



National Rifle Association Journal

Spring 2007

Volume LXXXVI

Number 1



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Cover photo: Stickledown sunset by Nick Tremlett

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NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



*by
Glynn
Alger*

Olympics

As you may be aware, there has been much discussion about where the shooting elements of the Games in 2012 should be held. Originally the bid was for them to take place at Bisley. During the course of the bidding process, to improve the chances of getting the Games, the shooting was placed at Woolwich to be close to the Olympic Village. The NRA has made several approaches to return the 2012 shooting to Bisley to no avail.

There has been much speculation about the suitability of the current site and whether a development at Dartford would be better, being still close to the Village and leaving a permanent legacy for shooting following 2012. Currently the Olympic Committee are unwilling to consider moving the Games from Woolwich.

What of Bisley I hear you cry! The NRA has not given up hope of getting the Games; should there be a problem with the Woolwich site we would still be willing to host the shooting events. In the meantime we have applied for Training Venue status to enable us to act as host to visiting teams in the build up to the Games from 2010.

The Need for Development at Bisley

As you are all aware, since 2001 the Association has been successfully paying off over £2 million of debt. It is likely that all debts will be cleared within the next three years which is a great achievement.

Unfortunately at the same time this is happening, despite trying hard to become more commercial to increase income, we are not doing as well as we should like. This is largely due to the fact that although Bisley is charming "it is not fit for purpose" in a modern world, in that the infrastructure and the condition of buildings are poor.

At the same time our costs in terms of staff, maintenance and utilities are rising at a rate that indicates they could outstrip income within five to seven years.

Where do we go from here? Wait until the crisis arrives then sell off property in a panic? Ask our members to pay more and often?

The answer of course is no. We need to plan a way out of any impending crisis before it occurs. Bisley is a major asset that, if developed and managed properly, could produce enough money to change the current 'fading glory' into a world class facility and allow real financial support of shooting in the regions. To do that we will need to raise millions of pounds in investment.

How have we got here you may ask? The facts are that we have not invested in Bisley or shooting in general for a very long time. In relation to Bisley, visitors see it as quaint but not somewhere to host high quality events because the infrastructure and accommodation of the required standard are not on site. As a result we have limited ability to attract the 'non-shooting pound'.

Because the estate has not been modernised and is crumbling we also limit our ability to attract new shooters into the sport. People today want to spend their leisure time in pleasant surroundings. They will spend money if they can turn up and have a shoot, followed by a meal, a drink and even some retail therapy or other leisure activity if available.

We also need to improve the current ranges and introduce more and different opportunities to shoot to maximise the 'shooting pound'.

I am not saying at this stage that there is any plan on the books to develop Bisley but I am pointing out that to continue as we are and do nothing should not be an option. To fiddle around the edges to keep the place afloat may suit some of the longer-term members by avoiding any real change but it will leave the Association in a position where it continues to struggle while failing in its duty to promote the sport of target shooting nationally.

I am told that if we choose to develop Bisley we could raise large sums of non-shooting capital that would allow us to modernise facilities at Bisley and open ranges regionally. In addition we could achieve an annual income from any development that would act as an on-going legacy for the sport.

There would of course need to be conditions surrounding any such project that would safeguard the interests of the sport and shooters.

- The shooting and accommodation provided would need to suit all pockets.

- Non-shooting pound activities could subsidise shooting at Bisley and nationally.
- The plan needs to accommodate the needs of current leaseholders and caravan owners.
- All accommodation needs to be upgraded and provided with mains services.
- The tranquillity and ambience of Bisley needs to be maintained and improved.

I believe it is time to return Bisley to its deserved position as the Home of Shooting on a world stage. To achieve this there is a need for necessary change.

Insurance

I am constantly amazed by being told that people do not understand about the need to have adequate insurance.

To avoid any confusion, at a basic level all shooters should have public liability cover. This is necessary so that should the unspeakable happen and an accident occur involving serious injury or worse, the individual or organisation has cover should there be a civil liability case. The usual level of cover is currently £5 million, soon to rise to £10 million. This is a requirement when shooting on any safety certificated range, whether MoD or civilian.

Individuals can get this cover, plus accidental damage to equipment, personal accident etc, by applying to be a member of one of the national bodies or by purchasing commercially.

On the other hand club insurance is usually a different animal. The cover is specific to club activities. Individuals are covered while they are taking part in their club shoots. However, when not so engaged, contrary to wide held belief, they are not generally covered. Basically if you are not shooting with your club under the club insurance when an incident occurs it is very unlikely you are covered.

The moral of this story is that everyone who shoots should be aware of the cover and conditions of their insurance whether that is for an individual under a member's policy or the club policy.

Another important matter is that individual and club policies generally start and finish on a specified date each year. For instance if the start date for a policy is 1 April 2007 and a club insures in June, the insurance starts from June and it is not back-dated to April. In effect if, for instance, a club secretary delays taking out insurance till after the start of the shooting season, the club is not covered for a period.

Hopefully as the CPSA, NSRA and NRA work towards becoming a single national body a number of ambiguities around insurance will be dealt with under a single insurance.

Use of MoD Ranges

The NRA met with the Army, Defence Estates and Landmarc on 16 November 2006 which resulted in the following outcomes:

Essentially the military will not agree to a blanket acceptance that our RCOs can replace Range Wardens on weekends. However, they do accept that some ranges, reviewed individually could potentially be signed over to RCOs on a weekend basis. Chris Webb the Regional Manager will be working with the MoD to identify the ranges that potentially fall within this criterion to help develop protocols between the MoD and interested clubs.

Regarding the licensing of clubs to use ranges, the Army have asked for a proposal from the NRA to centralise this function to be carried out by us during our renewal and affiliation process. They have been supplied with a draft document and we await their response.

Linked to this issue will be our ability to manage regional range booking services. If we run a range booking service we can achieve a number of things to improve the situation for clubs in general. For one, we would act as a buffer between clubs and the regional manager avoiding some of the confrontation of the past, while working in partnership locally with the MoD. By dealing with bookings regionally, we can also police whether clubs are licensed, insured and authorised to use the ranges. Additionally we can ensure ranges are used more efficiently by booking several clubs onto a range on the same day while reducing overall costs for clubs in terms of the Range Warden.

The Licensing and Regional Booking project will of course be managed by Chris Webb assuming the MoD agree to the changes.

Chris Webb has also met with Defence Estates and Landmarc to work out the details of their charging regime. The results of this meeting are published on our website for members' information so that we are in a position to challenge any regional differences as and when they occur.

During the course of the meeting it was agreed that the NRA would be contacted very early if the military were considering mothballing or closing any ranges so that we could consider our position.

Westminster Fair

The NRA was present with other shooting bodies at Westminster on 27 November 2006 presenting both international athletes and the sport to our politicians. More MPs attended this year than last. Unfortunately, the majority were already pro shooting or were shooters. Even so there is a noticeable improvement

in our profile as a sport and most were comfortable to be there.

The Bisley Butts Appeal

The Association wishes to acknowledge those listed below and all the anonymous donors who have made donations to the Bisley Butts Appeal since the publication of the last Journal.

Barnes, GC
Bryant, MJ
Coates, DE
de Launay, AJCB
de Vesconte, DH
Garnett, TPB
Henderson, K
Lury, DH
Newnham, RG
Nottinghamshire RA
Parker, RB
Pearce, TM
Piper, AA
Saunders, EJ
Smith, BWF
Stobart Hook, B
Strachan, RK
Tallack, AN
Tuck, J
Turner, RJ
Tutt, CC
Webster, JGM

Carol Painting has produced a short video illustrating the damage to the Bisley Butts and some of the remedial work being carried out. Profits from the sale of this video will go to the Bisley Butts Appeal. If you would like a copy please visit Carol's website at: www.carol762.org.uk/butts.htm or telephone 023 9235 2855.

General Notices

Annual General Meeting

The 2007 Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 15 June at 17:30 in the NRA Pavilion.

Bisley General Meeting

The 2007 Bisley General Meeting will be held in the Umbrella Tent at 21:00 on Wednesday 25 July.

Discipline Findings

Lt PA Finn was reprimanded for breach of Rule 4 of the Camp Standing Orders set out in Appendix 1 of the Bisley Bible.

Mr M Cosway was reprimanded for breach of Rule 4 of the Camp Standing Orders set out in Appendix 1 of the Bisley Bible.

These breaches occurred during the extreme weather conditions experienced at the 2006 Imperial Meeting, when large numbers of competitors suffered the effects of the heat. The penalty was agreed on this basis.

Message of Appreciation

Peter and Barbara Hobson have most generously provided three Landrovers for the use of the NRA around the ranges.

In recognition of Peter and Barbara's ongoing assistance to the Association we have decided to rename the "LVA Communications Aggregate" as the "Hobson Aggregate".

Team Captaincies

The following are congratulated on their appointments as Captains for the following teams:

GB Under 25 2007

Graham Nelson

GB Service Rifle 2007

Flt Lt Dave Vick

GB Service Pistol 2007

Sgt Chris Webb

NRA Team to the Channel Islands 2008

Matt Charlton

F Class World Championships 2009

Des Parr

Onwards and Upwards

Altcar Open Day

The National Rifle Association is holding another Open Day for budding marksmen at Altcar Training Camp, Hightown, Merseyside on Saturday 7 April 2007.

Why not encourage your friends and family to experience the sport of target shooting? Shotgun, air rifle, gallery rifle, target rifle, F Class, archery, black powder pistol, sporting rifle, classic and historic rifles are all on offer for them to have a go.

Doors open at 08:45 and shooting finishes at 16:00.

There is a £6 registration fee for adults and £3 for children. Books of ten £1 tickets may then be purchased which can be redeemed at each activity depending on the price.

Book online now at www.nra.org.uk or contact us for further details.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SHOOTING



*by
Martin
Farnan*

Shooting Division Staff

Sally Philcox, the previous Shooting Division Secretary, left the NSC towards the end of December 2006. She has been replaced by another Sally, Sally Agnew, who started work as the Shooting Division Administrator on 29 January 2007.

Open Days

Two NRA Open Days will be held at Bisley this year, one on Saturday 5 May and the other on Saturday 8 September 2007. These days will be administered by the NSC but all the firing points will be staffed by NRA appointed coaches. Members of the public as well as members of the NRA and affiliated clubs may, under a Home Office dispensation, shoot without the normal requirement to have a Firearms Certificate etc. Registration will only be accepted online: there is a registration fee of £8 per adult for non-members or £4 for adult members and children aged 10 - 14. Booklets of tickets can then be purchased which will allow you to shoot a number of different firearms ranging from Air Pistol to Fullbore Target Rifle.

We are also seeking experienced coaches and shooters to help coach or supervise the general public at the above event. (NB The ranges will be controlled by qualified Range Conducting Officers). If you are interested, and can give your time freely to promote the sport, please contact Karen Robertson on karen@nra.org.uk or 01483 797777 ext 146 with brief details about your shooting history and availability. More information about the Open Day can be found on our website at www.nra.org.uk. Please let all your friends know about the day and encourage them to attend.

Tenth Anniversary Phoenix Meeting

This year is the tenth anniversary of the Phoenix Meeting, which will be held over the long weekend

Friday 25 to Monday 28 May. The event is again being organised by the NSC on behalf of the NRA, and the planning committee is chaired by Brian Thomas, the Assistant Director of Shooting. Over 100 events will be held, ranging from 7m Air Pistol to 1000 yards F Class Rifle. The event is again being supported by Target Sports, for whose generous sponsorship we are extremely grateful, and will feature in their forthcoming issues along with the entry form.

The Match Conditions, Rules and Entry Forms are now available from the NRA, and copies may be obtained by ringing the NRA Range Office or the Shooting Division Administrator (extensions 152 or 149 respectively). Copies of the entry form have been sent out to all those who are on the Gallery Rifle database. The entry form and courses of fire are also available to download from the NRA website. Don't forget that you can also enter online via the NRA website.

Imperial Meeting

Dates

You are reminded that this year's Imperial Meeting is one week later than last year. First Saturday will therefore be 14 July and Final Saturday will be 28 July.

Entry Forms

The Individual TR and MR entry form may now be downloaded from the NRA/NSC website. Entry may be made online, which will save a postage stamp. In addition it will make life considerably easier for the Squadding staff since all entries made online can be uploaded directly to the Imperial Meeting entry and stats programme, thus saving many hours of manual entry of the details, reducing inputting errors and making your entry more secure. May I therefore encourage all those wishing to enter the Imperial Meeting to do so online.

The entry form is again in the format of an A4 booklet. Pages 1 and 2 contain important notes on completing the entry form correctly. It is essential that these notes are read carefully **before** the entry form is completed. The actual entry form is on pages 3 and 4. The majority of competitors only need to complete page 3 (personal details, block entries and financial reconciliation). Only those competitors wishing to enter **individual** competitions or aggregates need to complete page 4. Pages 1 and 2 should be kept for reference and only the entry form on pages 3 and 4 should be returned.

Entries

Once entries have been processed and entered in the computer a detailed entry summary sheet will be forwarded to each competitor as previously. This should be thoroughly checked and any errors should be notified to the Squadding Department as quickly as possible.

Late entry fees for individual TR and MR events will again be payable after 31 May (10% extra) with 25% extra payable after 30 June and 50% extra if entry is made within 48 hours of (but before 12:00 noon the day before) the start of the competition. No entries for any squadded competition will be accepted after 12:00 noon the day before that competition.

Late entry fees for team events remain unchanged, ie 25% extra on all entries received after noon two days before the day of the match concerned (except for the FW Jones and the Parting Shot competitions which may be entered up to noon the day before the match). Team captains should note that, in the event of a late entry being accepted, it may not be possible to provide markers at short notice. In this case the team will have to provide the required number of markers or else it will not be able to shoot. **Please carefully read the notes on all entry forms before making your entry.**

Individual Entry Fees

Having been held static last year, this year's overall entry fees for TR and MR individual and team competitions have been increased by approximately 5%. To encourage more entries the entry fees for aggregates and sweepstakes will, however, remain exactly as for last year.

Marker Fees

Marker pay has remained static for five years now, but has been raised this year to encourage more people to come and mark. The daily rate has risen from £45 to £50 (£55 on Sundays), an average rise of approximately 11%. For this reason the marker fee per squadded TR competition will have to be raised from £5.00 to £5.50 this year. The total marker fee payable must then be calculated (= number of individual squadded TR matches entered x £5.50).

In order to encourage more young, and new, shooters to enter the Meeting the calculation of marker fees will allow a 25% reduction (from £5.50 to £4.20) in the marker fees to be given to all competitors under 21 years of age, or under 25 years of age if they are in full time education. Those aged under 21, or under 25 and in full time education, will also benefit from a 50% reduction in their entry fees (less sweepstakes). All previous concessions have now been superseded.

Aggregates

The aggregate competitions, based on the individual squadded matches in both TR and MR, have again been grouped into four blocks as follows:

Block C including Grand Aggregate matches **only**

Block D including Middle Saturday matches

Block E including First Friday matches

Block G including all MR competitions

This will enable competitors more easily to enter the Blocks that fit in with their date of arrival at Bisley. Competitors arriving on First Friday may therefore enter Blocks C, D and E. Those arriving on the morning of Middle Saturday may enter Blocks C and D and those arriving on the afternoon of Middle Saturday may enter Block C only.

Block entry fees are discounted by approximately 10%. In Block C, for example, you get 22 aggregates for less than the price of 20! Please note that Sweep entry fees are not reduced (since these entry fees are returned as prize money).

Also enclosed with this Journal is a request form which may be used to obtain entry forms for Team Matches (including Schools Veterans), Pistol and Gallery Rifle, Any Rifle (MR), Civilian Service Rifle and the Imperial Historic Arms Meeting.

Competitor RCOs

The paid NRA RCOs will be responsible for ensuring that each range is fully equipped with all the required equipment before the start of all competitions, for the safe running of the range and for closing it down on the conclusion of shooting. Competitor Range Officers (ROs) will be appointed as hitherto, and will continue, under the supervision of the NRA Competitor Wing Officers, to be mainly responsible for the interpretation of the rules. No competitor RO should have more than two duties. Their assistance in the running of the ranges during the Imperial Meeting will be much appreciated.

Service Rifle

Entry forms for both Service and Civilian competitors may be obtained from the Director of Training on ext 150. They should be returned by 29 June 2007. The only change of note is that the ARA Cup, open only to military competitors, will now be concurrent with the Roupell (now renamed the Defence Match) rather than with the Henry Whitehead (now renamed the Advance to Contact Match).

In the case of the Inter-Services FIBUA Match (now renamed the Urban Contact Match) practices 1 and 2 have been re-written more accurately to reflect operational requirements.

Target Rifle

A number of changes have been made to this year's TR meeting, the main ones being:

- a Having run for its contracted period of five years the sponsorship of the LVA Communications aggregate has not been renewed. This aggregate has been renamed the Hobson Aggregate to mark the assistance given over many years by Peter and Barbara Hobson, in particular their funding of the construction of 'Hobson's Way' which runs from Century to Short Siberia and their generous donations.

- b The Shearwater Aggregate is also no longer being sponsored, and this aggregate, made up of the Conan Doyle and HM The Queen's Prize First Stage, has reverted to being the Wednesday Aggregate.
- c Consideration is being given to how to remove the present clash between the Champion of Champions and the Inter-Services Long Range matches. At present no finalist in the former is able to shoot in the latter, which is clearly unfair. It is possible that the Champion of Champions may be shot at one distance only, prior to the start of the Inter-Services Long Range.

Notice of any further changes to the TR Meeting will appear in the Summer Journal.

F Class

In a change this year it is planned that all F Class competitors will be squadded on a specific butt (though probably not in every detail) at both short and long range. This will have three distinct advantages in that (a) F Class competitors can meet and shoot with other F Class competitors, (b) these targets will be specific F Class targets with the F Class white 3/4 minute V bulls at short range and a 5" circle at long range, and (c) dedicated F Class markers will be marking these targets, reducing errors.

The Minor Squadded matches such as the Stickledown and Queen's Consolation may also be shot in F Class this year, with List D Prizes available, and I encourage all F Class shooters to enter these matches.

As agreed at the meeting of F Class shooters during the 2006 Imperial Meeting all F Class competitors, whether using their own ammunition or issued RG ammunition, will be scored as 6 for the F Class V bull, 5 for the remainder of the TR V bull, 4 for the TR bull, 3 for the TR inner, 2 for the TR magpie and 1 for the TR outer.

Schools

The revised Schools entry form will be sent out to all Schools before Easter. Entry fees, which have not risen during the past two years and were reduced by some 30% in 2005, will rise by about 5%.

The match conditions of the Marling will be revised this year to (as far as is possible) eliminate the possibility of ties. Competitors will now engage targets at 100, 200 and 300 yards, with differential scoring at each distance. The Schools Committee had also agreed that the presentation of Schools Hundred badges should be revised to ensure that members from the same school could be photographed together, and should therefore be in the same row of 25 rather than in strict order of merit.

It is likely that both the Schools Meeting and the Inter-Service Cadet Rifle Meeting will be shot using private back sights, rather than the issued MoD back sight.

Further details will be given in the letter to schools which will be sent out before Easter.

Schools Veterans

The Schools Veterans team match will be shot at 500 yards commencing at 17:15. The fact that the Ashburton 500 yards is being fired after lunch, from 13:15 to 14:50, should allow Old Boys time to visit their old School team in the final stages of this match, and still allow time for practice from 16:00 to 16:45 for the Schools Veterans match

Match Rifle

No overseas MR teams will be competing in the Imperial Meeting this year. The Any Rifle Extras, shot at 1000, 1100 and 1200 yards, will be shot on Pre-Friday, and the Any Rifle 1200 yards competition will be shot on First Thursday after the Humphry.

Match Rifle competitors shooting prone are reminded that the use of a rest is restricted to supporting the hand or forearm. Para 244 specifically prohibits any contact whatsoever between the rifle and the rest. Competitors using slings need to take particular care to ensure that the sling attachment and handstop are at all times clear of any part of the rest. RCOs will be paying attention to compliance with this requirement during the Match Rifle competitions.

In the Hopton MR Aggregate Sierra bullets will no longer be awarded to the top ten competitors in Classes O and T.

It will again be possible to enter the MR Meeting in F Class, shooting alongside the Hopton competitions for medals (Prize List D) only. The appropriate box on the entry form should be completed accordingly.

McQueen Competition

No changes are proposed for this match this year.

Gallery Rifle and Muzzle Loading Pistol

Some significant changes to the programme of this meeting are proposed for this year. It is planned that the traditional events will be shot on the left hand three bays on Melville, while additional gallery rifle events, similar to those shot during the GRAW Meetings, will be shot on the other two bays. An additional 1500 Match will be shot on Middle Sunday. Entry forms will shortly be available from the Range Office (ext 152) or the Assistant Director of Shooting (ext 148).

Prize Lists

As from this year all prize lists will be produced in CD format rather than as a printed book. This will considerably reduce the time taken to produce these lists and to post out to competitors. All competitors in the Grand Aggregate or the Hopton Match Rifle Aggregate, and all Schools competing in the Ashburton, will receive a complete Prize List CD. This cost is reflected in the entry fees. The CD

will be sent out to all qualified competitors after the Imperial Meeting. CDs will be available at a cost of £5.00 to Club Secretaries and those not eligible for a free copy.

Medals and Bars

Over the years a number of competitors have made a point of returning their medals and bars saying that they do not want them. Rather than waste staff time and resources in preparing and posting out medals and bars, only to have them returned, all competitors are required to complete the appropriate box on the entry form if they wish their medals and bars sent to them along with their Prize List CD.

Sponsorship

There are still many competitions which are not sponsored, and you are invited to consider whether any firms, companies or individuals you know might like to sponsor, or present a trophy for, a competition in the Imperial Meeting. Full details of the advantages for sponsoring firms are available from the Director of Shooting.

Range Conducting Officers (RCOs)

There is a continuing annual requirement to augment our Imperial Meeting RCOs, particularly this year. The Imperial Meeting cannot be run without competent RCOs, and I invite those of you who would like to be considered for this important position to contact me as soon as possible.

Ammunition

Prices

The purchase price of RG ammunition has risen in the last three years by nearly 2p per round, but the NSC passed only 1p on to the customer. This is clearly uneconomic and I regret that we will have to increase the price of ammunition by 1p per round with effect from 1 April 2007. The pricing structure for 2007 will therefore be as follows:

for orders from 1 to 4999	46p per round;
for orders from 5000 to 12999	45p per round;
for orders from 13000 to 19999	44p per round;
for orders of 20000 and over	43p per round.

The NRA will again agree to store large quantities of ammunition purchased by clubs, free of charge, for up to six months. It may be drawn off, by prior arrangement, in lots of not less than 2000 rounds.

It is, however, required that the normal credit terms be met, ie payment within 30 days from the date of invoice. If the invoiced (discounted) price is not paid within normal terms then a supplementary invoice will be raised equal to the amount of discount. Please contact Fred James in the Armoury on extension 134 for further details.

Ammunition for County Open Meetings

It has again been agreed that, as an exception to the prices shown above, all 7.62mm RG 155 grain ammunition (of whatever quantity) bought for use at County Open Meetings only (**not for resale** outside the County Meeting) will be priced at 43p per round, ie with the maximum discount possible. Any ammunition remaining unused after the Meeting may be returned for a full refund, and should **not** be retained for resale. County Secretaries should contact the Armourer for further details.

Ranges

Bisley Range Regulations

The 2007 Range Regulations have now been published. The number of shooting seasons has been reduced from three to two, Low and High, but during March the weekend hours will be increased by 30 minutes. In order to try to encourage more people to become markers, marker fees have been raised from £45 to £50 on weekdays and Saturdays, and to £55 on Sundays. All other range hire prices have been increased by approx 5%. Copies of the Range Regulations are available from the Range Office on request.

Electronic Targets

These targets are becoming steadily more popular, and with fewer perceived glitches (most of which have been due to the unfamiliarity of the users with the new system). Their great advantage is that they are available 'on the spot' without the requirement to book a marker in advance. At present the targets simply replicate the current manual system, requiring a scorecard and a score sheet. Printouts can be requested by radioing the Range Office and asking this to be made at the end of a shoot. In due course it is planned to enable an operator printed record of any particular shoot. You are encouraged to try out these targets which are available at all distances on Century and Stickledown.

Reverse Echelon Shooting on Century

To optimise the use of Century Range reverse echelon shooting (ie longer distances on the left hand side and shorter distances on the right hand side) will again be used on the second and fourth weekends of each month. The Range Office will make special arrangements to ensure that all firers are aware of the reverse echelon shooting on these weekends.

Range Radios

Some range radios have not been returned to the Range Office on the conclusion of shooting. It is possible that these have been inadvertently taken off camp in a shooting box, a jacket pocket or the boot of a car. Those who have acted as RCOs and have handled the radios recently are requested to search for and return any radio found. Your assistance would be much appreciated.

Firing Points

Despite previous requests in this NRA Journal, and specific notices in the Range Office asking for defects to be reported, no defects in the firing points have been reported. I have therefore been unable to put any remedial work in place. It is intended that simple Defect Report Cards will be available in the Range Office, where they may be completed and handed in to the staff. These cards will also be issued at major meetings, such as the English VIII, the Inter-Counties etc on which competitors may report any perceived defects on particular firing points. Please help us to help you and report defects.

Vehicles on Ranges

All range users are subject to the normal regulations regarding taking vehicles on to ranges, eg no vehicle forward of the 1000 yards firing point on Stickledown and no vehicles on Century. Specific 'Vehicle on Range' passes may be issued to staff or physically handicapped shooters. These rules are usually relaxed on team match days but it was noted last year that some teams and schools had taken undue advantage of this relaxation. The Shooting Committee have decided that, where necessary, the Chief Range Officer may enforce the Standing Orders concerning vehicles and trailers on ranges.

Butt Markers

Shooting organisers **are again advised to make their own arrangements for butt markers** if they can since the National Shooting Centre is unable to guarantee the availability of markers, at any time, for a variety of reasons. The strict observation of the employment law for children by the National Shooting Centre and the general shortage of casual workers seeking employment at Bisley Ranges are making the task of finding a full complement of markers an increasingly difficult task. Sunday poses the greatest problem since anyone under the age of sixteen may only work for two hours and not later than 11:00.

These problems have been highlighted in past years but few shooting organisations appear to have made their own arrangements. When there is a shortfall of markers the Range Office staff have to prioritise where those markers present will mark. This is usually done in the following order: (1) Stickledown Range, (2) large competitions, (3) the longer distances down to shorter ones on Century and finally (4) Short Siberia.

Complaints about the standard of marking should be made, in the first instance, to the Butt Supervisor over the radio. The Butt Supervisor will then stand in the vicinity of the marker in question and will keep an eye on him or her. If the problem is not rectified the firer should speak to Control (the Range Office) on the Control channel (Channel 8 or 16 depending on the type of radio issued), highlighting the problem. Disciplinary action will be taken where necessary.

It does help to build up a rapport with your marker. Tell the marker the name of your club and find out their name. Tell them the course of fire and stand them down where possible, even if for only a couple of minutes. If they have done a good job tell them so, and particularly good service might be rewarded with a small tip.

Please remember that whereas your shooting organisation may only need to find one or two markers, the Range Office have to find more than one hundred every week in high season! It would therefore be extremely helpful to everyone concerned, if you could assist by arranging even a few of your own markers.

Shooting Matters

Magnifying (Eagle Eye) Foresights

There have been approximately 170 responses to the article by Dr Paul Monaghan in the Winter 2006 Journal, the majority seeming to agree with the idea of allowing Eagle Eyes (but not with a lens in the backsight) for those with proven visual defects. The idea of allowing an automatic dispensation for those over 60 (or any other specific age) has, however, broadly not found favour.

In view of the relatively small number of responses you are requested to dig out the Winter Journal, re-read the article and then let us have your views on the matter. It is considerably more important, particularly in view of the ICFRA involvement, to get the 'right' answer rather than to get a 'quick' answer. The final proposal, as moderated by you, the readers, will be put to the ICFRA Council at their meeting in Canada in August.

Match Conditions

All shooters, particularly Club Secretaries, are reminded that the rules and match conditions of all meetings, in all disciplines, have to be approved by the Shooting Committee on behalf of the Council. This is to ensure that safety is not compromised. In practice this means that standard match conditions,

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such as are contained in the Bisley Bible, the Gallery Rifle Rules, the Phoenix Meeting etc have already been approved. Any Club considering shooting any match which might be considered in any way out of the ordinary, should first seek advice from the Director of Shooting.

Civilian Service Rifle Meetings

The programme of Civilian Service Rifle meetings has continued, with competitions being held in November and December 2006, and in January and February 2007. A further meeting will be held on 17 and 18 March. The competitions shot are many and varied, including rapids, timed fire, snap shooting and fire with movement in the prone, kneeling, sitting and standing positions at all ranges from 100 yards back to 500 yards. The most recent innovation is a FIBUA match which is shot on Butt Zero on Stickledown from 100 yards down to 25 yards. Entry forms are on the NRA website and entries may be made by post, fax, e-mail or telephone.

Attendance Records

You are reminded that in the Range Office we have the self-service system for recording your attendance and the use of your firearms on a computer. You will have your own PIN that enables you to log your firearms activity. The system has been developed in conjunction with the Surrey Firearms Licensing Officer following the Home Office guidelines.

The Range Office staff will be on hand to assist you if you need guidance. An important point to remember is that when your personal record is opened it is **that date** which is automatically entered on to the

attendance record **so no retrospective records can be entered.** *You must log your attendance on the day you use your firearms.* You are encouraged to record the use of all your firearms to justify their continued possession.

The 2007 Ages Match

Many members of those teams which competed in the 2004, 2005 and 2006 Ages Matches at the end of October again confirmed that they had enjoyed them so much they wished that one could be held every year. They particularly commented very favourably on the amazing fireworks display and the buffet dinners and disco which followed, and said that it was an excellent end of season weekend when they could enjoy a fun shoot.

It has therefore been agreed to hold an Ages Match over the weekend 27 and 28 October 2007, and to follow the same broad programme as last year. The team size may remain at 12, though teams of eight are being considered since this might allow two teams from the same age group. Further details will be given in the Summer Journal, but please note this weekend in your diary now.

Marksman's Calendar

A revised and updated Marksman's Calendar is enclosed with this Journal. Please read this carefully and note any amendments. If any subsequent corrections are required, or new events are added, please inform Karen Robertson by e-mail at karen@nra.org.uk as soon as possible. Any amendments will be published in the Summer Journal. The full Marksman's Calendar is available on the NRA website.

WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS AT BISLEY

NOW AVAILABLE AT THE NRA OFFICES!

PRICES:

ALL YEAR ACCESS: £20.00

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WEEKEND ACCESS (FRIDAY TO MONDAY): £5.00 PER WEEKEND

SEE THE NRA WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS

WWW.NRA.ORG.UK

Please note that weekend access must be booked at least a week in advance to allow staff adequate time to add your computer details to the wireless system. Imperial Meeting access can be booked at any time prior to or during the Meeting. Further details are available from Karen Robertson or Heather Webb at the NRA.

NOTES FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BISLEY



by
Jeremy
Staples

Chairman of the NSC

After over four years as Chairman of the Board of NSC, Charles Oliver Bellasis has stood down from the position but will continue to serve as a Director on the NSC Board. I should like to offer my personal thanks to Charles for his help, support and advice over the past four years. I am sure all members of the NRA would also wish to pass on their thanks for the time and effort he has put in.

Simon Dixon will be taking over as the Chairman of the Board of NSC.

Electronic targets

These are now working extremely well; new software updates are expected within the next two to three weeks. Members who have tried out these targets are, for the most part, very pleased with the results. As a result of the increase in shooting mid-week, we

are able to reduce the price of the electronic targets as follows:

High Season

Weekdays	am	£60.00	Weekends	am	£67.50
	pm	£50.00		pm	£67.50

Range Office Targets

These are available at short notice during the week and most weekends. Those on Century can be booked at very short notice but for the most part we do need 24 hours notice on Stickledown. The cost is only £10 per hour per person. To book please contact the Range Office on 01483 797777 ext 152.

NRA Open Day

The next Open Day is on Saturday 5 May 2007. We are once again looking for members to volunteer their services to help coach and act as support staff on the day. We are expecting in excess of 1200 people. If you are able to help please contact Sarah Bunch on 01483 799609 or e-mail commdir@nra.org.uk.

Site Security

We have installed CCTV cameras at the entrance of the estate and will be looking to extend the coverage within the next twelve months.

We have had to organise professional site security staff for the Imperial Meeting; there will be security at the entrance to the estate during the evenings and a roving security patrol.

Staff

We are very sorry to lose Sally Philcox as the Shooting Division Secretary and she has now been replaced by Sally Agnew. In addition we welcome Andrew Pearse to the Target Shed staff, Jane Williams as part time receptionist at the NCSC and Chris Scott to help on the ground staff at the NCSC.

Erin

The NRA has recently taken back this property and is now offering it to members on a full repairing and insuring lease on a term of up to 21 years. We are looking for expressions of interest from individuals by 10 April by which time we will be in a position to provide an information pack containing the proposed Heads of Terms together with a copy of the draft lease of the property.

The property is a two bedroom bungalow together with a lounge, kitchen, bathroom and separate WC.

It is recognised that the property is in some need of modernising (ie it needs a new kitchen and bathroom) and we are prepared to offer a rent free period totalling £1500 to the incoming tenants to allow them to fit a new kitchen and bathroom and put the building on a full repairing and insuring basis. Occupation will be from 1 May 2007. Any expressions of interest should be sent to Jeremy Staples in writing by noon on Tuesday 10 April 2007.



NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF TRAINING



*by
Phyllis
Farnan*

This year promises to be a busy year; training has already started and a number of courses are under way both at Bisley and in the regions.

RCO Courses

In response to requests from students and assessors, the RCO Courses at Bisley will now be run as a full weekend instead of a one day course and the separate instructional day will no longer be offered. The next course will take place at Bisley on 10 and 11 March.

A regional RCO Course will be held in Northern Ireland on 24 and 25 March and a regional RCO Course is also planned for Scotland in the spring (date tba).

Any club wishing to book a regional RCO Course for their members is asked to contact Maureen Peach to make the necessary arrangements.

Course fees for 2007 are:

Bisley Course £100; Regional Course £50

Dates for the Bisley RCO Courses for the remainder of 2007 are shown in the summary below.

Renewal of RCO Qualifications

All RCOs who qualified in 2001 will be due to renew their qualification during this year. A renewal form detailing the documentation required is available on request. The renewal fee is £25. All documentation together with the renewal fee should be marked for the attention of Maureen Peach. Please allow three to four weeks.

RCO Assessors

Twenty-two NRA RCO Assessors attended a training day at Bisley on 27 January. Any assessor who was not able to update their teaching presentation is asked to return their memory stick to the Training Department as soon as possible.

An RCO Assessors Course will be held on 21 and 22 April and applications are invited from RCOs with

good teaching or instructional skills and at least five years' experience of running ranges who would like to become NRA RCO Assessors.

Probationary Members Courses

The first course for 2007 is underway and a second course will start on 24 March. Details of Probationary Courses for the remainder of 2007 are shown in the summary below. Applications for probationary membership should be sent to the Membership Department; once the documentation has been completed, probationers will be offered a place on the next available course.

Skills Courses

Cadet Skills Courses were held at the National Shooting Centre, during the February half-term holiday for twenty-seven cadets from CCF and open cadet units. A number of regional Skills Courses for cadets will also be run during the Easter Holidays.

The next Skills Course for members of the NRA and its affiliated clubs will be run on the weekend 17 and 18 March at Bisley. This course is for less experienced shooters and those who have recently completed the Probationary course. The course fee is £120 for NRA members and £140 for non-members of NRA.

Club Instructors Course

Eleven cadet force adults successfully completed a Club Instructors Course held at the National Shooting Centre in February and a number of regional courses are planned for later in the spring.

The next weekend course for NRA members and members of affiliated clubs will take place at Bisley on 17 and 18 March. The course fee is £120 for NRA members and £140 for non-members of the NRA.

NRA Club Coach Course

Five cadet force adults successfully completed a Club Coach Course at Bisley in February.

The next Club Coach Course will be held on 6 and 7 October. Applicants must be individual members of the NRA and should have previously completed the NRA Club Instructor Course. The course fee is £120.

Wind Coach Course

A wind coaching course will take place on 23 and 24 June this year. The course will run on the Saturday evening (18:00 to 20:00) and all day Sunday.

A short half-day Wind Coach Course will take place as usual on First Friday for the benefit of those attending the Imperial Meeting; details will be given in competitors' squadding card envelopes.

For further information and application forms for all NRA courses please contact the Director of Training on 01483 797777 ext 150, or e-mail training@nra.org.uk.

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| 510 iris only | £45 | 568 iris, 48 cols, twin pols. | £149 |
| 550 iris, twin polarisers | £82 | 530 iris, 1.5x, -4.5 to +4.5 | £109 |
| 566 iris, six colours | £85 | 570 iris, 1.5x, 6 cols | £135 |
| 565 iris, 6 cols, twin pols. | £110 | 575 iris, 1.5x, 6 cols, twin pols. | £159 |



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Timetable for Courses at Bisley for the remainder of 2007

Probationary Courses

Course 2007/3 begins 2 June

Course 2007/4 begins 1 September

Course 2007/5 begins 13 October

Course 2007/6 begins 17 November

RCO Courses (weekend)

19 and 20 May

29 and 30 September

3 and 4 November

TR Skills & Club Instructor Courses (weekend)

10 and 11 November

Club Coach Course (weekend)

6 and 7 October

Wind Coaching Courses

23 and 24 June

20 July (short course)

Dates for NRA courses at Bisley are also shown on the NRA website at www.nra.org.uk.



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Membership available in this friendly and lively club, including lockers in the new armoury. The club offers the finest quality catering facilities at very reasonable prices at weekends throughout the season and during the main Bisley meetings. We can also cater for club meetings, dinners and special functions. Regular club team shooting matches throughout the season.

Full membership for 2007 season £60.00

Junior (in full time education) £30.00

Locker rental for 2007 £50.00

(plus refundable key deposit of £20.00)

For further details please contact:

Mick Barr 01438 811451

John Saunders 01276 502476

John Gardener 01483 289233

or call into the Clubhouse.

NRA AUNTS AND UNCLES SCHEME - CHANGES FOR 2007

The organisation of this scheme in 2007 will fall into line with the ongoing modernising of the Imperial Meeting Entry Form.

There will be a box on the Entry Form, both the online and the paper versions, where any TR or F Class competitor, young or old, can place a tick if he or she wishes to have someone to turn to for help and advice. Such help or advice, as I think you know, is offered by highly skilled and experienced volunteer firers and, most particularly, is free!

I have in the past personally contacted all who are competing for the first time at Bisley and e-mailed every school with pupils who will be taking part. From now on and using e-mail, I will receive from the NRA the details of all individuals – and I hope that there will be many – who tick that box. This will save me writing a host of unnecessary letters and e-mails and, as a bonus, greatly speed up the whole process. It will also save the NRA a lot of work.

Some schools, in particular, have developed the routine of sending me specific requests; please continue to do so. My contact details are given below (they have not changed).

So, to clarify: if you would like an Aunt or Uncle, please just tick the relevant box. Do also feel free to e-mail me any special request you might have, such as wanting an Aunt or someone from, say, Essex.

Tim Elliott

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

Tel: 01234 740334.

E-mail: tje@easynet.co.uk

SHOOTING DISCIPLINE MATTERS

Christmas Fun for the Gallery Rifle Range Crews

by Andy Lowe

Despite the miserable weather that had passed earlier in the week, Saturday 2 December was a fine, still day – just right for a bit of fun shooting. Butt 0 was wet under foot but a good pair of boots provided appropriate protection from the mud and water.

The jolly band of 38 shooters started to gather for a shoot with a difference. Brian Thomas had spent the year organising gallery rifle competitions but to make these work he needed a band of willing and able range staff. Times are hard so we got roped in instead! This day was a thank you from Brian to the volunteers that make the gallery rifle competitions happen.

The shooting was unlimited re-entry for as many times as you wanted to pay for at four courses of fire for individuals; log chop, Christmas puddings, bobbing turkey and speed steels and a team log chop event.

The bobbing turkey was the best fun I have seen on a range for a long time. The target was mounted on the Bianchi mover system. The turkey was on a pivot and as the trolley moved across the range, a pole sticking out from the pivoted turkey would catch on the rail supports and make the turkey lurch in an unpredictable manner. The scoring areas were designed to tempt shots at high value scorings rings, which were more likely to disappear as the bird gyrated. The winner concentrated on the lower scoring areas, which were more likely still to be there when the bullet hit. Well done Gaynor who won the free entry to the Autumn Action Weekend.

At the same time the Blue Team had set up a demonstration shotgun layout. This consisted of a number of different types of reactive targets. I had the opportunity to see some of these being shot and my favourite was the target that fell backwards when it was hit and in the process launched a standard clay a few feet into the air as a secondary target. I am looking

forward to the NRA adding this to its competition repertoire.

After shooting had finished we had time for a rest before gathering at the Artists clubhouse for the Thank You ROs part of the evening. Unlike some of the NRA's other competitions where markers and ROs get paid for their time, gallery rifle range staff are unpaid. In recognition of this fact Brian Thomas had organised a social for us - depending on how many shoots you had helped at governed how much of your dinner you got for free. If you had volunteered for all four shoots during the year you ate for free. Three shoots got you three quarters of a meal and you paid for the other quarter, and so on. Accommodation was also provided at a discount. Having rested/washed/had a few beers we gathered at the Artists for a few more beers. Prizes were on offer for those that donned the best seasonal costume. Jane, Brian and John seemed to have cornered the market in Santa outfits.

After dinner came the prize giving. Brian and Jane had organised a lengthy list for the winners but it was made clear that each competitor could only take home one prize. So those that won additional prizes had to choose between keeping the one they already had or swapping it for the latest one on offer. The "spare" prize then moved down the score sheet until it arrived with somebody who had not yet won a prize. Audience participation on the lines of "stick" and "swap" was in much evidence and the process gave rise to much hilarity but then I suppose that is the effect that Christmas spirit has on revellers. After prizes there seemed to be an outbreak of testosterone (even amongst the ladies) when various feats of endurance were attempted which reminded me of the TV programme where Japanese presenters practise torture on gullible members of the public. I stayed in my seat.



Even Santa helped out with the shoot.



Christine and Mandy getting in the mood.

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Win a John Rolfe specially commissioned Phoenix print in the free Tenth Anniversary Aggregate. To qualify all you need to do is enter the Timed and Precision One, Multi Target and Advancing Target in either GRSB or GRCF discipline.

On the evening of Saturday 26 May, the Phoenix Tenth Anniversary Party will be held at the Lord Roberts Centre. Tickets (including food and drink) will be free to all meeting staff and a limited number will be available to buy at Reception. These will be on a strictly first-come, first-served basis so book in early and join the celebrations.

Enter online now via the websites

www.nra.org.uk

www.nsc-bisley.co.uk

or contact us for an entry form

As the evening wore on those of us that needed sleep went to bed leaving those well practised in the consumption of the European Port Lake to carry on their good work.

If you think that this sounds like jolly good fun and you want to join in, you can. Your best bet is to help with the gallery rifle shoots, which will get your name on the invitation list. And if you are not sure that you will be available, the next ROs shoot is booked for Saturday 1 December 2007.

I for one left Bisley a very happy man. As a result of my efforts at the individual log chop I won the free entry to the Spring Action Weekend. I am making a list of all the events I am going to enter. If I start next week I should be finished by the end of June!



Brian, Jane and John. Santa's little helpers?

Classics

by Rae Wills

This article is a ragbag of bits and pieces. For the first item on the agenda, I still need help, and I am repeating my request made in the last edition. To explain to any new readers, for the past few years we have hosted the NRA Percussion Revolver Championship as part of the Imperial Historic Arms Meeting. Although it attracts relatively few entrants, they are the best, and it is a challenging series of practices, requiring weak hand shooting, snap shooting skills, and those of precision slow fire. To enable these competitors to enter more of the events during the Meeting, it was suggested it might take place at some other time, perhaps even as part of another event. However, at the present time no alternative has been found as initial suggestions proved impossible. One possibility might be to see if it could be held on the afternoon of the Friday before but that very much depends on range space and whether all (including a dedicated team of scorers and ROs) can come early to the Meeting. So if anyone has any ideas for this Championship, do let me know.

It is now a distant memory back to the Trafalgar Meeting, but my usual thanks to those who take on the burden of running the event, leaving me free actually to do some shooting. At this distance of time I cannot remember much, except I think I was lucky dodging the worst showers. In fact, I had a very successful Meeting, including one personal best, so if it had poured all day and I had only a bag of crisps for dinner, I do not suppose I should have noticed. My problem is how to do as well next time!

A whole year ago, I mentioned that a review of targets permitted at Bisley was being undertaken. A final recommendation from the working party is now on its way to the Trustees. My thanks to all who helped me, not the least David Clark for publishing his illustrated book on Historic Targets at just the right time.

Roger Cook, the secretary of FESAC, is now living in France but remains the UK representative. If anyone needs to contact him whilst he gets settled in they can do so through the HBSA or me. FESAC does sterling work dealing with proposals that come from Brussels; the most recent example was seeing that, as far as possible, a proposed EEC definition of an antique firearm did not cause problems for us.

I know many of you regularly shoot on the continent and quite a few have firearms at Belgian Clubs; unfortunately the Belgian Government caught a very bad case of the knee jerks after a shooting and, as a result, has passed, in great haste, a new law requiring much stricter regimes and practically everything needing registration.

The Police in one region misread the new law and seized all firearms at the clubs in their area. At present, it is all a bit of a mess and challenges by shooters are now going through the courts. If you have any problems as a result, we can put you in touch, through FESAC, with the local representative. The fact that Roger Cook speaks fluent French is a bonus as I know the Belgian concerned does not speak much English.

Changing topics to happier things, I know quite a few of you are interested in old and long-closed ranges, and whilst undertaking recent research, or more correctly doing anything rather than getting down to writing this, I found MoD Lands have published copies of quite a few of the relevant old byelaws on the internet. Most do not have plans, but often list landmarks enough to work out the layout.

www.defence-estates.mod.uk/byelaws/Internet/Intro.html

I have just been through the trauma of my FAC renewal, and although it took a long time to get the

paperwork together, it was relatively straightforward. One problem is finding one referee who knows you well enough but is not a member of one of your clubs! I also feel using the same report form for the shooting and non-shooting referees puts questions that may be inappropriate, such as a non-shooter commenting on safety.

I can imagine different replies concerning the same thing . . .

Non-shooter “ . . . but as regards safety I am concerned he is always clicking and clacking with the mechanism every time he touches a gun.”

Shooter “He is always meticulous with safety, and without fail always carries out normal safety precautions every time he touches a firearm.”

I am sure my local Firearms Officer can draw the right conclusion, but can they all?

Sporting Rifle - Running Deer in the Imperial Meeting

by RJ Maddison, National Coach, Running Deer



The Sporting Rifle Ranges at Bisley.

Running Deer, shot at 100 metres with a centre fire rifle, is one of the oldest events in the NRA's programme. Currently it is managed by the British Sporting Rifle Club (BSRC) on behalf of the NRA which is the National Governing Body. Internationally, it is the responsibility of the Nordic Shooting Region which defines the rules under which competitions take place.

Over the years the BSRC has completed many improvements to the Sporting Rifle Complex which now includes two 50 metres Running Boar ranges (.22 LR), both of which use electronic scoring targets. The Running Deer Range at Bisley is also electronic. Although the target is still the traditional pair of Red Deer, scoring is now done by the computer with shot location and value displayed on the monitor screen rather than using the traditional 'clock'. This has come a long way from the primitive target system used by Walter Winans a century ago. As a result of these, and other improvements, the Sporting Rifle Complex is fully occupied every weekend during the year, and on many weekdays too.

The British Running Deer Championship

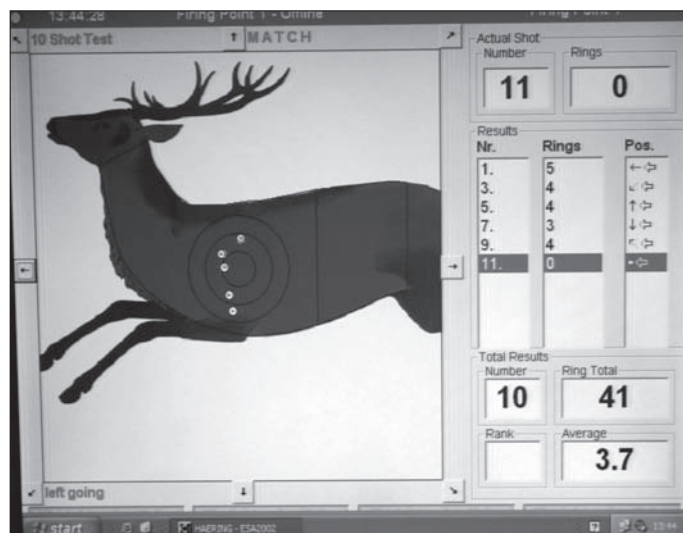
This is held each year over the middle weekend of the Imperial Meeting. The full Nordic course of fire is shot, which is from the unsupported standing position, without the use of a sling. There are two

events: the Running Deer Singles during which one shot is fired on each run of the target, and the Doubles in which two shots are fired. With a manual reload during the 4.3 seconds crossing time, the Doubles is very demanding. The aggregate of the first series of Singles and the first series of Doubles are used for the British Running Deer Championship Aggregate. Because each series takes about 11 - 12 minutes (Doubles a little less), range capacity is necessarily limited to about 24 competitors.

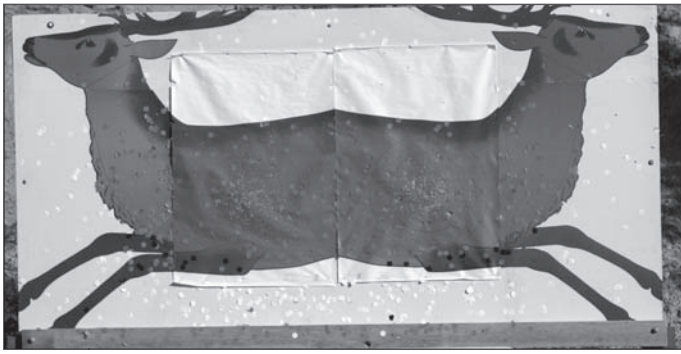
Although, as a British Championship, entries are open to all, most come from the BSRC who shoot this event during all their match and less formal range days throughout the year. The 5, 4 and 3 rings are 150 mm, 300 mm and 450 mm diameter respectively. Nevertheless, this very demanding event is not for the inexperienced!

The Running Deer Unlimiteds

The BSRC has a long history of introducing newcomers to the sport. As part of every major Championship they have gone out of their way to allow other shooters a chance to sample the delights of shooting at moving targets. At one time this was in the form of the supplementary Sweepstakes competition, in which the leading scorers received a share of the pot.



This is what the competitor sees on the monitor.



A well shot Running Deer target.

Inevitably it was the experienced shooters who took the spoils. A few years ago the format was changed, along with the name to Unlimiteds.

This is held on First Thursday and Friday and Second Monday and Tuesday during the Imperial Meeting. The course of fire is for two sighting shots followed by ten shots to count (HPS = 50) on the Häring electronic scoring target. Just as the name implies, this is a “pay and shoot” event, open to all NRA members and members of affiliated clubs. Suitable sporting rifles (.308 and .223) are available for those who own only a target rifle, along with ammunition at cost. Although for many this will be a fun shoot - the opportunity to try something different - for competitors entered for the Running Deer Championship it is an opportunity for some last minute practice. The NRA presents a gold medal for the best aggregate of two series in each week. Thus, the Monday and Tuesday are sometimes used as a compensation shoot for those whose scores in the Championship were disappointing!

The attraction of the Unlimiteds to the less experienced shooters is that each series is shot with an own start handicap. Entrants simply estimate how well they might shoot and then choose a handicap that will bring that score up to 50. Anyone who makes a handicapped score of 50 gets his entry fee back and can go away in the knowledge that he scored a possible. Although this is biased in favour of the better shooters (who can more easily estimate their target score), no one is excluded from winning a cash prize.



Shooting the Standing Boar.

The Standing Boar Unlimiteds

This was introduced on a trial basis in 2004 using the Sius Ascor electronic scoring targets installed on the BSRC's 100 yards Statics range. The target is a standing Wild Boar and is shot from the standing position without the benefit of any aids such as a stick, bipod or sling. The course of fire is for ten shots without sighting shots (to simulate conditions in the field), with an HPS of 100. It is a snap shooting competition with four seconds allowed from the command “shoot”, timed by electronic timer. A late shot is scored a miss! With an 8 ring 250 mm (~10 moa) diameter, many competitors seriously over estimate their ability, believing that they cannot fail to score at least 80. They cannot cope with the four second time limit which favours the Running Deer expert.

Just as in the Running Deer Unlimiteds, this is run as an own start handicap competition with rifles and ammunition available if required. It runs over the full weekend (Thursday until Tuesday) in parallel with the Running Deer Championship and Running Deer Unlimiteds.

The Running Deer and Standing Boar Unlimiteds are the opportunity for all taking part in the Imperial Meeting to try their skill at something different. It is also an excellent opportunity to experience shooting on an electronic scoring target. Qualified Club Instructors and Coaches are at hand to help beginners and to ensure safe rifle handling. The Sporting Rifle Complex is located to the left of the Melville Range facing the end of Elcho Road and there is plenty of car parking space. So this year, if you have an hour or so free, why not give it a try? During the Unlimiteds, the ranges are always quietest during the first part of the morning after the range opens for shooting at about 08:30.

Further details and opening times will be posted outside the NRA Offices during the Imperial Meeting.



The Standing Boar target.

NOTES FROM THE REGIONAL MANAGER



by
*Chris
Webb*

Solid Shot and Military Ranges

You may be aware that the NRA is vigorously pursuing the Defence Training Estates (DTE) to allow clubs to use solid shot on DTE Gallery and Barrack ranges. They have agreed to hold a trial, which will be held on Bulford ranges in the near future. Further information will appear in due course.

London 2012

During a recent meeting at Warminster, there was an appeal by the MoD External Affairs to Defence Estates, requesting support for our Olympic Pistol Shooting Team. They are looking at four venues countrywide with acceptable facilities such as ranges, armouries, accommodation etc. The NRA has put forward its own application for consideration as a suitable training venue, as it already has every facility required by potential Olympic athletes.

DTE and Wardens Charges 2007/08

DTE's Range Hire and Wardens charges have been published and a copy is on the NRA website. You will see that the range hire has NOT been increased this year, which is due to pressure from both the NRA and Landmarc! However, Landmarc have increased their charges by 2.3 per cent, which is the national average and considerably less than previous years. Clubs and associations will be receiving renewal paperwork from DTE anytime now.

I have received queries from a number of clubs about warden's charges and why should clubs have to pay for a warden when he is there anyway, doing his normal job. The reason given is that they are Landmarc employees and not just wardens; they can be tasked to do other unrelated jobs anywhere on the DE estate in their region. Therefore, if they are taken off one job to do another, such as range warden duties, someone has to pay! I know that on large range complexes the wardens are wardens and nothing else, but they could be put on other jobs if required.

NRA and Defence Training Estates

Essentially the military will not agree to a blanket acceptance that our RCOs can replace Range Wardens at weekends. However, they do accept that some ranges, reviewed on an individual basis, could potentially be signed over to RCOs, on a weekend basis. I am currently working with DTE to identify the ranges that fall within these criteria to help develop protocols between the DTE Regional Management and interested clubs.

Otmoor Range

In October 2006, the Oxford Rifle Association informed the NRA that Otmoor Ranges had been closed to civilian and police clubs, unless there was a military user present. Earlier there had been an incursion by 'civilians' into the Range Danger Area whilst a civilian club was shooting. This was expertly dealt with by the club involved. However, Otmoor Range operates under Military Byelaws; there is a section of the military publication dealing with civilian and police clubs use which says that civilians cannot use military byelaws to stop unauthorised entry to the danger area. The military authority at Otmoor therefore suspended civilian use until the matter was resolved.

Over the intervening months the NRA made numerous calls to Defence Estates requesting information on behalf of its members. Defence Estates responded promptly and with as much information as they were able to give.

We have now almost achieved our aim to get civilian shooting back on Otmoor. On 4 April, the Defence Land Ranges Safety Committee will convene to endorse the proposal for a revised policy to enable licensed civilian shooting clubs to use the facility regardless of the need for military users to be present.

Membership Committee

As from January 2007, I will be a co-opted member of the Membership Committee representing the interests of the regions. If you have any regional issues concerning any aspect of membership let me know and I will ensure that, if necessary, it is brought to the attention of the committee. You should still contact Membership for routine enquiries in the usual way.

Altcar Open Day

The second North West Open Day will be held on Altcar Ranges on Saturday 7 April 2007 and will be run on similar lines to the Bisley Open Days. David Young, NRA Representative for the North West, and his committee has already done an immense amount of work. Please support this event by advertising it any way you can within your region. If you are thinking of coming along, you can register online by visiting the NRA website or sign up on the day at Altcar. The route will be signposted and there is ample parking at Altcar.

We would like to see similar events in every region. The NRA now has a proven record of accomplishment as far as Open Days go and we are willing and able to provide support and advice to any region that is thinking of holding an Open Day.

National Shooting Week

This government sponsored event, which will take place between 26 May and 3 June 2007, has a number

of aims. Its main aim is to change public opinion towards shooting and firearms by letting anyone try shooting for the first time, allowing the public to try Olympic and Paralympic disciplines and promoting respect for and understanding of legal firearms and airguns. The event will concentrate on target shooting and will not feature live quarry. Further information can be found on the National Shooting Week website at www.nationalshootingweek.co.uk.

REGIONAL MATTERS

Full Shooting Programme in Scotland for 2007

by Tim Kidner

This year there is a full programme of fullbore shooting in Scotland, covering Target Rifle, F Class and Match Rifle disciplines. The structure for Target Rifle and F Class events in Scotland is based on the National level championships organised by the Scottish Rifle Association and the Regional championships organised by the local fullbore clubs. All the National and Regional championships and also club shoots are open to F Class as well as Target Rifle and most of these events now have separate classes for F Class Open and F/TR disciplines. During the year Scotland will also be hosting an American F Class team in April and a New South Wales team in June, both teams coming to shoot on the Blair Atholl range.

The first event of the season is the West of Scotland Championships at Blair Atholl over the weekend of 5 and 6 May, shooting Queens I, II and III stages. The Scottish Championships are at Barry Buddon North range on 8 to 10 June, shooting short range at 400, 500 and 600 metres (but using standard yards targets) and long range at 900 and 1000 yards. During the Championships there is also the Lawrence Trophy Match for Home Country teams of 12 including an F Class match for teams of four, both matches shot at 500 and 600 metres. The next event is the Scottish Long Range Championships at Blair Atholl over the weekend of 23 and 24 June with a full weekend of long range shooting – three 15 round shoots at 900 yards and the same at 1000 yards.

The Invernessshire Championships take place at the Cawdor range, which is between Nairn and Inverness, over the weekend of 11 to 12 August shooting at 300 metres, 500 and 600 yards. The range is in the middle of a forest which used to prevent most of the wind getting onto the range but in recent years a lot of the trees have been cleared which makes it more difficult now to judge the true effect of the wind, mainly because there are no wind flags on the range. The Tullibardine (Tayside) Championships will be on 18 and 19 August at Blair Atholl, shooting Queens I, II and III stages over the two days. The last Regional Championship of the season is the East of Scotland Championships at the Castlelaw range near Edinburgh on 29 September, a single day event shot at 400, 500 and 600 metres.

The Match Rifle events are run by the National Rifle Club of Scotland and shot at Blair Atholl where the shooting distances are actually 987, 1114 and 1233 yards. With the range positioned on the side of a steep valley wind changes have a significant effect on elevation making high scores relatively rare. The Spring Meeting, which is limited to NRC of S members only, is on 26 and 27 May and the Autumn Meeting, which is open to all comers, is on 15 and 16 September.

Anyone interested in taking part in these events will be able to find the contact details for entry forms in the Marksman's Calendar on the NRA website or on the SRA website scottishrifleassociation.org.uk.

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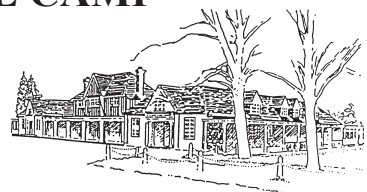
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CORNWALL OPEN TARGET RIFLE AND INTER COUNTIES CHALLENGE AT MILLPOOL RANGE BODMIN ON 26 & 27 AUGUST 2006

by Adrian Pettman

It was a pleasant change to start the 2006 meeting on time without having to wait for the usual hill mist to clear. A total of 53 firers from all over the country quickly settled down and began shooting the first warm up event at 300 yards - the winner here was Andrew Wilde with a cool 50.8, Tony Mitchell following closely on 50.7. There then came a shoot on metric targets, the St Justin Trophy, at the same distance with Rob Shaw making the top spot with 149.8, Paul Charlton runner up on 149.5 and George Cann third with 149.2.

A quick break for lunch and the proceedings moved back to 500 yards for the third competition: the ECC/Imery Group Trophy. Gary Capell put up a 74.12 to win with George Cann close behind with 74.11 and Pete Coley on 74.10.

The last shoot on Saturday (the MWT Trophy at 600 yards) saw a three way tie on 50.8. A tie shoot followed where Rob Shaw surfaced as the winner with Jonathan Cload and Alastair Kinross coming second and third.

The weather remained reasonable for the Sunday shooting. The main event, the Anchorage Marine Plastics Trophy, fifteen shots at 600 and 500 yards, produced a clear winner in Andrew Wilde with a magnificent 150.25. The six man team match based on this event saw Cornwall coming out top with 861.20, with Devon runners up on 840.72.

Lunch followed then a bit of light relief with a ten round rapid fire match at 500 yards, completion time set at two minutes. The Millpool Gallop, as it is known, was taken by George Cann who raced away making a 49.7 with Kelvin Ramsay close on his heels with 49.4.

The final match of the meeting involved the top twenty competitors in the Grand Aggregate shooting in the HRH Duke of Cornwall Cup - this time only

one sighter was allowed with fifteen scoring shots to follow at 600 yards. On this occasion George Gilpin rose to win outright with a superb 75.12 to round off the whole proceedings.

As regards the other individual prizes the Grand Aggregate, the Jobson Rose Bowl, was won with a very convincing 420.46 out of a maximum 425 by Rob Shaw. Dropping only five points over 70 shots including a metric target event is no mean achievement. However Andrew Wilde was only one point behind on 419.45 and Paul Charlton a fraction off with 419.36.

The Harvey Shield, on a par with the main aggregate but limited to Cornwall Rifle Club members only, was taken by Adrian Pettman on 410.30 with Pete Coley coming in second with 408.31 and Martin Gregory third only a whisker short on 408.29.

All the other aggregate results were as follows

E Thomas Construction Trophy (300 & 600 yards)

1	Rob Shaw	99.16
2	Jonathan Cload	99.14
3	Adrian Pettman	99.13

Royal Ordnance Trophy (RG Ammunition)

1	Roy Jobson	310.21
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Cornwall Shield (teams of 4)

1	Team 'Jilly'	1056.72
	(Gilpin, Cload, Ramsay and Rankin)	

Helena Rubenstein (Ladies Grand Aggregate)

1	Jacqui Rankin	413.34
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Dave Lumby Memorial

1	Andy Gent	105.9
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Dickson Pairs

1	Andrew Wilde and Ian Luckman	631.49
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Junior Prize

1	Rob Shaw (Jnr)	384.17
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Adrian Pettman with the Harvey Shield.



Rob Shaw with his trophies.



Winner of the Helena Rubenstein - Jacqui Rankin.

Class F Saturday Aggregate

1	Dave Pickering	553
2	Roger Weeks	550

Class F Grand Aggregate

1	Dave Pickering	467
2	Roger Weeks	450

At the end of Sunday prizes were presented by the Cornwall Rifle Club chairman Terry Kurn. The whole meeting was organised from start to finish by Tony Mitchell to whom we are all very grateful for his hard work in arranging a very successful event. Our thanks also go to his wife Jennifer for providing the refreshments over the two days and to all those competitors who acted as Range Officers. Our Secretary, Mike Hallows, deserves much praise for working tirelessly to give us a stream of computerised results. The cadet butt markers win a round of applause who, under the guidance of their CO Rob Moyle, gave us an excellent service over the two days.

Many thanks of course must go to all our sponsors for contributing handsomely to the prizes. Those involved were Albie Fox who provided many vouchers for sweatshirts, HPS who donated a free bedding service, RPA (Trakker sight), Roy Jobson, Keith Ellett, the NRA, the L&MRA, the City Rifle Club and Norman Clarke.

This annual meeting is probably one of the larger events taking place outside Bisley in the south of England. In spite of the low profile nature of this sport it is pleasing to note that the entry for this competition tends to increase from year to year. While we still have full use of a comparatively large range many shooters find that it is worth while taking full advantage of these facilities as long as they exist.

The 2007 meeting will again be over the August Bank Holiday weekend namely 25 and 26 August. If anyone is interested in taking part please contact Keith Ellett on 01822 614567 or Tony Mitchell on 01288 365459 or e-mail jentomitchell@tiscali.co.uk.

We in Cornwall look forward to seeing as many of you as possible this summer.

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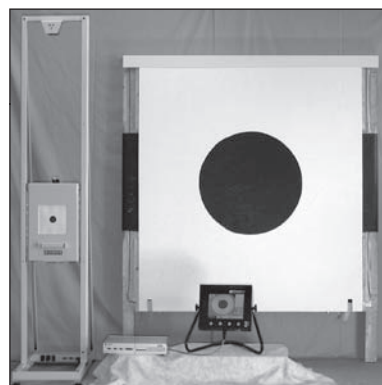
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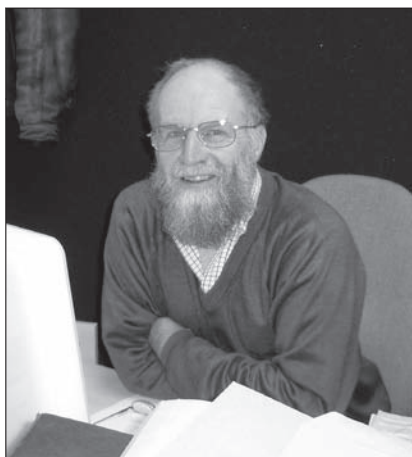
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NOTES FROM THE NRA FIREARMS LIAISON OFFICER

by
Roger
Speak



The Firearms Licensing Offices' new database system

Most of the UK County Firearms Licensing departments are now either online or shortly to go online with the new National Firearms Database (NFLMS), usually known as "Flimsy". The database will allow any Firearms Licensing department to communicate with another and swap data, such as when a firearm is sold from one county into another. Previously, phone calls had to be made or letters sent between counties so that the firearm could be tracked throughout its life. More importantly, police checks can be made throughout the country effectively simultaneously whenever someone applies for or renews a Firearms Certificate. All data is sent to a central system in London to which all the counties will eventually be connected.

The system, once fully up and running, will be very useful and will, in theory, speed up the application and renewal process. However, the stumbling block is usually the county police computer system: the systems tend to be overloaded at the best of times and are thus slowing down the firearms database. As each section of the renewal process is completed, it must be entered on the central system before going on to the next stage.

While your county system is going through the update procedure and the big learning curve which follows, we ask that you do not chase them; each extra phone call to Firearms Licensing will slow down your renewal even further. It really is NOT the fault of the Firearms Licensing department this time if your renewal or query is delayed! If your Firearms Certificate has expired, normally your Firearms Department will allow you to keep your firearms without risk provided that your renewal paperwork was returned in good time before the renewal date, but if you take your firearms when you go shooting, you do so at your own risk, as your Firearms Certificate is not current.

Bogus Firearms Officers

We must warn members to be alert to the increasing threat of people phoning or calling at their house purporting to be Firearms Enquiry Officers or wanting to check on their security arrangements. Such calls have occurred on a number of occasions recently and are causing concern all over the country. If you receive any such calls, shut the door on them, or put the phone down immediately and contact your police Firearms Department. Any Firearms Enquiry Officer wishing to see you will phone first and make an appointment. When they arrive, check their ID and if unsure, contact your local police or dial 999 immediately; if they are genuine, they will happily wait while you do this. If you do get bogus calls, please let NRA Firearms Liaison know as soon as possible, giving us as much detail as possible, so that we can discuss the incident with the relevant police force.

Signing on at the Range Office

The usual reminder to all NRA members: please make sure that the details we hold on the Shooting Database are current, such as your address, the firearms you hold, FAC number and expiry date. Please also ensure that you sign in at the Range Office computer every time you come to Bisley to shoot. The paper forms on the Range Office desktop are not a record of your shooting attendance and details on those forms are not entered on the Range Office computer. It is your responsibility to use the computer! Lack of a traceable computer shooting record can easily jeopardise your Firearms Certificate. If you don't know how to use the computer, Range Office staff are always happy to help.

Long Barrelled Pistols and Section 1 Shotguns

Please be aware of the law on other people handling and shooting your firearms. Whereas you may allow others with your permission to handle and use your small-bore and fullbore rifles, black powder rifles and black powder pistols while with them at the range, if you own long barrelled revolvers and Section 1 Shotguns, you are not allowed under any circumstances to allow anyone else to handle or use those firearms. Only if those particular firearms serial numbers have had a variation included on that other person's Firearms Certificate as well as on yours may they use them. If you need further explanation, please contact NRA Firearms Liaison to discuss.

Contact details

Telephone: 01483 797777 ext 154

E-mail: firearmsliaison@nra.org.uk

Available: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays only

KEEPING YOUR (CASE) HEAD!

A brief look at fullbore rifle handloading safety

by Paul Monaghan

Yes, I handload.

Yes, I know what I am doing.

No I don't need to read this.

Well you could be right, but there just might be an odd factor that you had not thought enough about. Please read on – and if you get to the end and think 'well, I knew all that' then that is as it should be. The (thankfully) rare problems that do occur, however, indicate that not everyone is as careful and knowledgeable as you are.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that when shooting a fullbore rifle we are generating something in the region of 50,000 psi within inches of our face. All will be well from a safety point of view if not from the score on the target, if the rifle action and barrel combination is designed to contain that pressure (modern cartridges should only be fired in modern design firearms) and on firing, the cartridge produces pressures that are not in excess of the design limits.

Factory ammunition is pretty safe in this regard. Ammunition manufacturers are pretty alert to the legal implications of their products causing excess pressure to the point of rupturing cases or even firearms. However, there are plenty of reasons not to use factory ammunition (accuracy, cost and bullet choice come to mind) and a large number of shooters reload their own ammunition. This is a perfectly safe pastime and allows many shooters to get additional pleasure from their shooting. When things go wrong on the range, it is more often than not when something has gone awry with handloads and this is either due to operator error (wrong powder choice, or too much powder, for example) or insufficient understanding of all the variables which contribute to a cartridge generating excess pressure.

Incidents are rare but they do occasionally occur and are dangerous. It is important to learn from these events and this article seeks to cover the main areas where handloads can deviate from the safe norm. It is not exhaustive and is not designed to teach the beginner how to reload. It is more of a reminder to handloaders that what they are doing is safe only if they stay within sensible limits.

Let us assume that the cartridge is to be fired in a rifle with a correctly cut chamber for that particular round; an obvious point, but it is possible to do otherwise. It is even possible with one or two cartridge and chamber combinations to fire the wrong round in the rifle. This is not a good idea. Even in ostensibly standard rifles, barrel dimensions, throat dimensions and neck diameter can all affect pressures produced

on firing; these were comprehensively explored by the Pressure Trials Consortium and reported in 1998. However these are predominantly gunsmithing issues and we are going to concentrate on handloading in this article.

The reloading process starts with a quiet area with no distractions, a pile of components and various tools – including, of course, safety glasses. Firstly, the case. If it is a new case, all should be fine but cases from different manufacturers can have markedly different weights and this translates to different internal volume – the heavier cases will have the smallest volume. Sometimes even different batches from the same manufacturer can have significantly different weights, although this is rare. The smaller case volume will increase the pressure generated on firing. A maximum load in a large volume case may well generate excess pressure if used in a heavier case. Clearly, mixing cases in a batch of ammunition is not a good starting point. Occasionally, military cases may have thick walls and relatively thin brass in the head region. Such cases are best avoided for reloading.

Fired cases should be cleaned, not for prettiness but to allow problems with the brass to be seen. Also, if fired cases are not cleaned soon after firing, the burnt powder and primer residue can cause corrosion to occur, especially in the neck area. This is made much worse if the cases get wet after firing. So there really is no excuse for not cleaning your cases.

If cases are fired in large chambers, the resizing process will 'work' the brass more and it will rapidly lose its flexibility, and splits and cracks will occur. The case is the only thing between you and the rapidly burning powder and it needs to stay in one piece.

Depending on a number of factors (case shoulder angle and reloading technique among other things) the case neck will elongate during each firing and reloading cycle until it is too long to fit into the space allowed for it in the neck part of the chamber. When a round with an over-long neck is chambered, the end of the neck will be forced inwards pressing it tightly round the bullet. In effect you are providing a crimp to the case in the rifle. However this process will stop the neck expanding readily on firing and letting the bullet go. Pressures will rise dramatically until it is sufficient to force the bullet from the grip of the case.

Cases can also elongate at the base, just above the web (which is the thickest region of the brass next to the extraction groove, or rim depending on the case) and this is likely to be caused by excessive headspace in the rifle or over-enthusiastic full-length resizing. Headspace is the term used to define the correct

length of the chamber. In the classical bottle-neck rifle cartridge, it is the length of the gap between the base of the cartridge, or the belt in the case of belted cartridges, and a point on the shoulder. If the chamber is too long or the cartridge is resized too much, then the brass will have to stretch each time on firing and will eventually weaken at the base. This can often be preceded by a bright ring seen around the base of the case just up from the web. If you see this, throw away the whole batch of brass as it is about to let go.



Case showing a split around the base just above the web.

All primers are equal; not so. Although there is the obvious difference between standard and magnum large rifle primers there is also a difference between primers of different manufacturers. Some are definitely 'hotter' than others and this will affect pressure and velocity. There was an interesting experiment to demonstrate this a few years ago by Mik McPherson in the USA. He produced a cartridge case base that could have primers inserted and fired, but the rest of the case was missing. He fired each primer in the dark and photographed the resulting flash, and there were marked differences in the intensity of the flash which he surmised would translate to the rate at which the powder was ignited in a normal load. As ever, this will probably not make a big difference with mild loads but if your loads are nearer the 'hotter' end of the spectrum then a change of primer may well make a notable difference to the result of pulling the trigger. Will it cause catastrophic failure? In itself almost certainly not, but this is as good a place as any to point out that most handloaders do not do any one thing rash enough to blow up a rifle. Problems usually occur when there are a number of factors which in themselves are not extreme but by bad luck or the sheer determination of the handloader to push all the limits, they add together in a concatenation of events resulting in a major problem. A typical example would be everything on the limits under

normal conditions but appearing to be OK and then firing this apparently safe load after the rounds have been left in direct hot sun.

Is there a problem with old brass? Not necessarily, but I have recently seen old (10+ years) factory loaded ammunition that when fired holes appeared in the case allowing gas to escape. It had clearly corroded from the inside and so the problem was invisible until it was too late. Likewise with primers; old primers can pierce when fired. This has happened recently so, the moral really is don't use old components.



Old factory loaded case with split allowing gas to escape on firing.

Propellant: this is where the gremlins have the best chance to get to work. The choice of powders is huge and the burning rates vary enormously. Even different batches of the same powder may vary, so it is wise to check when starting a new batch. No-one deliberately loads pistol powder in a rifle cartridge but it has happened. What it boils down to is if the burning rate and amount of powder loaded into a case are not appropriate for the case capacity, the calibre of the round and the weight of bullet, then things are going to go wrong. Either too much or too little pressure. The only person who should be determining the choice of powder and the load you use (remember it's your head next to the controlled explosion) is you. Information is readily available from the manuals provided by the propellant manufacturers and will give safe starting loads. The place not to go for information is someone on the range who tells you to use x grains of y powder. He may know what he is doing but he may be using much lighter bullets for example. Even worse is the generous person who provides you with some of his handloads. These might (but how do you know?) be fine in his rifle but there is no certainty that they will be OK in yours. I was present some years ago when someone in my club shot the revolver he had purchased from an acquaintance (I hope it was not a friend) who had also kindly provided some loaded

ammunition with the revolver. The first shot blew one of the chambers out of the cylinder.

Most handloaders have more than one choice of powder to hand and it is always recommended to have just one can at a time open on the bench. Common sense, of course, but the possibilities for error are endless. Dumping the remaining powder from the powder measure into the wrong container etc etc. It is also possible to have some of the powder charge from the measure to 'hang' in the measure drop tube so one case gets a short charge whilst the next gets more than its fair share. Recently at Bisley, pulling the bullets from a batch of suspect rounds showed very wide variation in powder charge. The cause was never really identified in this case but the fact is this is not merely speculation - it does happen.

Something to bear in mind when trying the old tub of powder with a bit left from a couple of years ago, is that powder contains moisture and other solvents. Leaving powder open to the air will rapidly change the moisture content and thus its burning rate. If possible, keep powder bottles as full as possible. A near empty bottle risks allowing the powder to dry out into the large air space.

Bullet weight will make a notable difference to pressures generated and if you are trying different bullet weights, make sure the load is appropriate – heavier bullets equals less powder. Bullet seating depth will affect pressures generated. If the bullet is seated into the lands as is common for VLD bullets there will be higher pressures on firing than if the bullet is seated off the lands, and of course a long bullet jump ('freebore') has been used by rifle manufacturers in the past to enable heavier loads to be used without causing excess pressure.

Even bullets of similar weight may behave very differently if the length of the bearing surface (the flat bit on the side of the bullet!) is different. The longer the bearing surface, the more resistance there will be to being engraved by the rifling and therefore the higher the pressure on firing.



Seriously stressed primer pocket

That just about covers the components, but things don't end there. Things can go wrong even with the most knowledgeable and experienced handloader. The illustration shows a case head that has been subjected to monumental pressure. Fortunately this occurred in a modern well-designed action. How did it happen? "Competition coming up, pressure of work - no time to test before-hand, new components etc etc – the usual load should have been fine". Yes, on paper it really should have been, but somehow, things conspired to make sure this was not so and this case was the result.

Handloading can get addictive and the search for the ultimate in accuracy can lead to greater excess up to and including doing your own gunsmithing. This is a good place to point out that whilst the law does not require proof testing of firearms that are not sold to a third party, the NRA strongly recommends that all firearms are proofed before use.

Let's look on the positive side. One of the most important tools you can have on the reloading bench is the bullet puller. They are cheap and quick to use. When in doubt, pull the bullet from the round and check the powder and the load. Another safety aid is a digital scale. There is nothing wrong with a beam balance but a digital scale is so quick to use it is no problem to check weigh rounds if, for example, you suspect you might have given one a double charge. Getting a bit more sophisticated, there are computer programmes (eg QuickLoad) which allow you to assess powder, cartridge and bullet combinations; their predictions of muzzle velocity are pretty good. That suggests that the information they provide on pressures generated within the chamber is going to be reasonably accurate. This can be a great help when starting to load with a new set of components.

This is a very basic look at some of the causes of excess pressure in fullbore rifle handloads and is not meant to insult the knowledgeable reader. As stated at the beginning, the aim is to learn from the problems that do occur and hopefully help to avoid them in the future. The focus is on fullbore rifle handloading as the opportunities for problems are greater. That is not to say gallery rifles firing pistol cartridges and long barrel revolvers cannot have problems. Giving a case a double powder charge is easier with the small volumes of fast pistol powders used when compared with the slower and bulkier rifle powders. Again, less common with fullbore rifles is getting a bullet left in the barrel from a 'primer special' (primer but no powder), the shooter not noticing and then firing again. Makes an interesting shaped barrel!

To sum up, the key elements are simple: know what you are doing and do it carefully. Easy, really.

ERIC MCGIBBON

Talking with Tony de Launay

Mention the name of Eric McGibbon to any member of the Surrey Rifle Association and they will yield a smile. By common consent he is part of the living legend of the Common. I found him beavering away in the NRA Museum alongside Ted Molyneux, among the other antiquities of our sport. We chuntered on for a couple of hours discussing what he described as his personal milestones.

Eric McGibbon was born on 14 October 1926 in Toungoo, Burma. Why Burma? "Because it was where my mother happened to be at the time", was the answer, setting the tone for our discourse. Eric's father was out there pursuing his profession as an economic botanist - "Whatever that was", said Eric. When his parents separated, some 18 months later, his mother and her two sisters went into nursing having moved to Ledo in Assam where his uncle was superintendent of the coalmines.

It was a direct result of this move that saw Eric develop into an all-round sportsman, cricket, football, hockey and shooting being on the childhood agenda. On the shooting front he progressed through Daisy and Diana airguns to a single shot BSA .22, "which made me feel that I was now equipped to go after big game. Fortunately I did not try it at that stage". He first fired a 12 bore at the age of 12.

School was the Catholic St Joseph's College in Darjeeling where "I was neither in the top flight of academia nor Catholicism". Nevertheless, in 1944 he took his School Certificate achieving distinctions in mathematics and mechanics (dynamics and statics) "... levers and pulleys and things. We had to do our exams using a pencil and carbon papers to produce three copies, each of which was posted on different days to the examiners in case the boats on which they travelled for marking were sunk".

His big game bag included an elephant (shot in self-defence), a cattle marauding tiger, and a wild boar that stood 37 inches at the shoulder, had a 39 inches neck and weighed 299lbs. "I also joined the Assam Valley Light Horse Volunteers. We had no horses although I had learned to ride". Eric participated in their annual rifle assessment course for the Sirocco Trophy which required 10 shots deliberate at 300 yards, 10 snapshooting at 200, and a mad rapid at 100 when you fired 5 shots and then reloaded with ten more, all in 60 seconds".

For some reason the planters among the troop consistently produced the winner, always decided on the rapid session – something to do with having time to practice.

Tea planting provided an occupation for the next three years until the arrival of India's independence in 1948.



Eric decided that it was time to move on and on his birthday in that year set sail from Bombay to come down to earth in Purley, Surrey. There he joined the queues for rationed goods and worked at drilling holes for door hinges at Briggs Motor Bodies at Croydon Airport. He moved on to Acc and Tab, which by 1952 had transmuted into ICT and then ICL, itself taken over later by Holrith.

"It was all to do with the manufacture of machinery for making punch-cards. As technology developed the battle was between round or square holes in the cards, the square ones being read more easily by the early computers". Acc and Tab provided the continuity for his shooting, their rifle club welcoming his presence.

From the dizzy technological height of square holes he moved to major heavy engineering at Banbury's in Croydon, first as a fitter and then as part of the maintenance team for the works. By this time two events occurred that were to influence his future. In 1950 he went to lunch with a friend, clutching as his gift his meat ration, as was the social etiquette of the time. His friend's sister, a telephonist at the Admiralty, was also there and quickly a bond was formed. He and Josie were married on a cold January day in 1952 with the reception at the Cafe Royal (Croydon). Their only child, Malcolm, was born in 1953.

He also became acquainted with fullbore rifle shooting, purchasing two .303" P14 rifles at £3 each and two sets of competition sights at £5 each. Some successes followed in 1971 when he tied for the Donegal at 300 yards with 50.10. There were six such scores in the whole of that year's Imperial Meeting, three in the Donegal. He came third in the tie shoot.

By 1969 and the advent of 7.62mm he met George Swenson. "In those days he could supply, fit and proof a new Schulz and Larsen barrel for £13". While he was still at Banbury's, Jeremy Hakim of Swing approached him and asked if he could do some work modifying sights. This he did for nothing in his spare time, only to be surprised when Hakim and John Bellringer appeared one day on his doorstep to present him with a Swing rifle for his efforts.

He and Josie had moved from rented accommodation to a flat in Gonville Road Croydon, buying the freehold after the shock of returning home one day to find a 'For Sale' sign outside. With some prompt intervention and help from his employers in the form of a company sponsored mortgage, this crisis was overcome.

An early diagnosis of cataract problems in his right eye led to a typical McGibbon response. "I developed a periscope for use with my left eye that allowed me to sight down the barrel and avoid some of the problems associated with an out-rigger sight". It worked well.

"By now I had joined the Surrey RA, the English Twenty and the NRA. I had a wonderful seven year spell with Surrey as Adjutant for the county team, winning the King George V Cup five years in a row, the first time this had been done". His captain, Ted Molyneux, presented him with one of his personal winning silver medals inscribed to record the event: only nine medals were awarded to teams at the time.

With the demise of Banbury's, Eric went to work for David Goodall at his chemical works at Lancing in West Sussex. This was followed by a move to work full-time at the Swing works at Tonbridge, alongside Simon Belither. "I called myself an engineer rather than armourer", he said.

Eric also acted as Adjutant to two Kolapore teams, for Walter Magnay in 1979 and Denis Cantlay in 1983. "We set new record scores each time". His reputation as a fettler of rifles reached other ears. In 1991 there started a series of armouring jobs with Colin Cheshire's British teams to the West Indies and Raton USA in 1991, the winning Palma team at Raton in 1992, and the winning Palma team at Trentham New Zealand in 1995. He won his GB colours in matches during the Canadian championships in 1992, on the way to Raton.

More recently he has become one of the most identifiable characters on the firing point, acting as a range officer during the Bisley Imperial Meeting. In 1989 he acquired his spaniel Ben, courtesy of a litter from Peter Medhurst's bitch Zara. The McGibbon caravan had always been something of a haven for passing animals and after christening the carpet Ben became glued to Eric's heels. "He even used to accompany me to the loo".

In 1990 Eric, after 38 years of marriage had to face the loss of his beloved Josie to cancer. In 2002 he lost his son Malcolm who suddenly collapsed and died while working in Germany. There were many fellow shooters who rallied round at these times and he is grateful to all of them. In response to the statutory question he said "Of all the people that I have met it was Josie for whom I had the greatest regard and affection. She supported me come rain, hail or snow and never complained. She even 'told-off' Keith Pilcher once, leaving him speechless".

In 2005 he lost Ben at the ripe old age of two months short of 16 years. There is now no dog to grumble away under the range officer's table.

Eric has ended his activities as an engineer (or armourer), but continues his work for shooting. What he does not know about the exhibits in the museum is probably not worth knowing. The displays of badges, the showcases and the display frames are his work and that of his museum colleagues. Order and shape has been brought to carrier bags full of mementos and the exhibits are in pristine condition.

I left him demonstrating the silken smooth action of a SMLE trench sniping rifle, a fine collection of levers and cables and periscope, with the enthusiasm of the true expert.

Norman Clark

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T REX – TICKING AWAY IN HIS BOX

Spotted with my Eagle Eye

Well, excuse me for being right! I seem to remember some issues ago that I blethered about the Eagle Eye conundrum. It, the conundrum, ran something like this. When is an Eagle Eye foresight plus a lens in the backsight not a telescope? Answer: when it is an Eagle Eye foresight plus a lens in a pair of prescription shooting glasses. “Doh” said Homer (not the great and ancient writer).

I did not understand the difference then because I laboured under the misapprehension that the backsight (or glasses) lens was a prescription lens. It was only when I read the excellent explanation by Paul Monaghan in the last edition that it all became a bit clearer – I think. I now see that it all depends upon the type of the lens and whether or not it is a true prescription lens or something rather more sophisticated.

Even so I am still not sure that I can see why shooting glasses are allowable in conjunction with an Eagle Eye, but a backsight lens is not. It occurs to my addled and aching brain that you might have a variety of lenses in your box to screw into your shooting specs, none of them totally in accord with your reading or normal visual prescription. Enter the sight police. I can see it now. “Could you please read the batch number on the ammo carton at 15 paces, sir?” Response: “Which ammo carton?”

I am infernally grateful to our opthalmic colleagues for proving me right, or not, I think. We need a clear and simple rule.

BBC TV Sports Personality of the Year

What an intriguing little show. New venue, new glitz, same old schmaltz, same old tedium – except if you were winning and then it was fourfold amazing. I have no problem with the winner, because she is a

world champion. Of course people will vote for the partnership of two and four legs, and why should they not?

No, my interest lay in the process. The BBC seem to have taken input from just about every source that they could think of. Their website carried the details of the groups that were consulted to supply their chosen lists of ten people. Stuck in between all these lists was the one from BBC TV viewers.

National dailies, magazines and other journals (such as Nuts and Zoo) were asked to submit their preferred final ten. Their selectorial panels ranged from readership to editorial and journalist choice. Close inspection revealed the name of Mick Gault in just one list. Guess which - that’s it, the BBC TV viewers’ list.

As far as I understand the process, from reading their own website, BBC then filleted the selections by awarding a point for each time a name appeared in the various lists. The final ten were reviewed briefly at the awards ceremony along with other notable candidates. There were mentions of Commonwealth Games successes, but not in the shooting world. True there were passing flashes of Kerwood and Parrish on the background screen, but no out and out commendation.

So, just in case we forget, the home nations accounted for 22% of all the shooting medals and 16% of all the medals won by the home nations in all sports. And Mick established a new individual record for medals won by an England athlete.

And I seem to recall Hazel Irvine was so supportive in her comments at the Melbourne closing ceremony. Funny old world . . .

Predictions for 2007

Having consulted my lump of Jurassic crystal I find more than the usual fog in the future. One thing seems reasonably certain, that at some point we shall find Fuscusaurus in the country’s top cave, untroubled by any populist election.

My water feels that the Monarch’s Prize may just attach to a lady for the third time, or possibly to a younger brother. Aggregatus maximus may go the way of a thrusting youngster. The Palma: just watch out for the USA who are almost on home turf, not that the hosts or Citylimits would wish to hear any such prospect canvassed.

A belated happy New Year

T Rex





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THE E-MAIL PETITION TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, ASKING IT TO RESTORE TARGET PISTOL SHOOTING THROUGHOUT THE UK,

by Richard Malbon, Director, SAGBNI

Target pistol shooting is an Olympic sport and Britain is in the unusual position of hosting the 2012 Olympic Games whilst, at the same time, imposing legal restraints on the pistol shooting events in those Games that would affect all the participants and especially affect the training programmes of the would-be mainland UK competitors. The firearms laws in the UK make it much too difficult for British Subjects to enter the sport of pistol shooting whether or not they aspire to Olympic competition. In an endeavour to rectify this situation and to make some progress in getting the sport of target pistol shooting restored for all throughout the UK, the Sportsman's Association submitted a petition to the Government's e-petition website.

A bit of history:

The Sportsman's Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was formed in September 1996 to campaign specifically in defence of target pistol shooting, which was then seen to be in severe jeopardy following the massacre at Dunblane Primary School, on 13 March 1996, of 16 young schoolchildren and their teacher and the wounding of a further 17 children, to say nothing of the trauma that must have been inflicted on many other people in the area at the time.

The Association was formed because, at that time, it was seen by many pistol shooters that the then existing organisations were either unwilling or were unable to undertake this campaign. As a measure of the depth of feeling that the expected ban of the sport generated, the Association rapidly grew to a membership figure of over 45,000. Most of these were pistol shooters, their families and friends but we did gain some support from other shooting disciplines too.

The massacre itself was tragic but it was also tragic to observe our three main political parties cynically manipulating the occasion to their own electoral advantage, despite having pledged not to do so (the 1997 General Election was then imminent). From my own point of view, politics, and politicians, have rarely sunk so low and they have not recovered since.

The deeply flawed Public Inquiry, under the Chairmanship of Lord Cullen, identified, quite unequivocally, that a major portion of the responsibility for the perpetrator of the murders, Thomas Hamilton, having been granted a Firearm Certificate on 14 February 1977, having it systematically renewed and varied over some 19 years prior to the massacre and therefore being in possession of legally held firearms despite ample evidence to suggest that he was an unfit person under the Firearms Act so to do, lay with the

Central Scotland Police. Needless to say, that was not the most prominent outcome of the Inquiry to be broadcast to the public by the politicians or by the media.

We lost the campaign to defend pistol shooting. All of our massive rallies and marches in London and elsewhere, supported by shooters from other disciplines as well as the pistol shooters, (the SAGBNI can claim to have started the practice of modern day large-scale protest marches and rallies) and all of our lobbying of politicians and attempts to present our side of the story in the media were ignored by the Government back then just as it has subsequently ignored the even larger rallies organised by the Countryside Alliance and by those opposed to British involvement in the war in Iraq.

The lobbying of politicians etc was carried out by the Association at considerable financial expense to our members as, naturally, professional lobbyists have to be paid.

That was a powerful lesson for us all of the ascendancy of political expediency over genuine democratic principles. Our political masters must have known that their proposed ban on the private possession of target pistols would have had no beneficial effect in the fight against crimes of violence but, if they could engineer things so that they were seen to be 'doing something' about gun crime, then they could achieve political capital and so they went ahead with it anyway. Government spokesmen now try to say that the ban was never expected to cut gun crime 'per se' but only to make it impossible for there to be any further massacres by people using legally held pistols. It is important to remember that that was not their theme back in 1997 – remember the Labour Government claim to have 'taken the pistols off the streets'?

Let us also not forget that the sport of target pistol shooting on mainland UK was virtually destroyed by the Tories with their Firearms (Amendment) Act, 1997. That Act raised to Section 5 (ie prohibited status) all 'normal' fullbore target pistols and created an administrative nightmare for police and shooters alike with its provisions for Licensed Small Pistol clubs; .22" calibre pistols would not be raised to Section 5 under the Tory Act but would remain available under Section 1 of the Act. However, the restrictions on their use and the proposed security arrangements for the storage of such pistols at the clubs would, effectively, have been intolerable to shooters and far too expensive and administratively burdensome for clubs to afford. The incoming 'New Labour' Government completed

the destruction of the sport with its Firearms (Amendment) Act No 2, 1997 which extended the prohibition to small calibre pistols as well.

With a few minor exceptions, the private possession of what most of us would regard as target pistols of any calibre was now effectively banned. Yes, it is true that pistols are not actually banned, they are merely raised to Section 5 status under the Firearms Acts, but we have, on several occasions, been informed by the Home Office that target shooters would not normally be granted Section 5 authority to possess and use target pistols. It is also true that we can still use muzzle loading pistols under the Section 1 provisions of the Firearms Act, but even though that is an excellent sport in its own right and an interesting one too, as I know from my personal involvement in it, it is not the same as the sport we have lost and does not appeal to all former target pistol shooters. The same comment may be made about the perfectly legitimate Section 1 long barrelled pistols and revolvers that some of us are using to enable us to continue some form of pistol shooting. It is interesting, but not surprising, to note the hostility that has been levelled at these firearms by the Home Office and by some police forces who seem to regard these firearms as an attempt to get round the ban rather than an attempt to comply with it. It was recognised when the 1997 Acts were being drafted that there was no easy way clearly to define in law that which the Government wished to ban. It was eventually decided that the only way that this could be done that would avoid an overly complex definition was to rely upon dimensional limits. After all, the supposed danger of the pistol was its concealability and repeat fire capability. To avoid the ban the firearm would have to have a barrel length of at least 30 cm and an overall length of at least 60 cm. Compliant pistols were certainly not 'small' firearms! Some considerable ingenuity has been applied by gunsmiths to make firearms that comply with these limits and yet still function as reasonably handy pistols. There is no Home Office Approval category for such firearms for use in Home Office Approved target shooting clubs and so, although this is still a bit of a legal grey area that should, perhaps, be tested through the Courts, it is my understanding that members of such clubs cannot take advantage of the benefits accorded under Section 15 of the Firearms (Amendment) Act, 1988 ie they cannot use their membership of a Home Office Approved Club to use long barrelled pistols without holding personal Firearm Certificates that authorise such use.

In 1997 the SAGBNI transferred its efforts from defence of target pistol shooting to efforts to get the sport back again. Some politicians have now had the honesty to admit that the banning of the sport was a futile gesture and that it was unfair and even wrong. However, that is a far cry from any of them having the courage to put matters right by repealing the Firearms

(Amendment) Acts 1 & 2, 1997. There are, obviously, very few votes in that!

The question then became: What could we do to encourage the Government to repeal the pistol ban?

Our best opportunity arose when it was announced that London's bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games had been successful.

It may not be generally known but the Games are covered by a document called the Olympic Charter. That Charter is a binding document on the Olympic Association of the host for the Games and it contains some very interesting clauses.

These are contained in the sections of the Charter entitled: 'Fundamental Principles of Olympism' and 'The Olympic Movement and its Action'.

Summarising the parts that are most relevant to the target pistol shooting situation we find that the British Olympic Association, and by extension, the British Government, to be in breach of the Charter in two important aspects:

- i British laws impose very definite discrimination against target pistol shooters. The laws are not even uniform across the country as target pistols have not been banned in Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.
- ii There is supposed to be a permanent beneficial legacy to the host country and to the sport from the Games. We understand that the pistol facilities that will be built for the 2012 Games will be dismantled after the events. Hardly a permanent legacy!

This Association has formally informed the International Olympic Committee and the British Olympic Association of this situation.

Our present Labour Government has recognised that 'something will have to be done' to enable the pistol events to take place in the Games and I have no doubt that 'something' will be done. However, that will be of little use to the grass roots pistol shooters and would-be pistol shooters in mainland UK as they will have little opportunity to practise the sport in their own localities unless the present law is revised.

Rumours abound concerning what proposals the Government has to deal with this problem. One possible option would be for the Government to issue Section 5 authorities as required – not forgetting the needs of coaches, officials etc as well as the actual shooters. This could be done without any need for what is called primary legislation to amend the Firearms Acts.

If they can issue Section 5 authorities to the Olympic competitors etc, what about the aspirants or those who merely wish to try out the sport? Where is the danger to the public safety or to the peace that firearms

legislation is so fond of claiming that it exists to protect or preserve?

The e-mail petition

The following section of text has been taken from the e-petitions website and explains what these petitions are and how they are managed. The source of the text is formally acknowledged.

"Downing Street is working in partnership with the non-partisan charitable project 'mySociety' to provide a service to allow citizens, charities and campaign groups to set up petitions that are hosted on the Downing Street website, enabling anyone to address and deliver a petition directly to the Prime Minister.

'mySociety' is a charitable project that runs many of the UK's best-known non-partisan political websites, like HearFromYourMP.com and TheyWorkForYou.com. 'mySociety' is strictly neutral on party political issues, and the e-petition service is within its remit to build websites which give people simple, tangible benefits in the civic and community aspects of their lives. For more information about 'mySociety' and its work, visit its website.

The e-petition system has been designed to be transparent and trustworthy. For legal and anti-spam reasons this site cannot host every petition submitted, but the rule is to accept everything that meets the terms and conditions of use.

No petition will be rejected unless it violates these terms. And even when petitions cannot be hosted No10 will still publish as much of rejected petitions as is consistent with legal and anti-spam requirements, including the reason why it could not be hosted.

If you have any questions about the service, you can email either the Downing Street web team at webmaster@pmo.gov.uk or 'mySociety' at team@mysociety.org."

It should be noted that the rules for submissions of e-petitions are quite stringent. For example, the petition must be no longer than 1000 characters – not words! - and it must be acceptable to the team of people managing the site. That meant that we could not say exactly what we wanted to say in our petition and be sure that it would be accepted for publication on the website. We also thought that we had better get this petition onto the site as soon as possible because we had been informed that only one petition per topic would be accepted.

The actual petition is reproduced below:

"The Sportsman's Association of Great Britain & Northern Ireland, acting on behalf of all legitimate shooting sportsmen and women who were affected by the so-called 'handgun ban' in 1997, calls upon the Government to take the necessary action to comply with the Olympic Charter by enabling target shooters to participate in the demanding and difficult sport of target pistol shooting at the Olympic Games and elsewhere.

This can be done without any danger to public safety as target pistol shooting, wherever it is practised, has always had an excellent safety record. Target pistols to be kept under suitable security conditions, as they always had been, and be available for use by members of Home Office Approved Clubs."

It will be seen that this petition is intended to call for the restoration of target pistol shooting for all, not just for an Olympic elite, but we felt that our most effective lever was the Olympic Charter.

It is, perhaps, appropriate to reflect upon the past achievements of our pistol shooting greats. The pistol shooters from the Home Countries performed extremely well at the Melbourne Commonwealth Games last year and Mick Gault, our most prolific medal winner for any sport at this level of competition, was among them!

The fact that they did so well, despite the current restrictions imposed on the sport, is a tribute to the dedication of the current team members but does raise the question: Where will the next generation of pistol shooters come from to represent us at the London Olympic Games in 2012 and beyond? Age is the inevitable destroyer of sporting ability and our present top-level shooters cannot continue at that level indefinitely. They will need to be replaced with new blood that should now be undergoing the necessary training.

The two Firearms (Amendment) Acts, 1997, as described above, effectively destroyed the sport of target pistol shooting for the vast majority of people and, taken in conjunction with the Home Office Approval Criteria for target shooting Clubs, made it harder for newcomers to gain access to such clubs and to the sport.

Most of the clubs suffered a significant loss of membership when pistols were banned (in many cases the loss was of the order of fifty percent). Such losses reduce the options for possible selection for our teams – be it at local or international level - and this must augur ill for our chances in future major competitions.

The pistol ban was introduced, to make us all 'safer,' by politicians who were only interested in electoral advantage. The present Government has shown that it has little or no interest in shooting apart from when medals are won by our people. Even then, Government representatives tend to ignore the shooting medallists when seeking photo opportunities.

Gun crime has actually increased significantly since the ban – what more evidence of the futility of the ban do we need?

It is time for the ban to be lifted and for the sport of target shooting with pistols to be resurrected for all, not just the competitive elite. The Sportsman's

Association calls on all sports men and women to support this cause.

Whatever one may think of the effectiveness of petitions in general, we understand that the Government is paying close attention to the progress of these petitions and I urge all of you who have an interest in pistol shooting or, indeed, in personal freedom of choice, to take the time to visit the website and, if you can agree with it, sign the SAGBNI petition.

Our petition may be found by going to:
<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/TargetPistols>

Please spread the word and get as many people as possible to sign this petition too and let us make the best possible use of what may be our last opportunity to persuade the Government of the justice of our cause.

The Olympic Charter issue could be a powerful factor in our campaign and could even be gratefully seized upon by the Government as a mechanism to employ, without too much loss of face, to make the necessary arrangements that would also be to its own advantage as 2012 approaches.

LETTERS FROM SHANGHAI – 1864 TO 1872

by Tim Kidner

In 1864 one of my distant relatives William Kidner set up business in Shanghai as an architect; in 1866 he was joined by one of his younger brothers James. During their time in Shanghai they both wrote letters home, mainly to their sister Ann, some of which have survived; they contain a number of references to the Volunteer Force and target shooting in Shanghai, Hong Kong and also Wimbledon when William was home on leave in 1872. The letters also cover the changeover from Enfield muzzle loaders to Snider conversions and then replacement by the Martini Henry rifle – in the letters they are referred to as the Henri Martini rifles!

The earliest letter is dated 13 February 1864; it was written by William on his way to Shanghai, and was posted from Malta. In this letter he mentions his stopover at Gibraltar:

I was quite surprised to see on the neutral ground between Gibraltar and the Spanish ground a hunting party in full chase. The horsemen dressed in scarlet just as you would see them in England. I suppose they were officers of the garrison.

William wrote again on 25 February on his arrival at Suez on the Red Sea relating his progress across the desert - the Suez Canal did not open until 1869 - and commented:

. . . the journey across the desert to Suez is as miserable as you can imagine, one vast sandy plain in every direction only relieved every now and then by an Arab encampment and string of camels.

William set up business as an architect in Shanghai; in 1866 his brother James travelled out to join him, arriving in Shanghai on 26 June 1866. James was impressed by what he saw in Shanghai and wrote home:

Shanghai is a very nice place, very much nicer than I expected to find it. It is very much like a European town.

James wrote of his progress in October 1866 and commented:

. . . the rifle shooting for prizes takes place on the 11th, 12th and 13th next. I hope to win something, I find I cannot shoot nearly so well as I could at home, the climate affects one so. The intense heat scathes one and shakes the nerves.

In the same letter he requests:

. . . 1000 rounds of bullets and wads for myself and William for our smallbores.

James wrote again in November confirming that the prize meeting had taken place, organised by the Shanghai Volunteer Corps, at which William won two prizes and James won a prize of £40 which he used for ordering a new breech-loading rifle from Harvey of Exeter. In this letter he also comments on the forthcoming change to Snider breech loading rifles:

. . . our rifles are smooth bores or nearly so and the sun and the glaring light which we get here is very unfavourable to good shooting. Sometimes at about 400 or 500 yards the sun is so bad that you can scarcely see the target. We are now talking about getting Snider breech loaders from England in place of the gas pipes which we have at present.

By the 1860s there were already French and American as well as British settlements in Shanghai and the attitude of the Europeans to the local population was 'Victorian'. In one of his early letters James comments that:

. . . the Chinese settlement is very dirty but not as bad as I had imagined – the Chinese themselves are a very barbarous looking set, especially the lower classes. The servants here seem to be the greatest nuisance, one of William's has this morning bolted with his cash box but I do not think he had much in it. Two or three days ago he caught one of his coolies carrying off 5 bottles of wine.

In May 1867 James wrote to one of his other brothers about the Spring rifle meeting that had just taken place:

... our Spring rifle meeting took place on the 1st and 2nd. William won 3 prizes and I none, I do not know what is the matter with me I get so nervous when I am shooting for anything I can scarcely hold my rifle, whereas in practice I shoot on an average much better than anyone else here. William shoots about 25 per cent better for prizes than he does at any other time. I am the second marksman in the corps, William the 4th.

In the same letter he says that there is a match pending with the Hong Kong Rifle Club in the Autumn but none of the surviving letters comment on the results of the match.

At the time that this letter was written, the business was struggling and James commented that:

I hope farming is paying better than architecture out here, if it is not I am sure you will rank whitewashing. We have not commenced a single new building for at least 10 months, the merchants have no money so cannot spend it. The new tea and silk season is just commenced, I hope there will be lots of money made. If there is not I am sure I do not know what will become of the place, everyone will be bankrupt I suppose, it is very nearly as bad as that now.

In 1871 the two brothers moved into a new house and James wrote in a letter to his sister:

... there is a capital croquet lawn in front of the house with turf like velvet – the only trouble is that there are only married ladies to play with, which is rather a drawback, as I am of the opinion that having a lot of nice young girls to join in the games is its great attraction. Everyone who goes home now seems to come out married, in fact it seems to be the proper thing to do. We now have 150 ladies in Shanghai.'

In 1872 William returned home on leave and took part in the NRA competitions at Wimbledon and James reports in a letter to his sister:

I received a short letter from William dated Wimbledon, sorry to hear he has done no good in the shooting. He is considered to be the best shot in China with the rifle. Our Volunteer Corps here is to be armed with Henri Martini rifles (we have Sniders at present). I have written to William about them as we want him to get them for us.

James left Shanghai at the end of 1872 having spent six years there but sadly he died at sea on 12 January 1873 on his way home – he was only 28. William stayed in Shanghai, having married when he was home in 1872, and eventually came back to live in London and died there in 1900 at the age of 59. The letters they wrote were very ordinary, commenting on their life in Shanghai but they give us some insight into their lives and attitudes as well as some comments on target shooting in the early days of the Volunteer Forces.

60 YEARS OF FULLBORE OR THE MEMOIRS OF A RIFLEMAN



To assist the NRA in raising funds to help the young into the sport, John Hissey has written this account of his experiences covering the years from 1938 right up to today complete with many photographs of past times.

As the Chairman says in his Foreword "Memoirs of members are rare" and "add to the recorded history of our Association".

It tells of starting with a .22 at Prep school before WW2, then with a SMLE at Public School followed by service with the Grenadier Guards and Sandhurst as well as his experiences of two years in Kenya. The booklet is full of amusing events which have improved with the telling at the bar over the years. .303 is fired from Lee-Enfields and a Bren; 7.62 from Target and Match Rifles.

Please support the Fund by purchasing this booklet which is available from the NRA for £5 or from John himself who will be happy to sign your copy.

e-mail john@hissey.net

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575..... iris, 1.5x, 6 cols, twin pols	£159
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522..... as perspex element	£80
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521.G..... ring-thickening tube, perspex	£109
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536..... single-side r-thick: as perspex	£125
537..... single-side r-thick: crosshair	£125
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WAVERLEY DISTRICT RIFLE CLUB

by Bob Galfskiy

As the club secretary I suggested to our members that we should hold a sponsored shoot to attempt to raise money for the benefit of the NRA Butts Appeal. My suggestion was that we hire an electronically-marked target at 300 yards and have four shooters (from the minimum requirement of eight members in the club team) on the firing point at any one time, having zeroed their rifles and the club rifles on a manual target in the morning. Each team member would then shoot at will, attempting to establish the total number of NRA standard target rifle bulls and V bulls which the team could score during the elapsed shooting time of one hour whilst rotating the team members as they become tired or when their barrels become overly hot.

I further suggested that we could possibly approach Guinness World Records Ltd (GWR) with a view to establishing this event as a World Record although unfortunately it appears that GWR are not currently renowned for their interest in target rifle shooting!

When 11 November finally came around after weeks of planning we held a normal club practice in the morning, marking the target using relays of our members, zeroing the rifles, discussing the event and brewing copious quantities of tea and coffee in our day-tent to stave off the cold caused by the gusty, chill wind which had sprung up before lunch-time. In the afternoon we tried out the Häring System on target 102.

We began by establishing how quickly the monitor could react to one firer shooting immediately after the other, within less than half a second. The system coped with this trial extremely well, showing the most recent fall of shot as a red disc, which changed to cyan when it was superseded by the next shot. Also, a green diamond appeared on the monitor screens showing the calculated centre of the developing group.

Eventually we got four firers down and ready, sharing three monitors which were visible to all and situating the fourth monitor on a table outside the tent, where our timekeeper could sit and record each score and use the stopwatch to 'time-out' any breaks caused by possible software, firmware or hardware problems which we thought might arise. I had taken part in the NRA trials of both the different types of electronic marking systems before Christmas of 2004, so I was already impressed by the capabilities of the Häring sensors and monitors, although I had my reservations about what lay ahead for our team in this event.

I was right! After less than 15 minutes shooting it became obvious that the score being indicated on the monitors was no longer the one fired by the last team member to shoot. We started a 'time-out' and watched as the monitor continued to scroll down dozens of scores, even though none of us was shooting! This we found somewhat disturbing, but Bob Oxford, one of the most experienced of our club members, came to the rescue, explaining that the computer, it seemed, was only programmed to accept 20 shots in a row and that we would need to wait for it to catch up. We noted the 'Shot Number' given on the Häring monitor at the time we had stopped shooting, waited until the system appeared to be in a better mood, then resumed the timed shoot. Our Timekeeper, Debbie Ann Privett, an experienced Range Officer and an expert in the art of shouting very loud commands, gave the firers their signal to stop and later to restart, also operating the stopwatch and recording all the scores on paper, such multi-tasking being well beyond the capability of most men, particularly myself. Debbie proved a wonderful asset to the team (she unerringly shoots straight V bulls with my F Class rifle!) and proved to be a great organiser of all the aforementioned duties when it was her turn to sit in the timekeeper's chair.



A tent - a necessary piece of kit for shooting in November!



"Have we finished yet?"



Bob Oxford sorts it out!



Waverley in action.

(All photos: Iain Robertson)

Being on winter schedule we were beginning to doubt whether we would be able to finish the whole hour of concentrated shooting before the hooter sounded at four o'clock, but our eight members became tired and ran out of ammunition after only 45 minutes, so we decided "let's call that an hour" and got the rifles cleaned after dismantling the tent and storing all the essentials in various members' cars. We were all freezing cold and in dire need of a comforting drink in the LMRA bar.

Our team consisted of Bob Galfski and Debbie Privett, both shooting F Class, Jerry Neave, John Flain and Bob Oxford all firing TR and Joan Osborne, Chris Mullins and Charlie Bradshaw shooting iron sighted club rifles off a front rest, mainly using RG144 ammunition at only 21p per round from Fred! Everyone enjoyed the event tremendously and our club fully intends to utilise the electronically marked Häring targets as often as possible in the future. Before carrying out another event such as the "Bull-Shoot" outlined above, we would need to discuss with the Häring system management team the possibility of altering the

program to accept a series of at least 250 consecutive shots and give a print-out on hard copy showing all the scores and the elapsed time record. This would be of great help, not only in saving the energy of the team for the shooting activities, but also to be used as evidence to support our intended Guinness World Record, should we ever obtain permission to do so. Surely the publicity showing the enjoyment the team gained throughout this fun event must be good for bringing new blood into the sport, which is one of the stated tenets and foundation stones upon which we based the Waverley District Rifle Club only two years ago. It could even encourage inter-club competitive spirit as others attempt to break each successive record.

At the very least Waverley District Rifle Club would be established as the first holder of this new World Record. Of course, our scores are reserved until we decide we can present them to the Guinness World Records Ltd organisation.

Visit our website at:

<http://www.waverley-district-rifle-club.org.uk>



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THE RANGE TRAMWAYS OF THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

PART THREE - BISLEY

by Christopher C Bunch



The Gale and Polden postcard view shows “Wharncliffe”, looking distinctly work-worn and no longer with the end skirts or wearing the lined-out livery of the earlier photograph, attached to an open toastrack type bogie vehicle, of the 1899 order, boarding a full load of shooters. Gale and Polden were a local company, based at Aldershot, who photographed activities at Bisley Camp over many years. The postcard dates from Edwardian times and shows the Long Siberia terminus of the tramway.

From the time the engine was purchased in 1878 up until the L&SWR involvement the NRA had always used contractors to maintain and operate it. Merryweather had acted in this role until the end of the 1892 season with the L&SWR taking over in 1893. However in 1897 authorisation was given for the tramway to be extended to Butts 19 and 20 of the Long Siberia Range. This extension implied much more frequent use of the tramway. It is clear, therefore, that the Council had decided to employ their own driver for on 26 May 1900 Lt Colonel Crosse wrote to Drummond again:

Dear Sir,

I shall be glad if you will kindly let me know the circumstances under which Charles Ginman, Engine Driver, left the employment of the London and SW Railway, and also if you think he it a man who may be trusted to take charge of the small locomotive which we use on our range tramway. A reply at your earliest convenience will oblige.

Yours, etc

The subsequent appointment of Ginman as the Tram Engine Driver and his continued employment in this role for at least the next twelve years is confirmed by a letter, dated 18 April 1912 to the Locomotive Superintendent at Guildford, together with a sick note. This letter requested a replacement Driver. The Doctor’s sick note confirming that Ginman, of Bisley Green, had a poisoned foot, is still in the records.

The Locomotive Superintendent

L&SWR

Guildford

Dear Sir,

My Engine Driver has fallen ill and I am writing to ask if you could arrange for one of your engine drivers to do his work here tomorrow (Saturday April 20th).

The work is that of driving our Small Range passenger Tramway Engine - the first trip with passengers is about 2.0pm and the last about 7.30pm. I can arrange to have steam got up if there is any difficulty in your man arriving in time to do so. Though I would prefer it if he could be here in time to do so himself. In any event, as our line is only a very light tram line, he should be here in ample time to make a trial run over the line in company with our foreman; I would suggest that it be not later than 12.30pm

If you can find me one of your men to do this I shall be greatly obliged, and shall be further obliged if you will let me know what pay I should give him and what payment (if any) your Company would require.

Yours truly

MC Mathews Lt Col

For Secretary NRA

The employment of a regular driver also seems to have ended the previous practice of a second man on “Wharncliffe”.

The NRA Report for 1900 referred to a new engine and tramway shed as well as the recent tramway extensions. The location of this shed was adjacent to Bisley Camp station as marked quite clearly on the 1915 1/2500 Ordnance Survey map. This map also shows the run-round loops at either end of the Range Tramway that had now reached its ultimate length of about three-quarters of a mile.

The General Balance Account included with the Report refers to the 'Tramway Extension'. The Financial Account contains the following: -

Tramway Extension Value - £236-13s-2d

Tramway Extension, Cost of Extension - £610-2s-2d

New boiler to Tram Engine - £205-9s-6d

With the appointment of a regular driver and the other improvements the operation of the tramway was satisfactory for the next nine years. However in 1909 problems started to arise with "Wharncliffe's" boiler and firebox. A Boiler Inspector's Report of 19 May 1909 recorded that the firebox plates were corroded at the bar level and there was some wasting of the smokebox, and the tube ends were thinned. A new firebox was advocated.

This was followed by a Report of The National Boiler and General Insurance Co Ltd dated 13 September 1909 (which also confirmed the boiler pressure to be 120psi).

No and boiler Designation N0 1 (48) Loco "Wharncliffe"

For this examination the lagging was removed from the exterior of the barrel plates and firebox casing, and all smoke tubes withdrawn.



A 1912 view, looking northward across the Century Range. In the foreground, the Bisley Bullet departs for Brookwood. The Range Tramway diverges immediately behind it as it heads, via the 600 yards firing point of the Century Range, to its final destination on the Siberia Ranges which lie beyond the distant end of the Century Range Butts. Across the green the C Lines Hut and Bazaar Lines, the latter dominated by the Mappin and Webb sign, are prominent. On the original photograph it is possible to discern the junction for the Range Tramway shed just behind the chimney of the locomotive.



The view at the 600 yards firing point of Century Range. The Range Tramway runs behind with two children playing on the line. The King's Prize that year was won by AG Fulton. He took it again after the Great War.

The lower half of the barrel is generally closely pitted and there is a local area of wasting at the right hand side of the firebox casing.

There is little pitting about the sides of the barrel internally.

We understand from our Inspecting Engineer that you wish to increase the working pressure of the boiler from 120lbs as at present, to at least 150lbs per square inch. We have therefore considered the suitability of the Boiler for this higher pressure and find that the barrel plates would be too highly stressed for a working pressure of 150lbs, and we think your best course would be to replace the Boiler by one of stronger construction in preference to spending money in repairs.

Even with a new firebox and other repairs carried out the Boiler would be unsuitable for a higher pressure than 120lbs per square inch.

We enclose circulars relative to the special services we undertake in connection with the designing and supervision of Boilers during construction.

Edward Hiller

Chief Engineer

The NRA Council decided against another new boiler and opted for Merryweather to take "Wharncliffe" back to Greenwich again for its third and final major repair.

On 22 March 1912 the Chief Engineer of the National Boiler Insurance Co and Boiler Insurance reported that:

. . . The smoke box tube plate is wasted to 3/8" at the mud holes, otherwise the boiler and fittings were found in order.

The tramway continued in its routine until at least the outbreak of the Great War in August 1914. After this date the NRA Council handed over control of the Camp to the Army although some rifle competitions

continued for the following two years. There is no current evidence that the military authorities made use of the tramway and it seems likely that "Wharncliffe" and the tramcars remained in their shed at least until 1917 when the Army at Blackdown Camp made a request to hire the locomotive.

The Executive and Finance Committee of the NRA met on 23 March 1917 and it was recorded under Item 11 that:

The Secretary stated that a verbal application had been made by Colonel Fraser, CRE Blackdown, for the hire of our light engine (The "Wharncliffe") and at rate.

The Committee approved of its being hired out and asked Colonel Barlow kindly to ascertain what would be a fair charge.

Col Crosse of the NRA telephoned Col Fraser and told him that the engine was valued at £300 and therefore the annual charge at 25% would be £75 per annum. A following letter to Col JP Fraser CRE Blackdown, offered the Loco at £6 per month.

The military extension of the Bisley Branch to Blackdown and Deepcut had been authorised in 1916 and was completed in 1917. In the absence of any further information it is assumed that "Wharncliffe" was required to assist in construction work. There is no confirmation in the records as to whether the hire actually took place.

The exchange of letters did, however, give some leading dimensions of "Wharncliffe". These are listed below together with others that have come to light.

Name and Number	"Wharncliffe", NRA Number 1
Maker, Type and Works Number	Merryweather and Sons Type 1, Works Number 32 (Repaired/rebuilt by L&SWR at Nine Elms 1894)
Date constructed	1877
Boiler pressure	120lbs per sq in (Probably 80psi before installation of new boiler in 1900)
New Boiler	1900
Gauge	3ft 6ins
Maximum Height to top of Cab	9 feet
Width of cab	6ft 6ins
Weight with water and coal	4 tons
Power Rating	about 7HP
Wheel Arrangement	0-4-0
Wheel Diameter	2ft
Length (Max)	8ft 11ins
Length (of body)	8ft
Cylinders (bore diameter x stroke)	6ins x 9ins
Firebox Length	2ft 9ins
Boiler Barrel length	3ft
Boiler Barrel diameter	2ft 7ins
Number of Flue Tubes	94
Flue Tube diameter (outside)	1 ? ins
Boiler Heating Surface	98sq ft
Total Heating Surface	132sq ft

Whether it was used on the military extension or not the 1919 Bisley Bible, and later Boiler Reports, confirm that "Wharncliffe" was not put back into use on the range tramway after the War.

The Bisley Bible for the 56th Annual Meeting 9 July - 19 July 1919, the first to be held after the War ended, stated - 'Range Tramway - To and from the Bisley Camp Station and Range 23 will not run this year'. This was the last mention of the Tramway to appear in this annual handbook.

The last internal boiler inspection was made early in 1919 by the National Boiler and General Insurance Company. After that date the latter wrote annually to the NRA enquiring whether the boiler could be inspected. The NRA Secretary invariably replied that it was not expected that the boiler would be in use that year. The last letter of this nature in the records is dated 21 February 1922.

In 1926 a most interesting Report, dated 17 September, was sent to the NRA regarding proposals to put the Siberia Ranges back into use. The implication is that they had been out of use probably since early in the



The NRA Journal, which had commenced publication in 1903, ran a regular series of articles entitled "Familiar Scenes at Bisley". Number 3, which appeared in 1911, is believed to show the driver, Charles Ginman, boarding the tram at the Siberia Range Terminal.

18

RANGE TRAMWAY.

N.R.A. RANGE TRAMWAY.

To and from the BISLEY CAMP STATION and RANGE 23.

Commencing on Saturday, 18th July, and thenceforward on each week-day during the Meeting.

CARS START FROM

CAMP RAILWAY STATION.	RANGE 23.
<p>At 8.50 A.M. and at 10 } Minutes after each hour 30 } 50 } until *7.30 P.M., Except at { 11.10 a.m. 1.30 p.m. 4.10 p.m.</p>	<p>At 8.40 A.M. and at each hour and 20 } Minutes after 40 } each hour until *7.40 P.M., Except at { 11.20 a.m. 1.40 p.m. 4.20 p.m.</p>

Fare 1d. any distance.

Members of the N.R.A. free on production of Membership Pass.

* Cars run later if Gunfire is delayed.

The last known timetable for the Tramway, taken from the 1914 Bisley Bible.

War. The Siberia Ranges were the distant terminus of the Tramway. Without them it served no useful purpose.

Dear Sir,

To make the most efficient use of the ranges the railway must be put into running order. The first consideration in regard to this is cost, and it follows that this will vary according to the route of the railway, and there are various schemes: -

1. Relay as at present
2. - Ditto, - but extend the terminus further through the Camp either: -

(a) behind the Pavilion

or (b) extend to the 200 yards firing point outside the hedge at end of butt 10.

Or (c) as in (b), but proceed up to the Clock Tower and run along Stickledown as far as, say, 1,100yds.

It is certain that "Wharncliffe" could not take any hill, and in any case may be beyond repair.

The majority of sleepers have out-lived their usefulness and the whole line, it might be said, would have to be re-laid.

The existing rails are serviceable and are the property of the War Office, but were loaned to the NRA for an indefinite period, as is the case of the telephone cables . . .

. . . This was raised with the Secretary of State for War who was asked if this was not the sort of job the Railway Section of the RE would welcome. This received an encouraging reply.

. . . With this information before it the Council should then ask the War Office to: -

1. Relay existing track with proposed extensions, but to another gauge if needful.
2. Loan to NRA, for an indefinite period, the additional rails and sleepers required.
3. Loan to NRA, as in 2., a suitable engine and tracks, ex stock at Woolwich, capable of taking Clock Tower gradient if necessary. It is asserted that suitable engines are in store against the next National Emergency.
4. Perform the entire work with the Railway Section R.E., and run the train for NRA during each Meeting as part of its annual training.

Note. Whilst making allowance for the difference in the times when the rails and cables were loaned as compared with to-day, the only cost to the State would be that of the sleepers which unless of metal would be a wasting asset. But these may be in stock today.

It will thus be seen that the cost of rejuvenating the Railway on the foregoing basis would not be carried by the NRA.

Should this not be realised in its entirety we must decide how much NRA can afford to contribute to the cost, as against "Roadrail Traction" . . .

Signed

Lionel Fletcher

The archives contain a brochure from the Roadrails Company (who manufactured hybrid road/rail vehicles), but they also include a 1927 letter from Major General Sir HFE Freeland the Managing Director of Roadrails, stating that the Bisley Range Tramway was not suitable for their system.

The Siberia Ranges were not, in fact, put back into use until many years later so there was little purpose in maintaining the tramway. "Wharncliffe" must have been virtually derelict by this time, hence the abortive negotiations with the Roadrails Company, and the sleepers needed renewing in any case. The 1917 military extension to Blackdown was removed in 1928 and, as the track of the tramway belonged to the War Office, perhaps the Royal Engineers dismantled both with "Wharncliffe" and the tramcars being disposed of sometime during this period. It is hoped that the NRA Letter Books for this period may provide an answer.

The tramway was largely converted into a roadway, as it remains today, so the major part of the final route can still be followed. However, although Bisley Camp station still exists (converted to a clubhouse complete with a British Railways Mark 1 Sleeping Car), nothing of the tramway remains visible.

References

The Tramways of the National Rifle Association by Mike Hutson - HMRS Journal January - March 1991

Volunteer Service Gazette

NRA Annual Meeting Handbooks, Reports, Council Meeting Minutes, and other Documents and Records.

Acknowledgements

I would like to record my thanks to all those who assisted in compiling this article, especially Ted Molyneux, Curator of the NRA Museum, for his assistance and allowing me full access to the NRA records.

All photographs, unless otherwise acknowledged, are reproduced from NRA Museum sources.



'The Last Tram' from 'Humours of Bisley'

THE HISTORY OF THE HOMEGUARD DIAMOND JUBILEE COMPETITION

by Stephen Donaldson

On Saturday 8 May 2004 the inaugural Homeguard Diamond Jubilee competition was held at Bisley. The idea for the competition came from Thomas Bodmin, a member of Newport Isle of Wight and District Rifle Club. Entry was open to all rifle clubs formed from Homeguard units; David Atkin (club secretary) contacted clubs that qualified, and the competition was born.

Unfortunately, the weather on 8 May was not very pleasant; in fact it rained all day. However, this did not dampen anyone's enthusiasm; there were three classes to enter - Service Rifle, Target Rifle and F Class. The course of fire was two convertible sighters and ten to count at 300, 500 and 600 yards. 300 and 500 yards to be shot in the morning, and 600 yards in the afternoon after a break for lunch and some much needed hot drinks!

There were thirty-six entries from ten clubs. Although the weather was far from perfect by raining all day, some very good scores were achieved. Service Rifle was won by J Hinchliffe with a score of 73.0 (Newport Isle of Wight), Target Rifle was won by Ian Luckman with a score of 145.13 (9th Somerset Homeguard) and F Class was won by Anthony Donnachie with a score of 150.19 (101 Rifle Club). Medals were awarded for the top three positions.

After the 2004 awards presentation David Atkin asked if another club would like to run the competition the following year; the 101 Rifle Club volunteered to run the competition in 2005.

It was soon time for Stephen Donaldson (Secretary 101 Rifle Club) to start organizing the 2005 competition with greatly appreciated help from David Atkin. HG 61 was run again at Bisley on 7 May 2005 - it was a

beautiful sunny day which was quite a contrast to the previous year. The weather conditions possibly helped because the winning scores improved: Service Rifle was won by William McIntyre with a score of 111.3 (101 Rifle Club), Target Rifle was also won by William McIntyre with a score of 142.12 and F Class was won by Adam Bagnall with a score of 149.22 (101 Rifle Club). Due to the competition now being a yearly event, and the finances allowing it, medals and glass awards were given to the winning competitors with runners up receiving medals.

All the competitors enjoyed the day and stated that they were looking forward to the competition next year. It was decided the competition would be run jointly by the 101 Rifle Club, and Newport Isle of Wight and District Rifle Club in the future.

It was decided that a new class would be introduced into the competition for the year 2006, the F Class entrants from the previous years were polled and they agreed. Hence Target Rifle F Class was born.

We found suitable rules for this division on the American National Rifle Association website. The reason for the new class is so that competitors with a normal sporting rifles in 7.62 x 51mm/0.308 and 5.56/0.223 can compete in their own class, rather than competing against 6.5 x 284s (benchrest calibres) and the like. The rules are your rifle must be 0.308 or 0.223 calibre, the front of the rifle can be supported but with a bipod only (front rests not allowed), a rear sand bag and reloaded ammunition is allowed as long as it is within the National Rifle Association rules.

HG 62 was run on Saturday 6 May 2006, the weather was sunny with occasional patches of rain. The weather forecast stated heavy rain all day, luckily, as



Shooting at 600 yards.

per usual, they were wrong! There was not much of a wind change in the morning, in the afternoon at 600 yards, the first two details did have rain and there were gusting winds to deal with. The new Target Rifle F Class had nine entries and those who competed in this class, stated their approval of the new division.

The finances and the now permanency of the Homeguard Diamond Jubilee Competition, enabled the purchase of trophies for the champions of each class, which would have their names engraved and they would retain for twelve months. Glass awards would also be given to the top three places which the winners can keep.

There were some very good scores achieved in the relevant classes: Service Rifle Champion was A



101 Rifle Club Chairman, Stephen Lynch, presenting the prizes.

Rowlinson with 107.1 (32nd 61st Surrey Homeguard), Target Rifle Champion was William McIntyre with 143.12 (101 Rifle Club), F Class Champion was Anthony Donnachie with 150.23 (101 Rifle Club) and Target Rifle F Class Champion was Stephen Donaldson with 150.25 (101 Rifle Club).

We hope that this competition will run for many years to come and we hope that more clubs will enter the competition in the future.

Any clubs who are interested in competing and who qualify (they must be formed from a homeguard unit), may enter the competition which is to be held at Bisley on Saturday 5 May 2007.

Please contact Stephen Donaldson on 07838 179910 or 07757 168766 for more details.

ARMY TARGET SHOOTING CLUB

PISTOL OPEN

12 & 13 May 2007

National Squad Nominated Meeting

- Air Pistol • ISSF 50m (Free) Pistol •
- ML Pistol/Revolver • Gallery/Sport Rifle •
- Individual and Aggregate Competitions •

Entry forms from your Club Secretary or download from
www.army.mod.uk/sportandadventure/clubs/competition_entry_forms/index.htm
 or the Meeting Secretary, ATSC (TP) Open Meeting, ATSC Clubhouse,
 Bisley Camp, Brookwood, Woking, Surrey GU24 0NY

NRA 100 RESURRECTED

by Carol Painting

Those who read the Journal carefully will be aware that NRA postal competitions were abandoned by the NRA last year for lack of support. A few of us enjoyed shooting the NRA 100 each year so we carried on with it in 2006 on a do it yourself basis. The NRA kindly agreed that we could present the trophy and have some of the cloth NRA 100 badges because there are plenty in stock.

For those who are not familiar with this competition, it is a three positional TR shoot at 200 yards on scaled down 300m targets. The course of fire is up to four sighters and ten to count at each position.

The results of the 2006 competition are as follows:

Key: SHGRPC 32nd/61st Surrey Home Guard Rifle and Pistol Club
WFBRC Wandsworth Fullbore Rifle Club

			p	s	k	Total
1	KB Hill	WFBRC	92	68	75	235
2	B Preece	Pumas RC	95	33	77	205
3	ME Barr	Pumas RC	93	41	68	202
4	J Photiades	Radlett RC	90	56	55	201
5	DF Robinson	Pumas RC	91	61	48	200
6	CA Painting	Pumas RC	99	28	68	195
7	J Wilson	SHGRPC	88	39	59	186
8	D Jessup	SHGRPC	83	36	42	161
9	M Mercer	SHGRPC	93	32	34	159
10	B Taylor	SHGRPC	89	18	47	154
11	S Wilson	SHGRPC	84	23	37	144

The SHGRPC shot their cards in July. Pumas RC and Radlett RC shot on 1 October by agreement with the other clubs. Although WFBRC tried to shoot in September, there was a problem with the booking; they had the wrong targets and could not shoot standing. Kevin Hill turned out for a second time on 1 October, and managed to beat us all by a convincing margin.

We plan to continue with this competition in the future. Our current thoughts are to leave it as a postal match at 200 yards, but to extend the period for shooting until the end of October. This might help those who are busy with other events to fit in a fun shoot later in the season. We also plan to make the third practice a kneeling or sitting shoot (see Rule 242). We believe this was one of the conditions in years gone by. Hopefully it will encourage others to join us.

While this is a do it yourself competition a committee of three is handling the entries and results. We need results in a spreadsheet submitted by e-mail. A small entry fee (probably £1 per head) will allow us to purchase medals for the first three in the competition. If you are interested in taking part during 2007 please send an e-mail to cpainting@iee.org. You can shoot this at any range provided you use the correct targets, which are available from the NSC.

THE BISLEY CLUBS EASTER MEETING

(Including F Class)

to be held at Bisley Ranges
Saturday 7 to Monday 9 April 2007

organised by

The London & Middlesex Rifle Association

Programme and entry forms are available at www.lmra.co.uk - follow the links to 'Events and Matches' and 'Entry Forms'. Also on the NRA website at www.nra.org.uk

Closing date for entries is Saturday 31 March 2007

Issued RG ammunition will be used - F Class supply their own.

NRA TOUR TO THE CHANNEL ISLANDS 2006

THE CAPTAIN'S PERSPECTIVE

by Chris White

Captain

Chris White Durham

Adjutant

Dave Dyson Yorkshire

Coach/Vice Captain

Dave Davies Sussex

Coach

Robin Hatcher Suffolk

Shooters

Daniel Blake	London
Simon Dixon	Surrey
Chris Claridge	Sussex
Tom Horrocks	Lancashire
Ed Jeens	Gloucestershire
Kenny MacDonald	Scotland
Philip Oxnam	Northants, Leics & Rutland
Steve Robinson	Yorkshire
Andrew Wilde	Somerset
Ed Wood	Norfolk

Non-Travelling Reserves

John Holmes	Yorkshire
Iain MacDonald	Lancashire

The tour appeared ill fated from the start with my appointment not being confirmed until after the 2005 Imperial Meeting, thus losing the opportunity to get to know potential applicants and to see them in action.

I toured the Channel Islands in 2001 under the captaincy of Lou-Lou Brister - a very hard act to follow. However it gave me a flying start in selecting coaches. Dave Davies had been a shooter on that team and had coached my 2003 team v Continental Europe and Robin Hatcher had been a coach on Lou-Lou's team. When both graciously consented to join the team a load was off my mind.

In my opinion the Captain's job is to ensure that the best possible team is selected and that the best possible use is made of that talent; his or her job is not to get bogged down in unnecessary detail. The most crucial decision a Captain will make is in the selection of Adjutant, closely followed by the selection of coaches and I was delighted that Dave Dyson agreed to be my Adjutant. He hit the ground running and despite the tight time scale the admin side of the team progressed smoothly.

The Channel Islands tour is a learning platform for aspiring GB shots, of whatever age; for most it will be their first tour. On return all the shooters should be clear on what international team shooting is about. Touring teams always face the challenge of shooting against determined opposition performing on their own range and in a unit composed of individuals who have worked together many times before. This tour would be a perfect reflection of this.

With the selection made and finalised there was one further difficulty - the issue of non-travelling reserves. I intended to hold a training weekend at Bisley before the tour and did not feel it fair that the reserves be expected to meet the cost of this. Therefore they needed to be shooters with the experience and capability of dropping into the team at the last minute and the maturity not to resent being left out of the first cut.

After considering various options the training weekend was fixed for 1 and 2 April. Briefing and introductions took place in the ATSC clubhouse on Saturday morning when, in addition to the usual kit issue and tour outline, the team were made aware of my personal attitude to team shooting. First and foremost that there are no individual performances in a team; each individual's score in a match is a combination of the shooter's ability, the quality of the coach, whether or not they are called upon to fire a pilot shot and what conditions they encounter at the time they shoot. For that reason no individual scores in team events appear in this report.

Plotting was sorted out and the team were made well aware that if conditions dictated they would be expected to shoot within five seconds of the coach's call. Not only that but if they wished to progress as internationals that would need to be reduced to no more than three seconds.

I am not impressed by shooters who think the way to approach a team match is stay up slonking and clubbing until the early hours of the morning before the match, keep everyone else waiting in the hotel car park and turn up late looking like they have just been dragged backwards through a hedge.

The message could not be got across more effectively than it was by quoting Andrew Tucker, "There are three things up with which I will not put. One who is drunk, one who is late and one who is unshaven." There was one obvious exception to the shaving bit!

The squad were made aware that short range matches, although usually won at 600 yards, are often lost at 300 yards.

On the grounds that whatever can go wrong will go wrong, the team were advised of various contingencies and scenarios. The Captain, Adjutant and coaches were pretty straight shooters and may, if necessary, shoot, with the possibility that either or both the Captain and Adjutant coach. Whilst this was a perfectly feasible scenario it was not, necessarily, a desirable one, but it did apply pressure to the squad who knew they would have to prove themselves.

Saturday afternoon was intended to be a zero checking exercise at 300 yards. Everyone was coached by each of the coaches and all shooters plus the coaches were coached by the Adj and the Captain. With the wind

running in excess of two and sometimes in excess of three minutes it was pretty much a waste of time as far as zeros were concerned. It did, however, give a taste of what might be expected in Guernsey and gave the opportunity to try to develop anti-buffeting techniques.

Saturday evening was spent over a pleasant dinner in the ATSC during which the Adjutant, without prior consultation, informed the team that if we won both matches the Captain would shave off half of his beard. After due consideration said Captain agreed to shave it all off!

Sunday was spent shooting at 300 and 600 with a Captains Team and an Adjutant's Team all parties being coached by both Dave and Robin. Those who had difficulty in shooting on call were identified and worked on. All in all we were happy with the end result and confident that we had a team who not only knew what was expected of it but looked likely to deliver.

The original plan was to meet in the ATSC clubhouse for a leisurely breakfast on Wednesday 24 May, pack the kit into the cars and leave Bisley at 11:00 for the 13:55 Seacat departure from Poole.

Once again ill fate took a hand. Storms raged in the English Channel and by mid-afternoon on the Tuesday no Seacat had left Poole for five days. Simon Dixon was monitoring the output from various mid-channel buoys, satellite pictures etc and the Adjutant was giving the unfortunate Steve Robinson, with whom he was travelling, earache whilst in constant communication with the ever patient Simon. Although conditions were easing it was not certain that the Seacat would depart but the ferry service from Portsmouth would operate.

The Captain was somewhere in Leicestershire and Kenny was somewhere in the air between Inverness and Heathrow when the decision was taken to take the ferry. This meant an 05:30 departure from Bisley. Kenny was not due to arrive at Bisley until after six o'clock and his rifle was in the NRA armoury. The Adj solved this problem with help from John Gardner of the NRA. It then transpired that another late arrival's rifle was in the North London armoury and that said party, for some reason which still escapes me, believed the Captain had access to it. I didn't. How it was retrieved I know not.

We got to Portsmouth in good time to find the Condor terminal closed. When it opened the ship was still mid-channel. By the time it arrived, Condor took the decision that instead of travelling Guernsey, Jersey, St Malo it would go to St Malo first with every prospect of the team being at sea for at least thirteen hours and little prospect of arriving at their hotel much before midnight. However they were very confident that the Seacat would sail.

We arrived at Poole on time and in good weather. By the time we embarked it was raining horizontally.

That crossing has already become legendary. Most members of the team were seasick, including the Captain who having crossed both the Channel and the Irish Sea in pretty foul conditions was taken completely off guard and was spectacularly ill in a very public and anti-social manner! Steve was so ill that by the time we arrived in Guernsey he was barely able to stand up let alone drive.

We were all pretty glad to get to Cobo Bay, a favourite with NRA teams, and those of us who were well enough sampled the pleasures of bar and restaurant before hitting the sack.

Fortunately the next day was R&R but Guernsey was partially fog bound and the airport was closed. This was to have consequences!

Friday morning should have been spent shooting but a sea fog obscured the danger area and we skulked around Fort Le Marchant finally getting to shoot just after noon. For those of us who had been there before it was no surprise to have our windarms visiting regions at 300 yards normally reserved for six. The Captain's call of 4 was near enough and a mean of 4¼ produced a pretty steady 50.7 (that ought to keep the young whippersnappers in line!).

Back at 600 our coaches were reading 11 to 12. A bit strong, thought the Captain, whose wise selection of coaches was reaffirmed when the first sighter produced a waterline magpie with 9 on the gun. When the second sighter made a bull five it was converted with alacrity, despite the Adjutant's views on yellow bellies who converted fives! Relying on a flag which told the truth in 2001 and now was patently lying resulted in the Captain



Not untypical Fort Le Marchant wind!

(Photo: Simon Dixon)



Dave and Robin after their tie shoot.

(Photo: Ed Jeens)



Seasickness recovery, Guernsey.



The NRA Team after the Guernsey Match.



Match v Guernsey in progress at 300 yards.



Is that a smile on the Captain's face?



NRA v Jersey in progress at 600 yards.



The Jersey RA team.



The coaches winding down after the match.



On the lager at last!

(Photos: Chris Claridge)

being soundly thrashed by two of the whippersnappers, the Adj and one of the coaches. Both Robin and Dave had 99s but Robin was seven Vs ahead to take the Parker Tankard. Friday evening was spent formally with a dinner at Guernsey Rifle Club.

Morning fog persisted on Saturday resulting in the Guernsey Can being reduced to one range. Messers Dyson and Hatcher tied on 50.8 with Dave winning the tie shoot.

After lunch the match commenced in typical Fort le Marchant conditions. Coaching was not really an exercise in wind reading but more a matter of maintaining shooter confidence and group centreing. The Captain, in chief coach mode, could do little but call for the odd pilot shot.

Under difficult conditions NRA scores at 300 ranged from 46 to 50. We came off the mound with 386.41 to Guernsey's 378.25. This lead was increased at 500 with 382.32 to 377.29 however we all knew that 600 was going to be crucial and Guernsey fought hard to best the NRA with 376.35 to our 376.29. NRA scores at 600 ranged from 44 to 50. The end result was NRA 1144.102, Guernsey Rifle Club 1131.89. Guernsey's scores ranged from 136 to 145 and the NRA's scores from 138 to 148. In neither case was this a reflection of shooting or coaching ability but of the extremely difficult conditions. In the Reserves Match the NRA beat Guernsey by 290.29 to 277.35

We then departed for the harbour to discover the backlog in sea travel, coupled with the closed airport, would result in a two hour delay. A pretty shattered but happy bunch of shooters finally staggered into the bar of the Uplands Hotel a little after 23:00.

The following day we were due to shoot long range at Les Landes. We arrived in brilliant sunshine to find Graeme Harris' car in a ditch. Soon the dreaded fog descended. It lifted just after 10:00 and we at least got a shoot at 1,000 yards. I for one was pleased to be there and quite intrigued with the ease with which the targetry was dismantled and taken away.

Then followed a somewhat exciting drive across the island to Crabbe Range whilst attempting to keep Alan Le Sueur's Landrover in sight.

The Captain, whose wind judgement hitherto had been less than sparkling, took himself off into a corner and delivered a pep talk. This produced a spectacular 50.9 at 200 yards and an equally spectacular 50.1 at 500 (with the V being the first to count) causing much amusement within the team! Of the eight 100s shot in Crabbe III this was the worst. Crabbe III produced a tie on 100.16 between Andrew Wilde and Ed Jeens with Andrew winning the tie.

Jersey's social secretary booked us a meal in an Italian restaurant and we looked forward to a convivial evening. Whilst most of the team chose to walk into St Helier, Kenny needed a taxi so I joined him. Ill fate struck again when they denied having the booking. Kenny and I mooched about and found a decent Indian and after a number of frantic calls to inactive mobiles finally

made contact with the rest of the team and the night was saved.

Monday dawned fair and cold and I was in no mood to allow anyone to relax. Noses were pressed to the grindstone. Over breakfast the team were introduced to the possibility of the Captain shooting in the match.

The final individual match (Crabbe IV) took place at 300 and 600 with Graeme Harris demonstrating that his talents extended beyond ditching BMWs by shooting one of only two 100s. By the grace of God the NRA Captain shot the other which just pipped Graeme by two Vs. The combined aggregate for the Edna Parker Cup produced only the one 200 and there were no further smart remarks about the 50.1!

Over the course of the tour NRA members had won all individual matches except Les Landes which was won by Cliff Mallett - a pretty sound achievement.

The final decision on team selection was extremely difficult. I had seen the Jersey team sheet and it looked formidable. I needed Robin's wise counsel to confirm the ultimate decision. When I emerged from the club house with a pint in my hand and pronouncing unqualified confidence in my crew the morale boost was tangible.

In contrast to Guernsey this was a coach's match. The team got off to a flying start with 398.54 to Jersey's 387.48. Windreading was difficult. In some cases changes were hard to see and in others difficult to evaluate. Jersey fought hard at 500 and equalled the NRA's score of 388 but with 44 V bulls to 40. It was neck and neck at 600 but with our last man half way through his shoot Steve clapped me on the back and I knew I could get out of my chair. The NRA came off the mound with 387.43 to Jersey's 386.40 - the end result being 1173.137 to 1161.132.

NRA scores ranged from 145 to 149 with Jersey's ranging from 142 to 147. Jersey Reserves beat NRA Reserves by 286.29 to 279.35. Rumour has it that this is the first time that most of the team discovered that the Captain could smile.

The evening was spent in convivial manner at the Jersey Rifle Association's dinner. Up to that point I had had a concern that most of the younger element had taken my warning about drinking a little too seriously. It had been almost impossible to get them to take a drink, from that point on it was absolutely impossible to get them to stop!

Tuesday was spent in R&R. We finally got into the Italian that night but unfortunately my memory of what went on there is somewhat hazy, other than that the ever persuasive Ed Jeens failed to negotiate my moustache into the shaving operation!

The return crossing was uneventful but we had all followed Simon's advice and taken his favourite anti-seasick medication anyway.

There was, however, still one episode of ill fate. The day appointed for the Captain to honour his promise to his crew was Astor day when the wretched beard trimmer



Grumpy after the shave!

failed to work. Said Captain, therefore, was compelled to introduce his face to the razor for the first time in 26 years, a procedure which he is not anxious to repeat, despite Steve's insistence that it was a marked improvement.

I was honoured to be elected Captain but I had three very specific misgivings. The first of these was that Lou-Lou had been such an outstanding Captain that it would be difficult to come up to that standard. The second was that with such an inexperienced team avoiding being thrashed by Jersey was going to be difficult let alone winning, and finally and, very personally, when I returned to Bisley in 2001 my darling Mary was waiting for me, already, although we didn't know it at the time, in the grip of the dreadful disease which killed her. This

time I would return to an empty caravan and I really did not know if I could handle that. All the team were sensitive to this.

On a lighter note, all of these guys were a credit to me, to themselves and to the NRA, their professionalism and dedication was as outstanding as their performance; any emotional qualms I had were completely overshadowed by the justified pride I had in them all.

Everyone did their part but specific thanks are due, in no particular order, to Dave for doing an outstanding job as Adjutant, Andrew for producing the brochure and team photo, Ed Jeens for compiling information and sending it to Bisley and in particular for respecting my wishes over a specific issue when put under very heavy external pressure to do otherwise, Chris and Simon for arranging meals etc at Bisley and finally to Simon and Steve for ensuring that the matches went smoothly without mishap.

We are grateful to the OTF for its support and to the NRA for the training grant. Thanks are also due to Peter Jory and the Guernsey Rifle Club and likewise to Colin Mallett and the Jersey Rifle Association; in addition thanks to David Jory and Cliff Mallett for looking after our rifles and for trying to prevent us getting lost. Without such annual support from the Channel Islands this tradition would not exist and British team shooting would be the worse for it.

Finally I wish Gary Alexander and crew an enjoyable and successful tour in 2007.

Andrew Tucker Jackets



Since taking over the running of the business in October last year, we have made one or two changes to the design of our made-to-measure jackets. We have introduced a new self-measurement chart and, in response to numerous requests from our customers, we have increased the choice of colours of leather, suede and canvas. We are also able to supply our jackets with button fastening instead of zips and adjustable shoulder straps if required.

Our website is now up and running and you can visit us online at

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There you can download self-measurement and colour-selection charts for our jackets and find further details of our range of accessories which is gradually increasing.

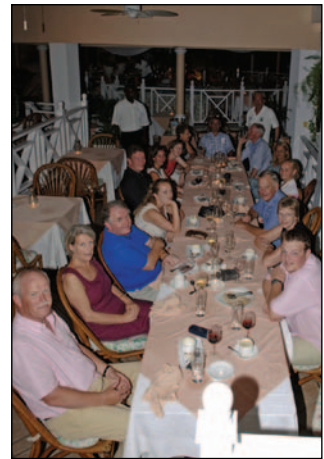
You can also contact us by mail, phone or fax as below or look out for Dorothy and James Dallas on the ranges.

Andrew Tucker Target Sports

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Telephone and Fax: +44 (0) 2088 762 131

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NRA GOODWILL TEAM TO THE WEST INDIES

by Joanna Hossack and Hilary Mott

Captain David Hossack
Shooters Samantha Adamson
Adam Brown
Jo Hossack
Hamish Hunter
Richard Mott
Nigel Penn
Ian Shaw
Martin Townsend
Martin Woolger
Mark Wrigley

Barbados only

James Anderson
Alex Hunter
Lynne Johnson
Alice Ogilvie
Sarah Rennie
Andy Tompson

Wednesday 4 October

After a horribly early start, we set off without any major problems for Heathrow. Expecting the inevitable problems with checking our rifles in, we were relieved when it all went smoothly. About ten hours later, our luck changed. The process at the other end was rather different. Suffice it to say, there was a bit of a delay.

We finally reached our hotel, the lovely Crews Inn resort on the Chaguaramas Peninsula in Trinidad's northwest and had a long-awaited meal before crashing out, tired, but glad to be there.

Thursday 5 October

Many of us didn't really feel ready to start shooting after the previous day's exertions but it all turned out to be a very relaxed (albeit sweaty) affair. Most of us fired just enough shots at 300 and 600 to feel that we knew what we were doing before retiring back to the hotel for some lunch and a swim. There was some disagreement about what the wind does when it comes down the range (which consists of ten targets in a tree-lined valley), with Martin Townsend suggesting that it comes down the range in a very confusing spiralling motion and Norris arguing that it is very simple and only varies between 1 left and 1 right. Time will tell who is correct there.

The afternoon was spent relaxing by the pool and enjoying happy hour in preparation for an evening at the Gomez house. In true native style, we arrived at the Gomez's a bit late. It wasn't deliberate – we simply took a few wrong turns – but it sounded so much better to say that we were now operating on 'Trini time'. As one would expect, the drinks flowed freely, the food was delicious and the company was brilliant.

Friday 6 October

We arrived early at the range for the opening ceremony conducted by Brigadier Dillon of the T&T Defence Force. He opened the shooting with a beautiful V bull, which was greeted by enthusiastic cheers by the assembled competitors.

Starting the competitions with 15 round shoot in excessive heat and humidity was certainly a baptism of fire. The idea was to get the shooting over as fast as possible but many of us still suffered. By about shot 8 it became a damage limitation exercise; a case of trying to pull the trigger between heartbeats.

The 2 and 7 at 300 was more comfortable and by the time we got down for 2 and 10 at 600, we felt like locals. (Well, they were very hot too).

Ian Shaw was top scorer of the day, only dropping one point. He was followed closely by Martin Woolger and Sam Adamson, both on three off.

Saturday 7 October

Thankfully, today was a slightly cooler day, meaning that some of the people who had suffered excessively yesterday were able to breathe a sigh of relief. David led by example, finishing the day only one off.

We had invited the Trinis to join us at the Crews Inn in the evening and we needed to stock up on refreshments in addition to the usual team rations. The hotel reserved an area for us in the garden and put up a small marquee in case of rain. They were unable to do the catering as well but would probably have struggled to match the skilfully presented finger food created by the supporters. The team also provided musical accompaniment for the reception, courtesy of Sam Adamson on bagpipes.

Sunday 8 October

The final day of individual shooting was hotter again but we felt sufficiently acclimatised by this stage not to suffer too much except for some of the older shooters who needed an umbrella to keep the worst of the sun off. These included Norris, so we were not ashamed to succumb to the relief given by some shade.

Ian finished the Trinidad Grand having dropped only two points; a range record. The closely-contested fight for second place was won by Sam, on nine off. Martin Woolger was just pipped, with ten off.

After the shooting (and with tomorrow's team match very firmly in their sights), the Trinidadian team insisted on entertaining us very well on the range with copious amounts of food and drink, under the guise of a very informal and enjoyable prize-giving.

Monday 9 October

Disconcerting exchange of the day:

Hamish – ‘What wind are you on?’

Martin – ‘One.’

Hamish – ‘Which direction?’

Yes, the wind came up today and Martin’s spiralling wind theory became a touch more plausible. However, the coaches got a handle on the conditions quickly and we managed to beat our hosts by 15 points.

After cleaning up, the shooters returned to the hotel for a swim and to join the supporters in preparation for dinner with Norris, Gaby and the Hakims at the Trinidad and Tobago Yacht Club. After a delicious meal, we all took up an invitation of one of the TRA members who is a member of a steel band to attend a rehearsal in a tin-roofed panyard in St James. The extent of the band’s repertoire (from calypso to classical to pop) was amazing and all the pieces were played from memory. We spent an hour or so with them and some of us managed to have a go, with varying success.

Tuesday 10 October

The shooters had a day off today and Norris had offered to take everyone out on his boat. We gathered at the yacht club around 11:00. It was beautiful weather when we set out, and most of the team sunbathed on deck as we cruised west along the coastline towards a secluded cove on the edge of Chaguaramas National Park where we anchored, had a swim and a drink or two. We were joined there by the Hakims, who moored their yacht alongside. Meanwhile, Gaby was in the galley conjuring up a wonderful lunch. As we were eating, it began to rain – and rain hard – but this did little to suppress the convivial atmosphere on board. When the skies cleared, there was time for one more swim before we had to weigh anchor and head for home.



Tobago

Wednesday 12 to Saturday 14 October

We flew to Tobago for three days of luxury R&R at the Coco Reef resort. As we entered the hotel lobby, we were immediately won over. A nice touch was the use of dried shoots and petals to spell out personalised greetings in our rooms. That said, the double bed bearing the message “Welcome Mr Shaw and Mr Wrigley” didn’t go down too well!

Gruelling activities included swimming in the artificially-created lagoon adjacent to the beach, lounging in the partial shade of palm trees, eating and drinking at the beach bar, and, for the more adventurous, deep sea fishing and scuba diving. The toughest decision we had to make was where to dine.

Saturday 14 October

News that our planned flight from Trinidad to Barbados had been cancelled delayed the departure from the Coco Reef of the majority of the team. We were forced to spend a few extra pleasant hours on the beach. It was dark when we arrived at Grantley Adams airport in Barbados, but we eventually got ourselves to the Southern Palms Hotel at St Lawrence Gap, where we were greeted enthusiastically by the team’s ‘Barbados Six’ who had flown out that day from the UK. They had arrived at Southern Palms by mid-afternoon and were getting nicely stuck into the champagne set aside for Joanna’s birthday!

Barbados

Sunday 15 October

We awoke to glorious blue skies. It was practice day for the shooters and a few supporters went with them to the range. Paragon lies on a strip of land between the airport and the shore, and benefits from a sea breeze. There is no natural shade, so a large open-sided tent was erected beside the clubhouse. It was clear from the outset that a great deal of preparation had gone into the championships. Having established the shooters’ subsistence needs – litres and litres of water but no food as lunch was provided at the range – most of the supporters returned to the hotel, seduced by the prospect of sunbathing and swimming.

Having finished shooting, we raced home to get into our team uniform, as there was to be a formal reception at the Prime Minister’s official residence. This was a very spectacular setting, complete with marquee and a band playing in the bandstand, and where we were welcomed by the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Owen Arthur. The team captains said their pieces and we were then entertained by a local dance school and a limbo dancer while enjoying the generous drinks measures. Some people could not resist the urge to lick the spectacular ice sculpture, which I can report tasted cool and delicious!

Monday 16 October

The first day of shooting seemed to go well for most people. We started slowly with seven rounds at 300, followed by ten rounds at 600 and 900. There was a long break for lunch so that we did not have to shoot in the midday heat. We were delighted to see John Killian as the Range Officer, who handled the whole event with tactful but firm control, and who moved things along nicely.

Tuesday 17 October

The shooting consisted of ten rounds at 300, 500 and 600. Helen Griffiths of Australia kept putting them in the middle and had dropped only one point. Ian Shaw was our top team member, a point behind.

In the evening we all helped Sam celebrate her 21st birthday at Pisces, a lovely restaurant at the western end of St Lawrence Gap, during which Martin T did his usual celebratory trick of spilling red wine on Sarah B. Later, we found ourselves at the Old Ship Inn, where colleagues from Trinidad and Australia, based nearby, helped us in our celebrations.

Wednesday 18 October

Sore heads were nursed by the committed members of the team as they battled through ten rounds at 600, 900 and 1000. At the end of the individual competitions, Helen Griffiths was still only one off, followed by Ian (three off) and Sarah R (four off) in second and third position. Sam learned an important lesson at 900, when she reduced her bedding screws from 7Nm to 4.5Nm, resulting in a 50.9. That will teach her not to torque so much.

There were actually three 50.10s at 900, which meant a tie shoot between Norris, Sarah R and Andrew. Sarah dropped a point in the tie and the other two went on to sudden death. Andrew went on to win with a V over a wide 5 from Norris (which he challenged!).

Thursday 19 October

The day off shooting was welcomed enthusiastically, especially by the Barbados six, who had not had the benefit of the holiday in Tobago and needed a bit of R&R.

The morning had been set aside for teams to go sightseeing – allowing the supporters to show off their newly acquired knowledge of the island. We then all met up at Farley Hill, a public beauty spot, with its now-ruined mansion, which was the venue for a picnic with our Barbadian hosts. Seemingly out of nowhere, the Bajan team (organised by Brian Hennis) produced a hot buffet lunch accompanied by plenty of Banks beer and a peculiar creamy concoction of rum and other goodies much enjoyed by the Captain.

In the evening, most of the team went to a local Greek restaurant before retiring early in preparation for the long range match tomorrow.

Friday 20 October

Sarah B and Hilary M were at Paragon for the match and were soon put to work by David. Sarah collated the team scores; Hilary distributed the ammo and collected unconverted sighters. Just like in Trinidad, the day of the match heralded completely different weather from that in the individual competitions, meaning that the coaches had to do some fast learning. The day started out bright and humid as usual, and the team used a tarpaulin and strategically spaced hire cars to construct a makeshift sunshade behind the firing point. On the firing point the shooters had no option but to swelter inside heavy and tight-fitting jackets and jerseys –this inspired a team song (to the tune of 'I Feel Pretty') entitled 'I Smell Yummy'!

The 900 yards stage of the match went well for both our A and B teams but in the afternoon the wind came up again and the rain arrived. Local knowledge is a powerful thing and we took the lead from the Bajans who suddenly abandoned the shooting and made for their cars. Later, it looked as though a second storm was approaching and the wind grew much more blustery. David withdrew the team for ten minutes while the other teams continued shooting. After a while, the wind abated and the advantage gained from the pause was reflected in the result.

The format of the match was such that the A teams shot before the B teams so by the time the B teams got to shoot, the conditions were very much easier and we had a scare that the Australian B team would beat our A team. However, this proved unfounded when the final scores came in:

NRA Goodwill A Team	774.88
Australia Green Team "B"	766.71
NRA Goodwill B Team	764.74
Australia Gold Team "A"	764.73
West Indies	726.67

We knew the Australians would come back fighting, so we all had a very quiet night before tomorrow's short range match.

Saturday 21 October

There was a strong wind during the 300 yards stage of the match and several people suffered from buffeting. Our A Team were behind the B Team at this point and realised that they had a lot of work to do at 500 and 600. The fright spurred them on and they only lost one point at 500. The final scores were as follows:

NRA Goodwill A Team	1185.152
Australia Green Team	1181.142
NRA Goodwill B Team	1180.143
West Indies	1175.151
Australia Gold Team	1174.160

In the evening the BRA kindly laid on a fantastic party at the range with the proceeds from the sale of food throughout the week. They also invited us to help

them drink the three five-gallon containers of Mount Gay Rum presented by the distillers. Several tour shirts changed hands.

History does not relate much about the subsequent events of the evening but we all got home in one piece (pretty much).

Sunday 22 October

Despite feeling decidedly ropery after the previous evening's exertions, we all made it onto the bus which took us to Bridgetown harbour where we boarded a 60ft catamaran chartered by our hosts for a cruise along the West Coast. The sea was much calmer than the day before, and we glided unhurriedly through the water to a nearby bay. Snorkelling equipment was supplied to add to the fun of swimming with turtles, a few of which came close enough to touch. After drying off in the sunshine, we helped ourselves to a buffet lunch and raised a glass to wish Nigel a Happy Birthday. All too soon, we were heading back to port for the bus ride home.

After the cruise, we spent the afternoon relaxing on the beach before the closing ceremony and prize giving at the Savannah Hotel. After a splendid meal, and as the team captains made their presentations there was a certain amount of banter, particularly between the captains of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Unfortunately, the fact that there were ten teams present meant that we did not finish the prize giving until after midnight.

Monday 23 October

The morning of departure was spent relaxing and topping up the tans before a final team meeting at midday. Having cleared customs and said our farewells, as we left the ground, Paragon came fleetingly into view on the right-hand side. The range will soon be planted with several trees (one for each nation competing in the 2006 West Indies Fullbore Championship) – a gift from our team to the BRA. We hope the trees will offer welcome shade for both shooters and supporters and look forward to opportunities for checking on their growth in the years to come. It is good to know that John Fitzgerald intends to get his own back by bringing a team from Australia over to the UK in 2007. We look forward to renewing friendships made during our tour with both West Indians and Australians then.

It just remains to thank everyone involved for making these three weeks so memorable and enjoyable. Both in Trinidad and Barbados, our hosts could not have been more accommodating, and they both provided some serious and enjoyable shooting as well as some fantastic fun. I'm sure we will all come back as soon as we can.

RECORD BREAKER?

In October LBH Custance Baker, known as Barry, won the Historic Arms RC competition for open percussion rifles at 200 yards - quite an achievement as he is 91 years old!

Barry's first competition win for target rifle shooting was his Prep School cup in 1928 at the age of thirteen. He went on to represent Marlborough College in the Cadet Pairs in 1931 and was a member of the school team that won the Country Life smallbore competition in 1933. After leaving school and joining the Army he made the King's 100 at Bisley in 1938 but the war and overseas postings then interrupted his shooting.

By 1959 Barry had retired from the Army and taken up a teaching post in Taunton where he joined the Somerset County Rifle Association. He shot for the county team, under Roger Mason's captaincy, for eleven years until 1970, as well as winning the County Championship in 1965.

His interest then turned to black powder shooting using various muzzle-loading guns and pistols, many of which he made himself. This culminated in 1984 when he built a .451 Rigby match rifle. After a good few years getting to grips with the sport and his rifle and, after a cataract operation, he started to win competitions. Barry has won prizes every year since 1996 and in 2002 he was invited to shoot for Great Britain in the long range muzzle-loading international match (aged 88!). He declined the invitation as he knew he would not perform well under the very poor weather conditions predicted.

Barry only stopped skiing at the age of 86 and keeps fit with regular cycling. He is now the oldest competing member of the National Rifle Association and we wonder whether, at 91, he is the oldest ever winner at Bisley. Can anyone beat this record or Barry's span of 78 years from first to last competition win?

With any luck Barry will be breaking his own record in 2007!



100 YEARS AGO

by Ted Molyneux

The year 1907 does not appear to have generally been a particularly auspicious one. Henry Campbell-Bannerman was Prime Minister and parliament voted to curb the power of the Lords, which attitude still persists. Lord Baden-Powell initiated the Boy Scouts movement and the average wage of a working man was around £30 per annum.

However, on the horizon were the 1908 Olympic Games which were to be held in England and its shooting events at Bisley.

The 300 yards firing point was constructed on Century Range, which was a much needed improvement, but the main consideration and talking point was of the marked supremacy of the new pointed bullet designs, introduced into the armies of both France and Germany, over the 215grns ball Mk VI cartridge of the British Army. These new designs produced higher velocities and much flatter trajectories giving better accuracy over longer distances and this gave the military much cause for concern.

The long range match rifle shooters were ideal for trying various bullet forms and cartridge loadings, so the findings of their tests and trials were invaluable towards the eventual production of our 174grns ball Mk VII cartridge with its pointed bullet.



HM The King's Prize winner Lt WC Addison of Australia.

The inaccuracy of the old Mark VI ball ammunition caused the 200 yards bullseye to be increased in size to 6" diameter and the inner to 15" diameter. The 12" diameter black circular aiming mark remained unchanged.

However, the Long Lee-Metford and Lee-Enfield rifles were soon to be replaced by the Short Magazine Lee-Enfield rifle (SMLE), so often lovingly referred to as "my good old Smellie", a rifle which was both a handy service weapon and, with the application of experienced armourer's breath, performed well as a target rifle especially at long range.

Of course the motor car was still something of a novelty and powered flight was very much in its infancy.

The Boer War had exposed many weaknesses in the efficiency and tactics of our Army, which caused the general public to be conscious of our need for improvement, resulting in large numbers of rifle clubs being formed. Records show that there were 1281 clubs affiliated to the NRA with a membership of 88990.

There were 1389 entries for HM The King's Prize, which was won by Lt WC Addison of Australia after a tie shoot with Pte JP Hope of the 1st London Volunteer Rifle Corps.

The Grand Aggregate was won by Arm Sgt WG Padgett, 1st Volunteer Battalion the Scottish Rifles.

Rugby won the Ashburton, England won both the National and the Mackinnon with the Mother Country winning the Kolapore from Australia, who had an equal total but a lesser score at 600 yards. Canada were third, 11 points behind.

The prizes were presented by HRH Princess Christian and many distinguished visitors were present. They were, to name but a few, HRH The Duke of Connaught, Field Marshal Earl Roberts VC, Lady Cheylesmore, Countess Waldegrave, Lord Strathcona, The Duke of Wellington, Earl Cranbourne, Viscount Hardinge, Lord Lovat, Lord Loch, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, Viscount Dalrymple, Sir Clement Hill MP plus six other distinguished Members of Parliament. In those days people appreciated the good work of the NRA and how it benefited the nation. Patriotic pride was on a high and only a few short years into the future, was soon to be put to a dreadful test. But then the social graces were observed, there was law and order in the land and the future looked rosy with hopes of world stability. Furthermore the Association's funds were in surplus!

Those were the days!

OBITUARIES

Terence Michael Gadsby

Terry Gadsby was born in Aldershot on 7 July 1937. Later his family moved to Crookham Village in Hampshire, and he went to Odiham Grammar School. After his National Service he continued his education at Reading University, reading for an MA in Agricultural Land Management. He then took up a post with the Greater London Council, where he became a Chartered Surveyor and Chief Land Agent, being responsible for the preservation and management of the Greenbelt around London.

Terry had many interests which included wood turning, ornithology and philately; because of his professional expertise he immersed himself in village life and the preservation of the local countryside. In sport, he was a keen golfer and for over thirty years played hockey for Guildford.

He became a member of the NRA in the early 1960s and was Honorary Secretary for the Hampshire Rifle Association for nearly fifteen years, organising the HRA Open Prize Meeting helped by his wife Jean and other members.

Essentially a fullbore shot he later turned to Match Rifle. He was very proud of representing Hampshire on a number of occasions during the 1970s and particularly of being in the KGV and Astor winning squads in 1973 and 1974 respectively. He was a team player and was always prepared to help and support other members in the County. He was a member of the City Rifle Club and the South London RC.

When he was diagnosed as having Alzheimer's Disease his reply was "Someone's got to have it!" - a remark that was typical of Terry. He bore his illness with fortitude and although no longer actively shooting was prepared to reminisce about shooting and the many friends he remembered. He died on 22 October 2006

He leaves Jean, stepson Julian and grandsons Ryan and Luke.

Michael Martel

Margaret Wright

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Margaret Wright.

Margaret was a keen member of the Northwood and Little Chalfont Rifle clubs, and had recently celebrated her 73rd birthday shooting fullbore at Bisley.

Her helpful and calming nature will be missed by all who knew her.



A memorial trophy has been presented to her home club at Little Chalfont and will be shot for on an annual basis.

Our condolences are extended to her family and friends.

Geoff Roads

Alan Collins

Alan Collins, a staunch member of Bullet Lodge Rifle Club until he became ill with the dreadful Motor Neurone Disease which he bore with great fortitude, passed away on 23 November.

He was earlier a long-standing member of the erstwhile Barclays Bank Rifle Club and

he made many useful shooting contributions to both clubs. He was always a good team member and a strong contender in all internal competitions and many Imperial Meetings but was always modest about his ability and achievements. Alan was also a keen smallbore shot with Flight Refuelling Rifle Club. His average was in the high nineties and he was a competitor at County level. Apart from shooting, Alan was a keen bowler in a club at his home town of Verwood in Dorset.

Before he retired Alan was Chief Engineer at Barclays House, the triple-tower former headquarters of Barclays Bank International at Poole, promoted some years earlier from a similar position at the 168 Fenchurch Street, London building. He was highly skilled in his profession and those skills were often of great benefit at Bullet Lodge. A problem with the plumbing? The electrics? Alan could always be relied upon to sort it and to ensure that a programme of general upkeep was maintained.

He was born a Londoner, in 1928, and the memories of his roots were precious to him, especially those of the wartime blitz. He was keen to ensure that his children and seven grandchildren knew what life in London was like during those dark months by the many stories he could relate. He was essentially a Londoner who happened to live in Dorset.

Alan was much loved by his family and will be remembered by his shooting associates as a cheerful friend and companion and a social asset. He is sorely missed.

Malcolm Boyce

We are sad to announce the death of Don Nockles. An obituary will appear in the next Journal.



PROCEDURE FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2007

These procedures are derived from the simplified Rules approved at the Special General Meeting held just prior to the Bisley General Meeting, 2005.

Eligibility of Candidates and Proposers

Only persons who are Registered Members of the Association and who have fully paid-up their subscriptions for 2007 by 31 March are eligible to be Candidates for election to the General Council and to be Proposers for such Candidates.

Casual Vacancies – Two Ordinary Members

There are two casual vacancies for General Council for the term expiring in 2009. There are accordingly seven vacancies for 'Ordinary' elected members. In accordance with precedent, in the event of there being an election (more than seven candidates), the two individuals among the seven successful candidates with the lowest number of votes will be deemed selected for the two-year terms. If there are six or seven candidates, there will not be an election and lots will be drawn to determine who fills the casual vacancies for two years. If there are five or fewer candidates, there will not be an election and those persons will fill the routine vacancies of the Ordinary Members retiring in 2010.

Regional and Shooting Discipline Candidature and Voting

Those voting for Regional Candidates must live in the appropriate Sports Council Region even though their nominated Candidates for election may live elsewhere.

Those voting for Shooting Discipline Candidates must have previously declared that Shooting Discipline to the NRA as their primary Shooting Discipline.

Eligibility for voting will be determined as at 30 April 2007.

Nomination forms for Candidates and Proposers with an explanation of the procedures for nominations, are available from the Secretary General's office.

Curriculum Vitae

In order to assist the Registered Members with their choice of representatives in the election, a CV for each Candidate will be provided with the voting papers. A draft of no more than 150 words should accompany the nomination. A passport sized photograph of the Candidate will accompany all CVs. A content layout for the CVs is on the pro forma.

The Secretary General will refer back to authors where CVs are too long or are, or appear to be, factually incorrect.

The Programme of key dates for Elections

31 March 2007

All Candidates and Proposers must be fully paid-up Registered Members of the Association by this date.

30 April 2007

- a) Nominations for all vacancies must be returned to the Secretary General by 17:00 on this date.
- b) Registered Members must be qualified for voting for their respective Regional or Shooting Discipline Candidate by this date.
- c) All Members desiring to vote must be fully paid-up Registered Members by this date.

31 May 2007

Voting slips will be posted to all entitled Members by this date together with the procedures for voting.

23 July 2007

Voting slips, in the correct envelope supplied, must be received by the NRA office by mail, or by hand, no later than 18:00 on this date.

Scrutineers appointed by the Council

To be notified after the Council Meeting on 26 April 2007.

Routine Vacancies

There will be the following vacancies in 2007, all of whom are entitled to stand for re-election.

Five Ordinary Members

JH Carmichael
ARK Clayton
M Maksimovic
Mrs KD Robertson
MWT Walton *

Four Regional Members

MJM Black	Northern
Dr JD Warburton	Yorks/Humberside
DD Watt	Eastern
DG Young	North Western

Three Shooting Discipline Members

JPS Bloomfield	Target Rifle
Dr P Monaghan	F Class
D Spittles	Muzzle Loading

Existing Vacancies

Two Ordinary Members
London & South East Regional Member

* not standing for re-election.

LETTERS

Whoops 1!

From Maurice Ayling

May I claim a little space to refute the implication in my letter published in the previous Journal that one who has in the past produced and administered a multi-million pound budget on behalf of the late Lord Weinstock, is incapable of costing his shooting to within six pounds sterling per trigger pull?

Having calculated the total twelve months' expenditure, including everything from travel to 4X2 and score cards, and divided it by the number of rounds fired in that period, the result was four pounds and ten pence per shot, which I wrote as "£4-10", but which was printed as "£4 to £10" per shot. Having been firing rifled weapons of one type or another in competition since 1946, I will readily admit to a certain length of tooth, but utterly refute senile decay.

On the subject of old age, may I take the opportunity to point out to those of our fraternity over the age of 75, who may have missed the point, that although the NRA insurance scheme covers them for the loss of equipment etc they are no longer covered for personal accident. So, be careful when tackling those Century Range water jumps!

Whoops 2!

From Jim Oxley

Many thanks for the recent Journal. However on page 48/49 the top photo is, I believe, my friend Marjoline Buitelaar from the Netherlands with the Dutch flag. Perhaps a correction could be made in the next issue?

Reply from the Editor

OK I admit it - I failed O level Geography! My apologies to France and the Netherlands for the confusion. Next time I will check my flags better!

The Journal – broaden its appeal to the younger shooters and those new to fullbore!

From Barry Tompson

I have just read through my Journal and found it very well presented and thoroughly professional in every sense; thanks for that.

I saw James Watson's appeal for more members to spread the cost of production. You can tell he is not a banker – bankers would tell you to thin it down and save on costs. Well done James and I wish you every success.

As a possible positive contribution to his cause I should like to take a few moments to be objective about the contents of the Journal, and in particular, what is there in it for new shooters? In my view there is almost nothing in it for new shooters; by new I mean those who may not have 'Shot the Meeting' before and who

are in their first years of fullbore shooting and don't know who's who on the ranges.

I came to fullbore shooting without the benefit of being a member of a school shooting squad and as a very occasional small-bore shooter. It took me twenty years to enter my first Imperial Meeting and in that time the Journal was almost meaningless to me (I received a copy as Club Hon Sec). I was a twice a year shooter probably not firing more than fifty rounds all year. There are many like that now who are not NRA members and who just enjoy coming to Bisley - these are some of the raw material who might join just to get the Journal if there was something in it for them. I can identify a handful of these in my own club.

My own training in fullbore techniques has been self-taught from various articles I have dug up during the past twenty years or so and the odd pearl of wisdom from the Bisley Tigers I meet on the ranges.

The most informative source of information is the booklet produced by the NRA: *NRA Target Rifle Coaching Course Notes* together with the *First Timers Guide to Bisley* by Tim Elliott. Added to that I have produced my own leaflet, for the benefit of newcomers in my own club - *Bisley - Things they don't tell you*.

I recommend setting aside two or three pages in each magazine to reproduce parts of these productions to help the newcomer to get up and running as soon as possible - success breeds success. Whilst the NRA runs some excellent courses not everyone who would like to can get along to them; the notes they use could perhaps be edited for this project? There are other learned shooters who might also contribute articles which they already have on their PCs.

In other disciplines there are experts who might proffer some articles on technique/equipment/wind etc which might serve to increase the use of the 'fringe' ranges (the profit is in the margin!).

I wouldn't print the whole thing each time but rather refer the reader to the main article where possible, and continue it next time. A repeat over a twelve-month cycle would not be amiss. The established and proficient would probably welcome the revision and be grateful for an article that reinforced their teaching for their own athelings – not easy being a Profit in your own land!

If it says it in print it must be right!

Reply from the Editor

Many thanks for your suggestions and I couldn't agree more. The introduction to my first Imperial Meeting was my Club Secretary shoving an out of date Bisley Bible at me and telling me I had to know everything in it before the Meeting; if I got it wrong I would be

drummed off Camp and banned from the ranges for ever! As someone who had not been a cadet and had not shot at school, I wish we had had the Aunts and Uncles Scheme back then.

Tim Elliott's excellent Aunts and Uncles Scheme together with his *First Timers Guide to Bisley* should hopefully help all those shooting the Meeting who need help and assistance. Tim's *First Timers Guide to Bisley* can be downloaded by clicking on Imperial Meeting in the Competitions drop down menu on the NRA website and further details can be obtained from him (see article on page 14).

The book *NRA Target Rifle Coaching Course Notes*, written by Peter Hicks, is available from the NRA for £5.00 per copy plus postage. Unfortunately it is not currently available in electronic form.

As I am sure everyone is aware, we want the Journal to be useful and informative to all shooters and I should love to receive more articles directed at the less experienced shooter. I do not think there would be much point in just reproducing parts of the two previously mentioned publications as they are either free to download via the website or it is extremely cheap to buy the entire book. What I should like to see is a variety of new articles along similar lines aimed at less experienced shooters in all disciplines.

Barry's own leaflet is extremely helpful but is mainly directed at his own club members. However if you would like to receive a copy of it and adjust it to suit your own club then contact me (*details on page 1*) and I will pass a copy onto you.

So how about it readers? Who out there would like to write an informative article along the lines that Barry suggests?

Or if you're a new shooter looking for specific information then contact me (*details on page 1*) and if I can't help, I'll point you in the direction of someone who can.

Well done!

From John Kime

I feel I must register my thanks to Linda Saynor and the staff at South Yorkshire Police Firearms Licensing Dept for their recent sterling service. A notification of disposal and application for a one-for-one FAC variation were posted on the evening of Monday 13 November. This was signed for on Wednesday 15 November and the variation printed (and signed) on Monday 20. I received the varied certificate on Wednesday 22 - four days not counting the weekend and time in the post!

Well done South Yorkshire!



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SUMMARY ACCOUNTS

Great Britain Target Rifle Team, South Africa, March/April 2006

Captain - Chris Hockley

A full account of the tour was given in the Summer 2006 Journal on pages 24-29. The team of 20 shot first on the Nottingham Road range in Kwa-Zulu Natal and then after a break in the area moved on to Bloemfontein to take part in the SABU Championships as individuals and in the RSA International and Protea matches.

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Air Travel	11,751	NRA OTF Grant	10,000
Car Hire	8,084	NRA Training Grant	1,610
Coach to Heathrow	460	Hospitality Days	32,243
Insurance	315	Auction of Promises	7,442
Shooting Costs SA	5,944	Sale of Special Beer	5,543
Ammunition SA	2,432	Company Donations	1,500
Ammunition Shipping costs	2,065	Team Brochure	156
UK Training	2,971	Bank Interest	1,650
Accommodation at ranges	5,344		
Cost of Rest Period	10,384	Team Member Contributions	13,097
Team Gifts and Receptions	4,689	(Average per head £655)	
Uniforms & Equipment	10,170		
Subsistence UK Training	1,490		
Team Dinners on Tour	3,045		
Administration	1,918		
Team Donation to OTF for Juniors	1,000		
Team Donation to NRA Butts Fund	1,179		
Total Expenditure	73,241	Total Income	73,241

NRA Target Rifle Team, Channel Islands, May 2007

Captain - Chris White

A full account of the tour is given in this issue of the Journal on pages 47 to 51. The team of 14 shot against Guernsey and Jersey on their respective ranges, winning both matches.

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Travel	980	NRA OTF Grant	2,600
Insurance	80	NRA Training Grant	933
Accommodation	8,408		
Shooting Costs (including training)	2,428	Team Members	10,011
Team Kit	1,268	(Average per head £715)	
Trophies & Expenses	380		
Total Expenditure	13,544	Total Income	13,544

ALL COMERS V PALMA TEAM

There will be a one day match against Martin Townsend's Palma team on Saturday 2 June.

The match will be at long range on Palma targets.

There will be a team dinner with the Palma team in the evening.

Please can all who are interested in shooting against the Palma Team, contact Chris Weeden at
chris.weeden@ntlworld.com
 with name, contact details, county details and county captain contact details.

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Errata

Apologies to Shooting Services whose advert was omitted from the previous Journal due to a computer error.

MEMBERS' PAGE

Everyclick Update

Following on from the article written on page 96 of the last Journal (Winter 2006), we are very pleased to announce that 264 members have signed up to support the NRA by using Everyclick as their search engine. So that leaves about 4800 of you still to sign up!

During November, December and January, NRA supporters have raised £330.51 just by using Everyclick as their search engine. If you would like to help us raise more money then here's how to sign up.

- 1 Go to www.everyclick.com
- 2 In the upper part of the Everyclick homepage, click on the white text "Select the charity you would like to support" located above the Search box. Do not type anything into the Search box on this page.
- 3 The following page should say "Select the charity you would like to support as you search the web". In the Search box in the middle of this screen, type "National Rifle Association" and click on "Search Charities".
- 4 Find the entry for the National Rifle Association. Click on the green arrow "Select this Charity" at the left hand end of the entry.
- 5 This should produce a registration form. Check that the National Rifle Association is the named Charity, then fill in the form and click on "Sign Up". You only have to provide your name, an e-mail address, country of residence and password.
- 6 Now use Everyclick and raise money for the NRA!

It does not cost us, or you, a penny - so please use it - and pass the message to all your club members, shooting friends and supporters!

Calling all Companies for a day of Golf on 18 June 2007

Does your Company have any golfers? Would they be interested in a great day out, perhaps hosting a few clients? Are there any golfers in your family or circle of friends? The OTF Matthew Clark Golf Day is ideal for your Company to have a day out with a couple of clients. Teams of four with the best three scores on each counting with stableford points and full handicap allowance gives everyone a good chance. Prizes for the longest drive, nearest the pin and Hole-in-One prizes of a Mercedes Car herald a great array of prizes for teams and individuals and are sponsored by Matthew Clark.

The whole day is a significant fund raiser for the Overseas Teams Fund but is not aimed at just persuading shooters to take part. However hopefully you know some non-shooting work colleagues or other companies that your company might challenge to a day out?

Please e-mail Chris Hockley at chockley.cu@defenceacademy.mod.uk for an entry form.

You Can't Be Serious

A comment was recently overheard in the Range Office that electronic targets were for serious shooters only prompting John Gardener to pen the following:

You really can't be serious
Unless you want to shoot
On our electric targets
(Of course and pay the loot)

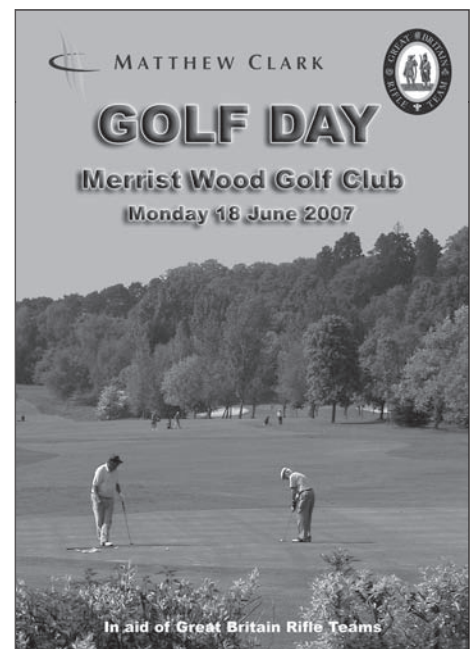
You can't shoot if you're happy
Only serious and low
Then of course, you're welcome
To come and have a go

But don't you come here smiling
Don't expect to get some fun
'cause only serious people
Are allowed to use a gun

Don't dare to laugh or giggle
Don't chuckle smile or smirk
Don't even offer money
If you're happy - it won't work

Because only serious shooters
Are allowed in through the door
So if you're in it for enjoyment
Don't come here any more.

NB The NSC would like to point out that shooting on the electronic targets is very likely to increase your levels of happiness and would therefore encourage everyone to come and try them out as soon as possible.



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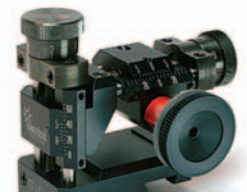
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