



National Rifle Association Journal

Spring 2009 Volume LXXXVIII Number 1



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Cover photo: David Dimpleby fires the Maxim Machine Gun (see page 32 for article). Photo by Karen Robertson.

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NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



*by
Glynn
Alger*

National Association of Target Shooting Sports

Recently a number of members have started to express concern about the spectre of joining NATSS. NATSS is about doing something shooting has been unable to do before, acting co-operatively to protect the sport as a whole. If you look at the results of both the NRA survey, carried out two years ago, and the more recent version run by the consultants Performance Matters, the outcome is consistent in that most shooters appear to want a single national body.

They believe, going forward, that it makes sense to join the various elements of the sport together at one level to make it easier to join and shoot and at another level to make sure the messages being sent to politicians are consistent and in the interest of the whole sport not minor factions.

The horrible truth is that the current national bodies have largely failed to represent the interests of shooters because they fail to appreciate the wider picture and act only within the limited confines of their small piece of the sport. Pistol shooting was a victim of this approach. Since then we have seen our rights as shooters increasingly eroded as the authorities nibble away on the margins with changes to legislation and interpretations of guidance that make the sport more difficult in which to join and to take part. When you look outside the UK at the position of the UN and the EU on civilian ownership of firearms policy the picture is equally worrying.

There are those within the NRA who choose to ignore these realities, having taken a fatalistic approach to life, which in terms of ambition is limited to being able to shoot within their own lifetime. The NRA has wider responsibilities to safeguard the sport for future generations.

To me the NRA is important because it has the opportunity to make all the difference for shooting across the UK. However, in its present form, it is

bound to fail if the “Bisley Rifle Club” prevails. The NRA’s importance is that it has the gravitas to persuade all the other bodies to come together to create a large significant shooting organisation in terms of the sport and being able to influence the political landscape.

On its own, the NRA has lots of history and it used to be able to bring influence to bear through its membership. Those days are gone and we can no longer attract senior politicians or members of the military to represent us. We used to run an event that appeared on the social calendar along with Henley and others. We are not even on the public radar today. As a sport we represent 6000 individual members and possibly 17000 others through their clubs. On this basis we are not a highly significant organisation. In a sporting context the Palma World Championships may attract 10 teams to take part, while ISSF disciplines attract 150 countries to compete. In international fullbore shooting terms we are a big fish in a small pond.

If we wish to protect, promote and grow fullbore shooting we have proven that we cannot do it as a stand-alone organisation even when we own a jewel in the crown like Bisley. Our future is intrinsically linked with the other target shooting bodies if we are to punch our weight in future.

NATSS has not decided that we will become a single national body but it is committed to looking at the possibilities. At the highest levels within the organisations concerned, there is a recognition that the formation of a single national body would be a good thing but no one is as yet convinced it can happen because there are influential elements within all three national bodies that will not support it.

What a single national body looks like has not been decided. It could be a loose federation or it could be something more profound. Whatever the desired outcome it must be approved by the three NGB boards and then by the wider membership. Let us face it, if the interests of fullbore shooting at and away from Bisley are not accounted for, the whole idea of a merger will not fly. Perhaps it is time for the quiet majority to be heard for once?

Whole Sport Funding

The CEOs of the CPSA, NSRA and the NRA have worked hard since June 2008, with John Perry of NATSS, to put together a Whole Sport funding plan. As you are probably aware target shooting was awarded £750,000 by Sport England to be spent over the next four years on the development of shooting at the grass roots level. As a result of being able to demonstrate that the NGBs can work together, we have been successful in attracting money from central Government for the first time to help with the wider development of shooting sports.

The plan put forward by the Associations was comprehensive looking to deliver to a modernisation agenda. Decisions on how the money is to be prioritised have not yet been finalised with Sport England. The major proposal that will probably get approval is the appointment of Regional Development Officers who will be responsible for supporting clubs in the regions in terms of governance, recruitment and funding sources to improve facilities.

Importantly, having breached the funding barrier, the most important part of the regional role will be to look for other funding pots to develop the sport at local levels.

Olympics

As you are aware, originally the Olympics were coming to Bisley. However, following a visit from the International Olympic Committee who advised the London 2012 bid team that they should look towards a more compact Games, the venue for shooting was moved to Woolwich. The shooting bodies supported the move not because they thought it appropriate but because they wished to be seen to be working in the national interest.

After the London bid was successful, the shooting associations repeatedly pointed out to the Olympic authorities that they had concerns regarding the safety conditions and the feasibility of Woolwich, in an effort to get it moved to a site where legacy for shooting could be achieved.

Following the Beijing Olympics the Government raised concerns regarding the cost of the Games for 2012, in particular the provision of temporary venues and the lack of legacy. At the same time the NRA was approached by both Sport England and the MoD to see if Bisley was willing to host the 2012 shooting. The answer was of course "Yes". On the basis of the approach, the NRA initiated a survey of its site to see where it could best accommodate the Olympic facilities as a stand-alone option.

The survey revealed that there were three potential sites, two out towards Long and Short Siberia and the third on an area of land between Pirbright Camp and Bisley. The last was the preferred option because it was less challenging in environmental and planning terms, plus increased noise would not be an issue for our neighbours.

An approach was made to the Olympic Authorities to engage with consultants KPMG following their appointment by the Department of Culture and Sport. The NRA, at this stage, was refused permission to talk to KPMG to put our case.

A short time later, despite having been told KPMG would not speak to us, they surveyed our site without permission led around by an Olympic official. Following discussions with the official concerned

we were dismayed to learn that KPMG had not been informed about our plans, in fact quite the reverse.

The NRA, after much debate, decided that, on a matter of principle, we would make sure our case was considered by the Olympic authorities. We wrote letters of complaint to the Olympics Minister and the Minister for Sport. In addition we initiated a campaign to have our case heard through the press and our supporters in Parliament.

In early December 2008, after months of pressure being exerted, the 2012 Olympic bodies agreed to meet with the NRA, NSRA, CPSA and the development team we had put together.

The Olympic Development Authority, who are responsible for building the Games venues, are now engaged with the shooting associations seriously considering the feasibility of holding the shooting at Bisley in 2012.

During the course of this journey and engagement, the shooting associations have also been able to work with a number of regional statutory bodies and local authorities who all support our bid for the Olympics and the wider development of Bisley to provide a world class centre for shooting.

General Notices

Annual General Meeting

The 2009 Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 12 June at 17:30 in the NRA Pavilion.

Bisley General Meeting

The 2009 Bisley General Meeting will be held in the Umbrella Tent at 21:00 on Wednesday 22 July.

Team Captains

We would like to congratulate the following on their appointments as Captain for the following teams:

Kolapore 2009

Robin Pizer

Under 25 Team 2009

Richard Stearn

NRA Team to the Channel Islands 2010

Colin Johnston

GB Team to Canada 2011

David Richards

Nomination for Team Captaincy

Nominations are required for a Captain for the following team. Nominations should be sent to the Secretary General and received by 1 June 2009:

GB Team to South Africa 2012

Onwards and Upwards!

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SHOOTING



by
*Martin
Farnan*

Open Days

Two NRA Open Days will be held this year, one on Saturday 2 May and the other on Saturday 5 September 2009. 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. A registration fee of £10 (over 14 years of age) or £5 (10 to 14 years of age) will be payable. Booklets of tickets (ten £1 tickets) may then be purchased, which may be used to pay the fees to shoot a number of different firearms ranging from air pistol to all varieties of fullbore rifles.

We are seeking experienced shooters who are members of the NRA to help coach or supervise the general public at the above event (please note that the range will be controlled by a qualified Range Conducting Officer). 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 www.nra.org.uk. Please let all your friends know about the day and encourage them to attend.

Phoenix Meeting

This year the Phoenix Meeting will be held over the long weekend Friday 22 to Monday 25 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 10 metres Air Pistol to 1000 yards F Class Rifle.

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 Secretary, Sally Agnew (extensions 152 or 160 respectively). Copies of the entry form are being 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 day earlier than last year. First Saturday will therefore be 11 July and Final Saturday will be 25 July.

Entry Forms

The individual TR & MR entry form may now be downloaded from the NRA/NSC website. Entry may again be made securely online, which will be much easier, quicker, more accurate (and 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 database, 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 to do so online.

The entry form will be in its usual 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 will only need to complete page 3 (personal details, block entries and financial reconciliation). Only those competitors wishing to enter single competitions or aggregates will 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.

This year you will also need to fill in your TRID (Target Rifle ID) on both the online and paper entry forms - the TRID is a unique identifying number which will enable us to match your scores with previous results. You can look up your TRID by doing a search on the website for your scores at <http://scores.nra.org.uk>. A more detailed explanation can be found on page 43. If you do not have internet access please contact the Squadding Department on ext 146 who will be able to look it up for you.

Entries

Once entries have been processed and entered in the computer, a detailed entry summary sheet will be forwarded to each competitor. Please note, as entries are processed in batches, that this is unlikely to happen until late April or early May. 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. 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 such 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 read carefully the notes on all entry forms before making your entry.

Individual Entry Fees (issued ammunition)

The actual entry fee for each individual squadded competition will remain at the same level as last year, ie £1 per round issued plus the cost price of the ammunition. To encourage more entries, the entry fees for aggregates and sweepstakes will also remain exactly as for last year, £4.40 and 50p respectively.

Regrettably the price of the ammunition has, for the reasons shown below, risen significantly this year. The NRA undertook a series of tests of ammunition from four potential suppliers and, as explained elsewhere in this Journal, decided to purchase the ammunition from RUAG, based in Nuremberg. This ammunition has been developed specifically for the NRA to give optimum performance at both short and long range, and contains a Sierra Match King bullet in an RWS case.

The price of this ammunition has, unfortunately, been affected by a number of factors which apply worldwide:

- (a) the rise in the price of metals by some 80%,
- (b) the fact that Sierra bullets are priced in \$US, and the decline in the value of the £ Sterling against the \$US,
- (c) the fact that RUAG price the rounds in €, and the decline in the value of the £ Sterling against the Euro.

These three factors have caused a huge increase in the Sterling price of this ammunition. It is of note, however, that despite these facts, the RUAG quote was still the cheapest of the final two quotations received.

Competitors using their own ammunition (Match Rifle and F Class) have not been charged for ammunition. In view of the potential complexity of the entry form F Class, using their own ammunition, will have a separate entry form, similar to the TR/MR entry form, but with their own ammunition-free entry fees shown.

Queen's and St George's Second and Third Stages

The costs of running the Second and Third Stages of both HM The Queen's Prize and the St George's Prize, and the Final of the Donaldson Memorial, have up to now been incorporated, on a proportional basis, into the First Stages. Being aware of the very significant increase in the cost of entering the Imperial Meeting this year, due to the cost of the ammunition, the Trustees have agreed to subsidise these Second and Third Stages, and the Donaldson Final, in full. The entry fee for these competitions will now cover the costs of the First Stage only in each competition. The entry fee for the Grand Aggregate will therefore be reduced to a figure under £300, considerably less than would have been the case without this subsidy.

It is intended that the significant sum involved will be recovered by the sale of the empty cases after the Meeting, and it is therefore imperative that every case, and every unfired sighter, is returned along with your squadding card.

Markers

As last year all marker fees are contained in the entry fee quoted, and no competitors will be required to mark in any of the competitions on the main TR/MR Individual Entry Form. The only competition where competitor marking will be required will be the Howard Wilkinson on Final Saturday morning. The entry fee for this two-range competition will therefore be reduced by the previous marker fee element.

Marker Fees

For the avoidance of doubt I show below, in italics, the same two paragraphs I wrote last year in connection with marker fees:

"Given that the figures on the entry form all have to be changed anyway, the opportunity has been taken to rationalise some other costs and simplify the entry form. Firstly, marking has been recalculated on a cost per-shot basis, and this has been applied to all competition entry fees. For most TR competitions, this results in a small fall in the marker cost element. The 15-round shoots, and the Match Rifle 20-round shoots, will have an increased marker cost element in their price. Since there is no competitor marking any more, there is no need to display the marker fee as a separate charge and it has been included in each competition entry fee.

The various discounts have been adjusted so that they now apply to the entire cost of a competition. Discounts were previously applied to the various elements in different ways for different groups – inconsistent and confusing. The percentage for each discount has been recalculated to give the same amount of money off as before, but as the discount is now applied to the full cost (competition + ammo + marker), the percentages have changed. These

changes result in a less complex form, with the basic price for a competition being a more accurate reflection of what you will actually pay – if you are not entitled to discounts and are not due to pay surcharges, the quoted entry fee is exactly what you will pay”.

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 to enter more easily the blocks which will fit in with their date of arrival at Bisley. Competitors arriving on First Friday are therefore encouraged to enter Blocks C, D and E. Those arriving on the morning of Middle Saturday should only enter Blocks C and D and those arriving on the afternoon of Middle Saturday should 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 in this Journal is a request form which may be used to obtain entry forms for Team Matches (including Schools Veterans), Pistol & Gallery Rifle, Any Rifle (MR), Civilian Service Rifle and the Imperial Historic Arms Meeting.

Competitor ROs

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 RO duties. Their assistance in the running of the ranges during the Imperial Meeting will be much appreciated.

Competitor Ammunition Issuers

As last year the ammunition will be issued on the firing point by Competitor Ammunition Issuers. This Special Duty will be in addition to any Competitor RO Duty, but will not be arduous in any way. Full instructions will be included in every competitor's envelope. No competitor should have more than one Ammo duty and two Competitor RO duties.

Service Rifle

Entry Forms for Service competitors may be obtained from the Squadding Department or the Shooting Division Secretary on ext 160. They should be returned by 26 June 2009. With the complete revision of the CENTSAM programme again this year there will be some major changes to the NRA SR events.

Unlike last year the majority of SR competitions may be shot this year as individual squadded matches on Thursday 2 July. This will allow TA competitors to compete this year. For those who are unable to shoot on 2 July the NRA matches may be shot concurrently along with Matches 4 and 8 during the various Service SAMs. The squadded team events will still be shot as standalone matches on 9 and 10 July. Details will shortly be finalised, and will be published in the Summer Journal.

Civilian Service Rifle

The draft Civilian Service Rifle programme will be as follows:

Individual

Thu 2 July	RouPELL, FIBUA and Moving Target
Fri 3 July	Civilian 100 yards, 200 yards and 300 yards matches
Sat 4 July	ARA Match 4 (500 yards – 100 yards Rundown) and Match 8 (PR Short Range match)
Sun 5 July	International SR Team (PR Long Range match)

Team

Sat 25 July	Civilian Methuen Team Match
-------------	-----------------------------

All individual matches are planned to be held on Pirbright Ranges, and the Civilian Methuen will be held on Century Range. Details will shortly be finalised, and will be published in the Summer Journal.

Target Rifle

The Chairman's Prize will again consist of 2 sighters and 10 to count at 900 yards on Friday afternoon, concurrent with the Queen's Consolation, and at 300 and 600 yards on Saturday morning, concurrent with the Howard Wilkinson. Entry to the Chairman's Prize itself will be free of charge, but all those entering this competition will have to enter both the Queen's Consolation and the Howard Wilkinson. The entry fee for the Howard Wilkinson will be reduced this year, as explained elsewhere in these notes, since it will be competitor self-marking, thus saving the previous marker fees.

F Class

The F Class Queen's Prize and St George's Finals will again be shot as 'stand alone' competitions on Second Friday under the same match conditions as those for

TR, but using F Class targets. There will be separate finals for standard F Class and F Restricted in both competitions.

Schools

The revised Schools entry form will be sent out to all Schools before Easter. Entry fees will remain the same as last year.

It is likely that both the Schools Meeting and the Inter-Service Cadet Rifle Meeting will again be shot using the Lynx back sight, and it is hoped that this will include those purchased from public funds as well as those issued by DSG. 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 on Thursday 16 July. 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. Team captains will be required to certify on the team register that all members of their team have a 'Safe and Competent' certificate or will be coached, on a one-to-one basis, by the holder of such a certificate.

Match Rifle

No official overseas MR team will be competing in the Imperial Meeting this year. The Any Rifle Extras, shot at 1000 yards, 1100 yards 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. The Humphry will again be shot in the morning and early afternoon of First Thursday, thereby allowing coaches and competitors to leave rather earlier than in previous years.

In line with the request from the MR Sub-Committee the blow-off period prior to the first detail of each match on each day, including Any Rifle, and before each distance of the Albert, will now be at the beginning of the five minute preparation period, not the end. Anyone permitted to take their firing position after the end of this blow-off period will not be permitted to fire any blow-off shots.

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 Centenary Aggregate

No changes are proposed in the McQueen competitions this year. The Centenary Aggregate prize of £100, introduced last year for scoring a double possible in Classes A, D and E, was not won. In accordance with the match conditions this prize has been rolled-over

and will be £200 this year. Readers are invited to enter this very challenging competition.

Gallery Rifle and Muzzle Loading Pistol

The programme for this meeting will be much the same as last year, being largely similar to the events previously shot prior to 2007. Matches will be run specifically for cadet competitors during the Schools Meeting on First Tuesday and First Wednesday. The main GR & P Meeting will be shot from First Thursday to Middle Sunday. All the squadded events will be shot during the Middle Weekend. Entry forms will shortly be available from the Squadding Department (ext 146), Range Office (ext 152) or the Shooting Division Secretary, Sally Agnew (ext 160).

In view of the low number of entrants and the high cost of running this meeting during the last number of years the Shooting Committee has set a target of an increase in entrants of 25% this year. If this is not achieved the future of this part of the Imperial Meeting cannot be guaranteed.

Prize Lists

As last 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. Additional CDs will be available at a cost of about £5.00 to all those not eligible for a free copy.

A Prize List book will also be produced but will only be available to order during the Imperial Meeting. An order form and further details will be available in your squadding envelope.

Medals and Bars

All competitors will again be 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. If you do not tick this box you may not get your medals or bars!

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 and the packages available, are available from the NSC Marketing Director, Brigitte Rushmore on ext 136.

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.

Armoury

New Armourer

A new Armourer, Peter Evans, has been appointed to join Fred James and the Armoury Assistant in order to provide a better service to members. The staff rotas have been arranged to ensure that two members of staff will be on duty six days a week.

E-mail address for the Armoury

Rather than having three different e-mail addresses for the Armoury staff all three have been replaced by a single, logical, e-mail address: armoury@nra.org.uk.

Marlin .357 Underlever Gallery Rifle

The NRA is very keen to trace the whereabouts of a Marlin .357 Underlever Gallery Rifle serial number 98002116. All Club Secretaries and members are asked to check to see if they can throw any light on the location of this rifle and to notify the Director of Shooting if they can assist with any information.

Ammunition and Prices

RUAG

As you will know up until last year we were able to minimise increases in ammunition prices for some years, but as explained elsewhere in these notes the cost price of ammunition has risen by over 50%. I therefore regret that the sale price of RUAG ammunition will be significantly higher than that of RG, as follows:

for orders from 1 to 9,999	83p per round;
for orders from 10,000 to 19,999	82p per round;
for orders of 20,000 and over	81p 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, by prior arrangement, in lots of not less than 2000 rounds.

It is, however, required that the normal credit terms will 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.

RG

We have a quantity of RG ammunition, manufactured within the last few months, available for purchase at a significantly cost-saving price of 50p per round (for orders up to 9,999 rounds), 49p per round (for orders from 10,000 to 19,999 rounds) or 48p per round (for orders of 20,000 rounds or more). This is likely to be the last RG ammunition we will have, and orders

will be taken on a first come, first served basis. Please contact the Armoury for details about availability.

Ammunition for County Open Meetings

It has again been agreed that, as an exception to the prices shown above, all 7.62mm RUAG 155 grains ammunition (of whatever quantity) bought for use at County Open Meetings only (not for resale outside the County Meeting) will be priced at 81p per round, ie with the maximum discount possible. Any ammunition remaining unused after the Meeting must be returned for a full refund, and must not be retained for resale. County Secretaries should contact the Armourer for further details.

Ranges

Bisley Range Regulations

Issue 1 of the 2009 Range Regulations have now been published and are available on the NRA website. All range hire prices have been increased by approx 3%. Copies of the Range Regulations are available from the Range Office on request.

Electronic Targets

The manufacturers of these targets are determined to overcome the problems which have beset them for some time. They are steadily becoming more popular, and with fewer glitches. 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. 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 not unknown for radios to be inadvertently taken off camp in a shooting box, a jacket pocket or the boot of a car. Some have travelled to Germany and back! 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.

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 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/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 downward turn in 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 then not after 11:00 in the morning.

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.

Any 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, 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 tip.

Please remember that whereas your 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

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, 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 2008, and in January and February 2009. Two further meetings will be held in March and April. The competitions shot are many and varied, and include 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. Entry forms are sent out to all previous competitors and are available 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 number 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 2009 Ages Match

The Ages Match is now a popular annual event especially as it includes the fantastic Fireworks Display by Dragon Fireworks on the Saturday night. The Ages Match will be held over the weekend 24 and 25 October 2009 and will follow the same broad programme as last year. The team size will remain at 12. Further details will be given in the Summer Journal but please note this weekend in your diary now.

Marksman's Calendar

The full Marksman's Calendar 2009 is available on the NRA website. The main advantage of this version is that it is constantly being updated, with new or amended events, changes of date etc. If you have any events that you would like included on this calendar please send details to karen@nra.org.uk.

NOTES FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NSC



by
Jeremy
Staples

Clock Tower

Work on the Clock Tower is due to start within the next two weeks and expected to take up to eight weeks to complete. The main frame does require underpinning and whilst this is being done it will be re-clad and the clock will need to be removed for restoration work. The cost of this work is in excess of £25,000.

Electronic Targets

Since Christmas the targets have been performing with more reliability. A number of sensor bars were shot out and these have now been replaced as have a number of the rubbers and hopefully the improved reliability will continue in the future.

Shooting Lodge Development

We are still actively working on the possible shooting lodge development at the rear of Century. This has somewhat been overtaken by the work towards trying to bring the 2012 Olympics to Bisley. A great deal of detailed work has however been carried out and the ecological surveys have been completed. Other research is under way in respect of possible new suppliers and once the venue for the Olympics is known, which is due to be by Easter this year, then we can progress the log cabin project as a matter of urgency. Details will be placed on our website and all those individual members who have expressed interest will be contacted as soon as we have a clearer view to how we can move forward with this project.

Staff

I am pleased to welcome Graham Sines who has joined the Target Shed team, replacing Eddie Harmer who left the NSC before Christmas, and Peter Evans who joined us in January in the Armoury.



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NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF TRAINING



*by
Phyllis
Farnan*

Training courses are already under way at Bisley, though the recent snow did delay the start of the probationary course.

New Training Facility

There have been some exciting new developments in the Training Department. At the end of last year the NSC were able to refurbish the building formerly owned by Bisley Gun Club. This unique 1920s building, one of the iconic Bisley landmarks, had been largely disused for several years since the NCSC clay facilities were constructed and Bisley Gun Club moved to its new clubhouse facilities on Fremantle Way. As the NRA Training Centre, this building now provides a large comfortable dedicated classroom for NRA courses.



Full-time Instructor

We are pleased to welcome Charles Perry who has recently joined the staff of the Training Department as a full-time instructor. Charles will also be responsible for running the NRA Shooting Club and for conducting assessments for membership applications and certificates of competence.

During 2009, NRA will be able to offer a larger programme of training courses both mid-week and

at weekends. Training will also be able to continue throughout the competition season.

RCO (HEF) Courses

The 'bolt-on' RCO (HEF) course continues to be popular. This year there will be two courses at Bisley on 19 April and 11 October. This course is only open to qualified NRA RCOs.

RCO Assessors' Training

Thirty-two NRA RCO Assessors from all parts of the UK attended the annual update seminar in the new training centre at Bisley on 31 January.

All trainee Assessors will in future receive 'on the job' training. They will be required to attend two RCO courses at Bisley and will then be supervised in the regions by senior RCO Assessors. Candidates must have been active NRA RCOs in their clubs for at least five years and must also have experience of more than one discipline of shooting.

RCO Courses

The RCO courses at Bisley continue to be very popular and the first two courses for this year (21 - 22 February and 16 - 17 May) are now fully booked. To meet this increased demand, an additional course has been arranged on 8 - 9 August.

RCO courses will also be held at Bisley on: 26 - 27 September, 31 October - 1 November and 5 - 6 December. Courses can also be held regionally by arrangement with the NRA. To book a place on a RCO course please contact Maureen Peach (see below).

RCO Renewals

You are reminded that the RCO qualification is valid for a period of six years. Those RCOs who qualified in 2003 will need to renew their qualification during this year. The actual run-out date is shown on the RCO photo ID card. Please contact Maureen Peach for details of the documentation required for renewal.

From 2010, it is likely that RCOs applying for a second and subsequent renewal of their qualification will also be required to complete a short re-assessment.

Instructor Workshop

The workshop, which covers methods of instruction and assessment, is for trainee RCO assessors and potential club coaches. The next workshop will be on Sunday 4 October and will cost £25.

Basic Handloading Course

This year the NRA Basic Handloading course took place on 14 - 15 February. A total of 13 students attended this course. The next handloading course will be held at Bisley in the Spring of 2010.

Probationary Training

Under the NRA/MoD agreement, all clubs which shoot on MoD ranges must now use the generic NRA

Probationary course at their clubs to train probationers, or must apply to the NRA to have their own training course accredited. Stocks of the NRA Probationary Manuals (£5 each) and Instructors Packs (£10 each) are available to purchase from the NRA.

Experienced club members can be trained to deliver probationary courses by completing an NRA Club Instructor course. This year a new General Skills Club Instructor course has been developed to meet the requirements of clubs that do not focus on target rifle disciplines (see below for further information).

Courses for NRA probationary members at Bisley have now been extended from four to five days. Each course includes target rifle, gallery rifle and muzzle loading pistol. Course 2009/1 is already under way and course 2009/2 is fully booked. Places are currently being offered for course 2009/3.

The relevant training dates for each of these Probationary courses are;

Course 2009/2:

28 March, 4 April, 18 April, 25 April, 9 May.

Course 2009/3:

30 May, 6 June, 13 June, 20 June, 27 June.

Skills Courses

The next Skills course (target rifle specific) will be run over the weekend 21 - 22 March at Bisley. This course is for less experienced TR shooters and those who may have recently completed the Probationary course. The course fee is £120 for NRA members and £140 for non-members of NRA.

The NRA is also working to develop a number of skills enhancement courses for other shooting disciplines and hopes to be able to introduce these courses from Autumn 2009. More details will be provided in the Summer Journal.

Club Instructor Courses

A new General Skills Club Instructor course has been developed and the first pilot course will be held at Bisley on 4 - 5 April. This course is designed to offer training for those who are responsible for delivering and assessing probationary training within their club environment. The course will include gallery rifle, telescoped rifle and iron sighted rifles but will exclude muzzle loading firearms and target rifle disciplines. The pilot course is open to a maximum of 20 candidates and no more than two applications can be accepted per club. Please note candidates must already be experienced shooters with a valid certificate of competence for each of the three disciplines. The course fee is £85.

The next Club Instructor course (TR specific) will take place at Bisley on 21 - 22 March. The course fee is £120 for NRA members and £140 for non-members of the NRA.

NRA Club Coach Course

The next Club Coach course will be held on 14 - 15 November. Applicants must be individual members of the NRA and should have previously completed the NRA Club Instructor (TR Specific) course and the Instructors' Workshop. The course fee is £120.

Wind Coaching Course

A short half-day wind coaching course session will take place as usual on First Friday (17 July) for the benefit of those attending the Imperial Meeting; further details will be given in competitors' squadding card envelopes.

It is hoped that the full weekend wind course can also be offered again this year but no date has yet been set.

Contact Maureen Peach for RCO Course bookings or RCO renewal information, on 01483 797777 ext 149 or e-mail: maureen.peach@nra.org.uk

If you require further information or application forms for any NRA training course contact the Director of Training on 01483 797777 ext 150, or e-mail: training@nra.org.uk

Introducing Charles Perry - the new NRA Training Instructor

I have been asked to write a few words to introduce myself. I am Charles Perry, and I have very recently joined the NRA as a full-time instructor. I am not entirely new to the NRA because, a couple of years ago, I ran the range days

for the NRA Shooting Club. Unfortunately I was only able to do this for a few months because work commitments kept getting in the way. Anyway, I am now here permanently and could not be more pleased. My job includes running the club, along with conducting assessments for the MoD certification. I will also be involved in the running of many of the courses offered by the NRA. Actually, I have been doing the certifications since September, so if you have been certified (in a manner of speaking) by the NRA we may well have already met. My shooting background is that I was a firearms instructor in the Metropolitan Police Force Firearms Unit for several years. I have also worked as a flying instructor and as a freelance training consultant. It is terrific to be at Bisley, and I am thoroughly looking forward to working with everybody here.



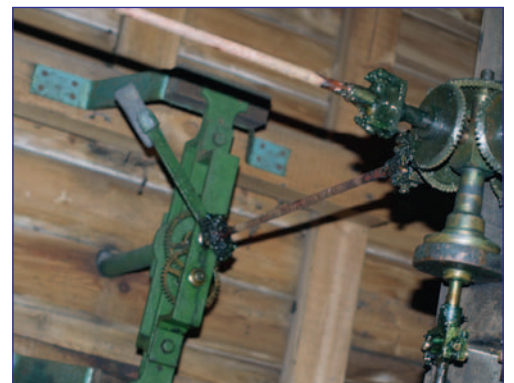


BISLEY CLOCK TOWER APPEAL



The Clock Tower is the most famous landmark on Bisley Common. Dating back to our Wimbledon days, this iconic tower has stood overlooking the ranges since the NRA moved here in 1890.

The original Clock Tower was rebuilt in its current form in 1934 and is now in urgent need of renovation. The clock itself needs major restoration and the tower requires serious structural repair involving underpinning and re-cladding. This is expected to cost in the region of £25,000.



The NRA Council has approved the launch of an appeal to members and shooters alike to help fund this necessary work to bring the Clock Tower back to its former glory.

In the event that the proceeds of this appeal exceed the cost of this renovation, the excess funds will be used for the ongoing costs of the upkeep of the Clock Tower and other historic artefacts.

This is where you as members come in. We are asking for donations, no matter how small or large, to assist the funding. As a tangible mark of your generosity, it is envisaged that a small token, which could be worn with pride, will be presented.

For donations in excess of:

£25.00

£100.00

£500.00

£1000.00

Title

Friend of the Clock Tower

Steward of the Clock Tower

Keeper of the Clock Tower

Patron of the Clock Tower

All donations of whatever size, particularly in these difficult financial times, would be gratefully accepted. Donations may be made online via our secure payment facility at www.nra.org.uk or by post to the address below.

For further details please contact clocktower@nra.org.uk

NRA Clock Tower Appeal

National Rifle Association, National Shooting Centre, Bisley, Brookwood, Woking, Surrey GU24 0PB

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SHOOTING DISCIPLINE MATTERS

Classics

by Rae Wills

Having now handed the job of Match Director into the capable hands of David Gregory for IHAM 2009, and no longer spending this time of year in a perpetual panic preparing the IHAM programme, I actually seem to have some time to myself. That has enabled me to reflect on what we have achieved in the last few years and to my surprise I find our achievements have been considerable, although it has not always been a smooth ride.

Despite the constant battle to keep the event financially viable, which often meant the pressure of inflation leading to increased entry fees, entry numbers, after initially falling, have recently stabilized and last year slightly increased. Yet for this coming year I am holding my breath as past changes in levels of income, whether from actual attendance numbers or the number of cards shot, have mirrored changes in the general prosperity, sadly lacking at the moment.

Some variations in attendance can be linked to changes in the programme, some of which started,

like all disasters, as good ideas but backfired and led to unintended consequences. For example the trial of not having the main competitions on the Sunday afternoon not only did not lead to increased shooting by way of additional matches, but also reduced the number of one day attendances on the Sunday, causing a fall in overall entries. Once abandoned, levels were restored.

However, when looking at the actual match by match entries overall, it is clear that if we had left the cut-off date as the 1946 design Dateline, we would have been in serious trouble, as entry levels for those original classes would not now give a viable income. Salvation came from the new Datelines, and the new matches that came with them, and the resurrected NRA SR(b) and Transitional 7.62mm classes are now a very significant part of our competition shooting and our great success. The lesson must be the old business adage, innovate or die!

So what next? More classes? You could say we have too many already! Yet there is a need to provide opportunities for older rifles to compete and be kept in use. It is well known that not only in shooting, but other pastimes such as motor racing, that there are definite stages in the life of an item and they bear repeating. One: The current new product winning everything. Two: Outclassed by newer products, carries on at club level. Three: Totally outclassed, gets put away and forgotten. Four: If it survives stage three, re-emerges as a collectors item. So to ensure as many potential Historic items are preserved, it is important to provide opportunities and encouragement to continue to use them through stage three.

In shooting terms the age of an item in stage three can be very variable, but it probably starts at around 10 to 15 years old to about another 10 to 15 years before.

So we could be looking to provide classes for items new as recently as in say 1999 or 1994, back to 1979 and beyond. If we do wish to follow this route, what items will we be considering? What criteria?

The main problem is that a particular class must have a precise definition, as, if the definition is 'fuzzy', despite the overall concept of "In the Spirit of the Original", there is the very real risk of never-ending rule wars. The 7.62mm Transitional and SR(b) classes were ideal, easily providing the necessary precision, but after that target rifle design is a story of gradual change without any obvious steps to provide cut off dates. There is a possible class of target rifles for the first designs after the Transitional, but I have not come

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up with a definition that would comply with the precision requirement, so if there is anyone out there who has the answer, do let us know.

So where do we look? Whilst I was planning a possible talk on the effects of the various firearms bans on our pastime I did however stumble on one possible, but rather small, class, being the first generation of Practical Rifles after the Self Loading Rifle ban.

The requirements might be:

Requirement	Notes
Any bolt or lever action or other pre-ban manual action	Excludes all post ban straight pull designs eg manual AR 15/16, M14, or FN type SLRs, or manual conversions or designs based on any other Self Loading Rifle. Known possible complying rifles: - The Cam Rifle
Magazine capacity of more than 10 rounds	Converted bolt actions eg Armalite converted Remington with NATO .223 or 7.62mm/.308 magazine; similar Custom bolt actions receivers were available in the USA, but as far as I know none were imported. Lever action adapted to take NATO .233 magazine. This introduces for the first time the .223 as an Historic cartridge; but introduced in 1964 does it now qualify?

Another matter that concerns us is the great increase in ammunition and component costs. Certainly the recent high cost of copper and lead has been a factor, though this has fallen again, but this is yet to be reflected in prices; there must be a few months lead time but some change must be due. Another factor for the USA-sourced material is believed to be the high demand from the military; primers have often been said to be in short supply.

We often complain of Health and Safety requirements hoisting the cost of powders, and look with envy at prices in the USA. But it is not all as it seems; they get environmental charges too. Ultimately cheaper yes, but they can be more than double the headline cost you see on the advert. For example Nachtez Shooting Supplies advertises Unique at \$14.40 for a 1lb tub. But to deliver it to New York gets a whopping \$22.50 Hazmat charge plus carriage, total price \$50.75/lb, about £35!

But the added charges are per delivery, so if I order a 8lb tub for \$99.84 I pay \$136 total, bringing the cost down to \$17.06/lb, about £11.75; motto, buy in bulk, but not so easy for us as we rarely need powder in such quantities. So I leave it to you, is our glass half empty, or half full?

PHOENIX MEETING 2009

An Annual Celebration of Shooting Sports
22 - 24 May 2009

**Events will be held
for the following
disciplines**

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Gallery Rifle
Service Rifle
Sporting Rifle
Long Range Pistol
Section 1 Shotguns
Muzzle Loading Pistol
Light Weight Sport Rifle
Black Powder Cartridge Rifle
Long Barrelled Revolver & Pistol**

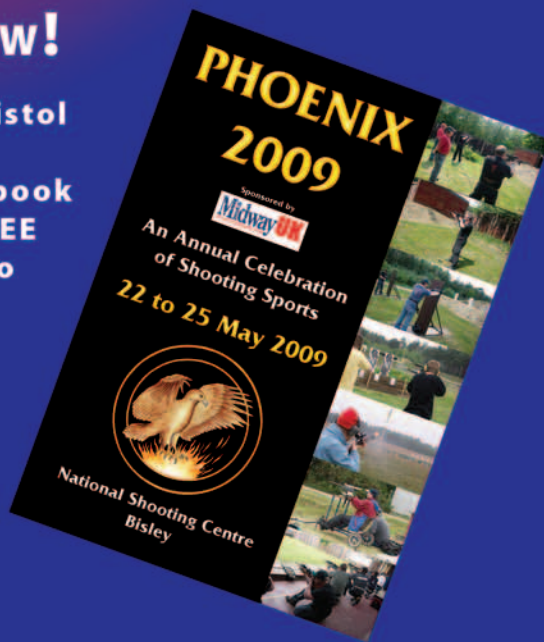
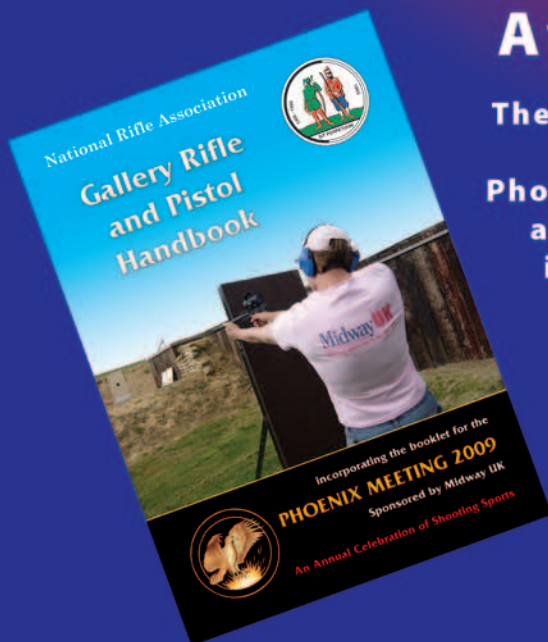


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Target Rifle

from Iain Robertson

The Chairman's Prize

The Chairman's Prize has had a difficult start in the first four years of its existence. The hidden cost of staging it has been a concern to the organisers of the Imperial Meeting. Elsewhere in this Journal there is some criticism of the approach taken to alleviate this expense, and I would like to add my own view here as TR Rep.

It must first be said that the Chairman's Prize – Prizes really, since there are separate awards for O class and T class – has not yet attained a settled place in the Imperial Meeting programme. Its purpose is to provide competitors of limited experience and modest ability with a challenging and prestigious event during the last few days of the Meeting, when the programme is mainly filled with international team events and subsequent stages of the open competitions. Speaking as one who entered three Meetings before finding out what went on after lunch on Second Thursday, I think this is a good idea. The event is, however, organised for 150 competitors to fire up to 41 shots each, which is almost the size (and cost) of the subsequent stages of the St George's. Participation in the first four years has been patchy, with only 334 of the 600 competitors who have qualified taking up their place, and of those, only 285 finishing the course of fire. This has been deeply frustrating to the organisers. The Association has to pay the range staff and markers regardless of the uptake, and the waste of resources when under pressure to keep prices down calls the viability of the event into question. It is perhaps ironic that the event was introduced and the prizes generously endowed by our past Chairman John Jackman, who did so much to recover the Association from its recent financial troubles, but failed to spot the significant extra cost, falling on the whole Membership, that this event would impose.

In order to alleviate that cost, last year the event was made concurrent with the Queen's Consolation and the Howard Wilkinson, and qualifiers had to pay to enter these two events to take up their "free" entry in the Chairman's Prize. The cost to each competitor, many of them cadets on fixed budgets, was £50.40. Ouch!

The Association having accepted the principle that nobody should face a financial penalty through accepting the rewards of success in competition (see *Imperial Meeting 2009 – Costs* on page 54), the current situation is surely unsupportable. But the Trustees are required to be risk-averse in financial planning, and an extra £7000+ is a significant sum to gamble on the margins of the possible takings from fired brass. So, barring a sponsor or generous benefactor stepping in, for this year it seems that the competition will be run along similar lines to 2008. Funding from resources under the Association's control will have to wait the outcome of this year's Meeting.

There are steps that can be taken to reduce the cost of staging the Chairman's Prize (the first, already taken, is

to reintroduce competitor marking, and thus reduce the entry fee, for the Howard Wilkinson). There are various ways to find the money to meet that cost. The format of the competition can be varied a little as long as it fits in the spare range space in the last two or possibly three days of the Meeting. I think the Chairman's Prize is a worthwhile concept, and as TR Rep I would like your views on how we might fit the event, or something very similar, into the Imperial Meeting programme and budget. I do not want to spell out the possibilities for cutting cost, finding money and formatting the event – I would like to see how others' views accord with the ideas I have heard so far. It may be that it isn't a worthwhile concept – if you can argue that convincingly I would like to hear that too. It may be that a different structure would be more attractive – it is depressing that even in the best year, only about two-thirds of qualifiers took up their places. Members, and especially Os and Ts attending the Imperial Meeting 2009, I await your inputs, but I need them soon if the TR Sub-Committee is to present a view one way or another. Answers on an e-mail please, to iain@bang.eclipse.co.uk

Future GB Target Rifle Tour Programme

In recent years, representative teams from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ("GB" in shooting vernacular) have been highly successful in target rifle tours abroad. The Shooting Committee, with the approval of Council, decided that it was appropriate to expand the GB TR touring programme, firstly to increase the opportunity for participation at elite levels, and secondly to give additional support to our friends overseas.

Accordingly, it is the intention to run two GB TR teams overseas each year from 2011. The programme is currently planned to include a tour to Canada every year, a tour to South Africa every other year, the Palma Match every fourth year, and a tour to another destination every fourth year. It is understood that this may not be completely sustainable in some years, and that there may be modifications when Home Countries are on tour. There will, as a result, be more opportunities for members to lead and compete in GB teams. The TR Sub-Committee has drafted "Procedures and Rules for the Appointment of GB Captains". When these are approved by Council, they will be published so that the process is transparent to all.

Organisationally, we are regarding the 2010 tour to New Zealand as the GB '2009' tour. Significantly, all four Home Nations are taking large teams to the South African 80th Anniversary Championships this year, with little apparent impact on the GB programme for New Zealand and Canada 2010. South Africa 2009 is believed to be the first occasion that the four Home Nations will shoot against each other outside the UK. I wish all the team members, and the many partners travelling with the teams, an enjoyable and successful tour!

F Class

by Paul Monaghan

Looking forward to FCWC 2009 and beyond

Discipline reports should cover what has happened rather than pontificating on the future, but with the FCWC almost upon us, it raises a few questions about the direction of F Class in GB. Using my Chairman's prerogative I have decided to use this report for some musings over the future of F Class.

The event at Bisley this July will be the third in the ICFRA F Class World Championship series, and without doubt will attract the largest entry so far. For those of you who have not yet registered, there is a link to the entry forms on the NRA GB website. The format for the meeting will be practice on the Sunday following the Imperial Meeting Queen's Final (25 July) followed by two days of individual competition and then two days of team events. If you have not managed to secure a place in the National team there is plenty of opportunity to form 'ad hoc' teams to compete for the Rutland Cup. The competitions will be shot at 800, 900 and 1000 yards each day.

There are two categories for the competition – F Open and F Restricted and this may be a good time to think about these categories. Whilst F Class grew out of classic Target Rifle roots, it soon attracted people who found the accuracy challenge irresistible. Whilst there is a dedicated Benchrest community in the UK, F Class fulfilled an additional need. The accuracy challenge grabbed a lot of UK shooters and F Open was the main area of interest. Accuracy means ammunition, gunsmithing and rifle skills – mainly wind-reading. All but the latter cost money and learning to read the wind means lots of range time. Ammunition moved to the 6.5mm cartridge and now there is a lot of interest in 7mm calibres. These calibres allow bullets with high BC's to be used but many of the cartridges have proved to be barrel burners. You can spend a lot of money (although you do not have to) to stay at the top of the Open class. What is the alternative? At present for the Imperial Meeting it is 'Issued ammunition F Class' and for the F Class League it is F/TR. Both restrict shooters to the .308 Win cartridge but the main difference is that the League allows handloads with unlimited bullet weight. So in the UK we have two F Class sets of rules for the '.308 only' class. Actually, 5.56mm is also allowed but you will struggle to be competitive with this calibre. The light bullets just get blown too easily by the wind.

If we turn to the FCWC, the rules are governed by ICFRA and the F Open class is well, pretty much open. The 5.56/.308 class is called 'F Restricted' and with a bit of a kerfuffle, the rules were finally agreed to allow handloads and unlimited bullet weight.

So in GB the F Class League rules match the ICFRA rules but the NRA Imperial Meeting rules stick to issued ammunition. Why? We started this brief review acknowledging that F Class grew out of TR and a number of F Class shooters still enjoy the links with TR and enter the Imperial Meeting. 'Issued ammunition' F Class was specifically designed for the TR shooter to 'give scoped rifle shooting a try'. Sadly very few have actually done this. In fact, F Class has drawn shooters from a number of backgrounds and almost all are familiar with handloading techniques and enjoy this part of the sport. Issued ammunition just does not appeal.

This has one consequence namely that, as mentioned in the last F Class report, the rules for the Imperial Meeting prior to FCWC will be relaxed for 2009 to allow handloads in the 'issued ammunition' category. We will have overseas competitors for the F restricted class who will want to compete in the Imperial Meeting. This is for 2009 only.

What to do post 2009? With the economic storm clouds right overhead, .308 F Class of some form or another will be essential bearing in mind the perception of F 'Open' as being expensive. First question is 'how vital is it for there to be one set of rules for F Class worldwide' ie how important is it that we stick to ICFRA rules? Benefits include the ability to take your kit and shoot anywhere, knowing it will be legal. On the other hand, it is getting more and more difficult to travel with rifles and worse with ammunition. It is equally nightmarish to try to arrange for all your favourite components to be in a foreign land ready for you to load your ammunition.

Should the NRA ditch 'issued ammunition' for 2010 onwards? But what if the new supplier of TR ammunition for the meeting turns out to provide a much improved product (as we sincerely hope it will)? It seems an anomaly to have the Imperial Meeting with one set of rules and the League having another. Although they are somewhat different events, there were 40 F/TR shooters at the F Class European Championships in 2008, compared to seven at the Imperial Meeting. It seems that using the ICFRA/International F/TR rules attracts far more competitors. The idea that F/TR (Restricted) might work by using any ammo, ie handloaded, purchased or issued just might solve this problem.

THE WORLD F CLASS OPEN & F CLASS RESTRICTED CHAMPIONSHIPS BISLEY 2009

These Championships will be held at Bisley immediately following the Imperial Meeting, and will run from Sunday 26 until Thursday 30 July 2009. The programme of events will be as follows:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 26 July | Teams & Individual Practice Targets. |
| 27 - 28 | July World F Class Individual Championships. |
| 29 - 30 | July The World Championships of International F Class Teams.
Open & F/Restricted, also the Rutland Cup (Six Man Open Teams). |

Entry forms are available to download from the NRA website for these Championships and must be forwarded to reach the Squadding Department at the NRA by no later than 1 April 2009.

Bids for entries to the F Class World Individual Championships may now be made but are subject to the following conditions:

- a A maximum of 300 entries can be accommodated on Stickledown Range, three details of 50 targets (two firers per firing point) at each distance (800, 900 and 1000 yards) each day for two days.
- b All competitors must (i) be of the highest class within their own country and (ii) their nomination must be supported by their own NRA.

As required by the rules of ICFRA priority must be given to members of the international teams. It is likely that there will be some 120 in these categories leaving only 180 places for individuals. The number of entries which can be accepted from each country will therefore be as follows:

- 1 All members of the International F Class team and F Restricted teams
- 2 An equal number (likely to be in the region of 20) individual competitors who also comply with para b above. This number will be increased depending on entry.

Home based competitors are likely to complete the entry.

Teams Composition

ICFRA F Class Open International Team

Sixteen members comprising a Captain, an Adjutant, three Coaches, eight Firers, two Register Keepers and a Reserve.

NRA (GB) F Class Restricted International Team

Eight members comprising a Captain, a Coach, four Firers, a Register Keeper and a Reserve, minimum four firers.

F Class Open - Rutland Cup Teams

Six members comprising a Captain, a Coach and four Firers, minimum four firers.

Note: Rutland Cup Teams (F Class Open/F Restricted) matches are open to firers from anywhere in the world. Teams may be called by any reasonable name and team scores may be shot concurrently with the International Match. Entries will close at lunchtime Mon 27 Jul 2009.

Further information can be obtained from Mik Maksimovic on mik@mikdolphin.demon.co.uk who will happily answer any questions or put you in contact with the people who will know the answer.

Metric Matters

by Ian Shirra-Gibb

As the snow settles here at Bisley we reflect on the 2008 300 metres season, which had its ups and downs and some success on the way. Throughout the season many smaller clubs, counties and individuals took advantage of the facilities at Bisley to improve their technique on our electronic targets.

As previously reported the NRA GB Team visited EC Cup events in Pilzen (Czechoslovakia) where we had one shooter in the final in very windy conditions. At the next event in Tolmezzo (Italy) we had a fine fourth place from Simon Aldhouse with 597, resulting in him being well placed on the circuit points table. A first visit to a new venue in Norway gave us middle of the road results and a few points for the men. The last EC Cup was in Denmark in early August: here we saw Simon Aldhouse take the silver medal with a fine 598 and, with the final season's point tally complete, become the highest points scorer in the prone event in Europe - other than the four event winners, the best position GB have ever been in!



The medal winners.

The final itself in Winterthur (Switzerland), during mid-September, was windy and difficult and it was easy to run out of time. After 39 shots or so, Simon was in the lead but with only 15 minutes left and a lot of shots to go, the edge slipped away and placed him back in 12th place.

The second half of the bi-annual match against the French Team from Clermont took place at Bisley on the last weekend of August and gave us a much stronger competition on home ground. After the first day the French were in the lead by four points but a strong shoot from the NRA levelled the match on identical scores of 3505, so the ISSF rule was used on all the last strings and NRA "A" won by six to retain the Danik Bowl. At this match we also have a concurrent memorial match aggregate for the Danik Individual Trophy - this was won again by Simon by one point from the French team member R Demey. Catherine

Houlemont took the bronze, two points behind her team mate.

The British Free Rifle Club Championships in September welcomed Carston Brandt from the Danish National Team who showed us he could cope well with Bisley wind, winning with an excellent score of 596. Our Bisley season continued into early October with the GB 300M Rifle Clubs annual championships; Isle of Man resident Harry Creevy shot a fine 597 to take the cup and gold medal. Mary Pearse was second with 595 and last year's winner Australian Dave Tracey took bronze with 594 (a personal best).

For the 2009 season, we will be returning to three EC Cups and a European Championship in Croatia so our time will be spent preparing to put our best shooters forward. Our website is now showing the competition, trial and training dates for 2009 - should any NRA members wish to enter competitions or just train with your target rifle for more V bulls, please contact us directly via the website www.gb300m.com.

Don't forget the NRA 300M British Championships on 16 and 17 May - it is open to all! Entry forms will be available from the NRA.

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REGIONAL MATTERS

Shooting Programme for Scotland in 2009

by Tim Kidner

The normal programme of shooting events are being organised for 2009 but there will be a significant change with the decision to transfer the Scottish Championships from Barry Buddon ranges to Blair Atholl. In recent years the cost of running the Championships at the MoD Barry Buddon ranges have increased significantly – in 2008 we had to pay for two range wardens as well as five sentries in uniform at all times plus a new 'Event Fee' – so that it is now difficult to cover costs without a further significant increase in entry fees. There have also been problems in recent years with disruption to shooting at Barry so it has been decided to run the 2009 Championships at Blair Atholl, using the electronic targets which have been very successful in their first year of operation. With the electronic targets, shooting is carried out in pairs sharing a single monitor and, with scores and plots showing on the screen within two seconds of firing the shot, so shooting can be completed relatively quickly. Also, because there is no requirement for anyone to be in the butts, shooting can continue all day. Another change associated with the electronic targets at Blair Atholl is that when it rains moveable gazebos are put up over the firing point to protect the monitors, which can be affected if they get wet, and the shooters from the rain – 2008 was very wet and the gazebos seem to have been used for most of the shoots at Blair Atholl.

The programme for the Scottish Championships will be the same as recent years with short range shoots on the first two days, including the Lawrence Trophy International Match, and long range shooting on the third day – dates for the Championships are 5 to 7 June. With the existing number of targets at Blair Atholl the maximum entry will be limited to 60 so an early entry is advisable.

The 2009 programme of target rifle and F Class events starts with the West of Scotland Championships over the weekend of 2 and 3 May, followed by the Scottish Championships on 5 to 7 June and the Scottish Long Range Championships on 27 and 28 June – all these events will be held at Blair Atholl.

The inter region team competitions – Finlux Match for F Class teams and the Pentagonal Match for target rifle teams – are on 5 July, also at Blair Atholl.

The Invernessshire Championships at the Cawdor range take place over the weekend of 8 and 9 August and the Tullibardine (Tayside) Championships at Blair Atholl are on 22 and 23 August. The last of the regional events are the East of Scotland Championships at Castlewart range on 26 September.

All these Regional Championships have separate TR, Open F Class and F/TR sections. There are no F Class league events in Scotland this year because of the F Class World Championships which will be at Bisley in July but the F Class Association plans to hold league shoots at Blair Atholl in 2010.

The match rifle events, run by the National Rifle Club of Scotland, are also held at Blair Atholl and now use the electronic targets which have worked without any problems back to 1200 yards. The Spring Championships – closed event for NRC of S members only – are on 23 and 24 May and the Autumn Championships, which is an open event, are on 5 and 6 September.

Anyone wishing to take part in any of these events can find the contact details for entry forms in the Marksman's Calendar on the NRA website or on the SRA website www.scottishrifleassociation.org.uk and the National Rifle Club of Scotland website www.nrcofs.org.

Cornwall Open Meeting 2008

by John Garnett

Shooters gathered from 8:00 in the morning and those who had travelled to Millpool before were surprised to be able to see the targets so early in the day, for over the last few years Message 1 has been delayed due to heavy mist, which usually obscures the targets.

Shooting was held over 30 to 31 August and commenced with a leisurely 2 + 10 at 300 yards achieving some good scores (for some!). This should have been a gentle warm-up but although the weather god was kind, the shooting god thought we had to work at it! Kevin Hill took the trophy with a very fine 50.10.

Then followed the dreaded Metric stage – 2 + 10 at 300 on a metric target – kindly reduced from 15. This sorted the men from the boys. George Gilpin of Devon won this with a 99.7.

Dressing back to 500 yards the wind began to strengthen and more work was required for a 2 + 15 but at least on a 'proper' target. This was George Gilpin's again with a 74.12.

The MWT trophy was contested with 2 + 10 at 600 yards. Jonathan Cload took the trophy this time with another 50.10. That ended the Saturday shooting and shooters went their various ways to prepare for the Sunday competitions.

Sunday morning dawned and we approached Millpool wondering what the weather would throw at us. The wind had changed direction but at least it was readable – well, at least for some!



Lady Mary Holborrow presents the MWT Trophy to Jon Cload.

The competitions today were 2 + 15 at 600 and 500 yards. The aggregated scores gave George Gilpin a fantastic score of 150.23 to win the trophy and a free entry to the City Open Meeting.

That was the end of the serious competition – now for the fun shoot of the weekend. This was the Millpool Gallop – 1 sighter and 10 to count in two minutes. Each shooter had his own target to get the best-centred group in the time allowed. Yes, it was George Gilpin again with 49.8 and the prize pot of £18.

Whilst the relaxed Gallop, or perhaps it should be called the Trot, was shot the stats produced the aggregated scores for the Final being a 1 + 15 at 600 yards. This was George Gilpin's weekend winning with 75.11. Dave Pickering took the F class honours with a score of 81.

We were graced with the presence of Glynn Alger, Secretary General of the NRA and Team HPS being John, Deitra and Robert. John Carmichael shot in the F Class events whilst Deitra and Robert took part in their first ever fullbore competition – it was a privilege to



Tony Mitchell collects the Cornwall Shield.

have them at our meeting for their first competitions. Now they know what it's like at the sharp end!

That concluded another great weekend on the Moor. The weather was kinder than predicted, the company was good, new friends made and old acquaintances revisited.

Prizes were presented by Lady Mary Holborrow, Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall and President of the Cornwall Target Shooting Association. Lady Mary also carried out the raffle and the draw for an assortment of prizes from our valued sponsors. Thank you to them all for their continued support.

We would like to thank Keith Ellett for organising the whole competition with help from various club RCOs. Butt marking was carried out by club members because of a breakdown in arrangements with the local cadets. Thank you lads – we would have had a problem without you! Our club captain, Tony Mitchell gave a 'thank you' speech acknowledging our sponsors and helpers, without whom we would not have had this successful meeting. See you all next year.

FORTHCOMING TOURS

I am honoured and privileged to have been selected as Captain of the Great Britain Under 25 Rifle Team to compete in the Under 25 World Championships in Brisbane, Australia in October 2011. I am delighted that Stuart Young has agreed to be my Vice-Captain.

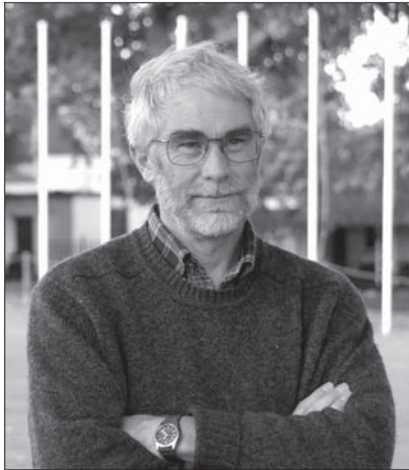
Having been involved with the Under 25 movement over the last few years I have seen the talent that youth shooting in Great Britain has to offer, and have every confidence that I will be able to take a team to Australia that are more than capable of retaining the crown of Under 25 World Champions.

I plan to select a squad of around 20 after the 2009 Imperial Meeting, and then select the final touring team after the 2010 Imperial.

I welcome applications from anyone who will be Under 25 on 12 October 2011 who wishes to be considered for the tour. If you would like to apply, please forward me your shooting CV along with details of any coaching experience that you may have had and full contact details. Please note that you must be a member of the NRA to apply. The deadline is the end of the Imperial Meeting 2009, and you can send your application to me either by e-mail james@lothian.me.uk or by post to 67 Rosebushes, Epsom Downs, Surrey, KT17 3NT.

James Lothian

PAUL MONAGHAN - TRAINEE AUSSIE!



It is with deep regret that we report the passage of NRA Shooting Committee Chairman Paul Monaghan to a sunnier and less stressful place. Paul is one of those highly intelligent and dedicated people who either cannot spot a poisoned chalice, or sees it coming and does his Socratic duty anyway. Paul was elected to General Council as F Class representative at just the time that discipline was establishing itself as something independent of TR. That the discipline has developed steadily and largely without friction in GB has much to do with his direction. His international colleagues spotted a soft touch, and elected him Chairman of the ICFRA F Class Committee. Getting the barely coherent group including the high-rollers of F (Open), the cheap and cheerful F(TR) competitors, the ones stuck up the dead-end of TR(O) and numerous other splitters to head in roughly the same direction, was an achievement in itself. To do it on the international stage, when faced with the deeply-entrenched positions of various ICFRA member organisations, was close to miraculous. F Class hasn't arrived at a secure position yet, but Paul's work has been instrumental in providing the base for it to go forward from the forthcoming World Championships.

The NRA Shooting Committee also knew a good thing when they saw it, and elected Paul to be their Chairman in 2005, catapulting him, *ex officio*, into the highly stressed world of NRA Trusteeship. At the Shooting Committee, Paul cut through a mass of trivia to deal with many really serious issues. Technical problems like the Eagle Eye debate, crises like the butts flooding, critical decisions like the Imperial Meeting ammo – all handled with care and deep attention. Paul's belief that shooting, while maintaining its history and its integrity, should above all be fun, provided a much-needed reality injection to the Council. A service to all of us at considerable cost to his own enjoyment of his sport.

Paul, on your departure from your various NRA roles, "Thank you!" The Trustees, the General Council, the Shooting Committee, the staff and your many friends amongst the members will all miss you. All the best 'down under' and think of us when you're sipping the amber nectar from your NRA decanter in the southern sunshine.

CERTIFICATES OF SAFETY AND COMPETENCE

All users of Bisley ranges are reminded that they must either be in possession of a current Certificate of Safety and Competence or else will have to shoot under the one-to-one supervision of the holder of such a certificate. This is a result of the agreement between the NRA and the MoD which requires all civilian shooters on MoD ranges to have been assessed as being safe and competent in the use of the firearms concerned. This requirement also applies to Bisley ranges since these are leased from the MoD and also use the MoD Pirbright Range Danger Area.

Normal Daily Use of Bisley

All individuals who intend to shoot on their own must produce their Certificate of Safety and Competence to the NSC Range Office staff before they may sign in. Similarly, if an RCO is signing in as RCO of a group, he must first check that all members of his group have their certificates with them. When he signs in he will be certifying that he has confirmed that this is the case. Anyone found not to have a certificate may be asked to cease shooting.

Imperial Meeting

Competitors at the Imperial Meeting may only collect their squadding cards on production of their Certificates of Safety and Competence. Squadding cards will not be issued without one. In the case of overseas competitors the relevant certificate must have been signed by their own National Governing Body.

REMEMBER - CARRY YOUR CERTIFICATE WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES!

GBRT SA 2008 – How a TEAM WAS BUILT

by Steven Thomas – Team Captain

Question: How can shooters and coaches of the highest calibre be prepared for a challenging tour in March 2008 when Palma Team members have only recently re-established diplomatic relations with their families and employers after an epic shooting season in 2007?

Answer: With difficulty. But keep the tour as short as possible and encourage the impression that something special is going to happen.

Result: the tour was to amount to two weeks in South Africa plus packing/travel time. This meant no safari holidays and precious little rest and relaxation. Acclimatisation would be achieved by spending two hot days on the range at Bloemfontein before the Free State Championship, hammering away at team drills and shooting/coaching techniques/permutations/combinations, before any of the South African shooters arrived.

Preamble

Appointed captain of the GB Team to South Africa 2008 in September 2006, there was no scope for team building until 12 months later as the Palma Match project was the clear priority for GB shooting until after September 2007. This left six short winter months available to turn a list of names into a shooting/coaching team strong enough to face a unique and formidable challenge in April 2008. This was to be the first GB Rifle Team ever to win both the RSA Invitation and Protea Matches in South Africa.

I had never, since school nearly 40 years previously, been captain of a shooting team so it was necessary to fall back on logical deduction, observations from teams in which I had previously toured, and experience of business management, to build the team. Team-building was emphasised from day one, and reflected in such areas as:

- Selection
- Allocation of duties
- Design of training sessions at Bisley
- Travel and accommodation
- Acclimatisation
- Club team matches on tour

Selection

On my appointment I followed the example of my predecessor as GB captain in South Africa (PC), selecting first my vice captain (VC) and then my main coach/guru (MCG). These two appointments were important because they would create a selection committee of three, and would help me to complete all the pre-tour planning and administration. I needed a “guru” because I felt that I lacked the required depth of technical knowledge to deal with all the shooting and coaching issues likely to arise.

My choice of VC was based on the need I perceived to maximise the depth and breadth of communication

through the team (whether they wanted to hear it or not), to ensure that management would really be “in touch” with every team member. My choice was strengthened by my perception that I and my VC would combine complementary personality types and skills, and by a shared philosophy of how a shooting tour should be run (having been on several together in recent years). As a bonus, he was/is a shooter of the highest calibre, having battled through years of squad survival sessions to shoot in the successful GB Palma Team.

My chosen MCG, having recently captained the GB Palma team, on top of his wealth of previous team shooting experience, would have answers to any conceivable question on any aspect of touring team management (whether I wanted to hear them or not).

I decided that the role of Adjutant (A) would be filled by a member of the selected team, rather than being pre-selected for that purpose. In this team A would be kept busy once on tour, but pre-tour his duties were limited to the organisation of the training weekends. This would ensure that I had the largest possible choice of eligible shooters for the main matches, and the minimum number of “passengers” who may not be relied upon to produce a decent score if required. Gratifyingly, A won the Queens Prize after his appointment and VC went on to win the State President’s Prize on the last day of the tour, thereby endorsing this approach. And although I never gave the matter serious thought, hell, if an epidemic was to have a sufficiently catastrophic impact on the team, the captain could always shoot too.

Returning to the selection, the decision to keep the tour short yielded an early dividend. We had a good quality list of applicants, every captain’s dream. We clearly needed big-hitting shooters and coaches, and they all needed to be team players. The selection process threw up a list of names some of whom I knew by reputation but had not met, and a few whom I had never heard of. It was important to screen the lesser-known-to-me names and, as I expected, most of the applicants were well known to VC and MCG, whose appointment had been based, amongst other things, on their broad knowledge of eligible GB shooters and extensive touring experience.

As well as past team performances, I was interested to know about individual achievements when selecting the team. Why? Because a new cap by definition has not been put to the pressure test of shooting for GB in an international team match. The nearest equivalent test of temperament is, in my view, how people maintain their challenge in or around the top fifty of the Grand Aggregate and how accomplished they are in qualifying, or otherwise, for Queen’s Prize, or St George’s, finals. Having established a list of candidates by analysis of recent past Bisley meeting results, we were able to make our selections of new caps by reference to trusted captains of past touring, or current national, or county,

teams. These referees contributed to the creation of a team of team players and the avoidance of the risk of prima donna behaviour.

We made it a principle that nobody would be selected by virtue of the fact that he/she was a friend of the team officials and that all selections would be strictly on merit. In the end we had picked a team with a core of nine Palma team members, joined by four other previous GB shooters and, excitingly, seven new caps.

Allocation of Duties

There is a huge amount of work involved in completing a GB tour. The more that this work is shared out, the more harmonious the team (and the less grumpy the captain) will be. It may have been in the selection, or it may have been good luck, but whatever the reason, everyone who was given a duty discharged it with energy and enthusiasm. Pre-departure, much effort went into fund-raising and this was achieved through the publication of the brochure and the organisation of corporate hospitality days at Bisley. The brochure and website had a team of four; one co-ordinating the sale of advertising (AS), one brochure editor (BE), one brochure compiler (BC) and one website co-ordinator (WC). Three of the four were new caps. Several team members were successful in selling adverts and bringing guests to our Bisley Guest Days.

Ammunition had to be hand-loaded for the team matches and another new cap (AM) paired up with VC to complete this exacting task. An enthusiastic amateur gunsmith (and past Queen's and Grand winner) (PQGW) adopted the role of armourer and we were well endowed with young professionals, which gave us a team treasurer (TT), a choice of doctors (one a new cap) (TD) and an optician (TO). Once on tour, other duties were undertaken, starting with the "Luggage Legends" (LL) and continuing with stats co-ordinators, diarist/press team (DPT) and snacks/water providers. These tasks mostly involved co-working with the other team members which helped the team to bond.

Training Sessions at Bisley

These were designed with team-building in mind and consisted of a sequence of weekends: one in September, one in January, one in February and one in March.

September weekend

The September weekend had one objective – to dismantle the recent Palma team and lay the foundations to the GB Team to South Africa. So the team was divided into pairs, coaching each other, always with a new cap paired with an old cap, and changing pairs after each had shot. We shot at 300 and 1000 yards, the ranges where we knew the Protea would be won and lost, until seven new caps had shot/coached with seven new partners and got to know each other in a relaxed context. Scores were not of great interest, but turned out to be encouraging. To their credit, the Palma team veterans entered enthusiastically into the process.

The other key element in September was a session led by our member of England's Commonwealth Games gold medal winning pair (Melbourne 2006) (CGGMW), and assisted by PQGW, on the vital topic of "Winter Preparation". Proper winter preparation had been essential in laying the ground for his "games glory" and would be just as vital for GBRT SA 2008. With the aid of PowerPoint, the concepts of technical, physical and mental preparation were explained and the team went home in no doubt about where their focus was to be during the four months until we met again. As part of winter preparation, all were required to submit their winter preparation plans to the VC and some team members met together for on-range or SCATT sessions during the winter. Feedback was used extensively with a review of progress each time we met over the winter.

January weekend

January was soon upon us and Bisley can look and feel depressingly down-at-heel in mid-winter. Nevertheless, the team forged ahead with its preparations by starting to build the target teams that would, by and large, endure to the end of the tour. As well as working on a myriad of administrative issues such as rifle permit applications, copy FACs and passports, rifle chamber dimensions and barrel lives, entry forms, medical proformas, clothing sizes, blazers, buttons, badges and other minutiae, the thrust of the weekend was to review progress on everyone's winter preparation plans, and practise the art of speed shooting, again at 300 and 1000 yards, for which ample incentive was provided by the biting winter cold.

In addition a session, led by one of the team's most senior and accomplished tourists (SAC1), was held on the subject of contingency planning ie "what if x, or y, or z goes wrong?" This led to every team member being made responsible for ensuring that he/she could borrow a back-up rifle in the event of a failure, with a promise from the captain that a technical failure would definitely happen during the pre-tour training period and everyone must be ready for it at all times. Only eight weeks to departure.

February weekend

Four weeks to departure and the team prepared for its trial match to be held two weeks hence, against a strong All-comers team to be raised by PC. Target teams once again practised at 300 and 1000 yards, and management, once again, chastised plotters for failure to adopt the team standard method, or for forgetting to enter shooter/rifle/coach/plotter details on the plots, or for failing to record a shot during a changeover, or for forgetting to add up the total score at the end, any of which could mean disaster in the Protea if the register keeper was not feeling generous. At times nagging cannot be avoided if the end result is to be a professional unit.

During this weekend a new concept of "collective mental preparation" was tested. Many shooters have their own routines for relaxation, visualisation and mental focus prior to a competition. The team was invited to form,

as an experiment, a huddle for mental preparation in the form of a short meditation. This was used several times and could, along with group physio stretches, be said to have played its part in team building. Ultimately it was not used for the big matches, as a minority of team members did not feel that it helped them. It did however help to raise the profile of, and encourage, proper mental preparation.

In addition a key session on team building was led by another of the team's most senior and accomplished tourists (SAC2). This class room exercise was done by dividing the team into five groups of four, each headed by a new cap (they had nowhere to hide). Groups were given ten minutes to identify their worst past experiences of team failure and to diagnose the reasons for these failures. Once the groups had all come back together, the "worst" column on the flip-chart filled up as the group leaders called out their groups' conclusions on outcomes and causes to be avoided. The process was then repeated, this time identifying the best team experiences and why. Soon, with the aid of the flip chart, the team had agreed the key behavioural and organisational criteria for success and the "no-no" behaviours and attitudes which would not be acceptable.

Conduct of the team would henceforth be monitored against the benchmarks which the team had itself created. Two weeks later two team members would fail to show on time for the 8:30 start of the All-comers match and it was not just the captain who admonished the culprits. Team discipline was now everyone's province.

Meanwhile A had arranged a trip to Woking's ten pin bowling emporium on the Saturday evening where four teams (yes, mixing old and new caps!) battled it out over copious amounts of lager and pizza. Hugely enjoyed by all.

March weekend

The All-comers' match gave the team its first opportunity to benchmark progress in the areas on which it had been working. It was also the last shoot before departure to South Africa and any outstanding rough edges needed to be identified and resolved urgently. Team members were asked to focus on their jobs within the team and not be distracted by the social opportunities presented by having some agreeable company on the range, in the form of the opposition. In addition, the long predicted mass rifle failure had still to occur . . .

Hitherto the team had trained in a four target format as the reserves had demonstrated great commitment to the team by attending winter training when the attractions of the fireside at home might have been more compelling. This was therefore to be the first time that the MCG would be the main, as opposed to a target, coach and the captain was keen to see how the coaching team was coming together. Saturday's match was held at long range and was won by a disappointingly small margin. The shooters had shot well but the coaching team, after its first outing in full match format, needed more practice in their team-working.

In the evening the adjutant organised a superb dinner for both teams, the menu having a distinctly South African flavour. A happy occasion, with exchanges of toasts between the team and the All-comers, contributed further to the sense of togetherness. The goodwill of our supporters was much in evidence and it was clear that many at Bisley were with us in spirit.

On the Sunday morning, after a mental preparation session, the whole team stepped up a gear at 300 yards and delivered a convincing performance. Then the mass rifle failure struck and all shooters were required to complete the match against the All-comers with a different rifle at 600 yards. Neither coaches nor shooters missed a beat in terms of concentration, and the result was a convincing win. The captain then knew that he had a competitive team in the making.

For the avoidance of complacency, and taking another cue from the Palma team, an independent auditor (IA), accomplished in team organisation, had kindly agreed to observe and report back on the team's performance in terms of firing point drills, plotting and so forth. His report was mixed, with praise in some areas and points for improvement in others. His conclusion was clear: the team needed to continue to improve further its firing point drills and plotting if it was to beat the mighty South Africans!

Travel and Accommodation

As the tour was short, and as the Bloemfontein conditions can be hot and tiring, (and as the captain avoids personal discomfort where possible) the emphasis was on comfort, convenience and effective team communication. Seats were booked in premium economy, the extra leg room giving better rest and therefore reduced recovery time on arrival both in South Africa and on return home.

As one team member was an employee of Avis Europe, staff rates were obtained on five large mini-buses, with four or maximum five to each eight seater bus which again maximised comfort.

Further, as a result of the captain's recce the previous year, comfortable accommodation had been organised in a well-located guest house where the team had something approaching its own wing and the conference room was allocated to the team for breakfast throughout the tour. This base was invaluable for team meetings, ammunition pressing sessions and occasional pizzas when there was no time for supper out, and the team had somewhere pleasant that it could call home. This was enhanced by having our own section of garden for relaxation (also providing a venue for the team's three or four smokers' leper colony).

Travel and accommodation, if not properly thought through, can have a negative impact on team morale. Whilst our comforts came at extra cost, they were worth having and the team worked hard on the fund-raising to pay for them. Once again the importance of integrating old and new caps was reflected in the room and vehicle allocations.

Acclimatisation

On arrival our one travelling reserve was immediately upgraded to full team member so that he would not feel in any way excluded. After one complete day free to recover from the long journey (over 24 hours from Bisley to the guest house), the team was briefed on the two precious practice days that would be held on the range prior to the arrival of any other competitors.

Day One was to be in four target format with the aim of confirming 300 and 900 metre elevations, shooters practising their drills and plotting, whilst all four coaches had the chance to get the feel of the wind which, at 28 degrees C and 5,000 feet above sea level, was somewhat different to Bisley in March. For starters they found abundant mirage, following three inches of rain the previous week. Although a reasonably unstructured day, plotting was being carefully watched by the VC who on investigating a serious transgression discovered the culprit to be . . . the captain.

Day Two was our last practice day as a team, and the team formed on to the three target format as would be used for the RSA Invitation and Protea matches. Team-building continued as the target shooters were fixed for the day whilst, at each range, MCG swapped places with one of the target coaches. This was very valuable as, by the end of the day, MCG had coached all the shooters, thereby becoming more familiar with hands-on wind-calling in the local conditions, and the three target coaches had all had a go at being main coach, which led to a deeper understanding amongst the coaching team as to how they would best function as an effective unit.

After the two long hot acclimatisation days on the range the team had gained an appreciation of the importance of sleep, hydration and ever-vigilant sun-protection in the maintenance of concentration and energy levels.

Club Team Matches

Our last opportunity for team-building was the three 6 man, plus coach, club team matches, each one shot straight after lunch on successive days in the early part of the SABU Championships. These matches were important as they presented the sort of heat and wind conditions that would arise in the two 12 man international matches later in the week.

The team divided into three BCRC teams which were designed such that, by the end of the three club matches, all shooters would have been coached by all the coaches and all shooters shot in different target teams and at different places in the firing order. No effort was made to pick winning teams for the club matches as they were a valuable opportunity for management to shuffle the pack and ensure that, whatever the selection for the international matches, no shooter would be allocated a coach that he had not shot with in an earlier team shoot.

Result

The results achieved by the team are recorded in the Summer 2008 Journal and something approaching a "clean sweep" was achieved in both team and individual matches, including wins in the RSA Invitation and Protea

matches. These wins were by margins of three and six points respectively. Mission accomplished!

Conclusions

The narrow margins of victory suggest that team-building was perhaps the difference between winning and losing. This is based on the assumption that the shooters, coaches and ammunition were of similar quality between the teams. Whilst the opposition had shot more than us in the preceding weeks and months, they had probably not shot in national team format since the Palma Match six months previously.

The captain, by coincidence, was also captain of the Kolapore team at Bisley three months later. By the nature of the latter match there is no opportunity for team building and, compared with the matches on tour in South Africa, the captain found the experience curiously uninvolved. I believe that this shows that home advantage and the benefit of a wide selection choice are offset by the team building advantage held by a well prepared touring team.

The contribution of the new caps was immense in many ways and it is clear that they brought an extra edge in terms of energy and work-rate both on and off the range. Our opponents would give anything to have so many eligible shooters and GB should consider itself blessed to have such depth of talent to choose from.

Finally I pay tribute to our hosts. It is a huge credit to the determination of the South Africans that they maintain such a competitive standard with a comparatively small fraction of the choice of up-and-coming shooters enjoyed by GB captains. Long may they continue to be worthy adversaries, and long may shooters from the UK travel to Bloemfontein to support them in their endeavours.

Post Script: this article has been written with emphasis on process rather than personalities. However for those readers interested in the identity of the "dramatis personae", they are set out below:

PC	Chris Hockley
VC	Dave Dyson
MCG	Martin Townsend
A	James Lewis (<i>GM</i>)
AS	Marcus O'Leary
BE	George Gilpin
BC	Rick Shouler
WC	Chris Watson
AM	Ian Davison
PQGW	Jon Underwood (<i>GM, SM, GC</i>)
TT	Toby Raincock
TD	Paul Sykes
TO	Gary Alexander
LL	Matt Ensor, Ed Compton, Adam McCullough
DPT	Matt Charlton and Ed Jeens
CGGMW	Parag Patel (<i>GC2 SC</i>)
SAC1	Jane Messer (<i>GC, SC</i>)
SAC2	Nigel Ball (<i>QM, GC, SC</i>)
IA	Iain Robertson (<i>SM</i>)

RAF TARGET RIFLE CLUB TOUR TO NEW ZEALAND 2009

by the team

Captain
Tour Manager
Shooters

Neil Moxon
Chris Fitzpatrick
Jim Bryant
David Calvert
Rupert Clark
John Deane
Chris Fopp
Hannah French
Mike Gregory
Chris Hockley
Brian Jones
Jim Lindsay
Julie Ouston
Bernard Parke
Iain Robertson
Karen Robertson
Karen Ryan
Mick Silver
Conrad Steele-Benny
Keith Trowbridge
Roger Wood

After much planning and anticipation the Royal Air Force Target Rifle Club tour to New Zealand got underway just before the turn of 2008. The team left Bisley on 29 December with a full coach load of equipment and luggage. Following a relatively smooth check-in at Heathrow the team arrived in Auckland via Hong Kong after “only” 25 hours flying time. We had left Bisley with temperatures near freezing but emerged in Auckland to a more temperate and pleasant 25°C which was a good introduction to what was to come.

On arrival we were pleased to see the others who had travelled separately but were only too keen to get away from the airport and on to our hotel in downtown Auckland. However, those who have toured before know that the formalities can take some time especially when twenty shooters descend on the police and customs representatives in the baggage hall. Patience is ever thus a virtue. Once we had cleared customs, we were very pleased to see Rex Chilcott who was able to help us with storing the rifles until the team’s shoot at Te Puke the following week.

New Year’s Eve was spent in Auckland – a city combining new and traditional colonial styles of architecture – which the team had a brief chance to explore that afternoon. The team also enjoyed several days of R&R in Paihia in the Bay of Islands to get over the jet lag and acclimatise ourselves to the summer heat.

The variety of scenery was particularly impressive as we drove south from Paihia to Rotorua to the team’s first friendly match at Te Puke; however, the most spectacular sights for us as visitors from UK, awaited

us in Rotorua where all the evidence of the geothermal activity and the historical volcanic happenings around the area manifests itself in the forms of geysers and hot mud pools.

Some from the team also took advantage of a trip in a historic aircraft on the way south as they passed by Auckland North Shore airport. This was the RAF team after all!

On 7 January we headed out from Rotorua to the Te Puke range in the middle of a heat wave – a very useful experience for us to further acclimatise ahead of the shoots at Trentham. The range is set on beautiful rolling countryside – very different to the Bisley scenery – with the firing points on top of volcanic outcrops with the Pacific visible in the distance.

This was an opportunity for checking that rifles had travelled well, that zeros were still accurate and for the shooters to (re)learn to cope with the heat. This also provided an excellent opportunity to practice string shooting, which is used in New Zealand, before we got into the major competitions at Trentham. We had individual shoots at 300 and 600 yards with David Calvert showing us the way just dropping one point.

The Te Puke Fullbore Rifle Club looked after us extremely well and we all admired their range set in the beautiful landscape, although the gullies which ran through it led to some “interesting” wind conditions. Good practice for us!

By this time we were certainly beginning to understand the word “hospitality” and after the match, the Te Puke RC provided us with a marvellous barbecue of local produce including lamb cutlets and venison steak as well as great salads and fruit from this centre of the kiwi growing area. Our Captain and Tour Manager presented trophies to Mick Buckley, now resident in New Zealand, and to Ron Godfrey who said our “unusual” policeman’s helmet trophy would go alongside others which visiting UK teams have been pleased to give Te Puke Club over the years. Diane Collings took the chance to model it for us.

This was a special chance for the team to make new friends and also for us to see something of New Zealand life. Bruce Godfrey, brother of Diane Collings, took us onto the farm and showed us the fine art of sheep shearing. This was interesting for all, but perhaps more so for those city dwellers amongst us. We saw him shear three sheep and wondered how one shearer could do 250 sheep a day!

After Te Puke and Rotorua the team pressed onward to Upper Hutt and the NRA of New Zealand Seddon range at Trentham. There were some breathtaking



At least the wind behaved itself for the team photograph!



The team regretted "Curry Night" in Roturua.



Keith Trowbridge's 105.3. You might not need V bulls . . . but you might need a new barrel soon!



Hannah French (RAF) and Amy Hatcher (RNZAF).



Brian Jones and Mick Silver hoping for success!



Roger Wood - happy with his final shoot.

landscapes on the way and some members of the team decided to take a break at the RNZAF museum at Ohakea . . . or so they thought! It was clearly signposted on the tourist maps (and indeed in a 2007 guidebook) but the slightly bemused gate guard at the base said it had closed two years ago and moved to Christchurch . . . and about ten people had asked about it that day! Others found their aeronautical attractions nearly on the road.

Everyone travelled their separate ways with one group deciding to head for a very different landscape at the ski resorts of Whakapapa on Mount Ruapehu, New Zealand's highest volcano – snow covered even in the New Zealand high summer. Mount Ruapehu stood in for "Mount Doom" in the Lord of the Ring's films.

Some of the group went through the town of "Bulls" and we hoped that the signs seen by Brian Jones and Mick Silver would be a portent of things to come!

Having arrived at last at Upper Hutt and having experienced the clearest blue skies and blistering temperatures, what did we find at Trentham? RAIN! It's a good job that the team had prudently carried our wet weather gear halfway round the world! The overcast skies gave us a first shoot at Trentham more like Bisley at least in terms of weather and we started with a 300 yards practice to get used to the unique Trentham conditions. The wind, however, was decidedly un-Bisley-like and it went from 1/2 L to 2 R instantly apparently – and that was at the shortest distance!

More fun awaited us the following day at Trentham with the team matches. Monday 12 January was a big occasion for team shooting with the International and other matches involving the RAFTRC, Australia, New Zealand, North and South Island teams as well as Ladies and Veterans teams. The course of fire was 2ss + 10 for teams of 10 at 300, 600, 900 and, unusually for this meeting, 1000 yards. The day started overcast with a hint of imminent rain but later turned sunny and hot – the mirage becoming very thick which was useful as we fell back to see the sudden and large wind changes. Trentham started benign but certainly lived up to its reputation later as we fell back to 1000 yards.

Neil Moxon and Chris Hockley were our coaches for the match with David Calvert and Chris Fitzpatrick as main coaches. No easy task for them – often not only was it a question of how much wind but which direction! We had many stops and starts and out of sequence sighters from waiting shooters to confirm the wind.

This was a real challenge for the coaches and indeed for the shooters who had long periods on the point waiting for the wind to get back to previous conditions – or at least those that could be understood. Big changes of 4 or 5 right to 7 left and quickly back again

were common and our waiting tactics meant that we used all of our time allowance.

After 300 and 600 we had been a narrow third behind Australia and New Zealand trailing Australia by seven points and New Zealand by four (ex 1000). This was a very small margin given that the long ranges were yet to come. However, we were pleased to have some very steady scoring at 900 yards but things got really tricky at 1000 yards and we were not able to improve our placing. A highlight of the day was Hannah French's first 50 – great to do it at Trentham – especially at 900 yards. This was after her success on the previous day in the Wellington RA Championships where she came second in her class of the Overall and Long Range Aggregate to AC Amy Hatcher from the RNZAF.

Australia were first with 1943.187 (Neil Drain high scoring with 198.20) and New Zealand second with 1937.189 (Rob Johanson 197.26). We scored 1918.142 (David Calvert was our high scorer with 197.20)

We were also pleased to have a visit from Group Captain Graham Bond, the UK Defence Adviser and Head of the British Defence Liaison Staff in New Zealand which is the diplomatic arm of the Ministry of Defence located in the British High Commission. He made the trip from Wellington to see how we were doing and to meet a number of members of the team.

The following day was the beginning of the Ballinger Belt series which was the first day of individual shooting. We started at 800 yards, then 900 and twice at 300 yards. If we had not suspected it before, now we really did know that Trentham held a few 'challenges' for the shooter. Even at 300 yards there were plenty of blown magpies and certainly so at 800 and 900 yards. Peoples' scores varying from 50 at one range to low to mid 40s (or worse) at the next were common even among those with local knowledge and our group suffered the same kind of pattern. On that day Rupert Clark had the pleasure of shooting with one NZ competitor, Lt Col (Ret) Haddon Donald now aged 91 and who had been taking part without a break in the NRANZ Championships (excepting the war years) since 1935. That's right 1935! Still using a blade foresight but why change now?

On Wednesday 14 January the team hosted a barbecue at the Upper Hutt RC clubhouse as a way of saying a very big thank you to all those who had helped us organise the visit and also to have the pleasure of the company of old and newly made friends in New Zealand.

Our 'thank you' list was long but we were especially appreciative of the assistance of the Upper Hutt RC, the NRA of New Zealand, the range officials at Trentham, those who had helped us with rifle storage and transport, British Defence Liaison Staff and, of course, the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

There was an exchange of mementos which will now adorn clubhouses at the opposite side of the Earth – as our tour brochure says “Behind 5,974,000,000,000,000,000,000 Tons of Planet!” – we haven’t re-weighed it though!

One of the team members’ scores which deserves a special mention is that of Keith Trowbridge scoring 105 with three V bulls in the Masefield Short Range competition. Truly an outstanding achievement . . . but who needs Vs he said!

The Saturday was an overcast day to finish and our final team shoot on that morning was in a clubs event and RAF Red were very pleased to finish third just one point behind an Australian team comprising part of their national side.

When the analysis of concurrent scores was done, the other highlight was that the RAF Red team had won the Colvin Cup for Service competitors based on an aggregate of scores from 300 yards to 900 yards in the Ballinger Belt Series of competitions. It was awarded to the team by Haddon Donald, in his capacity as the NRA of New Zealand Patron, at the Prizegiving on Saturday afternoon.

Also on the final Saturday Roger Wood signed off from 55 years of competitive shooting by competing in the F Class Queen’s Final at Trentham. David Calvert had admired his flat elevation but was left wondering what the wind spread indicated for the TR shooters like him about to get down to shoot in their Queen’s

Prize Final. At this point we should add that Roger has asked for particular thanks to be passed to all the team members and locals who helped move him and his shooting equipment around the ranges.

In the afternoon, David Calvert was our last team representative firing in the meeting where he achieved 17th place in the New Zealand’s Queen’s Final. Yet again the Trentham winds were strong and tricky with several of the finalists recording misses at 900 yards. The Ballinger Belt and NZ Queens Final were won by an Australian shooter, David Rich from Victoria.

All of us found the week’s events at Trentham to be very testing with a combination of the high temperatures, brilliant sunshine (and high sunburn risk!) and the (in)famous winds. Getting used to the string shooting technique proved challenging and the local shooters clearly knew how best to employ waiting tactics for the wind to return to a known previous condition. This was very different to Bisley where the competitor needs to make a more instant decision when his or her turn to shoot comes around with a short time allowance in which to shoot. However, we all had an excellent tour and came away pleased with our results. A final ‘thank you’ should go to the support of the RAF Sports Board and all our other sponsors and supporters who contributed to the tour. No doubt all of us would hope to return to New Zealand soon, to renew friendships and again try to beat the ‘challenging’ winds of Trentham!

RESULTS OF THE NRA CLUB 100 THREE POSITION POSTAL SHOOT 2008

For the Swanston Challenge Cup

	Name	Club	Prone	Standing	Kneeling / Sitting	Total
1	Sarah Cheslyn-Curtis	Pumas RC	97	57	83	237
2	Kevin Hill	Wandsworth	98	58	76	232
3	Carol Painting	Pumas RC	95	39	78	212
4	David Robinson	Pumas RC	94	47	58	199
5	A Rowlinson	32nd / 61st	88	47	61	196
6	John Wilson	32nd / 61st	94	51	49	194
7	Ben Preece	Pumas RC	87	19	72	178
8	Olly Siddall	Pumas RC	85	37	40	162
9	David Brigden	32nd / 61st	92	10	46	148
10	Ellie Hoolahan	Pumas RC	93	12	35	140
11	S Wilson	32nd / 61st	90	26	23	139

For details and entry forms contact Kevin at club100.nra@ntlworld.com

THE MAXIM MACHINE GUN COMES TO BISLEY!



Tuesday 24 February saw a historic event occur on Butt Zero on Stickledown when BBC presenter David Dimbleby fired a Maxim Machine Gun for a new BBC series, the Seven Ages of Britain. Records indicate that this was the first time this model of gun has been fired in the UK since 1890 and it is believed that there are only six known Maxim Machine Guns still in existence.

A Brief History of the Maxim Machine Gun

Recognised as the unquestioned father of automatic firearms as we know them today, Hiram Stevens Maxim was a mechanics genius. Born on 5 February 1840 at Sangersville, Maine, USA, he displayed remarkable mechanical abilities at a very early age. Becoming interested in the development of firearms with self-loading / automatic characteristics, from 1883 to 1885 he filed patent specifications on just about every conceivable system under which automatic fire might be produced.

Maxim had been in England for some time developing his machine gun at a small plant at 57 Hatton Gardens, London. The British Government gave him his first order for three machine guns in 1887, but the Maxim Gun was not officially adopted and issued to British forces until 1891. These fired .577/.450" calibre cartridges, canvas belt fed, at a rate of 600 rounds per minute. This was the standard military calibre as used in the Martini-Henry rifle but with jacketed bullets (to reduce lead fouling in the feed mechanism?). The first production Maxim Guns were manufactured by Albert Vickers at Crayford, Kent. This association with Vickers was to their mutual benefit

and, after Maxim's patents had expired, the design was evolved into the Vickers Gun of 1912.

The Maxim Guns were first used in battle in the Matabele Wars of 1893 - 94 and later on the northwest frontier of Afghanistan in the Chitral campaign of 1895 with devastating effect. They also proved most effective at Omdurman in the Sudan (1898) and the Boer War of 1899 - 1902.

Recoil operated and water cooled, the Vickers weighed about 60lbs overall. The gun was usually fired in short bursts. A rate of 60 shots per minute was rated 'slow fire', 125 shots was 'medium fire' and 250 per minute was 'rapid fire'. The gun was normally mounted on a folding tripod, which itself weighed approximately 52lbs. Various designs of two-wheeled carriage were produced to ease handling in several countries. Vickers guns were also mounted on some WW1 aircraft.

With a high degree of accuracy to at least 600 yards, the Vickers Machine Gun became a favourite of the infantry whose gunners often affectionately referred to it as "the Regimental Company Typewriter"!

Still in use in some parts of the world, the product of Hiram Maxim's genius has left an indelible mark on the history of modern warfare.



The Seven Ages of Britain

Presented by David Dimbleby, The Seven Ages of Britain will tell the story of our nation through the objects we made. These include paintings and monuments of stone and gold, religious relics as well as weapons of war, instruments of science and works of art. The programme explores rare objects of great beauty and craftsmanship, but also simple, everyday things that have a powerful story to tell. The series hopes to explore the ways in which these objects shed light on our history - what they tell us about who we were and who we are today, and the insights they offer into the great events in our national story.

The series takes the form of seven one-hour episodes which is provisionally scheduled to be transmitted this autumn / winter at 9pm on BBC One.



INTRODUCING OUR NEW CHAIRMAN ROBIN PIZER

Talking with Tony de Launay

Dr Robin Pizer will be familiar to many shooters in both the regions and at Bisley. For some 40 years he has competed in Match and Target Rifle competitions and has played a part in the administration of the NRA governed sport. With earlier roles on the NRA's Council and a continuing Council role with the English Twenty Club he is well attuned to the practicalities and politics of the fullbore target shooting world.

By education a mathematician and by career a civil servant, he has held roles at GCHQ and earlier with the UK Atomic Energy Authority. His specialist area is Information Technology security testing with an international reputation as an expert in his field. By hobby he is also a noted postal historian and author of many articles in philatelic journals.

Over the years he has gained a reputation as an outspoken contributor to shooting issues and debate. In short he is someone of substantial intellect and analytical force. With all these qualities what does he see as his primary tasks in his new role as Chairman of the National Rifle Association? I spoke with him for some preliminary views and observations.

"As someone who has for many years felt that the disparate shooting voices need to be drawn together, I fully support the moves towards a unified voice short of full amalgamation. We now face the challenge of deciding what form that voice should take and what immediate activities can be carried out for the common good. To be realistic I do not see this approaching anything like a full amalgamation in the next 5 to 10 years."

He believes that there is also a strong need to ensure a tangible legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games. "So much excellent work has been done to prepare the ground for Bisley as a training and preparation centre for the 2012 Games that we cannot afford to lose that progress. If Bisley is given the Games' shooting events then it will be the opportunity that our sport needs to turn the training legacy into an even more comprehensive legacy for the future. But we also need to ensure that we minimise the disruption to our traditional programme." Although he has not yet had an opportunity to study the detailed plans and schedule of what might happen if the Games are held at Bisley, he is clear that we must recognise that we do not have the skills to build the facilities needed and should leave this to the Olympic Delivery Authority.

He is fully committed to building on the recovery from the debt-ridden period of the NRA's history. "The current recession is going to require some positive action and I intend to ensure that we have

contingency plans in place to deal with any shortfall in income in 2009." Much will depend upon the action already in hand and the scale of current budgeted activities.

He has long been a proponent of support for regional shooting:

in what areas does he see the NRA making a beneficial impact for the regions? "We should continue and improve the broad framework relationship with those that now run the ranges. We need to make it as easy as possible for local clubs to reach the understandings that they must have with the local managers and range wardens. We also must look seriously at opportunities to purchase ranges where the chance arises."

In his view this should include a whole life costing of a pro-forma 300 metres no danger area range, incorporating 10 metres air rifle and 50 metres smallbore, as is common in Europe. "We should aim for one such facility in each Sports Council region over the next twenty years. Of course there are funding implications but unless we try we will not succeed."

It is often said that shooting is ignored – even ostracised – by the media. Whether or not that is true how can the sport restore the balance and attract better coverage? "This area needs joint action with the CPSA and NSRA. We need to look at events we hold and select the more interesting to which we invite journalists. We need to provide regular reporting especially with pictures of events and their winners. We need help from members already working in the media to get the right contacts and a good reporting style."

Finally, in recent times shooting has had some harsh and restrictive treatment at the hand of Government. What now needs to be done to put the sport in a position when Government will look at it as something of a jewel in the UK sporting crown? "This is another one for joint action with the CPSA and NSRA. We need to use the Olympics to best advantage to demonstrate we are responsible, mature people who excel in a range of target shooting sports and to regain some pistol shooting – and that target shooting is a sport at which we win medals."

It is a down-to earth agenda. Hard work lies ahead.



HISTORY OF A TYPICAL CLUB - THE RICOCHET RIFLE CLUB

by Rob Needham

There must be scores of small shooting clubs like the Ricochet Rifle Club up and down the country, whose members have their occasional moments of glory but for the most part just enjoy shooting and the social aspects of their club. It is this sort of clubs that foster the camaraderie of shooting and form the backbone of support for the NRA. The Ricochet Rifle Club celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2008, which encouraged members to recollect its past successes over an excellent meal at the London & Middlesex. Readers of this short history who belong to small clubs will surely find parallels in their own clubs.

A piece in the January 1955 issue of the NRA Journal said that the Ricochet Rifle Club was founded on 27 May 1933, at Bisley, by Major CHB Shepherd, RN Cowan, BB Keen, GD Jephson, and AG Close. The stated object was to promote Service Rifle shooting amongst past and present members of Magdalen College School (MCS), Oxford.

Major CHB Shepherd was the schoolmaster at MCS in charge of rifle shooting and the other names were those of senior boys at the school. Until that time the schoolboys leaving MCS had no Old Boys club to join if they wished to continue shooting. The name suggests that the club's proposed formation might have been a light-hearted, spur-of-the-moment idea, but from then the club has continued for 75 years! The obvious name for the club would have been "Old Waynfletes Rifle Club" because old boys of the school are called Old Waynfletes after the school's founder, William Waynflete. No matter, as with either name nobody else would know what the club was!

For many years the club had no rules, no constitution, no AGMs – it just ran for the enjoyment of its members (ah, happy days). Now of course it has to have all these and much other bureaucracy and paperwork. In the early years before the Second World War the club had matches against a most unlikely sounding (no criticism intended) group, the Doyle Carte Opera Company, on an old range at Bicester. We still compete for the Martyn Green Cup that was presented to the Ricochet Rifle Club in 1936 by W Martyn Green Esq, late of the Doyle Carte.

In the 1950s, Oxfordshire was not a strong shooting county and it competed in the Junior Counties championship at Bisley; this was a team of four instead of a team of eight. In 1957 Oxon won the Junior Counties match; most of the team are in the photograph opposite but Col Douglas Merry was shooting concurrently in the Services match. Ricochet history around this time is scant, but the club was low on numbers and by the early sixties the three men in the front of the photo were members of Ricochet

although they were not Old Waynfletes. Their names were Frank Shotton, RM (Mick) Stevens, and Wally Smith and they were staunch members for many years. The last record of Frank Shotton taking part in a Ricochet meeting was in 1971 at the age of 87.

Most of our members were gained from the school shooting club when they left school, but the Ricochet Rifle Club continued its policy of recruiting some non-Old Waynfletes who had become friends on the ranges. In this way we were joined by WHC (Crawford) Alexander and Ian Shepherd. Crawford is probably our most familiar name to other shooters at Bisley; he joined us around 1968, has been an international shot many times, and has been in the Queen's Final 13 times. Crawford has won the Barlow Aggregate and the Palma Aggregate in past Imperial Meetings. Ian Shepherd, who won the Kenya Championship in 1974, has been the Hon Sec of the fullbore section of the Oxfordshire Rifle Association for many years, and his organisation of ORA practice shoots has done much to improve the standard of Oxon shooting.

By the end of the sixties Oxfordshire had a county team of eight, and in 1970 Oxfordshire pulled off the double when they won both the Short Range and the Long Range county matches (it's always satisfying to see pussy cats savaging the tigers!) Ricochet members made up half of both teams, and the captain for the Short Range match, Richard Dust, was also our Ricochet captain until 1997. Richard's greatest of many successes was 75 ex 75 at 1000 yards in 1982 to win the New Zealand in the British Commonwealth Meeting. John Knight was also in those two successful Oxfordshire teams, and he has done excellent work over the years on rifles owned by several Ricochet members.

The club's greatest success was when Mick Stevens won the Queen's Prize back in 1971. His typically modest comment after he came off the firing point, "The shots just went where I was pointing." A





Mick Stevens (GM) being chaired from the range.

comment overheard behind the firing point was, "I think Mick Stevens is a Canadian shot," and another comment, "He's a member of an Irish club" (perhaps they were confusing Ricochet with Rick O'Shea). So the club name was still keeping people fooled because he was actually a farmer from Oxfordshire, and Mick Stevens (GM) is now the President of our club.

During the 1970s and 1980s the Ricochet Rifle Club was clearly the strongest Oxfordshire club. It never had more than 18 members, but in 1986 the club had four X class shots: Crawford Alexander, Richard Dust, Jason Elliot-Smith and Mick Stevens. Ricochet members have won the ORA Spring Meeting 10 times; the Autumn Meeting 12 times, the Club Pairs 12 times, and the Oxon County Championship 9 times.

Our only class X shot now is Maj (Rtd) Brian Taylor who shoots for Kent. He was an outstanding shot as a schoolboy; in 1965 while still at school he shot in the Oxon team at Kingsbury in pouring rain and was Oxon's top scorer with 144 – in those days, using a No 4, a very good score. In the 1965 Imperial Meeting Brian came second in the Young Rifleman's Aggregate after a tie shoot, won the Friday Aggregate and was one of first schoolboys to reach the Queen's Final. He was captain of the UK Cadets, and captain of the Army Target Rifle Club from 1991 to 1997. He is our current Ricochet captain.

The club may have been formed by a light-hearted suggestion – the Ricochet participation in the Australian Bi-centenary event in 1988 certainly was. At the 1987 Imperial Meeting a bunch of members were chatting and one of them (we never have found the culprit) suggested that the Ricochet Rifle Club should send a team to the Australian event. After some dismissive chuckles the idea gained ground and in the end four members shot at Cairns and in

the Bi-centenary meeting at Sydney: Mike Bodinham, Richard Burden (team captain), Peter Bysshe, and Dave Parkinson. They all had good shoots, particularly Richard at Mackay and Peter at Sydney, who picked up a lot of prize money. The team was most grateful for the support and encouragement it got from the GB teams out there, and returned with antipodean friendships, a Phil Mastin stock, and high-class souvenirs like a boomerang and a T-shirt with fake bullet holes in it!

In the spring of 1989 the Ricochet Rifle Club held its first training weekend at Bisley for MCS shooting club members. The NRA kindly provided free of charge the use of the Trophy Exhibition pavilion as a meeting and lecture room. Several Ricochets did talks on aspects of shooting and there was practical work on the ranges; the weekend ended with a match at 500 yards between two teams, each of three Ricochets and three schoolboys. We held a similar training weekend in 1990, but unhappily that year the shooting master retired from running the shooting club and no other master was appointed in his place. Effectively the main source of Ricochet Rifle Club joiners dried up; the MCS Shooting Club has never been revived.

Peter Bysshe took over as Ricochet captain from Richard Dust in 1997. As well as one of our best target rifle shots he is keen on historic rifle shooting and has won many competitions over the years; he has also won the McQueen's Sniper Rifle competition. Other Ricochet members have also shot for their counties: Rob Ackrill (Oxon), Richard Burden (Dorset & Oxon), Jason Elliot-Smith (Oxon), Will Handley (Wilts), Rob Needham (Oxon), Dave Parkinson (Gloucestershire), Ian Shepherd (Oxon), and Clive Wall (Bucks).

The club has carried out several recruitment drives, including sending letters to all previous members of the MCS shooting club, and writing to all fullbore shooting schools in the area. We also walked down the Ashburton line one year talking to each school and trying to reach students who were leaving and had no Old Boys club of their own to join. Our best source of joiners is the 'friend of a member' network and shooters we get to know on the ranges. In this way the Ricochet Rifle Club got to know some of the Reading University shooters. Two Ricochet members gave a talk to their club members at Reading University in 2007, and we have kept in touch at the last three Imperial Meetings. We would, of course, be happy to hear from any shooter looking for a small club to join.

And that brings the Ricochet Rifle Club up to date – a small but friendly club with an interesting history, but with an ageing membership and experiencing difficulties in recruiting young shooters who are new to the sport. We would like to pass on our knowledge and enjoyment of shooting and ensure that the club continues for another 75 years.

ARE YOU ADDRESSING THE TARGET?

by Bob Maddison, National Coach, Running Deer

Anyone who has watched golf on TV, even if they know nothing about the game, knows that the golfer “addresses” the ball before adjusting his position and finally striking it with his club. The object of this is to ensure that when he does strike the ball, the natural swing of the club will propel it towards the green. During the process he carefully aligns his body, by moving his feet, so that his swing will drive the ball accurately without strain. In other words, so that the club becomes an extension of his body directed by his brain. The “tigers” get it right, the “also played” don’t!

Shooting has much in common with golf: it shares the need to align your body carefully with the target so that your rifle points naturally with the least strain. During the Imperial Meeting, as well as the Running Deer Championship we have the Running Deer Unlimiteds in which shooters who normally shoot from the prone position have the opportunity to try shooting from a free standing position at a target that is moving! It is interesting to see how, so often, their body position and the way they address the target puts them at a disadvantage. Whilst we try to correct their position, such advice isn’t always accepted. To understand why stance and position is important, it is helpful to consider the process as applied, first to prone shooting and then to Sporting Rifle Shooting.

The Prone Position

Before taking up his position, the experienced prone shooter will, subconsciously, align his body with the assigned target. Now a glance along the firing point will tell anyone that the actual position adopted is as variable as human physiology varies! Not only will the geometry of the firing point affect the position, but it is obvious that a tall slim shooter will adopt a slightly different position from a short stocky shooter. Other physiological differences have an effect too. In the end, they are striving to achieve a comfortable but stable position that can be maintained throughout the competition. A target rifle match is relatively short compared to an ISSF competition where a comfortable position is even more important. What is important is that the position adopted will determine how your body (and rifle) align naturally with the target. The prudent shooter will make fine adjustments to his body position so that his rifle points naturally without any strain, not just moving his arms and head to force the rifle on to the target. One way to assess this is that the shooter should, after taking up his position, close his eyes and try to “aim” the rifle blind. His position should be adjusted until the rifle naturally aligns itself with the target. In the prone position there is little freedom to get it wrong; if the rifle does not align itself naturally with the target,

any attempt to force it into alignment will result in significant strain and discomfort, and is the cause of many a bad shot. Because there is so little freedom to move, it is even more important to adjust the whole position before starting to shoot. A common effect of body misalignment is an overpowering desire to fire the shot quickly so that you can relax once more! Even a small deviation requires a disproportionate strain to realign the rifle. Another effect is that if the position is “forced”, this will affect the way the rifle recoils, and this can affect the bullet, particularly in small-bore shooting. This can be minimised if your body is correctly aligned with the target in the first instance even if this means that you must stand up and get down again. Sometimes the muzzle height is ignored. This is determined by the position of the butt plate in the shoulder, by sling tension and by the position of the leading hand, which is located by the hand stop. The butt plate height is itself dependent on the height of the rear sight. A deeply curved butt plate makes it more difficult to adjust its position in the shoulder and its height on the rifle must be carefully adjusted. The hand stop often incorporates the swing swivel and so any adjustment should be accompanied by adjusting the sling too. As the muzzle height is also determined by the geometry of the firing point relative to the target it will often be necessary to make changes if strain on the leading arm is to be minimised. A separate hand stop is an advantage.

The ‘Hunting’ Position

This is used for the Moving Target events as well as for the free-standing Sporting Rifle events on a stationary target. A sling is not used. Because the upper support arm must be clear of the chest to allow the rifle to “swing” freely with the target (as well as being in the Rules), some muscular effort is needed. This can be minimised by adopting a suitable hold and stance. The optimum support arm position is when the rifle is held at about 45 degrees to the body (ie shoulder line). The upper arm should make an angle of about 45 degrees and the elbow about 90 degrees. The right shoulder is brought forward to make a good support for the butt and to ensure that the sight can be kept aligned with the eye. It helps to minimise stress if the point of balance of the rifle is somewhere near to this natural position of the leading hand supporting the rifle. This requires that the rifle is rather more front heavy than many sporting rifles are. Extra muzzle weights and barrel extensions also help by increasing the moment of inertia and encourage a smooth “swing”. In Moving Target shooting, mounting the rifle from the ‘ready’ position is very important. A deeply curved butt plate makes it difficult; the butt plate should be nearly straight with a smooth finish so that it does not snag the clothing.

Because the target is moving, it is important that your body can "swing" freely with it across the full arc without moving the head (eye) in relation to the sight. Thus the "swing" must be from the ankles and upwards but never by moving the shoulders which will put the sight out of alignment with your eye. Your heels should not be too far apart - 200 mm (8") is about right (an "open" stance prevents free movement from the ankles), and with the toes pointing at a little less than a right angle for stability but still allowing a free "swing". Your right (rearmost) foot will be roughly parallel to the target run. The stance of a right handed rifle shooter will be similar to that adopted by a left handed (ISSF) pistol shooter! It is most important to address the target before attempting to fire a shot. With your eyes closed, swing the rifle across the target "run" and back again, finally letting it come to rest in your most relaxed position. When you open your eyes, the rifle should be pointing about the middle of the "run". If not, then your foot position should be

adjusted. With your eyes closed it is also easy to assess the body stress that necessarily occurs at the extreme ends of the target run. It is most important that this should be the same in each direction (a cause of enlarged groups in one direction!). Because the target starts from the right, it is a very common problem with novices that they align their body too far to the right with the result that their swing is attenuated as the target reaches the left side of its run! The natural body alignment should be with the rifle pointing towards the place where a shot is most likely to be fired. Exactly the same applies to clay target shooting except that the target height must also be taken into account.

A very experienced shooter will be able to take up his position accurately aligned with the target every time. However, if he is prudent he will address the target and make that small adjustment to his position that will ensure minimum strain and that every shot fired is in the centre of the scoring rings.

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WALCH PISTOLS - REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

In a recent Gun Report article Herb Houze introduced the fascinating subject of the 12 shot Walch Navy size superimposed revolver. He did a brilliant job of gathering the various patents and press reports concerning the pistols created by John Walch and his associates in the late 1850s and early 60s that he patented in February 1859.

The superimposed load has occupied the inventiveness of several makers over the years even back to the flintlock days. The idea of a revolver having a cylinder with double charged chambers was not patented until the late 1850s by John Walch of New York.

I have been collating serial numbers of many USA and UK manufactures over the last 15 years or so. My aim is to produce Survival Figures for the various makers. In the first instances my recordings were for Colts, percussion and conversions, but developed to cover most others, from Alsop's through to Whitney, including Walch, in the USA, and Adams' to Westley Richards in the UK (a list is available for researchers). From the information about Walch and Lindsay models that I have gathered over the years I have now compiled a questionnaire that I would like to ask if the readership might help me out with

John Walch and his partner John Parker Lindsay patented two models of revolver, three models of pistol and one rifle with varying degrees of success; none are common, some being extremely rare.

The models included in the scope of the questionnaire are:

The 12 shot .36" Navy two trigger model revolver of which less than 200 were made. When studying the patent drawings you see a very different design

to that which went into production. It was therefore doubly unfortunate that that which did go into production was a seriously flawed and potentially dangerous concept. That flaw cut short the pistols production life and thereby created a considerable rarity.

The 10 shot .31" Pocket single spur trigger revolver of which 3000 were made, both produced under Walch's Fire Arms Company, New York, name.

The 2 shot .41" derringer pistol, identified as 'Patent Applied For' with a distinctive double fluted barrel of which maybe only 160 were produced.

The 2 shot 4" .41" derringer single spur trigger model of which over 1200 were made.

The 2 shot 'Large' .44" single trigger model of which maybe only 120 were produced.

These last three were marketed under Lindsay's 'Young American' brand employing his 1860 patent with the two stage 'idiot proof' trigger.

One thousand of the superimposed load two shot rifled muskets were produced for the Military, These are not serialised so do not feature in the research.

I am appealing for serial numbers and descriptions of any examples known to any of your readers.

The questionnaire is available to anyone wishing to participate. I will of course, maintain absolute confidentiality, if required, about any data gathered.

For a copy of the questionnaire please contact Phil Boulton (Walch), 22, Robinia Green, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 8EQ, telephone 023 80324322 or e-mail philboultoncps@hotmail.com

FROM THE RANGE OFFICE

by John Gardener

Know your zero!

It has recently become obvious that a large number of users of Bisley ranges are not aware of their zeros beyond 200 yards (if at all). There have been a number of instances when the Range Supervisors have lowered targets and instructed groups or individuals to make use of the zero range.

Following the introduction of compulsory zeroing for High Muzzle Energy firearms, and the heightened awareness of outside authorities, all users of Bisley ranges will be required to confirm that their firearms are correctly zeroed for the distances to be shot. This means that you must have a record of your settings for each distance, having shot at that distance. The zero range will only give a rough guide, given the different barrel length, power of the ammunition, state of the bore etc, each firearm being different. The signing in form places the onus on the person signing in to ensure that the declaration is complied with. It is your responsibility to ensure that you shoot safely. The attitude "oh there's plenty of safety space behind" will not do because there isn't. A round falling short from any distance can, and does ricochet at a very acute and unpredictable angle. Range Supervisors have been instructed to be especially vigilant and will, if needed remove firers from the range.

Recently, during a staff meeting at which we were discussing the pros and cons of compulsory zero, I was called back to the Range Office to speak to a shooter who was blaming the electronic targets for his not getting a score (admittedly this can happen, I have 'lost' a couple of shots myself recently). Because there was doubt, I asked the shooter (a well known and regular shooter at Bisley) if he had checked his zero. These, as far as I can recall, are his words, and I apologise to him, for he will know who he is, if I misquote.

"I have done some work on my rifle and used the sight settings from my book; I have no need to go to the zero range, as I know the settings for my rifle. When the first shot didn't record, I aimed a shot at each corner of the target just to double check". He had been shooting at 1000 yards and he couldn't understand my astonishment and anger. He was genuinely upset at my reaction, which was to tell him how irresponsible and stupid he was. He had obviously forgotten the 'cone of fire' bit of his RCO course as well as much else.

Shooting isn't a game any longer; it is not a casual pastime at which you can dabble. It is a precise and exacting discipline which demands full, constant and one hundred per cent attention to detail. A mistake here doesn't merely result in the loss of a wicket or a dropped catch; it means danger of damage to property,

injury and worse, the possibility of someone being killed.

You are strongly recommended to take every precaution to ensure that your rounds will be captured by the stop butt, failure may well result in disciplinary action.

There have also been some instances recently, when shooters have independently moved to a different distance from the one which they booked. This is a dangerous practice, no-one may change their distance, or allocated target without permission from the Range Office.

I dearly love shooting, and I love 'my' Bisley; it saddens me to think that there are those who would take these loves away from me; and this sadness is exacerbated by the knowledge that some of my contemporaries would aid my detractors by their irresponsibility. Please don't be one of those. Come in and see us, discuss, ask and above all, be diligent. Shoot safe, shoot well and remember – gun rhymes with fun.

So You Had a Rubbish Marker?

We regularly get complaints about poor marking, many, if not most of them are justified. I covered the reasons and solutions in an earlier piece entitled 'From The Butts' (*NRA Journal Summer 2006*). Despite my article and despite other readings on the subject, the complaints continue to be voiced after the event. Let us get one thing perfectly clear. You are never going to get a top class, efficient marker for all your shoots. They are like hen's teeth. The majority of teenagers have found themselves proper jobs and are not available to us here, and as the law has now changed with regard to the number of hours youngsters are allowed to work, we cannot employ many of them for more than half a day so you will not often get the same marker all day.

Sometimes the fault lies with the firing point sometimes not. However it is absolutely pointless telling me when you come in at the end of the day that you have been having problems. Would that I could put the clock back some days (on others I would happily put it forward)! Recently a club secretary came into the office at 15:00, with two and a half hours shooting left, ranting, raving and demanding his money back because his members has gone home in disgust with the abysmal marking. When I asked him, he said that he had not contacted the Butt Supervisor or the Range Office on channel 16 to report any problems but had "Put up with it". That the club's whole day was ruined was entirely his fault. We supply a butt officer at weekends and for major competitions. It is to him you should make first complaint and he should be able to

deal with it. In the event that he or she does not, then it falls to me. There is always a solution, ultimately sacking the marker concerned (three so far this year). However if I sacked every marker about whom I get complaints we would end up with about fifty!

Marking is not an easy job; the target has to go up and down some ninety or more times in a forenoon. More if there is a message four/five etc.

Some of our markers are not exactly built like Arnie, and get very tired. If it's been a while since you

marked a target give me a ring and I'll pay you forty five pounds for your day's work.

Talk to your marker, talk to the butt supervisor, talk to me or one of my colleagues in the Range Office and we will do our best to resolve the matter. Unfortunately we don't have a crystal ball (mine was stolen because I didn't see him coming).

If you go home angry and disappointed because of poor service from your markers don't blame me. Look in the mirror.

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NATIONAL TECHNICAL OFFICERS FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES 2012

You may have seen the notice of the appointment of Discipline Managers for OG2012 and a brief statement of their role and responsibilities, an early one of which is the "Identification and Training" of potential National Technical Officials (NTOs) to help with the delivery of the shooting events. Their tasks include selection and appointment of Range Officers and Referees for the various disciplines, plus officials for Equipment Control, Classification, and other necessary supporting duties. The official Juries and Technical Delegate will be appointed by the ISSF. Individuals wishing to be appointed as an NTO will need to be the holder of a 'British Shooting' or equivalent National judges licence as a minimum qualification. Active holders of ISSF 'A' or 'B' licences are naturally invited to apply. Please note that if you do not yet hold such a licence it is still possible to qualify for one, as courses can be arranged in the UK provided that there is sufficient justification. Details of such courses, and how to apply, can be viewed on the NSRA website. Applicants must be aware that appointment will be conditional on a promise of commitment not only to the Olympic Games themselves, but also to the following Paralympics and the preceding World Cup test event in April 2012, plus the appropriate training and selection processes. Therefore, those who feel unable to make this promise, either because of personal or occupational commitments, will place themselves at a disadvantage for eventual selection.

Applications are therefore invited for consideration for appointment as an NTO, either by letter or e-mail, (not just by telephone please), stating their discipline preference, present or intended judging qualifications, and a CV of their current and former activities and experience in connection with organising or officiating at National and Open shooting competitions in the UK or internationally. Suitably qualified applicants will be invited to attend a meeting later this year* to be assessed according to their choice, aptitude, suitability and proven previous commitment. There will be a further opportunity to attend a similar assessment at a later date, dependent on the number of applications

received. Potential NTOs will be expected to attend further selection and training refresher sessions through 2009 - 2011, as well as officiating at ISSF-rules Championships in the UK and including, where possible, placings at international events in order to gain practice and experience, particularly in the events that are not possible to host in the UK. This procedure will enable a short-list to be compiled by end of 2010, from which final selection of NTOs will be made by mid-2011. It is recommended that, if not already done, all active officials should maintain a log-book of official duties performed, so as to be able to evidence their activities when applying for the grant or renewal of their judges licences (one that includes EC stickers or official stamps from the various events is ideal).

Although efforts will be made to get financial support for some necessary overseas training, those wishing to be involved in this process should anticipate having to meet all of their own costs 'in country' in the interim, as any such grants will be a bonus. Naturally at the test event and at Games' times, official clothing, feeding and accommodation will be supplied.

Please send in your application expeditiously, and by 30 April if you wish to attend the first assessment meeting, to enable the requisite arrangements to be made. Questions concerning the venue proposals, accommodation, uniforms, feeding, dates, etc cannot be answered at this time but further information will be announced and published as and when these become known.

** No dates have been set as yet, but this will most likely be at the Lord Roberts Centre, Bisley, June or July this year.*

Send applications to:

Mr D Goodfellow

7 Pinetree Hill, Woking, Surrey, GU22 8LZ

E-mail: davgood@ntlworld.com

Include full contact details, especially e-mail addresses if possible, as this will be the preferred method of further communication.

THE EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF THE FIVE MISSES THAT SCORED 25.4

or Why it is Important that Markers Patch Out Spotting Disks

by X Class Shooter

It all happened during a club championship in September 2008. Scenario: 300 yards range of a Queens II conditions competition, having just shot a Queens I conditions competition in the morning. I was right hand man on a target of three shooters and so fired the first shot on the target. The target went down promptly and came up with a nice central V bull. At my next turn, I fired my second sighter. The target went down and came up with a 5 o'clock cooking bull which looked as though it should be a V. The previous firer had scored a 5 so, thinking the marker may have forgotten to change the marker panel, I challenged for a higher score and was pleased to be given a V bull. Convert both – thank you very much! Shot 3 and the target went down and came up with another V. Shot 4 was marked as a high cooking bull. Shot 5, and none of us was sure whether the target had gone down – the spotting disk didn't appear to have moved from the previous shooter's (left hand man's) V bull, so message 4 was sent. The target came up clear so we asked the Range Officer to ask whether the last two shots on the target had been in the same place. The reply from the butts was that yes, the last shot had gone right through the middle of the spotting disk. As the shot before our two had been an inner, a V bull was duly awarded. First 5 shots: 25.4 – going well.

Shot 6 was fired and the marker pulled the target down, but when it came back up it was clear. I obviously hadn't cross shot or the marker wouldn't have pulled the target down, and at 300 yards you know if you have fired a shot wide enough to miss a 6 ft target, so I challenged for a hit. The Range Officer sent a message 7. The target went down, and stayed down. Then we noticed that the target had been unshipped from the frame. Hurried communications through the Range Officer – the message had been received as message ten. The Range Officer asked for the target be put back up and checked for the missing shot. The target was put back up and was clear, but there was no message back from the butts to confirm it had been checked for a shot. Due to the confusion the Range Officer awarded another shot, which I duly fired. The target went down immediately but came up clear. At this point I checked my sights to see if anything was loose or had moved – rear sight fine, ladder foresight tight but set on 600 yards elevation (ie 10 minutes high for shooting at 300 yards)! With some bemusement I accepted the miss.

I corrected the foresight down 10 minutes and fired shot 7 with some trepidation – I needn't have worried – it was a high cooking bull. Down a quarter and I finished V 5 V for an accredited score of 45.6 with a miss. But, given my sight settings, the first five shots clearly couldn't have been mine, so how did I get credited with 25.4?

In post shoot discussion, the left hand man revealed that he had been surprised how my second, third, fourth and fifth shots had all been remarkably close to his. This was confirmed when we compared plots. Indeed, the marker had reported that my shot 5 had gone through the middle of the spotting disk. Except it couldn't have! Middle man said he had noticed at least one unpatched hole in the spotting disk, so perhaps the marker had heard the shot, pulled the target down and assumed that the shot had gone through the same hole in the spotting disk – but four times . . . ? Or perhaps the marker had heard a shot, pulled the target down, found nothing, assumed the target had been pulled incorrectly and put it back up without patching out the previous shot. Either way that didn't explain how I got a V bull for my first sighter – the first shot on the target. All was revealed when recounting the tale to another shooter from an adjacent target, who owned up that he had cross-shot on my target for his first sighter. He had been so certain of what he'd done that he'd even recorded the position of the shot on his scoresheet.

So, thanks to a cross-shot and some dubious marking, perhaps due to a spotting disk with an unpatched hole, I had been credited with 25.4 for five shots that had missed the scoring area of the target, if not the target itself (given my sight settings, they should have landed in the non-scoring area about 6" down from the top of the 300 yards target). Should I have accepted the score, knowing that my shots had gone 10 minutes high? Perhaps not, but the marker's word is final and he had officially scored back my shots as 25.4. From a moral standpoint, had he marked correctly, even allowing for the cross shot first sighter, I would have had a miss no later than my second sighter. I would then have checked my sights, realised the problem, corrected it and my first to count would have been at least an inner. Given my usual average I would probably have scored at least a 48, so I feel morally justified in accepting a 45.6 rather than a 20.2. Even without my 500 and 600 yards scores, the 45 ensured my total was not enough to qualify for the final stage of the Club Championship. Had it been, I probably would have disqualified myself but, as it made no difference to any prize list, I don't believe accepting the score was unreasonable, immoral or illegal, though perhaps a ruling from the NRA is required.

So, what are the lessons to be learnt from this extraordinary saga?

- 1 Always check and double check your sights before starting to shoot at each range.
- 2 After firing a shot, watch the target until it goes down, especially with fast markers. Don't rely on the other shooters on your target being able to confirm whether your shot has been marked.

- 3 Markers should always use a fresh spotting disk (as instructed) when a shot has hit the spotting disk, or at least patch out the shot hole. They should also recognise that a shot through the spotting disk generally leaves a second hole in the target underneath and, on the rare occasions when it goes through the same hole, it invariably damages or removes the wire.
- 4 If a marker mistakenly pulls a target down, having thought a shot has arrived on it, he should invariably patch out the existing shot before putting the target back up, even if he can't find another shot.
- 5 Markers should watch the sand for incoming shots: not only does this avoid them pulling the target down when no shot has arrived, it also allows them to pull the target down immediately a shot has arrived, without having to look up to find a shot hole first. Furthermore it gives them a good indication whereabouts on the target to look for the shot. In my case the marker would have realised that the shots were going a long way high and he might have found them near the top of the target. If anyone has found a 300 yards target with a group of 7 unpatched shots at the top of the target and wondered how they got there and why they weren't patched out, here is the explanation! I would love to know how tight the group was . . .
- 6 Once officially credited and accepted by both shooter and register keeper, can (must?) a score be taken away if it is subsequently realised that it was incorrectly awarded? The converse is certainly not true – if a miss is awarded and (reluctantly, after challenge) accepted, and an unnoticed shot hole is found on the target a little later, it is never retrospectively awarded, even if no other unaccounted-for shots have been fired at the target. Equally, if two shots arrive on a target, the shooter whose correct turn it was is allowed to claim the higher value shot, even if it is clearly out of his group and the other shot was in his group. Is my case any different, other than that it involves five shots, not just one? One miss is usually all it takes to identify, and correct, a sight setting error. This normally occurs during the sighters, generally causing at most a single point impact on the subsequent score. In my case, thanks to the marker's actions, the miss was not credited until the sixth to count. The five point penalty of a single miss is enough to put anyone out of the running for most competitions. To have lost the credited 25.4 as well would not only have destroyed my score in that competition, but would also have devastated any aggregates to a far greater extent than is normal for such an error. Would that be fair, given that it was repeated marker errors that perpetuated the problem so far through the shoot? What do you think?

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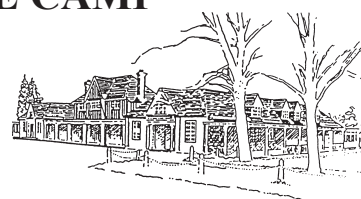
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SIGHT OPTICS

by John Bloomfield

I read with considerable interest the letter from Richard van Lingen published in the last Journal (*Winter 2008 pages 58 - 60*). Unfortunately his statements about sight optics show only an almost complete ignorance of basic schoolboy physics.

"Telescope" derives from the Greek *tele* = 'far' and *skopein* = 'to look or see' hence *teleskopos* = 'far-seeing'. The term telescope is used today to refer to both optical and radio instruments. Optical telescopes can contain either lenses or mirrors or both. In so far as shooting optics are concerned we are only interested in optical systems using single or multiple lenses.

The primary definition of an optical telescope is a device to improve the vision of a distant object by presenting the observer with a magnified image of that object.

As most shooters are now aware, fitting an Eagle Eye in the foresight of a rifle gives a magnified image of the target even with no other lens(es) present in the sighting system. The sighting system is therefore, by definition, a telescope.

There are two types of simple lens:

- Converging lenses which cause a parallel beam of light rays incident on one side of the lens to converge to a focus on the opposite side of the lens. The distance between the lens and the point where these light rays converge is called the focal length of the lens. For the purposes of optical calculation, such a lens is given a positive sign to its focal length and may colloquially be called a 'plus' lens. This type of lens is used in spectacles to correct long sight.
- Diverging lenses, where a parallel beam of light rays incident on one side of the lens appears to diverge away from a point on the same side of the lens. The distance between the lens and the point from where these light rays appear to diverge is called the focal length of the lens. For the purposes of optical calculation, such a lens is given a negative sign to its focal length and may colloquially be called a 'minus' lens. This type of lens is used to correct short sight.

The Eagle Eye lens is a converging (or 'plus') lens. A 0.5d Eagle Eye should correctly be described as having a focal length of +0.5d or +2m. In practice the + sign is often omitted.

When used in the foresight of any rifle, TR or MR, to magnify the target image, the focal length of the lens must always be greater than the sight base of the rifle. The degree of magnification achieved depends on the focal length of the lens and the sight base of the rifle. Typically, 0.5d and 0.3d Eagle Eyes will give

magnifications of 1.8x and 1.35x respectively with a prone rifle sight base of about 36".

At this point, one piece of technical misinformation circulating at Bisley should be disposed of. Most users of Eagle Eyes have the lens fitted in the front of the foresight tunnel, between the target and foresight element. Positioning the lens in the rear of the foresight tunnel, ie between the foresight element and the rearsight will not magnify the foresight element, the element is too close to the lens for this to be possible.

Those competitors now using Eagle Eyes will have observed that whilst the lens magnifies the target image, it also introduces a slight but perceptible blurring of the image.

The reason for this blurring is that the convergent light rays from a positive object lens (such as the Eagle Eye) only form a real image of a distant object, however such real images in space cannot be brought to focus by the eye. In order for the eye to bring an image to a focus the rays of light from the object which enter the eye must be parallel, or slightly divergent as if from an object no closer than the near point of vision of the eye (approximately 10 inches).

The slight blurring of the target image introduced by the foresight lens can be corrected to some extent, but not removed completely, by adjustment of the rearsight aperture. The convergent light rays from the foresight lens are bent slightly to be nearer parallel when they pass through the small aperture of the eyepiece, the phenomenon of diffraction.

The converging rays from a positive lens can be made parallel (or divergent) by allowing them to pass through a diverging or 'minus' lens. Because the focal lengths of lenses are additive, a +0.5d foresight lens can be combined with a suitable -ve rearsight lens to produce a beam of light emerging from the rearsight in which the rays are parallel. The eye can now focus these parallel light rays to produce a sharp image of the object (target) being viewed. In practice, due in part to the effect of the rearsight aperture in the sighting system, a rearsight lens of between -0.25d and -0.3d will allow the eye to achieve a sharply focused target image with a +0.5d foresight lens. With the long focal length lenses permitted for TR under both ICFRA and GB TR Rules, the eyepiece lens has no perceptible effect on magnification.

Blurring of the target image caused by an Eagle Eye foresight lens can therefore be removed completely by using a long focal length diverging (or minus) lens of similar or slightly longer focal length than the foresight lens, in the rearsight. *(It should be noted that the same effect cannot be obtained by use of spectacles or contact*

lenses. An explanation of the optics involved is beyond the scope of this letter, but may be covered by an article in the NRA Journal in the future).

It can probably be argued that a single lens system cannot be termed a telescope except under the strict definition above. There can however be no doubt that an optical system containing two (or more) lenses giving a magnified image of a distant object is anything other than a telescope.

Galileo's first telescope of about 1610 consisted of a converging (+ve) object lens and diverging (-ve) eyepiece lens (as do all Galilean telescopes) with a magnification of 3x. No different from a target rifle with a +0.5d foresight lens and a -ve rearsight lens except for slightly more magnification. The negative eyelens makes the convergent rays from the object lens parallel before they are able to converge to a focus and create a real image; so no real image exists in this optical system. The light rays do not converge to form a real image; however if you look through the eyelens you see an enlarged erect (right way up) virtual image of the object which appears to be at a point between 10 inches and infinity. The virtual image viewed through the eyepiece lens is effectively at infinity and can be viewed by the eye without accommodation. In other words there is no eyestrain caused by use of this type of telescope.

To return to the specifics of Richard van Lingen's letter:

The Match Rifle used in the GB trials to which Richard refers may have had a foresight lens stronger than that permitted by ICFRA or GB TR rules; however this would only affect the magnification. Galilean match rifle sights always contain a converging foresight lens whose focal length is longer than the sight radius just the same as an Eagle Eye for TR. If as Richard claims the focal point of the front lens of the match rifle used

in the GB Trials was in front of the rear lens, then the rear lens must also be a positive lens for the eye to be able to focus the image. This system is called a Keplerian (or astronomical) Telescope in which the image is inverted (upside down). I would challenge Richard or anyone else to shoot with the optics he claims were used!

ICFRA and GB TR rules both permit the use of a lens in the foresight which may not have a focal length less than 2m (ie a 0.5d lens). ICFRA rules permit any lens in the rearsight whereas GB rules permit only a prescription lens to adjust for astigmatism.

Given the divergence of ICFRA and GB TR Rules with respect to optics, the real question that to my mind remains to be answered is "what is actually fair?"

- **ICFRA Rules:** where any rearsight lens is permitted, therefore allowing a shooter who already has excellent eyesight to obtain not only an enlarged target image but one which is also in sharp focus thus giving a still further advantage over the shooter with poor eyesight.

or

- **GB Rules:** where the older shooter, perhaps losing the power of accommodation, or a shooter with relatively poor vision regardless of age, can obtain an enlarged target image which may be of benefit, whereas the shooter with good eyesight and/or young eyes which can accommodate has the choice between an enlarged image which is blurred or a normal size image in sharp focus.

NRA of GB has taken the view that allowing rearsight lenses (other than to correct astigmatism) is to permit those competitors with good eyesight the still greater advantage of an enlarged target image in sharp focus, and would be completely unfair to other competitors with less good vision.

.....

YOUR TRID AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT!

Over the past few years, we have made the scores from the Imperial Meeting available to registered users on the website. This has often taken a long time to post because of the amount of work we have in reconciling each individual's score with previous years. If someone is not a member, there is some considerable effort that is undertaken to try and match these. As a result and to allow us to improve this process, we have introduced the concept of a TRID - a number that will remain unchanged and unique to the individual. Whilst TRID stands for Target Rifle ID number it will also be used for Match Rifle and F Class.

You can see your TRID as these are now shown alongside your name when you do a search on the website for scores (<http://scores.nra.org.uk>). You will need to look up your TRID as it will be a required field in both the online entry and the paper form.

Checking Your Data

You may find that there is currently more than one entry for your name on the website. If you do, please let us know using the link on the scores search page. We will need both TRIDs and an indication from you as to which record has the correct club/county/name information. You can also let us know of any other errors in the same way.

100 YEARS AGO

by Ted Molyneux

The year 1909 was a milestone year for the NRA as it marked fifty years since its formation on 16 November 1859 and was the year of the fiftieth Prize Meeting since Queen Victoria fired the first shot at Wimbledon on 2 July 1860.

It was also the year in which British subjects over the age of 70 years became entitled to a pension and on 25 July, a certain Frenchman spent 43 minutes of his life demonstrating that the sea was no longer the defensive protective barrier as was regarded at that time. That man was aviator Louis Bleriot who made the first cross-channel flight in his own design monoplane Bleriot XI, thus winning a £1000 prize offered by the Daily Mail newspaper.

Being our Jubilee year, Council decided to commemorate it with a banquet in London at the Prince's Restaurant on Thursday 8 July. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, President of the Association, was in the chair. It was a splendid banquet with virtually anybody who was anybody attending.

At the General Meeting it was announced that his Majesty the King had taken advantage of the Jubilee year to recognise the Association by conferring the honour of Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order upon the Chairman, Major-General Lord Cheylesmore; and of membership of the Fourth Class of the same Order upon Colonel J Barlow, Mr AP Humphry and Mr Henry Whitehead, members of the Council, and on Lieutenant-Colonel CR Crosse, the Secretary.

A total of 1195 competitors entered for the King's Prize which was won by Cpl HG Burr, London Rifle Brigade, in very wet and windy conditions. The Grand Aggregate was won by Pte E Skilton, late London Rifle



A host of famous names honoured in this year - Henry Whitehead Esq MVO 4th Class, Col John Barlow MVO 4th Class, Maj Gen Lord Cheylesmore KCMG, Lt Col CR Crosse MVO 4th Class and AP Humphry Esq MVO 4th Class.

Brigade, and the prizes were presented by HRH the Princess of Wales (later to become Queen Mary) accompanied by HRH the Prince of Wales (later to become HM King George V).

Behind the scenes there were numerous trials of experimental pointed bullets which would result in the current round nose 215 grains Ball Mk VI becoming obsolete in favour of the 174

grains Ball Mk VII. This would also spell the demise of the Long Lee-Enfield rifle in favour of what was to become the legendary SMLE.

In general, 1909 was a year of progress in many fields, some notable items being that Commander Robert E Peary of the US Navy was first to the North Pole (at his sixth attempt), Marconi won the Nobel Prize for his discovery of wireless, the Union of South Africa was proclaimed, suffragettes were force-fed in Birmingham prison and, in Nigeria, twelve British colonial policemen were killed by tribesmen's poison arrows!

Finally, and with consideration to the present day swing to a completely different sport from rifle shooting, it was reported that Crystal Palace Football Club appealed against an award for compensation to a player for match injuries, under the Workman's Compensation Act. Their grounds were that he was not engaged in work but was just playing a game. The player's lawyer said his client had surrendered to the club the bodily labour of his arms and legs and that he was a servant in that he had to obey the club's orders. The appeal was dismissed!

At that time, who could have foreseen the great change in public popularity of the two sports, but patriotism went out of fashion following World War I and, although there was a resurgence for the duration of World War II, ordinary people had had enough of warfare and of all things associated with it. Consequently and understandably shooting lost much of its popularity and appeal but now 100 years later there are signs of increasing participation which hopefully will revive and restore our public image as a demanding sport, conducted responsibly in the best possible competitive spirit and with safety all important.



Cpl HG Burr - winner of the 1909 King's Prize.

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T REX – REFLECTIONS AFTER A CHILLING BREAK

NATSS

I was pleased to see that, after some hesitation, the 'latest' (well pre-Christmas) update from NATSS was eventually released from captivity onto the NRA website. Whatever the parochial views held by both back and front woodsmen and women, there is a general point worth a little contemplation by members of the three principal shooting bodies.

For the past 15 and more years, the old style sports funding available to target shooting, essentially for support at the top level, has dwindled to virtually zero. Funding for the generality of the sport is at an all-time low in the history of funding. Only the elite Olympic disciplines now stand a chance of supportive finance, subject to a Blairite philosophy that success is measured in medals (and preferably gold coloured ones at that). The latest announcement from UK Sport of a £1.2m grant towards 2012 shooting (towards the bottom end of the list of all Olympic sports) seems to encourage that view.

Government and authority in general have concluded that they wish to hear a single voice when it comes to listening to representations from sports with multiple sections. Nothing in that approach is new, and it is in some ways understandable.

With that as the background forget for a moment all those pressures placed upon the sport by legislative intervention. Forget for a second moment the oddly illogical concept of the failure to win medals being a reason for funding starvation when exactly the opposite might make logical sense.



Sport England has recently promised some £750,000 for target shooting as a total sport directed specifically at the grass roots, subject to shooting having its house in unified order. When Sport England says that it expects to deal with one representational structure, it means it. SE admires the concept of NATSS. They will have little truck with a plethora of self-interest disciplines. If this requires us to make some difficult decisions let us try to find a way to make them.

Just think of the choice that now faces you. You can bite the bullet and decide how you can make this work, or you can adopt the good old British Imperial stiff

Congratulations James "Jumbo" Lewis



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upper lip and go down into a sunset of glorious navel-gazing, all the time saluting the poop and musing over how it was in your day.

In short, cease thinking of the 101 reasons why a united shooting structure might not work. Find ways that can make it work in the interest of the future of the sport as a whole. Otherwise turn to face the poop . . .

Shiver-Me-Timbers

While on the subject of the poop, word comes to me of one of our number who has joined the literary elite. Guy Bartle has just published his first novel "The Taking of the Renown". According to the blurb we have a fine mix of sadistic captain, brutal first officer, magic, mutiny, pressed thief-highwayman, cashiered soldier, warrior woman from the far North and a softy boatswain.

My scaly eyes have not yet been clapped upon the work, but it sounds from this as though there could be a deal of timbers shivered, main-braces spliced, planks walked, scores settled and foul play in the crow's nest. Sounds just the thing for a balmy July evening. Best of luck Guy.

Stimulation In Time of Recession

Let me now turn to my dinosauric shadow chancellor for some free thinking. The great thing about this sort of advice is that you can take it, or leave it. In fact a wonderful put down was once recited to me thus: "When I want a really stupid opinion I will ask for yours".

So, how do we stimulate activity, and thereby cash flow, for a leisure organisation in times of credit crunching recession? The essence, one would suggest, must be to ensure that active participation is increased. Therefore there must be a compelling argument to hold down costs to the customer, indeed to reduce them where possible. Have a look at the High Street for all those bargains (between the empty shops). BOGOF offers abound. Two main courses for the price of one come flying out of the kitchens. Discounts smear themselves across shop windows. Some bold moves might just pay dividends in the current economic climes.

Good to hear, then, that NRA/NSC are alert to the issue of costs to their customers participating in the Imperial Meeting and have been working on this. One hopes that this can go a step further to contemplate offering unbeatable bargains that will increase the footfall to the firing point throughout the year. We await the outcome of deliberations with our usual degree of hope.

Chairman's Prize

I was a tad optimistic thinking that something conciliatory might have been said about this in the last edition. Nary a word of contrition nor a whiff of apology or explanation. It has been a sad episode. The conclusion that has to be reached is that the excellent

concept was simply too expensive and, therefore, the principles were deemed expendable. Even at this late stage might we look forward to some action to preserve the original aims? (*Please see page 17*)

Trial by Fire

So, with the passing of RG must we also bid adieu to that shadowy wraith, the figure of merit? Her voluptuous measurements have been like the Sirens' call – alluring. Whatever attractions the wraith has flaunted in the past, the most recent methods adopted in the selection trials late last year had a more practical veneer thanks to the insistence of a different sort of flyer.

The different choices of ammunition available were test shot by tigers and not so tigers, young and old. They used a variety of rifles and barrels, new and not so new. You can read about it elsewhere. The consensus pointed clearly at the manufacturer eventually chosen, with the test shooters uniformly 'happy' at the results. Final polishing of the cartridges now proceeds.

Thank you Flight Lieutenant Robertson and the members of the TR Sub-Committee that organised and ran the tests. We all hope that your determination will be reflected in corresponding customer satisfaction levels come July.

ICFRA

From the high veldt I have had my scaly knuckles well and truly rapped via a lengthy summation received recently of the Gestation period. It seems that my explanation of the nativity of Icfra-saurus may have not given appropriate credit to earlier pre-existing moves to bring world national shooting bodies together. Correctoraptor (from the veldt) points out that in the early 2000s " . . . ICFRA was already on its way to formation, or actually created" - prior to South Africa's pressing needs.

So at the time of RSA's difficulties he is clear that ICFRA already existed in one form or another. Correctoraptor adds "Just about everything that we have to do has to be substantiated by membership of an international body". He is equally clear that the existence and assistance of ICFRA in dealing with the bureaucracy was extremely useful to South Africa.

I am obliged to him for his contemporaneous information. "The possession of information is the possession of power". Was that Marx? Was it Karl or Groucho? I am not sure. Here endeth the history lesson before it gets out of hand. Of course, none of this detracts from the main points. ICFRA must continue to be encouraged to think about what it can do to help safeguard the sport in the future without added complications, and how we can all encourage and support our target shooting youth.

Hoping that this finds you all in a better mood than I.

LONDON & MIDDLESEX RA TOUR TO THE WEST INDIES 2008

by Phil Harrison

It was with the usual mixture of excitement at the enterprise ahead and weary resignation as to the journey immediately in prospect that Jenny and I joined Dick and Helen Winney, and David and Joan Robinson at Gatwick (thank goodness – the Terminal 5 saga was in full flow at the time) at 07:00 one April morning for a flight to Guyana. We were going out as the advance party of the LMRA Tour of the West Indies which was to culminate with full team representation – of a multinational flavour – at the West Indies Championship some three weeks later. Self-dubbed “the Old Farts Team”, the advance party was to fly the flag in Guyana, Trinidad and Barbados, gathering additional members as we went and finishing up with the main Championship in Jamaica.

Guyana

Courtesy of a six hour stopover in Trinidad – of which well over an hour was spent at immigration but the rest in the convivial company of Mark Homer, Michael Perez and our first bottle of rum – our 24 hour (bed-to-bed) journey ended in the Cara Lodge Hotel, Georgetown. This proved to be a comfortable, if basic, colonial-style hotel. Our Guyanan hosts in the persons of Ryan Sampson and Claude Duguid had whisked us and our rifles through the formalities at the airport with consummate efficiency, and the rifles were committed to the care of the Army. Mahendra Persaud came round the next morning to see if he could help us in any way and our stay in Guyana owed no small measure of thanks to these three and, indeed, the other members of the Guyana Association.

We had gone for the sun, but we were welcomed by the rain – lots of it – and our practice day on the range at Timehri was curtailed after just one detail at 300 yards. The following day we travelled out to the range in the rain which relented on our arrival. The range has a fierce reputation for strong fishtails, but in the event the rain had killed the wind and we had a relatively unchallenging day. The rain had caused a different problem: the Guyanan Defence Force had allowed the rifle boxes to be exposed to it! The rifles were dried out, the superficial rust was removed and Mahendra arranged for the foam liners of the rifle boxes to be taken away and dried out. With one day having been cancelled, it was agreed that an extra distance would be added and just a set of individual Matches would be shot. Guyana are the WI Champions – and a formidable outfit – but Dick showed them that even elderly Brits could shoot a bit and won the day's shoot with 198.27 at 300, 500, 600 and 900, edging out Ransford Goodluck by a single V bull. Both Phil and David had their moments at individual distances, but couldn't match the Captain's consistency.

The sightseeing highlight in this country of massive 'eco-tourism' potential was a light aircraft flight for the Harrisons and the Winneys – the Robinsons clearly knew something we didn't – out to the Kaieteur Falls: the highest single drop falls in the world, exceeding both Niagara and Victoria in this measure. None of this 'Health and Safety' nonsense here – you can go as close as you dare and not a railing in sight. Though the end of the dry season, the flow was impressive and our resident guide was extremely knowledgeable. The aircraft was memorable too. The first take off from Georgetown had been aborted owing to a non-retracting flap, and the return take off from the casual strip at Kaieteur was postponed while the pilot phoned home for instructions about the same flap. The women were brave, the men philosophical!

Trinidad

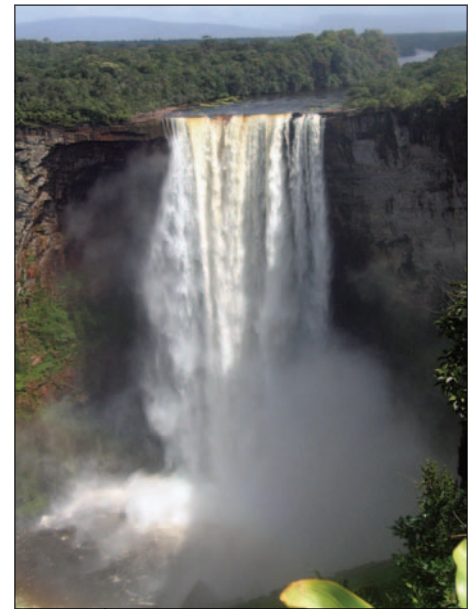
The flight to Trinidad was early, even by WI standards, and we were up at 04:30 to go to the airport. Once again, the GRA Members put us through the formalities with speed and skill and we set off for Trinidad. Forewarned is forearmed and we were off the plane like greased lightening to get into Immigration where, fortunately, the queues had abated. With the local assistance of Mark Homer and Lesley Chung we cleared the formalities, this time committing our rifles to the Trinidad RA, and were conducted through the permanent Port-of-Spain traffic jam to the extremely smart Crews Inn Marina and Hotel at Chagueramas, less than five minutes by car from the range in the Tucker Valley.

Trinidad offered more chances to get on to the beach, which we did at Las Cuevas Bay where we learned to enjoy the local seafood at “Richard's Shark and Bake” stall. There was the chance, too, for the girls to go and see the Scarlet Ibis for which Trinidad is famed, though their numbers are somewhat diminished compared with former years.

The range at Chagueramas is deceptive. Alas, it only goes back to 600 yards, though 1000 would be possible if a road could be diverted. It is largely surrounded by bush, but there is a gap between 300 yards and 500 yards on the right hand side through which the wind can accelerate, requiring substantial changes at little notice. We found the fish-tailing wind – generally running from 2½ minutes left to 3½ minutes right extremely difficult. Michael Perez was top scorer by far in the individual matches with 147.16, an exceptionally good score in the conditions. In the team match Trinidad loaned the LMRA two of its newer shooters and with five to count out of six the Trinidad team won by 563 to 558. Top scorer in the match was Justin Lall with 143.11. The day concluded



The end of the day in Guyana.



Kaieteur Falls in Guyana.



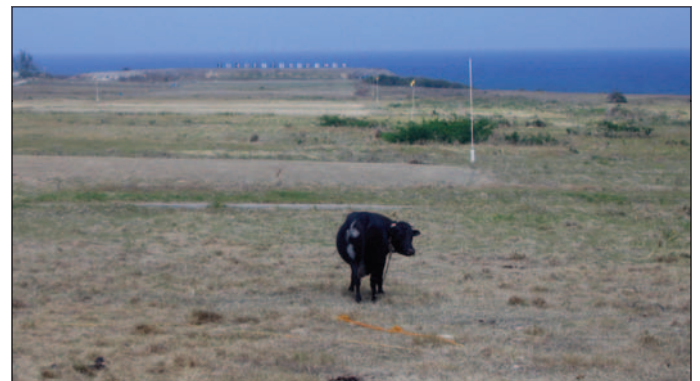
Actually we didn't go in . . .



Harp Gun - Muzzle Energy well in excess of 7000 Joules!



The locals enjoyed a sundowner as well.



Barbados - should manage a bull at 1000 yards!



The team photo.



Andrew Wilde - to the winner the spoils.

with a very convivial fish-and-chicken takeaway at the TRA Clubhouse, at which speeches were made and gifts exchanged.

Barbados

Another island, another flight, another early start and, fortunately, relatively early arrival. Something was astray with the meeting party and the rifles were detained at Customs until we could make arrangements. Brian Hennis sorted out our arrival at short notice, whereupon Jennifer Cousin, Louis King and Junior Mapp (a member of airport security) sorted out officialdom and transported the rifles. The team stayed at the Dover Beach Hotel on the south coast of the island – a new and very satisfactory hotel for visiting shooters with excellent balconies for the traditional sundowners which were such a part of life. However, there was competition for the rum . . . Dick turned his back only to find a small bird perched on the edge of his glass, quenching its thirst . . . The first night's sundowner had a topic for concern: would the 'Young Fart', due to join the team the following day, find the pace of life too genteel?

The team started to gather its numbers. Andrew Wilde (at 38 years, the aforementioned youngster) joined us on the second day, his flight from UK having been substantially delayed for no discernible reason. Uniquely in both Phil's and Dick's extensive touring experience, Andrew's rifles had been exposed to the massively sub-zero temperatures inherent in air travel and, when the gun case was opened, both were absolutely swimming in condensation. Indeed, the armoury at the military base of which the range forms part, is fully air conditioned, and a measure of condensation was also apparent when all our rifles were retrieved. Later in the day our reinforcements from Canada appeared, having flown down from Ottawa: Rick Melling, Steve Hunt and Sherry Power, the latter shooting an F Class Rifle.

We were able to get out to practice on the range at Paragon just south of the airport. It's a seaside range with the trade wind blowing constantly and briskly from 12 o'clock . . . well, plus or minus a little bit either way, not always visible from the mirage . . . and the ammunition was red-boxed 150 grain US 'National' ammunition. It wasn't until after some very strange results that Phil noticed that the primers were of differing colours – even within the same box of 20! Once the four (!) batches of ammunition had been sorted, things settled down a bit. Unusually when it came to the match, the visitors had more shooters available than the home team, so LMRA split into 'Brits' and 'Canadian Cousins'. The team match at 300, 600 and 900 the following day resulted in a win for the Brits (who could now properly deploy a formidable coaching duo in Phil and Dick) by 425.33 to Barbados 405.26 and the Cousins' 404.26. Andrew Wilde top-scored with an excellent 145. Hmmm . . . shape of things to come?

The range in Barbados is the former home of the 1960s HARP project designed to launch satellites from guns and the team went to inspect the now-abandoned weaponry. Consisting of two US battleship 16" guns strapped together (to provide an extremely long burn for the propellant), altitudes of 80km (!) for individual shells were being achieved before the plug was pulled on the project. For ultimate gun-nuts "HARP" plus "research" in Google provides fascinating detail, including a bit of James Bond-ery in the form of an (alleged) MOSSAD assassination. This was not the limit of Barbados's attractions: one member of the team would never miss out on "Harrison's Caves" (which stand comparison with Cheddar or Wookey Hole); and no member of the team would miss out on a Mount Gay rum-tasting, whatever the perils! Jenny Harrison was first into the Briney Oggin to swim with the turtles, and so on. Barbados is a tourist-based economy par excellence (albeit the first signs of the credit crunch were already in evidence) and takes care to ensure the visitors feel safe.

Jamaica

You've guessed it – another early start and an encouraging message from the aircraft Captain when we took off from the stopover at St Marten – "OK, it's a bit noisy when we hit full power to turn out between the hills", which was nothing to the battle-hardened survivors of Kaieleur! Jamaica RA led by Dennis Lee, were out in force to help us through Customs, who responded by being especially bureaucratic about the rifles. As the rifles were loaded onto the JRA vehicles at the airport, an enterprising crayfish was spotted making for the nearest drain-grating! Eh! What?

Accommodation in Kingston was at the Knutsford Court Hotel which was rather variable in quality, but once it was sorted was fine; with sundowners being allocated to the Harrison suite (they having objected to a pokey double room smelling of a squash-club changing/shower room). Having settled down for dinner, the team members were startled to be summoned to a JRA "meet and greet" – but fortunately the waitress was just taking the order at the very moment of summons! Having arrived at the party, the puzzle (not to mention the fate) of the crayfish was revealed!

Security was – of necessity – strict at the WI Championships conducted with great efficiency, particularly on the part of Dennis Lee, at the Police Training School range at Twickenham Park. Rifles were held on-range guarded by a full platoon of JDF reservists. A practice session for visitors was provided after which the WI Championships started in real earnest – as did Andrew Wilde! After a first day in which he merely held his own with the leaders, he went into overdrive on days two and three, coming within touching distance of winning all six of the last matches. Despite a bull on the wrong target (aren't

they always?) he was nevertheless able to win the Championship with two points to spare from Ransford Goodluck of Guyana, himself no mean shot! Andrew's winning score was 390.46 (13 V bulls more than anyone else) ahead of Ransford Goodluck (Guyana) 388.33 and Richard Fields (Guyana) 285.28. Dick Winney continued his excellent form of the tour in seventh place with 378.32.

In the teams match the LMRA's team of seven was loaned two Jamaican shooters – we were joined by Benjamin Henry for the long range and Bassilios Hado for the short. Bassilios kindly entertained us to dinner at his magnificent Lebanese restaurant (Chex Maria in Hillcrest Av) at the end of our stay –

	900	1000	Total	300	500	600	Total	Aggregate
Guyana	378.029	370.026	748.055	378.030	387.037	383.041	1148.108	1896.163
LMRA	376.037	364.027	740.064	374.036	379.040	375.038	1128.114	1868.178
Jamaica	361.023	343.019	704.042	378.035	384.033	381.037	1143.105	1847.147
Trinidad	362.027	332.019	694.046	364.026	377.028	366.020	1107.074	1801.120
Barbados	360.020	337.021	697.041	348.020	379.028	363.020	1090.068	1787.109
Antigua	309.011	292.011	601.022	335.013	351.016	338.016	1024.045	1625.067

The Antiguanians are new to fullbore rifle shooting and, being accommodated also at the Knutsford Hotel, were anxious to learn from the old and bold of the LMRA. A couple of coaching sessions plus a coached shoot at 600 yards were conducted on their behalf. Some of us plan to return in 2009 to build on this work.

The day following the prizegiving dinner (conveniently held at the Knutsford) our Canadian cousins bade us farewell, returning to Canada via a couple of days off at Montego Bay; while we had a couple days R&R at Kingston. Notable achievements were the climbing of the Dunns River Falls at Ocho Rios; and a visit to Captain Morgan's 'Port Royal' – an ancient capital of Jamaica and a centre of the 'privateering' industry. That's a story in itself!

After exactly four weeks away it was with heavy hearts we set off for the UK . . . and it appears to have rained ever since!


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Contact Brigitte Rushmore, Marketing Director, on 01483 798816
or e-mail Brigitte@nra.org.uk for further details

UPDATE FROM BRIGITTE RUSHMORE, MARKETING DIRECTOR

What a great start to the year with Vodafone, McDonald's Europe and bioMerieux all having corporate events in January! Not the best time of year perhaps you would think for people to enjoy what Bisley has to offer but with the provision of a few extra warm jackets, everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves. Indeed, Vodafone's Mark Langham who is a shooter himself said "I've had some fantastic feedback from my guests, and I will certainly be recommending this as a corporate or team-building activity to other departments."

With the Phoenix Meeting taking place from 22 to 24 May and attracting over 500 competitors each year, Brian Thomas, Assistant Director of Shooting, is constantly looking to find ways of improving the competition. With Midway UK and other generous company sponsorship we have been able to combine and then produce 'The Gallery Rifle and Pistol Handbook of the National Rifle Association of the United Kingdom' and 'The Phoenix Meeting' booklet, in a single comprehensive guide. For entry forms and a downloadable copy of the booklet visit www.nsc-bisley.co.uk or www.nra.org.uk.

As we move into Spring, then as we all know, the drive up King's Way through the avenue of leafy trees gives Bisley a completely different character. We already hold the hugely successful Harley Davidson and Hot Rod Rallies here in August, and there must be other opportunities for organisations such as car owner clubs, to hold their events here. Bisley has ten grassed plots totalling just over ten acres, ranging from just under half an acre to nearly three acres which would provide a fantastic backdrop for outdoor events with all the history that Bisley has to offer.

For details on corporate and team-building events, sponsorship opportunities, and the hiring of the Bisley Grounds, please contact Brigitte Rushmore on 01483 798816.

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NRA SHOOTING MENTORS "AUNTS AND UNCLES" SCHEME IMPERIAL MEETING 2009

I wrote in the last issue that there are going to be changes. These are forced on us not so much by efficiency (we try very hard to be efficient) as by sheer necessity.

I have over the past three years flagged-up that necessity and it leads to one radical change which, in fact, is wholly consistent with the well-flagged passing of responsibility for the success of the scheme from the Aunt or Uncle to the Niece or Nephew concerned.

In 2005 I sought feedback from Nieces and Nephews and received none. In 2007 I repeated the request, if perhaps obliquely, and again received no reaction. Aunts and Uncles have routinely given me feedback.

I have therefore taken the following decision in concert with Bruce Roth who, as you will know, is taking things over from me. The objective is to spare the Aunts and Uncles the occasional embarrassment of making an initial contact only to hear nothing – or nothing positive – further.

Thus:

In 2009, people will be notified as and when requests are processed, and the customary full details will be sent when the books close at the beginning of July to all those many people who will ask for an Aunt or an Uncle. Emergencies after that date will always be dealt with.

It will then be up to them to e-mail their Aunt or Uncle, when notified, so as to facilitate the setting-up of that vital first meeting – and not the other way around, as has been the case in the past.

I hope that, by doing things this way, Nieces and Nephews will confirm their wish to have an Aunt or Uncle and that this will put an end to the trend that I have discerned of a request being made to me – and of course actioned – but then nothing further coming from the Niece or Nephew.

A second new departure is that a central notice board (The Hub) will be set-up alongside Fulton's which will contain other information as well as offering the option of feedback.

Tim Elliott

Lark Hill, Haynes West End, Bedfordshire MK45 3RB

Telephone: 01234 740334 Mobile: 07932 706171 e-mail: tje@easynet.co.uk

IMPERIAL MEETING 2009 - COSTS

by Iain Robertson, TR Representative on General Council

It is no exaggeration to say that everybody involved in running the Imperial Meeting - the NRA Trustees, the staff of NSC and those of us who occasionally get to offer them free advice - is gravely concerned at what it is going to cost. Over the last two years, despite every saving we can think of, the price has gone up by 14% plus the increased cost of the directly purchased ammunition. In order to ensure fairness, we recalculated all the prices and discounts last year, so that all the TR and MR events were priced on the same basis. At the same time we tidied up the presentation of costs so that it was easier for Members to tell what each entry was contributing to their total bill.

Since the 2008 Meeting, there remains general concern over the total cost, and two areas where several members have been concerned over the specific approach taken. The first of these is the cost of competitions containing subsequent stages - principally the Queen's Prize and the St George's. The second is the cost to O and T Class competitors of entering the underlying competitions in order to shoot for the Chairman's Prize. In both of these there are a number of alternatives available.

Regarding the overall cost, everybody involved is doing their best to find ways to at least hold the costs if not actually reduce them. We think we have done all the easy things and most of the difficult ones, but if you have spotted something we have missed, please let us know. There is no increase this year in the basic cost excluding ammunition, which was calculated for 2008 to be 99.8p per shot, and was charged at £1 (the organisers hoped that nobody would object to the 30-50p surplus per competitor accruing to the Association). To that cost was added the price of a round (48p in 2008), and each competition was charged according to the number of shots that might be fired. For 2009 the ammunition cost has risen substantially, mainly due to the collapse of the pound against the dollar and the euro. This will have to be passed on, but be assured that if the pound recovers in future years, the benefit will be passed on also.

Both the Shooting Committee and the Council have considered the issue of charges for subsequent stages. The total cost of these is a bit over £30,000, the exact amount depending slightly on how you do the sums. That money has to come from somewhere, and we identified four possible sources under our control. Firstly, the Association could pay, effectively applying a subsidy of that amount to the Meeting. Since only about one-sixth of our Members actually enter, that seemed unfair to the silent majority. Secondly, the cost could be absorbed in the overheads of the Meeting as a whole. This is effectively the same as the Association paying, unless we adjust that £1 per shot, and the

equivalent calculations for other disciplines, to account for the £30,000+. Either way, that hardly seemed fair to everyone not entering TR. Thirdly, we could adjust the number of shots charged for in each competition to take account of the subsequent stages. This means that everyone who puts their money in to enter, and thus has a chance of winning, pays equally for that privilege. This has been the broad intent for years, but in 2008 the calculation was done explicitly. Last year a Queen's entry cost 27 (shots in the First Stage) plus one-quarter of 36 (shots in the Second Stage) plus one-twelfth of 34 (shots in the final) multiplied by £1 plus the cost of a round. Total £52, which seemed a lot for an O or T Class shooter with little or no realistic chance of getting beyond Queen's I. The final alternative was for everyone qualifying for a subsequent stage to pay for it at the time of picking up their cards. This means that the costs of events are borne strictly by those participating. However in 2009, the cheque required to pick up your Queen's II cards would be £63 with a further £59.50 needed for Queen's III. A significant and relatively vulnerable minority of our competitors would find such a charge difficult if not impossible to meet. No way to introduce a promising youngster to the top level of competition, or to treat the 70-year old who has finally earned his Queen's badge after a lifetime of trying. The Chairman's Prize in 2008 starkly demonstrated the consequences of such a policy, with over two-thirds of the eligible competitors choosing not to pay to enter the "subsequent stage" shot concurrently with the Queen's Consolation and Howard Wilkinson competitions.

There seemed to be no solution, until one feature of the 2009 Meeting ammunition was pointed out. The cases, by RWS, are widely known as one of the strongest and most attractive for reloading. Some investigation led NSC to the view that there was a significant financial gain from dealing with the 375,000 or so empty cases for reloading on an industrial scale, rather than as scrap or by flooding the retail market for once-fired brass. At the same time, this was a resource which had been costed into competitors' entry fees, so any gains should be returned to the competitors rather than to NRA funds generally. By an amazing coincidence, the sum that NSC expects to realise from exploiting the fired brass is somewhat in excess of £30,000.

It seemed to the small group suddenly faced with drafting a policy on this issue that using this resource to pay the costs of subsequent stages would be a Good Thing, for several reasons. Nobody would face a financial penalty through taking the rewards of success in competition by qualifying for subsequent Stages. The money being used is generated by TR shooters, and would go back to TR shooters. The

Queen's Prize is the most popular of the TR events, so a substantial price reduction would reach the maximum number of competitors. Anyone entering the Grand Aggregate would see the maximum benefit of the price cut, thus helping more people to participate in the flagship events. The benefits of scale would neatly be distributed to all TR competitors. And if the price goes down, more people may participate, there would be more brass, and the recovered sum of cash would be bigger, so there might even be something left for NRA funds.

This proposition was put to the Trustees within a few hours of it being formulated. They approved, but were mindful that the Shooting Committee had considered the same issue only a couple of weeks before and had, at that time, concluded with regret that, lacking any source of cash other than entry fees, the current situation was the best of a bad job. The

Shooting Committee were consulted by e-mail, and replied with overwhelming support. Decision made – in six days end to end through all stages.

The result of this affects three events. The basic cost (not including ammunition) for the Queen's Prize will fall from £39 to £27. The basic cost of the St George's will fall from £22 to £17. The Donaldson Memorial First Stage, which is an aggregate, will fall from £5.40 to £4.40, the same price as other aggregate events. The charge for ammunition will be for 27 rounds in the Queen's (instead of 39), 17 rounds in the St George's (instead of 22) and 0 rounds in the Donaldson Memorial.

To make this happen, the Association needs all the TR fired brass returned, and no other fired brass back. Please do not dispose of other scrap brass at the ROs' tables during TR events!

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THE YOUNG SHOOTERS' FUND

by Karen Robertson, Chairman of the Young Shooters' Fund

A Short History of the Young Shooters' Fund

The Millennium Scholarship Fund was formed in 2000 as a vehicle to manage a number of donations made to benefit young shooters. The two largest elements were a bequest by the late Edna Parker, and a large quantity of surplus equipment from the Bank of England Rifle Club. In 2004 the name was changed to give a more accurate indication of the Fund's objective. It became apparent that a formal structure under the control of the NRA Council would be required if the Fund was to continue long-term. Terms of Reference for the Fund were drawn up. These have now been approved by the Trustees, and are published below. They will be available in the Members' section of the NRA website for future reference.

Over the past few years the Fund has been able to help seven young TR shooters and one Gallery Rifle shooter acquire new rifles under an interest free loan system, as well as providing financial assistance and donated equipment to several other young shooters. The intention is to establish a regime where the repayments from existing loans finance a regular stream of future support to promising newcomers struggling with the setup costs of fullbore rifle disciplines, with donations expanding the Fund's activities and covering rises in equipment costs from one beneficiary to the next. At the moment the Fund is capable of assisting about two people in 2009, three or four in 2010, and we hope about six a year thereafter as loans are repaid. With a good stream of donations, that number might rise by about one each year indefinitely.

YSF Committee

At the General Council Meeting of Saturday 21 February 2009, I was elected as Chairman of the Fund and Mik Maksimovic was elected as the Trustee to sit on the Committee. Whilst I do have a couple of people in mind to join the Committee I would very much like to hear from anyone who feels that they might have skills or attributes to offer. If I turn you down, please do not be offended as there are a maximum of three places for ordinary members of the Fund Committee!

Fundraising

Currently the Fund receives income from:

- donations on the Imperial Meeting entry form
- donations from membership renewals
- donations from the Imperial Meeting newspapers
- donations at the Fireworks Display
- returned coaching or prize money vouchers
- a donation tin in the NRA Front Office
- auctions of unwanted items on Ebay
- repayments from the interest-free loans

This year proceeds from the Bullet Ball will also be used to augment the Fund and I really need volunteers to assist, and ideally lead, in organising the Ball.

Any thoughts or suggestions on how to raise more money for the Fund will be gratefully received.

Donations

Please send any unwanted cash and/or equipment to the Young Shooters' Fund – just contact me either by e-mail to karen@nra.org.uk or by phone to 01483 797777 ext 146. I can probably arrange collection of equipment (and can definitely collect large bags of cash) if you do not live nearby. Also, a bequest of your "rifles and shooting equipment" to "the NRA for the benefit of the Young Shooters' Fund" will ensure your rifles continue in service and will help a young shooter enter the sport that you have enjoyed so much.



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE YOUNG SHOOTER'S FUND

The Young Shooters' Fund ("the Fund") is established to provide financial assistance to young and new shooters in order that they may participate in shooting disciplines controlled by the National Rifle Association of Great Britain (NRA). The Fund is financed by donations and other appropriate fund-raising activities. The Fund normally acts by providing grants and interest-free loans to purchase or hire items of shooting equipment, to use facilities and otherwise to take part in or continue to take part in the sport. Items to be purchased are the items, routinely provided by cadet units, schools and universities, that a young shooter no longer has access to by reason of having left such an organisation or a new shooter because of financial or other constraints. Exceptionally, the Fund may be used to provide other types of support, financial or otherwise, and may provide support in other circumstances.

Responsibility

The Council (Board of Trustees) of the NRA shall have overall responsibility for and ownership of the Fund and has full powers to amend, add to and/or replace these Terms of Reference as it shall think fit from time to time.

Administration

The Fund is administered by a Committee appointed by the Council. The Committee shall be at least five and not more than seven in number. The Committee shall consist of Members of the NRA, not in receipt of support from the Fund and shall comprise:

- A Chairman, who, at the time of appointment, shall be an ordinary Member of the General Council of the NRA and shall be recommended by the General Council.
- One past Captain of the GB Under-25 Team, aged over 25 and under 35 at time of appointment,

and recommended by the Committee of the GB Under-25 team.

- At least three other members, recommended by the Chairman.
- At least one of the members of the Committee must be a Trustee.

The Secretary General shall act as Secretary to the Committee and the Finance Manager of the NRA will act as the Treasurer of the Fund and both shall be entitled to attend all the meetings of the Committee

Committee members shall serve for a period of three years, and may be re-appointed at the end of any three-year term subject to the conditions above. In order to achieve continuity it is desirable for members of the Committee to have staggered termination dates.

It is desirable to have a Committee representing as large a constituency as possible, so that the various NRA regions can be effectively represented on the Committee.

The Committee shall meet face-to-face at least annually, following which meeting the Chairman shall submit to the Council a report including a financial statement. At other times, business shall normally be conducted by email; however, face-to-face meetings may be held if convenient. Support Agreements shall be approved by agreement of a face-to-face meeting or by written resolution in accordance with the rules for such as adopted by the Council. The Committee shall keep minutes and other formal records sufficient to enable an outsider to establish the provenance of any decision taken, and shall submit its formal records to the Council for scrutiny annually.

Fundraising

One member of the Committee shall be appointed to lead on fundraising. Donations are routinely sought along with entries to the Imperial Meeting. Donations given for the newspapers provided during the Imperial Meeting have historically been passed to the Fund. There are no specific limits on fundraising activities, but all proposals must be risk-free, appropriate to the purpose, not in competition with other fundraising for the NRA, not such as to detract from the image of the NRA and in accordance with Charity Law.

Donations in kind

The Fund may accept donations in kind, whether of goods or services. Donated goods or services that could be used directly to meet the Fund's aim should be independently valued and distributed under Support Agreements. Other donated goods or services should be sold without undue delay.

Indirect Funding

The Fund will achieve its aim mainly through funding the purchase of equipment. Many, if not most, equipment suppliers are small businesses or

sole traders who are themselves NRA members. It is entirely legitimate for the Committee to approach such suppliers with a view to obtaining discounts in exchange for appropriate recognition and publicity, subject to Charity law.

Publicity

The Committee shall publicise the existence of the Fund, its purpose, and basic information on how to apply for assistance. Publicity shall be conducted in such a way as not to disadvantage any potential applicant. Publicity shall also be arranged so as to make those who might submit an application on behalf of a potential beneficiary aware of the Fund.

The Committee and in particular those Committee members having responsibility for the various NRA regions are responsible for achieving best possible promotional coverage in the regions of the availability of the Fund on an ongoing basis.

Support Agreements

Any provision of support from the Fund to an individual constitutes a Support Agreement. Support Agreements shall be approved by at least four members of the Committee.

Eligibility

Applicants for support from the Fund must be individual members of the NRA prior to initiating an application. Recipients should fulfil the following conditions:

- Be under the age of 25 at the time of application.
- Be, or be about to be, limited in their participation or progression within an NRA discipline by lack of access to suitable equipment or facilities.

Potential recipients not fulfilling these conditions may be considered, but the Committee must explicitly set out its reasons for granting support setting out the conditions in their formal records.

Recipients must remain members of the NRA throughout the term of the Support Agreement.

Application Procedure

Applications must be submitted on behalf of potential recipients by one of the following, who should not themselves be eligible for support from the Fund:

- An official of a Home Office Approved Club affiliated to the NRA, of which the potential recipient is a member.
- An officer of a cadet organisation of which the potential recipient is, or recently has been, a member.
- The Captain of a County, NRA, Home Country or GB representative team of which the potential recipient is, or was, a member.

An application should be submitted through the Secretary General to the Chairman of the Young Shooters Fund Committee. The application should explain how the potential recipient meets the conditions for support, why support is necessary, what support is requested and how both the individual and the sport will benefit as a result.

The Committee will prepare a template application form to simplify the process.

Assessment

All Committee members shall see all applications. The Chairman may comment on applications as they are distributed to the Committee. In particular, the Chairman should highlight any applications that are obviously frivolous or bound to fail for non-compliance with mandatory conditions.

Awards

Awards are at the discretion of the Committee. In exercising its discretion, the Committee should aim to provide support at a level that would enable a recipient to realise his/her potential within his/her chosen discipline, while keeping expenditure to the minimum consistent with the aim. It will normally be appropriate to meet fewer genuine applications in full rather than to provide some support to more applicants and risk several failures through lack of funding. Awards for equipment should consider essential ancillaries as well as the primary item. For example, an award for a rifle should take into account storage, tools, cleaning kit and transport containers as well as the rifle itself. Awards should take into consideration the ability of the recipient to contribute to the cost. Awards should be paid to the supplier of goods or services against invoices rather than to the beneficiary. It should be made clear to suppliers, by agreement in writing that Sale of Goods Act rights and similar rights rest with the beneficiary and not with the Fund.

Repayment of Awards

The Committee should develop standard terms for repayment of awards provided as loans. Recipients should normally be expected to make regular repayments to the Fund's bank account by standing order. Standard terms may be varied if circumstances make it appropriate.

Prohibited Activities

The Fund may only provide support to individuals. It is prohibited to provide support to groups, teams, Clubs, Associations and the like. The Fund may not enter into open-ended arrangements. The Fund may not commit funds it does not actually hold. As a result, the Committee will have to engage in an element of active management of the timing of awards.

Approved by the Council on 21 August 2008

PROCEDURE FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2009

Eligibility of Candidates and Proposers

Only persons who are Registered Members of the Association and who have fully paid-up their subscriptions for 2009 by 31 March are eligible to be Candidates for election to the General Council and to be Proposers for such Candidates.

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 2009.

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 2009

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

30 April 2009

- 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.

29 May 2009

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

20 July 2009

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 23 April 2009.

Routine Vacancies

There will be the following vacancies in 2009, all of whom are entitled to stand for re-election.

Five Ordinary Members

CM Brooks
GK Alexander
EJ Gardener
Prof AR Horrocks
JA Watson

Three Regional Members

Mrs ID Bennett	West Midlands
PR Coley	South Western
MP Watkins	Wales

Two Shooting Discipline Members

P Hunter	Practical Rifle
JM Kynoch	Sporting Rifle

Existing Vacancies

The following Regional vacancies have been filled during the past year by co-option of the candidates concerned. However they must also be elected in accordance with the Rules of the Association.

Miss J Scrimshaw	London & South East
GAE Larcombe	Southern

* not standing for re-election.

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IMPERIAL MEETING 2009 – AMMUNITION

by Iain Robertson, TR Representative on General Council

The decision on ammunition for the 2009 Imperial Meeting has been made. RUAG, a Swiss munitions company owning several well-known brands such as RWS and NORMA, will supply 500,000 rounds of 155gr 7.62mm ammunition to a specification developed in discussion with the NRA. The round will use a Sierra Match King 155gr bullet, loaded in an RWS case with powder from RUAG's wide range of own-manufacture powders. The length will be the standard CIP overall length of 2.8" maximum. The target for muzzle velocity from a .3065" bore diameter 30" x 1:13" twist barrel will be 2920 fps at a temperature of 20°C. The round will be supplied under the brand-name RWS. The contract is for one year only. Subject to satisfactory performance at the 2009 Meeting, the contract may be renewed for future years.

In arriving at this decision, the Association has been through a protracted process involving bench testing, a factory visit, comparative firing trials, and large-scale use of likely contenders. Also, the Trustees and senior staff of NSC have given much thought to the many factors other than pure performance.

There were a couple of articles in last year's Journals reporting on progress. In this article I will review briefly the work reported there, before bringing you up-to-date with the latest developments.

It became apparent in Autumn 2007 that the 'ammunition-for-ranges' arrangement that the NRA had operated with MoD for many years, effectively a barter system, would not be renewed. The Association was not in a position to carry out the testing and analysis of alternative supplies in the time available for the 2008 Meeting. Also, a change of supplier might have rendered the Association's stock of about 200,000 rounds of RG unattractive to shooters working up for the Imperial Meeting, with serious implications for our finances. Consequently, it was decided to continue with RG, albeit purchased direct rather than supplied through MoD. Given that RG had previously demonstrated that they could build really good ammunition, and given that a long-term contract was being considered, we were hopeful of outstanding performance.

We were disappointed.

Although it was difficult to pin down precisely where the ammo was lacking, and the 2008 Meeting had some of the most difficult wind conditions for many years, the widespread impression was that the ammo was not an example of RG's best. This gave impetus to the analysis and test programme that had begun rather earlier in 2008. I commented that unless we (the people involved in the process) came up with really convincing evidence, we would be in trouble

if the answer for 2009 was RG. The Chairman of the Shooting Committee was more certain. "If we say the answer is RG, we'll be lynched regardless" was his view.

We did review the possibilities. "Bring-your-own" was considered. However, at the Imperial there are several hundred competitors who are not licensed to bring their own, and most of them are cadets or youngsters. We really need to avoid any move that discourages their participation. There are many more who do not have the knowledge, the equipment or the inclination to handload ammunition. The Imperial Meeting works because of the many hundreds of club-level shooters who turn up for ten day's shooting in familiar surroundings and with good company, despite having little expectation of winning anything at all. There is a view that the balance of the sport is already well towards technical factors rather than shooting ability – adding a whole new level of technical expertise should be avoided in what is after all a mass-market event. The ammunition does need to be good enough, and RG too often hasn't been. The ammunition does not need to be the best possible – the last refinement in performance always comes at utterly disproportionate cost. So we needed a good-quality round that would work well in almost any target rifle, at any distance from 300 to 1000 yards, within safe operating limits and at a price that wouldn't break the bank. Squaring the circle might just have been easier.

Issues around security of supply, enforcement of contractual relations, and cost of transport led us to discount any manufacturer who couldn't deliver from factory to Bisley in a lorry. In other words, our supplier would be somewhere in Western Europe. That effectively narrowed the choice to just four possibilities. These were RG, HPS, Lapua, and the offer of a purpose-built round from RUAG. Given that the other three were reasonably well-known quantities, the first step was to get RUAG to supply a prototype batch for some testing.

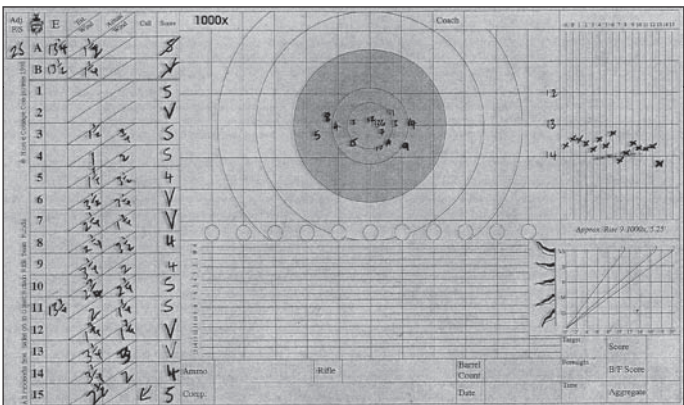
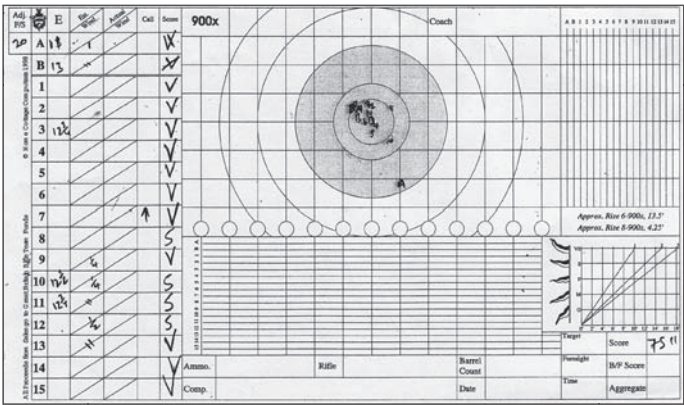
The first tests of the RUAG prototypes were from the NRA test rig at short range. The results were not encouraging, and given the extremely competitive price being offered, confirmation of the result was urgently needed. This led to the first comparative trial in August 2008.

The evaluation involved four competent shooters firing a test group of ten rounds of each brand of ammunition from their own target rifle at each of 300 and 600 yards. Resource constraints at that time prevented long range testing. External variables were minimised as far as possible, and the shooters did not know which brand they were firing at any time.

Loading was done for them, so they never had a close look at the ammunition. The paper target centre was changed for each group, and analysis was simply a matter of laying out all the test groups in a suitable pattern on the floor and making a visual comparison. The best performance, by a small but noticeable margin, came from the ammunition provided by RUAG. There was little to choose between the products from HPS and Lapua. All three were noticeably better than RG, except that one shooter, using a much older barrel than the others, produced his best result at one distance using RG. Lapua ammunition is significantly more expensive than the other brands, and would have had to have shown a very large performance advantage to be seriously considered further.

Armed with the evidence of this evaluation, which finished about 12 noon, the TR Sub-Committee briefed the Chairman of the Shooting Committee at lunchtime, and he briefed the Trustees that afternoon. By the end of the day, the choice was RUAG v HPS.

We arranged to shoot the European Long Range Championships with the rest of the RUAG prototype batch. From this we hoped to see if it had catastrophic long range performance – given the possible conditions, only an extreme result would be conclusive. Of course we already knew the answer for HPS. More importantly we simply wanted to know if there would be any chambering, ignition or extraction problems across a wide range of rifles. Meantime we gave one of the comparative evaluators (all right it was Ian Shaw) some of the very few rounds of RUAG we could spare, for a first go at 900 and 1000 yards in the Surrey Open. This is what happened.



As concurrent activity, Martin Farnan, Paul Monaghan and I visited the RUAG factory in Nuremberg to gain a better understanding of the company we were dealing with. We were seriously impressed, and not just by the lunch! The factory RUAG intend to use to produce ammunition for the Association has the capacity for approximately 100,000 rounds a day. It produces, from raw materials, several highly specialised ammunition natures for police and military forces across Europe. It has test facilities including literally hundreds of test barrels, indoor ranges out to 500 metres, extensive laboratories and significant numbers of staff (38!) exclusively employed in quality control. RUAG have bought three new 30" TR barrels to do the testing for our ammunition. Quality testing takes place at every stage of the process, starting with metallurgical tests on the brass sheet from which the cases will be formed, and finishing with live firing. The factory is supported by the resources of a large holding company with specialists in all parts of the ammunition manufacture process. Although RUAG do consider the NRA to be a significant customer, the additional production would be absorbed with little or no change to current processes.

As an aside, in November RG informed us that they had decided that they would no longer sell to non-Governmental customers. While we could possibly have negotiated a way round this restriction, life's too short, and as stocks are used up, RG will disappear from the retail market.

The European Long Range Championships showed excellent performance at 800 and 900 yards, but a significant performance deterioration for the RUAG ammunition at 1000 yards. We had established by this stage that it was quite lightly loaded, and the company agreed that higher muzzle velocity was required. A revised load was provided for a further comparative firing, and was delivered just in time for testing on 6 December 2008. Again, a group of experienced and competent shooters was assembled on a cold, clear and calm morning to fire comparative groups at 300 and 1000 yards. Matt Ensor, who had coached in the European Long Range match, acted as coach for the long range evaluation and data co-ordinator for the whole event. Matt's detailed analysis showed that there was a marginal performance gain by some firers for HPS over RUAG at long range, and the reverse at short range. We also felt that RUAG had slightly over-compensated for the low velocity from the original batch, and they are adjusting the mix again for the production run.

So, in the end there was next to nothing in it, and it came down to money, with a side order of managing distribution. There are arguments both for and against having two suppliers, and the people who have to manage the Meeting were attracted by the organisational benefits and the flexibility of having only one batch of ammunition for all events. Despite

the catastrophic effect of the recession, which has forced us to buy bullets in (expensive) US dollars and pay for the ammunition in (expensive) Euros, at the same time as the cost of raw materials – brass in particular – has skyrocketed, RUAG were able to hold the edge on a financial deal.

The Association is doing its best to keep the price down. First, the ammo will be priced strictly at cost in the Meeting entry. Also, we believe that dealing with the fired brass for reloading in industrial quantities will enable us to recover significantly more money than if it was simply sold as scrap or for reloading in retail quantities. So, as described in more detail elsewhere in this Journal, we need all the brass back, undiluted by other empty cases, to sell to offset the reduction in entry fees to the Queen's Prize and the St George's. Working with RUAG, we will do our best to have production-standard RWS/NRA ammo for sale before the Imperial Meeting - optimistically some time towards the end of May.

That's the story. Many thanks to all those who helped in the evaluations:

Karen Robertson, Guy Larcombe, Paul Monaghan and Martin Farnan who did much of the organising and most of the donkey work on the days.

Matt Ensor for coaching all day in very cold conditions and for his detailed statistical analysis and John Bloomfield for chronographing the ammunition.

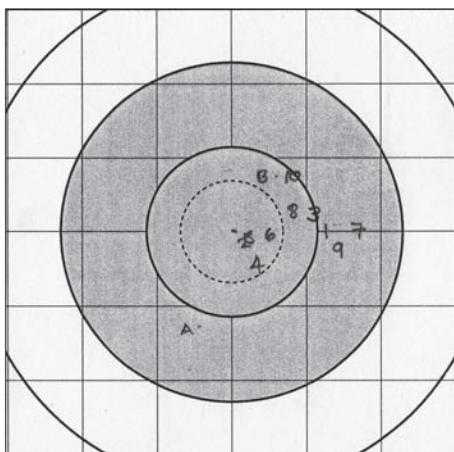
The shooters: Gary Alexander, Ian Shaw, Mike Fugeman, George Gilpin, George Wright, Jon Sweet, Nick Tremlett, Toby Raincock, Steve East, Howard Gray, Mike Martell, Eddie Brice, Bill Rowlands, Peter Griggs, Lindsay Peden and Matt Charlton.

Everybody who shot in the European Long Range match, for accepting an ammo trial imposed on your event.

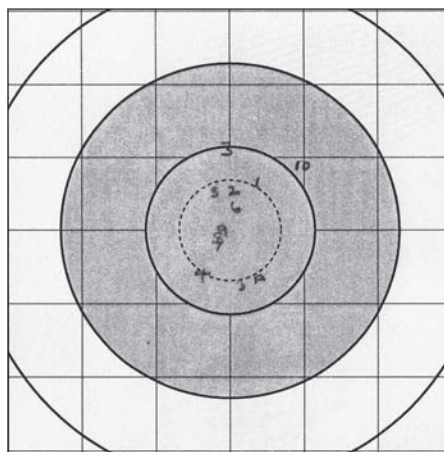
And those who sent carefully reasoned opinions to inform the debate. We didn't accept all your views, but we considered them all.

Shooting Committee Chairman Paul Monaghan has arranged to skip the country for Australia, so if it all goes wrong I guess you had better blame me. See you on the ranges in July.

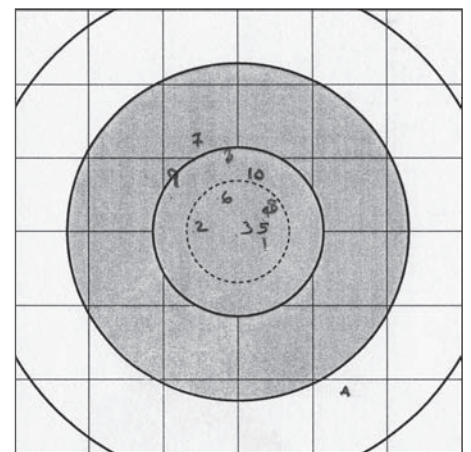
Below: A sample of RUAG test groups at 1000 yards shot during the trial on Saturday 6 December 2008. Two sighting shots (A & B) were used to set elevation followed by a ten shot group with fixed elevation.



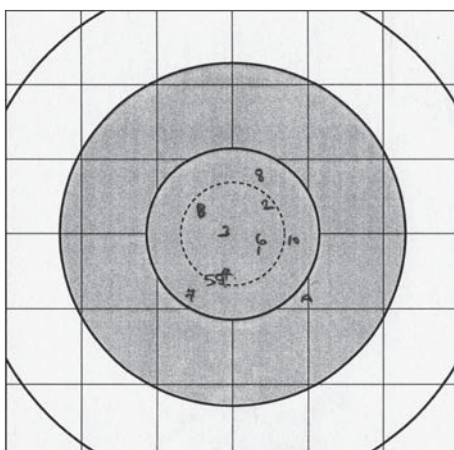
George Wright of Cambridge University.
Paramount with Maddco 30" x 1:12".
Approx 3,500 rounds.



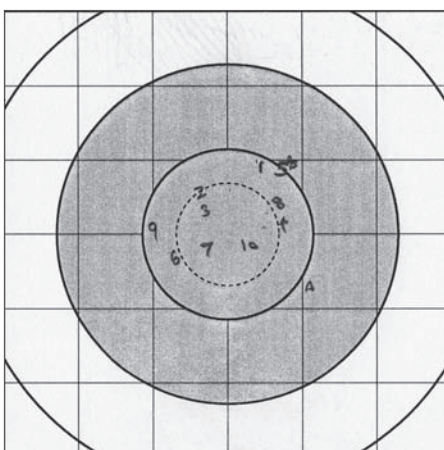
Eddie Brice of Manydown RC.
Quadlock with Krieger 30" x 1:13".
Approx 5,500 rounds.
Shots 9 & 10 called high.



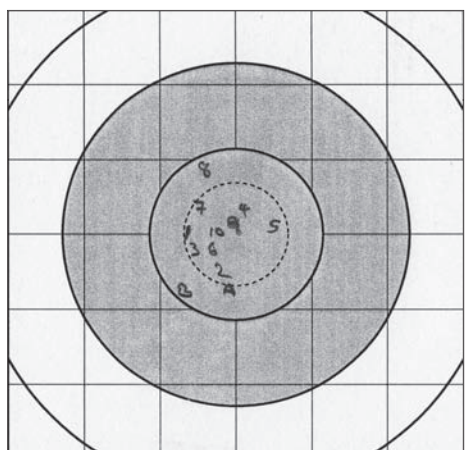
Toby Raincock of GB and Old Epsomians.
Quadlock with Bartlein 30" x 1:13".
Approx 500 rounds.
Shot 7 called high.



Lindsay Peden of GB and NLRC.
Paramount with Krieger 30" x 1:13".
Approx 2,500 rounds.



Mike Fugeman of GB and Windsor RC.
Swing Mk 3 with Krieger 30" x 1:13".
Approx 4,000 rounds.



Steve East of RAFTRC.
Quadlock with Lothar Walther 30" x 1:13".
Approx 10,000 rounds!

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TARGET SHOOTING SPORTS

A PERSONAL EVALUATION AND SUGGESTION

by John Hissey

It would seem that the NATSS project has stalled and perhaps now is the time to see what went wrong and if any of the work can be salvaged.

I have been able to meet the co-ordinator, John Perry, who has been more than helpful and spoken to our past Chairman, John Jackman, and have been in contact with Terry Blaney of the CPSA who is Chairman of the Steering Group and I thank them for their assistance.

The Steering Group was made up of the Chairmen of the NRA, NSRA and CPSA and their respective Chief Executives who met and decided to explore the possibility of amalgamating their respective bodies "in the best interests of Target Shooting Sports in Great Britain". The idea was to "to forge three equal bodies into one unified organisation . . . to govern the interests of all Target Shooting".

The earliest that NRA members were informed was in the Spring 2006 Journal when they were advised that meetings had taken place to "explore the possibility of a merger into a single national body" which might have alerted those who were paying attention of what was intended. As the main idea was that "the single body will be better able to represent our interests with politicians" and the three Associations were to be "equal", the general view was that we should let our representatives get on with it and see what they recommended.

The Summer 2006 NRA Journal stated that "some areas for short and medium term collaboration have been identified" and that matters were being progressed. Such items as insurance and publicity were mentioned as being suitable for joint action which again seemed to suggest some form of co-operation for these purposes only.

The Steering Group however clearly had full amalgamation in mind and they soon realised the considerable problems involved and "would need outside assistance". They might have first looked to some amongst our own membership as many would have the necessary business experience and perhaps have alerted them as to the impracticability with such divergent assets, liabilities, membership and the consequent legal and accounting costs. As Sport England (SE) wanted to deal with a single body, they offered a grant of £150,000 with a list of 'Facilitators' from which NATSS could choose and who would be paid directly by SE. They would be providing "guidance and assistance". Government bodies of course have much use for PR consultants and little

for business advisers who in any case, by their very nature, prefer other employers.

The choice of Facilitator fell upon Performance Matters (PM) headed by Roger Moreland. He had sent in details of his proposed team and his CV alone ran to 25 lines of close text but on examination it would appear that his entire experience had been in organisations supported by public funds. To my astonishment I found that PM were given no Terms of Reference or a brief by NATSS so it is therefore not surprising that they started by running a campaign designed to get the various members to support full amalgamation. The problems that should have been tackled first were ignored. Thus no cost benefit analysis of the pros and cons of the three obvious options was carried out – namely no change, a confederation dealing with our common areas, and full amalgamation. The Press Release of October 2006 mentions that the feedback had been very positive but there were no further details of how this impression was gained.

There was an online survey, not of course available to all. This contained some curious questions such as the first which mentions ensuring charitable status when quite how this could apply to many of the commercial clay ranges is not explained. Question 2 is to whether it is a good thing that the sport received government funding and I wonder how many would say "No"? There is much about the Olympic Games which of course does not include fullbore. None of the questions touched on the obvious problems. Subsequently it appears that some of the data was 'interpreted' to provide the desired result. Those in favour were stated to be 87% whilst the true figure was 37%.

Meanwhile the staffs of the three bodies were invited to informal meetings "to give them assurances for the future" but no such invitations were offered to members. It was emphasised again that NATSS would be considered "as a uniting of three equal organisations" although how this particular circle would be squared was not mentioned.

Workshops were held about the country and I find it odd that nobody raised the obvious problems but I gather that from the way these were organised that there was little opportunity. Such telling evidence as that from Simon Carson who said that full amalgamation had proved unsuccessful in Ireland was by-passed, maybe as not fitting the result required.

In the meantime the NRA received a new Chairman and there was evident unease amongst the Council about NATSS as in his maiden speech in the summer

of 2008 he mentioned that the project was “more of a journey than a destination”. That August the PM Update mentioned that “a draft constitution” had been tabled and I would have thought that such an important document should have been published or at least made available to interested parties. In fact as it turns out, our Trustees were becoming a little alarmed and decided not to publish this Update on our website. The “next Forum” was to take place in middle England but didn’t and by December it was clear that NATSS was in trouble. PM at last wrote about “a number of practical issues” and even admitted that they were “complex and thorny” and to allay fears we were assured that there would be a “vote by members” suggesting that some thought that our various managements would be able to lump us all together on the nod, perhaps by a simple show of hands at an EGM. In the meantime the NRA Chairman announced that he was standing down after only a year in office.

With things in this state I felt some initiative necessary. PM had not produced any answer to the problems of unbalanced finances and the large differences in membership numbers. The costs of full amalgamation were already becoming apparent especially as we were to have a “Board led by someone of appropriate stature and experience (not necessarily from shooting)” who would no doubt be offered a suitably grand salary, pension, car, office and staff to underline the status of this great new body. How was it intended to be more economic than our present set up? An article criticising the whole idea appeared by Charles Young in the Winter Journal.

I did ask the Chairman of the Steering Group himself what the object of the whole exercise was and had the rather startling reply that a combination of services only “would not satisfy the need” and that amalgamation “seemed to make sense”. There was no elucidation over why the former “would not” and how the latter would work or the anticipated savings.

Thus I circulated my many friends in the Match Rifle community who represented a good spread of NRA members. I pointed out that full amalgamation with equal voting would mean that NRA members would be in a minority of about 6 to 1 so would have little say over the future of the camp in which neither of the other parties had much interest. Having got our finances in order, I could see no good reason for combining with the NSRA who had not yet managed it. They had failed to develop the plot in the middle of the camp which remains an eyesore which is evidence of financial embarrassment. Some 80 e-mails reached their destination and over half replied with all except one preferring a form of combining suitable services only, which could attain all the original objects without any of the problems and expense of full amalgamation.

I would therefore suggest that we now turn our attention as to how this can be achieved and the name “British Target Shooting Confederation” has been welcomed. It has been pointed out that some in Northern Ireland might prefer UK instead of British but Simon has assured me that the latter is acceptable as the former would be rather too cumbersome.

In the meantime such a body is already, for all practical purposes, in existence as the CE's of the three Associations have been dealing with SE successfully over the Grant and the Olympics. At a recent General Council meeting a presentation by PM failed to gain any support but we did get a new Chairman which gives us a chance of a fresh start.

There are clearly some matters political, PR and state funding which are better done jointly and I would hope that we could pause for breath and consider how this would be best accomplished. But this time don't let us put our rearsights in front of our fore. Let us start by considering what we could best do together, then the method, balancing the costs against the savings. If we need outside help let us get from those experienced in these matters. Let us put the interests of the members first. Lastly, and of most importance, let us make sure that we are in the driving seat and we don't set up an organisation that, in no time at all, starts dictating to us what their requirements are.

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ENGLAND RIFLE TEAM TOUR TO THE USA – SEPTEMBER 2008

by John Webster

Captain	John Webster	Cheshire
Vice-Captain	James Watson	Northants, Leics and Rutland
Adjutant	Jon Underwood	Surrey
Main Coach	Nick Hinchliffe	Cheshire
Coaches	Jeremy Langley	Devon
	Nick Tremlett	Berkshire
Shooters	David Armstrong	London
	David Dyson	Yorkshire
	Holly Foster	Norfolk
	Susie Kent	Surrey
	David Luckman	Somerset
	Jane Messer	Sussex
	Emma Nuttall	Lancashire
	Stephen Penrose	Essex
	John Pugsley	Devon
	Kelvin Ramsey	Surrey
	Tom Rylands	Cheshire
	Ed Welford	Hampshire
	Andrew Wilde	Somerset
	Alex Williams	Cambridgeshire

The Council of the English Twenty Club accepted an invitation from the NRA of America to send a team to compete in the 2008 America match, after it had become clear that the NRA of GB team touring schedule post the 2007 Palma Match would not allow a GB team to participate. The 2008 America Match was scheduled to be held immediately after the 2008 Spirit of America US National Fullbore Rifle Prone Championship, hosted by the Bald Eagle Rifle Club at the NRAA Whittington Center in Raton, New Mexico.

I was delighted to accept the English Twenty Club Council's appointment to captain this team. I invited James Watson to be my Vice-Captain and Jon Cload to be my Adjutant. After seeking applicants throughout the first half to 2007 (we had over 50 applications), we were in a position to name our team.

Unfortunately Jon Cload's personal circumstances forced him to pull out (as did three others who were originally selected) so I was delighted when Jon Underwood accepted my invitation to take over the Adjutant's job.

A strong team was deliberately selected to meet the anticipated strength of the opposition, with 15 of the 20 team members having GB team touring experience. All but one team member had shot for England before, although three others had represented England in the National Match only once. With Jane Messer's success at Bisley in July 2008, we were able to claim that we were touring with the reigning British Open (Jane)

and World Long Range (David Luckman) Champions in our midst.

Preparations

We had a couple of training sessions to help hone our skills and bond as a team. We also focussed on practising string shooting, which the conditions call for at long range in the US (short range competition is two to a target). We also used decimal target faces to grow accustomed to the different sight picture and tighter target dimensions.

We decided to avoid the logistical problems encountered by previous visitors to the US and had our ammunition built to our requirements in the US. We managed to replicate the load and recipe that we would be using for practice courtesy of Rick Stewart, whose help was greatly appreciated.

Our fundraising also proved to be successful with support from various sponsors, some corporate days (some of which are to be held in 2009) and an excellent brochure. While the final accounts have yet to be done (due to the as yet unknown contribution from next year's corporate days), I am confident that we will have raised at least 75% of the budgeted cost of the tour. This means that each tour member will be able to undertake the tour for no more than the air-fare to get them there.

The Tour Itself

We travelled to Denver on the last day of August, where the team split. The bulk of the party went onto Las Vegas for a couple of days, while four took the rifles and team equipment to Raton where it could remain under lock and key, thereby avoiding a lot of logistical hassle. We gathered as a full team at the south ridge of the Grand Canyon for two spectacular days, and then drove to Raton via Monument Valley (to pay homage to John Wayne) with an overnight stop in the surprisingly lively Durango.

The Spirit of America Matches

The George Tubb Range at the Whittington Center in Raton, New Mexico is a north facing 100 target range that goes straight back to 1000 yards. Shooting starts early in the morning; Colours (and National Anthems) were presented at 07:30, by which time all competitors were expected to have picked up their daily squadding which was randomly organised amongst more than 150 competitors taking part. This number included a few competitors from Canada and a contingent from Australia, which included a veterans' team.

The typical daily course of fire included three short range shoots (300 yards, 500 yards and 600 yards) of 10 shots to count, and then a 15 round shoot at long



The England Rifle Team to the USA.



"Can we have some wind flags please?"



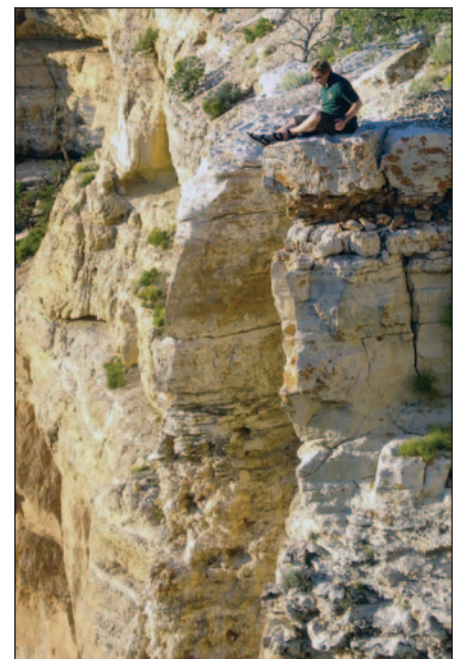
The Captain shares a tender moment with David Luckman.



"Wait till they taste this!" team vet Nick Tremlett is let loose in the kitchen.



The epitome of sartorial elegance - the Captain indulges his love of leather.



James Watson took dropping a point a bit too seriously!

range (either 900 yards or 1000 yards) after a lunch break. The competitors were split into two relays with one pair shooting and the other pair marking. The logistical challenge of getting people to and from the butts was accomplished by two small buses. Each pair shot two to the mound at short range and single string at long range.

The seven days of competition were split into three days of coached club teams of four and four daily individual competitions that make up the individual aggregate for the US National Fullbore Rifle Prone Championship.

The Club Team Matches

For the first club team match (the Cunico Team Match), we divided the teams into regional county districts (Northern counties, South and South Western counties, Home and Eastern counties, and London and South Eastern counties). This was a four range shoot out of 1600; the South and South West was our best team, coming fourth on 1586.87 behind the eventual winners, the Bald Eagles Rifle Club on 1589.37

The next day we divided into Club Teams (OCRA, LMRA, English Twenty Club and BCRC), for the Folsom Shooting Club Team Match. LMRA was our best team coming second on 1573.66 behind the eventual winners, USA Blue on 1579.76

The final day of Club Team matches was split into two; the Sierra Bullets Match at 300 yards, 500 yards and 600 yards, and then the McGee Stock Match at 1000 yards. We split the team up across different English Twenty Club groupings to use these matches as more of a trial for the America Match itself. In the first of these ex 1200, our best team was the England Twenty Club Lions who were fourth on 1192.62, behind a fabulous shoot from Australia Green who won with 1198.70

In the afternoon however, we had a clean sweep with the English Twenty Club Crowns coming first on 585.19, the Roses second on 580.18 and the Unicorns third on 579.20.



Team selection? Sorted!

The individual matches and aggregates

There were four daily competitions (made up of three short range and one long range shot each day) which made up the individual overall aggregate, and the overall short and long range aggregate prizes.

On the first day (the OK Weber match), the team got off to a cracking start taking the top three places with Jon Underwood winning on 450.22, John Pugsley second on 449.26 and Jeremy Langley third on 448.25. Jon Underwood continued his good form by winning day two (the Precision Shooting match) with 447.24 ahead of Mike Dunia (USA) on 446.22 and Justin Skerret (USA) on 445.22 to have a commanding lead in the overall individual at the halfway stage.

Days three and four belonged to shooters from the USA with our best being Jeremy Langley at fifth on day three (the Sinclair Individual Match) and Kelvin Ramsey at fourth on day four (the Sierra Bullets Match).

Despite a 36th place on day three, Jon Underwood was leading the individual championship with only 1000 yards to go after dropping only one point at short range on day four. Unfortunately he got clobbered on a very difficult detail and fell from first to 13th in the overall championship.

David Luckman was our highest man coming fifth overall with 1773.95 behind the winner, Ty Cooper of the USA with 1781.99. David Armstrong and Jeremy Langley were ninth and tenth respectively. Brian Litz of the USA won the Short Range Aggregate with a highest possible score with David Luckman third, and David Rich of the USA won the Long Range Aggregate with David Armstrong our best at fifth.

The America Match

The day dawned with good weather but a fresh breeze from behind the firing point. Its strength and angle changes presented a constant challenge to both the coaches and the shooters, as it was imperative to get good shots away quickly. After a good shoot at 300 yards, we were one point behind after the USA went clean, but we clawed back that point at 600 yards to lead at the halfway stage.

Unfortunately, disaster struck at 900 yards when we put a perfect X on the wrong target, while the USA team pulled away. We were however still leading Australia at this stage (by just one point), but they managed to claw that back at 1000 yards to put us into third place on centres in the final analysis.

In truth, the USA team came out comprehensive winners with a commanding performance at the longer ranges, especially 1000 yards. One consolation was that David Luckman had the highest score of the day with a magnificent 599.35 coached by Jeremy Langley.

Results from the America Match

Captain: John Webster
Main Coach: Nick Hinchliffe
Adjutant: David Dyson
Reserve: Kelvin Ramsey
Reserve: Emma Nuttall

		300	600	900	1000	Total
Coach:	Jeremy Langley					
	David Luckman	150.09	150.11	150.10	149.05	599.35
	Andrew Wilde	150.13	150.09	137.04	142.02	579.28
	Tom Rylands	150.13	147.04	148.10	137.03	582.30
	James Watson	150.14	150.09	146.05	143.05	589.33
Coach:	Nick Tremlett					
	David Armstrong	150.08	149.08	149.08	145.01	593.25
	Stephen Penrose	149.06	150.11	147.06	146.06	592.29
	Jane Messer	150.13	150.10	144.03	143.02	587.28
	Jon Underwood	150.11	150.08	144.02	147.05	591.26
1	USA	1200.88	1195.62	1184.58	1179.50	4758.258
2	Australia	1992.86	1194.72	1173.45	1153.34	4712.237
3	England	1199.87	1196.70	1165.48	1152.29	4712.234

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Volume 5



by David Gladwin

Published by Adam Gordon

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OBITUARIES

John Barry Evans

John, who died on 11 November 2008 aged 79 years, sadly just over six months after his wife Stella had died suddenly and unexpectedly on 25 March, was a first class pistol shot who shot most of the pistol disciplines but whose forte was free pistol. He had competed at Bisley for almost fifty years



and was a member of the GB Mayleigh Cup team six times in the 1960s, twice gaining a bronze medal when the GB team came second. He also represented Great Britain in other free pistol matches seven times again in the 1960s. He captained the English Team in a Home Countries International in 1987. In 1963 and 1965 he participated in the European Championship and the World Championships in 1966. In addition he was twice a reserve for the British Olympic team. Further to his international achievements he won many awards in various UK competitions, not least winning the coveted Tiger Pistol Trophy in 1961 and coming second the following year. He regularly competed during the Imperial Meetings over many years with considerable success.

He was a member of the NRA, NSRA and the British Pistol Club (BPC), which was founded in 1957, in addition to local clubs near his home. Not only was he an active shooting member of these organisations, he gave considerable time to them being a member of the Board of Management of the NSRA 1993 - 95, Administration Member of Council and a member of the Pistol and International Committees in the early 1990s. He served as Chairman of the NRA Shooting Committee in 1991 and Chairman of the BPC 1989 - 95. In all of these he endeavoured to further the interests of all forms of shooting, especially the pistol disciplines.

In 1987 he and the late Wilfred Ward, a founder of the BPC, thought up the idea of forming a team to stimulate more competition. The result was the Ancient Brits with its logo of a caveman, armed with a club, dragging a cavewoman along by her hair. Delightfully non-politically correct, but that was John and Wilfred Ward lightheartedly poking fun at bureaucracy. The shooting was deadly serious but conducted in a most friendly atmosphere with an annual match against the Army and other occasional matches against the National team, the RAF and BPC.

John Evans was Managing Director of Abatron his own pharmaceutical company in Bedfordshire which

sponsored the annual Ancient Brits/ Army Match. It was fitting that John, although suffering badly from cancer, attended the 20th Anniversary match in 2008 leading the Ancient Brits to a resounding victory.

Not only was John a first class pistol shot, but he took up the skilled and strenuous sport of real tennis and, as in any endeavour he embraced, was determined to master it and attain a high standard. This he did becoming a first class player.

Those who knew John will have their own memories of him. Generally he was courteous, gentlemanly and extremely generous; an interesting and amusing raconteur; he enjoyed good food and wine and was excellent company. As he and Stella had no issue and were only children themselves he leaves no immediate family. Nevertheless he will be much missed not only in the shooting environment.

Peter Gilpin

Harold James (Jim) Blundell Cleaver

Jim was a boy who knew no fear. A boy who would scavenge a downed Spitfire for its ammunition belts only to be caught by the local policeman trying to drag them home. Who as a choir and altar boy found the large brass collection plate too heavy to carry, decided to balance it on his head, only to drop it onto the flagstoned floor of the ancient church, the clang being heard across Surrey



Scouting showed him the wonders of living outside and self-dependency; Youth Club introduced him to boxing and he became a very successful junior amateur boxer winning many championships.

He won a scholarship to the London College of Commercial Art and Lithiography (carpeted very soon for lobbing toilet rolls out of the top floor window).

After college he went into the commercial arts world of advertising. Life changed when he was called up for National Service into the RAF – this opened up the world of sport to him. He became a proficient all-rounder at most sports including football, rock climbing and fencing, but cricket became his love. He loved sports that pitted him not only against opponents but the elements as well. He also became a physical training instructor and led the RAF PT team at the Service of Remembrance held in the Royal Albert

Hall in 1949. His time in the RAF didn't quite quench the boy but it did enhance the man teaching him the disciplines and skills needed to become a leader – he always said that this period was the making of him. After demob in 1950 he became a member of the briefcase, broolly and bowler brigade entering the world of shipping with firstly Overseas Buyers, then Cox and Kings and also the South African Citrus Foundation better known as Outspan.

He met his future wife Jo at a Scottish clan gathering in 1951 and they married in 1954. When the children arrived he realized that perhaps shinning up rocks wasn't quite the safest of activities so he gave it up and concentrated on cricket, playing regularly for Epsom Cricket Club.

A chance glance in a shop window showed an advert looking for members to join Epsom Rifle Club. He thought he'd give it a go and the rest, as they say, is history.

Jim joined Epsom Rifle Club in 1957, where he won a great number of awards at Club and County level, and became Club Champion in 1961 as well as taking on the duties of Club Secretary and Captain. He also started his long service as a Stats Officer for the NSRA where he remained a member till 1976 when he moved to South Wales.

Joining Dorking Rifle Club in 1959, he became Fullbore Champion in 1964, and also went on to shoot at County, National, and International level, with both fullbore and small-bore success. Jim was part of the team that gave Dorking RC the distinction of being the first club in the County to hold the Civilians, Surrey Astor and the Westcott Cup concurrently. He became Club Secretary in 1961, and was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by the NSRA for his contribution to the club - he spanned fifteen years as secretary. The Club honoured him by making him a Vice-President when he resigned on his move to Wales - a position which he held with heartfelt pride.

Bookham Rifle Club added pistol shooting to his disciplines and he won the Chason Cup in 1961. Jim became a member of the Standing and Kneeling Team that broke the British National Record no fewer than six times - the Surrey eight-man team in 1966 and the three positional eight-man team in 1973 and 1975 then outstandingly, with the three-man Standing and Kneeling team in March 1966, October 1967 and December 1970. The Sports Council for Leatherhead awarded Jim their Certificate of Merit for his fourteen-year service to rifle shooting, the community, and in recognition of him shooting for Scotland. The Club also honoured him by granting him Vice-Presidency. Again he was overwhelmed with their kindness.

Jim first gained his Scottish colours in 1966 with the Three Positional Free Rifle, and Small-bore Long Range competitions. He won the Scottish NSRA Individual

Short Range Championship in 1983 and 1984. In the fullbore field, he shot in the Scottish National Team in 1974, 1981 and 1982, and was Adjutant in the Mackinnon in 1984 and 1986 as well as being part of the fullbore team that went to Kenya in 1983.

The British Left Handed Shooters Club was formed at Bisley, of which Jim was a founder member, and he was also a stalwart of the Great Britain Free Rifle Club.

Both the NRA and NSRA Open Meetings at Bisley were attended by Jim regularly from the middle sixties and he appeared on many lists - just pipped at the post in the Argentina - but was part of the Dorking Rifle Club Team, who won the Belgian in 1970. He won the NRA Rifle Club 100 Challenge Cup in 1975 and 1976.

The Surrey Rifle Association presented Jim with a goblet for his long service on the Committee and for his contribution to the County S/K Team, before he moved to Cwmbran with Siebe Gorman (Diving Equipment), who were re-locating from Chessington, Surrey.

The ICI Fibres Rifle Club at Pontypool became Jim's new home. This Club evolved into the Torfaen Small-bore Rifle Club, which has gone from strength to strength over the years, with members shooting at County, Welsh National, and International levels. Jim became Club Captain, and was a member of the team who won the Provincial Cities and Boroughs Trophy twice, also, the Burroughs and Watts trophy. He also continued his individual success in small-bore and fullbore competitions in Monmouthshire. The Club became coaches to the Air Cadets Squadron which is based in Cardiff and one of their members Johanne Brekke along with Torfaen member Ceri Dallimore won Gold Medals at the Manchester Commonwealth Games in 2002. When ill health curtailed Jim's shooting, the Club presented him with Life Membership and the position of Vice-President in recognition of his twenty one years service to the Club.

Undaunted and determined not to lose touch with his beloved sport, Jim became an Assistant Curator at the NRA Museum at Bisley, a job he delighted in and filled it with his usual happy enthusiasm.

Alongside his shooting achievements, of which the above is a brief summary, Jim played a major part in the administration of each club and association of which he was a member, Team Captain, Secretary, Statistician, Coach, and Mentor, he really took part in all facets of the shooting world.

Jim made many friends and he will be sadly missed but fondly remembered. Our commiserations and condolences go out to Jo and all the family.

Ted Molyneux

Michael Stanley Bingley

Michael was born on 11 February 1932 at Lydney, Gloucestershire, where his father was working at the time. The family moved back to Surrey, original home of both his parents, while he was a baby and to Eaton Farm, which remained his home



for the rest of his life, in 1938. After a local nursery school, Michael started as a day-boy at the local preparatory school, Feltonfleet, in September 1939 and, to his fury, rapidly became a boarder when the school was evacuated to Somerset. Ironically, the house the school occupied in Somerset was bombed, although with no significant injuries, while its home site in Surrey near Vickers aircraft factory was untouched. In 1945, Michael went to Harrow School, where he found the training in the engineering workshops and the rifle range most to his taste. Michael's father had been captain of the Harrow School team in 1908, the only occasion when Harrow won the Ashburton. Although Michael shot for the school team on two occasions, they were less successful. However, in 1966, Michael captained the Harrow Veterans to victory at Bisley when they won the Public Schools Veterans Challenge trophy.

After a short period of National Service in the East Surrey regiment curtailed by ill-health and a spell at Guildford College, Michael went up to Trinity, Cambridge. He took Part I Tripos in Botany and then specialised for Part II in genetics, under Sir Ronald Fisher, graduating with BA in 1954.

Work for Aspro, the Air Hygiene Unit at Colindale and the Cement Marketing Board proved that a commercial career did not suit Michael's idiosyncratic ways and luckily his landlady in Slough knew Professor Jim Danieli of the Biophysics Dept in King's College, London. Prof Danieli recognised Michael's enquiring mind and persistent demands to know why and how were the ideal mindset for a research scientist and invited Michael to join his department as a doctoral student.

Michael enjoyed his time in the Dept of Biophysics in Drury Lane as part of King's College, working on experiments in electrophysiology. He always took a close interest in the equipment needed for his work, putting his school workshop experience to good use and building close relationships with the technicians who worked for the department. In the early 60s, electronics was advancing and to understand and design the equipment needed, Michael took a course in electronics at Chelsea Polytechnic while still working on his thesis at King's. Throughout his life, Michael built any further electronic equipment he needed for his research using the skills he learned then and an ever-increasing collection of valves, resistors and other components accumulated in filing cabinets in his workshop at home.

In 1962, he was awarded a PhD in Zoology for his work on "Membrane Potential Studies on Amoeba in relation to movement, radiation and ageing." He continued this work at King's until Professor Danieli and most of his staff moved to the US. Reprints of his work in this area continue to be requested and in 2006 he was invited to be a keynote speaker at a conference on the subject in Mexico, but ill-health meant that the long-haul journey was not possible.

During the period 1966 – 68, Michael held a research fellowship at the Institute of Aviation Medicine, where he learned to fly and, seeking *Nitella* for further electrophysiological experiments, came to know and love the Scottish hills and lochs.

In the late 60s and early 70s, the changes to rifle calibres and ammunition led Michael to various scientific experiments and researches about the flight of the bullet. He and Colonel Whittaker spent days on Short Siberia and the 200 yards range at Bisley with oscilloscopes seeking ways of measuring various aspects of what happens when the trigger is pulled. He added several Kongsbergs with their distinctive woodwork to his Mauser conversion and experimented with a variety of imported ammunition. Settling on Raufoss 144 grains as the best fit for the Kongsbergs he sometimes worried that he would be unable to replace it when his store was exhausted, but made it with a few boxes to spare.

In 1969, as target rifle shooting was coming to terms with the switch from .303" to 7.62mm ammunition, it was Michael who realised that the problems with the new type of ammunition related to poor quality control inserting the bullet into the casing, resulting in very variable flight by the bullets and poor scores as a result. By selecting a batch of straight bullets (by the primitive method of spinning each bullet in the chuck of his lathe and selecting those that did not appear to wobble), advising Air Commodore Riall, the NRA secretary, of his plans and then achieving the only possible (ie 50 out of a possible 50) in the Daily Mail at the Imperial Meeting, Michael caught the interest of the authorities and both the NRA and the Royal Ordnance Factory at Radway Green were grateful for his help in assisting to provide both the civilian sport and the professional army with bullets of the new calibre that would go where they were aimed.

This was a most successful period for Michael at rifle shooting. As well as the Ashburton Veterans and the Daily Mail already mentioned, he was in the Byfleet RC winning team in the 1966 Astor County Championship, reached the Queen's 100 in 1972 and the George's in 1973.

At the Surrey RA Centennial Meeting in September 1972, Michael met Joan, who was to become his wife, when they were squadded to shoot on the same target. They met again during the season at Bisley the following year and got engaged there on Remembrance Sunday, telephoning Joan's parents in Dublin to break the news from the box outside the NRA offices. At her university rifle club a few years earlier, Joan had heard from those returning from Bisley of the eccentric who had spun his

bullets to win a competition, little dreaming that she would later meet him. They were married in her native Dublin on 1 August 1974.

Michael was most supportive of Joan in her career as a chartered secretary, especially during the period when she was president of her professional body, and they travelled widely together. For many years, their holiday plans were dictated by the Council meetings of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Michael explored places as diverse as Auckland, Bulawayo, Hong Kong and Vancouver while Joan chaired meetings or gave lectures on corporate governance.

Michael was too much of a maverick to play politics and subdue his personality to fit in to a permanent academic post. Between various research grants, mainly at Surrey University and King's College, London, plus spells of teaching science and occasional consultancy work, he continued his researches in a workshop at home, equipped with items built mainly from parts bought cheaply on the government-surplus market. At the Yehudi Menuhin School, during one of the teaching episodes, he and some pupils investigated filters for motor car rear lights at a time of impending EU legislation, criticised the proposals backed up with experimental data using most of the school as guinea pigs and were surprised to find that an article on the work in Autocar magazine paid a welcome fee, unlike academic journals.

In his search for a really good microscope to use for the microelectrode work, Michael discovered both the Royal Microscopical Society, which he joined in April 1970, becoming a life member soon afterwards, and the Quekett Microscopical Society, which he joined in December 1970. He was an enthusiast for first class resolution and was prepared to spend hours setting up a microscope to get the best results. And he was always willing to spend more hours explaining his methods to anyone who would listen. He published the "Plain Man's Guide to Exhibition Visiting" in Lab News about how to spend funds effectively and, after many rejections, his paper on "How to test a light microscope" in Engineering.

Early in the 70s, he was asked by Rupert Ledger, who sold garden and farm machinery, to solve the problem of the gummy bugs that fouled petrol left in machines stored in damp sheds and barns, especially over winter. Although asked as a biologist, Michael found the answer with chemistry in a silicone based lubricant for the two-stroke engines. A chance remark led to experiments with this oil as an additive in four-stroke engines, where it proved to have anti-knock properties at a time when octane ratings were falling. He spent years working to find out how and why this effect was achieved, using his own cars (TR6 sports cars) as experimental engines and many model engines, some purchased and others machined by himself in his workshop at home. Despite the efforts to exploit his patents on this additive, it never really became the money-spinner that Michael had hoped. However, his work in this field, and his presentations and

penetrating questions at meetings, led to an invitation which he was delighted to accept to become a member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

Michael never retired as such, continuing his researches on both engines and electrophysiology into his 70s. He carried on attending the annual conferences of the Society of Experimental Biology and tribology events at the Institute of Mechanical Engineers until 2006, well known for his challenging questions and lively interest in new work even when his failing heart made walking and breathing difficult.

Joan Bingley

Bert Brookes

It is with sadness that we report the untimely and sudden death of Bert Brookes on 19 October 2008. He was known by the shooting fraternity as the Customer Range Officer at Eley Ltd.

Born on 4 December 1939 in Stourbridge, West Midlands he subsequently attended King Edward's Grammar School in Stourbridge. It was there that he had his first introduction to shooting when he became a member of the Army Cadet Force at the school at the age of 11. His passion for shooting all disciplines was nurtured there.

A dedicated pistol shooter, he became a member of Stourport Rifle and Pistol Club and Somers' Rifle and Pistol Club, shooting for the Worcester County Team. In the mid-1970s he diversified and concentrated more on Clay Pigeon shooting. However nothing could keep him away from his true dedication - pistol shooting and during the 1980s and early 90s he renewed his memberships of his old clubs and also joined Birmingham Shooting Centre where he found another discipline - practical pistol shooting. He joined the UKPSA then unfortunately learned of the ban on pistols on his return from the World Shoot in Brazil in 1996. Undaunted by the ban he turned his attention to rifle shooting in the UK but still kept his hand in with pistol shooting by competing in the National Championships at Camp Perry, Ohio, USA each year where again, his enthusiasm led him to make many new friends.

Coming from an engineering background he was always interested in the technical side of the sport and finally joined Eley Ltd in 1998 as Customer Range Officer. He was well respected and liked by the many multi-national shooters who tested with him at the Customer Range



which can be measured by the number of messages of condolence sent from the four corners of the world. A member of the NRA, he attended the National Shoots at Bisley and again was recognised at these events as the 'Face of Eley'.

He gave any of his other spare time to his other passions – on- and off-road motorcycling. It was quite usual to see him going up and down the M42 to Eley on his Honda Pan European or off-roading whilst on holiday in Spain or Fuerteventura. Always up for adventure he had only this year attained his PADI licence for deep water scuba diving at the age of 68!

Bert leaves his wife of 45 years Gay, daughter Helen, son Robin, their respective spouses Adrian and Justine and eight grandchildren, James, Faye, Zac, Luey, Bayleigh, Ellis, Kane and Harvey J.

He will be remembered by everyone who knew him by his mantra - 'Aim High, Shoot Straight'!

Gay Brookes

Adrian Johns

Adrian lost his fight against medullary thyroid cancer on 20 December 2008 aged just 55.

He had a good shooting pedigree. His maternal grandfather William John was a fine shooter who represented Wales many times. Adrian would recall shooting prone rifle at the age of nine with his grandfather on one side and Lord Swansea on the other.

However Adrian chose to shoot pistol and competed in all the open meetings at Bisley during the golden years of pistol shooting. Probably his best result was when he won Service Pistol B at the Army Open in 1991 equalling the record which was never broken. After the pistol ban he took up rifle, black powder and 5 shot air pistol.

He trained as a photographer and worked for some time in London before moving to Wales to work as a film sound recordist for BBC Wales and then HTV Wales, before taking a second degree in Computer Graphics and returning to photography.

He had his first operation for thyroid cancer in 1996 when he was given a 60/40 chance of survival, then another in 1998 and a third in 2000. These operations severely sapped his strength as did the courses of radiotherapy and chemotherapy which followed and he was unable to continue competition shooting although he enjoyed acting as Range Officer for the competitions at the Pickwick range at Ewenny.

A highly intelligent man he studied all subjects that interested him in great detail and became an expert on each of them.



During his illness he assisted the medical profession in trying to gain knowledge of this very rare disease, and was the inspiration for Dr Laura Moss setting up Thyroid Cancer – UK at Velindre Cancer Centre in Cardiff to pool information about the disease.

It is very sad that a man who excelled in very precise activities, shooting, photography, calligraphy and computer graphics should lose the ability to do them.

During the last year of his life he became a quadraplegic although his brain was very active right to the end.

He was an unusual man, who made the best of the life he was given.

Sheila Johnson

Wilfred (Bill) Turner

Bill was born in Ilkeston, Derbyshire, and the son of the local Police Sergeant in 1926. His main interests in life other than devoting himself to his wife Hilda, daughter Anne, son Roy, grandchildren and great-grandchildren was shooting and fishing; any time these subjects were raised with Bill, it was laughingly said 'that it made the winter seem shorter'. Bill was passionate about both, he was involved in all forms of shooting, small-bore and fullbore rifle and clays, rough, game and wildfowling with a shotgun - whenever you called to see him at the weekend, Hilda would usually tell you that he was either on the salt marshes by the coast or down by the river, a short distance from home.



He was employed most of his life by the Raleigh Cycle Co in Nottingham and was a member of their rifle club amongst others, including the English Twenty and Midlands Counties. He was a good shot by county standards and could always be relied upon to turn in a decent score with the Nottinghamshire RA county team when needed. He was a steady shot and his name appears on many of the county's trophies, he helped Nottinghamshire to win the Short Range Senior County Championships at Bisley in 1983 and he got himself three Queens Final badges in 1979, 81 and 82.

Bill was fond of the occasional glass of whisky or brandy and could often be seen standing at the end of a large cigar. He was also somewhat ingenious: it is said that he solved the age old problem of making a pair of underpants from two 'J cloths' when it became a necessity.

He was a familiar figure at Kingsbury and Bisley, where he had a caravan, which he gave up in the latter years when driving long distances became too tiring. Anyone who knew him would know that he had difficulty in walking, because of this he was medically downgraded and did his bit during the war with the RAOC as a storeman - although his feet were painful, they never stopped him from enjoying life to the full.

Hilda passed away a year before Bill, who died of pneumonia on 8 June 2008; his funeral service was attended by many of his friends and shooting pals.

His like will not be the seen again, they broke the mould.

RIP

Anne Newell and Dennis Aram

Derek Hodson

Derek was born on 19 May 1925 and at the age of eighteen enlisted in the RAF and was drafted into the photo reconnaissance section. This no doubt gave him his life-long love of photography. Later he became interested in cine work filming one of his tours with the GB Rifle Team in the seventies and of shooting at Bisley. Most recently Derek purchased a digital camera as he had aspirations of using it with his new laptop. He was one who kept up with technology.



During his time in the RAF Derek met Margaret McArthur whom he married in January 1946, as her parents were going to Iran. Two years later Derek left the RAF and went into the Royal Engineers with a secondment to the War Office as a lecturer. Whilst there he became more involved with shooting, and, in the trophies he had recently donated to the NRA Museum, are a cup and tankard won whilst a member of the Trojan RC - "the only rifle club in the War Office" he once said.

Derek had a life-long passion for science, technology and engineering and it is not surprising that he joined the Civil Service in the Construction and Engineering division after he retired from the Army in 1970. He was able, through his expertise, to advise the NRA on some, if not all of its drainage problems. During this period he also took up a part-time lectureship at Surrey University lecturing in Physics and Maths to undergraduates. A job he pursued with passion for many years.

At this time Derek was able to devote more time to shooting. He and Margaret had owned a caravan at Bisley from the mid-sixties and this is where they would stay with their parrot at weekends during the shooting season. He shot and coached Buckinghamshire RA on very many occasions. He was proud of his certificate commemorating the fact he had shot for them on more than twenty-five occasions. His coaching had a style of its own. Many shooters – he belonged to the Army RA, the North London RC, and the Civil Service Rifle Club – recall his "tin of sweeties" with which he rewarded central bulls. They also remember his skill and attribute

their good scores and team trophies to his ability.

Derek had a purple passage in the seventies, when his shooting reached great heights. In 1970 on Second Thursday he won the Duke of Gloucester, and received not only the trophy, but a telegram and photo from the Duke himself. The next day he won the St Georges Vase, arguably the third most important individual competition at Bisley. That year he toured the West Indies with the GB team. He also toured Canada and the USA and the West Indies in subsequent years. In 1972 he represented England in the National and the following year was Adjutant to that team and reserve for the Mackinnon team. In 1974 he appeared for the first time in the final of HM Queen's Prize placing 90th and in 1977 he placed 20th. In 1976 he shot for Great Britain at Camp Perry, USA in the Palma Match. The following year Derek placed 33rd in the Grand Aggregate at Bisley.

At Crookham Rifle Club, of which he was a life member, he was very keen to support and happy to advise younger members of the Club. Members recall Derek showing them the SMLE that he used to win the St Georges – the last time a .303 was used for that competition. It was beautifully presented as Derek had spent time working on the woodwork.

Derek's other great interest was in cars. He had in earlier years owned a rare two seater Jaguar SS100 and one of his anecdotes concerned this revered car. Derek was driving through Surrey when he was hailed by a scout master who requested a lift to the nearby railway station so as not to miss the train. Derek agreed whereupon a number of other scouts appeared and were all fitted into the car for the short ride. Derek was not going to be fazed.

The loss of his wife Margaret in 2005 was a great blow to him, and he dealt with that and his illnesses with stoicism. Derek and Margaret did not have any children, but he does have a niece in Sussex and a god-daughter, who lives in Australia.

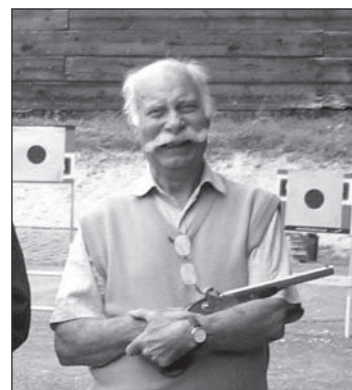
Derek was a gentleman with a grace and style of a former age and a laid back manner, but a steely adherence to old fashioned standards.

Mike Martel

Tony Thornhill.

It is with deep regret that I report the death of Tony Thornhill on 14 December 2008, only a few days before his 77th birthday.

Tony won no championships or great trophies but was the bedrock of our shooting sports as can be testified by so many that had the privilege to know him throughout his long life.



He was born before the Second World War in Gosport, Hampshire, so very different from the Gosport we know today. To the south and west were the shingle beaches of the Solent, to the east the mudflats and tidal creeks of the great Portsmouth Harbour and all around countryside and farms. It was here that Tony, as a young teenager, roamed and where he shot wildfowl, fished and hunted rabbits for the pot and where he developed those personal qualities that made him so respected and popular throughout his life.

After a war that devastated Portsmouth and Gosport, his apprenticeship was interrupted by the arrival of his National Service papers and, for some unexplained reason, he found himself drafted into the Pioneer Corps. His exceptional character marked him out for quick promotion to Sergeant with all the privileges of that rank and his natural marksmanship to a place in the unit rifle team with which he travelled the country. This was his first introduction to the sport of fullbore rifle shooting which became his particular favourite. Happy times indeed.

Following the Army and a spell in the Merchant Navy sailing to and from the St Lawrence River, Tony returned to Gosport and soon after married his sweetheart, Vilia. He also picked up his wild fowling again, with all its accompanying risks and worries for his new wife. This included getting stuck in a gun punt on a mudflat in Portsmouth Harbour with his friend Mick, the tide rising rapidly. They had made the punt and the large puntgun themselves. That was our Tony.

Tony and Vilia were looking for new rural opportunities and moved to Devon with their young son, Jan, where Tony was to introduce him to those same country sports and skills that gave him so much pleasure. They became best mates as well as father and son. Their last move away from Gosport saw them in Somerset, running a smallholding. Hard work but some of their happiest times.

They finally returned to Stubbington, near Gosport, to be close to their much-loved daughter, Sally. Tony soon had the rights to some rabbit shooting and joined the local rifle and pistol club. A move to other clubs led him back to fullbore shooting and Bisley. He had first visited Bisley while in the Army and every time he went through the entrance in these more recent years he felt the same thrill - the honour to shoot at that world-renowned and most visually impressive venue that is both prestigious yet welcoming.

Latterly he added muzzle loading to his wide repertoire and applied the same vigour and dedication to that as he did to everything in his life. But of all his many interests, fullbore shooting at Bisley was always the greatest challenge and gave the greatest pleasure. That pleasure could be no greater than when his son, Jan, now living in Australia and himself an accomplished long range fullbore rifle shooter, was able to accompany him in recent years and to share that same unique experience.

To Tony life was one long adventure. He was interested in just about everything and read widely. When he was

not tinkering in his workshop on his latest project or restoring his motorbike he might be found in his office repairing his clocks. But more likely he would be off helping someone else, whether a friend or neighbour. Tony was generous with that most precious commodity, his time, but whatever he was doing he could not go for long without needing to be at the range. Shooting was his passion and his enthusiasm was contagious. He preached competition as the path to better performance and was as keen to ask advice as he was to help the novice and support the experienced.

His unfailing energy, his integrity, his basic humanity and compassion and his wonderful sense of humour will be missed by all his friends at Springfield Target Club and at Havant Rifle and Pistol Club and by the very many who were lucky enough to have crossed his path.

Our condolences go to his beloved wife, Vilia, his son, Jan, his daughter, Sally, and his four grandchildren.

I was proud to call him friend.

Peter Gosden

The NRA is very sad to announce the death of Arthur Stoner - a full obituary will appear in the Summer Journal.

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LETTERS

"A clear eye and a steady hand . . ."

from David Calvert

Recent discussion and debate in our Journal on ICFRA rules for the fullbore target rifle discipline, has focused on the three issues of optics (front and rear sight lenses), rifle weight and trigger weight.

Proponents of the rule changes have suggested that our sport is "a shooting game, not a seeing game", and has been enhanced by the introduction of magnifying optics. They might also argue that our sport is a "shooting game, not a holding game"; thus, heavier barrels and rifles, allowing improved stability and accuracy, may improve individual performance and thus our sport? In addition, perhaps our sport is "about shooting, not trigger release", and so reducing the minimum allowable trigger weight by two-thirds can only be a good thing?

Even if you accept the current rule changes are for the better, they can significantly increase the cost of a traditional target rifle for those who wish to be at the 'cutting edge' of the newly permitted technology, perhaps discouraging the young and less affluent - the very people we need to encourage and retain in the first place. And what next - unlimited optics, rests to assist with the increased rifle weight, electronic set triggers, and perhaps hand-loaded ammunition of any calibre . . . ?

So what effect have these rule changes had on the ethos of our sport and what are the essential elements of the 'shooting game' of fullbore target rifle? It may be argued that clear vision, a steady hold and good hand-eye coordination are three of the elements that have been fundamental to success in the sport since its inception in the 19th century. These are, of course, faculties that deteriorate with age, thereby giving some additional encouragement and hope to the younger competitor, who has yet to develop fully other essential elements such as wind judging skills and match temperament enjoyed by many an older, more experienced shooter. However, such hope may be dashed as those older shooters rewrite the rules to allow magnifying optics, heavier barrels and lighter triggers!

Schools Meeting

from Charles Young

Reading the report written by 'Soupie' about the Schools' Meeting 2008, I spotted a sardonic comment about "the well known Scottish Range Officer"

noticing something amiss with the backsights fitted to one school's rifles. Well, there must be a second "well known Scottish Range Officer" out there, because though I certainly noticed a sights problem, the incident Soupie reports does not describe my experience.

Accepting as Schools must that the sight issued for the L82A2 is "an abortion" (in the words of CCRS at a Monday meeting), there were in place certain rules regarding backsights. That these MoD rules are neither sensible nor conducive to good (ie including safe) shooting, is irrelevant, and all the schools knew exactly what the permitted sights situation was. Basically, the rules were that schools were allowed to use the 'Issued' L82A2 original sight, or an 'Issued' "AEC Lynx" sight - and all else was expressly forbidden. Early in the Meeting one school lined its dozen or so rifles up very neatly right behind me, and immediately (I am a dealer and make up rifles) I spotted that a whole lot of them (five or six perhaps - it stuck out like a sore thumb to me) were fitted with Parker-Hale/AJ Parker sights of a definitely not-allowed pattern. The sights were not the least bit like a Lynx or Central. I quietly suggested to the person in charge of that school that this was the case, and recommended the sights were changed forthwith, and didn't appear again. Later on the sights were still there and, following a complaint from another school, I again informed the school those sights had to go and quick. The sights stayed put, ending up with Chief Range Officer and Director of Shooting involvement, and some disallowed scores to boot - oh yes, and the sights being removed.

Now I have no problem with schools fitting decent sights on their L82A2 rifles. I think every school should be encouraged to do so on safety grounds alone. My own school owns 12 sets of sights and brackets which we may not use as they are the earlier pattern of the AE Clarke sight, and thus are not (a) 'issued' or (b) AEC Lynx sights per se. The problem is when every school bar one (or two is it?) suffers the rule of the day, is it not every RCO's duty to ensure no other school(s) take advantage by chancing their arm by fitting expressly prohibited sights? After all, the only possible reason for using another type of sight is that it is perceived to be better, and will thus give an advantage over the issued sights and therefore also over those schools observing the rules and suffering the issued sights.

At some stage "taking advantage by knowingly breaking the rules" becomes a more serious matter,

and I involved the higher levels of management the moment another school complained to me that the school involved was . . . 'cheating'. Scottish or not, well known or not, isn't it the case that seeing the rules are followed is one of the functions that RCOs are there to do?

Winchester .357 mag 94AE - Broken Cartridge Lifters Available

from Peter Hogan

Many shooters of Pistol Calibre Carbine who have used Winchester 94AE rifles in .357mag have had a problem with the breakage of the alloy cartridge lifter (carrier) component. With the demise of Winchester these parts had become unavailable and many rifles have been reduced to single shot or in some cases scrapped.

However, a 94AE owner who has not yet suffered this problem is in contact with a firearms engineering firm, with computer controlled machinery, who can reproduce the part in steel, with a projected cost of about £35 - £45 per piece. Sufficient demand has been established for a limited run to be viable but there must be many more who have suffered this problem and the greater the demand the more the set-up cost is spread.

This is not a business enterprise, merely a matter of solving a common problem. Shooters who have suffered such a problem and wish to obtain the part, may make e-mail contact at p.hogan1@sky.com to register their interest and obtain information as progress is made.

NATSS - A Personal View by Charles F Young

from Andy Sherriff

My reaction to Mr Young's article is an emotional one. I am a pistol shooter who is now restricted to air pistol, muzzle loaders and LBP, and immediately the horrible memory of 1997, and handing over my pistols to a police station in Bristol floods back.

The response to Dunblane was fragmented by having separate shooting organisations, and many of us felt that one shooting organisation such as the NRA of America would have had a stronger voice. Sadly the Chairman of the National Pistol Association, the most relevant organisation deserted us to further his own career.

As an individual shooter I do feel I have been consulted, and I attended one of the regional meetings last year. I also get regular updates.

Like Mr Young I shoot several disciplines. As well as my restricted pistol shooting, I shoot gallery rifle, light sporting rifle and casual clays. I am a member of both the NRA and NSRA and I would hope that NATSS would save me money by having one organisation to cover all my shooting, including the clay shooting.

I do agree with Mr Young in one respect. I am uncomfortable with management consultants generally, and have had experience of them costing a lot of money to state the obvious. I just hope 'Performance Matters' are better than the average consultants.

Finally I would like to thank the Sportsman's Association for starting the fight back in 1997, the MLAGB for managing to negotiate the retention of ML pistols and the NRA for providing the wonderful Phoenix Meeting each year.

NRA to the Rescue

from Charles Quinn, Killingholme Full Bore Club

One reads and hears of negative comments about the National Rifle Association of what they do or failed to do etc. Well, let me give you the case where the NRA came up trumps for us, at the Killingholme Full Bore Club. The club uses an old ex World War Two RAF range, on part of a disused airfield near Grimsby, NE Lincolnshire. We rented the range from the land owner farmer. The farmer, who had retired, then told us that he wanted to sell the range, and were we interested? We are a small club, with 85 members and nine junior members. Most of the membership is of retirement age so money is tight to say the least. We started negotiations with the farmer, and settled on a price for the range of £20,000 with the understanding that we could have some time to raise the money. If we had not been able to buy this range, it would have been the end of fullbore, gallery rifle and black powder pistol and rifle shooting for many of us. We applied to the NRA for a loan, outlining our plans for the future if we were able to purchase it. The NRA responded positively in very quick time, and, in fact, when I rang them later to tell them that I believed someone else was trying to purchase the range as an 'investment buy', whilst I was still on the phone, one of the young ladies at the NRA was making out the cheque and rushing around to get the necessary signatures required so that the money could be sent to us quickly to enable us to secure the range (which we did). We, at Killingholme will always be forever grateful to all at the NRA for their help in our hour of need. In fact, as far as we are concerned, the NRA is the "best thing since sliced bread". Our club will promote and support them for the help that they gave us.

SUMMARY ACCOUNTS

Great Britain Target Rifle Team, Canada 2006 & Palma, Canada 2007

Captain - Martin Townsend

A full account of both tours has been given in the NRA Journals, Winter 2006 (pp76-82) and Winter 2007 (pp 68-74). The teams competed successfully in the Dominion of Canada's Championships at Connaught Ranges, Ottawa in both years and also in 2007 in the World Long Range Rifle Championship and Palma Match.

Expenditure	2006 £	2007 £	Income	2006 £	2007 £
Air Fares	18,076	15,506	OTF Grants (3) 2007 shown net of refund	7,000	12,000
Accommodation	12,605	18,047	NRA Training Grant	1,867	0
Car Hire, Coaches & Petrol	4,318	5,214	Donations	915	9,670
Entry Fees	16,232	15,492	Brochure	5,349	7,801
Ammunition	8,617	10,758	Auction of Promises	6,505	0
UK Training (1)	18,576	12,485	Corporate Days	8,413	26,905
Clothing	2,155	5,391			
Team receptions & food	4,287	4,957			
Insurance	527	0	Contributions by		
Sundries (2)	1,241	2,518	Team Members	56,884	33,992
Total	86,934	90,368	Total	86,933	90,368

Notes

- 1 UK training includes target hire, markers and ammunition for 11 weekends
- 2 Sundries includes stationery, gifts, photos, flag and pole etc.
- 3 £3,000 from the official OTF grant of £15,000 was returned to the OTF after the tour

Great Britain Target Rifle Team, South Africa, March-April 2008

Captain – Steve Thomas

A full account of the tour was given in the Summer 2008 Journal (pp 28-34). The team of 21 competed in the Free State Championship and SABU Championships at the General de Wet Range, Bloemfontein. The team won the international Protea Match and had a number of individual successes.

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Air Travel	34,335	Grant from the OTF	10,000
Transport	5,338	Corporate Days	23,587
Shooting Entry Fees	3,858	Brochure	16,946
Ammunition for tour	7,440	Interest	753
Accommodation	8,017	Donations	500
Team receptions/dinners & food	3,994	Sale of Brass in SA	401
Clothing	2,387	Other	393
Gifts	1,023	Team Member Contributions	15,446
Sundries	1,089	(21 - £736 per head)	
*Team donation to Lettie Fouche School	545		
Total Expenditure	68,026	Total Income	68,026

* The team also raised an additional £814 for the Lettie Fouche School through an auction on eBay.

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MEMBERS PAGE

2009 Bullet Ball

Where: Bisley Pavilion
Date: Friday 24 July 2009
Time: 8.00pm to 2.00am
Cost: £40 per ticket



Many of my friends and work colleagues may have heard me say "I am NEVER organising another Bullet Ball again" during the days leading up to last year's Ball. However, despite being incredibly tired and having to get up really early for the next day's Mackinnon, I had such a fantastic time at the Ball itself that I am now more than happy to retract that statement!

Last year's Bullet Ball was a huge success - the food was hot and tasty, the drink was plentiful, the company was great and the band were just fantastic and impossible not to dance to. We raised £670 for the Under 25s going to South Africa . . . but I am sure we can do better this year!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Shaun Hopwood and his staff at the Pavilion whose hard work and generosity made sure the Bullet Ball was a success.

This year's Ball will be run along similar lines to last year so you can be sure of a good night's entertainment and, of course, any ideas, suggestions and offers of help will be gratefully accepted!

This year all proceeds from the Ball will go to the Young Shooters' Fund so please help support the future of shooting by buying a ticket (and maybe making a donation as well).

This will be a Ball for everyone so why not buy your ticket on the Imperial Meeting entry form, online at <http://ball.nra.org.uk> or from the Front Counter during the Imperial Meeting.

Karen Robertson

Imperial Meeting Coach Tours

As a result of a request from some of the wives accompanying this year's overseas teams it has been decided to re-introduce the Imperial Meeting Coach Tours. Previous tours have visited places such as Blenheim Palace, Windsor Castle, Oxford and other historic or fun days out.

Iris Bennett has kindly volunteered to co-ordinate and organise any potential tours.

If you are interested or have any ideas of places you would like to go for a day out, please contact Iris c/o the NRA or by telephone on 01562 69708 or by e-mail on westmidlands@nra.org.uk. Further details will be available in the Summer Journal.

Blast from the past!

A good example of excess calibre at long range. Shooters with big ideas take note!

May 27 1916

Officer Commanding Heavy Section Motor Machine Gun Corps

I note that you have erected on the 1000 firing point at Stickledown, platforms for firing your 6-pounder guns. I have not objected so far, but after yesterday's experience of your shell firing, I must draw your attention to the damage you will probably cause to our mantlets. I have in our office two shells which were taken out of the front of the mantlet where they had penetrated nearly three feet.

Would it not be better to move these guns to Siberia: it would be nearer your own Camp and on the Range allocated to you.

*Lt Colonel CR Crosse MVO
Secretary NRA*

Out and About!

Over the last couple of years the NRA have started to exhibit at Game Fairs around the country. This has proved popular with current members and has been a successful way of recruiting new members. This year we will be attending the following events:

The East Anglian Game and Country Fair to be held at the Norfolk Showground, Norwich on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 April.

The CLA Game Fair to be held at Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire on Friday 24 to Sunday 26 July.

Other events may be added during the year so look out for us at a Game Fair near you!



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