher was second with 147.13, but must have rued converting bull, inner sighters at 1200 yards. Most people would have done the same, but if he had gambled and finished with two bulls, he could have pipped Tremlett by a point.

Given these scores, it was not surprising that Nick Tremlett also won the Saturday Aggregate with 295, five points clear of the field. But this was only the start of an incredible run which continued right through until Tuesday afternoon.

On Sunday (11 July) Tremlett was one of six shooters to make a possible in the Cottesloe at 1000 yards, though the winner on V bull count was Ted Hobbs with 100.16. David Calvert took the Wimbledon at 1100 yards with 99.15, counting out Mike Baillie-Hamilton and John Powell, with Tremlett equal fourth on 98. But at 1200 yards Tremlett won the Armourers outright with 95.10: he thus took the Martin Parr (Sunday) Aggregate with 293.33, five points ahead of everyone else, and inevitably the overall Weekend Aggregate with 588.68 out of 600, a whole 13 points clear.

At the Tyro level, Michael Wentges was showing almost equal dominance in his first MR season with his own gun. He was top Tyro in all the aggregates, as well as in the Armourers. Meanwhile the RG Aggregate (excluding the two 1200 yards shoots) went to Jon Cload with 392.21 out of 425.

Monday 12 July only brought more of the same. Nick Tremlett took the Edge with 196.26 (99.14 + 97.12), two points clear of the competition, and Michael Wentges was top Tyro with 187.20.

Until the last minute, entries for the FW Jones team competition were low - a symptom of the pressure on competitors caused by the way in which the MR programme has been telescoped over the years. By Monday afternoon, most people are glad of an

*Oh, all right then: it was David Brechin

300: frames
- fully adjustable £93



390: clip-on flip-up iris
for ordinary glasses £52



391: flip-up light or dark eyeshield
£19



302: eyeshield combined sideshield £20
340: iris to improve depth-of-field for pistol £42
337: three-colour rotational filter set £49
345: matching frosted set for other eye £27
342: clip-on individual colour filters £19

392: 3-colour push-fit filter set £32



373: velcro-fastened headband with iris and eyeshield combined sideshield £63



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afternoon's break, and the thought of firing another 20 shots each at 1100 and 1200 yards lacks appeal. However, some last-minute decisions to participate resulted in a total of seven teams competing. The Etonian Shooting Club won with 554.36, six points ahead of Sussex.

During all of this Julian Peck sustained a general interest in the evolution of his rifle. Though its stock is clearly modelled on an RSJ, it is more living organism than artefact, sprouting new pseudopods and sensory organs as time passes. However it seemed to have reached harmony with its environment before the Hopton ended.

Tuesday at last saw some sunshine, higher temperatures, and a variable wind from the left. With Nick Tremlett 19 points ahead in the Hopton before the Albert started, the only question seemed to be the margin of his victory. His performance in winning the Albert with 220.30 (only five points dropped in a three-range shoot with no sighters, and three points clear of the opposition) gave him the Hopton with 1004.124. Rob Lygoe won the silver medal with 981.93 and Hugh Butcher took the bronze with 980.92. Top Tyro was Michael Wentges in 18th place with 958.53.

Tremlett's dominance meant that apart from winning four of the seven individual competitions (and equalling the winner's points score in another two), he won every single aggregate, adding the Hopton, Victoria, 1000, 1100, 1200, Weekend Selection and Match Rifle Selection Aggregates to those he had already claimed on 10 and 11 July. In the Hopton he:

- is the first winner to score 1000 points or more
- achieved the second biggest winning margin (23 points) on record
- is the first-ever winner to drop fewer points than the margin between himself and the runner-up.

His clean sweep of all the aggregates is also unprecedented.

For the Elcho on Wednesday 14 July we were back to grey clouds and a cold wind. At 1000 yards Ireland shot outstandingly well, dropping only six points overall and leading England by four. Ireland's score of 594.81 was also a new range record for the Elcho. England fought back at 1100 yards and were 12 points ahead of Ireland, who in turn led Scotland by six, going into the final distance. At 1200 yards, Ireland demonstrated the virtues of firing quickly by being the only team to average over 70 points a man. They set England a stiff target of 1725 overall, and with England the last team to finish, the result was in doubt

until the final few shots. Eventually England triumphed by six points over Ireland (who had the minor consolation of making the top scores at two of the three ranges). Scotland, who never quite managed to impose themselves at any of the three distances, were third and Wales fourth.

The detailed scores were:

	1000x	1100x	1200x	Total
England	590.80	585.72	556.39	1731.191
Ireland	594.81	569.48	562.42	1725.171
Scotland	586.84	571.48	554.41	1711.173
Wales	582.67	552.33	537.27	1671.127

Top scorers:

England	Alex Cargill-Thompson	221.31
Ireland	Peter Campbell	221.22
Scotland	Hugh Butcher	218.29
Wales	Henry Jeens	213.17

In the remainder of the competitions, Scotland won the Five Nations Match with 554.45, six points ahead of Wales. George Barnard, with 93.7, won the Any Rifle for the second year in a row. Anna Calvert won the Ranken with 75.9 (though she wisely allowed David to do the actual shooting for her) and the MR Pairs went to the Lead Sardines, alias Tom Smith, who made 99.10, and Rob Lygoe 99.08. They broke new ground by having a non-human captain: Bob the Dog. Next year perhaps Michael Davis will emulate them by enlisting Green Jim the Parrot.

Finally, the Humphry between two strong Oxford and Cambridge teams was won by the Light Blues. The scores were:

	1000x	1100x	1200x	Total
Cambridge	289.26	278.22	279.19	846.66
Oxford	283.21	271.13	257.09	811.43

For the winners, Henry Jeens was top scorer with 218.22 (including a 74 at 1200 yards), a day after making the highest Welsh score in the Elcho. Chris Padbury was Oxford's top scorer with 209.14.

But the abiding memory of 2004 must be Nick Tremlett's wonderfully consistent shooting, from the first shot of the Hopton to the last. All his many friends are delighted that he has finally won the Hopton, after so often falling just short. But they may be rather relieved if he takes a sabbatical in 2005 . . .



Rob Lygoe shooting in the Armourers.

(Photo: David Pollard)



Captain of the GB Match Rifle Team to Australia, Colin Hayes, in action.

(Photo: David Pollard)



David Friend shooting at 1200 yards.

(Photo: David Pollard)



David Lury at 1100 yards in the Whitehead.

(Photo: David Pollard)



Alex Henderson coaching for Scotland in the Elcho.

(Photo: John Knight)



The winning England team at 1200 yards in the Elcho.

(Photo: John Knight)



Mike Baillie-Hamilton relaxes after a hard days Elchoing.

(Photo: John Knight)



Well if you're going to win the Hopton you may as well do it in style!

(Photo: John Knight)

TARGET RIFLE 2004

by Iain Robertson

Right, that's enough about Tremlett!

Every Meeting seems to have one memorable feature which serves to identify the event for the future. There was the one when an entire detail of QI was rained out of the competition, the one when Blind Pew made 300 ex 300, the one when Ireland won the National. 2004 will be remembered as the year the ammo didn't work. It took time to amass the evidence, but after a couple of days most people were aware something was not right. The effects varied; a lucky group found no problems, many felt their shooting was suffering to a degree but found it difficult to demonstrate conclusively, while a sizeable minority had third-rate results no matter what they did. Statistics have to be interpreted with care, since the weather can have such an influence on achieved scores. However, as a rough indicator, take the table of "Competitors Scoring the Highest Possible Score" which appears in the back of the Prize List. In 2001 there were 61 competitors with more than five HPSs. In the benign conditions of 2002 there were 132. In 2003, there were 37. This year there were 18. Radway Green had made progress in recent years towards overcoming their appalling reputation of the 80s and early 90s; that progress has been squandered and, rightly or wrongly, they are worse regarded than ever. Meanwhile the handload or bring your own debate has taken new life. Our overseas competitors rightly object to spending thousands to attend and then finding the event compromised for the expenditure of perhaps £180 on ammunition. On the other hand, £100 for enough ammo to shoot the Grand Aggregate, added to the minimum entry, looks like a great deal to a cadet or junior soldier who normally gets his shooting free. Resolution of this issue to a standard that clearly addresses the many valid concerns is essential to the survival of the Meeting as a world-class event.

Thursday

The Opening Shot may be entered by just about any club, military unit, or association short of a national representative team. This year the trophy went to one of the NRA's smallest and most exclusive clubs, Queens Lodge (yes the residents of the building between the Barn and the Canadian Clubhouse really are affiliated), with a score of 580.48.

In the Schools' Veterans, Old Bradfieldians had an excellent shoot, then four more for 250.25. Gresham's won both the 2nd and 3rd Teams events to take the Schools' Veterans Aggregate. The Individual Tankard went to Jon Underwood of Old Guildfordians with 50.8.

Friday

Friday saw the centenary of the Astor County Championship. All the clubs still in existence who had shot in the first Championship were invited to shoot in a commemorative match, and as a special prize anyone who shot in both would receive free NRA Life membership. Four clubs took up the invitation, and the

special medals went to Exonia & Tiverton with 620.74. In the Astor Championship itself, OGRE made the same score to take the Tankard, although a stats misunderstanding (involving using the same colour cards for both matches) led to Exonia & Tiverton being announced on the range as the winners on countback.

Onto the start of the individual squadded competitions where there were six centuries in the Century with Chris Belk of OCRA winning by three V bulls with 100.16. With an afternoon of moderate wind from the left there were 36 possibles in the Admiral Hutton. Alan Haggerty of Wandsworth made 50.9 and took the candlesticks after a tie shoot with Andrew Burton of Guernsey. Special mention for bloody-minded determination goes to 17 year-old Edward Jowett of RGS Guildford, competing in his first Meeting, who hit the target with his last to count for a score of 1.

Saturday

In the Donegall, Robin Baker's winning score of 50.10 was the only individual clean score for an HPS cross of the entire Meeting (although there were 14 scores of 35.7 in Queen's I). In the Daily Telegraph, Steve Thomas had a convincing win (and the overnight lead in the Grand Aggregate) by two V bulls with 75.13. John Bellringer took the Lovell by the same margin with 50.8.

Sunday

A day that started overcast with some drizzle and cleared with gradually rising winds gave many competitors a relatively straightforward run. Over a hundred collected an HPS cross in the Duke of Cambridge. Topping the bill on 50.9 were Simon Belither, Gareth Morris and Dave Dyson. Equal fourth were John Warburton and Nigel Penn, converting two and one bulls respectively for 50.8 with an 8V finish, and both no doubt delighted with the points towards the Grand Aggregate. Somewhat further down the list, Edward Jowett of RGS Guildford was learning fast. Wisely not converting a magpie second sighter (having missed with the first), he followed four more misses with two outers, a magpie, an inner and two bulls for a 21.0. At that rate of improvement since Friday, winning the Queen's next Saturday was a viable proposition.

James Lewis and Steve Thomas both converted a bull sighter for two of the six 50.9s in the Alexandra. The tie shoot after Queen's I was a more testing affair, James winning with a 24.2. In the Daily Mail three scores of 75.13 meant an international tie shoot between Aussie Andy Powell, Canadian Cadet Brenda Greene and Alice Ogilvie for GB. All three tied again on 24.2 with Andy's nerve holding for the sudden death finish.

At close of play on Sunday comes the first posting of the Grand Aggregate leaders. Tim Kidner of West Atholl had demonstrated his form by winning six events at the Scottish Championships a few weeks before. Now he was excelling himself, with fifty consecutive bulls to

count. Close on his heels was Tom Rylands with one point dropped in the Daily Mail, followed by Andrew Le Cheminant, Danny Coleman, Stuart Collings, Peter Holden and Nick Tremlett all on two off.

Also decided were the early birds of a flock of trophies heading North for the winter - the Clementi Smith, the Howcroft Newspaper Aggregate and the Weekend Aggregate all went Tim's way. However, the Sunday Aggregate went to Stuart Collings with 175.23, edging Tim out on V bulls.

Monday

Last year there were 174 possibles in the Times; this year, in a light but fishtailing wind that could catch the unwary, there were only 56, and unusually for a 300 yards competition there were no 50.10s. John Tapster and Mike Cosway made 50.9, and John continued with 25.5 in the tie-shoot to take the trophy. No ties in the Wimbledon though where Roy Jobson of Cornwall was the only competitor to score a 50.9.

There were five scores of 50.8 in the Conan Doyle although Mark Joyce of the RAFTRC back in seventh place may have applied that most exact of sciences – hindsight – and wished he hadn't converted two bull sighters for a 50.7. Bill Rowland of Ibis RC won the tie with 25.3 and a V bull. Edward Jowett of RGS Guildford continued his spectacular progress at 900 yards, remaining in the inner or better throughout for a 45.1. One more shoot and it's Palma Squad, beware! Seriously, Edward has obviously cracked the basics of shooting straight (74.9 in the Daily Telegraph said goodbye to his T) and his long range shoots demonstrated how a little practice and a lot of determination can reap rewards.

Nobody went clean on the day but five people ended up on 149s; Martin Parker was the highest of these with 149.21. Tim Kidner just missed the Monday Aggregate prize list with 146.15 but there were others having a less steady day and he held his one-point lead in the Grand. Chris Weeden's 148.17 meant he joined Coleman, Collings and Tremlett all on five off.

In the aggregates, David Richards had the only 150 in the three shoots at 900 yards making up the Brigadier. The Young Rifleman's Aggregate went to Cpl Henryk Golaszewski of 1344 (Cardiff) ATC with 173.21.

Tuesday

In the St George's First Stage there were 73 scores of 75 with seven competitors scoring 75.13. However only James Watson managed a 25.5 in the tie shoot to win the coveted Bronze Cross. At the other end of the possibles was Martin Parker who had either over-celebrated his Monday Aggregate win or was just fed up with the V bull by achieving a 75.2 (and he did string ten 5s together in the middle). Cut off score for the Second Stage was 73.7 - an average standard given that the spread for the past six years has been 73.3 to 73.11.

In a separate tie shoot for the Gurkha Appeal Will Dixon and Nick Verduyn both tied again on 25.5 but three more V bulls from Will sorted out the size of his kukri. The Foster went to the Army, Chris Claridge scoring 75.11.

With only a single point separating the top 200 competitors in the George's, the Grand Aggregate saw little change right at the top. However, none of the overnight top five made better than 74, so there was considerable shuffling just below. Tim Kidner on -5 held the lead by a point from Danny Coleman while Andy Luckman's 75.9 moved him into third place leading a pack of seven competitors all on -7.

The County Senior matches were characterised by big changes in the lead. At short range Surrey took a five point lead with 397 at 300, but lost by a point when Hertfordshire shot 395 at 600, five points better than anyone else, to recover an eight point deficit. At long range Hampshire set a difficult mark at 900 with 297, well clear of Yorkshire on 292, Devon on 291, Essex and Surrey 290 and East of Scotland and Suffolk on 289. But at 1000 yards it was a different story. East of Scotland and Norfolk both made 290, next was Kent on 287, followed by Yorkshire and Somerset both on 284. When the arithmetic was sorted, the Scots had won by a single point, while Hampshire held off Norfolk's challenge by 10 V bulls winning the Victor Ludorum in the process.

By contrast the smaller teams in the County Junior matches were closely matched throughout. Only a point separated the first four teams at 300 yards, and Tyrone pulled back one at 600, only to find (despite having a member or two in stats and holding the post-match debrief in their office) that they had lost by 10 V bulls to Northumberland. The Inter-Services Short Range was proportionately even closer, the RAF twelve staging a small recovery at 600 yards to win by just 17 V bulls from the Regular Army.

Wednesday

Of 25 scores of 105 in Queens I (the lowest number for at least five years) the top score was Pte Jeremy Grant-Jones of the Army Target Rifle Club with 105.18. Last in was John Carmichael with 102.9 with Millennium Queen's Prize winner Jo Hossack just above him in 299th place.

Of the various concurrent winners, the oldest (Queen's Veterans) was Mike Martel of Guernsey with 105.10, the girliest (Amazons) Mary Boston with 105.12, the furthest (Faunthorpe) Karen Berman of Australia with 104.17, the muddiest and foolhardiest (Loder and Volunteer Force) Jon Cload with 105.15 and the fishiest (Admiral Campbell) Nigel Ball with 105.14.

In the Families the Luckies won again with 210.32, finally taking the Richards' brothers 1994 record for the match. David's 105.17 gave him the OTF Short Range as well.

I have a vague recollection that the early details of the Corporation were benign, but the wind then got up and stayed up well into the afternoon – my plot shows 11 minutes left at 5pm, falling through the shoot to about 7 minutes. Once again the editor has highlighted in her notes for this report that there were “only” eight possibles. I had hoped that last year's comments would have ended such disparagement on us all, but no she expects better. Do buck up everybody. The few to satisfy her ridiculous expectations included T class Cadet EC Dickson from Oundle School, but topping the bill were



Alexandra Hakim waits for the target to appear.
(Photo: Tony de Launay)



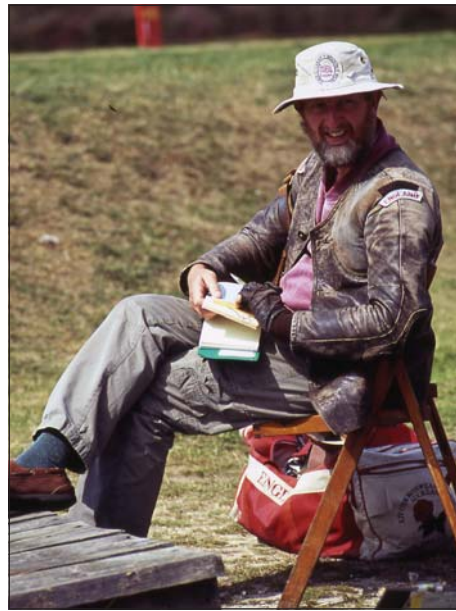
John Deane of Dursley had a good start to the Meeting coming third in the Tucker Aggregate.
(Photo: Tony de Launay)



"What the hell does that vernier say?" Steve Thomas studies his sights.
(Photo: Tony de Launay)



Where have we seen this pose before? Luckily Ron and Reg Kray never had the shooting skills of the Luckmans.
(Photo: John Knight)



Simon "The Crusher" Belither plans his next attack.
(Photo: David Pollard)



NRA Armourer Fred demonstrates his skills in the delicate task.



Grand Aggregate winner Tim Kidner with his collection of silverware.
(Photo: Liz Kidner)



Carol Painting collects the Victor Ludorum for Hampshire.
(Photo: Karen Robertson)



Alex Woodward receives his trophy from Lord Moyrihan.



James demonstrates the art of rifle repair.

(Photo: Alastair Kinross)



Henry at the Bullet Ball - "I guess I can always have an early night tomorrow!"

(Photo: CURA)



The Jersey team shoot the Mackinnon.

(Photo: David Pollard)



"Now did I turn the gas off?" Douggie Watt, Chief Range Officer on Stickledown, has a reflective moment.

(Photo: David Pollard)



It's all about mental preparation - David Luckman keeps his brain cool.

(Photo: John Knight)



Has anyone told him that size isn't everything?

(Photo: John Knight)



...ives the Silver Medal

(Photo: John Knight)



Under 25 Captain Jacqui Rankin won the Prince of Wales.

(Photo: Karen Robertson)



Cadet Daniel Richardson of Victoria College, winner of the Conwey Fenton Memorial.

(Photo: John Knight)

Derek Lowe and John Cross who both scored 50.6. However for the tie shoot held on Friday lunchtime conditions were rather more difficult (remember Queen's II?). Both scored 20 (one bull, three inners and a magpie) so it went to sudden death; Derek's inner to John's hit gave him the trophy.

A possible in the Corporation is generally a great help in the various aggregates. It gave Marcus O'Leary of Manydown both the Elkington (149.19) and the Palma Aggregate (197.23) by a clear point each time, but was only enough for second in the Stickledown Aggregate. Success went to Richard Gardiner of Club 25 with 246.30 including a very creditable 48 at 1000 yards.

Best scorer of the day was Rupert Dix of Old Guildfordians whose 154.17, narrowly beating Will Dixon and Ian Shaw by a couple of V bulls, gave him the Shearwater Aggregate and lifted him 117 places in the Grand Aggregate, just off the leader board. Will Dixon's effort lifted him 47 places to the left column of the leader board overnight, while Ian gained a dozen places to come into close contention. Meantime Tim Kidner was battling hard and Danny Coleman hadn't had a good day. With 103 in Queen's I, Tim had slipped to sixth place, but 48 in the Corporation recovered him to second. Andy Luckman had only dropped two and was now leading the Grand by seven V bulls, with Tony Jones and Ian Shaw a point behind. Danny's seven off on the day dropped him to 17th place.

Only Reg Roberts of Sussex managed to get his V bull count into double figures in the Donaldson Memorial with a 73.12. However, David Luckman had a point in hand to win with 74.9, on an evening when the wind varied by a little more than the width of the bull as the sunlight worked its way behind the targets. Not entirely straightforward, but surely not so different from the past four years, when the top two at least have had them all in and 74.9 would have finished fifth or sixth.

Thursday

The day started with the Prince of Wales and as usual all eyes were on the Grand Aggregate leaders. Tim Kidner on the 8.00am detail held his nerve for a 75.7. Andy Luckman, shooting at 11.50am, needed 75.1 to win (no pressure) but lost his third to count for 74.5 and the Silver Cross. Four competitors scored 75.13; Chris Weeden and Nick Tremlett may have regretted converting 5s as Under 25 Captain Jacqui Rankin won the tie shoot but their 75.13s helped them to win the Allcomers Aggregate and the OTF Long Range Aggregate respectively. Tim's excellent shooting also earned him the Lord Tedder and the Century Range Aggregate.

Top lady in the Grand Aggregate was Mary Boston with 689.78; top veteran was Dick Winney with 685.67 and top overseas competitor was Zulkeflee Hamsan of Malaysia with 684.69. The Olle Beckett Memorial for highest under 23 went to Henry Jeens of CURA who had also won the Brian Green Memorial the previous week for highest under 25 in the Hopton. Hmmm maybe a name to watch out for in the future . . .

Usually the winner of the V Bull Aggregate is to be found near the top of the Grand Aggregate but this year's winner - Steve Thomas with 91 V bulls - was down in 66th place. This was sufficiently unusual to lead me to muck about with the spreadsheet - what if we used the F Class scoring system where the V scores 6 instead of 5.000000 . . . 01? Answer - the usual suspects mostly drift upwards, with Tremlett, Barnett, Luckman A, Paton and Cload all overtaking Kidner, followed by Luckman D, Underwood, Langley and Thomas (up 66 places!). Quick sort to see who gained and lost most reveals that Jim Dunn gains 167 places, while Robert Sheead loses 339. Highest placed of the 16 well balanced shooters (whose placing would have been unaffected either way) was Mike Ball at 35th.

Dropping your last shot into the bull isn't the brightest way to a 50.9 but luckily for Andrew Wilde of Box RC his was the only score of 50.9 in the PW Richardson whilst in the Barlow Crawford Alexander of Oxfordshire led the RG class with a 49.5. However, worthy of note in the Barlow Any Ammo class was the achievement of Nigel Wells who managed 50.0 using his own handloads.

After its short holiday in Northern Ireland last year the National Match returned to Bisley, complete with a few lepRGachauns in the box. At least one busy little meddleR Got to the ammunition, with fouR Glaringly inexplicable outers recorded. One to Ireland (to be sure if we don't there be suspicion), one to Scotland (sure and that'll be fair now) and two to England (now to do such a thing to the Welsh would be like cheating so it would). However the perfidious English applied both of theirs to sighters and won by sixteen points, so outside influence was not critical to the result. Top score came from Alex Pilgrim with 105.17; other 105s came from Glyn Barnett and both Luckman brothers for England, Martin Millar and Paul Charlton for Ireland, Ian Shaw, Tim Kidner and Mark Joyce for Scotland and Nick Haley for Wales. The match conditions now include a requirement to hold the National Match away from Bisley every four years, so the trophy can expect its next holiday in 2008 when the match will visit Scotland.

Alongside the National, Jersey won the Overseas with 1227.127, the Universities National Match went to Scottish Universities and the AG Bell went to the UK Cadets.

At the end of the afternoon the military contingent dashed off for the second round of defence cuts. In the Inter-Services Long Range, the Regular Army reaped the rewards of their recent efforts to rebuild a viable squad, taking the lead at 900 and holding it at 1000 despite a late challenge from the Cadets to win by five points from the Royal Air Force.

Friday

The morning's team matches are serious competitions between old rivals. On a cold morning with the wind developing to give a taste of the struggle to come, record scores were not going to be made. Nevertheless, very close calls did occur. In the Chancellors, Cambridge's winning margin was less than a point: 1143.108 against

Oxford's 1142.111. The Musketeers, contested by the other Universities, saw London improve through the ranges. From last place and seven points down against Southampton at 300, they contained the further deficit to a single point at 500 and then smashed their way to victory with an 11 point recovery at 600. London 573.58, Southampton 571.58, others trailing. Mature students are of course a feature of further education so it should be no surprise to see one Mrs Lynne Johnson representing London - if the educational course is a peg to hang the lifestyle on she is certainly hanging in for the long haul, and I'm sure her many years of experience contributed greatly to the team's success. The English XX held off Combined Services by six points, with the other Home Countries trailing by 20 or so. The Under-25s perhaps were insufficiently tested. Although the Canadian Cadets are superbly trained and equipped, the difference in experience between a group of 17 to 19 year olds mostly on their first visit to Bisley and our Under-25 team, who all are well experienced at Bisley and most have international touring experience, showed in the scores; 872.90 for GBU25, against 846.63 for RCAC. And in the Kolapore, Martin Townsend was not seen dancing on the point as in the 2002 National, but can take great satisfaction from a winning margin established at 300 yards and increased at each subsequent distance to average more than a point a man a range. Great Britain 1188.155, Jersey 1161.127, Kenya a creditable third with 1145.105.

For those at the higher levels of the sport, Second Friday is an extremely busy day. Exit a serious team match, go straight into George's II, then there is hardly a break and Queen's II is on you. Seven ranges in a day. Luckily, as far as I can tell, nobody actually had to tie-shoot on top of that lot.

Chris Weeden qualified in 263rd place, but adding the top score of 75.11 in St George's II took him to the Final in seventh place and of course carrying the top score forward. The Silver Cross went to Peter Griggs with 74.9 which when added to his first stage score of 75.11 gave him the highest of the four 149s.

Queen's II was a battle with the wind. Alex Woodward of Wales took the Silver Medal with the only 149 on the range, a score that would not have made the cut in 2002. Rather spookily he had also qualified for the Second Stage in 263rd place! Last man in was Ian Davison of Somerset with 144.11 – the lowest qualifying score since 1995, which was also the last time that the Silver Medal was won without a 150 (Danny Coleman with 149.22).

If you thought Queen's II was bad, spare a moment for the 90 hardy souls who entered the Queen's Consolation. George Williams of OGRE made 71.11, one of only three 71s and the only V count in double figures.

Saturday

Final Saturday was breezy from the start. With accurate wind reading at a premium, the opportunity was there to recover points lost in the qualifying stages. Those seizing the chance included the top three in the St George's; Nigel Ball, Gaz Morris and Jon Underwood

had qualified in the middle of the field on 73s, but all added 75 to see the badges go in that order on V bulls. Tom Rylands' 75.12 shared top score of the stage with Nigel, but a 72 carried forward was irrecoverable.

As the wind built towards 10 minutes left with 2 minute changes commonplace, Keith Pugh led England to a fine victory in the Mackinnon. Determined coaching by some of the masters of the art kept a team of relatively youthful shooters away from disasters. A solid lead after 900 was built on by staying out of trouble at 1000, and a 95 average was two points a man better than the Scots in second place. Top individual in the match was Richard Jeens for Wales with 98.11.

Queen's III

The wind continued to build. Just over half the field broke 70 at 900 yards, but only two made 75. James Watson's 75.9 was the first 900 yards score in, and combined with 148.14 to give him a clear lead going into the final distance. Henry Jeens was a point behind with 75.6 added to 147.16. Following were Angus McLeod on 221, Rob Lygoe and Richard Hebblethwaite on 220, and a pack of six on 219. It was a hectic time on the scoreboard as the contenders dropped in and out of the top six places. With points being lost in chunks, the plot changed moment by moment. However, amongst it all was one constant. Henry Jeens was shooting very fast and very straight. He finished over ten minutes ahead of some serious contenders, and there was a nail-biting delay as the indicators for those still in the fight crawled across the scoreboard. But the result was settled long before the last shot was fired, and the Camp braced itself for an exuberant celebration as CURA carried off the young Champion.

Just a couple of quirks from the Final. The first target to finish at 900 yards had top scorer James Watson partnered with Martin Brister; those with experience tell me that Martin is the fastest shot on the Common. So guess who partnered Jeens to that high score and fast finish at 1000 yards? I have a feeling that there may be a queue to shoot with Mr Brister in the future. And in between those very fast shots, I am told that young Jeens found time to turn round and monitor his progress against the field on the scoreboard. Has nobody explained to him about nerves?

Her Majesty the Queen's Prize for 2004 went to HRT Jeens of CURA with a score of 291.25, from CN Tremlett of Windsor RC with 289.33 and TJD Raincock of Old Epsomians with 288.28.

Nick Tremlett actually made the highest score in Queen's III, 144.15 against Henry's 144.9. With Tim Kidner and Andy Luckman both out at Queen's II, and Tony Jones in the middle of the field (49th with 14 off in Queen's III), Nick's fourth place in the Grand combined with his Queen's success to win the British Open TR Championship with 983.120 from Jon Cload on 981.110 and Chris Weeden on 980.107.

Oops, we weren't going to mention Tremlett again after the Match Rifle.



Keeping an eye on the scoreboard.

(Photo: Karen Robertson)



The winning shoot at 1000 yards - so what happened with that first sighter then?

(Photo: Eric McGibbon)



Tony de Launay oversees a quick telephone interview with a local radio station.

(Photo: John Knight)



Lord Moynihan pins on the Gold Badge.

(Photo: John Knight)



Inadequately dressed Edward Jeens borrows a jacket.

(Photo: Karen Robertson)



And off they go led by brothers Richard and Edward.

(Photo: Karen Robertson)



The band lead, the crowd follow.

(Photo: David Pollard)



Well haven't you wondered what happens back at the NRA Offices? Henry signs the book . . .



. . . and receives that all-important £250 cheque.

(Photos: Karen Robertson)

F CLASS 2004

by Peter Campbell

Events started with a surprise, for unusually the Century wasn't won with a maximum score, with John Felton winning the count back from Jo Wright, both scoring 119 or 100.19. Events returned to a normal service with the Admiral Hutton with John Bridger, Carel Taljaard, Adrian de Jong, Jo Wright and Des Parr all sharing the glory at 900 yards.

Saturday's shoots started with the Donegall and perhaps at so short a range no less than twelve shooters achieved possibles. The afternoon's conditions were less benevolent but Ted Hobbs and Jo Wright showed their mettle with the maximum score. Over the hill Keith Whitecross scored a lonely 59 to win the Lovell. With the first day of the Grand over, it was surprising to find that it was being led by only two shooters, Hobbs and Wright, who were however only one point in front of another five shooters.

Middle Sunday saw a return to normal service, although it was to be the shortest distance that produced the smallest number of maximum scores with nine shooters achieving 60s in the Alexandra in the morning. Meanwhile in the afternoon Wolfgang Scholze, Liam Jennings and P Guse topped the list in the Daily Mail albeit with several shooters one or two points behind. The Duke of Cambridge saw R Berghuis, Paul Schouten Trautig, Peter Medhurst, John Knight, Hans Mitera, Mik Maksimovic, John Bridger and Liam Jennings all scoring possibles. In the Grand, Hobbs was out in front by a point, while Medhurst and Bridger were chasing hard.

Back to 300 yards on Monday and there was the usual supply of possibles; Mark Jackson, D Groom, Colin Shorthouse, Knight, Hobbs, Guse, Morley and Felton produced the goods, while later Groom, Medhurst and P Eggemann were a lonely trio at the top in the Wimbledon. Scores weren't much better in the Conan Doyle where Medhurst, Barnard and De Jong produced the only three maximum scores at 900 yards. In the Grand, places were largely static, with Hobbs still in front, while Medhurst and Bridger were joined by Taljaard to make four in close formation at the top.

Tuesday is a traditional day of rest for the Effers, with only the First Stage of the St Georges to decide the 12 shooters to go forward to the St Georges Final, Taljaard, Wright, Parr, Hobbs, H Seeger, Mitera, Scholze, Bill Norman, Mik Mak, Roger Wood, Bridger and finally Olaf Fischer were the lucky ones. In the Grand, Hobbs held position whilst Bridger and Medhurst slipped slightly enabling Taljaard to jump to second place.

Super Wednesday is often a day when premonitions come horribly true and there is plenty of choice with either the Queen's I or the Corporation ready to destroy many a shooter's dream. Scholze and Groom assured themselves of a Queen's Final while Morley, Wright, Shorthouse, Knight, Hobbs and Barnard were all contenders on one off; on only two off, Mitera, John Campbell, Darren Stewart, Medhurst, Guse and Taljaard

had the big sweat with only the first three making the cut. In the Corporation, Taljaard compensated for his not making the Queen's cut by producing the top score along with Barnard. In the Grand, hiccups were aplenty: Medhurst dropped three points, but crept up one place, while Bridger found his Queen's and Corporation blues coming home to roost with eleven points dropped and his Grand over. Hobbs and Taljaard had also had hiccups, but Hobbs was still in front with his lead reduced by a point leaving everything to play for in the Prince of Wales.

Thursday's finale would see the Grand settled one way or the other, with four or five people in touch at the front but realistically, failing disasters, only Hobbs and Taljaard were likely to finish on top. Surprisingly both shooters had off days, with Ted suffering three ordinary bulls, while Carel managed to keep all but one inside the V but that was enough to secure him the Grand. In the Prince of Wales, Keith Whitecross, Mik Mak, George Barnard, John Knight and CD Morley placed themselves on the medal-buying list, while another ten shooters followed with one point off.

Ted Hobbs had sweet revenge the following day when he won the St George's Final from Carel Taljaard scoring 177 and 176 respectively. Des Parr and Jo Wright followed in third place with 174. Later that day the F Class Queens Final was decided, hopefully for the last time on Century range. George Barnard and Colin Shorthouse struck an early lead, shooting clean at 300 yards, whilst only Wolfgang Scholze was in touch with one off. Barnard put the hammer down with another maximum at 500 yards to go into the final distance with four points separating him from his closest rival, Ted Hobbs. George then shot a steady 58 to finish with two points dropped, while Hobbs shot the same to hold onto second place, with fellow Welshman Howell Morley taking third place on countback from the sprightly Jo Wright.

The final match of the Meeting was the F Class International; six teams competed shooting on the Palma target which hopefully would make scores easier to split. Not surprisingly England's team captain George Barnard had the makings of a hugely strong team and this was borne out with a score of 600 ex 600 at 900 yards while Scotland and Wales could only manage 594 and 593 apiece. The BDMP and CPC were a point behind, with Ireland trailing a long way behind with a poor score of 587. The move to 1000 yards brought a few hiccups for England who dropped 10 points between two shooters, while Wales overhauled Scotland and pulled back two points on England, but it was not enough to better England's unassailable lead. Further back in the field, the BDMP and CPC held their earlier positions whilst Ireland's misery was compounded when Peter Campbell had his last shot to count disappear - it failed to find the target and was reputedly seen to vaporise about 75 yards downrange. I blame the manufacturer!

WIN A FREE JUNIOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP COMPETITION RESULTS

Just before the Imperial Meeting the NRA decided to run a competition for all those competitors who were under 21 years of age. Entrants were given a free rein to write about any aspect of the Imperial Meeting at all (whether complimentary or not) and the prize was a free Junior Life membership. We intend to run similar competitions in future years; if you know of a young competitor who will be entering next year's Imperial Meeting, please encourage them to enter.

This year's winner was Alexander Monro aged 17 from Shrewsbury School. Congratulations to him and here is his winning entry.

MY FIRST IMPERIAL MEETING

by Alexander Monro

I had only been to Bisley Camp once before, for a week during the Easter Holidays. That's when it started, when I caught the bug. I had been shooting small-bore for a number of years and wanted something a bit more exciting. So I was introduced to fullbore. Based on the experience of one week bruising my shoulder whilst desperately trying to score anything better than a magpie, I entered my first Imperial Meeting.

I had not shot a fullbore rifle since I had been introduced to them at Easter, and was more lost (in terms of reading wind) than a penguin in the Sahara. It was all I could do to make sure I shot in turn, never mind score for someone else, move my sights (reading the vernier produced some interesting results!), score and plot my own shots, and take a quick glance at the wind whilst not really knowing what to look for! I quickly got into the habit of telling my squadding partners that it was my first Imperial Meeting, and could they please bear with me if I was a little slow or muppet-worthy. I'm glad to say that everyone from other first-timers, right through to the Captain of the Athelings and members of the GB Palma Team did just that.

This is what struck me most during the Meeting. Everyone was so genuinely friendly and helpful, going far beyond polite tolerance, instantly willing to offer (very much needed) useful tips and hints, for which I was, although surprised, immensely grateful. It didn't matter that I was shooting 42s (ex 50) and they were shooting possibles, or that all my kit (including my rifle) was borrowed whilst they were using the best that money can buy; I always got help when I asked for it, and frequently when I didn't!

As the Meeting went on, my scores gradually improved, and I got round to plotting corrected elevation graphs (though I never quite mastered the wind graphs) and even calculating (though only after the shoot) Actual Wind to see how wrong my very sketchy Estimated Wind had been. The shooting highlight of my first Imperial Meeting was definitely

the Daily Telegraph at 500x where I managed a 71.7 on a 0930 detail that required only one wind change of half a minute!

Stickledown presented its own unique challenge. I had found it hard enough at 900 yards with a gentle breeze during my Easter initiation, but now, at 0830, I was faced with mist. I had been getting low scores even when I could see the target, for goodness sake! Still, I had had worse; during my Easter sojourn I shot in the Ibis Open. The final Long Range shoot was 1100 yards. If you add rain and a 20 minute crosswind (not guessed by me, but used by everyone else who had a clue about wind) just for good measure, mist at 900 yards seemed like a walk in the park . . .

On closer inspection of my cards I found that I could happily hold an elevation of around or under 1 minute, and that virtually all my dropped shots (bar a few lapses of concentration) were due to wind. Apparently this is a good thing . . . ? It still frustrated me immensely that no matter how hard I tried, I usually got the wind slightly, if not considerably, wrong. I know that 'practice makes perfect', but I wish it would get on with it!

During the Meeting I shared a room with a friend in the legendary A Lines. With their paper thin walls, tin roofs and fire buckets containing nothing but some mouldy Parma Ham and a blob of toothpaste, they were a real treat. Add to this the psychotic cackle of the neighbour as he watches endless repetitions of the film Zulu (do DVD players have a repeat function?) after a long night at the Surrey, and life can't get much better!

A Lines not being catered accommodation, and me being about as good at cooking as your average three day old soggy digestive biscuit, we arranged to eat at the Ibis Club. This yielded a lot of interesting conversation as well as some gourmet (Marlin steaks and 'Strawberries Plus . . .') and some gourmand (Sainsbury's Ice Cream by the bucket-load) grub. It was in the Ibis that the diversity of shooters' normal

lives first hit me. I had kind of assumed that someone who was good enough to consider 49 with only 7 Vs a bad (!!!) score, would have little time for anything else. But how wrong I was. A whole spectrum of people, from computer technicians, Classics teachers and Laithwaites employees (very handy!), right through to Aircraft Structure Designers for Airbus, shoot at the Imperial Meeting, and are very good at it!

Unfortunately, due to an impending visit to an oversized wood with a flipping great rock in the middle (aka Corsica), I couldn't stay for the Queen's Final, though I would have liked to. It would have been surreal but nice (to borrow one of Hugh Grant's phrases) to be involved even in Queens 2, or St

Georges 2, but I never really expected to be there; I would have been thrilled just to break my T. The advantage of not breaking my T is of course that I can enter the Tyro sweeps next year and attempt to recoup some of the exorbitant entry fee.

Even when I remember my 40.0 at 300 yards, or how I forgot to change the elevation between 900 and 500 yards, I see my first Imperial Meeting as a resounding success. I came into the Meeting having shot a total of 10 cards with a 7.62 and left it with another 18, some vital experience, loads of helpful tips, a spring in my step and an addiction to fullbore shooting. I had caught the bug at Easter, by August it was terminal; see you all next year!

.....

OUCH! (OR PHYSIOTHERAPY AT THE IMPERIAL MEETING)

The sport of fullbore rifle shooting appears to be missing one valuable asset that many other sports can take for granted: an experienced Physiotherapist dedicated to the sport.

Having been introduced to the sport of fullbore rifle shooting in January 2004 to help David Hossack's recent GB team to Africa, Jackie Davies, a chartered and state registered Physiotherapist with 15 years' experience, decided to attend the second week of the Imperial Meeting in order to provide physiotherapy advice and treatment to competitors in conjunction with Dr Mark Wrigley. The underlying aim of this was to assess the need for specialist physiotherapy support for the sport.

Little active advertising was undertaken, but sixteen first time patients were seen (whose ailments included painful necks, backs and shoulders, and sprained ankles), and a total of 21 treatments or assessments were given. Some were acute, competition-stopping problems, where treatment enabled the shooters to continue with the Meeting. With the help of digital photography, an immediate assessment enabled Mark and Jackie to advise shooters on positioning, strength, stability and flexibility.

The clinics were provided free, although donations to the NRA medical equipment fund were accepted with grateful thanks. The first aim of this fund is to provide a defibrillator for an immediate life-saving facility within the camp.

The general consensus was that this was a successful venture, and many thanks are due to both Mark Wrigley and Jackie Davies for their professionalism, enthusiasm and individual skills. It was agreed that there seems to be a requirement for specialist physiotherapy dedicated to the sport, to work alongside other disciplines such as osteopathy and sports massage that already exist in rifle shooting, particularly in team situations.

The provision of physiotherapy services to a team can include such matters as group advice and support regarding strength, flexibility, stability and training; individual assessment and treatment of conditions or problems, pre- and post-match; and help with warm-up and warm-down, including specific stretches and massage. Team Physiotherapists may also be able to help with basic sports psychology, physiology and match preparation, quite apart from general help with carrying, organising, liaising, drug testing etc.

Jackie is now undergoing an NRA Probationer's Course which will not only allow her to follow her interest in the sport as a hobby, but will also give her much needed sport-specific information so that she can provide a more comprehensive physiotherapy service. She is also studying part-time for an MSc in Sports Physiotherapy at Cardiff University. The aim for her research project next year is to investigate some aspect of fullbore rifle shooting. Any ideas, thoughts and suggestions anybody may have in this respect are most welcome.

Jackie is also particularly keen to hear from any Team Captains interested in finding out what physiotherapy has to offer the sport. Please get in touch with Jackie direct either by telephone 07885 697058 or by e-mail at j.f.davies50@btopenworld.com.

T REX - BACK WITH A VENGEANCE

A Cry from the Ablutions

We who live in caves are of hardy stock – save for a need for the softest tissues – and can remember the times of ultra-draughty tin huts with concomitant plumbing. Come to think of it, there may even have been a dearth of doors – certainly of working bolts. It was a frozen time when pink paper was only to be found on the news-stands. Some slippery waxed roll adorned with arrows and the legends WD or Bronco was at your fingertips. Indeed one such roll per half dozen cubicles frequently had to suffice in an eye-watering atmosphere of pungent Jeyes.

For our outward well-being the typical water precipitation device spouted a miserable stream that fluctuated between scalding and less than luke-warm, to the accompaniment of an orchestral gurgling and pounding of which the boilermakers in the Clyde shipyards would have been proud. There were, too, cakes of a latherless white substance, though not many. Someone had always found an alternative use for them, probably as an essential part of a smash and grab kit. Ah yes, those were the days, when at least you knew that your fellows could not scent you over their own fragrance.

Any news that Father Stitch is to seize the remnant legacy of this rampant nettle with both hands will, therefore, be welcomed by the wailing unwashed and come as a great relief as we all glow sweetly after our post exertion swabbings. Health and efficiency will return to the Common. You never know, it may lead to the universal installation of bidets. Now that would bring a flush to the most complaining of cheeks.

Trollies

Eco-wheels are the vogue upon the ranges, it appears. Anything from golf carts and garden refuse caddies to pedal power and cycle towable devices. One grizzled forester has threatened a quad bike to tow a trolley that is at least equal to the weight of rifle and clobber.

Sadly in this rush to fashion, Simon the Crusher has claimed the first victim 'neath the wheels of the internal combustion engine. Reversing out from behind the point in a ballistic daze resulted in a mangled cycle and trailer, and to compound the folly two highly charged NRA land rovers rubbernecking the carnage thumped each other nose to tail. Jolly well done all round. A sort of bicycle chain

reaction, that left an Eeyore like owner moaning softly "I was rather fond of that bike". Just bag him an outer at 300 yards next time you coach him, son.

Who's That Knocking?

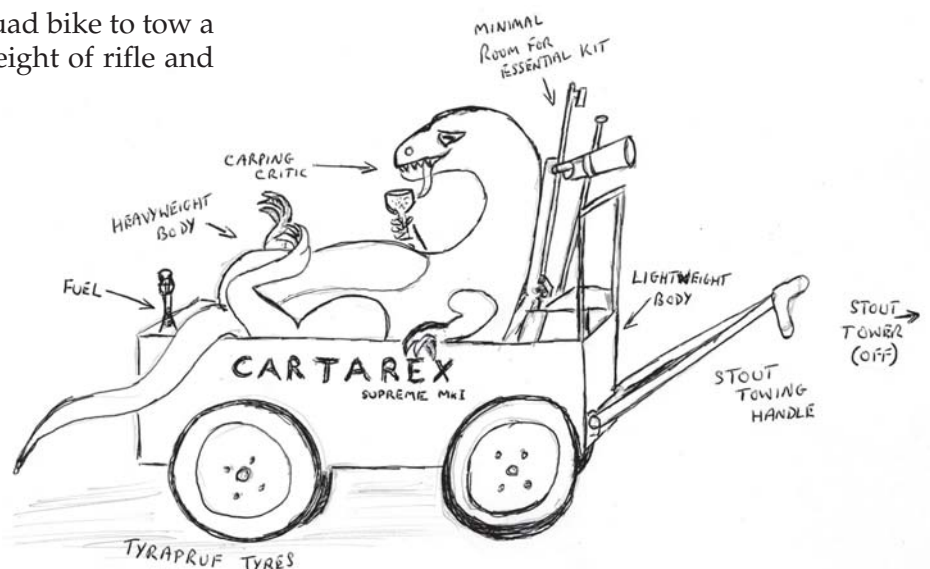
Would I mind putting a sign at the mouth of my cave? Surrey Heath's chekisti seem to want to know whether I am out or in. Some would say I have been out to lunch for years but that is not the point. I have to balance my scaley safety with a concern for my meagre belongings. The view of my insurers and the police is that it is best not to advertise your absence. Fear not: I have the answer. T Rex Productions Inc will be producing a sign that says both in and out at the same time, to satisfy everyone and mislead potential unwelcome intruders. There will be a 50% chance that one of the indicators will be correct. There's your compromise.

A Weighty Problem

My basilisk stare fell upon some nifty additions to the range officers' tables, in the shapely form of some new trigger weights. I was told that they had been sent to the weights and measures police to check that they were of the ultra correct denomination. Was that before or after they were painted? I confidently expect a convoluted explanation where x equals microns. Answers on a postcard please.

Holey Possible

To end with a fitting finale, congratulations to Nigel Wells who has achieved a degree of notoriety possessed only of James Watson in 1998 in Canada thus far (unless of course you know better). Wellsy entered the Barlow at 900 yards and, he tells me, scored 50.0 using his own ammunition. For this superlative skill he gets the coveted washer award.



GUN DESIGNER VISITS BISLEY

by Iain Robertson

And so what? Only this was perhaps the most famous ever, and certainly the most famous still living. Mikhail Timofeevich Kalashnikov, former tank commander injured in the Great Patriotic War, designer of the unified series of automatic weapons which bears his name, in recognition of their success showered with honours and promotion to Colonel and in retirement to Major-General, and a hero not just in his birthplace Kurya and his home town Izhevsk but throughout Russia, came for a day out with his wife and his new business partners. Apparently they have the bright idea of marketing vodka under the Kalashnikov name, and General Mikhail, as one would expect of an old Russian soldier, thoroughly approves of the idea and takes an active interest in the product.

With the approval of the authorities, and with the Head of Firearms Licensing from Kent Constabulary in attendance, arrangements had been made to fire one of the General's designs on Stickledown. An entertaining if bizarre hour resulted. A firearms dealer with Section 5 authority provided the weapons, and did the only live firing of the day. Kalashnikov himself accepted the legal restrictions with considerable puzzlement but good grace, and fired blanks from a weapon modified to that

specific function. Mrs Kalashnikov handled her husband's most famous product for the first time, and the young and glamorous interpreter decided after minimal experience to stick with languages.

Coincidentally, alongside the small group of guests, a friendly international was in progress between the F Class teams of Great Britain and Germany. The General was introduced to both teams, and diplomatically avoided taking sides, restricting himself to a lively interest in the technicalities of F Class rifle design.

Escorted by Comrade Chairman Jackman, the General spent some time touring the ranges and the NRA Museum and, in appreciation of his visit, presented the Association with a deactivated example of the AK-47 to add to the collection.

Over lunch in the Surrey Clubhouse, General Kalashnikov considered the concept of firearms being subject to strict legal control - "Such a law is a sign of order in a State, and without order there can be no peace". But difficulties of translation (and lack of a rational starting-point) defeated all attempts to explain why the laws prevented the old soldier from firing his own design.



Mikhail Kalashnikov with the AK-47.



NRA Armourer Fred James oversees the live firing.



The General meets the German F Class team Captain.



The presentation at the NRA Museum. (All photos: Iain Robertson)

SERGE BISSONNETTE

talking with Tony de Launay



One of the great enjoyments of our sport is that you meet and make lasting friendships with a great variety of people. You probably then meet them, if you are lucky, once a year but the strength of the friendly greeting never fails. Serge Bissonnette from Ottawa is one such *ami*. Possessor of the driest of dry humours and a monstrous fund of anecdotes (mostly totally unsuitable for printing) he is becoming something of a father figure to Canadian teams at Bisley.

Why the soubriquet "Papa Bear", even to that grizzled ancient Scott Murray? "Well I guess it just happened. If people are having a problem or wanting to rearrange something, I just get stuck in and they seem to follow", he said. We were talking at the exit to Century 600 yards as the US Air Force was attempting to rule the Surrey skies.

He is a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, now aged 54 and looking forward to retirement in 2016. "Right back at the beginning I had a choice between two extra curricular activities – the Christian Brothers or the cadets. I took the cadets and discovered shooting." It stuck with him after one of his instructors, impressed by his initial high scoring, told him that if he could do it once he could do it again and again. True there were interruptions at the time of his university spell at Loyola, Montreal. "I had this belief that I could play American football but then I found that all the good players were bigger than I was. That was unfair."

After a spell with a lumber company he joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, eventually specialising in the technicalities of business and computer linked fraud cases. That was not before he had done spells with the RCMP equivalent of our tactical weapons teams, including guarding visiting royals.

Along the way he found time to reawaken his interest in rifle shooting thanks to some persuading from members of local clubs. This has left him heavily involved with the club level shooter programmes in Ottawa, concentrating on the youth intake. On a personal front he first toured with a DCRA team in 1977, with Dr Mike Walker to New Zealand. "It was a great introduction", he said, "and I guess I made a contribution even if it was not always on the targets".

Eighteen GB tours and other trips to Australia and the USA as well as NZ later he is back at Bisley. So what is it that you particularly like about the place? "The Bisley family, the sharing of information and experiences and the fact that it is generally a well run event" is the immediate response. Dislikes? An immediate waspish "Inners at 300 yards".

So where is the need for major contributions to the sport? "I take shooting for the sport it is. We have a reasonable intake stream through the Canadian cadets. But we have to ensure a flow-through of youngsters, and it takes them three to four years to mature from promising prospects into competent shots. In that time they are pressured by all sorts of other distractions as they complete their education and enter their working lives".

"We have to offer youngsters a sport in which they can compete with other sports, and amongst themselves and with the established shooters. We have a duty to offer them all the support and advice that they need". Wise words, on which he reflects for a brief second. "However, I make it a rule never, never to offer my daughter advice on how to dress": even wiser words.

On the mechanisms for the future for shooting bodies he is clear that technology offers a clear route. "Websites are a godsend. They are notice boards and sharing opportunities. You can address any subject you like and give your members and friends all the contact information they need".

At this point he realises that the Corporation beckons and we part company at the 1000 yards point. Three days later he is again in the Queen's Prize final. Serge is one of the international ambassadors of the sport, a caring man who will always make you laugh. A pleasure to see you again, sir.

RON MATTHEWS

talking with Tony de Launay



Couple a Wiltshire burr with an Australian twang and what do you get? The answer is the unmistakable figure of silver haired Ron Matthews, visitor every year for the past 30 years to the Bisley meeting from his adopted country, Australia.

A Wiltshireman by birth, Ron started his career at the tender age of 15 in the Swindon railway engineering works as an apprentice. In those days that was the biggest employer in the town. He moved on through National Service in REME which introduced him to Warminster and fullbore shooting, the days of the .303.

After that it was a matter of graduating through SR(a) to SR(b) and the Devizes Rifle Club until in 1965 he became one of the many to emigrate to a new land of opportunity - Australia. With Bernice and their two daughters they settled into a new life. Research and development with British Leyland in Sydney saw an outcome in the form of the Forces Seven hatchback, of which only eight were ever made before BL closed the factory.

This led to Qantas Airways and engineering maintenance of 707s and 747s. In 1982 he transferred to technical support specialising in aircraft, engine and components section reliability. Warnings of ill-health in 1980 and 1990 led to a wise retirement decision at the age of 56. Now just into his 70s he can reflect on a lifetime of contribution to shooting from his early Wiltshire activities to his Australian associations.

A founder member of the New South Wales Shooting Association, council member and first Vice-President, he also served on their Olympic and Commonwealth Games Committees for six years. Club champion of the Randwick Club three times he was one of the first

exponents of the Sportco rifle. A visit to Bisley with the NSW team in 1978 resulted in Queen's Final and St George's badges. In 1980 another team visit saw participation in the Kaltenberg World Championship plus a second place in the Donegall to Alain Marion of Canada after a tie shoot.

In 1990 Ron and Bernice moved to Orange for a quieter life, with time to admire his vast collection of shooting trophies and souvenirs. It did not stop him shooting, and the British Commonwealth Rifle Club's Ceylon Trophy came his way in 1997. In 1999 he gave a cup to be awarded for the Sudan match, and in 2000, the year that he also managed the Australian team at Bisley and Ottawa, he was there when it was first presented.

Back at home Ron remains associated with his family run private investigation company, although the business is now managed by his daughter, Shirley. Lynn, his other daughter, runs a farm with her husband in the Central West of Australia.

To Ron the essence of Bisley is the friendship and the organisation, and the step back in time as you come back through the gates. "Please do not change it too much", he says. Will he be back? "I don't know if we will be able to get here as often now", is the guarded response. However, even if he still remains busy with shooting administration in Oz, the pull from his second home may just bring him back. We look forward to seeing him again.

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Crabbe Range, Jersey, at 500 yards.



Fort le Marchant Range, Guernsey, at 300 yards.



The NRA team with the Guernsey team.



Watch out Schumacher - here comes the NRA!



Pete Coley and Richard Bailie aka "The Management."

NRA TEAM TO THE CHANNEL ISLANDS 2004

by Jon Taylor

Captain	Richard Bailie	Ulster
Adjutant	Pete Coley	Cornwall
Coaches	Jim Dunn	Berkshire
	Keith Trowbridge	Lincolnshire

Shooters	Sarah-Jane Binder	Yorkshire
	Steve East	Oxfordshire
	Garnett Faulkner	Ulster
	Woz Headley	Regular Army
	JT Miller	Kent
	Gaz Morris	Cambridgeshire
	Emma Nuttall	Derbyshire
	Guy Palmer	Cheshire
	Chris Slator	Ulster
	Jon Taylor	Berkshire

Prologue

Team building preparations for this tour began in earnest at the end of April when the majority of the squad were thrust into the world of Corporate Hospitality. Along with Reg Roberts' GB Team to Australia 2005 and run under the considerable experience of Chris Hockley and the RAF Target Rifle Club a full day's shooting lay in store. Disciplines shot included TR, MR, Clay Pigeon and Black Powder Pistol. Unfortunately the weather was not on our side and it rained heavily until late afternoon. Despite this it was a roaring success with everyone enjoying themselves and leaving Bisley damp but smiling. Thanks are due in great measure to Matthews and Goodman for their very generous support and a significant amount of money was raised towards the cost of this tour.

The following two days saw the team compete in the Army Rifle Meeting. This was a chance for the Captain to view the various members of the team and judge their capabilities behind a rifle – luckily many of the team made it into the prize lists and the Captain was suitably impressed. The Saturday night found the team enjoying a meal in the London and Middlesex where many goodies (sweatshirt, polo shirt, blazer badge, shooting bag etc) were handed out by the tours own Father Christmas also known as Pete Coley (well the beard does have some white!).

LMRA Match

The day before departure to the Channel Islands a team match, as has become the tradition, was held against the LMRA. Unfortunately the day started badly with the news that three team members had their rifles locked in the Surrey armoury and the key holder was away until the following morning. Substitute rifles were hastily arranged and zeros estimated. This along with a misfiring rifle and generally slow marking and shooting conspired to see the team lose to the LMRA by two points and four V

bulls. After a team photograph fully suited and booted on the lawn outside the NRA Pavilion, another enjoyable meal (is there a pattern emerging?) was taken in the LMRA.

Guernsey

Following a most welcome lie in, Pete Coley donned his holiday rep persona and handed out the ferry tickets and various island maps and booklets to the assembled team. Sharing cars, the NRA team convoy proceeded down the M3 to Poole. The fast ferry journey was reasonably smooth (fortunately) and we soon found ourselves in Guernsey, as confirmed by Keith and his GPS unit (pilots and their toys!).

Everyone was suitably impressed by the hotel (except the girls who found ants sharing their room) and some brave souls even partook of the heated outdoor pool before breakfast. The day was designated a day off and the team split into groups to pursue various activities. S-J, Emma, Woz and Jon took in St Peter Port and the underground hospital where S-J showed us her 'orbs' captured on camera (their spirit lights apparently!). Others (mainly military personnel) went in search of German bunkers along the coast. Assembling once more at the hotel our hard working Adjutant had arranged a karting and bowling afternoon. Donning helmets and coveralls and with the words of the Adjutant ringing in our ears 'not to crash or render each other incapable of firing a rifle' we headed for the track where a very enjoyable and somewhat competitive 15 minutes was had by all. Conveniently across the road from the karting is the ten-pin bowling alley. Richard and Pete proposed they pair up and challenged the remaining 12 bodies to a match in teams of four. Counting their scores twice to make up the numbers Richard and Pete proceeded to beat the nearest team over three games by some two hundred points, 'Ringer' Bailie then claimed to have only played the game once before! A hearty meal washed down by real ale was taken in the Ship and Crown in St Peter Port before retiring for the night.

A civilised 9.00am start found us at Fort Le Marchant; a beautiful range jutting out from the north of the island, with a backdrop of blue sky and sea. The martello tower doubles as a lookout and home to a family of pigeons. The first competition of the tour was the Parker Tankard (2 and 10 @ 300 and 600 yards). Despite the fairly fresh fishtailing wind there were a large number of 49s and 50s recorded. After a marking stint in the butts, we fell back to 600 yards and continued with a still fishtailing wind but requiring less correction than at first appeared. Again scores were high and the first two places went to NRA team members: in first place, Jon Taylor with 100.11 and second place, Steve East with 99.14. After

refreshments in the clubhouse we were given the afternoon off. The evening consisted of a Vin d'honneur hosted by the States of Guernsey at Castle Cornet. Following a welcoming speech from the President, Peter Sirett, a tour was taken of the new museum which houses an interesting and fitting tribute to the late Charles Trotter. A fine meal was then taken at Hotel De Havelet, just up from the bay, where Garnett continued his personal quest to eat a steak in every restaurant on the island. The Captain made a speech and completed it in fluent French before a member of the GRA kidnapped three of the team and forced them to take in the Guernsey nightlife. Suffice to say they got in after midnight!

A grey cloudy morning greeted us for the day of the match but first the Guernsey Can (2 and 10 at 500 and 600 yards) had to be contested. The first detail experienced a heavy downpour, trying times for anyone who had not put on their waterproofs, but the rain soon cleared to leave a light fishtailing wind. The team only recorded one 50 at 500 yards and four at 600 yards; Guy Palmer had produced two of them giving him a total of 100.13 and the Guernsey Can Trophy.

Following a fabulous spread put on by Cherry and Paul Le Poidevin it was time for the match. A few words from the Captain on organisation and discipline and we were off to the point. As the first shot went down so did the rain. Fortunately it eased and a good start was made with the NRA taking a seven point lead. However a tremendous effort from Guernsey at 500 yards saw the lead reduced to just two points. A calming few words from the Captain before the start at 600 yards steadied a few nerves and a 49 average was achieved by the team. However Guernsey still managed to pull a point back. When the final scores were announced the NRA team had finished with 1172.124 to Guernsey's 1171.126 - a very close but very enjoyable match. Top score for the NRA was Sarah-Jane with 149.17 and top score for the GRA was Peter Jory with an excellent 150.21. The NRA with 295.32 to 280.20 also won the Reserve Match. Garnett, picked as a reserve, made a point to the Captain with a superb 150.18 which earned him the Presidents Special Prize, a fine decanter and glasses. Finally finishing the remains of the mammoth spread we said our fond farewells and headed back to the hotel to pack. Unfortunately the 7.00pm ferry was delayed and we were forced to seek refuge in the Ship and Crown (again).

Jersey

We arrived at Wheatland's Golf and Country Club, Jersey at 9.30pm and went for a late meal at a local Chinese restaurant a "short walk down the hill" - the "hill" was near vertical and the "short walk" took ten minutes. Fortunately the owner of the restaurant kindly drove us back to the hotel, bulging stomachs and all.

A 7.30am start at Les Landes, Jersey's long range, for the Jersey Evening Post Trophy (2 and 10 @ 900 and 1000 yards), meant no breakfast to speak of. Located on the north-west tip of the island it provides an interesting and challenging test of any shooters skill. It is at this point that a fifteenth member of the NRA team must be introduced. Possibly joining us on the ferry trip between the islands he/she/it was most unwelcome and shall be known henceforth as 'The Virus'. S-J and Gaz succumbed to its evil way and spent their first night on Jersey becoming intimately acquainted with the bathroom facilities.

Not surprisingly both missed the long range competition which, shot in a westerly, moderate to fresh wind was won by Nigel Cole-Hawkins (LMRA) with 99.12, the top NRA score being Jon Taylor with 98.14. That afternoon the Crabbe III Trophy (2 and 10 @ 200 and 500 yards) was shot for. A steady, moderate, westerly wind resulted in a win for Cliff Mallett on 99.15 closely followed by our own 'JT' Miller on 99.12. S-J and Gaz rose from their respective beds to compete, S-J putting in a very credible 98.12 considering the colour of her complexion. The NRA's top score in the Sunday Aggregate was Jon Taylor in second place with 196.26. A very enjoyable cocktail party at the range was organised for the evening and many new acquaintances were made and old ones renewed. Keith Trowbridge was in fine form recounting many hilarious stories and jokes.

Match day morning saw Crabbe IV (2 and 10 @ 500 and 600 yards) being competed for. Garnett, in fine form, produced the best 100 with 14 Vs to take the victor's laurels. This score combined with Crabbe III gave Garnett the Miss Edna Parker Cup with 199.25. Breaking for lunch The Virus reared its ugly head and took its next victim, Steve East. As the match began, just as it had in Guernsey, the heavens opened and down came the forecast rain. Although not heavy, it was that fine rain that gets in everywhere. Some also felt the cold as one NRA team member (female) borrowed another's (male) thermal underwear. A steady but not spectacular start at 300 yards saw JRA pull away to a three point lead. At this point The Virus claimed yet another in the shape of Garnett, who disappeared into the bushes. Falling back to 500 yards the conditions worsened further to the point where you were reduced to shooting at a grey blob. The JRA at 500 yards extended their lead over the NRA to eight points. A short break was then taken in order to repair the soggy target faces and wring out the excellent markers. Larger foresight elements were required at 600 yards as the increasingly poor conditions continued. The wind coaches had done a good job but as the sight picture deteriorated so did the scores; a further three points lost to the JRA gave the final scores as 1162.124 to 1151.106. Top score again for the NRA was S-J with 147.15 and hats off to Steve who, despite his condition, still managed a 146.18 (hardy

types these RAF guys!). Congratulations then to the JRA, whose very polished and professional team performance, not forgetting their renowned shooting abilities, won the day in difficult and trying conditions. A consolation for the NRA in the form of a win in the Reserves Match 288.30 to 286.23, saw JT record a 148.15 (another reserve making his point to the Captain maybe?).

That evening a very enjoyable meal at La Place was consumed by all before presentations were made by the JRA Captain, Colin Mallett. Garnett unfortunately missed his presentation of the Miss Edna Parker Trophy due to The Virus but S-J received a memento for top scoring in the match. A special presentation was made to Cliff Mallett to celebrate his 54 years in shooting; Cliff thanked everyone in a touching and honest speech.

At last a lie in and a day off before returning home especially beneficial for the Captain - the fifth victim of The Virus. The rest of the team split up into groups and amused themselves for the day; activities included visits to the Occupation Tunnels, Gerald Durrell's Wildlife Trust, St Helier for shopping, the beach or a round of golf to mention just a few. Not surprisingly blue skies dominated the day's weather. An enjoyable

evening was then spent partaking of fine seafood at the Old Court House, St Ouen's Bay, before returning to the hotel for a final drink with Richard and Pete, joined later (3am) by Emma, Woz and JT who had been into St Helier to sample the nightlife. Finally what remained of the team retired at 4am much to the delight of the hotel barman.

An early breakfast and off to the ferry. Unfortunately three cars got pulled over by security but after a bit of head scratching and moaning from the officials we boarded the ferry for home. After an uneventful journey, we arrived back at Poole. Next a dash back to Bisley where fond farewells were exchanged and the Captain handed out the Jersey Royals to the team.

Finally I think I speak for all the team in wishing to thank Richard and Pete for organising and running a superb tour. Thanks to Jim for his coaching and Keith for his coaching and jokes (particularly the Tommy Cooper impressions). Thanks also to all the shooting communities on both Guernsey and Jersey for their assistance, hospitality and friendliness shown towards the team. I would say to any shooter out there with aspirations to greater things to apply for the Channel Islands Tour. It was a highly enjoyable eight days and I would not have missed it for all the potatoes in Jersey!



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CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH TO THE BISLEY GENERAL MEETING 2004

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Bisley General Meeting.

Before I formally open the Meeting I believe that we would all like to thank the Surrey Rifle Association and its secretary, Geoff Hooton, for arranging for the second year the excellent musical display by the Surrey Pipe Band which has added colour to this week. I hope you agree?

It has been a special pleasure to hear many competitors compliment the state of the ranges. We come here in July and all is ready for us. I shall refer again to this later.

I welcome Glynn Alger to this, his first, General Meeting. Glynn's main focus will be on improving our service to members and recruitment, with special emphasis on the regions away from Bisley. Please do take the opportunity to meet him if you have not already done so in the last week.

As usual, this evening, we will first deal with the formal business, then, on this occasion, I shall take questions and I will close by announcing the result of the First Stage of Her Majesty, the Queen's Prize.

May I take the notice of the Bisley General Meeting as read? *Affirmed*

I turn now to the Agenda for the Meeting which has been posted on the Secretary General's Notice Board.

It is my great pleasure, on behalf of the Council, to propose that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales be re-elected President.

May I have your approval? *Approved*

It is my great pleasure on behalf of the Council to propose the re-election of Lord Swansea as Deputy President.

May I have your approval? *Approved*

I welcome all our Vice-Presidents who are attending Bisley this year and particularly those from overseas: Mr Graham Berman from Australia, Mr Jim Cantlay from Zimbabwe, M Robert Chombart and M Philippe Ginestet from France, Mr Norris Gomez from Trinidad, Mr Alan le Page from Guernsey, Mr Stan Frost and Mrs Lillian Stewart from Canada. Welcome to you all. Mr Brian Hawkins of Kenya is very sorry not to be here with us this year, especially as there is a large team from Kenya present. David Hossack's Great Britain team has recently enjoyed a successful and welcome tour to Kenya.

It is my great pleasure on behalf of the Council to propose the re-election of the existing Vice-Presidents as listed in the Programme.

May I have your approval? *Approved*

The last of the formal business is the election of auditors. Baker Tilly have expressed their willingness to be re-appointed

Professor Richard Horrocks proposed the re-election of Baker Tilly and Mr Rae Wills seconded the proposal. Approved

That ends the formal business of the meeting, thank you.

The Association's Affairs

It is only four months ago that I updated you at the Spring General Meeting and my speech is, as usual, in the Journal and on our website. Accordingly, I shall be fairly short and summary this evening.

The budget target is proving as tough as we thought, but we are still hopeful that it will be achieved overall. The clay range is doing well for us and we should thank Barry and David in particular, who have taken us forward following Sarah Bunch having laid good foundations. Following a well-earned break, Sarah has returned as Commercial Director to assist Jeremy Staples in moving ahead on our plans for much needed commercial profits. These are needed to support the Association's objectives and viability as it faces its challenges in this increasingly over-regulated country and where our key resources of regional ranges are continuing to be restricted.

Naturally, membership continues to be a concern, but there is some good news. We thank Heather Webb for holding the fort whilst we recruited a Secretary General to take forward our plans after an admitted hiccup last year. Our membership has proved robust. We have taken on some 200 new members, including probationary members. In fact our probationary courses, led by Phyllis Farnan, have been full such that the need for resources to increase the number has been the restricting factor to overcome. Resigned, lapsed and deceased members are nearer 300, but we have every intention to achieve a net increase in future.

Just to summarise our main current plans, the key priorities of the Council are to:

- 1 Submit a constructive paper to the Home Office on Firearms Legislation.

- 2 Work out and develop plans to improve access to ranges away from Bisley. This will probably need a radical approach and not be achieved overnight. I can report that we appreciate the support of commanding Generals, but recognise the financial constraints applying to the Ministry of Defence imposed by the Treasury. This appears to lack joined up thinking with Number 10, which relies immensely

on the MoD for its foreign policy, with ever decreasing resources.

3 Build up a better regional network representation and recruitment programme. There are so many things that we recognise can be done. The key is to prioritise, seek and use new resources.

4 The Council will provide fullest support and encouragement to Jeremy Staples and his team at Bisley National Shooting Centre to develop a viable business which contributes to the Association after financing all charity-qualified shooting activities carried out here, currently financially supported by the Association.

5 Lastly, I shall just mention the London 2012 Olympic Bid. There has been no fullbore shooting in the Olympics since Munich 1972. Nevertheless, shooting with air pistols and rifles, small-bore pistols and rifles and clay target shotguns make up 17 events at the Games. It is in our interests to encourage them. You may have read in the Press, speculation that the bid will site shooting events in London. The Council of the National Rifle Association will continue to encourage the London 2012 bid, but only on terms which ensure that the Association derives full compensation and benefit from any resources provided, whether here or in London.

The Bisley Meeting

In spite of overseas engagements, there was a good turn-out for the three Regular Services Queen's Medal events. I have been reminded again that marksmanship is seen as very important to our current senior Generals and Bisley is regarded as the centre for the units to aspire to and relate back their experience.

We must congratulate the British team on winning our Association's International Service Rifle Team Match on 7 July for the first time since 2000. The strongest opposition has been coming from the Sultan of Oman's Forces who had won most of the medals the previous week and so our team's win was very welcome.

The Methuen Trophy Inter-Services Teams shoot was won again by the Royal Irish Regiment and eight NRA Practical Rifle teams shot alongside with impressive results. The winners were the Highpower Club who, in fact, achieved the highest gun score for all teams present for the second year running.

The Territorial Army Queen's Medal shoot suffered again from absentees abroad. The prizes were presented by Lt General Sir John Kiszely who is Commander Regional Forces, Land Command and Inspector General of the Territorial Army and who is a great supporter of target shooting. The Services Cadets, however, were here again in force with over 700 competing cadets, some 1000 in all including cadets from Canada and Australia shooting cadets and all enormously enthusiastic. Admiral Sir Peter Abbott,

former Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff presented the prizes. It is a pity that foul weather prevented Arthur Clarke and his V Club members from holding a long range shoot for some of the cadets - it has proved so popular in the past.

The Ashburton was won by Epsom with 511 points over Marlborough with 508. The Royal Canadian Australian Defence Force cadets shot alongside for the Garry Trophy, which Epsom also won. Oratory again won the popular Falling Plates.

There were 50 schools represented this year which is a further improvement over the last two years. The new Cadet Rifle has continued to be a major incentive for this, but many schools have been finding it difficult to find suitable coaches on their staff. We welcomed this year Langley College and Wycliffe as well as several schools returning to the fold after their recent absence. I am pleased that the prizes were presented by Major General the Duke of Westminster who has recently been appointed Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff with responsibilities for reserve forces and cadets. Most apposite for us, he clearly enjoyed his visit.

Glynn Alger seeks to ensure that all shooting cadets next year shall receive a personal introduction to the NRA and its activities.

The Historic Arms weekend was again organised by Rae Wills and David Mumford and staffed by volunteers to whom we are all grateful. Entries were about the same as last year at 228. This is a firm fixture which has its place within the diversity of our activities.

In the Pistol and Gallery Rifle formal events the entry was just 19, but with a good number in the unlimited events. To meet the special demand from the newer disciplines and categories of activity we have been successfully promoting events in the Spring, late Summer and Winter, with further combined events at the Phoenix at Whitsun and the Trafalgar Meeting in October. Our thanks go to Brian Thomas and Fred James as well as Jim Quinlan of the South London Rifle Club for their special work on these events.

The Match Rifle Meeting had 158 entries which is one more than last year. More competitors, at 118, fired the full Hopton course of 1025 points. I was pleased to welcome Mr Anthony Pontifex, the Master Armourer of the City of London who witnessed part of their Company's sponsored competition at 1200 yards, eventually won by Nick Tremlett. Nick also won almost every other trophy making up the Hopton Aggregate together with the Hopton itself, with a record score of 1004. He deserves our congratulations. *Applause.*

The Hopton was followed by the Elcho Match won by England by just six points from Ireland and recovering the Shield won by Scotland last year.

Target Rifle is our premier target shooting discipline and the de facto successor of HM The Queen's Prize of 1860 even though much has changed since those days. The total Match and Target Rifle entries are 1257 with 214 from overseas compared with 1494 and 450 last year when we held the World Long Range Championships. The home entry was therefore the same year on year. However, the entries for the Grand are 1056 which is just short of the 1091 entries in 1999, five years ago and before we entered four years of special World events and increased costs, which we are now gradually reducing. We need to continue to encourage shooters, particularly those new to the sport, to join us.

However, I am again very pleased to see so many younger shooters taking part this week. In fact there are 196 students and under 21s receiving the special discount and we also welcome 16 competitors awarded a free Grand Aggregate entry by their Counties under our scheme for encouragement of new entrants. Our youngest competitor is Cadet Sam Harley from Epsom College aged just 14 years and 3 weeks closely followed by Cadet Sam Hunter, also from Epsom, and just 14. Most creditably, Sam Hunter won the Cadet Rifle Aggregate. *Applause.*

The young are as enthusiastic as ever. The key, when planning the future, will be to find new ways and focus attention more on shooting facilities and access to clubs away from Bisley.

This year was the 100th anniversary of the Astor Match promoted, specifically, for clubs and counties throughout the United Kingdom. Old Greshams of Norfolk won this year. The current Viscount Astor was unfortunately abroad for this event, but the match was duly celebrated. We thank Mrs Iris Bennett for her initiative in determining that there are 12 clubs who still exist and are active from 1904. Four of those opted for a separate shoot in celebration which Exonia and Tiverton won and she arranged for commemorative medals to be provided to the other teams. We thank her. *Applause.*

I also welcome the teams from Canada, Kenya, Malaysia and the Channel Islands as well as individuals from a further ten countries. We had previously welcomed teams from New Zealand, Brunei, Oman and the Republic of Ireland for our services events.

With some regret there has been deserved criticism for some of the ammunition which we have been using. This is further noticeable in view of the high standard achieved by Radway Green in recent years. There was, indeed, a forced halt in production earlier this year which may have been an underlying factor. You can be assured that we will do all we can to encourage a return to high standards.

We thank all those organisations which sponsor our events. A list has been posted on the noticeboard.

I take this opportunity to thank a number of people and I hope that I do not miss out anyone.

Firstly, we welcome, most importantly, the support of Milforce provided this year by the Royal Rifle Volunteers under the command of Lt Col Mike Scott. Milforce is a vital part of the organisation of the Bisley Meeting. Many of you will not have appreciated that over this four weeks as many as some 4000 competitors will have used our ranges from the Services, Cadets and civilians like most of us here this evening. The main task for Milforce in the NRA part of the Meeting is to manage the ammunition supply and distribution as well as the range rigging for the Services in which they were supported by Lt Col Hall and his team from the Small Arms School Corps, Warminster.

I thank Major Jim Sharp, Range Officer, Pirbright Ranges, for all his help throughout the year.

There are the Chief Range Officers, Tony Clayton on Century and Doug Watt on Stickledown, together with the Chief Butt Officers, Michael Batty and Peter Alliss and the Range Officers, stats staff and particularly all the volunteers who have worked so hard to support this year's Meeting.

I mentioned at the start of the Meeting the condition of the estate. It is easy to take for granted, but as anyone who manages land or an estate knows it is easy to sink money endlessly. We call on Jeremy and his staff to run a tight ship and I hope you will join me in thanking him, Alan Brant and the ground staff for what they have achieved.

You will have seen that the new road to Short Siberia has been built, three new targets added at 200 yards and a car park at 300 yards to the east of Century. We expect a steady progress of facility enhancement at Bisley. It will take time. We plan to seek sponsorship for major items. Donations will be fully recognised.

Jeremy is fully aware that butt marking has been an occasional problem causing great inconvenience to our visitors. Modern problems are competition for employing youngsters, regulation and tax. Fortunately, the initiatives taken have found the people, but training is still a problem to overcome. I hope you have found the marking satisfactory this last week. None of us has any illusion that automation is the future both at Bisley and on other ranges, but being realistic, this has been said on and off for many years. Nevertheless, it is close to our grasp. Please do introduce to me persons or organisations who might help us sponsor and finance these developments as the technical snags are overcome.

I conclude, most importantly, of course, to thank Martin Farnan and his staff for organising the shooting. Again, it is easy to take for granted, but it is done. *Applause.*

Teams

I take this opportunity to wish Martin Townsend success in the Kolapore which takes place on Friday and Jacqui Rankin with her Under 25s team. I also wish every success to John Webster and his team which is visiting Canada and the United States for the America Trophy Match and Colin Hayes who is taking a Match Rifle Team to Australia for the Woomera Trophy Match.

Questions

I turn, now, to questions. First, I remind you of the Suggestions Book which is in the Front Office. You can be assured that all entries are duly followed through. Likewise, questions raised this evening will be duly considered, if not answered immediately.

The following topics were raised by members present:

(Afternotes are in brackets).

Ammunition

A number of people present complained about the quality of the ammunition supplied for the 2004 Imperial Meeting.

The Chairman undertook to have the matter investigated to gain an explanation for the poor quality and to be able to put in place an appropriate strategy for 2005 to ensure all contestants are reassured.

Ablution Blocks

There was criticism of the cleanliness and condition of some of the camp ablution blocks.

(There is a programme for annual improvement and modernisation of facilities).

Astor Centenary Celebration Match

A complaint was read out on behalf of the Exonia and Tiverton Rifle Club regarding the arrangements for the Astor Centenary Celebration Match.

The Chairman requested a copy of the complaint and undertook to investigate the circumstances.

(Although it was found that the rules as published had been correctly followed, it was acknowledged that the Club felt aggrieved regarding the outcome where it had achieved the highest score, but not qualified for the Astor Trophy itself. After discussions with Exonia and Tiverton an amicable solution was reached between the NRA and the Club).

Supervision on Firing Points

Observations were made that some RCOs appeared unsure of their duties and a minority of competitors were not following the correct processes at the firing point.

The Chairman undertook to have the allegations examined.

(The Director of Shooting will review the processes, how they are managed and enforced).

Caravans

Some caravan users complained of the new requirement to display in/out notices outside their caravans because this in their view created a potential security risk.

(This was a requirement of the local authority to meet a Health and Safety requirement. Had the initiative not been introduced it was probable that the Local Authority would have issued a prohibition notice banning use of all vans on site just prior to the main Meeting).

Practice Targets

The need for practice targets at short range to be available during the Annual Meeting was raised.

(The Director of Shooting will examine what facilities can be made available for future years).

Vehicles

Speeding by motor vehicles and the reticence of competitors to walk was raised.

It was proposed that walking ought to be encouraged on site.

(Camp Standing Orders apply to the use of motor vehicles and anyone found infringing them will be subject to the disciplinary procedure).

Home Office Firearms Consultation Paper

The question of the National Rifle Association's response to the Home Office Consultation Paper on Firearms Legislation was raised in that it was felt in the past that the organisation had used its charity status as an excuse not to involve itself in the debate.

The Chairman emphasised that the Association's position on the subject was unambiguous in that the National Rifle Association of the UK had a duty to represent and protect the interests of its members and target shooting sports. It was not however in a position where it could act as a general gun lobby.

Butt Markers

Several members expressed special appreciation of the high quality of marking this year.

HM The Queen's Prize, qualifying score

The Chairman reported:

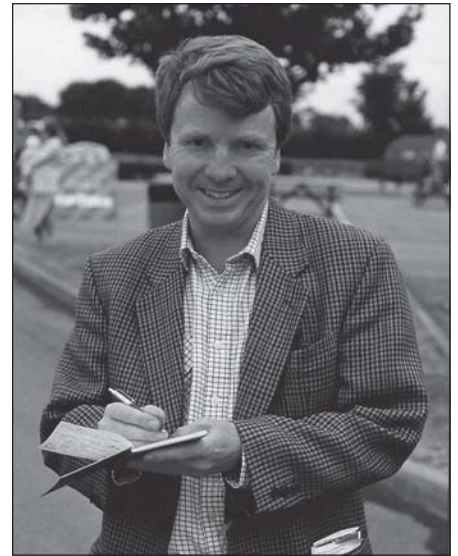
I can now inform you that there were 26 scores of 105 in the first stage and the winner of the Bronze Badge is Private JO Grant-Jones of the Army Target Shooting Club with a score of 105 with 18 V bulls. Applause.

The lowest score qualifying for the second stage is 102 with 9 V bulls finishing 33.2 at 600 yards.

The Chairman declared the Meeting closed.

SPEECH BY THE LORD MOYNIHAN AT THE IMPERIAL MEETING PRIZEGIVING 2004

Thank you for the honour extended to me to come down this afternoon. This is a magnificent occasion and it was a great privilege to watch really fine shooting in difficult conditions. To say they were difficult must be an understatement because the strength of that cross head wind is not easy in any sport. This was the same wind, strong cross head, that I faced in the first Olympic Games that I was fortunate enough to be in as Cox in the back of an Eight. All six of the crews were lined up and coxing down that very narrow lane for 2000 metres was tough because we kept on being blown across by the wind until I broke the rudder with about 150 metres to go. For the first time in my life, I think, I went completely silent. Everybody else was screaming and we were very close to getting the gold medal. We were about half a second behind the East Germans at the time and I just went dead quiet and thought what on earth was I going to do, because with the cross head wind we were heading pretty swiftly to the side of the lane and we would have been disqualified.



Fortunately it was a boat that had a T bar immediately behind me so I could steer from behind rather than with the wires. But just looking down the range today brought back a lot of those memories; that cross head was very, very tough indeed for everybody competing. I didn't manage to pull off the gold that day, we were 0.6 of a second behind. Silver was terrific and it's probably good to reflect another parallel today with somebody like Nick Tremlett, who has had the most phenomenal week, tipped that thousand earlier, and today to have shot so well and come up into second place. It brought back, as I say, a lot of personal memories and reflections. But it was a privilege to see him shoot and to see him shoot so well. But for Henry, as we shall hear in a moment, it is just the most magnificent honour in your sport and it is a privilege for anybody to be around him and to watch him, and to see the product of so much hard work and dedication that goes in. Elite level performance in any sport requires complete 100% commitment and 100% dedication and so congratulations to him and his family and his friends and everybody who has been around him, and to everybody who has competed.

An event like this doesn't go so smoothly nor so successfully without a lot of hard work and effort that goes on throughout the whole of the year and the executive directors of the National Shooting Centre, with Jeremy Staples, Martin Farnan and Sarah Bunch, in particular, I think are to be congratulated on the hard work that they have put in. It has been a huge success. It has run very smoothly, it has gone well.

From a personal point of view, since taking on the job a year ago, having been Minister for Sport a long time ago, and now Shadow Minister for Sport, shooting has dominated most of the work that I have done in the House of Lords; that and the 2012 Olympic bid have been top of the agenda in many, many debates. I regret that, as far as shooting is concerned, because to me it shouldn't be an issue that is debated within Parliament at the moment. We should be doing everything we can to back the shooting fraternity, both competitive and anybody who is licensed and affiliated to a club. They should be respected for their sporting ability and given every support, we shouldn't have anybody in any discipline training abroad. That is a nonsense, and I will continue to work with your Chairman and the various disciplines to make sure that is rectified. It has to be a priority, it must remain a priority. It is completely wrong to muddle up the very real problems of gun crime on the one hand with the utterly different world of competitive sport shooting. Those who mix it, and those who bring forward legislation that mixes those two issues are heading off in completely the wrong direction, and it is not one I am prepared to see continue. So with that background and for those of you who have followed, as I say, the lengthy debates, which I regret, on the subject, let's get back to a happier occasion.

Thank you, once again, for allowing me to come down and share today with you. Thank you for the inspiration with which I shall leave today to fight your corner even harder and above all, continue to respect those guys at the top who have shot so well and deserve much of the silverware that is both in front and behind me and with those few words can I hand you back to the maitre d' or whoever is organising what is going to be quite a lengthy little prizegiving here, but it is lengthy for very good reason. We are respecting the best in the sport and it is a privilege I think for all of us here to be able to applaud their successes. Thank you again.

THE BISLEY CAMP COOKBOOK

Now came the most important question to settle, as to which of the many hospitable offers of luncheon we should accept. Our mind was much distraught, for Wimbledon Camp is the most hospitable place in England. Moreover, we knew we should see something we had never seen before, a real camp kitchen, with the mess all served and the dinner entirely cooked by the said sociable and energetic Victorias.
The Graphic July 1870.



Why should it be any different in the 21st century at Bisley, Wimbledon's successor? There is now an opportunity to buy a useful souvenir cookbook which could help ensure the continuing high standard of cooking around Camp. The Bisley Camp Cookbook compiled by Deborah Sabalot Deane and sold in aid of the Overseas Team Fund combines a love of good cooking and a glimpse of some of the social history of the Imperial Meetings from 1860 to 1908.

The Cookbook, which is now available from Robert Stafford and the NRA Range Office, contains a selection of Deborah's American recipes together with recipes from Barbara Calvert and Karen Richards. They include New Orleans Style Barbeque Shrimp, Smothered Duck, Breakfast Casserole and Muffelatas (you will have to buy a copy to find out what those are!). Desserts include Bananas Foster, Deluxe Chocolate Brownies and New Orleans French Bread Pudding with whiskey sauce. Many of the recipes are aimed at one pan easy cooking which would be as useful at home as at the Camp. A separate chapter entitled "In the Markers' Camp" is mainly for those whose kitchen facilities are limited to a calor gas ring or the disposable barbecue.

The Cookbook contains a number of illustrations of camp life and extracts from the London Illustrated News and the Graphic, newspapers of the period that show some of the foibles and fashions of the rifle meetings in the Victorian age. When you look at the reports of the weather or the sartorial splendour of improved caps and sights of the 19th century Volunteers, you will realise how little has changed.

The Bisley Camp Cookbook has nearly 100 pages and over 40 recipes; it has chapters on Starters and Snacks, Main Meals, Vegetable Dishes, Desserts, Lagniappe (a New Orleans tradition of "a little something extra") and In the Markers' Camp. It makes a great souvenir or Christmas gift for shooters and non-shooters alike. It is priced at £8.50 (inclusive of postage and packing in the UK) from Robert Stafford, 1 Old Court, Ashted, Surrey KT21 2TS.

NRA MUSEUM - HELP REQUIRED

A most unusual rifle has been deposited in the NRA Museum, for inspection and identification, which so far remains a mystery. It is chambered for the .577" Snider cartridge but the action has no markings to indicate its origin, so it may be a one off experimental piece which was never patented. The photographs below show the action with one side plate removed.

If anyone recognises this design, could they please enlighten Ted Molyneux, the Hon Curator of the NRA Museum. Thank you.



ANDREW PENFOLD - CHIEF NATIONAL COACH (TR)



The NRA and NSRA have teamed up to provide some workshops for coaches; all are presented by the Sports Coach UK (formerly the National Coaching Foundation). Whilst they are not sports specific they are designed to enhance the coach and make them look at the bigger picture.

All the workshops listed will be held at the Lord Roberts Centre, and have limited places. To register contact Chris Webb on 01483 485513 or CWebb@nsra.co.uk

The workshops cost £30 per half day. Discounts are available for those booking on more than one workshop at the same time: two courses £55, three courses £80, four courses £100. The fees include all resource materials.

23 January 2005	9.00am – 12.30pm 1.30pm – 5.00pm	Goal Setting and Planning Coaching Methods and Communication
19 February 2005	9.00am – 12.30pm 1.30pm – 5.00pm	Observation, Analysis and Video Coaching Disabled Performers
12 March 2005	9.00am – 12.30pm 1.30pm – 5.00pm	First Aid for Sport Analysing Your Coaching

Goal Setting and Planning

Help your shooters set targets and learn how to plan a training programme to meet their needs

This workshop will help you, the coach, to:

- describe the processes involved in effective planning
- gather information on the demands of their sport and the training needs of their performers
- explain and apply the adaptation process
- divide the year into training phases of different emphasis
- integrate all elements of performance into individual training programmes
- explain the importance of monitoring and evaluating performance in the context of an overall plan.

Coaching Methods and Communication

Unlock and develop your communication skills to build and maintain a positive and effective coach/player relationship. Learn the principles of good communication and coaching styles and how to use them to meet the needs of your performers.

This workshop will help you, the coach, to:

- identify and explain your own coaching style
- assess your own communication skills and action plan to increase your effectiveness
- build and maintain good relationships.

Observation, Analysis and Video

Develop your coaching eye through a greater understanding of how to observe and select appropriate methods to analyse your player's performance. Find out the power of video analysis and how you can use it effectively in your coaching.

This workshop will help you, the coach, to:

- explain the importance of observation and analysis to enhance performance
- evaluate the way you currently analyse performance
- select appropriate strategies to analyse performance
- record and extract performance related information
- consider ways in which video can be integrated into your coaching.

Coaching Disabled Performers

Develop your own coaching knowledge and skills to coach disabled players through inclusive and separate coaching sessions. Discover new ways to adapt equipment and identify appropriate safety and medical considerations to meet your players' needs.

This workshop will help you, the coach, to:

- explain when integration and segregation might be most appropriate
- identify appropriate safety and medical considerations
- review and extend your knowledge of how to adapt your coaching to the specific needs of disabled performers
- design and monitor a programme for a disabled player taking part in his or her sport
- direct players to appropriate structures for competition and further coaching

Analysing Your Coaching

Discover methods of analysing your own coaching performance and identify areas for development. Learn how to develop and implement an action plan to enhance your coaching.

This workshop will help you, the coach, to:

- analyse your own performance against a checklist to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses
- recognise the different behaviours you exhibit in your coaching
- devise and implement an action plan to change aspects of your own coaching behaviour where required
- monitor any improvements in your coaching practice.



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THE NATIONAL MATCH - MOVING THE GROUND RULES

Background

The current rules of the National Match allow the winning country at Bisley to determine the venue for the match in the following year, and it needs a quick look back in time to put the rule in perspective. The rule was introduced after the 1880 match, which was held in Scotland, in order to end the dispute which prevented Scotland from participating from 1877 to 1879.

That particular “stramash” arose because the earliest rules allowed the winning country to determine the venue for the match in the following year and Scotland, who had won in each of the years from 1874 to 1876, had quite properly decided to hold the match in Scotland in 1875, 1876 and 1877. This fell foul of an Anglo/Irish decision, contrary to the rules, that the 1877 match should be at Wimbledon, causing such bad feeling that Scotland withdrew from the match until 1880.

In those early years of muzzle loaders the match took seven hours to complete and it was usual to have a meal break during the proceedings, a feature not revived until the match at Ballykinler in 2003. There may be some who consider that this more leisurely approach to life has great merit and, as with the Elcho match, should be revived for the National to emphasise its importance as an occasion. After all, the finest piece of silverware is associated with the match and is now rarely seen. It was the original intention of the subscribers that it should be paraded through the streets of London, Edinburgh and Dublin by the winners before being presented to the Lord Mayor or Lord Provost for display in the capital city of the winning team between matches.

Since 1900 Scotland has won the match on 12 occasions, but on only two (1901 and 1949) did the Scots choose to hold the match in Scotland. Prior to that the match had been held in Scotland on 13 occasions. Scotland last won in 1965 but, because the Lawrence Match had been started by then, decided not to hold the 1966 match in Scotland. Thus the occasions in recent years when the match has taken place away from Bisley have been few and far between - until the memorable event at Ballykinler in 2003, after the Irish victory at Bisley in the previous year.

The Need for Change

This has brought unanimity of view among the four countries that, in the interest of shooting, the time is right for a change to the existing rules. At a meeting of the National Match Council held on 20 July 2004 the four home nations agreed to make historic changes to the rules governing the venue of the contest. In future the match will be held at a venue outside Bisley every fourth year.

The host nation for that year will determine the place at which the match will be shot as part of a larger Prize Meeting to attract visiting competitors from throughout the UK. The host nation will be predetermined on a rota basis, and will have the best part of four years to plan their event. In the case of England, the requirement will be that a venue in England other than Bisley will be used.

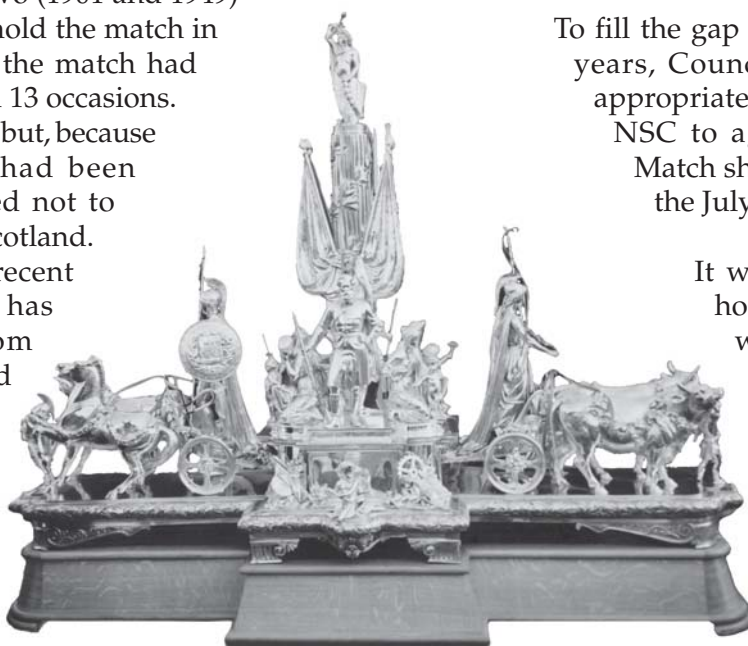
Planning is vital. Proper preparation with all the bodies that will be involved will be the key to a successful event. The National Match Council immediately recognises that all parties, including the range owners or administrators and the local clubs that will be invited to become an essential part of the event, will need time to prepare.

Rota Approach

The Council agreed that the rota should start with Scotland in 2008, and be followed by Wales (2012), England (2016) and Ireland (2020). Inevitably there will be issues that arise that may cause problems with the continuing availability of ranges, or clashes in the shooting calendar. Those issues will be dealt with as they arise and Council agreed that, in the event of an emergency, the fall-back location would be Bisley.

To fill the gap at Bisley in each of those years, Council felt that it would be appropriate to ask Scotland and the NSC to agree that the Lawrence Match should take place as part of the July Bisley Imperial Meeting.

It will be hard work for the host nation, but the reward will be a premier event being brought to the different regions of the country. It is an exciting prospect that deserves to succeed with the help of shooters UK wide.



WILL ON THE COMMON

A hitherto unfound manuscript buried in the archives, it seems, since Shakespearean times, has been recovered from ultra secure storage. The Journal is privileged to have been accorded the opportunity to publish a preview extract prior to general release.

(With enormous foresight, the author has foreseen in this text events, artefacts, characters, and general bits and bobs that may be spotted by those at the July Meeting, or even those who were not. An exceptionally modest prize awaits the individual who can produce the longest list linked to the places where they can be found in this extract.)



Act 1 Scene 1

(A blasted heath with all the detritus of battle. Sennet off. All around are abject figures, prostrate or sitting or kneeling. Two loyal retainers are standing and in conversation.)

Bill: How now sirrah. Yonder horn signals an end and the telegraph upon the tower is fading in this falling light. A close fought contest this day, methinks.

Ben: Aye, tis true but my flights did fall as a varlet's beer passing from an upstairs window. How did you fare, friend?

Bill: My string did place them all within that roundel painted large upon the hostile frame save that with two I did fly into the dusk. I know not why, but a black and white bird did fall with one and the other did but one score without the outer mark.

Ben: Twas ever thus, but look to the distance there! A spectre approaches in dark shades. Methinks it doth have a wimpled brow. Perchance it is a far nun.

Bill: You are mistook. Those are not shades of night and day but a messenger clad in a cloak of new yard gear sorely mixed. He has a furrowed visage, writ large with mean of impact. Let me prod him with my staff.

(A mysterious figure enters stage right)

Figure: Ahem. Do not you two point nought at me while all around are possible indeed without comprehension? My task is to bid all left standing upon this field to a meet with our Noble Lord in yonder tent, there to hear of our success this day.

Bill: He doth talk in riddles. Let us away there to hear what fate befalls us.

Ben: Aye, and we do hope to miss that unkindest cut of all.

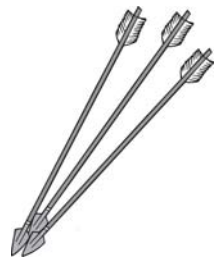
Scene 2

(The inside of a capacious tent. Serried ranks are listening to the Noble Lord.)

Bill: Our Noble Lord doth have a harried air.

Noble Lord: This day upon the field I have seen an omen, two wondrous birds that did in circles fly with wings outstretched. There be one that did roar and in straightest line did fly with wings now folded towards yon neighbouring hamlet. Upon its going there be two did appear upon the airs in ponderous flight. This bird did to the black bush in the distance go as if upon a lengthy journey yet seemest not to know whither was its great intent.

Figure: Perhaps some great calamity hath befallen of which we know not what.



Kilted warrior: Nay – perchance a flight hath sorely wounded it to the final straw. None may comprehend the merit of our flights, which doth invite the wisdom of a Solomon without the comprehension of good Pythagoras.

Noble Lord: Stay your chatter for methinks all is not right of this our quest. We must consult that oracle made sweet by beguiling witches that doth carry away our registers and our hopes. Let us away.



Scene 3

(A hovel. Three voluptuous figures are gathered round an enormous blackened pot and are lobbing items into the brew)

Voluptuous Witch 1: Eye of load

Voluptuous Witch 2: Cap of bat

Voluptuous Witch 3: Case of woad

Voluptuous Witch 1: Slug of rat

(A minor explosion off)



Voluptuous Witch 1: B****r – would that yon contraption should consistent be and not offend again.

(Enter the Noble Lord accompanied by the Figure)

Noble Lord: Fair ladies: what is this magic that you do upon the lists? We come from warriors who would a tie engage should you not satisfy our protest.

(All three Voluptuous Witches scream and swoon)

Noble Lord: Methinks the fair ladies are in need of succour. Go to them, gruesome apparition, and make good their need for breath with your saving lips.

(Voluptuous Witches recover with alacrity and much giggling)

Voluptuous Witch 2: Tis a pity. We did imagine that from a thunderer you might be who paints with light, come to seize us in his pixelled halls.

Noble Lord: How now, what an amendment is this. We have come to seek guidance upon the appearance of omens dark that have disturbed our flights this day. How look you to this, fair glowing creatures?

Witches in unison: These flights untimely from their mother's womb were ripped with form of brass and ogive tipped. It hath done their heads in or, perchance, they lead us all a merry dance.

(They join hands and caper about the pot)

Witches in unison: Noble Lord and figure faint, pursue your quest without constraint. Forsake stale thoughts and two point noughts, the gods have spoken. The mould is broken. We three shall meet again, one year hence upon the plain. There with hindsight we shall judge whether goodly flight or common fudge.

Noble Lord: By my butt and stock, you toy with me. Come my servant, put them to an answer upon the edge of your sword.

(The Voluptuous Witches leap into the pot – darkness).

© Dado



GREAT BRITAIN RIFLE TEAM TO KENYA AND NAMIBIA 2004

by Alex Henderson

Captain

David Hossack GB, Scotland and Sussex

Vice Captain

James Dallas GB, England and London

Adjutant

Alex Henderson GB, Scotland and Berkshire

Main Coach

Martin Townsend GB, Ireland and Hertfordshire

Shooters

Gary Alexander GB, Ireland and Tyrone

Iain Brechin Scotland, East of Scotland

Lou Lou Brister GB, Wales and Sussex

Matthew Button GB and Lincolnshire

Julie Cane GB, England and Essex

Simon Cane England and Wiltshire

Peter Chapman England and Sussex

Colin Cheshire GB, England and Hampshire

Derek Lowe GB, England and Surrey

Richard Mott England and Middlesex

Trina Noyes GB, Scotland and Berkshire

Iain Robertson GB, Scotland and Aberdeenshire

Ian Shaw GB, Scotland and Wiltshire

Martin Woolger Sussex

Mark Wrigley Scotland and Middlesex

Richard Vary GB, England and Berkshire

After nearly two years of planning, and having chosen a team which we felt would work well both on and off the ranges, we found ourselves at the North London Rifle Club on Sunday 16 May for our final packing and preparations for the start of the tour the next day.

We had a nice easy check-in at Heathrow thanks to the firm and knowledgeable handling of the check-in process by Trina, who had probably trained the staff in an earlier life, thereby bypassing any of the usual problems. We have never had as easy an arrival at any airport as we had in Nairobi; having been met and escorted through Customs and Immigration by senior members of the Kenyan Military Police, our rifles were simply taken straight from the plane to the range by nice men in uniform. We were even waved through passport control, neatly sidestepping the \$50 per head fee for visas.

The colonial affluence of Muthaiga Country Club was amazing. Polished parquet floors, comfortable armchairs everywhere, today's edition of every newspaper, more waiters than guests and delicious food. Sadly, much as we loved the place, it is too far from the range to make that journey every day, so during the shooting we stayed at a lodge near the range. Wana Funzi, as the ranch is called, can only be described as pure Africa: a dozen little thatched huts,

some with running water, most with electricity - some of the time - set round a clearing in the bush. It is as remote a place as many of us had ever been, the only company, apart from the staff, being the monkeys, giraffes and ostrich that are all around. We passed the day with a visit to Stony Athi: a hot and dusty but well-kept range with about 20 targets at all distances, again, in the middle of nowhere. We had time to check kit and zero before a much-needed shower and a home-cooked and delicious dinner, before we lit the fire, opened the whisky and awarded the Prat Hat for the first time, to the person who acted in the most unnecessarily stupid manner during the day. I won't mention who won it, nor will I tell you what I did!

The meeting opened with the team match, the result of which, we're glad to say, was substantially in our favour. Our hosts were, as we knew they would be, the friendliest team we had ever met, eagerly congratulating us and pulling us all into a group photo at the end before a hugely hurried return to the lodge for a shower and change. Well, there was almost time for a shower, but there was one vital ingredient missing: water. Half the huts at Wana Funzi are VIP huts with running water, (so long as only one person in the camp is running it); the other half have a bucket on the roof with a rope attached. A whistle to the staff ensures the bucket is filled at a suitable temperature and a quick yank on the rope releases it onto your head.

There was sadly not enough water for twenty showers, so most of us set off dirty and smelly to the party held by our hosts at their small-bore club in Nairobi. They had built it themselves, by the way: having failed to obtain government grants, they raised the cash from the members and built themselves the smartest best-equipped range complex any of us had ever seen anywhere in the world.

*It's time to play the music;
It's time to light the lights;
It's time to put on make-up
For the Muppet Show tonight.*

*"Well, what did you make of the show?"
"Terrible!" "Awful!"*

We'll introduce the rest of the cast as the tour progresses, but we'll start with Colin "Statler" Cheshire and Martin "Waldorf" Townsend, those two grumpy old men sitting in their box, hurling abuse and criticism. You might already know Mark "Oscar" Wrigley, that filthy stinking beast who lives in a dustbin, and Lou-Lou "Miss Piggy" Brister (and that's her idea, not mine). Mind you, the similarity between Martin Brister and Kermit is suddenly striking, so maybe it's more appropriate than we'd thought.



The team with their trophies (and a chair) at Windhoek.



"The view's better from here . . .



Life's a beach - this one's Malindi.

(All photos: GBRT to Kenya and Namibia)



. . . than from here" Matt Button demonstrates his skills.



"It may be the middle of nowhere but four-star accommodation is just not good enough. I demand an upgrade!"

The individual shooting started with a pool-bull competition at 200 metres (where you get five rounds and have to try to hit a disk the size of a 10p piece in the centre - one point for a hit, zero for anything else). So quite why Townsend challenged an inner for a bull we'll never know. He lost the challenge, by the way.

After a good day's competition, we made our way back to the lodge, where we wished James a happy birthday, with the hotel staff dancing round the dining room singing *Happy Birthday* in Swahili and presenting him with a delicious home-made birthday cake. A few celebratory drinks followed, as you'd imagine.

Day two of the individual shooting saw the start of the Championships. A rather cooler start was most welcome, but the temperature still climbed to its normal scorching level by lunchtime. The wind was a lot more taxing today, so the 10% reduction in target size, through using yard targets at metre ranges, meant that anything but the tightest group was too big. So far Gary Alexander, James Dallas, Martin Woolger and Trina Noyes had won competitions, with Ian Shaw taking the Short Range Aggregate.

A small selection of cross-shots and a wide selection of cross shooters, due to very variable conditions, opened the field up somewhat in the morning of the final. Twelve of us made the cut, with Ian Shaw leading the field by the narrowest of margins. However Matt Button managed to knock Shaw into second place with a very creditable performance at 1000 **metres**, which caused a large sigh of relief from the National Guard when they saw a rather lighter person climb into the chair for the procession back to the mess!

They did it brilliantly - a 40-strong band, all in uniform and led by a Drum Major, escorted him and us down the half-mile stretch of dust from the firing point. Then followed the Prizegiving at which a large table was completely covered with trophies to present, and we were honoured by the presence of many important dignitaries, including the Kenyan Sports Minister, IOC representative and at least one Olympic gold medallist.

The next day was the start of our holiday period, and began with a lie-in - what bliss! Well, it would have been had Statler and Waldorf not risen at dawn to give themselves that precious extra hour of uninterrupted bickering before the rest of us got up for breakfast and wrecked it all.

We sent all our cases and shooting kit back to Muthaiga without us, while we spent half an hour on a fifty-seater twin-prop to Kichwa Tembo in the Masai Mara for our safari. We were met by the hotel staff and driven to Bateleur Camp, where we were staying. Kichwa Tembo is a four-star establishment. This, of

course, is not adequate for a GB team, so we wangled an upgrade to a \$400 a night hotel half a mile up the road.

Wow - what a place! We thought Muthaiga was the pinnacle of opulence but boy, were we wrong - Bateleur knocks it into a cocked hat. Our rooms here have a floor and a roof but no walls. In the space between they have pitched permanent tents, so the effect is of sleeping under canvas, without actually doing so. We were allowed a few minutes to unpack before being whisked out on our first game drive.

David and Martin T took the precautions of throwing hats and sunglasses respectively to the elephants as a sort of peace offering. A full-scale military operation involving three jeeps was launched in order to manoeuvre ourselves into a suitable position from which to retrieve the gifts, and then to get ourselves to a safe distance before the elephants changed their minds and decided they would, after all, look good in Armani shades and a cricket hat.

We spent a truly wonderful couple of days in the middle of the Masai Mara game reserve, which included six game drives, on which we saw most game imaginable, and a hot air balloon flight followed by a huge cooked breakfast; there is something wonderfully unique about sipping champagne and eating bacon and eggs at a fully laid table, under a cloudless sky hundreds of miles from the nearest town.

From there we boarded the same little plane as before and headed south to Malindi on the coast of the Indian Ocean. With white sand beneath our feet and a warm, warm sea lapping at the shore, we all agreed it was a tough life.

For fear of making you all too jealous, I will keep the report of our stay in Malindi nice and brief. Suffice to say that it was paradise itself, and we all spent a very happy few days fishing, playing golf, swimming, relaxing and investigating the excellent local seafood restaurants.

Now, I'd like you all please to picture a small, homely, intimate restaurant, specialising in its beautifully presented, minimalist vegetarian low-calorie masterpieces. Got it? Good, because Carnivore's is **nothing** like that. For a start it seats 360. They have every sort of meat you can imagine, from chicken wings and pork sausages to zebra, crocodile and kudu. Not a place for the faint-hearted or anorexic, but we didn't have any of them. And so, after our final night of holiday ended, we flew the next day to Windhoek in Namibia for the second bout of shooting.

3:45am? You're kidding, right? Oh, you're not. We were at Nairobi Airport, just a shade earlier than we would be going to bed on some other tours we could mention, while Trina negotiated manfully with the

check-in clerk who wanted to charge us over US\$6,000 excess baggage because Air Kenya weren't honouring the 50kg limit we had agreed with BA. Well done Trina in getting him down to a lot less than that, but we can still feel a letter coming on when we return.

On arrival at Johannesburg we found we only had about 53 microseconds in which to change planes; unfortunately, as it takes 57 microseconds to move rifles and luggage from one plane to another, while we made the transfer by the skin of our teeth, our suitcases (having neither skin nor teeth) missed it and were currently sitting forlorn, lonely, abandoned and frankly rather cheesed off, in South African Customs. We, on the other hand, were now sitting forlorn, lonely, abandoned and frankly rather cheesed off in Windhoek Airport. Still, at least the South Africans who came by air had also lost their luggage, so at least it was fair, even if it was a pain.

While we wait for our luggage, allow us to divert your attention for a few moments towards the Namibian landscape and away from the stench of forty unwashed socks.

Namibia is now a republic, with its own government, currency and problems - if you think fitting eight million people into an area the size of London is an infrastructural nightmare, there is an equal and opposite nightmare in populating an area the size of France with the population of Woking. Happily, the Germans left in something of a hurry and didn't have time to take their excellent roads with them, although sadly they also left behind four original 1920s VW people carriers, which we were able to verify were still operational. The country is a strange mix of desert and high-rise. It all seems either very affluent or very barren, but quite unslummish. It is also at 5000 feet, so the air is clean and pure, the sun is warm but not too hot, there is no humidity and it is basically the most comfortable climate you can imagine.

Arrebusch Travel Lodge, as its name suggests, may not be five-star accommodation, but is extremely comfortable and very convenient for the range. It also has an excellent bar and restaurant attached, both of which we sampled, and both of which we would recommend.

Fantastic! Some of our luggage has arrived. One of the vans has returned to the airport and has just pulled up at the hotel with . . . four coaching chairs and a flagpole.

Windhoek has a pretty range, in a bowl formed by the sizeable hills all round, with the result that there is circular wind (left at the firing point, right at the 300 metres point or vice-versa). It is also full of concrete blocks the size of garden sheds. Apparently the Army had been practising there the previous week and had been using various obstacles, some of which

needed a ten-ton crane to shift. C4 had a fit at the suggestion that we would just shoot round, over and through them, but it seems the Namibians felt that even we are good enough shots to miss twenty foot slabs of stone ten yards in front of us.

Despite the obstacles, the range was immaculate, our hosts clearly having been working long and hard to make it so for our arrival, even re-painting the ablution blocks after the graffiti of the previous week.

Finally, at about lunchtime, our rifles and kit arrived, so we hastily assembled everything and hurried up to the range for a practice before the sun went down. None of us shot exceptionally well, but it served the purpose of establishing zeros and locating our base on the range so we were all set for the competition.

The Meeting started with the opening ceremony, led manfully by C4 who raised the flag while a troupe of Namibian dancers, dressed in lion hides, ostrich feathers and what looked like rather unlikely strips of chipolata sausages strapped to their ankles arrived and performed some traditional pieces for us. They sang and danced beautifully, and, though none of us can claim to have understood it, we all thoroughly enjoyed it.

Scores on the first day were OK, but not really much more than that. We picked up the odd third and fourth place, but the field was clearly dominated by the South Africans. We thought up various reasons along the lines of "they've been here before and know the range", "they have handloads", "they eat more red meat", etc, but unsaid we all knew we were definitely up against it here.

We stayed for a couple of hours after the shooting and joined them at their range-side braai (barbecue) which was delicious, provided by the catering arm of the local bowling club, called "the Terminators" in a rather worrying way.

Namibia does not believe in issued ammunition - it is all "bring your own" so we had approached the South African manufacturer, PMP, who had supplied us in Kenya. They were, however, unable to provide enough for the whole of the Namibian Meeting, but some of the South Africans had kindly agreed to make some handloads for us so we could compete on a level playing field in the team match.

It was agreed that we would use these handloads in the second leg of the individual shooting so we could all get zeros with the good stuff. Wow - what a difference! Suddenly the prize lists had GB shots in the medals in every match. We didn't win them all, but we won some and were either second or third in the rest, so we all breathed a collective sigh of relief that tomorrow's match might now not be the walk-over we feared.



Leopard Valley Range.



The Opening Ceremony at the clubhouse.



Iain Robertson enjoys the ride.



Taking the 0600 to breakfast.



Very civilised - breakfast in the bush.



"Right we'll wait till they drop something then I'll stamp on them - which one do you fancy for lunch?"



"Hmmm Robertson and Townsend could be a bit on the stringy side but that Lou Lou looks tasty!"

We spent the evening in town at Joe's Beer House and Rib Shack, an establishment that, as you will imagine, specialises in red wine and steak. The service was dreadful and we were there for hours, but the food was superb and cheap, so we got over the slowness, but really had no time for anything afterwards except sleep, especially as we had the International Match the next day.

The match started a little below par at 300 metres: none of us really had any particular ideas why . . . it was just one of those days where we didn't get everything right at once. At 600 metres we improved, but the old enemy still increased their lead by one or two, before 900 metres where they were simply in a class of their own. We reckon if we'd performed a little more like we feel we ought to have done we would have dropped about 35 points, instead of the 48 we actually lost. The South African B team dropped 32; their A team dropped 18. We're not really used to feeling totally outclassed, but we're afraid that's what we were.

The conditions for the Final the next day were difficult, to say the least, with some people coping better than others with the very fast changes. Top of the day was Iain Robertson, who was chaired back to the clubhouse, with Johann du Toit of South Africa taking the Grand.

Now, we've heard of people flying from London to Paris for lunch, but we are not aware of anyone flying to Cape Town for lunch before. But we did. The fact

that we had to change aeroplanes there and had a seven-hour stop-over is nothing to do with it, of course. We had the most delicious seafood lunch imaginable on the Waterfront while some very nice people in uniform looked after our rifles and luggage at the airport.

We returned to the airport for the long slog home, except for David and Alex who stayed on, with Hilary (David's wife) and Cairen (Alex's fiancée) joining them for an extra week in South Africa. The rest had an easy and uneventful flight back to Heathrow and on to Bisley, thus concluding a most enjoyable and memorable tour. Now all we have to do is sift through the 4,000 photographs we have taken between us.

Final words from the Captain

On behalf of the team, I cannot thank our hosts enough for the care, attention and good humour shown to all of us during this, the most enjoyable tour I have yet been on. Everything was laid on, and the whole tour proceeded without a hitch. We were welcomed wherever we went and I feel sure that both countries we visited will not have seen the last of us. I do hope they see that as a promise rather than a threat!

Lastly, on a personal note, I should like to thank all members of the team for their tremendous spirit of enjoyment and fun throughout the tour, and particularly to James Dallas and Alex Henderson, both of whom were unflagging in their support and help to the team both before and during this amazing tour.

Barbados Rifle Association Centenary

As part of its 100th anniversary celebrations, the Barbados Rifle Association is planning a Fullbore International Invitational Individual and Team Shoot on the Paragon Ranges from 20th - 26th March 2005, over 300 to 1000 yards ranges.

The provisional plan is as follows:

Sunday 20th	Practice
Monday 21st to Wednesday 23rd	Individuals
Thursday 24th	Day off
Friday 25th	Team shoot at 900 and 1000 yards
Saturday 26th	Team shoot at 300, 500, 600 yards
<i>(Team events will be held between combined international and Barbados teams)</i>	

An indication of availability to take part would be much appreciated at this point after which a detailed programme will be made available. We look forward to hearing from you.

Bill King

Barbados Rifle Association

E-mail: bass7@sunbeach.net

THE BRITISH SPORTING RIFLE CLUB

by RJ Maddison, National Coach, Moving Target Shooting

When you enter Bisley Camp, turn left and drive along Elcho Road, the group of colonial style buildings that face you beyond the end of the road is the home of the British Sporting Rifle Club (BSRC). Much of modern shooting sport can be traced back to the necessity to fill the pot and the BSRC endeavours to keep those links alive. The pair of Landseer Deer outside the NRA Offices and the sketch in the Museum, commissioned by the NRA in 1862, are an elegant testimony to the early days of our sport. The Running Deer competitions can be traced back a long time and have existed from the earliest days of the NRA. A century ago, Walter Winans was a great proponent of the sport and across Europe, Moving Target competitions can be traced back over many centuries. The Running Deer was included in the Paris Olympic Games of 1924 where the late CW Mackworth-Praed took two individual silver medals and shared the team Doubles gold medal. More recently John Kynoch, present Chairman of the BSRC, won the bronze medal in the Running Boar event in the 1972 Munich Olympics, John Gough won the bronze medal in the World Championship in Seoul in 1978 and John Maddison won silver in the 10 metres Running Target event in the Commonwealth Games in Auckland in 1990.

The BSRC was formed in 1962 when a group of enthusiasts and international shooters perceived that there was some risk of losing the Running Deer range as it fell into disrepair. One of them was the present BSRC President Archie Butterworth. The range was refurbished and soon afterwards a 50 metres Running Boar range was built. The Running Boar, shot with a .22" LR rifle, was to become the Olympic Moving Target event for many years because it was less demanding on range construction than the Running Deer shot with a fullbore rifle, until it in turn was replaced by the 10 metres Running Target Air Rifle event after the 1988 Olympics on the same grounds!

Throughout this period until the present day, the BSRC has been responsible to the NRA, the Governing Body for the Running Deer, and the NSRA, the Governing Body for the Running Boar and more recently the Running Target event, for conducting the relevant British Championships and for training GB international shooters in these events.

At the front of the Clubhouse, the building that faces Elcho Road, is a paved veranda behind a lawned area. There is wheelchair access to the Clubhouse and to the firing points. The Clubhouse has a large reception area, a small office facility and "the long room". This can be used for meetings and courses, but it was designed around a 10 metres Running Target range. The original 'mechanical' range with its paper targets was replaced by a Sius-Ascor Electronic Scoring Target (EST) range in 2002 and is becoming increasingly popular amongst members not only as a shooting event itself, but as an easily accessible, easy to use, training facility for the other moving target events. It is equipped with an opto-electronic self start system so that a range operator is not needed for informal training. Range facilities also include the 100 metres Running Deer range, the 50 metres Running Boar range and a 95 metres Sporting Statics range equipped with four Sius-Ascor ESTs. The ESTs have already proved their worth on the Statics range by increasing range turnaround many times over. Because of increasing demands, a second Running Boar range has been built over the adjacent Time Limit range, preserving its use as a Gallery Rifle range. Ultimately this range will also be equipped with an EST thus making it marker free, a welcome development nowadays. The completion of a second Running Boar range will make it possible to host major competitions at Bisley.

For the 1992 Nordic Championships, the BSRC built a covered firing point for the Statics range to provide a true 100 metres zeroing distance. Subsequently, to



The British Sporting Rifle Club Clubhouse.



The old statics firing point is now a pleasant area for a barbecue.

make way for the extension to Melville range and to meet MOD requirements, it became necessary to reorientate the Running Deer range and this Statics firing point could no longer be used. A new covered firing point was built bringing all the firing points into line, but reducing the Statics distance to about 95 metres (104 yards). The old covered area was left intact and is now a convenient gathering area for Club members. It is also home to a permanent barbecue which is well patronised during the Club's major matches.

BSRC membership is a little under 300. Of those, about 50 are qualified Range Officers under the Club's own training scheme, which is fully recognised by the NRA and NSRA. There are also four GBTSF Club Coaches and six Club Instructors. The Club has some ten match days, usually a Sunday, throughout the year, and rather more range days for informal shooting. There are major matches in the Spring and early Autumn spread over three days, as well as Stalker's Matches and events for Historic Sporting Rifles. There are also about six training days throughout the year for more intensive training at all levels. Typical attendance is 40 at the regular weekend events and the range facilities are all in full use. There are also well attended mid-week range days, and the Statics range is available to members (and non-members) during the week for rifle functional testing. There are some 20 affiliated clubs who are able to book the range whenever it is not reserved for BSRC use. This means that it is in full use every weekend of the year and it is also booked increasingly by affiliated clubs during the week. Clubs using the Moving Target ranges must have a BSRC qualified RO, and so regular courses are held in the Clubhouse. For the safety minded, because a range operator is required, this means one to one supervision on the Moving Target firing points (except 10 metres). A recent innovation is the use of the Running Deer range to simulate driven Wild Boar to train hunters going to the continent for this form of hunting. The BSRC provides an RO/Instructor and this provides a useful income for the Club which is used for range development.



The sitting position.

The BSRC fully supports the recognised ISSF/NSR Moving Target events and several Club members are ISSF or GBTSF qualified judges. On the 100 metres Running Deer (Centre Fire Rifle) there are two events: the Singles in which the 23 metres run is completed in 4.3 seconds, and the Doubles where two shots have to be fired during that run; not easy with a bolt action rifle. The 50 metres Running Boar (Rimfire Rifle) and the 10 metres Running Target (4.5mm calibre Air Rifle) events consist of a slow runs series (5 seconds run time) and a fast runs series (2.5 seconds run time) for the 10 metres/2 metres crossing distance. On the Statics range there are two traditional competitions using the fullbore rifle: the Roebuck and the Sitting Fox. The former is shot from the sitting or kneeling position and is a snap shooting competition with four second target exposures, now timed electronically. The Fox is shot from the standing position and is for five shots in one minute. These competitions were devised to complement the Running Deer, the first to simulate the target exposure, the second to promote unsupported shooting from the standing position. There are now variants on these competitions to permit the use of some support and these tests are used by stalkers and vermin shooters as a training aid. For the stalkers there is also the Stalker's Test which is for ten shots in five, two shot series, from each of five positions on the Roebuck target, simulating the BDS / BASC competence test for would-be hunters. This has proved very popular. A recent introduction is the Swedish Deer Test. Here, the Running Deer target is stopped just outside the wall and the shooter fires one deliberate aimed shot. The target immediately runs and the shooter must reload and fire a second shot before the target reaches the far wall. This simulates the competence test all hunters have to pass annually in Sweden in order to retain their hunting licence! It has proved to be an excellent introduction to the more demanding Running Deer Doubles event. The Club also organises special events in the Christmas Match and the Memorial Day event, which is a celebration of the life of some of our deceased early members. There are also regular Junior Shoots for the children of members and their friends.



The BSRC's Running Boar range.

A regular feature of the programme are two Inter-Club Challenge Matches each year that give us an opportunity to meet the members of the affiliated clubs. We have also had a friendly match with our neighbours, the Bisley Field Target Organisation.

Traditionally, one of the activities of the BSRC has been to organise Unlimited Entry events coincident with the National Championships. Although primarily to allow entrants to undergo some last minute training before the championship, these also allow non-members the opportunity to try the event. The current format is on the basis of an own start handicap with anyone hitting the HPS on handicap receiving a nominal cash prize. For the Running Deer this is held on the Thursday/Friday and Monday/Tuesday around the middle weekend of the July Imperial

Meeting. This year we organised a Standing Boar shoot on the ESTs: a snap shooting competition from the standing position. Anyone entering the Imperial Meeting is welcome to take part in these events, suitable rifles are provided and ammunition is available at cost. There are also similar events before the Running Boar and Running Target Championships and many new members have come to the Club through the unlimiteds.

Although there are many shooting clubs based at Bisley, other than the BFTO and the NSRA, the BSRC is unique in having its own range facilities for rifle shooting. Those facilities are now as modern as any in Europe, and lead the way in bringing Bisley into the 21st Century yet maintaining the traditions of our forebears.

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO COACHING

"Some people are born coaches, some people achieve coachdom, others have coaching thrust upon them."

Speaking as a novice coach, I should like to take this opportunity to share some of my thoughts with you. In my experience there are three sorts of shooters that are difficult to coach: the tyro, the club shot and the ace.

The Tyro

An inexperienced shooter will regard the coach with awe. To them the coach obviously embodies the wisdom of Solomon, the patience of Job and the wrath of Jehovah on a bad day. This is an awful responsibility to bear. The spectacle of the late, great Larry Orpen-Smellie looking down upon me, with an unblinking fishy eye and enquiring "Do you know anything about that one?" still has me waking in the middle of the night, screaming. Unvarying kindness has its problems too. There is nothing so demoralising to the novice shooter as when you can feel and see a significant wind change and the coach doesn't alter your sights. Then you know, in your heart of hearts, that a mere three minute wind change will not alter your group. Unfamiliarity with the equipment doesn't help. After the first "message four - clear target" the coach will enquire "What range did you shoot at last?" There then follows an unseemly scramble to adjust the foresight ten minutes up or down. The ensuing embarrassment will ensure a magpie, no matter how good the shot. After a while, the coach will learn all the variants on the word "Errm". "Errm" is invariably followed by the words "It might have been". Novices will either tell the coach nothing or tell them the way the ley lines are influencing their shooting, the state of their marital/financial affairs, or any other codswallop that comes to mind. Ignore all this, or make kindly grunts.

The Club Shot

This is the man/woman who knows it all. They have been shooting for years and had their triumphs and their near-misses (they never have failures). They are turning out for the team as a favour. They know you. They know you are inexperienced. They are prepared to tolerate you, providing you do as you are told. Club shots are capable of putting a shot on the waterline one or two minutes left or right without telling you. This leads to a crisis of confidence. Do you say "That was a little bit out of the group", or do you ignore it, knowing you've got the wind right or do you alter the sights, thinking there's been a wind change you haven't spotted. Answers please, on a postcard . . . At the end of a shoot they are prepared to be magnanimous. "Tricky wind that." "I don't think that was my best shoot." "Elevation plot wasn't great." "If you'd just come half a minute up/down/left/right I'd have got a forty-seven." Club shots are also distinguished by the time variation between "Go on" and "Bang". Some specialise in firing as you open your mouth, others give you time to study Grand Prix Continental Drift results before deigning to touch the trigger. One of the most annoying bugbears of the coach is the variation in clothing and equipment. Many shooters possess a hat which has a flap covered in lead weights, spikes, fish-hooks and barbs between coach and sights. It is deeply embarrassing, particularly with a lady shooter, to adjust the sights and find (eventually) that you are fiddling with the bolt release on a Swing.

The Ace

Coaching these people is a learning experience. They generally go where you put them. They are

completely confident that they have shot a V bull and only your incompetence has denied them the 50.10 that they are used to. The finest example of this was a well-known Scottish shooter who, when asked why he was taking so long to fire answered "I'm just waiting for the wind to agree with what you've put on my sights." The antithesis to this is the left-handed shooter who has L-R written on his hat to aid the coach. One of my most deeply satisfying experiences was watching one ace being coached by another in South Africa. The coach smote the shooter on the shoulder to inform him that he should wait. The result was a shot that ended in Somaliland followed by a five minute diatribe which had the entire field listening intently, hoping for a chance to improve their idiomatic grasp of the English language.

Glossary

Things shooters say:

Errm

It might be out of the bull (every recognised bad shot is prefaced by "Errm, it might be . . .")

That wasn't my best shot

It might be anywhere

That's straight through the middle

True, but on the neighbouring target

That might be a tad low

Six o'clock magpie

(NB one bit = two tads = four smidges)

Was it all right to go?

Five minutes ago, it might have been

Sorry I took so long

Wake up!

Was that my last shot?

I've only fired nine

Unbelievable!

50.0

Thank you very much

I've cocked up, you've cocked up but some of our mistakes have cancelled out

Things coaches say:

Wai . . .

Bang!

That was a bit out of the group

It's your magpie, not mine

Lovely waterline shot

It's my magpie, not yours

You're shooting very well

No matter what I do to the sights, it's still in the middle

Relax a minute

What the hell is the wind doing?

What was that fired on? (to another coach)

My shooter's wind zero is out by two minutes and I've no idea which way

Have you ever had a possible at this range?

You still haven't

To sum up

The fundamental basis of coaching is: if the shooter gets a good score then he/she is rewarded with spoons, medals, badges etc. If the shooter gets a bad score, it's the coach's fault. However, it is one of the most satisfying experiences in target shooting to make a six minute wind change for two consecutive V bulls. To my mind, coaching is an art rather than a science. An artist will live for his art in spite of all those miserable shooters.

INTENDING TO GO TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN 2005?

The Army Target Rifle Club have a number of spare tickets (as part of a group booking for the Army tour) to South Africa next year which they are keen to sell on at cost price.

The ticket details are:

24 March BA55 Heathrow - Johannesburg Depart 17:50 Arrive 06:45 (25 March)

10 April BA56 Johannesburg - Heathrow Depart 20:15 Arrive 06:35 (11 April)

The cost is £628 inclusive of taxes and the booking includes an extra 27kgs personal baggage allowance per person (making a total of 55 kgs) which has been negotiated with BA. These dates would fit with someone doing the South African Championships. If anyone is interested could they please contact Chris Claridge.

E-mail: the.claridges@virgin.net

Telephone: 01276 23814

OBITUARIES

Bob Hassell

Bob Hassell started shooting in the RAF in 1952 and his shooting qualifications and success ranged from achieving a .22 Rifle Master Shot badge at 25 yards to an Elcho badge in 2002. In between becoming a qualified Bombing and Weapons Instructor from 1956 to 1960 and a qualified Nuclear Bomb Aimer from 1960 to 1968, he found time to have great success with everything from the sub machine gun, the service rifle and the target rifle to the match rifle; but it was with the pistol that he really excelled.



He represented the RAF in small-bore rifle for ten years, was holder of the National SMG Trophy (the Sterling Trophy) for seven years and was Inter-Services Champion for five years. With the target rifle he collected more than 60 National and Mackinnon badges. He was a member of the last official GB team to South Africa in 1963 before Apartheid put a halt to visits there for 30 years. During this tour he had a rather nasty toothache which a well-known team member who was also a dentist nearly persuaded him to solve by extraction under the influence of alcohol. The picture of Bob standing up to his waist in the Victoria Falls Hotel swimming pool being served afternoon tea is one that many who knew Bob will be well able to visualise! He toured to the Channel Islands in 1981 and was a team Captain of the City and North London Rifle Clubs. He also excelled during his RAF career with the Service Rifle winning the Queen's Medal for Champion Shots of the RAF in 1964.

Early in his RAF career though he showed greatest shooting prowess with the pistol. Having been taken in hand by such RAF greats as "Stainless" Steele he went from strength to strength in both fullbore and small-bore pistol disciplines. He went to the Olympic Games shooting small-bore pistol in 1960 and 1968 and to World and European Championships from 1960 to 1972. He was a National Coach for seven years and member of the National Squad for more than ten. With fullbore pistol he represented Wales at the Commonwealth Games in 1966 and 1974 and in the World Championships in 1966.

Shooting was his life until recently when a stroke limited his involvement to being just a spectator. Nevertheless, there have not been many in the last fifty years who have shot in so many disciplines and excelled in so many. Together with a remarkable talent was a passionate will and determination to do well and also to help those coming along to fill his considerable shoes. Added to that was a love for a good party, good food and wine and to ensure that he combined them all with good friends and shooting.

Chris Hockley

John Hugh Voice

John Voice died on 23 March 2004 aged 84 years. Born in 1920 in Darjeeling, India, he came to live at The Moat, Hadle in Suffolk at an early age. Educated at Cranleigh School, he entered Sandhurst Military College at the age of 17 years and was commissioned in 1938 whereupon he returned to India with the Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own Yorkshire Regiment). There he transferred to the 3/14th Punjab Regiment of the Indian Army.



In World War Two, the regiment served in North Africa and in the Italian Campaign in Eritrea in 1941 where John was wounded. Initially hospitalised in South Africa, he was transferred to the UK for further treatment, after which he returned to India in 1944.

In August 1946 John came home on furlough and, that September, married Joan whom he had met when they were both young teenagers. The ceremony took place at the parish church at Cross-in-Hand, Sussex; five days later John returned to India.

In 1947, the partitioning of India and Pakistan resulted in John's regiment becoming part of the Pakistan Army, after which John left the service and returned to his home in Cross-in-Hand.

A job with Booth's, the tanners, took them both to Africa for a short time, returning finally to the UK in 1952. John had a variety of jobs, including working for Cogswell and Harrison and the Port of London Authority, before taking early retirement in 1971.

It was during his school and Army days that John developed a love of target rifle shooting becoming, after the War, a regular visitor to Bisley. He became a Life member of the NRA, a member of the ATSC (from its transitions from the SR(b) Club), the NLRC and English XX Club and was a regular visitor to the Surrey Clubhouse. He regularly shot in ATSC teams against the Bisley clubs and in the annual RAF International Matches. He also represented his county on several occasions.

John was a quiet and reserved, but friendly, person who never complained in spite of increasing pain in his leg. Eventually, when in his seventies, this pain called for hospital treatment which would have been complicated so, at his behest, the leg was amputated. After a brief period of rest and recuperation he returned to Bisley to resume his shooting, eventually retiring to his other hobby of gardening.

He will be greatly missed by his family, to whom go sincere condolences, and by his many friends and acquaintances at Bisley who will long remember his smile and quiet demeanour.

Derek Hodson and Ted Molyneux

Gordon Baker

The death of Gordon Baker, late of the Artist Rifles Clubhouse, occurred on 17 June at the Woking Hospice. Gordon was born in 1928 at his family home at Worcester Park and was educated at the Henry Thornton Grammar School. Prior to his National Service in 1946 he became a solicitor's clerk, but declined the offer to become an articled clerk in favour of a transfer to the solicitor's city office as a managing clerk. He was selected as a National Serviceman for the RAF and was posted to RAF WAHN in Germany where his talents were fully used by being appointed to the Head of Staff and Security at the Commanding Officer's house with the rank of Sergeant.

In civilian life he founded the Consumer Union which later became the Consumer Council. He went on to become a freelance writer which led him into the worlds of journalism and broadcasting. Amongst many achievements in the media he successfully exposed a pyramid selling operation which led to its being banned.

He soon grew restless with civilian life and enlisted in the reconstituted Territorial Army with the 21st SAS



(the Artists Regiment); this was later designated the reserve Regiment to the 22nd SAS Regiment of the Regular Army. With the rank of Sergeant he served with the Intelligence Troop and was seconded to the War Office Special Intelligence Unit. He went on to serve with the Rhodesian Government during the terrorist campaign as an intelligence officer. In later life he became a member of the SAS Regimental Association and the Artists Rifles Association and did much to recover the Artists Rifles Clubhouse from a private owner and restore it to its original purpose. During his tenure the clubhouse was modernised and two new shooting clubs were formed together with a new armoury. With ill health and his wife, Maria, having a serious accident which left her severely disabled Gordon left Bisley.

Gordon's cancer was not discovered as early as it should have been and he was referred to the Royal Marsden Hospital where in the true Baker spirit he became a volunteer to undertake treatment with a new experimental drug to assist in research. He had been advised that his cancer was terminal and no other treatment could be offered. The last six months of his life was spent with several in-patient stays at the Woking Hospice.

Gordon was a good friend who would not tolerate fools lightly. He will be greatly missed by all who truly knew him.

Bernard Parke

Bernard Cridland

It is with a feeling of profound sadness that the death of Bernard Cridland is being reported. Bernard was everything to the Jamaica Rifle Association over the past five decades and there was never anyone quite like Uncle B as he was known to all in the shooting fraternity - pistol, rifle and shotgun. He shot for his country as a member of the Rifle Group on numerous occasions in the West Indies and Bisley, and was Captain many times. He was also a member of the teams that participated in the Central American and the Pan American Games, but perhaps his pet achievement was being the main local architect who introduced shooting to the Commonwealth Games when they were held in Jamaica in 1966.

Uncle B was President of the JRA several times and it is therefore not surprising that the small-bore rifle range has been named in his honour, in recognition of his devoted years of service. He will be sadly missed by us and his wife Sheryl and their four children.

At the time of going to press we have just been informed of the deaths of Stuart Armour and Field Marshall Sir Roland Gibbs. Obituaries will appear in the next Journal.

LETTERS

From Maurice Ayling

Publicity for the Competition Marksman

In the Bisley General Meeting in the Umbrella Tent this year, the subject of publicity and our public profile was aired. We are unknown to the general public although we field competitions of world standard. It has been said that this is because target shooting is not a spectator sport and does not lend itself to television coverage. This may be partly true, but I would suggest that it is partly our own fault but, even more significantly, because there is no big money involved.

I would not suggest that our competitors shoot for enormous sums of money in current times (although perhaps why not?), but it is significant that the Queen's Prize attracted plenty of publicity when £250 was enough to enable the winner of it to set himself up in business. However, there is a way of involving large sums of money without corrupting the morals of the shooters which would also attract publicity.

In my first years at Bisley in 1947-48, I wondered what was the significance of a certain type of hat, and I learned that it was part of the regalia of GB teams. I remarked that I would like to have one in due course but was told by one old and bold CPO fellow team member that I had fat chance of that as the wearers had to purchase a place in the teams and that I would never be able to afford it. The significance of this gem of information became clear to me in 1959 when, because of my results in the Imperial Meeting, David Horton-Smith wanted to include me in his 1960 team to Canada. That was out of the question as I had been appointed to Ark Royal on completion of the 1959 Meeting, which was just as well as I discovered that as a married, junior officer with three children in school and a mortgage, I would have been hard pushed to finance membership of the team. By 1976, I had had five years to establish myself in civilian life, and was able to offer my services to the 1977 Canada team which were accepted. My company was very supportive, giving me paid special leave and, to my embarrassment, put me in the local rag and on the local TV, thus gaining publicity for both me and the company. However, I was surprised by the interest shown by many persons who had hitherto been unaware that there was such an outfit as an overseas competition rifle team. I had to give many explanations of the mysteries of the game and I was only too happy to take advantage of the publicity to further our cause. Nevertheless, there were a few of my shooting contemporaries who considered this to be Non-U.

Although by this time finding the money was no problem, I was nevertheless surprised by the amount I was required to cough up, and it struck me that this requirement was restrictive in team selection, many worthies not volunteering as a result. I therefore decided to do something about it, with the aim of enabling team captains to nail up a list of those selected, purely on merit,

who could accept or refuse knowing that if they accepted, they were not going to impoverish themselves. Having written to several bookmakers and football pool promoters, I was sufficiently encouraged to get on my hind legs in the 1978 Umbrella Tent and propose that the Queen's Prize Draw be extended nationwide via the betting organisations who would take their cut, the residue, after payment of prize money, going to the Overseas Teams Fund. The general idea of the draw being that if a punter drew a competitor he won a certain sum, if the competitor reached the Second Stage, he won more, and there would be prizes pro rata for positions in the Final. This, I felt, would have the two-fold benefit of increasing publicity and broadening the field of selection. There are many habitués of betting shops who will have a go at anything but, once the scheme had achieved some publicity, the field would naturally extend itself to include all those thousands who normally only have a go at annual events such as the Grand National or the Derby.

My proposal was received with such acclaim by the shop floor that the Chairman said it would be investigated. With the exception of two elderly gents who accosted me on the 600 yards point the following morning, telling me that my proposal was disgraceful, and that they hoped that they would never see the day when an overseas team did not consist entirely of gentlemen (whatever that meant!), many persons indicated their support over the next few days. I never heard another thing from the Council, which did not surprise those who enquired of me over the coming months.

All that was twenty-six years ago, and times and attitudes have greatly changed in the meantime, so perhaps it is now an appropriate time to revive the proposal. Modern methods make publicity easier, and TV has already demonstrated the technique of matching firer and target which, with a knowledgeable commentator, should be at least as interesting as snooker which captivated my dear old Mum in her old age although she had previously known nothing of the game.

There has been an attitude in the past of keeping heads below parapets because of political correctness resulting in creating the impression that we have something to hide. We need aggressive publicity to ram home that shooting is one of the latest of Olympic-type sports, most of which have their origins in military exercises right back to the original Games in Greece. We also need to emphasise that the UK NRA aims are very different from the aims of the NRA of the USA with which some of our opponents eg the Gun Control Network, deliberately confuse them to our disadvantage.

Of this I am certain, if we do not create favourable publicity, we will be eliminated before long. This will not concern me, but it will the young shooters of today, and it is defeatist to hide our light under a bushel.

From Alan Piper

The Home Office Consultation Paper A View from the NRA as shown in Target Sports magazine

Whilst initially reading the NRA viewpoint I must admit that I was greatly alarmed by some of the NRA comments. After I had scraped myself off the ceiling I was merely very concerned by them. I eventually concentrated on 'Licensing the person' and 'Registered firearms'. I hope that I have merely misunderstood their contents!

Let me attempt to make myself clear. Whilst 'Licensing the person' starts off on a reasonable basis it falls down totally when it states *"Only when someone has passed the course do they qualify to possess firearms"*.

In 'Registered firearms' it builds further on this damaging start by stating: *"A qualified license holder should only be allowed to possess and use a firearm and ammunition that has type-approval as recommended by one of the governing bodies based upon safe construction (fitness for purpose) and a public safety risk assessment. This should take account of sporting purpose, work purpose and historical significance."*

'A qualified licensed holder . . . ' This is a potentially disastrous suggestion to put forward as far as most shooters are concerned. It would be impossible to create and run the very large numbers of courses necessary to 'qualify' the hundreds of thousands of certificate holders should the Home Office take up the idea, even with a five year periodicity.

' . . . should only be allowed to possess . . . ' A seriously misguided suggestion to put forward taking into account those we face.

' . . . A firearm and ammunition that has type-approval as recommended by one of the governing bodies . . . ' How many of the firearms and related ammunition which will be used at the Trafalgar Meeting (advertised immediately opposite to the NRA viewpoint) will require such mindless bureaucratic nonsense?

' . . . based upon safe construction (fitness for purpose) . . . ' The firearms used have passed proof, what else does the NRA want? Does the NRA consider that our handloads/ reloads should be subjected to 'type-approval' before we can be 'allowed' to use them?

' . . . and a public safety risk assessment.' This could be a two-edged sword dependent on an inevitably legalistic basis.

'This should take account of sporting purpose, work purpose and historical significance'. A display of utter irrelevancy. As long as they are legally possessed and used why was this included by the NRA?

The NRA has apparently decided that we are incompetent, unsafe, uninsured, unsuitable and incapable of complying with security requirements. The basis for this is not made clear, and existing affiliated systems and practices are ignored.

Over the years the NRA has adopted various inappropriate policies to the general detriment of shooting. This appears to be another.

The saying "The road to hell is paved with good intentions" is all too true when applied to the NRA's response to the Home Office 'Consultation' paper.

From Glynn Alger, Secretary General

In response to Mr Piper's letter I have to agree with some of his concerns, if taken in isolation. The piece in Target Sports is a direct lift from the NRA submission to the Home Office in response to the Consultation Document.

When you have had the opportunity to read our full response you will appreciate that the proposals from the Association are necessary to move the firearms legislation debate forward. For shooting to progress and expand as a sport, we need to address the public safety debate while reducing the bureaucracy associated with firearms ownership and use. Current legislation and the proposals contained in the Consultation Document are technical, complex and unnecessarily restrictive to licensed firearms users.

The submission had to be to the point and thus does not contain detail or definitions that would be required in the event of further debate on the issues raised. For instance on the issue of licensing the person, as with driving licences the Association would not expect existing license holders to have to re-qualify; that expectation would only affect newcomers to the sport from a future date.

To have genuine dialogue with Government, leading to a modernisation of firearms law, we need to resist the temptation to just say no or make submissions that increase the technical debate and complexity even more.

To date the NRA has received a large number of supportive comments and e-mails in relation to its submission and only two other negative responses. However we welcome further comments from members once you have read the full enclosed publication.

From Tom Harrison

Disciplinary Findings

I am reading the Journal and I think it is a waste of space to state under disciplinary matters that Mr A has been fined Y under rule X as very few of us know all the rules by number and even fewer read the Journal with the Bisley Bible beside us.

I presume that the object of publishing these fines is to remind us all of rules and to encourage us to abide by them.

From Glynn Alger, Secretary General

The Council Minutes and the Journal are in the public domain. We have an obligation to publicise the fact that a discipline offence has taken place and the outcome of any discipline process. We also have to protect the interests of both the individual and the Association from inappropriate publicity appearing in the press. By publicising which rules have been broken, we fulfil these requirements.

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NRA AUNTS AND UNCLES SCHEME IMPERIAL MEETING 2004

I have now been running this exercise for eleven years. In that time, 125 shooters have volunteered their help and 315 firers have benefited from the scheme, several going on to achieve international honours. No wonder other countries are keen to emulate the NRA.

Once again, my sincere thanks go to all who have contributed to what turned out to be a rather more successful year than 2003, when there were too many firers who eagerly sought help from me, but did not make contact with their mentors. I was right, too, when I wrote in the Summer Journal that demand was likely to be up; it was.

Looking ahead, I do hope that all and sundry will take note of the existence of this scheme (it is, as you know, open to anyone, not just to first-timers). I try, as far as possible, to match firers with coaches who are likely to fit well with that firer's needs and background. Further, because I ended up using almost all my Aunts and Uncles, I would warmly welcome some more volunteers. It was a close call this year.

Finally, the demand for the revised Guide for First-timers, now split into one for adults and one for cadets, increased sharply. I do heartily encourage newcomers to Bisley to request a copy.

Tim Elliott

Lark Hill, Haynes West End, Bedfordshire MK45 3RB.

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Gobbles the Turkey says:

Whatever you do please make sure you're not available for the

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on Saturday 11 December

Don't telephone the Deputy Director of Shooting on 01483 797777 ext 150 or e-mail phyllis.farnan@nra.org.uk by 7 December to book a place for yourself and any of your friends

Don't turn up or bring your friends for a great time shooting Target Rifle or Gallery Rifle at five different fun targets

Don't enjoy the lunch, mulled wine and mince pies generously included in the entry fee of £20 for target rifle and £15 for gallery rifle

Don't come along and win me for Christmas . . . and you won't be wanting the gammon or mince pies as prizes either . . . currants have feelings too you know!

Don't listen to anyone who says they turned up and had a good time last year - they're all liars and probably drank too much mulled wine at lunchtime!

MEMBERS' PAGE

Plumbing - With Ambition

Steve East reports from Jersey (see pages 56-59)

'The Virus' was having its revenge. It was being downright rude to my digestive tract, which was protesting volubly. The nervous system was losing the battle to persuade the two ends to stick to what they were best at (though the brain has, on occasion, demonstrated considerable expertise at talking out of the alternative path).

I had rushed off the range, still in my shooting jacket, to deal with the consequences of the demarcation dispute going on in my body. Having obtained relief for my troubled bowel, I stood up to finish the job, when there was a loud metallic splash. Thoughts: I didn't believe things had got so bad that I wouldn't notice, and anyway I don't remember eating any of the cutlery. So what's going on? Oh s**t that was my bolt falling out of the back pocket of my jacket.

Options: write off the rest of the shooting and £2000 of rifle, or . . . stick my hand in . . . or, go New Labour (and hope you can get rid of the effluent without actually losing everything you are hoping to grab).

Screw my courage to the sticking point, and go for a flush. Hooray! The bolt is still there, and the murk is thinning. Recycle the action, and we have something approaching a clear view. A quick grab, rinse thoroughly under the hot tap, and off to finish QII for a 146.18.

John Tuffin also reports from Jersey

All tours have that memorable moment. In Jersey it happened early one morning, halfway through the tour. As shooters were transferring the issued ammunition to their boxes, one extolled the benefits of an ammunition box that he had proudly possessed for many years. Most shooters had a 5x10 box with lid, some had a 2x12 box. This particular shooter had 'the best'; a 3x8 box, very stable, which stayed upright even in strong winds and was of a size to fit very nicely in his range holdall.

In preparation for my shoot, I decided to use the 'facilities'. Just finishing my business, I suddenly heard a very loud expletive followed by a clatter. Moments later, an embarrassed and slightly angry shooter exited the corner cubicle. A handful of live rounds went into the basin and, accompanied by more expletives, the shooter proceeded to wash the rounds, the 3x8 very stable box and his hands.

Enquiring as to the problem, I was told by the shooter that he had placed the very stable 3x8 box on top of the cistern and, moments before flushing, the very stable 3x8 box, and its contents, had fallen into the toilet bowl.

The shooter was now faced with the dilemma of retrieving the no longer very stable 3x8 box and the ammunition, or flushing the toilet and hoping the ammunition did not disappear into the cesspit. He decided on retrieval and cleaning before returning to flush the toilet. I next saw him some way into this procedure, kneeling on the floor drying the ammunition on a towel before placing the rounds back in the once more stable 3x8 box. It may have been unkind, but I felt it necessary to point out that the box also had water in it. Mumbling more expletives, he dried the box, and the ammunition again, and proceeded to the firing point.

On returning and being asked how he got on, his response was "It was a crap shoot".

The morals of this double tale

- The Law of Gravity is inviolable. Penalties for infringement are immediate, and there is no appeal.
- Murphy's Law is not negotiable.
- Lightning can strike twice in the same place.
- Learn from others' mistakes – you won't live long enough to make them all yourself.
- However carefully you plan, there will be a flaw, and someone will feel compelled to point it out to you.
- You will then feel the need to stuff their head down the toilet.
- S**t happens.
- And not just to people.
- Inanimate objects aren't, and they have malicious personalities.
- And there is a toilet in Jersey planning to steal a rifle piece by piece.
- So, don't turn your vulnerable parts to the enemy before you check for weapons.
- **And, Martin Townsend - no ammunition box is stable on a sloping toilet cistern in Jersey, no matter how good it is!**

Have you got any good shooting photographs?

The NRA and NSC are creating a digital library of photographs that can be used in the Journal and other publications, on the new website or for future publicity as well as forming a historical archive for the future. If you have any suitable photographs (prints, slides or digital) that you would be happy for us to use then please send them to the Editor at the NRA who will scan and return them to you. All photos are welcome: any date, any discipline, any range or any aspect of shooting. Please remember to include your name and address and captions to the photos wherever possible. If sending multiple digital images please send on CD; if you are sending only a couple of images then they can be e-mailed to karen@nra.org.uk.



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A THANK YOU AT CHRISTMAS TO YOUR STAFF OR CLIENTS

For more details please contact

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