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Spring 2015 – Volume XCIV No. 1

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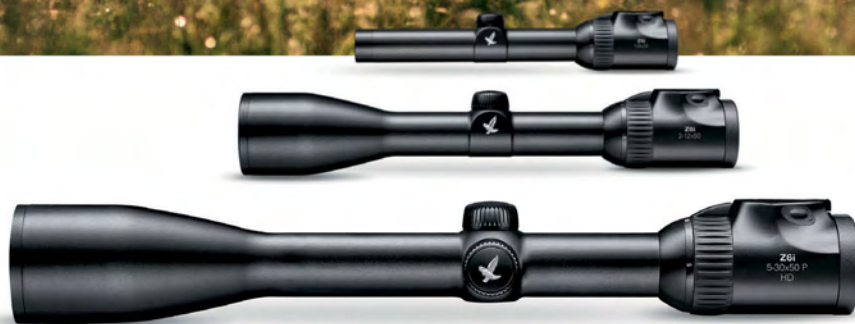
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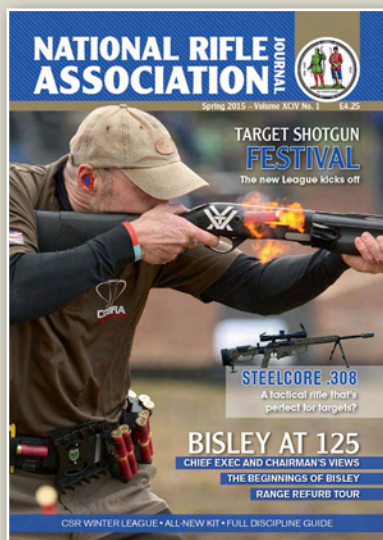


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Front cover: Canish Pope
Cover photo by Lee Bowditch

Managing editor: Colin Fallon
Sub-editors: Alex Ormiston, Nick Robbins
Graphic design: Jessica Riley
Ad design: Matt Smith
Advertising sales: Charlie Ward
Operations director: James Folkard
Assistant publisher: Ruth Burgess
Publisher: Wes Stanton
Contributors: Joanna Archer, Mark Bradley, Christopher Bunch, Alex Cargill Thompson, Peter Cottrell, Mike Dunstan, Neil Francis, Jon Harper-Smith, James Harris, Katia Malcaus Cooper, Des Parr, Nick Parrish, Iain Robertson, Peter Ryder, Iain Shirra-Gibb, Andy Trickett, Sally Wilson
Stock photography by Lee Bowditch, Matt Limb and James Marchington

NRA chief executive: Andrew Mercer
Chairman: John Webster
Address: National Rifle Association, Bisley, Brookwood, Surrey GU24 0PB
T: 01483 797777
F: 01483 797285
W: www.nra.org.uk
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Pleasing progress

Chief Executive Andrew Mercer gives members a taste of what's to come from the Association in 2015

The start of 2015 allowed me a moment or two of retrospection after two busy years with the NRA. With so many challenges ahead it is easy to miss some of the progress we have made; perhaps the most pleasing is the continuing growth in membership and rapidly increasing use of Bisley ranges. Our determined efforts to apply basic business principles to the NRA's varied activities are beginning to bear fruit; we are generating decent cash surpluses that are now being invested into projects that facilitate shooting.

We have recently published a strategic and development review; details can be found on our website. Reaction has been largely positive; I suspect many members share our aspirations but are understandably reserving judgement to see if wise words result in measurable and demonstrable action.

Works to improve the ranges at Bisley continue apace. Butt Zero, Melville and Cheylesmore have all been significantly upgraded. Six new Kongsberg electronic targets have at long last arrived; we have just installed new target frames on Butt 19 Century range to accommodate them. The targets should be available by the end of March and I am waiting with bated breath to see how they cope with the intensive shooting typical of our ranges. Our thoughts have moved to considering how the firing points and other range facilities will stand up to the expected increase in use.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that we are not meeting the demand for shorter-range shooting, and this happy problem can only increase. We have identified the area next to Stickledown as hot favourite to develop a series of new ranges and are currently considering a programme of works.

Our plans include some of the more dynamic forms of shooting such as Target Shotgun and Service Rifle.

The new membership team has put in heroic efforts to deliver an efficient annual membership renewal; we will shortly start the club affiliations. After a lengthy review we have changed provider for our membership insurance policies; Endsleigh Insurance, with underwriters Hiscox, impressed us with their proposals and experience, and have helped us significantly improve the cover provided.

Legal expense cover has been increased from £25,000 to £50,000; property limits from £5,000 to £10,000; and personal accident limits significantly improved and extended. I am confident that the new NRA membership insurance policy now offers cracking value for shooters of all persuasions.

Our recent discussions with police forces have proved interesting; at any time we have an average of six cases where we are supporting members with problems with firearms licensing. In many cases, robust dialogue sorts out the problem to the satisfaction of both the member and the police. It is easy to form a jaundiced view of these disagreements but we are absolutely on the same side: helping the police help us by identifying individuals who should not own firearms is something we should support. That is not to say that all decisions made by police officers are correct and not deserving of challenge.

We have started the recruitment of a regional manager to help improve our services to shooters away from Bisley; there is much to do and he/she will be keenly supported by our newly formed regional ranges committee.

With membership growing steadily, we have decided to focus on a series of guest days alongside the successful discipline days for 2015. The open days were great fun but yielded modest returns for a considerable investment in time, resources and effort from more than 300 volunteers. Over half the attendees were NRA members or guests who can now attend the new guest days; many of the other attendees were long-standing open day visitors who we hope will now join the NRA. ■



I suspect many members share our aspirations but are reserving judgement



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NEWS

REPORTS

RIFLE SECURITY

There have been a number of reports online and in the trade press about a theft from the NRA armoury involving a rifle belonging to Miss Jessica Bayldon-Lee. It is wholly regrettable that our security was breached; the police were immediately informed and CID has investigated.

Miss Bayldon-Lee's scope and bolt were found to be missing from her rifle in January 2014; after an investigation the NRA admitted responsibility and offered to pay her compensation based on a third party valuation. She obtained a valuation from G E Fulton & Son of £2,500 and the NRA offered to pay her this money in full. Miss Bayldon-Lee would only accept the money if she could keep the rifle minus the bolt and scope as well. The NRA refused to agree to this on the basis that no insurer would allow anyone to keep the wreck of the car after the insurer had paid the owner.

Miss Bayldon-Lee subsequently submitted a claim in May 2014 to the County Court (Small Claims) against the Association for £4,000 plus court fees. She thereafter refused two opportunities for mediation, which had been recommended by the court. In the papers to court in October 2014 Miss Bayldon-Lee produced two other valuations of the rifle, one for £4,000 and one for £4,500, shortly before the hearing. Neither of these had been previously disclosed to the NRA. The judge decided that the value of the rifle

was the only issue of contention and valued the rifle at £3,500 and deducted £400 as the value of the rifle less the missing bolt and scope. Court fees of £520 were awarded to Miss Bayldon-Lee.

In summary, after an investigation the NRA apologised to Miss Bayldon-Lee and offered her full value as justified by her own valuation. The NRA did not feel that it was in the interests of members to pay both the claimed value of the rifle and return the rifle (less scope and bolt) to her. This policy was endorsed by the judge's eventual ruling.

Any assertion that the judge upheld Miss Bayldon-Lee's claim because the NRA was not operating a secure Section 5 armoury is false.

As a charity the NRA needs to behave fairly, openly and responsibly. We would be failing in our responsibilities (not least in relation to our members) by paying excessive sums just to save our embarrassment. The incident highlighted shortcomings in our armoury security procedures that have been addressed.

The bolt and scope are still missing and we would urge all members to be alert if they see them offered for sale or used on the ranges – both parts are stamped with serial numbers matching the rifle, a Mauser K98 ZF Sniper Rifle No. 8930. If seen please report to Surrey CID quoting reference 45140003415, or the NRA at Bisley.

NRA Trustees

F-CLASSER FORGIE'S FUNDRAISING

Hugh Forgie, NRA member and ex-Great Britain F Class shooter, is to cycle 2,000 miles to raise money for the Paul O'Gorman Research Laboratory in Glasgow.

Hugh, who was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL) 12 years ago, said, "My wife and I have planned to take part in the ultimate challenge (because one of the main side effects of CLL is fatigue), to cycle from the Beatson Cancer Centre in Glasgow to Malaga in Spain, a trip of around 2,000 miles, to be completed in around 10 days. I am planning on cycling 140 miles per day and Mag 60 miles, a total of 200 miles per day between us."

All funds raised will go directly to CLL research at the Paul O'Gorman Research Laboratory, and if you'd like to sponsor Hugh you can visit his Just Giving page at www.justgiving.com/Margaret-Forgie3/



SPENCER SITE DEVELOPMENT

When in July 2014 the NRA launched the new Spencer site development at Bisley, it is fair to say it generated a hubbub.

As part of our continued efforts to improve facilities at Bisley, we have been concentrating on ranges, accommodation and roads to offer our Members and visitors a better Bisley experience.

Spencer Site is the first step into a comprehensive refurbishment and upgrade of many facilities, which will be carried out over the next few years.

We partnered with Regal Holiday Homes to offer our members a luxurious home away from home. The homes represent excellent value for money as members can buy a fully furnished unit complete with decking from £35,000, a substantial discount from usual retail prices.

Work started in earnest and the new site was completed six weeks ahead of schedule in December 2014, with the first eight homes sited just before Christmas. The site was completely redesigned and landscaped, concrete stands were put in, utilities and foul drainage as well as Wi-Fi and Freeview TV.

Unsurprisingly within 48 hours of the launch the site had a tremendous

amount of interest, and by October 2014 half of the 26 pitches were sold off plan.

The first owners took possession in November 2014 and are looking forward to enjoying their little corner of luxury here at Bisley, with seven more waiting for delivery later this month.

Eleven pitches remain with two homes available for immediate occupancy.

The homes can be bought by individual members and clubs alike, and offer a fantastic opportunity to enjoy shooting in the luxury of a home away from home.

"Regal are able to turn orders around very quickly," says commercial operations manager Chris Dyers, "so a home ordered by 31 March will be ready for occupancy by the Meeting in the summer, and this is excellent news for shooters."

With many current positive enquiries ongoing, we are confident that the last 11 units will sell quickly. All enquiries can be directed to Chris Dyers 01483 797777 x 180 or chris.dyers@nra.org.uk or spencer.site@nra.org.uk. Further information and details on the NRA website.



NEWS IN BRIEF

NSW NO MORE

National Shooting Week, a campaign started by the Countryside Alliance to promote shooting, will not be running in 2015. The week, which stated its three aims as: to enable anyone to try shooting for the first time; to promote respect for and understanding of legal firearms and airguns; and to provide opportunities to try Olympic and Paralympic disciplines on a nationwide scale, was used by shooting clubs and grounds to promote their sport to new shooters by offering have-a-go sessions, discounted lessons, and taster events.

STICKLEDOWN AVAILABILITY

In order to provide members with regular access to longer ranges in a coordinated manner that uses range space efficiently, the NRA has published Bisley Long Range Target Availability at 1,100 & 1,200 yards on Stickledown Range 2015. As of its publication, targets were available on: 28 March, 5 April, 6 June, 14 June, 28 June, 23 August, 19 September and 10 October. Download the full details from www.nra.org.uk.

IBIS OPEN

The Ibis Open will be held on Saturday 18 April at Bisley. The event consists of a Queen's II in the morning and 2 + 10 at 1,000 and 1,100 yards in the afternoon. Lots of prizes are up for grabs, including lesser placings, plus an HPS voucher for the top under-19 in the Aggregate. F/TR class entries are welcome. Download and entry form from www.nra.org.uk or www.ibisrifledclub.co.uk.

SHOOTING GETS FUNDING BOOST

British Shooting was revealed as one of the winners when UK Sport announced its most recent funding plans in its Annual Investment Review. UK Sport has stated it will invest an extra £2.3 million into Olympic and Paralympic sports, and shooting and disability shooting are among those sports selected to receive a share of the funds.

YOUR VIEWS

If you have an opinion or suggestion you would like to share, write to "Journal Letters" at NRA HQ or email nra@blazepublishing.co.uk

Loss of a monument

I am hoping what I have to say here will raise some sort of indignation among the shooting community. Here in Waltham Abbey we have the Royal Gunpowder Mills: an establishment dating back to 1640, and where I have spent eight years as a volunteer. For the last 10 years this has been a visitor attraction, with probably the best rocket and missile exhibition in the UK along with an armoury of deactivated weapons, historic buildings, 174 acres, an interactive exhibition of gunpowder making, and a theatre.

In September the Trustees (a misnomer

if there ever was one) announced they were in discussions with a company called PGL Ltd to lease off the greater part of the site for use as a Children's Holiday Adventure Camp, thereby denying the public access to the most important areas. It will be a national tragedy should this be allowed to happen; this site supplied gunpowder to Trafalgar, Waterloo, and all our other major conflicts, it cannot be allowed to disappear from the public domain. Granted they need to increase income, but there has to be a better way. Suggestions, help, and assistance are urgently required.

Russ Orchard



A shooting life

Thank you for your letter of 13 January 2015 with regard to the renewal of my membership of the NRA.

After many years' connection with Bisley and the NRA, as I am now 91 years of age, I have decided to call it a day and discontinue my membership.

I first shot at Bisley in 1939 in the school cadet pairs competition less than two years before the outbreak of the second world war. The next time I shot at Bisley was in October 1944 on a one-month training course with a small group of young Parachute Regiment officers from the 6th Airborne Division, all of whom including me had recently served in Normandy for one to three months since D-Day.

After our course I rejoined my unit (No.45 RM Commando) and after Christmas leave returned to Holland and Germany in January 1945, where we remained until June after four assault river crossings including the Rhone. We lost 113 men from 6 June 1944 to 8 August 1945.

Post-war I shot again with the RMs and the London Scottish RC before joining the Scottish Rifle Association in the mid-1970s. I shot in the National from 1978 to 1989 and the Mackinnon 1978-1986. I won the Scottish Bisley Aggregate in 1982.

However, I gave up full-time rifle shooting at Bisley in 2003 at the age of 80 and had disposed of all my rifles by 2004.

I am still an honorary life member of the LMRA and a full life member of the City Rifle Club. After two cataract operations in 2003 I am still allowed to drive my car, although I will not drive in the dark!

With all my best wishes to the future of rifle shooting and the success of the NRA.

Eric McDonald

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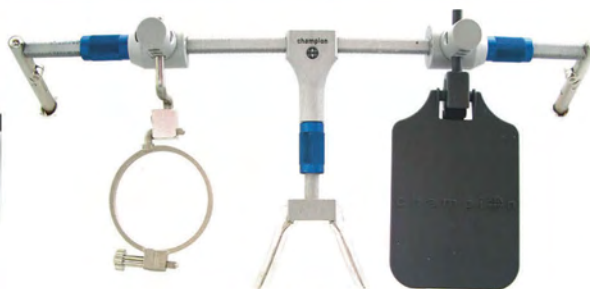


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Tactical decision

Nick Parrish gets his hands on the Steelcore SC-76 Thunderbolt – a rifle with a distinctively tactical look but the accuracy of a target rifle

On a visit to WMS Firearms in Wales, I took the opportunity to try out a totally new rifle that I had never even heard of, let alone seen before. Visually, I took to it from the start, with its seamless lines that clearly indicate precision design and manufacture of every component to contribute to the functionality of a full rifle system. All designed in-house by a company only four years old.

To get the obvious out of the way: Yes, it does look like a part of what you might describe as the growing ‘tactical’ market for rifles. Don’t let those looks fool you – this system is assured to meet minimum standards of accuracy for a four-shot group of ½ MOA or less at 100 metres given suitable ammunition and shooter skill. The gun arrives with several key accessories such as bipod, muzzle brake, tools and cleaning kit

included, so all you need is an optic if your discipline and preference allow for one. The versatile .308 cartridge gives the rifle 800-1,000 metre shooting capability, although as many will know, this particular envelope of flight into the realms of transonic velocities is ammunition sensitive. A shorter 20” barrel is available, but the larger all-metal chassis seen here definitely warrants the full 26” tube for target use at longer ranges.

Eager to get the most out of this rifle, I mounted a scope and got down prone with the gun gives an immediate feel for how it is likely to shoot. The grip, underslung AR-15 style with high comb and cheekpiece, is always likely to keep recoil well controlled. A low grip may sacrifice firing hand position slightly, but what it allows in terms of eye-cheek-shoulder alignment is worth it. Reloading

drills also benefit as you can keep your cheek welded down to the adjustable comb with no fear of the bolt running into you – it stays well below your face.

The Steelcore incorporates adjustment in the recoil pad as well as a rear monopod, adjusting both rapidly down with rotary fine elevation control. I prefer a soft rear bag when testing rifles as monopods seem slow and prone to mal-adjustment, especially on a surface where the shooter’s influence over the gun interferes. That’s no critique of the one here – it’s easily operable, just not my cup of tea.

The barrelled action sits within a full-length aluminium chassis to ensure both mechanical and environmental stability. Hinged behind the grip, nine interlocking leaves give massive strength when folded or open, securely latched in either position with no discernible

movement in use. The action is bolted to the stock's central segment running from hinge to the tubular Picatinny equipped forend, with rails on all sides enveloping the 660mm barrel. It's clearly designed to mount sighting accessories or 'other' parts, but of more interest to the target shooter is the cylindrical tip that the bipod rotates around. The bipod can be locked in position or allowed to cant freely with the telescopic legs extending from 9-12" and locked with sprung catches. Splaying 90 degrees apart for stability, at full extension they leave the barrel 10 inches from the ground. Rubber feet are fitted and the legs will fold for storage; a small sprung loaded collar disengages them.

Screw-cut 17x1 with a spigot for the supplied muzzle brake, six flutes run down the barrel that floats generously within the forend. The supplied brake is a laterally ported unit that indexes and clamps with a hex-head key to

retain zero. I shot the gun with an Ase Utra SL5 sound moderator to make it a bit more acceptable on a busy firing point; any brake can be disruptive to others close by.

The rifle holds 10 rounds of .308 within a twin column, staggered-feed steel magazine, disengaging from below the stock's integral mag well with a single sprung catch to its rear. A carrying handle is integral to the underside of rifle, sloping up to the tip of the forend – slightly unconventional perhaps but functional all the same, as long as you are careful putting the gun down. A buff-coloured, rubberised grip gives perfect reach for the pad on your index fingertip to control the two-stage trigger. Although finally breaking very cleanly at 3lb with a normal second stage leading up to that point, it had an unusual primary stage that was heavier than the second. This gave a heavy-light stop-click feel to the trigger that felt



The rubberised AR-15 style grip was positioned perfectly for trigger control

bizarre at first touch – but once you're accustomed to the primary stage, the second stage and break are excellent.

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of the rifle is left until last. It has a four-lug bolt, giving a short 45-degree lift to disengage. Ammunition feed was smooth and reliable with positive primary extraction and ejection from the plunger ejector and extractor claw, each beautifully nestled into the bolt face. The gun cocks on opening with surprisingly little effort for a four-lug action; a unique cam system is used to enable this and lock times of 1.5 milliseconds offer theoretical accuracy benefits.

I wasn't a huge fan of the bolt handle – an extended teardrop shape rather than a knob – but it was 100 per cent functional and blissfully smooth, thanks to the high-tech Graphite Vapour Deposition action coatings, enabling slick motion and improved wear resistance. The safety selector sits just below to the right-hand side of an ambidextrous stock (no left-handed action is available yet). With cheekpiece and Sorbothane butt pad both adjustable, there is no problem aligning your head and eye with perfect comfort towards the inclined 20 MOA Picatinny rail that, unlike some rifles, runs in a true straight line all the way to the forend tip. It bolts to the cylindrical action with gas escape vent at the chamber, a hefty integral recoil lug descending into the aluminium bed and a minimal ejection port to maintain rigidity.

Every feature, control, component, surface and mechanism of this gun are machined and finished to the highest standards with quiet operation and ease



The bolt handle shape is unorthodox but you can't argue with how smoothly the gun cycles



With the bolt remaining below your cheek, you can keep your head welded down for rapid reloads and retained target visibility

of use throughout – at odds with its militaristic first impressions. Cerakote on the stock surfaces and Fluorokote on the barrel resist corrosion and abrasion, the design descending from military requirements to operate in any imaginable conditions with minimum care, lubrication and tools.

Shooting the gun put a definite ‘signature’ to all the characteristics it displays in front of you. It is realistically too large, long and heavy to shoot in any way unsupported, but prone, it is utterly at home. The long forend gives a rearward weight balance and unsurprisingly suits a posture with a fist, other support or the monopod to keep the rear end off the ground and control elevation. The overall ergonomics of the gun’s design make it at home when parallel to the floor, neither requiring an unusually long bipod nor leaving no space for the necessary supporting hand. Firing creates no muzzle lift, and the sight picture remains remarkably solid with fast target re-acquisition. A moderator sheds less recoil than the brake would have done but with a 16lb all-in weight, recoil was not a worrisome factor anyway.

I shot the gun to confirm zero at 100 yards with FMJ Sellier & Bellot 180-grain ammunition. This is not premium-grade stuff, but it certainly befriended the barrel, not quite clover-leafing but very stable to aim and throwing no fliers. I was able to immediately test the gun out to longer ranges on reactive and resonant steel plates to 900 metres, and at all times found it rewarding to shoot. I didn’t shoot lots of paper to test group sizes but I knew where each bullet went – the gun was so stable that on the longer shots, it recoiled so gently that I saw my own bullet trace as it dropped into the targets.

It is not difficult to see the tactical origins of the gun’s design but for a fully integrated rifle system that is more than a sum of its parts, the Steelcore was a dependable, capable and enjoyable rifle to shoot over any range. It’s a comprehensive package showing great value for money and it meets its designed accuracy criteria with ease, and will no doubt improve with handloaded ammunition. ■



An adjustable buttpad and monopod aid both ergonomics and elevation control



Great stability and adjustability are on offer from the included bipod



180gr S&B ammunition suited the Steelcore well

SPECIFICATIONS: STEELCORE DESIGNS SC-76 THUNDERBOLT

Calibre	.308 Winchester / 7.62x51 NATO
Capacity	10 rounds
Trigger	2 stage, 1.5kg/3lb break
Barrel	26"
Rate of twist	1 in 11"
Finish	Multiple coating types for wear resistance, aesthetics and self-lubricity
Overall Length	47" (37" folded)
Weight	16lb in total for rifle and Scope
Includes	Muzzle Brake, Bipod, Sling Attachment, Field tool and cleaning kit"
Optional Extras	Waterproof rigid hard case, Drag bag, Sound moderator, Sling
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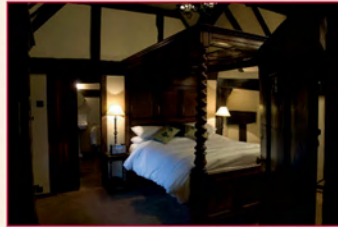
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How Bisley came to be

As the NRA celebrates its 125th anniversary at Bisley Camp, Christopher C Bunch takes us through the events that led to the move from Wimbledon Common to Bisley

Quoted extracts from *Targets and Tramways* by Christopher C Bunch. Images courtesy of the NRA museum

The NRA had held its annual meeting every July on Wimbledon Common ever since Queen Victoria fired the first shot there in 1860. But in 1887 it had become apparent that it must urgently find a new home. This was primarily due to the increasing urbanisation of the surrounding area, severely compromising safety, especially with the imminent introduction of new military rifles and ammunition capable of greater ranges.

The viability of the Wimbledon Ranges had first been questioned during the 1860s, not many years after the opening, and there had been recurrent problems with tenants of the Coombe Wood Estate, which lay directly behind the target butts of the ranges. Those most affected were small tenant farmers who had to be compensated during the Annual Meeting as they were unable to work their land safely. Ironically the owner of Coombe

Wood was the Duke of Cambridge, the NRA's president.

This came to a head in 1869 when the Duke's solicitors demanded absolute assurance that rifle bullets would not traverse his estate during the meeting, failing which firing would be stopped. A temporary resolution was reached in which a payment of £100 was made to the Duke's main tenant; this was followed by an agreement dated 30 March 1870 between the Association and Cambridge that enabled either party to make a determination at short notice based on the 1869 issue.

They were aware that though the Ranges were not on his ground they were backed by his ground. Considerable danger had arisen from the bullets going over the butts into his ground, and the question of giving notice to the Association to discontinue their meetings had long been under consideration. But when he heard that it was proposed to expend a

considerable sum of money on additions to the existing plant, he felt that he ought to give the notice at once so that the Council might be enabled to set about finding a new shooting ground without any unnecessary delay.

The Committee drew the conclusion that lines of fire should be altered to confine the danger zone to a much smaller area south of Cambridge Lodge and to finally eliminate all danger through the Association acquiring this land, an area of about 120 acres. However, the Duke of Cambridge remained adamant in his opposition and caused his solicitor to write a strong letter to the Association reflecting this view, stating that the proposal 'would be a most serious injury to his estate, and might interfere very materially with its development hereafter'. He said Coombe Wood was 100 feet lower than the firing points:

...And as the range of a bullet from muzzle to first graze is, if fired from the

first situation, greater over falling ground than over hard or rising ground, and as the extreme range of the Martini-Henry rifle is almost 3,240 yards, it follows that, according to Mr. Metford's measurements (as detailed in his report) Coombe Wood is within easy range from every firing point on Wimbledon Common. As a matter of fact bullets do now drop into the wood beyond the boundary line of the land that it has been suggested the Association should purchase.

The Duke of Cambridge remarked that he would quite understand if the Association decided in the circumstances not to re-elect him as president but of course it might be considered useful to have the head of the British army in that position. He was re-elected unanimously.

The Association realised they must search for a site outside the immediate London area without delay. There were already two strong contenders: one at Cannock Chase, in Staffordshire, and the other on the Berkshire Downs at Compton, south of Didcot, which had been offered by the Association's chairman, Lord Wantage, on whose estate it lay. A special meeting of the Council, attended by a deputation from Staffordshire representing the Cannock Chase offer, was convened on 22 September 1888 to decide between the two. But the veteran Lord Wemyss (who as Lord Elcho had been the first chairman of the NRA) stepped in with a statement that effectively put the whole issue back in the melting pot. Wemyss had by this time identified a site near Brookwood in Surrey and had gained influential allies outside the Council.

Lord Wemyss then rose and in an exhaustive statement gave his reasons for objecting to a decision being given at this Meeting: "Before finally adopting the Berkshire or Cannock sites it is desirable to give further time for enquiry as to the possibilities of obtaining a suitable site within a reasonable distance of the Metropolis, and that a Committee be appointed to communicate with the Government and ascertain whether they would assist the National Rifle Association to obtain a new Site for the annual Rifle Meeting."

After discussions Lord Wemyss's amendment was decisively carried. Now backed by the Committee, he put his case for the Brookwood site to Edward Stanhope, the Secretary-of-State for War, that included a request for a government



grant of the substantial sum at the time of £25,000. He received a very positive reply promising every assistance but the grant was refused on the grounds that the Secretary-of-State "was not prepared to recommend to Colleagues that a contribution of £25,000, should be made out of the Public Funds to repay the expenses, which, as you state, the N.R.A. may have to incur. They have hitherto been independent of any Government interference; and it is open to very considerable doubt whether, in the interests of the Association, and of the objects we all have at heart, they would not be wise in retaining their independent position, and in deriving their main strength from the confidence and support of the great body of Volunteers in this Country."

No doubt Earl Wemyss was disappointed by the government's refusal to help fund the enterprise, but otherwise he had gained the firm backing of the Secretary-of-State for War and was now able to include in his report dated 3 December 1888 a significant statement regarding the Bisley site:

Till within the last few days I was led to believe, from unofficial but apparently reliable information, that exceptionally favourable terms would be granted to volunteers by several of the great railway lines, in competition among themselves to obtain the advantage resulting from traffic incidental to a 'New Wimbledon'.

But the place which seemed specially to be desired was the tract of Government land adjoining the Brookwood Station on the London and South Western Railway.

The Bisley site, near Brookwood, so strongly advocated by the Earl of Wemyss and March, had been discovered by Captain

Hoey (the Association's 'Clerk of the Works' at Wimbledon) when he was sent down to inspect other sites in the area. The Earl, now in his seventies but still retaining his old energy and drive, was able to put forward a variety of excellent reasons for this choice including the proximity of the site to Aldershot and the help already offered by the Military Authorities there through the War Department. It was also next to the existing Pirbright military ranges.

The Association now moved rapidly to reach a final conclusion. Six different sites were still in the frame in mid-February 1889 and these needed to be whittled down by the next Council Meeting. At the same time three major railway companies came up with their proposals for fares to be charged from London.

Finally, on 27 February 1889, the Council took the decisive vote on the three most favoured sites, Brookwood, Cannock Chase and Churn Down on the Berkshire Downs. The vote provided an easy majority for the Brookwood site and the Winter General Meeting of the Association finally confirmed Brookwood (later to be known as Bisley Camp) as the chosen location.

The opening of Bisley

After long and anxious deliberation, the Council, as was announced at the Winter General Meeting, decided on the adoption of the Bisley Common site for the future meetings of the Association. A large portion of the land to be used is the property of Her Majesty's War Department, but lands necessary to the use of the site have been bought by the Association

at a cost of over £12,000. By the favour of the War Office, the military authorities have been permitted to assist the Association, and the work has been energetically advanced by Lieut.-General Sir Evelyn Wood, commanding the troops at Aldershot. A Company of Royal Engineers and working parties from regiments quartered at Aldershot have been, and are, engaged in raising the butts, and in making the tramway line. Major J. L. Brown, of the Royal Engineers, has been placed in charge of the works by the military authorities, and continues to act there at the present time.

Initial plans for the ranges were published in March 1889. These showed that the intention was to establish the main range on a westerly alignment, which would have had the unfortunate effect of requiring shooters to fire into a setting sun by early evening. By May this had been rejected in favour of a northerly alignment including the possibility of shooting up to a maximum range of 2,500 yards. By the time construction started in August 1889 the final layout had been agreed, reducing the longest range to 1,100 yards.

In parallel with these activities, agreement was reached with the London & South Western Railway Company on the construction of a branch line, to be built under the Tramways Act, between their mainline station at Brookwood and the Camp. Although its construction was partially funded by the Association, railway track materials were supplied by the railway company, who also contributed £1,000 towards the Association's expenses.

The provision of ranges is as follows: A range of 24 long-range targets, of which 16 will be available to 1,100 yards; a range of 90 targets

available to 600 yards; a range of 24 targets available to 600 yards; a range of 20 targets available to 300 yards; and two running deer or man ranges. Sporting Rifle and Revolver ranges will also be provided for, as may be found necessary. Should it be desired for special purposes, long ranges up to 2,000 yards or more could at any time be laid out.

Lord Cottesloe, who, as TF Fremantle, had been the assistant secretary of the NRA during the move to Bisley, described the development of the Camp and Ranges in a 1951 article for the NRA Journal:

Well do I remember my first view of the ground at Bisley. It was early in 1889; I went from London by train on a Sunday morning, walking from Brookwood Station to the Common. The general site had been selected, but details were as yet unsettled. A row of white flags indicated a suggested site for the main butt, running along the eastern side of the Hog-Lees ridge, almost at right angles to the direction of the present ranges, but this scheme was quickly abandoned. From the ridge the Common seemed wild enough; nearby I flushed a greyhen; she must have been one of the last of her species to remain on the wild Surrey heaths which had given black game a home for centuries, and I never saw one there afterwards. Many deep-worn tracks, no doubt of horses and mules, were noticeable on the heathy ground, where men had crossed the open heath as seemed to them convenient; these have disappeared since that time.

When I saw the ground again, at the beginning of 1890, the scene had entirely changed. Working parties came daily from Aldershot, and the Royal Engineers were making the butts. The general arrangement of the various standing buildings in the camp

had been settled, and the site for the camp railway station selected, as well as those for the offices and the refreshment pavilion. The buildings for these latter were the actual buildings that had for many years done service annually on Wimbledon Common; they were light constructions of timber, with roofing of stretched canvas, easily penetrated by rain; at Bisley they were re-roofed with a light temporary material.

At Wimbledon the Victoria Rifles, the London Scottish, and other corps had had their own camps: these now established themselves on the new ground. The site for the Council Club, on the rising ground where it commanded a fine view across the valley to Chobham Ridges, was obvious. It was evident that the demand for accommodation for competitors would be large. At Wimbledon a great number of them had been able to lodge within a short distance of the camp, at Wimbledon or Putney, or to come daily from London for the shooting; at Bisley no lodging accommodation was available near the camp except the limited amount existing in the villages at a little distance from it. Blocks of wooden huts were therefore built to accommodate some 40 competitors; clubs began to provide quarters for themselves; a few farsighted individuals erected their own huts; in such ways all made the best of the new conditions, with the cheerful co-operation to be expected from rifle enthusiasts.

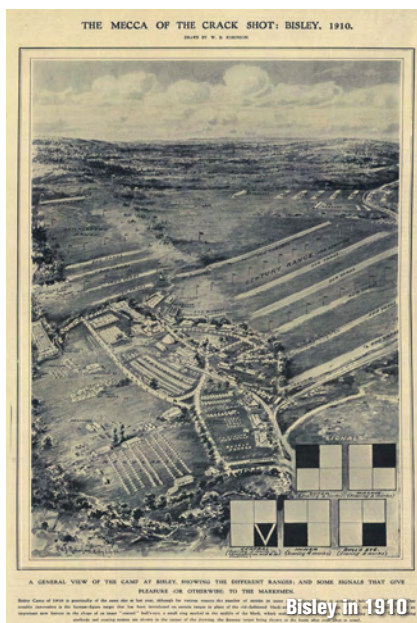
The first half of the year 1890 was a time of ceaseless hustle in the endeavour to complete all the arrangements for the meeting at the accustomed time in July. Much new equipment was needed, such as wooden chairs for register-keepers and for the great umbrella tent that had long been a feature of the meetings. A club building for the use of members of the

Competitors and spectators on the Running Deer range, July 1890



The first Queen's Prize winner at Bisley, Sgt H Bates





Association was erected; a great improvement on the marquee they had used at Wimbledon. The umbrella tent reappeared, and for many years raised its high top opposite the club-house of the Army Rifle Association, but it was at least once blown away, and has long since been replaced by large marquees.

The camp on Wimbledon Common was the model which it was natural to follow in making the layout for the new camp. There the Clock Tower, of great importance in giving the time for all the shooting, had always stood close to the office building, and, owing to the ground being flat and bare, it was in view from the firing points of all the ranges. It was at first proposed to put the clock at Bisley in a similar position, but it was soon seen that it would be much better sited on the high ground between the long range and short-range butts, where it was visible from all the ranges.

One difficult problem had to be dealt with. At Wimbledon it had been necessary to have in camp a large number of police from the Metropolitan Force, on account of the crowds which had free access every day after the hours of shooting, as well as for the whole of Sundays, and also to prevent people straying into danger on the ranges during the firing. There was vague talk of the possibility of the camp being invaded by roughs from Aldershot, and although there was unlikely to be at Bisley any such mass invasion by the public as had become habitual at Wimbledon, it was thought wise in the first year to have an ample force on the spot. Charge was for many years made for admission, but there has been little difficulty in the control of

the camp, and the police required are now very few in number, although it is not possible to ensure the complete exclusion of undesirables.

The long continuous firing points of the Ninety Butt at first caused some difficulty, since no range at Wimbledon had had more than ten targets, and now on the long firing point there was no conspicuous break to show the firer where he passed from one butt to the next. Also, at 500 and 600 yards, the lines of the poles carrying the wind pennants, which might be looked at diagonally as well as squarely to the butt, were apt to mislead the eye; this is still sometimes the case, for it is still not unknown for one new to the ground to fire at a target on the wrong butt.

There was a wet spell in the summer of 1890, and when I went down to live in the camp about a month before the meeting opened, the croaking of frogs was loud and continuous in the evenings. There were many wet places on the 500- and 600-yard firing points of the Ninety Butt, and heavy rain on one or two days of the meeting increased this trouble. Fortunately, the solution of the difficulty proved to be unexpectedly simple. There is, at a small distance below the surface of the ground, a formation known as the Bagshot Pan, a layer hard and impenetrable by water; this is only a few inches thick, and if it is pierced, any water it holds up escapes into soft soil underneath. The trouble was thus cured at very small expense.

It had been hoped that Queen Victoria would agree to open the new Camp, just as she had opened Wimbledon 30 years before, but this time, much to the disappointment of the NRA, she declined. However, the Prince and Princess of Wales expressed their willingness to assist at an opening ceremony on the Saturday preceding the Meeting, as Lord Wantage reported:

Saturday was a day to be marked with a white stone in the annals of the National Rifle Association. It was the day upon which the labour of many months was brought to a close, and the new camp, upon the laying out of which untiring industry, energy, and skill have been lavishly bestowed, was opened with all the ceremony appropriate to a Royal visit.

The central point of interest in Saturday's proceedings was the arrival of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and that interest came to a climax when her Royal Highness, following the example set a generation ago by the Queen, pulled the silken cord attached to the trigger of a magazine rifle and scored an unquestionable

bull's-eye. It would have been strange if she had not, since Sir Henry Halford had fired more than one shot from the rest beforehand to make sure that all was right. The conclusion, foregone as it was, was received with prolonged cheers.

In a few minutes Mr Hoey had the honour of presenting the carton to her Royal Highness, who was obviously pleased to find that it had been perforated almost in the centre of the black circle. To Mr Hoey the Prince addressed some kindly words of congratulation upon the excellence of the arrangements. The boys of the Gordon Home, well set-up lads, who promise to make good soldiers, were then signalled out for special honour, inasmuch as the Princess particularly requested that they might be brought up and presented to her. [The Times]

In late 1889 AP Humphry, a prominent member of the NRA Council, was asked to fulfil the role of acting secretary, Capt. St. John-Mildmay having resigned after the final Wimbledon Meeting. However he found it impossible to continue in the Office of Secretary after the opening and handed over to Lt.Col. Marsden who had supervised the move from Wimbledon in 1890. After only a few months in the post, the latter resigned for personal reasons and the Association was forced to cast their net wider. They turned to their old colleagues at the Hythe School of Musketry and found a suitable candidate for the post in the then Chief of Musketry at the School, Col. William Mackinnon. He became the NRA Secretary at Bisley, in November 1890. In 1891 he awarded his Mackinnon Prize of £20 followed by his Challenge Cup in 1892. No new buildings, other than huts for accommodation, were constructed for the opening of the Camp in 1890 but the three NRA-owned prefabricated buildings and the Clock Tower that had graced the Wimbledon scene were brought to Bisley where they were re-erected and modified as necessary to render them 'permanent'. These were the Pavilion (1871), the Council Offices (1876) and the Staff Pavilion (also believed to date from 1876). The latter was subsequently renamed the Council Club, later being greatly extended to offer additional accommodation. A new Council Office building, which was to become the headquarters of the NRA, was constructed of brick in 1903 and the now redundant ex-Wimbledon building was made available for tenant use. ■

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Aldershot RPC's Marion Harding and Ollie Bloomfield on stage seven

Target Shotgun Festival

James Harris reports from the weekend that kicked off the new Shotgun League

The immaculate whiteness of the snowdrops pushing up through the leaf mulch and flowering mean spring is bearing down on us to break the winter gloom. And the sounds of steel cabinets around the country clanking open at are-you-serious o'clock in the morning can only mean one thing: the shotgun season has started again.

A mere two months after the final match of last year, the ever-increasing band of hardy souls congregated on Butt Zero to fire the first shots of the NRA Shotgun League; but in our haste to celebrate the signs of growth in shooting, we have rushed past the perennial GR&P shotgun events of the Timed and Precision, and Multi-Target. Held on the Saturday morning of the festival, these matches use solid slug only on turning targets, at varying distances and exposure times.

This year the new turning target arrays on Butt Zero were utilised, and a

vast improvement they were, allowing up to 18 shooters per detail and easy control through wireless remote by the long-serving RO, George Granycome. This was the first NRA competition to be held on Butt Zero since the refurbishment works and the feedback was very positive. The new targets are easier to access for scoring and patching; the sleepers set into the floor make for clear distance markers and the wood chippings have completely eliminated the mud that bedevilled this range in latter years.

Although interest in GR&P Shotgun events has remained steady for many years, ammunition costs are evidently hitting hard and numbers were not as good in past years. Gratifyingly, a number of recent attendees to one of the Target Shotgun discipline days took part – well done to Mark and Brittany Pugh who put in respectable scores in their first competitions.

As ever, the skill brought on by many years of practice shone through and John Chambers took another top place in the Timed and Precision event scoring 298.12x. Rob Sanders and Peter Matthews ran a close second and third with 297.14x and 297.12x respectively. Matters were reversed in the Multi Target with Rob Sanders scoring 114.8x to pip John into second place with 113.9x. Full results are posted online.

As is now standard practice, a small band of volunteers laboured away in the February drizzle while the slug events were being shot, putting up the stages for the practical match. With planning and thought these are relatively simple to build, but the task is made easier when you have a manual; regrettably the manual dissolved in the rain and became more of squishy mush than a concise drawing. Still, no matter – it was constructed and everyone seemed to enjoy what was built, apart

from when they had to shoot kneeling through the low ports.

With many hands pitching in, the crew was able to start shooting on the Saturday afternoon, complete a few of the shorter stages and thus free up some time for them on the Sunday, which was fortuitous given the number of entries.

As previously mentioned this was Round 1 and the launch of the NRA Shotgun League. The intention behind the League is to encourage grassroots shooting in the regions and to encourage participation. All competitors at League matches will be entered into a free prize draw generously sponsored by Edgar Brothers.

The top prizes include a shotgun that is eminently suitable for Target Shotgun events, and numerous other prizes as well.

After the drizzle on Saturday the still overcast, but dry, start on Sunday morning was a relief. A turnout that would be respectable for some of the more established disciplines in summer came along, although the going would have been tough if the rain had continued. After the mandatory safety briefing, the shooting started at the sound of a klaxon.

With the nine stages laid out over the full width of Butt Zero, the air was soon full of the sound of gunfire. A sharp rattle of shots followed by a pause then another drum roll of fire came from stage one, where carefully positioned tyres made the competitor move between positions to shoot all the targets. Richard Ingram made short work of this and shot it in a smooth 5.95 seconds, though the slippery ground did its best to catch out the unwary.

To make things different, stage two was laid out along the Butts access road. With targets to either side of the track, wet feet and muddy boots were kept to a minimum, but it was apparent that the fleet of foot had an advantage, with Mark Sienesi setting an enviable time of 16.94 seconds to cover the 50m and shoot the 12 targets. It was almost a sprint biathlon, really. As a result of what must have been a great deal of practice, Mark was able to take an early lead and it was soon apparent that the battle was to be



Mark Sienesi was untouchable and shot to the top of the leaderboard

The options here were to shoot from 20-25m, or use some low shooting positions



Awkward shooting position?
No problem!



for second and third places, with Mark continuing to stretch the field.

No proper shotgun match is complete without a buckshot stage, and thanks to the efforts of Alan Brant in the metalwork shop, this was no exception. On stage three, shooting one of the various metal targets released a bobber that oscillated rapidly, passing behind penalty targets to catch out the unwary or hasty. Full-size silhouette targets were easier to shoot but the real challenge was the six-inch plate at 20m that numerous competitors had to shoot at many times owing to terrible buckshot patterns with large gaps that meant pellets passed on all sides without striking the target down.

With the shooters warmed up on these short courses, stage three loomed large with 20 targets dotted around the range and various shooting gates and apertures forcing the competitor to plan their moves and reload with care. A seamless performance by Mark Sienesi saw him put in a superlative time of 22.52 seconds.

To set a faster time than anyone else was not possible on stage five, where all competitors had the same 3.5 seconds to shoot at four targets. With the two highest hits to count at a distance of 15m, this was no stage to have a stoppage on, and no one managed to keep them all in the A-zone to score maximum points. Tactics on this stage varied from those who favoured the steady, precise aim to score some points, to those who favoured trusting their skill and going all-out to gain their points.

Stage six was as much a challenge to shooting ability as to technical knowledge of shot pattern, and resultant effective range. Eight targets, laid out from 12m to 20m, posed the problem as to whether to stand and shoot from the start, or close the distance. With only nine rounds loaded to start for most competitors, there was a small margin for error, but if the plates failed to fall, was it down to missing the target or not enough energy imparted? If not enough, there was then the problem that there was no choice but to spend time moving closer and thereby dropping points, but then you had to be sure of your aim.

Stage seven required similar familiarity with shot pattern at distance, if time spent in awkward shooting positions was to be minimised. The options here were to either shoot from 20-25m, or use some low shooting positions that would take time to assume and stand up from, to shoot the targets from a closer distance. Fortunately for the majority who decided to get closer, the rain held off and the ground had dried well from the day before, so they were able to escape relatively cleanly.

To round things off, two short stages followed: a deceptively simple unloaded start followed up by a slightly more technical mandatory weak-shoulder shoot that caused more than one person to forget how to operate the safety catch when faced with the additional challenges of doing so with the unfavoured hand.

By the time of printing the second round of the NRA Shotgun League will have taken place at Shield Shooting Centre in Dorset; a report for that event will be in the Summer Journal.

Any club wishing to participate in the League please contact the league director, James Harris, via james.harris@nra.org.uk. Entry to the league is free and clubs will benefit from extra publicity and resulting increased entries to their events. For event updates, and to follow the league through the year, go to the NRA Shotgun League Facebook page or the Marksman's calendar on the NRA website. ■

Full results available at www.nra.org.uk



#	NAME	%	POINTS
OPEN DIVISION			
1st	Ingram, Richard	100.00	466.7366
2nd	Thorne, John	85.87	400.7924
3rd	Love, Ben	83.61	390.2429
STANDARD DIVISION			
1st	Sienesi, Mark	100.00	469.6231
2nd	Harris, James	88.80	417.013
3rd	Jennings, Jon	79.20	371.9602
STANDARD MANUAL			
1st	Kenneally, Conor	100.00	432.9795
2nd	Cox, Stephen	94.79	410.402
3rd	Holloway, John	88.82	384.57



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Winter wizardry

As the Civilian Service Rifle Winter League reaches its latter stages, Mark Bradley reports on the top performers at three of this year's meetings

Since the last edition of the *Journal* was published, there have been no fewer than three rounds of the ever-growing Civilian Service Rifle Winter League. First, the December round, held on 7 December. The morning saw around 25 lanes full of shooters on the right-hand side of Century in a match starting with the 300-yard Kinnaird (10 rounds in 60 seconds on a Fig12 prone), a 200-yard Bisley Bullet Snap practice and the popular Sitting Rapid Fire (10 rounds in 40 seconds).

Stages four and five were shot at 100 yards with the usual standing and kneeling, then a 'breaking from cover' practice that gives the thigh muscles a good work out.

The afternoon match was LR Rural Contact, shortened because of the failing daylight that is to be expected (but not welcomed) at that time of year.

Starting with two sighters at 500 yards, the first stage was 10 rounds in 60 seconds on a triple Fig11. Scoring five and four on the middle target and two anywhere on the outer ones, it's tough to fire all your shots in time while keeping an eye on the wind flags, and even more difficult with a low-power scope or 'Mk1 eyeball' on irons!

Stage two was a fire-and-movement rundown with two shots prone at 500, four shots sitting at 400 and another four shots prone at 300. Stage three was The Wantage, with 10 three-second exposures of a Fig 12 at 300. All credit to Bill Ellis in this one, for his excellent 10 Wash (50pts) at 500.

January

January saw a chance to blow the Christmas and New Year cobwebs away after what seemed like a break that lasted an eternity. There were 93 thrill-seekers on the day.

The day began where December left off with an amended LR Rural Contact, although as we were shooting it in the morning, this time we had the opportunity to add the missing fourth stage, a sitting, albeit shot at 300 and not 400 yards.

The biggest factor on the day was the strength of the wind, and with it running at around nine minutes at 500 yards, it was fun playing in it with .223.

The afternoon match was a short-range affair, all shot at 200 and 100 yards.

Again as with Decembers CoF, we decided to shoot a 200-yard Bisley Bullet (think McQueen's without the castle) and Sitting (10 rounds in 40 seconds on double Fig11s).

The two 100-yard stages were as before, with the ubiquitous standing and kneeling, and a variation on breaking from cover.

As well as being standalone matches that make up the Winter League, people

use these also as good opportunities to practice. Several years ago we decided to include standing practice in all the matches when we could. Since doing so the standing has gone from one of the most difficult to possibly one of the most enjoyable and popular practices in CSR. Where once it was a daunting thought to try and get all 10 on target, as scores have improved over the last few years, it is now seen as a huge disappointment when you drop even one or two off.

The standards continue to improve at an impressive rate, and we have some fine marksmen in our group now.

February

The February round of the CSR Winter league, held on Sunday 1 February, saw 96 eager souls braving the bitter wind on a blustery Century Range and the aptly named Short Siberia.

The courses of fire for the day were the Short Range Rural Contact Match and the popular Urban Contact Match.

Following the obligatory range safety brief and other announcements at the gathering point (the crammed 300-yard car park), the first detail lined out across 24 lanes from 85-108 for Practice 1: two sighting shots followed by a 60-second exposure of a Fig12 with shooters moving from the standing to prone position and firing 10 rounds. Despite the wind there were several 10 Wash (possibles) recorded.

Practice 2 was the Rundown. After firing two rounds at 300, a flash of targets prompts competitors to advance to 200 where they take up the sitting position and fire a further four rounds at their target (two six-second exposures). This is followed by a further advance to

100 yards where the practice is repeated, this time from the standing position.

Next, standing: five double exposures of three seconds up, two down and three seconds up, the first shot taken from standing and the second from kneeling or squatting. This is shot on a Figure 12C (much smaller than a Fig12), which can be a challenge especially in gusty winds.

After these three stages everyone moves back up the range for the sitting stage. Starting from the standing alert position, on appearance of two Fig 11 targets, firers adopt the sitting or kneeling position and fire five rounds on each target in 40 seconds. This is definitely one of our most popular practices and always one of the most challenging – achieving natural alignment while shooting rapidly and operating a bolt allows little room for error.

The final stage is a Snap practice, comprising 10 three-second exposures of a Fig12 target, at random positions.

The PM match saw all competitors move to Short Siberia for the first phase of Urban Contact. Starting three metres behind the line, on appearance of the targets firers advance to the post, adopt the standing supported position, make ready and fire two shots. This is followed by four exposures of six seconds; each time two shots are fired from the standing position.

Competitors then prove clear and make safe with another magazine of 10 rounds, ready for phase two. On the next appearance of a Fig11, firers advance to 75 yards, adopt the kneeling position around the side of a wall, make ready and fire 10 rounds at two 15-second exposures.

Phase three is shot at 50 yards. On the appearance of a Fig14 target, firers advance, make ready and fire a round

from the standing position, then from the kneeling or squatting position in six seconds. This is repeated four more times.

For the last phase, firers advance to 25 yards where there are three exposures of seven seconds. All shots are fired from the standing position. At this point everyone is proved clear and then go forward to score and patch out.

The match is a dynamic event with limited time to make safe and re-load. Owing to the rapid movement forward, firers have to think about sight settings, adapting their point of aim and engaging the correct target from the correct position, with the right number of shots. It makes for plenty of what-ifs and maybes.

The next match is on 7 March, which should be just before this Journal is mailed; the final stage of the League then takes place on 5 April. ■



Shooting in 'standing supported' position – always a popular stage

STAGE WINNERS

DECEMBER – AM

Historic	Robert Morris	114
Iron	Doug Cross	134
Service	Ben Boreham	223
Practical	Colin Hudson	211

DECEMBER – PM

Historic	Jon Foreman	40
Iron	Doug Cross	135
Service	Bill Ellis	144
Practical	John Raistrick	140

JANUARY – AM

Historic	Robert Morris	61
Iron	James Geering	126
Service	Peter Cottrell	187
Practical	Martin Camp	166

JANUARY – PM

Historic	Paul Bentley	116
Iron	David Moran	154
Service	Adam Chapman	188
Practical	Nick St Aubyn	173

FEBRUARY – AM

Historic	Paul Bentley	141
Iron	David Moran	164
Service	William Ellis	236
Practical	Martin Camp	231

FEBRUARY – PM

Historic	Robert Morris	137
Iron	Doug Cross	134
Service	Peter Cottrell	187
Practical	Nick St Aubyn	172

March

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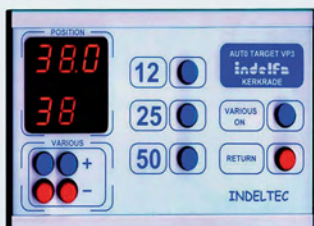
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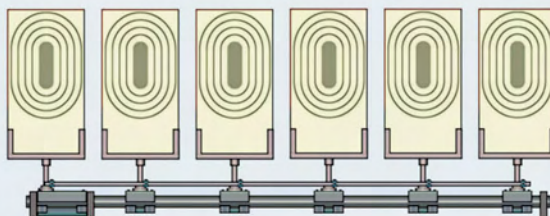
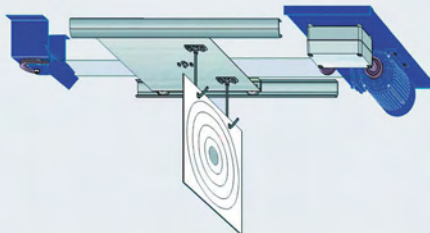
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Discipline guide 2015

As the national governing body for fullbore target shooting, the NRA promotes a host of disciplines under its banner. We get the low-down on 10 disciplines to find out what you should be shooting this season

300M SHOOTING

By Ian Shirra-Gibb

As the figure implies, this rifle discipline shoots at the fixed distance of 300m or about 329 yards. The rules allow any calibre of rifle up to 8mm, so any target rifle shooter can still use their .308 / 7.62 rifles. With long competition times, new and existing small calibres are now being used to help reduce fatigue and recoil levels. Currently a range of 6mm ammo is popular.

The metric target, which has barely changed since it was devised, is demanding with a bull of just over 1MOA, so the top TR shooters find this superb practice to keep their V-bull count high.

International competitions are held, including a European circuit, European and World championships for both men and women in prone and positional events. Although UK shooters are noted to have shot 300m in overseas competition back into the late 1800s, not much went on in the UK other than the 300m event in the 1948 Olympics at Bisley, which was a positional event, not just prone.

Following the 1970 world championships (where we were lent rifles), a small group of shooters started to get the discipline up and running again. A firing point was constructed

at 300m on Long Siberia, and a competition was held during the main NRA meeting. It was decided to form a club to run the range and competitions, so the GB300M RC was formed.

Following a legacy from one shooter, electronic targets were bought and installed. Bisley now boasts the only 300m electronic ISSF range in the country, on butt 10, where a shooter in practice or competition can shoot in the dry, at their own speed, and get a printed result at the end. For more info go to the club website, www.gb300m.com.

Discipline Rep: Ian Shirra-Gibb



CIVILIAN SERVICE RIFLE

By Mark Bradley

Civilian Service Rifle (CSR) is the same as the Service Rifle competitions run by the military, and only differs in the fact that we naturally use UK legal civilian firearms and don't have to wear belt kit and helmet (unless you want to). Apart from the timings on a few practices, it is to all intents and purposes the same thing. We allow an extra 15 seconds for 200-yard sitting and generally anywhere from 5-15 seconds for some of the rundowns, depending on ground conditions, so it's not too strenuous.

The first weekend of every month from October to April sees the NRA host the CSR Winter league at Bisley. Competition days alternate monthly between Saturdays and Sundays, giving everyone a chance to attend.

The main requirement for CSR is a centrefire rifle with the ability to hold a minimum of 10 rounds. Most matches are shot from 300 to 100 yards, but also go back to 500 and as close as 25 yards, depending on the course of fire.

The Winter League came about because the ranges are generally quiet during those months, so this gives us the space to conduct matches at varying distances without impacting too much on other range users and affecting safety traces.

Because of the popularity of these events, attendances are now regularly around the 100 mark, and all you need, apart from a rifle, is a decent set of waterproofs, boots and a good sense of humour. New shooters are always welcomed and will be paired up with some of the more experienced shooters on the day, so no need to feel daunted.

The Introduction to CSR courses have proved to be a great success; over 100 people took part in the last year, and many joined the League as a result, boosting numbers and adding to the occasion.

There is a break until the Imperial CSR and PR (Practical Rifle) championships. This comprises five days of matches with something for everyone. This year's event



runs from 24-28 June, starting with the Imperial PR match and ending with the Methuen Cup. It will be shot on Bisley and Pirbright Ranges, including the excellent Nelson Range with 25 lanes of turning targets, and the popular Falling Plates Match, which saw 34 teams take part in 2014.

There are four classes: Historic, Iron Sights, Service Optic, Practical Optic. So if you have an Enfield, an AR15, Remington 700, AI or anything else in between, you probably have the right stuff to take part, and if you don't then the NRA Armoury has suitable rifles for hire.

Discipline Rep: Paul Hunter

F CLASS

By Des Parr

Do you know what F Class is? It was named after the founder of the class, George Farquharson of Canada. He originally wanted to find a way of staying competitive at shooting when his eyesight gave up. So he stuck a telescopic sight on, and to give his unsteady muscles a rest, he employed a sandbag to support the weight of the rifle.

From then, it has grown into a discipline in its own right, not just something you do in later life. In fact, F Class appeals to a younger set, folk who have had no prior involvement or interest in traditional target shooting.

"Isn't it expensive?" is the most common question we hear from prospective shooters. As with all disciplines, it is as expensive as you choose to make it. Harking back to the beginnings of F Class, it can be done cheaply, with your existing TR rifle, an inexpensive scope, a Harris bipod and a sandbag. From there, the sky's the limit.

F-Classers can generally acquire all the kit they require off the shelf or from custom gunsmiths and within a year or so they can be competitive. That appeals to busy people: no need to invest many years of training, just acquire good kit and jump in, while learning on the job.

There are two sub-divisions: the F/TR class, which as the name implies is for .308 or .223 rifles, and F/Open class, for any calibre up to 8mm. There are generous weight limits of 8.25kg and 10kg respectively. F Class is distinguished by an absence of overbearing rules; the whole ethos is to maintain just a light regulatory touch to foster experimentation.

"Where can I shoot F Class?" is another perennial question. Most clubs now have a section of shooters who may not actually call themselves F Class, but nevertheless

use scopes, bipods and sandbags for informal practice and club shooting. The NRA has recognised F Class for at least 15 years and offers the opportunity to shoot in the Imperial and in many other Bisley competitions. For those who aspire to shoot competitively, there is the GBFCA National League: a series of competitions held at three venues over the spring, summer and autumn.

"Is it for me?" Well, try it and see, all I can say is that I've seldom had such sheer good fun. Shooting F Class can simply be described as a joy; we take our shooting seriously of course, yet still have fun and good humour throughout. Young and old, male and female, able and disabled all drawn together by the daft notion of trying to hit tiny targets that are much too far away.

Discipline Rep: Peter Hobson



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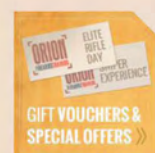
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GALLERY RIFLE & PISTOL

By Neil Francis

Gallery Rifle and Pistol (GR&P) or just Gallery Rifle (GR) disciplines cover events shot at short and medium distances by various rifles and pistols using pistol-calibre cartridges. Many of the events are classified so competitors shoot against others of similar ability. Open meetings are held at Bisley and at club ranges around the country. Competitors can take part at all levels from club through to international.

There are four main categories:

- Gallery Rifle Small-Bore (GRSB). Most competitors use a semi-automatic (self-loading) .22 rifle.
- Gallery Rifle Centrefire (GRCF). Most shooters use a lever-action rifle in a traditional pistol calibre. Examples of the most popular calibres are .38/.357, .44 or .45.
- Long Barrelled Pistols (LBP) and Long Barrelled Revolver (LBR). With an overall length of 60cm and a barrel length of 30cm, these types of firearm are designed to comply with UK firearms regulations. The LBPs are available in .22 rimfire only and can be used for all events, generally available as semi



automatic types although single-shot designs are available and are sometimes used for precision events. The revolvers are available in a variety of calibres – most popular are .38/.357 and .44 although some competitors use the .45 ACP. Most events are shot at distances between 10m and 50m although a few go out to as far as 300 yards.

There is a large selection of GR events that only require range space out to 25 metres so the discipline is easily accessible. The most common shooting position is standing unsupported but some events test the shooter's skills from other positions such as kneeling, sitting or from the weak shoulder or hand. Some competitions are deliberate precision events while others require the competitor to shoot and reload quickly. The targets can be stationary or turning at set intervals. Some targets are even moving and reactive (e.g. steel plates).

Information about this discipline, events and details of clubs near you can be found at www.galleryrifle.com and www.nra.org.uk.

Discipline Rep: Neil Francis

HISTORIC AND CLASSIC FIREARMS

By Peter Ryder

What are Historic Arms?

In essence anything made more than 50 or so years ago should be acceptable provided it has not benefited from more recent modifications. If the end result is 'in period' it should be satisfactory. Modern reproductions that conform to the spirit of the original are acceptable in most matches.

Why shoot Historic Arms?

For most, the incentive is to see if they can extract the full potential from the 'old stuff' and see how it stacks up against current equipment. The published competition results, when they include the firearm type, give a measure of comparison not available to the informal shooter.

The last 200 years have seen tremendous advances in mechanisation, and firearms development has been a major driver of that. As we move from an age of mechanisation into one of electronics we are already seeing a loss of knowledge and understanding of how mechanical things work. Historic Arms is an opportunity to rediscover a little of that knowledge.

How should we shoot Historic Arms?

The best way to get people interested in something is to show it to them and to let them try it for themselves. To that end the NRA is endeavouring to increase the opportunities to incorporate Historic matches into the mainstream disciplines. This will hopefully permit economies of range use and staffing. It should also enable shooters to use their Bisley trips more intensively, and might also help clubs outside the south-east participate in Historic Arms shooting.

This recognises that Historic Arms, while recognised as a discipline in its own right by the NRA in the way that, say, Match Rifle or Gallery Rifle are, can be viewed as a convenient label to enable an additional dimension to be incorporated into the NRA pantheon of disciplines.

One consequence of this approach is that it makes it imperative that the overdue rationalisation of the rules and courses of fire for Historic shooting takes place soon. To that end I am proposing to reduce the rules to the basics and follow the courses of

fire set by whatever meeting Historics have been incorporated into. This is likely to lead to some inconsistencies between meetings initially, but we have some of those already.

If people can experience the strengths and limitations of, for example, a Great War rifle or Crimean War revolver under the slightly pressured conditions of a competition, it can start to give an understanding of the conditions under which our forebears lived. Hopefully they will be encouraged to study further and to share the results of their efforts.

Discipline rep: Peter Ryder



MATCH RIFLE

By Alex Cargill Thompson

Match Rifle can be thought of as an extreme, experimental version of Target Rifle. While the same calibres are permitted (.308" Winchester / 7.62x51 mm NATO and .223" Remington / 5.56x45 mm NATO), Match Rifle starts at 1,000 yards where TR finishes, and goes up to 1,200 yards. Telescopic sights are permitted, as is hand-loaded ammunition (typically for .308 / 7.62 with bullets weighing between 190 and 220 grains, as opposed to the 155-grain bullets normally used in TR); unlike TR, a rest may be used to support, or steady, the hand supporting the rifle (a sling as used in TR is also an option), but the rifle may not be directly supported by a rest or bipod. While most people shoot Match Rifle prone, a sizeable minority shoot supine ('back position'), and a small number (who would be unable for medical reasons to shoot prone or supine) shoot seated at tables.

Match Rifle offers a variety of challenges, and shooters are drawn to it for different reasons. Some enjoy experimenting with the intention of optimising their rifle and/or ammunition – it's easy to start Match Rifle by attaching a telescopic sight to a Target Rifle. Others enjoy the challenge provided by the wind at MR distances – every day is different, and sudden wind changes can often be sufficient to blow shots off the 10' wide NRA Long Range Target. The satisfaction of spotting such a change, adjusting the sights appropriately, and successfully scoring a bull can be enormous.

Most shoots involve 15 or 20 shots to count (usually with two convertible sighting shots permitted) at each of 1,000, 1,100 and 1,200 yards. With few ranges extending back to Match Rifle

distances, most Match Rifle shooting in the UK takes place on Stickledown range at Bisley.

The highlight of the MR season is the Hopton, four days of individual entry competitions from First Saturday to First Tuesday of the Bisley Meeting in July. This is followed on the Wednesday by the Elcho, a match between teams of eight from each of the Home Nations. The Elcho was first shot in 1862 between Scotland and England, and is one of the oldest international team matches in any sport.

Other key open competitions at Bisley include two-day Spring and Autumn meetings organised by the English Eight Club (www.englishheight.org.uk), one-day individual and team matches organised by the London and Middlesex Rifle Association (www.lmra.co.uk) and a one-day meeting organised by the Welsh RA.

Discipline Rep: Alex Cargill Thompson



MULTI-GUN

By James Harris

The newest of the NRA's growing repertoire of events is Multi-Gun.

Introduced to the UK by the members of F4i, the events have been modified to suit the equipment available to us. Out went the high capacity .40 pistols and in came lightweight .22 rifles, the shotguns thankfully remained the same albeit with longer barrels

The basic ethos of Multi-Gun is that it's not just about accuracy. Speed plays a major part, though missing is heavily penalised. The targets themselves consist of paper 'roundel' targets and a variety of knock down steel targets and mechanisms. What makes it so different is that the shooter sometimes has to choose which firearm to use to shoot the targets, while this is difficult to work into

the stages on most ranges it adds to the excitement. Most stages will involve a .22 rifle and a shotgun, though sometimes a .223 rifle is added to the mix. Those wishing to shoot a .22 LBP are encouraged as this is a trend we want to promote.

Though Multi Gun matches are not yet a regular feature of the Bisley

calendar, events are held as and when the range space permits and the increasingly busy match calendar permits. Away from Bisley, a growing number of clubs run events.

More details are available online from <http://four4islands.org> or by email from james.harris@nra.org.uk.



MUZZLE LOADERS

By Jon Harper-Smith

The MLAGB was formed in 1952 and is the governing body for muzzle-loading in the UK. Its objectives are to encourage an interest in muzzle-loading firearms; to promote, regulate and safeguard their use; and to preserve their freedom of collection.

There are a number of events for rifles and muskets that are shot at 50 metres from the standing position. Off hand 'Schuetzen' style shooting with muzzle-loading rifles is extremely popular in Europe and is a precision discipline with shooters regularly achieving near perfect scores. Smoothbore muskets in both matchlock and flintlock mechanisms are also shot at this distance, and are surprisingly accurate when correctly loaded.

MLAGB runs a number of events covering all aspects of muzzle loading arms. These broadly follow the history of firearms development from the early days of matchlock, through the flintlock era and right up to the late Victorian period when the percussion mechanism reached its zenith. Fine examples of rifles from this period are still regularly used. These are precision events, and both original and reproduction rifles are capable of superb shooting at all distances.

Pistol shooting is generally carried out at 25 metres although there are some events held at 50 metres. There are a number of different categories including matchlocks, flintlocks, percussion single-shot and revolvers.

The MLAGB also runs events for miniature cannon. This is becoming extremely popular. Miniature cannons are generally smoothbore and despite the lack of sights can shoot extremely well.

The MLAGB holds regular competitions at Bisley as well as at its own range at Wedgnock in Warwickshire. In addition, the MLAGB is responsible for the UK muzzle-loading international team. This has been extremely successful in recent years and currently lies in second place in world rankings, well ahead of a number of fully funded, sponsored countries.

The MLAGB runs courses to introduce muzzle-loading shooting to newcomers to the sport. These courses cover all aspects of muzzle-loading shooting from safe handling through to best practice as well as offering some hints and tips so that attendees can get the best out of their muzzle-loader.

Visit the MLAGB web site at www.mlagb.com.

Discipline Rep: P Roberts



TARGET RIFLE

By Iain Robertson

Target Rifle (TR) is, by far, the largest of the NRA disciplines. TR competitions happen at every level from informal challenges between individuals or clubs through County, Home Country and National team competitions to the World Championships for the Palma Trophy and the Commonwealth Games. TR is also the discipline for Her Majesty the Queen's Prize at the NRA Annual Prize Meeting at Bisley.

To compete in TR you need a Target Rifle (a single-loading 7.62/.308 rifle with adjustable non-magnifying sights – see NRA Rule 150), and the kit to go with it. Minimum: sling, glove, ear defenders, spotting scope, pencil and scorebook (though I scored my first competition literally on the back of a fag packet). Highly desirable: shooting jacket, mat, hat, waterproofs, ammo box, clipboard, rifle tools and a bag to carry it all.

Competitions are shot at some combination of 300, 500, 600, 900 and 1,000 yards in the prone position at a static round-bull target. Each shot is fired in a 45-second time bracket and is scored separately. Competitors shoot two or three to a target and keep score for each other. A single competition or stage normally consists of two sighting shots and 10 or 15 scoring shots. The tight definition at Rule 150 ensures that a competitor's skill is

vastly more important than his equipment. For the 1,000 or so competitors at Bisley every July, that is further refined by the ammunition being issued centrally. The intent is that TR should be the ultimate test of marksmanship. However, it is not a difficult discipline to be moderately good at. Qualifying standards to enter are unusual except at international level, so a world champion may share a firing point with the youngest first-timer, making national-level competitions a great opportunity to learn from the masters past and present.

Discipline Rep: Nigel Cole-Hawkins



TARGET SHOTGUN

By James Harris

Target Shotgun includes any event that involves the use of a shotgun for the purposes of competition, excluding clay shooting. The NRA has supported and provided the governance umbrella for this area of shooting for many years and has, within the last few years, started to increase its support by developing training syllabuses and providing a greater range of competitions at Bisley.

Some of the events will be familiar to most Club shooters as they were derived from the old Pistol matches that were continued by the Gallery Rifle and Pistol (GR&P) community after the 1997 handgun ban.

These include: Timed and Precision (T&P); 100- and 200-yard competitions; Action/Practical competitions.

Timed and Precision (T&P) involves the use of solid slug (a single projectile, as opposed to birdshot with many projectiles) at distances from 25m to 10m on turning targets that only appear for short periods of time. The top-scoring 'x' ring is not much more than 2" wide, and to date only a few have managed to achieve a highest possible score.

If you wish for a slightly more relaxed competition without time restrictions then perhaps the 100- and 200-yard competitions would be of interest. Long-range slug shooting was, curiously enough, pioneered by the Long Range Pistol Shooting Association using .410 shotguns but latterly this event have come to be dominated by 12-gauge shotguns fitted with optical sights. The 100- and 200-yard events are slow fire (within a set time frame) but they do present a significant challenge. The targets measure almost 5 feet across, and a fair bit of allowance for bullet drop has to be made by the shooter at 200 yards. From the long-range and leisurely to the up-close action/practical competitions. These fast-growing events require marksmanship, thought, movement, and complete familiarity with the gun and ammunition. Each competitor shoots each stage against the clock under the close supervision of a range officer, who wields an electronic timer that picks up the sound of the shots. The shooter with the quickest time usually wins that stage, provided that

they have hit all the targets.

No two matches are ever the same – steel plates stood on their edges or on fixed base plates that react when hit. When hit fair and square with birdshot, they are bowled over and bounce away most satisfyingly. Targets also include lollipop-hinged plates and bigger pepper poppers, which are also shot with birdshot, but buckshot is sometimes specified for longer ranges. Paper targets are often used and can be scored and patched when shot with large buckshot, and, best of all with solid slug. Sometimes clay pigeons held on posts by elastic bands are used as targets, and can be a particularly difficult but satisfying target when shot with slug.

The gun of choice for all Target Shotgun events is either a semi-auto shotgun or a pump-action shotgun with an extended magazine tube, which must be held on a Firearms Certificate. Pumps are cheaper, more reliable, and easier to feed, but semi-autos are faster.

Contact the League Director for more information on Practical Shotgun events this year: james.harris@nra.org.uk.





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The works on Butt Zero

Transforming Bisley

James Harris takes us on a journey and highlights all that has been done on the Bisley Ranges and on Camp

A new season, a new journal and some nearly new ranges. We all notice immediate change, such as traffic lights altering from red to green and pint glasses suddenly being drained, but incremental alterations over time are less apparent. Like a careworn old hacking jacket, the ranges at Bisley have been 'left to gain character' over a number of years and were not exactly as good as new, despite the best endeavours of the hard-working maintenance teams. To be blunt, we had a bad spell financially and all but non-essential maintenance was curtailed while the problem was solved.

That time is now over. In fact it's been over for a while and the upgrade works are well under way, the benefits of which have not been missed by regular users of the complex. There is a plan behind the works so far but, as with all projects, it needs to be implemented in a logical sequence,

taking into account various factors such as resources and third-party interfaces. With the added complication caused by safety constraints, things can become, at first sight, rather jumbled.

So what is the plan? First: increase the amenity of the ranges – access, drainage and so on. Second: progressively improve the equipment; and lastly, upgrade the existing facilities to increase the range of firearms that can be used on them and the disciplines undertaken.

So what has been done so far? Let's take a tour of the ranges, starting with Century, heavily used in summer for the Imperial and many other competitions, and increasingly in winter by the hardy souls in the CSR league. Though not normally noticed during July, it can become a real duckpond in winter, so first job was to clean the ditches and unblock the drainage channels. A few

new bridges were installed at the same time to help cross them. A refurbished firing point at 100 yards on butt 18 and 19 was next, with associated access track from the 300-yard car park.

Out of sight in the butts, the target frames are going through a progressive upgrade cycle with a planned change-out rate of one butt a year. This may sound slow but it has to be worked around the needs of the users. The new frames are an in-house design and should require less maintenance over their lifetime. They are in butt 14, in case you fancy a walk down to look at them.

Electronic targets will be operating in butt 19 at 100, 200 and 300 yards by spring of this year. Made by Kongsberg, they will allow you to swiftly zero your rifle, check your ammunition and practise faster than conventionally hand-marked targets currently do; and while you are

lying on the firing point perhaps you should note that the grass has been cut with the new machinery and that you could well be on one of the points that has been re-turfed. While the firing point markers remain, the old wooden pegs on the number boards on Century have been replaced and are now more legible and, at the other end of the range, new ablution blocks have been installed.

Long term plans for Century are:

- Install more electronic targets after reliability trials
- Improved firing points
- Semi-permanent weather protection on butt 19 for winter practice
- Improvements to the 300-metre hut
- Larger car park at 300 yards
- To resurface the main road at the rear of the 600 yard firing point

Travelling on through the woods will lead to Short Siberia. Once you have crossed the resurfaced car park, a veritable sea of gravel awaits those of the more active disposition who need to transit the range floor up to the turning targets installed in front of the mantlet. While these are mostly used during the week for training, they are available for NRA competitions as required. A new flag has

been installed to assist with wind readings from 200 yards. The butts access track has been better defined and improvements to the butts have been made.

Our long-term plans here include widening the covered firing point at 100 yards to increase the weatherproof areas available, and a covered firing point at 200 yards, which needs to be deepened to allow for mustering behind the firing points. Better car parking and improved access tracks are also being considered along with a dividing wall/bank to increase the range space/firing points available

We can now travel back along Hobson's Way to Winans. You will notice that the number of potholes has been reduced in the tarmac areas. Hobson's Way itself is more problematic in that a permanent surface cannot at present be installed, so please slow down and avoid creating potholes along it.

Originally the Advancing Target Gallery, Winans has been knocked about a bit over the years to accommodate other works on camp. Until recently it had been taken out of use and was only really used for air rifle shooting, but a brisk attack with the paintbrush and bin saw it

tidied and smartened up. A more invasive operation with a tracked excavator saw the butts re-shaped, and now it's back in use for .22 and Gallery Rifle. Admittedly the firing points are still a bit industrial, but they are dry and large enough to accommodate everyone.

What next for this little range? Some parking next door would not go amiss, and a nice bank of turning targets should liven it up. Perhaps even a bullet trap cover to allow some silhouette shooting and Bianchi plate practice.

Pausing only to admire the view from the 1,200-yard point, we move on to Stickledown. Again nothing obvious at first, but the trees have been cropped along the left to reduce the wind eddies. For those that shoot at shorter ranges, Butt Zero has been set about with digger and chipper to install new drainage runs, re-enforced walkways, an improved woodchip range floor and new mantlet to protect the additional turning target mechanisms. The firing points have been marked out with sleepers, and the mover-and-turners are now radio rather than cable control.

Future plans are to improve the side bay floors as per the centre bay and to

Phoenix Meeting: Set to be one of the first major tests of the new facilities





Cheylesmore range has undergone a particularly thorough transformation

We had a bad spell financially and all but non-essential maintenance was curtailed while the problem was solved. That time is now over



Bisley's facilities for Target Shotgun are being increased

upgrade the sleeper walls in length, height and thickness. A gravel car park behind the 75-metre point is also planned along with an RO/stats cabin and welfare block in place of the open-sided troop shelter.

Next is Melville, which has also undergone the woodchip transformation along with refurbished intermediate walls to protect the 25-metre turning target mechanisms. The sleeper walls are now thicker, higher and clad in ply. It certainly looks better but has the shooting experience improved? Well with new turning targets mounted on improved concrete bases, one would hope so, though only a full-scale trial such as the Spring Action Weekend or Phoenix will tell. But it won't be stopping there – new surfaces for the firing points are in the pipeline and refurbishments to the waiting rooms are planned. Works left to do include tidying up the car park, and access roads need to be re-surfaced. Generally speaking, the access roads are always the last part of any project to be completed to prevent damage by machinery moving on them.

Last but not least, is Cheylesmore, now changed from the run-down shed with a range next door. A new range layout the starting point, followed by improvements to the dividing bay walls and new turning targets. As previously published, the two middle bays have been merged into one larger range to make it more suitable for training and competitions. Imminent works to the right-hand bay will be carried out to make it suitable for a wider range of firearms, particularly Target Shotgun.

The firing point shed is no longer a dingy, cobweb-ridden dumping ground for old targets, but has been upgraded to include classrooms and rest areas. New ablutions have been installed with the Biodisc foul drainage tank buried under the recently refurbished car park. To accompany this work, the very latest in ISSF/UIT target systems are to be installed to enable top-tier pistol training to international standards. Our plans also include a new armoury to improve the growing number of Section 7 pistol shoots.

All in all it's not a bad effort so far. Work still needs to be done, but the corner has been turned and you can look forward to improved and better facilities at Bisley over the next few years. ■



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Raring to go

What are the opportunities at Bisley for new members? Head of shooting and training, Peter Cottrell, introduces the new probationary training members' package, discipline days and competitions

The NRA has an active aim: to ensure its training provides a solid grounding in target shooting for its members and shooters by enabling them to confidently experience enjoyable, competitive and safe shooting.

In September 2014 training delivery was integrated with shooting division, at which time a review was undertaken to find the best way to add value to probationary members' training. This is very much seen as the start of the target shooting journey.

Following this review, we introduced a new training package in January 2015, consisting of five one-day modules. These cover a wide spectrum of full-bore and Gallery Rifle shooting, in addition to lessons on range safety and procedures, zeroing and sighting, basic firearms maintenance and target marking.

The cost for this new training is considerably less than the previous package, at £85 for Module 1 (introductory shoot and safe system lessons) and £95 for each of the remaining modules (total cost £465). This includes all range costs, firearms, ammunition and instruction by the professional training team.

Module 5 includes Shooter Certification Card (SCC) assessments, guidance and discussion on where to go next – including clubs and associations, the NRA's discipline days, and participating in matches and competitions.

Discipline days

The NRA offers a series of one-day courses specific to shooting disciplines, all led by some of the best shooters in their field, providing expert one-on-one

instruction. These courses help dispel the myth some shooters hold that only the elite can compete at Bisley. The days provide good knowledge of the chosen discipline, help sharpen positional techniques, give plenty of practical tips, and increase one's confidence to participate in the many events on offer.

One recent participant's testimonial highlighted the personal value he gained: "A big thank you for putting on a fantastic course yesterday. The instructors certainly knew their stuff and I thought the mix of classroom and range work was just right – exactly the right atmosphere to learn. My knowledge has increased 100 per cent."

There are currently three courses on offer: Introduction to Civilian Service Rifle (Civ SR), Introduction to Gallery Rifle and Introduction to Target Shotgun.

The courses cost £70 and this includes range fees, targets, course material, individual coaching and lunch. The next courses are: Intro to Gallery Rifle (7 March) and Intro to Target Shotgun (14 March). Further details and booking forms are available on the NRA website.

Competitive shooting

Competitive shooting is fun and should be challenging – it's a great way to test and validate an individual's skills, to meet new people with similar interests, and to improve marksmanship.

The NRA organises competitions for every shooting discipline throughout the year, and posts the details on its website together with entry forms

and courses of fire. There are often prizes for novice shooters, so don't be put off and think you're not good enough. The training received during the probationary member's training, plus any further training from a club or discipline day, will put you in a great position to take part.

We are also looking ahead to the prestigious 146th Imperial Meeting – the focal point for many shooters at Bisley and held every year since 1860 (with the exception of the two World Wars). This internationally recognised Meeting starts on 18 June with the Services Operational Shooting Competitions, followed by the Civilian SR, Match Rifle, Schools, GR&P,

Historic, F Class and TR. It culminates on Saturday 18 July with the Queen's Prize for the best target rifle shooter.

We look forward to receiving the entries and welcoming shooters of all disciplines to Bisley to take part this year. 2014 saw a 13 per cent increase in the number of competitors (vs 2013) and we trust this will be an even more successful meeting.

What can NRA members do?

As always, we encourage NRA members to continue to be actively involved and take part in all the opportunities on offer. With the view to encouraging new and young shooters to take up what we know to be a dynamic sport, we ask that you consider friends, colleagues and family members, including the younger generations – and pass on details of the probationary members' training to them. Or bring them to visit Bisley to see some of our shooters in action. ■



Need proof that competitions aren't intimidating? Look no further than the Imperial's Parting Shot...



Build-up to the 2015 Imperial Meeting has already begun

DISCOUNTS FOR UNDER 25S

As an incentive for young people to take up and develop their target shooting knowledge and skills, the NRA is offering a 40 per cent discount for under-25s on all training and competitions through 2015. This includes the probationary members' training, introduction days and all NRA competitions.

AMMUNITION UPDATE

Following a review of ammunition performance/cost in 2014, the NRA has made the decision to use GGG ammunition for the individual and team Target Rifle matches. GGG proved itself to perform as well as RUAG ammunition. This move has enabled the cost of all individual and team TR competitions to be reduced by 7.5 per cent for 2015. Details will be on the 2015 Imperial entry form, which should be available by the time this edition of the *Journal* is mailed.

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Shooter's Case

This useful case from Plano is perfect for the shooter who can't get enough gear – but can't stop losing it either. Measuring a roomy 14.75" by 6" by 9", it's got two lift-out trays, while the case itself has a removable lid with durable latches and a comfortable handle. Pleasingly, it also doubles as a maintenance centre for your target rifle.

John Rothery www.bisley-uk.com



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Since a year ago, HPS has sold insert blocks worldwide for fullbore target actions including Barnard, RPA, Quadlock, Remington and more. It comes as standard with a flat, cushioned rubber butt plate with vertical and rotational adjustment, while you can opt for a higher cheekpiece as well as forend weights and a hook butt plate. On top of that, for the first time there's a one-stock-fits-all model available, which also fits small-bore rifles based on the Anschütz round action – perfect if you're more of a .22 fan.

HPS 01531 822641 www.hps-tr.com



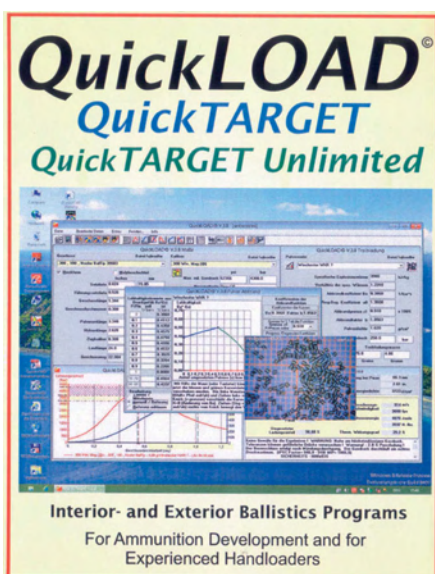
QuickLOAD

The QuickLOAD computer programme is the real deal when it comes to loading your own target ammunition. Its ballistic software is comprehensively loaded with a vast database of predefined bullets, cartridges and propellants, meaning you don't have to have a library of books to get all your reloading data in one place. You can customise cartridge selection for your own rifle while the database also includes dimensioned images of a selection of cartridges. You can get a quick overview or get as technical as you like – if you're determined to work up the best load possible, you need this.

Price: £125

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www.quickload.co.uk



Swarovski STR

Here's the newest spotter from Swarovski, details of which were unveiled at the start of this year. It's perfect for plotting long-range shots, aided by the built-in MOA or MRAD reticle, which can be activated or deactivated as required. If you want to record your groups, you can combine the scope with Swarovski's digiscoping adapters and document your results on the range. On top of that, this unit has a dirtproof, dustproof and watertight body, with top-class HD optics.

RRP: TBC

Swarovski 01737 856812

www.swarovskioptik.com



New Ammunition for the Imperial and Inter Counties

There is a new ammunition supplier for the Imperial and Inter Counties competitions: the Lithuanian company GGG. The NRA explains how and why GGG was chosen...

As some of you may be aware, 2014 was the last year of the RUAG contract for the supply of 155gr .308 ammunition for the Imperial Meeting and we have been working to identify ammunition suitable for the Imperial and Inter Counties competitions for this and future years.

After careful research we settled upon Lithuanian company GGG. They are a relatively small manufacturer of a variety of ammunition, and we have sold large quantities of their milspec 5.56mm and 7.62mm rounds over several years with no reported problems. Their modern factory machinery was sourced from reliable American manufacturers and we have a good relationship with their UK distributor Law Enforcement International (LEI).

The product from GGG uses their standard 7.62 milspec case and primer, suitable propellant sourced by GGG, and the Sierra 2155 MatchKing bullet, as used in the

RUAG ammunition for the last six years. GGG cases are used by the Birmingham Proof House for assembly of proof loads. The ammunition is of course CIP-compliant, and we have test figures from the Birmingham Proof Laboratory showing :

- Max average working pressure: 3598 bar
- CIP conditions mean velocity: 2822 ft/sec (24" barrel, .300 / .308 & CIP Chamber Dimensions).
- Velocity SD 13.3

LEI provided an initial sample of 400 rounds. This was followed by a larger prototype batch. We gave small samples to respected target shooters to try. With encouraging reports from those, we included a sample in the batch testing of ammunition for the 2014 Imperial Meeting, and used the ammunition during the Purples match in May 2014 with no reported problems and good results in a wide variety of target rifles.

Our own test figures, which come from 30" barrels with typical TR internal dimensions fired from a test rig at 200 yards (rather than CIP standard test barrels and conditions) indicate mean values over three 10-shot test strings:

- Velocity 2979 ft/sec
- Velocity SD 11.7
- Extreme spread as a proportion of v-bull size 0.66

Those figures are towards the top end of the velocity range of RUAG batches from 2012 to 2014, and at the median of grouping capability of the batches used in the 2014 Imperial Meeting.

GGG was selected to supply competition grade ammunition for the NRA late in 2014, and the production run of the 2015 ammunition is nearly completed. GGG's ammunition offers both excellent performance and exceptional value; pricing per round will be around 78 pence for competition/ retail sale compared to 99 pence for the recent RUAG ammunition.

We have decided to invest the resulting savings to reduce TR entry fees for the Imperial by 9.5 per cent in real terms (7.5 per cent year on year), meaning block A and B entry fee will be £460 (£498 in 2014); and increase youth subsidies to 40 per cent for all competitors aged under 25.

GGG and LEI have kindly agreed to sponsor the Inter Counties. Their generosity means team entry fees are reduced to £400 for 2015 compared to £895 last year. ■

GGG's sponsorship of the Inter Counties will see team entry fees fall by over 50 per cent. Photo: LEI



Club call

From Bisley and beyond, we profile three NRA-affiliated clubs to cater for all forms of shooting discipline

HEREFORD CITY RIFLE AND PISTOL CLUB

There has been a shooting club in Hereford City for about 100 years. In March 2013 the club was forced to relocate from the Rotherwas Industrial Estate close to the city centre, due to re-development.

After a tedious search, the club managed to secure a new site on a private industrial site at Kington, Herefordshire, 19 miles from Hereford city centre. Although the club's new location is no longer near Hereford City, it was decided that the club should keep its old name.

The site, a former military hospital used by the US forces during the second world war, had been stood empty for a number of years and required extensive work to convert it to a 25-metre indoor range and clubhouse. To this end volunteers

began the work, which, mostly done at weekends, took over 12 months to complete, and in August 2014 following an inspection by the NRA of the range, the Club was issued with a safety certificate and allowed to start shooting.

The new indoor range has five shooting lanes with firing points at 10, 15, 20 and 25 metres. There is also a 10-metre indoor air rifle range totally separate from the Gallery range for our airgunners. Our clubroom has a small kitchen area for beverages and snacks.

The Club's membership is mostly made up of rifle shooters but there is also a strong element of black powder shooters who fire both rifle and pistol. There are experienced personnel on hand to assist with safe firearm handling and coaching and all firing is supervised by NRA qualified Range Conducting Officers or Club Safety Officers.

Hereford City Rifle and Pistol Club meet at the range every Monday evening at 7pm and on alternative Saturday afternoons. We also have the use of an outdoor 100-metre range on Sunday afternoons near Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, on limited dates throughout the year.

The club is now actively recruiting new members to join us whether experienced or novice shooters. All abilities are welcome to join our friendly community.

Essential info

Discipline: Fullbore, .22, air rifle, gallery rifle, black powder

Location: Rotherwas Industrial Estate

Opening: Mondays at 7pm, every other Saturday

Contact: Andy Trickett jmajtrickett@gmail.com or on 07775 656540



The view down the range



THE OLD SERGEANTS' MESS

The Old Sergeants' Mess is a vibrant, happy and sociable club, dedicated to the sport of shooting. Our members tend to be individuals who enjoy shooting, whether for competition, practice or as quality time to themselves after a busy work schedule. The Old Sergeants' Mess Shooting Club (OSMSC) offers members regular shooting (three or four times a month), tuition in a variety of disciplines, probationary courses, support for all shooting activities and a well-equipped clubhouse. All this, along with firearms storage, armoury services, quality catering and member services, make the OSMSC a very good place to shoot.

Historically we have been known as the club that specialises in scoped rifle shooting, McQueen and fieldcraft. The McQueen shooting and training is supported by C.Sgt Jan Berry, who has won a trophy or two at Imperial Meetings. He runs regular courses in this challenging sport, encouraging others to compete and improve their skills.

The OSMSC and the British Sniper Club are now affiliated, allowing us to develop our expertise and take this sport further in 2015.

Fieldcraft is another specialist skill developed at the OSMSC. A good shot has honed shooting skills, keen senses and intuition. Unlike competition, where you get sighting shots and 10 tries, the field shooter spends many hours looking for a suitable target and may only use two rounds a month on cold barrels.

Over the last three years, we have developed our reputation in gallery rifle under the care of John Ware, and F Class under the care of Heather Webb. We have also expanded into the world of shotguns. Under the care of Dan Archer, we have regular summer shoots in DTL, Skeet and Trap and winter shooting at four sporting layouts in the Surrey area. We also offer Black Powder with the expert help of Andy Derriman of LAGS and the popular Target Shotgun, with the support and guidance of James Harris. Pistols are available on our regular trips to Poland.

The clubhouse itself is open 51 weekends over the year with shooting



The club runs a formal probationary training course for new shooters



The view from the outside of the clubhouse

on at least 40 of them. We hold spring, summer and Christmas guest days to allow members to introduce their family, friends and colleagues into the joy of shooting sports.

We cater on shoot days and for affiliate club functions, favouring game meats alongside the more usual shooting offerings.

We have a website, Facebook page, Twitter account and use email to contact our members, but above all this technology, we love a good chat at the bar, long discussions on the latest shooting gadgets, friendly banter in the armoury, a beer on the excellent verandah – and, what's more, the kettle is always ready for a warming cup of tea or coffee.



You don't need to be a member to use the clubhouse

Essential info

Discipline: Scoped rifle, F Class, gallery rifle, black powder, clay shooting

Location: Bisley camp

Opening: Every weekend

Contact: osmshootingclub@gmail.com
or 01483 799998

OLD WINDSOR RIFLE & PISTOL CLUB

The Old Windsor Rifle & Pistol Club was formed in 1977 by a small group of enthusiastic pistol shooters. With the support of the local parish council they acquired a lease on a disused building and set about converting it into a clubhouse and indoor range. The club grew rapidly to a membership of over 200, including half a dozen international-standard practical pistol shooters, and hosted many UKPSA inter-club competitions.

The range was gutted by fire in 1996 following a suspected arson attack, but was quickly rebuilt. Following the 1997 handgun ban the club diversified into other forms of target shooting. Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated and enthusiastic

Committee, the club now has a stable membership and is financially sound.

OWR&PC offers its members an excellent ventilated and soundproofed 25-yard indoor range facility, which is open five evenings a week for .22 prone, gallery rifle, long barrelled pistol, black powder rifle and pistol, air rifle and pistol, mini rifle and practical shotgun. A recent addition to the range is an electric returning target system, which was designed, built and installed by club members.

Our air rifle members have been medal winners in many national individual competitions run by the NSRA.

Fullbore shooters are equally well catered for, with monthly meetings at Bisley, Ash, Stoney Castle and Henley Park. These ranges allow the club to offer a wide choice of courses of fire, with firing points from 100 to 1,000 yards plus the new small

arms range targetry system (SARTS). Club members own a wide range of target, sporting and service rifles from classics such as Lee Enfield, Schmidt-Rubin, Moisin-Nagant and Mauser to modern rifles such as the Remington 700, Steyr, Accuracy International and the ever popular AR15. Competitions for all classes of fullbore rifle are held throughout the year.

OWR&PC is keen to encourage young people to take up shooting as a sport. Our range is used by the local Cub troop for air rifle practice, and range days have been held for other youth groups. We will also be hosting youth education events for the local police team. Our range has even been featured on television; in 2008 we hired it out to a production company to film scenes for the popular ITV science fiction series *Primeval*.

Everyone with a genuine interest in shooting sports is welcome to join the Club, and new members receive training in the safe handling and use of firearms and assistance with their FAC applications. ■



Essential info

Discipline: Fullbore, .22 prone, gallery rifle, long barrelled pistol, black powder rifle and pistol, air rifle and pistol, mini rifle and practical shotgun

Location: Robin Willis Way, Old Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 2PX

Opening: Monday 7.15pm, Tuesday 7pm, Wednesday 8pm, Thursday 10.30am, Friday 8.30pm

Contact: www.owrpc.co.uk



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OBITUARIES

LT COL (RETD) T. W. WHITTAKER OBE 7 August 1918 – 17 November 2014

Warren, the son of Thomas Miller

Whittaker and Florence Edith Whittaker, was born in Ffestiniog on 7 August 1918 and grew up on a hill farm near Porthmadog, North Wales, where his father, a professionally trained engineer and retired army officer, set up a state-of-the-art mechanised milking parlour and retail dairy business. There Warren learned the value of hard work, innovation, and the outdoor pursuits of shooting, riding and fly fishing, all of which gave him much pleasure and success.

At Cranbrook School, Kent, Warren earned a School Certificate with credits in science subjects. He was awarded school colours for achievements in the rugby team and for target rifle shooting, which started his lifelong relationship with Bisley.

On leaving school he followed in his father's footsteps, being commissioned into the 6th Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers (TA). In 1938 he was granted a regular commission. He served in India and Burma as an officer in the Indian Grenadiers during the second world war, reaching the rank of Major. One of his duties was to design and run a small-arms combat training program for sepoy: skills that he pursued during his service in the British army and at Bisley. He married Mary 'Bobbie' Wild, daughter of Lt Col Wild RAMC, on 18 November 1943 in Belgaum, India, a partnership that lasted until her death in April 2011, 67 years later. They had two sons, Giles Miller (1945) and Thomas Granville Whittaker (1948).

On the partition of India he chose to return to the UK with his family – a wrench because he had come to love

India – and his soldiers told him they hoped he would return. In September 1947 he became a captain in the 1st Bn RWF in Germany, where he and his young family were flown into Berlin during the airlift. Regimental duties included training a shooting team and organising skill-at-arms meetings, encouraged by his commanding officer, who also participated. His regimental team won the British Troops Berlin, the Brigade and BAOR Rifle meetings.

Having learned to sail dinghies in India, he developed his skills in Germany, cruising and racing keelboats and dinghies requisitioned from German military clubs by the Allies.

Appointed adjutant for 1st Bn RWF, Warren served in Jamaica 1951-54. Warren led a team to Cuba to shoot against the US Marines where they were narrowly beaten, but honour was restored when the Marines came to Jamaica for a return match. Warren had the highest scores in both matches.

When King George VI died, Warren was tasked with providing a 56-gun salute, but there were only 24 blanks available, so Warren arranged for the pioneer sergeant to hide in a trench between the guns and the spectators to detonate 32 gun cotton slabs, making up for the deficit: problem solved!

Under Warren's command, an RWF detachment was dispatched to Bermuda to provide the security for the Three-Power Summit Conference of December 1953 where Warren used his usual diligence and personality to persuade the CIA that his arrangements, approved by the UK Foreign Office, were well rehearsed by his soldiers and that last-minute changes would cause confusion.

Warren told us that the RWF guard of honour, highly polished and drilled from the recent Queen's visit

DR CDA DAHLSTROM

The DCRA regrets to have to inform

you of the death, on Friday 16 January 2015, of Dr CDA (Clint) Dahlstrom. He was in his 90th year.

A full obituary will appear in the next issue of the Canadian Marksman.

Jim Thompson

Deputy Chairman of Council, DCRA

STAN GRAY

It is with sadness that I announce

that my father, Stan Gray, passed away on 29 January.

He was a member of the NRA from 1961 to 2010. He was the captain of the Great Britain Team to Canada in 1993 and captained Wales many times.

Paul Gray

to Jamaica, contrasted sharply with the US contingent, so he insisted that they were well separated on parade. According to Warren, President Eisenhower (a retired five-star general) demanded an explanation: on being told "we are fighting soldiers, and don't do drill," he answered, "From now on you do!" or words to that effect.

Back in the UK, Warren went on to train as a ground liaison officer at an RAF HQ. On being told by the RAF that he could have anything he needed on exercises with the Army except RAF aircraft and pilots, he contacted the Fleet Air Arm, who were delighted to help out, establishing a close relationship that was to make an important contribution to the military success of the Suez operation, reducing confusion and loss of life, for which he was 'mentioned in a despatch for distinguished service'.

"The system [of ground-to-air liaison] had been well tried by the Commando Brigade during the long wait in

MALTA. Under the direction of Major Whittaker, and with the co-operation of the Royal Navy [aircraft carriers and Fleet Air Arm pilots], it had been perfected”.

In recognition he was presented with a citation and plaque by 40 Commando, Royal Marines.

In 1957-58 he again served in Berlin with the RWF as a company commander, getting involved in a stand-off with a Russian detachment. Then the battalion went to Cyprus for operational duties during the EOKA troubles, involving covert night patrolling and establishing relationships with local leaders.

In September 1958 Warren took command of 6/7 Bn RWF(TA) in Caernarfon, and provided the band, drums and pioneers for Princess Margaret’s wedding, as well as 100 men to line the street. He also established the RWF museum in Caernarfon Castle.

From 1961 to 1964 he commanded the Far East Training Centre, Nee Soon, Singapore, which he regarded as the peak of his Army career, being awarded an OBE for exemplary service. Meanwhile he took his recreation seriously, sailing and winning many races in his GP14 dinghy, with many expeditions into Malayan jungles by car and with his dinghy equipped with an outboard motor.

In 1967 Warren retired from the army to become secretary of the Army Rifle Association (ARA) at Bisley. Some of his achievements include having shooting recognised as a sponsored army sport, and moving the office from London to Aldershot. During his 12-year tenure he improved service shooting in all its forms,

being responsible for innovations at Bisley such as the Moving Target and Falling Plate ranges on Stickledown, a close-quarter battle range, and most notably the introduction of statistical analysis techniques (in consultation with a colleague who was a university mathematician) to calculate the optimum diameter of the bull ring on the traditional Bisley targets, as the accuracy of ammunition and rifles rapidly improved, so that a suitable percentage of competitors would continue to achieve ‘possibles’ in the annual Queen’s Hundred competition at Bisley.

At the nearby Ash Ranges he established facilities for the Olympic Games discipline of International Shooting Union (ISU) Three Position (PSK) shooting, which he promoted in the UK. He led and guided many Army and National teams to international competition success and became an active Member of Council for the UK National Rifle Association (NRA). As well as shooting target rifle competitions for Wales and GB, coaching the Welsh team in two Commonwealth Games.

He retired from the ARA in 1979, having been ‘head-hunted’ by Australian Training Aids (ATA) as technical and range design consultant to develop their Super Dart target system for military use, which introduced Warren to computer programming.

While in Australia he and Bobbie toured Australia in a 4x4 with rugged trailer-tent, visiting much more of that continent than most Australians. He equipped their vehicle to cope with most eventualities, rather than for comfort. They also visited family and friends in the UK and USA, including white-

water rafting down the Grand Canyon with his son Tom, whom he also accompanied to Everest Base Camp.

In the late 1980s Warren was recruited from his retirement by an ex-colleague from ATA, who had established a successful business surveying for hydrocarbons and minerals for industrial operations, and needed help with navigating light aircraft and with map-making for customer reports. Warren also set up in business, and in consultation with a university used LORAN and then GPS and laptop computers in the cockpit, and a ground-based PC for post-processing, establishing state-of-the-art knowledge in that field.

In the mid-1990s his expertise resulted in him being recruited by Oberon Aviation as a consultant, working closely with them to develop a computerised GPS-based air and ground system for mapping power lines and identifying faults from light aircraft flying 80 feet above the ground in the Australian outback. This saved them from imminent bankruptcy, and they are still trading profitably based on software Warren developed or specified.

Not long after his beloved Bobbie died in 2011, Warren relocated to Scotland to be close to his family. He died peacefully in St John’s Hospital, Livingston, Scotland, the day before his 71st wedding anniversary after a short illness. He donated his body to medical research.

A good man who influenced the lives of many, he will be sorely missed by his family, friends, and colleagues worldwide, many of whom have kept in contact.



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GENERAL NOTICES

Procedure for the General Council Elections 2015

Eligibility of Candidates and Proposers

Only persons who are Registered Members of the Association and who have fully paid up their subscriptions for 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 2015.

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 Chief Executive will refer back to authors where CVs are too long or appear to be factually incorrect.

Key dates for Elections

31 March 2015: All Candidates and Proposers must be fully paid-up Registered Members of the Association by this date.

30 April 2015: Nominations for all vacancies must be returned to the Chief Executive by 5pm on this date.

Registered Members must be qualified for voting for their respective Regional or Shooting Discipline Candidate by this date.

All Members desiring to vote must be fully paid-up Registered Members by this date.

23 May 2015: Voting slips will be posted out to all entitled Members by this date together with the procedures for voting.

14 July 2015: Voting slips in the correct envelope supplied must be received by the NRA office by mail or by hand, no later than 5pm on this date.

Scrutineers appointed by the Council

To be notified after the Council Meeting on 24 April 2015.

Results

All results will be confirmed at the General Council meeting in September.

Routine Vacancies

There will be the following vacancies in 2015, all of whom are entitled to stand for re-election.

Five Ordinary Members

GK Alexander
CM Brooks
MJJ Charlton
JM Kynoch
PDC Turner

Five Regional Members

Mrs ID Bennett – West Midlands
PR Coley – South West
GAE Larcombe – Southern
JF Miller – London and South East
MP Watkins – Wales

Three Shooting Discipline Members

JS Harris – Target Shotgun
P Hunter – Civilian Service Rifle and Practical Rifle
A Bullen – Sporting Rifle

GB Team Captain – Nominations invited

Nominations are invited for the Captain of the Great Britain Rifle Team to South Africa for the Australia Match 2017.

Nominations in writing, signed by three proposers all of whom must be full annual or life members of the NRA, must be received by the Secretary General not later than 5pm on Friday 17 April 2015. Requests for nomination forms to be sent to Georgina.Thatcher@nra.org.uk.

NRA 100

Congratulations to Zoe Northam on winning the NRA 100 2014 with an impressive score of 238.

Both Adam Leech and Gareth Corfield scored 235, with Gareth awarded second place on count back in his first attempt at the competition.

Full results are available in our classified results service on page 59.



Gallery Rifle 2015

Welcome to the 2015 Gallery Rifle season. This year looks like it could be busier than last with plenty of opportunities for regular GR shooters to hone their skills and battle for top place in the rankings. With over 15 Open competitions throughout the UK and Europe we welcome all newcomers to try their hand at gallery rifle and pistol shooting. We challenge them not to become addicted. I and the GB squad are always on hand to offer advice and help to anyone who wishes to learn more about our sport.

The coming season sees Team GB competing in three international matches, the last of which is the IGRF 1500 World Championships, to be held in Germany. We are training hard and determined to come away with both trophies this time. At the last World Championships we managed to win 1500 small bore with Ireland narrowly pipping us to the post winning the The team now has a Facebook page where

we will be posting photos, competition updates, scores, hints, tips and so much more. If anyone has any content they feel is worth adding, feel free to make suggestions.

My thanks and appreciation goes to every single member of the 2014 squad. Without them our year wouldn't have been as rewarding or successful as it has been. We have won international competitions, raised money to help us travel and hosted a sociable dinner the night before our home international. Team appearance on the shooting line was very smart, helped by our new kit, which would not have been possible without the help of our sponsors – thank you. The squad and I have had a lot of fun competing across Europe, what could be better than travelling and shooting with friends. I am very happy and proud to be continuing as captain of the GB gallery rifle squad into 2015. I am looking forward to another productive and successful year. It is on this note that I am pleased to

announce that the members of the 2015 squad are:

Peter Cooper – Captain
Lynnemarie Cooper – Secretary
Dave Holt – Vice Captain
Jonathan Avetoomyan
Mel Beard
Jonathan Cormie
Keith Cox
Ash Dagger
Terry Fry
Glenn Gordon
David Hackett
Fraser Hay
Andrew Jarman
Steve Lamb
Colin McMichael
Greg Rastall
Jim Smith
Andy Summers
Morné Van Dalen – New Member
Peter Watts
Chris West
Taff Wilcox
Peter Cooper

Imperial 2015 Update

There are a few changes to the programme for the 146th Imperial Meeting, mainly affecting the Services, IHAM and F Class. The main points are:

Service Shooting

The Tri-Service Operational Shooting Competitions will start a week earlier this year to double the number of competitors. The MoD makes heavy use of Century during training and competitions, starting on Tuesday 16 June. The Queen's Medal Final will be on Thursday 25 June, which also coincides with the joint NRA/Army Rifle Association Adaptive Championship (being held on Melville). Both promise to be great spectator events. As a result of the MoD bookings, civilian use of Century will be limited during this period.

The NRA Service Rifle Individual matches including the Queen Mary will take place on Thursday 18 June. The United Service and International SR Team Matches will both take place on Tuesday 30 June on Century.

Imperial Historic Arms Meeting

Matches will be staged over the weekend of Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 July, on Short Siberia and at BSRC. The meeting will include the most popular 100 and 200 yards events, and Classic Sporting Rifle.

F Class

The F Class programme has been condensed into five days of shooting, from First Friday (10 July) to Second Tuesday (14 July). The idea is to allocate an entire butt for the matches and squad all F Class competitors together across two details, making for a more inclusive and fair competition with similar light and wind conditions.

The F Class Grand Aggregate will be the sum of all shoots on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

The Queen's Prize has been renamed The Farquharson to recognise the original founder of F Class, and together with the St George's, new badges have been designed for the eight finalists in each class – F (Open)

and F/TR. Both matches will be held on Tuesday 14 July, along with the F Class International Match.

Prizegiving will take place on Tuesday 14 July in the Umbrella Tent at 2.30pm.





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SOCIAL CLUB

With a busy calendar of events including formal dinners, relaxed buffets and parties, we also host regular talks from interesting and adventurous individuals, such as Kate Adie, Doug Beattie MC and Pete Winner. The clubhouse is a great place to meet and relax in a vibrant but comfortable atmosphere.

SHOOTING CLUB

With many active and competitive shooting members, we hold club shoots several times a month and run regular competitions from TR & FClass to Service Rifle and other disciplines. New to civilian shooting? We hold regular NRA approved courses to get you started.

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Our Membership Secretary would be delighted to speak to you for further information.



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2015

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Results

NRA 100

Competitor, club, prone,
standing, k/s, total

1. Z Northam, TNHR, 93, 72, 73, 238
2. G Corfield Brunel, 96, 63, 76, 235
3. AJ Leech, Pumas RC, 98, 48, 89, 235
4. CA Painting, Pumas RC, 99, 41, 79, 219
5. C Green, Brunel, 89, 50, 73, 212
6. J Culshaw, SCSRC, 93, 30, 80, 203
7. D Gibson, SCSRC, 95, 29, 76, 200
8. M Mann, Brunel, 94, 30, 71, 195
9. I Ashworth, TNHR, 91, 27, 72, 190
10. J Parsons, 27th, 94, 22, 73, 189
11. DF Robinson, SCSRC, 90, 25, 73, 188
12. A Jackson, HCRPC, 79, 35, 70, 184
13. ME Barr, Pumas RC, 92, 55, 35, 182
14. D Pooley, Old Berks, 90, 30, 54, 174
15. P Waldron, Glascoed RC, 99, 21, 53, 173
16. J Wilson, 32/61, 85, 14, 71, 170
17. S Wilson, 32/61, 86, 24, 59, 169
18. RJ Billington, Pumas RC, 94, 13, 62, 169
19. M Blythe, TNHR, 81, 28, 59, 168
20. IRM Brown, WFBRC, 98, 35, 33, 166
21. P Diprose, SCSRC, 80, 45, 35, 160
22. P Francis, Carlshalton RC, 78, 13, 65, 156
23. J Thurley, 27th, 79, 23, 51, 153
24. D Johnson, HCRPC, 62, 24, 66, 152
25. R Ellis, WFBRC, 87, 14, 47, 148
26. K Hime-Knowles, SCSRC, 73, 29, 44, 146
27. W Turmeau, HCRPC, 54, 15, 68, 137
28. J Pain, SCSRC, 81, 13, 41, 135
29. APW Daw, TNHR, 59, 18, 50, 127
30. G Clark, HCRPC, 75, 0, 48, 123
31. J Stibbs, HCRPC, 56, 15, 51, 122
32. J Pryde, HCRPC, 51, 22, 40, 113

33. S Allan, 27th, 64, 21, 28, 113
34. E Kirk, HCRPC, 76, 9, 16, 101
35. H Dalglish, HCRPC, 45, 8, 20, 73
36. M Mercer, 32/61, 21, 18, 32, 71
37. CR Dean, HCRPC, 27, 19, 12, 58

27th = 27th. London (Putney) R.C.

Brunel = Brunel University Target Shooting Club

HCRPC = Home Counties RPC

Old Berks = Old Berkhamstedians

32/61 = 32nd/61st Surrey Home Guard Rifle and Pistol Club

SCSRC = Surrey County Scout Rifle Club

TNHR = The North Herts Rifles

WFBRC = Wandsworth Fullbore Rifle Club

TARGET SHOTGUN FESTIVAL – GR&P SHOTGUN

T&P1 Semi Auto

1. J Chambers, 298.12
2. R Sanders, 297.14
3. P Matthews, 297.12
4. M Ball, 294.12
5. B Reacher, 292.8

Multi Target Semi Auto

1. R Sanders, 114.8
2. J Chambers, 113.9
3. B Reacher, 111.6
4. P Matthews, M Ball, 107.10

T&P1 Manual

1. A Dreyer, 276.5

Multi Target Manual

1. A Dreyer, 90.3

Practical Shotgun results on page 23.

CSR WINTER LEAGUE – STANDINGS AS OF FEBRUARY

Historic

1. R Morris, 960.67
2. P Bentley, 893.81
3. J Drummond, 791.94

Iron

1. D Moran, 935.61
2. J Geering, 818.14
3. D Cross, 453.89

Practical Optic

1. N St Aubyn, 963.22
2. J Morgan-Hosey, 933.87
3. M Camp, 911.93
4. C Hudson, 921.93
5. S Sheldon, 893.37
6. F Cooke, 876.09

Service Optic

1. A Chapman, 956.44
2. W Ellis, 937.33
3. B Boreham, 919.44
4. P Cottrell, 885.00
5. D Wylde, 880.31
6. D Sanderson, 870.42



Message from the Chairman

An update on the future of the Association from the Chairman, John Webster, following the NRA's three-year strategic review

In an effort to keep you abreast of what is going on, I am writing to encourage you to follow Andrew Mercer's advice elsewhere in this magazine and read our latest three-year strategic plan that has been adopted by the Council, and that is available on the NRA website.

Although the year-end audit is not yet complete, it seems that we will be

able to report another healthy surplus for 2014. This is obviously welcome news, but brings with it the question as to what we should be doing with it, and with future surpluses that we are aiming to generate.

The three-year plan seeks to answer some of these questions, and involves plans to actualise a series of key objectives:

- Improve access to regional ranges
- Increase Bisley range utilisation
- Improve the infrastructure of Bisley Camp
- Improve services to members and increase membership
- Make Bisley more welcoming to new and prospective members
- Increase participation in competitions
- Improve communication with members and affiliated clubs

As I have mentioned before at both last year's Annual General Meeting and Bisley General Meeting, your Council continues to keenly debate what the right level of surplus is for an organisation like ours. This is a complex question that needs to balance the competing interests of value versus cost on a number of fronts.

What I can say is that, at present, I feel comfortable with the current level because in the first instance, we have some catching up to do on missed maintenance and capital expenditure from the recent lean years, and, perhaps more reassuringly, the current level of surplus plus capital expenditure is roughly equal to the level of commercial (i.e. non-member) income that we are generating.

In other words, members' shooting activity is breaking even, and we are either investing or banking the rest. This seems to me to be fair to both current and future members of our Association. I hope you agree.

I wish you all the best for the coming competition season.

John Webster
Chairman



Year-end surpluses will fund the key objectives in the NRA's three-year plan

Members' shooting activity is breaking even, and we are either investing or banking the rest

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Marksman's Calendar

PLAN ALL YOUR SHOOTS FOR THE SUMMER COMPETITION SEASON WITH OUR GUIDE
TO THE EVENTS COMING UP IN 2015. ALL EVENTS AT BISLEY UNLESS STATED

MARCH

21-22 LMRA v Irish Rifle Club (Bisley)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

21-22 Gallery Rifle

– Spring Action Weekend

Shooting Division
sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

APRIL

04-06 Easter Meeting

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

04 Historic Service Rifle Match

Shooting Division
sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

05 Civilian Service Rifle (Winter league)

Shooting Division
sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

11-12 LMRA v UK Police FBRT

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

12 NRA Pistol League Round 1 (Shield Shooting Centre, Dorchester,

Dorset), James Harris
james.harris@nra.org.uk

12 CoL v Surrey v Yorks v ATSC

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

12 Gloucestershire Spring Open TR Meeting (1st Stage)

Ian Ashworth,
ian.ashworth1@mbda-systems.com

18 IBIS Open 2015

Bill Rowland, 0207 696 5249,
billvbull@yahoo.co.uk

18 LMRA v Manydown Rifle Club

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

19 LMRA League First Round (AM)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

19 NRA Shotgun League Round 3 (Romsey Shooting Club)

James Harris, james.harris@nra.org.uk

25 LMRA v Surrey Venture Scouts

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

26 Smallbore Long Range Match

Shooting Division
sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

26 COLFBRT v Middx v

Suffolk v Herts v ULU

LMRA, 01483 473006
secretary@lmra.co.uk

MAY

02 Veterans (AM), LMRA Schools Meeting (PM)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

02-03 ATSC (TR) Open Meeting

ATSC Open Meeting,
atsc.open.meeting@gmail.com

02 LMRA v Oxford University RC

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

02-03 West of Scotland Open Championships (Blair Atholl)

John Potter, 01416 443017,
jmdpottter@googlegmail.com

03 LMRA v Cambridge University Rifle Association

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

03 LMRA 59th Pre-Service Cadet Meeting (PM)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

04 LMRA Individual Match Rifle Competition

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

09 County Astor Heats (AM)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

09 COLFBRT County Jewels/Individual (PM)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

09-10 English, Scottish & Welsh Match Rifle Spring Weekend

Bill Taylor, bill@englisheight.co.uk

10 KGV Heats, London (Middlesex)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

16-17 British 300M Championships

Shooting Division
sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

16 LMRA v Hampshire LR (PM)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

17 LMRA League Second Round (AM)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

17 Scottish Multi-Discipline Shooting Championships (Blair Atholl)

Tony Langford, amlangf@yahoo.com

19 LMRA v UK Police FBRT

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

22-24 Phoenix Meeting

Shooting Division
sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

24 NRA Pistol League Round 2

James Harris, james.harris@nra.org.uk

30-31 LMRA v Welsh XX

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

JUNE

05-07 Scottish Open Championships (Blair Atholl)

Tim Kidner, 01224 321468,
tlk762@aol.com

06 LMRA Match Rifle Competition

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

06-07 NRA Shotgun League Round 4 (Shield Shooting Centre, Dorchester)

James Harris,
james.harris@nra.org.uk

07 LMRA League Final Round (AM)

LMRA, 01483 473006,
secretary@lmra.co.uk

13-14 NRA Inter-Counties Meeting

Shooting Division,
sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

17-02 Jul Service Weapons Events and Aggregates

Shooting Division

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

20-21 Scottish Open Long Range Championships (Blair Atholl)

Tim Kidner, 01224 321468, tlk762@aol.com

21 LMRA v BCRC v NLRC

LMRA, 01483 473006, secretary@lmra.co.uk

24-28 NRA Imperial Meeting – Civilian Service Rifle

Shooting Division

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

25 NRA Military Adaptive Shooting Championship 2015

Carol Kellow, 01483 797777, carol.kellow@nra.org.uk

28 NRA Shotgun League Round 5 (Phoenix Shooting Club)

James Harris, james.harris@nra.org.uk

JULY

03-09 NRA Imperial Meeting – Match Rifle

Shooting Division

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

04-05 NRA Imperial Meeting – Historic Arms

Shooting Division

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

06-09 NRA Imperial Meeting – Schools Meeting

Peter Turner, schools@nra.org.uk

08-12 NRA Imperial Meeting – Gallery Rifle and Pistol

Neil Francis, gallery@nra.org.uk

09-18 NRA Imperial Meeting – Target Rifle

Shooting Division

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

09 LMRA v Guernsey Rifle Association (PM) (Guernsey)

LMRA, 01483 473006, secretary@lmra.co.uk

10-15 NRA Imperial Meeting – F Class Rifle

Shooting Division,

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

18 NRA Imperial Meeting – HM Queens Prize Final

Shooting Division,

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

19 Shotgun Solid Slug Match (Shield

Shooting Centre, Dorchester)

James Harris, james.harris@nra.org.uk

AUGUST

01-02 Inverness-shire Open Championships (Cawdor)

Donald Drawbell,

secretary@cawdorifleandgunclub.co.uk

09 NRA Pistol League Round 3

James Harris, james.harris@nra.org.uk

15-16 Tullibardine (Tayside)

Open Championships (Blair Atholl)

Jim Bell, jwhbell@btinternet.com

15-16 HBSA Miniature Rifle Meeting

HBSA, shooting@hbsa-uk.org

16 Catastrophy

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

29 LMRA v Royal Navy TRC

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

29-30 Gallery Rifle and Pistol

National Championships

Neil Francis, gallery@nra.org.uk

30 LMRA v JRA (Away) (Jersey)

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

SEPTEMBER

05 Highpower Rifle Association Precision & Snap Shooting Match in aid of the Royal British Legion

HRA Entries,

HRA.Entries@btinternet.com

06 NRA Practical Pistol League (Shield Shooting Centre, Dorchester)

James Harris, james.harris@nra.org.uk

06 Bisley Clubs (LMRA v RAF)

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

12 Affiliated Clubs Championships (pairs)

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

12 East of Scotland Open Championships (Blair Atholl)

Major (Ret'd) RJ Aitken, 0131 445 1948,

baitkenshooting@btinternet.com

19-20 National Rifle Club of Scotland Open

Championships (Blair Atholl)

Tim Kidner, 01224 321468,

tlk762@aol.com

19 Match V ATSC

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

20 Gloucestershire

Autumn Open TR meeting

Ian Ashworth,

ian.ashworth1@mbda-systems.com

26-27 Open Meeting

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

26-27 English & Irish

Autumn Meeting

Bill Taylor, bill@englisheight.co.uk

OCTOBER

03 Historic Service Rifle Match

Shooting Division,

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

03-04 LMRA V SRA (Home)

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

04 Civilian Service Rifle

(Winter league)

Shooting Division,

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

10-11 Ages Match

Shooting Division,

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

17-18 The Trafalgar Meeting 2015

Shooting Division,

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

24-25 Gallery Rifle – Autumn Action Weekend

Shooting Division,

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

NOVEMBER

01 NRA Pistol League

James Harris, james.harris@nra.org.uk

07 Civilian Service Rifle

(Winter league)

Shooting Division

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

15 NRA Shotgun League (Shield Shooting Centre, Dorchester)

James Harris, james.harris@nra.org.uk

21-22 Target Shotgun Festival

Shooting Division

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

DECEMBER

06 Civilian Service Rifle (Winter league)

Shooting Division,

sally.wilson@nra.org.uk

06 Wappenschaw

LMRA, 01483 473006,

secretary@lmra.co.uk

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Message 10

George Granycome, practical shotgunner, gives NRA marketing and communications manager Katia Malcaus Cooper his views

How did you get into shooting and at what age?

I must have become interested in guns at a very early age, probably from watching all those westerns at the cinema, and playing cowboys and Indians. At Sunday School when all the other children drew holy pictures, I drew pictures of guns. I remember the vicar actually being complimentary about my drawing of the Battle of Jutland.

I was nine when my father bought me a second-hand .22 Webley air pistol for Christmas. I have it still. I became proficient and could hit a matchbox at 10 yards. I used to rat hunt with it at a nearby farm, but discovered that I did not really enjoy shooting live quarry, and so I have since stuck to target shooting. It is, however, my regret that I did not take up shooting as a hobby until my late thirties.

What is the most memorable moment in your career?

Sitting in a ditch on Century Range at Bisley in 1987 awaiting the start of the first day's competition in the Regular Army Skill at Arms Meeting. I remember the thrill, the tension, the nervous joking, and my fellow members of the Fleet Air Arm Rifle Team as vividly as though I were looking at a photograph.

What was the biggest hurdle you had to overcome as a shooter?

I have never overcome an inability to shoot as straight and as fast as I would like.

What Club are you a member of?

I'm a member of Shield Shooting Centre in Dorset. It is a wonderful club and shooting range run by Steve Pike, a true friend to me and to shooting. I am also a member of Romsey and enjoy the humour and fun of that club.



How has Bisley influenced you?

To the extent that I wish I had not wasted my youth on drinking and chasing women, and had found my way there sooner.

What do you like to do in your free time?

A trite but almost true answer would be I regret I do not have sufficient time to answer that question! It is difficult to spell out what fills the day. The internet is a wonderful means of communication, and replying to emails and reading favourite internet forums takes up a chunk of time. I do jobs around the house and in the garden. I like to reload when I have the time. I read, and I am attending German language classes, and also have been recently been inspired to get out my Italian books to try again with that beautiful language.

Do you have any pre-competition routines?

I like to clean my gun the day before. I know a very experienced shooter who is of the opinion that it is good to find yourself in a spray of oil as you shoot,

because it confirms you have lubricated the gun sufficiently. I confess to being a compulsive choke changer, to the extent that even though I know I have the correct choke for the next practical shotgun stage, some strange force compels me to take it out and put it back in again.

What advice would you give to somebody who wanted to take up shooting?

Do not wait – begin now. Find a local club and join it, talk to other shooters, but do not believe half the advice you are given. Above all shoot in competitions, but do not get upset if you do not do well. Participation is everything; becoming upset if you don't win is for Australians.

So what next?

A hamstring injury (incurred while running in a shooting competition – where else?) has delayed me from fully taking up Civilian Service Rifle this year, but I look forward to getting stuck in on recovery, and I look forward to more practical shotgun, and more two-gun, at friendly clubs across the country and especially at Bisley. ■



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