

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

Bisley General Meeting

Minutes of the Bisley General Meeting

held in the Marquee, Exhibition Lawn, Bisley
on Tuesday 23rd July 2019 from 9.00pm

Present:

Chairman:	Mr JGM Webster
Chief Executive	Mr A Mercer
Vice Chairman Council	Mr D Evans
Treasurer	Mr A Reynolds
Members:	200 Registered and other Members

BISLEY GENERAL MEETING

Notice of the Bisley General Meeting

The notice of the Meeting was taken as read.

ITEM 1 - SPEECHES

The Speech of the Chairman is attached hereto and initialled by the Chairman.

ITEM 2 - OPEN FORUM

ITEM - 3 – QUALIFYING SCORE HM THE QUEENS PRIZE, STAGE I

The Bronze Medal went to Mr K Crabtree of LMRA with a score of 105.15v.

The last score qualifying for Stage II is 99.8v, finishing 33.4v at 600 yards.

Chairman

Proceedings

Welcome to the Bisley General Meeting of 2019.

I am joined here on the rostrum by David Evans, the Vice-Chairman of Council, Andrew Reynolds, our Treasurer and Andrew Mercer, our Chief Executive.

I would like to welcome all our Vice-Presidents who have either been here, are here or are coming here. I would particularly like to welcome those from overseas: Philippe Ginestet from France, Norris Gomez from Trinidad, Stan Frost from Canada, Cliff Mallet from Jersey and Dennis Flaharty from the USA.

I would also like to introduce our two new Vice Presidents, who were elected at the Annual General Meeting.

The first is Deitmar Honersch of Germany, whose is not with us. But Dietmar has been involved in Gallery Rifle shooting with the BDMP for several decades and is widely credited with instigating competitive gallery rifle shooting in Germany. He has been the Gallery Rifle discipline rep for the BDMP for many years. He was also the manager of the popular Liettmar range which has regularly welcomed NRA pistol shooters to its facility.

He is a regular visitor to Bisley and he is an active competitor at the Phoenix and the Trafalgar Meetings. He was also the German Team Manager for the Gallery Rifle International that took place at the Phoenix Meeting.

This is a first for our Association, to have a German, and a member of the BDMP, as a Vice President, and I can think of no finer representative. I did award Dietmar his badge after the AGM when he was here for the Phoenix meeting.

The second needs no introduction here, I'm sure. He is Tony Clayton. Those of you who know Tony will know that he needs no introduction. For the very few of you here that don't, Tony has, for the last 25 years, been the Chief Range Officer of the Imperial Target Rifle Meeting, either on Century and/or Stickledown. This is his last year in that capacity.

In addition to that, he has been variously a member of General Council of the NRA and he has also been heavily involved in cadet shooting, including being a commandant of an Athelings tour. I would like to ask Tony to come forward to receive his badge and, of course, your applause.

Moving on to the competitions:

We started the Imperial Meeting with the Service Rifle events, which were supported by

overseas teams from Canada and Oman. Over 200 competitors took part.

The winners of Her Majesty the Queen's Medals were:

for the Royal Navy/Royal Marines, Marine Barrie Wallace, Royal Marines;

for the Army Reserve, Private Paul McLure, 152nd Regiment Royal Logistics Corp;

for the Army, Corporal Subesh Rai, 2nd Regiment Royal Gurkha Rifles;

for the Royal Air Force, Flight Sergeant Peter Guard of the Royal Air Force.

The Methuen Trophy Inter Corp Team Shoot was won by the Royal Gurkha Rifles.

The first part of the meeting open to civilians was the Cottesloe Heath Challenge on the 28th to 30th June and 161 entrants and 9 teams took part.

The Civilian Service Rifle events followed and they opened with their first shot taking place on 3rd July and these events saw 441 competitors shoot over 5 days, up by over fifty competitors on last year's numbers, including some all the way from Australia for the first time, which is great news.

The class winners were;

in Historics, G Corfield with a score of 635,

In Iron Sighted Rifle, D Moran, 1020,

Practical Optic, N Stirrup, 1121 and

Service Optic, N Greenaway, 1160.

The CSR Meeting culminates in the NRA Methuen Cup Match. The Practical Class was retained by the London Practical Shooting Club A Team, while the Lee Enfield Rifle Association 'A' team retained the Mons Trophy for the Historic Enfield Class.

The winner of our fifth NRA Military Adaptive Championship this year was Ash Hall with a score of 337.20v in the Veteran class. There were 22 Veteran entries this year.

A successful Inter Services Cadet Rifle Meeting was held over the period with a total of 103 teams competed including the Royal Canadian Army Cadet National Rifle Team. The winning team in the Team Grand Aggregate was 2nd Northern Ireland Battalion E Company Army Cadet Force 'A' Team with a score of 910.46v, and Cpl AM Doody from Dorset A Company Army Cadet Force won the Bossom, which is the individual prize, with a score of

241.18v. Mr Nick Taylor from the Defence, Equipment and Support Group presented the prizes to the cadets.

At the Schools' Meeting there were 37 schools competing, with 468 cadets taking part, including the Royal Canadian Army Cadets and The Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps. 20 of those schools participated in the Ashburton Shield which was won by the Royal Grammar School Guildford with a score of 759.44v beating Gresham's School into second place by 3 points.

The Historic Arms Meeting was run over the weekend of 13th and 14th July aided by volunteers to whom we owe our thanks. The event saw a slight increase in the number of competitors. Cadets from 211 ATC (Newbury) Sqn acted as markers and performed to their usual high standard.

Turning to Match Rifle, the Hopton was won by Nick Tremlett, beating David Calvert by five points with a score of 1000.111v. David Calvert got his revenge by winning the Albert, which is the last shoot in the Hopton, with the score of 222.25v.

The Elcho was retained by England with a score of 1727.189v beating Scotland's 1715.160v with Wales on 1671.116v and Ireland 1664.123v.

The Match Rifle events also included the 8th holding of the Woomera Match between Australia and GB, to help us celebrate our 150th prize meeting. This is most fitting, since Match Rifle is one of our most venerable disciplines and has long-lived international competition at its heart. The annual match for the Elcho Shield was first contested in 1862 which was at our 3rd Annual Prize meeting and it has the distinction of being the second oldest consistently held international team sporting rivalry anywhere in the world, behind only yachting's America's Cup.

To boot, we all know that any sporting clash between GB and Australia is no ordinary rivalry. A genteel Match Rifle contest may not have the spice of a cricket or rugby clash, but national honour, as well as bragging rights, are still at stake. I am pleased to report that the Woomera Match was won by Great Britain, captained by Tim Kidner, with a score of 1758.208v ahead of Australia with 1702.143v. Well done Tim.

The Imperial Gallery Rifle meeting had over 125 competitors, with over 1,400 competitions shot, an increase of 14% over the preceding year. Our thanks go to those who helped organise this very enjoyable and relaxed event.

McQueen A, sponsored by Accuracy International, has had a very successful meeting with a

more than doubling of entries.

Overall Target and Match Rifle has shown 1070 entries, up on last years' entries. 239 of those are from overseas, compared to 158 in 2018. The Grand Aggregate has had 825 entries, up on last year and we have seen teams and individuals from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Guernsey, Jersey, Kenya, the Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, the USA and the West Indies. 85 entered the F-Class competitions. 61 Under 25s and 256 Under 21s are competing, both up on last year.

The oldest competitor remains Jo Wright who is now 96, and is competing in his 62nd Imperial Meeting, and our youngest is Miss A Longhurst at only 10 years of age, competing in her first Imperial in the F-Class competitions.

Thursday sees the 10th holding of the America Match to help us celebrate the 150th Imperial meeting with a TR match. This can only be held with the permission of the NRA of America and when the US National team is present. I am pleased to welcome Stu Mackey and his team to Bisley and I wish all the competing teams a most enjoyable match.

We also wish all the best on Friday to Toby Raincock with his GB team in the Kolapore.

Now my thank you's to those who have worked very hard over the last 5 weeks of competitions.

To the Operational Shooting Training Team who produced military range teams and the MoD and Landmarc teams at Pirbright.

Our thanks also to the Bisley 'V' Club for organising "The Arthur Clarke" long range match for the cadets.

To Col Robert Bruce and CCRS in their support of the cadets with both ISCRM and Schools.

To our Chief Range Officers, John Miller and Tony Clayton on Stickledown and Peter Turner and Lisa Railton on Century and Martin Camp on the McQueen.

To our Chief of Staff, Mike Turner, Chief Butts Officers, Colin Scoles on Century and Tom Hampshire on Stickledown, and all the RCOs and Butt supervisors who have kept things going for us. Our sincere thanks goes to all the markers who have done a sterling job in all the butts.

And to the staff who have prepared the Camp and Ranges, to the team of volunteers who have opened the Museum.

And I would also like to thank the front counter team for ensuring everyone had their squadding cards on time, the Stats team who have produced all the results, the Range Office and Armoury staff who have ensured the ranges run smoothly, as well as all those working diligently behind the scenes to ensure a successful Imperial Meeting for all.

We have also had elections for positions on General Council this year, and I am pleased to announce the results.

Firstly the F-Class Discipline Representative for which we had two candidates put forward. The successful candidate was Jon Longhurst.

The second election was for five vacancies for Ordinary Members of General Council. There were six candidates put forward and the results were as follows:

Iain Thomson, 1,518 votes;

Karen Robertson, 1,424 votes;

Mik Maksimovic, 1,325 votes;

Reg Roberts, 1,239 votes;

Derek Lowe, 1,216 votes; and

Simon Dixon, 882 votes.

Our congratulations go to all the successful candidates.

Many of you will know that we have been engaging with the Charity Commission on various aspects of the operation of the Association. This engagement came about as the result of a complaint received by the Charity Commission primarily about the levels of rents charged by the Association to its tenants, and the costs it had necessarily incurred in managing those relationships.

The Association is a registered charity and as a result must operate within the confines of charity law and must have regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission.

The Commission has sent us a detailed report of its investigation and an action plan for us to implement. The content is useful, and most instructive. I am happy to provide here a summary of the work involved in implementing that report, including several important points that have come out of the engagement process.

The first is in relation to the rent that the Association charges in relation to leases of its

properties to non-charitable tenants. There are 108 properties on Camp that are leased to a range of tenants – individuals, clubs and commercial organisations. There has been an ongoing discussion between the Association and various tenants over recent years as to the level of rents.

As previously advised at the AGM, The Charity Commission has helpfully advised us in the following terms, and I quote:

"We have previously advised that the support of non-charitable shooting clubs is not in itself charitable. NRA tenants and affiliated clubs are not themselves established for charitable purposes so we expect tenants to be charged at full rent. It does not fall within the purposes of the NRA to support and subsidise its tenants".

In their most recent letter to us of the 30th May, the CC added: "In the case of the Artists Rifle clubhousethe points of law established are relevant matters for decision making in future leases."

This advice is clear and unequivocal and confirms that the Association was correct in pursuing market rents in relation to the leases that it grants. It also means that the Association is right to expect tenants to comply with the requirements of their leases including maintenance obligations and paying the costs of dilapidations at the end of the lease.

Having dealt with the issue of rents, the Commission also reviewed a number of other aspects of the operation of the Association, including the extent to which civilian marksmanship may be considered a charitable activity.

The NRA has a wholly-owned subsidiary, the National Shooting Centre Limited, often referred to as the NSC. The NSC was established to carry out non-charitable activities, since the Association may only engage in those activities that are considered charitable.

The Commission takes the view that the promotion of civilian marksmanship is not a charitable activity. Whatever the views on the state of the law within the Association, our preference as Trustees is to be pragmatic and work to maintain an allocation of activities between the Association and the NSC that will be acceptable to the Commission. We are working on this at the moment, and our expectation is that a division of responsibilities can be mapped out between the Association and the NSC that enables you to continue to use the facilities here as you enjoy them at present.

One of the key actions is that we not just maintain, but are able to demonstrate, a clear

distinction between the non-charitable activities of the NSC and the charitable activities of the Association. As a result, you will see the name of the NSC with more prominence than in the past. We will also be putting in place internal procedures and legal documentation that will enable us to demonstrate compliance with this separation to the Commission.

We will be updating our real estate policy and our disciplinary code to ensure they are fit for purpose. Our processes must not only be fair, but they must be seen to be fair. Clear, simple policies that are applied equally to all are an important part of this.

The website will be reviewed and updated to make sure that the website reflects the separation between the Association and the NSC.

The Trustees will be working with General Council to ensure that the Trustees can demonstrate that they have the necessary skills available to them, from within their number, or by drawing on the broad range of skills in General Council and wider membership, or by engaging appropriate professional advisers as needed to ensure that the activities of the Association are carried out effectively.

Finally, we will be reviewing the process for the negotiation and agreement of new leases and implementing a mechanism for demonstrating to the Commission that the Trustees are exercising appropriate oversight of the management of the real estate on Bisley Camp, and are avoiding, to the extent possible, the need to incur significant legal fees in managing these relationships. We were reassured that the Commission made no finding that the costs incurred on such matters to date were unreasonable.

These arrangements should not change the way you experience life at Bisley, or at any other shooting range around the country. However, they will involve the preparation of a significant amount of documentation and will be occupying much of the time of the Trustees over the next six months. This process will also involve a not insignificant amount of legal costs.

The result will be that the structure and governance of the Association will be in good order for the coming years. We will also be reviewing the disciplinary rules in the Bisley Handbook and rewriting them. This review will simplify the rules and make them easier to understand, provide greater transparency to our processes, and clarifying the role of the Secretary General in relation to disciplinary matters. It will preserve the fundamental point that the Disciplinary Body is independent of both Council and of General Council. This process will draw on the experience of the Disciplinary Body over recent years. As a practical matter, you will also see greater clarity as to whether an action is being taken by the NRA (in respect of its members) or by the NSC (in respect of its customers).

Before I throw the meeting open to questions, I would like to ask John Bloomfield to step forward to update us all on the findings regarding the issued ammunition for the meeting. But before I do, I would to thank the Armoury team of John Bloomfield himself, and Tom Rylands who have been enthusiastically supported by Anton Aspin, Fergus Flanagan, Fulton's and HPS, for all their considerable hard work and expertise in keeping the meeting going.

John, please would you come forward.

John Bloomfield:

Thank you Chairman. Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

I thought it might be appropriate if I started by giving you some approximate numbers to try and put things into context. As many of you know, we have run an extractor clinic over in the Pavilion and people who have had problems with their firearm have been able to come and get them sorted out, more or less as they happen, and they have not been charged for that service.

We have had visits from approximately 130 competitors, of which 9 have been repeat customers, if I may use the word rather loosely. Several of the repeat customers have been more than once. One in particular has been 7 or 8 times with the same problem and it is becoming increasingly clear that there is a manufacturing issue with that particular rifle which makes it particular vulnerable to such problems.

Of the rest, 118 of the rifles we have seen are divided into three makes; Barnards and the RPA family. As far as the RPA family is concerned, virtually all of the problems have been with either the Quadlock action (the black coloured ones), and the older Paramount. The extractors are exactly the same design on all of them, as they are on the RPA 2000, and indeed the earlier silver coloured Quadlocks.

It is not insignificant that we have had virtually no problems with the RPA 2000s (we have seen 3 of those) and we have seen only 1 silver coloured Quadlock. That points us in the direction that there may be other contributory causes, as well as the ammunition.

So that puts things, I hope, in context as to the scale of the problem. You can count for yourselves; if there is 900 people shooting the Grand, there has been at least 700 people who have had no problem at all.

One of the things that we have had to contend with is there has been a lot of talk, particularly on Facebook, that the NRA has not acknowledged that there is a problem with the ammunition. If that is the case, why is it that we have actually published a procedure to deal

with problems with ammunition, we have provided the range staff with instruction and the tools to help competitors out, and we have provided a free facility for dealing with those problems when they occur? The accusation and the actions simply do not add up.

If I may move on, there has also been a lot of speculation about this being a pressure related issue and therefore a safety issue. It is most emphatically not.

The ammunition has been tested, both by the manufacturer and the Birmingham Proof House Laboratory, both in the CIP barrel that is specified by the Proof House, and by a Rule 150 compliant barrel.

To give you some approximate figures, and this is not an exact science by any manner of means, the average figure for pressure in the CIP barrel, which is what we have to quote, is 3450 bar, set against a maximum limit that the Proof House has given us for our ammunition used in our rifles of 3650 bar. It is quite clear that the ammunition is within the specification for pressure, and therefore the speculation that has gone on on Facebook is entirely unfounded and inaccurate.

The other thing that has caught people's eye is the excessive stretching of cases on firing. We are still examining the reasons for this. We have some rather better ideas now with the quantity that we have seen during the meeting of both the mechanism which is driving this, and potentially the causes for it.

We have commissioned and are awaiting the results of some metallurgical analysis of both cartridge cases and some rifle components, and in due course along with a report on the rest of it, this will be published.

What has also become clear is there are a certain number of rifles which may have gunsmithing issues that the ammunition problem has simply highlighted.

Anybody who deals with the forensic investigation of problems, accidents and so on, will realise that there is never one single cause to a problem or an accident happening. It may be, for example, that there are four causes or four contributory factors, three of which are present all of the time, and it is only the fourth one that makes it become obvious that there is a problem, and that is something else we are looking into.

I think that's about as much as I wish to say, other than the investigation will continue, we have an obligation at the end of that investigation to discuss our findings first with the ammunition manufacturer, and once we have done so, the results and the analysis will be published in the usual fashion on the website and possibly in the Journal, but I think mostly on the website for people to read.

I don't know whether you want me to answer questions if there are any Mr Chairman?

Chairman:

I'm sure there will be questions, but let's wait until we open that to the floor.

Thank you very much for that.

I think I would say again, I'd like to thank John and Tom in particular for their sterling hard work, but I would also like to thank those 100-120 people who have had what could be described as a less agreeable experience than they might have enjoyed otherwise at this meeting.

I think, in general, those people who have had those problems have done so with very good humour and I think it is only fair for me and the rest of us to acknowledge that this is not what we anticipated, it is not what we wanted, but we would like to thank you for rolling with that particular punch in the way that you have.

With respect to that, the Shooting Committee have met earlier today and we have secured a number of rounds of 2015 GGG which will be used for both the George's Final and the Queen's Final on Saturday. I'd like to thank all those involved for their help in doing that. So that should ensure we will not have anything that should be untoward for our two finals on Saturday.

Again, thank you for that, John.

So I'd now like to throw the meeting open to the floor. The microphone is over there. Please come forward, state your name and please try and make your point quickly as there may be several others who want to make a point. If you can do it in under two minutes, we would be most grateful.

Thank you.

Jeremy Hakim, Old Epsomian Rifle Club:

Regarding the Charity Commission, I would just like the NRA to advise us when that committee have seen the result of the reorganisation that you are planning, and advise us that they are happy with those changes.

Chairman:

So the process of these letters tends to be when you have a charity investigation of this type, the Charity Commission send you an action plan. They have sent us an action plan, and

have given us six months to complete it. We have written back to them, saying we believe we can achieve this. Some of the things on the action plan have already been accomplished, but there are other things, particularly legal documentation and alike, which we would anticipate getting done by the end of December.

I would say we have advised the Charity Commission that if we thought we needed to run into January or February, we would let them know, and they seem to be able to oblige us if that is the case. But we don't think it will be.

Jeremy Hakim:

That is excellent. I just wanted to make sure that when they say it's in order, that we are all advised.

Chairman:

That's fine. We anticipate getting to the end of 2019 with a fully completed action plan and we would of course make that fact available.

Jeremy Hakim:

Thank you Mr Chairman. Just one other if I may? It's well under the two minutes.

It's a matter of the taking over of the clays and sporting rifle units and whether members should be in a position to have to fund the acquisition of new equipment, and has the funding been put in place and agreed to be able to do just that?

Chairman:

So I think with respect, these are two different items, so I think it's fair for me to separate them if I may.

The British Sporting Rifle Club is on our Council agenda for the 9th & 10th August. I have a meeting to go and see the facilities personally in the earlier part of that week. We will be undergoing an analysis with the help of the members of the British Sporting Rifle Club to do exactly that.

With respect to the Bisley Shooting Ground, there has been a lot in the press, as you will know and will have seen. I think there is an attractive commercial opportunity and we are, at the moment, having a disagreement. BSG have initiated court proceedings to stop us taking back the land and clubhouse which we believe is due to us at the end of the lease and the licenses on the clubhouse and the land.

Until that is resolved, we don't really know where we will come out. But the business model that is suggested is clearly affordable and fundable.

Jeremy Hakim:

Thank you so much.

Peter Hobson, Vice President of the NRA:

Good evening Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen.

Mr Chairman, I welcome your frankness on the separation of the duties between the NSC and the charitable organisation. Can you assure us that there will also be a separation of powers that the Chief Executive of the National Rifle Association is not also Chief Executive, or the only director as he stands at the moment, of the National Shooting Centre?

In terms of discipline, I feel we can have conflict of interest.

Chairman:

The straightforward answer is yes. There will be more directors of the NSC.

Ian Reeves, Open School Rifle Club:

My question is regarding the nature of ammunition and the people's good humour and goodwill and rolling with the punches.

Is it the intent of the NRA to use GGG next year?

Chairman:

I think the answer to that is it's too early, and it will be taken under advisement by the Shooting Committee.

There is clearly, as John Bloomfield has rightly pointed out, a need for us to be professional with a supplier of this type. We need to put to them our findings, which have been painstakingly put together, and that we give them a chance to assess the findings that we have discovered and see if they are in agreement.

I think it would be wrong of us to make a decision now to say we wouldn't use GGG, they have been a pretty good provider of ammunition in the past. As it happens, last year's problems were a projectile problem which was not of their making. This year's problems still appear to be as yet uncertain, but we are honing in on a cause.

Once we have done that, we will obviously make an assessment about next year.

The issue will include the affordability of any other issued ammunition. We get this ammunition at a very attractive price for competitors. Offers have been made to us by other providers but I'm not sure that we would get it at such a commercially attractive price for each competitor, and so we will have to weigh that in the balance.

Ian Reeves:

Thank you sir.

Mike Gregory, Royal Air Force Target Rifle Club and North London Rifle Club:

A trivial point really, but to flesh out one further aspect of the ammunition, I had a failure, I wouldn't call it a like strike because when I reported it as instructed to the NRA Armourer and had my rifle checked, it checked out and I had HPS examine my bolt and that was fully serviceable, so it wasn't the rifle, but the ammunition. And I was told it wasn't the only round that had failed to go off. Was this widespread or is it just two or three examples during the meeting?

Chairman:

I don't know the answer to that question – John (Bloomfield), do you?

John Bloomfield:

I can give you some idea. We have had a very small number of reports of light strikes, the odd hang fire, but that is not unusual. We've had these and it's running at the same level as it has for many years, both with GGG, with RUAG and RG before it.

It's not, as far as I'm aware, a concerning problem.

Mike Gregory:

Thank you very much.

Rob Kitson, Army Target Shooting Club:

Good evening Mr Chairman.

There's been some ammunition issues for the past couple of years, and RWS had its own issues with hot primers, and some people were pulled off the point when that happened, and some of us can remember some time ago with Indep.

So there seems to be an issue from year to year, or some years. Can we make it part of the tendering process that is open and, if we are going to continue using issued ammunition, that manufacturers are held to account for the standard, it is produced some months in advance, there's time to resolve any issues, and if there is a bullet issue, if there's a primer issue, or if there is a brass issue, which appears to be the case this year, that they resolve that, and that there is sufficient time for other measures to be put in place, which is a necessity when you've got many overseas teams in a high profile event?

So, with such a high profile event, it seems to be a lack of planning in the tendering process. I'll leave it to you to consider.

Chairman:

Some observations from me, and I may ask John (Bloomfield) to put in a couple of observations.

The first thing that we have got to recognise is that we buy approximately 400,000 rounds for this competition which is not an inconsequential amount of money.

The Target Rifle part of the membership of the NRA represents less than 50% of the members. For us to be able to afford to buy that amount of ammunition, we have to encourage all of you who want to participate to enter early to improve our cash flow sufficiently such that we can actually afford to pay for the ammunition when it is delivered. So that gives us quite a problem with early production.

The second thing is, we tested this ammunition quite extensively before we started to incur the problems that I think were first evidenced in the Army Target Shooting Club weekend in early May. The issue that we found with this particular ammunition was obviously much more action specific than was obvious during the testing that either GGG or we had done prior to that date.

So I recognise that if we are going to continue with this, there are some improvements that we can make to this tendering process, but it's not without its challenges. I take the point that your making Rob, and let's see if we can improve things going forward.

John, do you have anything to add on that?

John Bloomfield:

If I may Mr Chairman, yes.

I'm sorry to be taking up quite so much of your time!

The ordering of the ammunition starts more or less straight after the Bisley meeting. We have to bear in mind that bullets have to be ordered from the United States, they have to be made, they have to get a shipping and export licence for them, despite the fact they are inert, and that with the American export system takes a considerable time.

We had hoped last year that the bullets themselves would arrive with GGG around about the end of October and we had asked for a small quantity of about 1000 to be shipped across so that we could do some testing to find out whether the quality of bullets, which was the problem last year, had been resolved.

Unfortunately, and I don't know the exact reasons, the bullets didn't arrive with GGG until early in the New Year, at which point in order to get the shipment out before a certain date of the 26th March, and avoid possible export problems from Europe, they had to set to and make the ammunition in fairly short order.

So the ideal situation did not occur and we will certainly attempt to put in place a rather better way of doing that for next year.

As far as testing it is concerned, I fired something like 650 rounds through the NRA's testing equipment and found absolutely no problems whatsoever with extraction. However, hindsight is a wonderful thing and that was done using a Swing action, as it has been for at least the last 30 years, and it turns out that the Swing action is one that just does not suffer from the problems that we've had this meeting.

Had we used another action, it may well have become obvious in early April that the problem existed. We then tested a certain amount of it with two firers, one of whom used an RPA 2000 action, which again is one that does not suffer from problems, and one used an RPA Quadlock which did in fact suffer a broken extractor, though that is not unusual, we get at least 20 a year having asked around the gun trade. Therefore I simply put it down as it was one of those things that happened.

It wasn't until the Army meeting that it became clear that there was a problem with 2019 GGG. Even then it wasn't immediately obvious whether it was the same ammunition as the NRA had bought. So there was a certain delay built into the system which we've had to cope with, and in reality it was not until about mid-May, perhaps the second or third quarter of May, that we actually become aware that we had got a problem and we had to try and do something about it.

As I said earlier, there has been an extensive investigation going on which is not yet completed, and will continue after the meeting. That is about as much as we could do, other

than putting in place the arrangements to try and minimise the disruption to competitors and the inconvenience to competitors.

I would like to think from the pragmatic and good natured people who have been in to get their extractors fixed, I would like to think that perhaps we achieved that.

Chairman:

Does anybody have any more questions?

Dominic de Vere, Old Marlburian Rifle Club:

I appreciate your comments about thanking competitors for taking on the problem of ammunition and rolling with it. I do think that the NRA needs to accept that Facebook and other social media platforms are here. You've got to take on that problem and roll with it.

There has been a poor response on social media, and I think just to stand here and say 'oh there are too many people complaining on Facebook about the ammo',

OK, yes, feed back. Deal with those problems on Facebook, on the other social media platforms, and let people have the information. Explain stuff to them rather than just letting the rumour mill run amok on those platforms.

Chairman:

John (Bloomfield) would like to answer, I think.

John Bloomfield:

Thank you for those comments. I'm not sure I necessarily agree with them.

Part of the issue that we have with Facebook is, as with any investigation, when you start with an investigation you will perhaps come to some initial conclusions. As the evidence gathers, those conclusions may change. Having spent something of the order of 35 years standing up in the courts in this country as an expert, having investigated the firearms aspects of some quite serious crimes, including multiple issues of murder, one of the things that always appears in those reports, is that if further evidence appears, the expert reserves his right to change his opinion.

The problem with providing early information and early conclusions, is that people do not always appreciate that those conclusions can change with evidence. And that leads to some difficulties.

It is not very helpful, I agree, when people speculate wildly, but if you feed more information that changes, you end up in a situation where people say, well you said this before, or the first time, you are now saying something different, do you actually know what you're talking about.

No expert would put himself in the position of saying one thing and then changing his mind and finding that you are basically shot down for doing so.

Dominic de Vere:

Yes I agree. But this is 2019 and this is what political parties and politicians do every day. You've just got to learn to manage it better.

Mike Seager, British Sporting Rifle Club:

Good evening.

Mr Chairman, we've heard from the Charity Commission about a required action plan and it is truly gratifying to hear that you are going to really take it in hand and grab the bull by the horns.

Given that you are planning on changing our association, apparently fairly radically, and also the National Shooting Centre which we pretty much mostly are all clients of, will you be opening to the membership the chance to consult on how we would like to see our association, in account that we put a lot of revenue into, run?

My second question is more towards the BSG and BSRC question of leases, it seems to me that both of these will require quite major capital investment and will require a serious use of NRA or NSC funds, wherever you draw the lines. Would you be willing to share some of the business plans? You've said there is a model that will work. Given its our money, would you mind telling us how it is going to work?

And I would just like to echo the comments of the previous questioner, that yes, perhaps some sort of electronic communication on social media would be a good way of doing this, especially given that there has been a lot of tit for tat and perhaps less than decorous publicity about BSG particularly. It would be good hear some straight talk and some straight answers about what is actually going on.

Chairman:

Let me deal with the last question first.

As I've said already, BSG want to take us to court because they happen to believe that they have a lease that gives them a right to renew, and that is certainly what they are claiming. I can tell you that we believe that the lease says that they don't have a right to renew.

So that is a matter for the court now to decide. BSG have taken us to court by the way, not the other way round. So we have to defend that action. We think we should. I do believe that there is a very good case for us to make and I'm hopeful that we will be successful. We have counsel's advice that we are within our rights to pursue the action that we will take.

Let us come therefore to the first question that you asked, which is the way that the Charity and the NSC operate.

With perhaps one exception, the Charity and the NSC do exactly the same things that they did when I became a Trustee in 2012. I'm pretty sure that they are still doing the same things that they did when the structure was set up in 1998.

So we are not doing anything different. But when the Charity Commission receive a complaint, they tend to examine what it is that you are doing. They and we have a difference about the charitable aspect of civilian shooting. Rather than go to battle on that, we think it better to cooperate with them and reach agreement. Quite simply, there will be a division of activities which they will agree between the NSC and the NRA, on the one hand non-charitable, and on the other hand charitable.

Our engagement with them has been enormously helpful because we can now understand a lot more about what it is that they think we should put in the non-charitable activity bucket, if I can put it that way, and the charitable activity bucket.

I think you won't see much change. There is one item - training - where I believe we had it in one bucket and they think it belongs in another, but I don't think that's a deal breaker.

So let me come to BSG and the BSRC and funding plans.

Like everything else, capital investment in this place is not inconsequential. Over the last two or three years, our annual capital expenditure budget and repairs and renewals budget exceed £1.2M.

We are not short of the ability to invest a much more modest number in either of those two activities, sporting rifle or sporting clays, if we so choose.

And it is not beyond the realms of possibility that if the returns on one or two of those activities would be relatively attractive, that we would be able to borrow the money to do it faster if required. I happen to be opposed to a charity borrowing money, but we do have a trading subsidiary which has a large P&L. I'm sure that if we so chose, we could borrow money to fund such capital investment.

So that, I hope, gives you an answer that the process of investing in these capital investments and the capacity that we have to invest is very high.

Does that answer your questions?

Mike Seager:

I was kind of hoping for some numbers sir.

Chairman:

I can't give you numbers here. I don't have them to hand, I'm sorry. If you want me to be discussing the absolute numbers behind what our plans are, I don't have them here. If you wanted me to answer that question, you were given advance warning of this meeting and you could have put that to us and we could have come prepared.

Re transparency, I shall repeat what I have said. With respect to the BSG, they have taken us to court because they believe that they have a right to renew. We believe that they do not. They have to win that battle in court. Until that is decided, there is no point in me speculating about what it is that we will have to invest and/or make out of a shooting organisation.

Secondly, with respect to the BSRC, I have already told you that we will be discussing that, at length, at our meeting on the 9th & 10th August and I am meeting with the BSRC to discuss that very issue earlier that week.

Is there anything else that you would like me to say?

Mike Seager:

If I may follow up my question with regards to the BSG in particular. You said it was going to be under new management, you put an article out in the Journal, you hired a Clay Manager, presumably you had a business plan otherwise you wouldn't have hired the gentleman, and as you say, you can make significant capital investments, and I don't expect you to be able to talk it off to the nearest decimal place, but I would like to know how quickly you think you will be able to replenish our reserves from the expenditure spent on taking over something like BSG. It could be a number of, we think, two to three years, three to four?? I'm not talking massive amounts of detail, but I'd have thought sir if that was that significant you'd have been very well briefed and you'd be able to give us the answer.

Chairman:

We think it will be 18 months in pay back.

We did hire people, and they put together plans, we gave notice for these people to quit a year ago, and their lease expired on 30th June. Upto 25th June, they gave us every indication that they were leaving. But they haven't.

Alex Roupell, Managing Director, Bisley Shooting Ground:

Good evening.

Chairman:

Are you a member?

Alex Roupell:

Sorry, let me call upon my father who is a member. But I'm an associate member. Are you trying to get me off the stage?

Chairman:

No, not at all.

Alex Roupell:

Can I just ask you a simple question Mr Chairman?

The simple question is, you've just stated that up until the 25th June, Bisley Shooting Ground said that they were going to leave. I have factual, documentary evidence that since 2017 I have been offering to communicate, negotiate and discuss with your Chief Executive and your Trustees.

I have personally sent you, and your Trustees, because your Chief Executive refused to pass it on, a proposal that was preferential to the NRA, cost saving to the NRA, it offered increased rent, greater access to ranges, and I have in a year not heard back from any single one of the Trustees, or yourself.

And yet you stand there and you suggest to this audience that we have been suggesting that we would leave since the 25th June. The only reason we are taking you to court is because you refused to negotiate with us, instead preferring, in spite of the Charity Commission's report, to throw further funds towards litigation, because we get pretty much weekly love letters from BWB, your solicitors.

So yes, we are taking you to court because on the 25th June, your Chief Executive threatened to sue me for £400k, and said he was walking into our family business. How do you explain that?

Chairman:

First of all, I think I better let the Chief Executive explain, but can I just say one thing.

Alex Roupell:

I sent you the proposal, Mr Chairman.

Chairman:

I know you sent me a proposal. I know that you sent that with a non-disclosure agreement. I was sent a proposal by you, which had attached to it, a non-disclosure agreement which our legal advice suggested that if we opened it we were opening ourselves to a suit from you which we happen to now know was a likelihood anyway.

The second thing I would say to you is that not very many months ago, the pair of you met with a former Trustee, who then offered my services to come and meet with you, and neither of you have approached me. So please do not accuse me in front of this membership of not being open to your suggestions. That person was David Frank.

I'm going to hand over to Andrew Mercer.

Andrew Mercer:

Regarding the challenge that we threatened to sue, we were asking our tenant to honour licence conditions. Specifically the licence obliges Bisley Shooting Ground to clear all waste debris from the land of which they've used.

There is, by our judgement, several thousand tons of clay debris and a thousand or more in terms of lead shot that remain uncleared. And all we have striven to do with Bisley Shooting Ground is to remind them and hold them to the lease and license obligations that they signed up to in 2000.

Now it is interesting that I've had a number of meetings with both the Mr Roupell's and I think the great challenge that I face is getting them to a) recognise and then b) honour the very explicit lease and licence agreements and concessions and obligations that were set down very clearly in the leases and the licences that they signed back in 2000.

There is always a difference of opinion. We have advanced upon tiresome and what will undoubtedly be expensive litigation, but I repeat, all we are trying to do is to get Bisley Shooting Ground Limited and their directors to honour the lease, which is an unprotected lease, they say it's protected, we say there is no right to renew, they say there is a right to renew. They signed a licence for the ranges, that confers non-exclusive use; they are now claiming that non-exclusive use licence is in fact a lease and is protected. We say we want to use the ranges for our own purposes, they say we are not entitled to do so.

They are also now saying that the clay debris and the waste and the substantial and very significant cost of clearing the debris that has accumulated in their 21 years of tenure is not their liability.

So they may well paint a very pretty picture of them being honourable tenants, and they have undoubtedly built a successful, very lucrative operation, but they are obviously resisting our efforts to hold them to the covenants of the lease and the licence that they signed back in 2000.

Alex Roupell:

So what happens if your membership funds go towards an organisation who are looking to spend up to £500k on a non-charitable activity, just at a time when the Charity Commission has brought into question not only the experience of the Trustees, but their cost on litigation.

So let's say that we were to leave, and the only reason we are taking the NRA to court is because for the same contract that they are looking at, we're looking at it and it says we have a right to renew.

So let's say the NRA did move in, they need to spend up to £500k of your money, or they are going to loan it at interest. They are not going to not receive any income from us. We pay significant rental on this camp, so you are going to have 18 months of downtime, no

rental income, a huge capital expenditure of let's call it between £300k-£500k. The name is trademarked, they've got no pipeline business, they tried to run the business, Bisley Shooting Ground, in the late 90's and it went into £300k worth of debt. All of this for what reason?

If they think that the Bisley Shooting Ground makes as much profit as they seems to be lambasting on social media, I can categorically say that our profit is less than the rent we pay the NRA.

If they say that they want to take Bisley Shooting Ground in-house because they want more accessibility to ranges for rifle shooters, then I would also question this, because the NRA have 84 days a year to close Cottesloe Heath for the ability of rifle shooters on Stickledown and on Century. Now in the last decade, the NRA have not taken all of those 84 days a year, and in fact in the last 3 years, they have taken 4 of those 84 days to host Target Shotgun events at the preclusion of their own members to shoot on ranges.

Now the challenge is that if you look over the old AGM and General Council meetings, on one side the Chairman suggests that they want to take Bisley Shooting Ground in-house to allow more rifle shooting to take place. On the other side he suggests that we are trousering up to £300k worth of profit and that they could be running it and making that money, they are both mutually exclusive, so you can't either take it in-house and makes lots of money, or allow rifle shooters to shoot rifle.

So it's a bit of a mixed message.

Andrew Mercer:

Let me just give some specifics. The licence fee that Bisley Shooting Ground pay for Cottesloe Heath is £16,000 a year. That's all.

Alex Roupell:

If we were to go, you would lose Long Siberia and the clubhouse which is £70k.

Andrew Mercer:

No it's not, it's £66,666 in total.

Alex Roupell:

OK fine, £66k.

Andrew Mercer:

You say that Bisley Shooting Ground with the sterling efforts that you put in to running the clays ranges at Bisley, that the nett profit that business generates is less than £66k. Re corporation tax, how much did you reserve in your accounts for 2018? £52k.

Alex Roupell:

Andrew, as you well know more than anyone else, you cannot reverse engineer from a subject such as tax. Tax doesn't include capital allocations, it doesn't include depreciation, and it doesn't take into account that our account includes our Scottish business. That's two businesses. Plus it includes an overflow from another year. But look, we're not trying to be untoward. Obviously we want to save our family business, but I think that the membership are being blinded by the fact that the NRA is willing to go into debt to take over a business that is not as successful they think they are and will not allow rifles shooters as much access to ranges.

As we say, we are going to litigation, we remain open to trying to negotiate, as we always have been, and, Mr Webster, I'm very happy to sit down with you and go through the proposal that I initially proposed to save increased litigation and, quite frankly, I don't think that the plan that you may have put in place is as thought through as you think, if you are suggesting that you can make £250k from a business that we've been running for 18 years.

Thank you for your time.

Chairman:

Let me give you a quick answer to one point before you go.

The 281 days that we cannot use under the current licence agreement affects the right hand side of Stickledown and the left hand side of Century, and is an attractive outlet for us to actually pursue the rifle shooting that is a charitable activity.

And I will add that our range utilisation is growing at about 16-20% per annum. So if we are to tie up the right hand side of Stickledown and the left hand side of Century for another 281 days for another 21 years, that doesn't seem to me to be a very attractive thing for us to do.

Also all of the shooting grounds in the areas around London will give you a reasonable guidance as to what income can be made from running a sporting clay range of the type that we could be able to run. If this membership does not want us to do that, and to generate what we believe could be up to £250k a year, then we don't have to do that. But I actually think that the members of this organisation would like us to take that money and invest it for the benefit of rifle shooting generally, and not for the benefit of the shareholders of BSG.

Nigel Wells

I'm glad I'm following, because as most of you know I'm a retired police officer. When I retired, I was a debt collector/repossession person.

I think Mr Mercer has answered one of my questions, which was you've actually read the lease and it says, in black and white, 'possession'.

My next question is I'm expecting that you are successful in court for immediate possession. So once you are granted that order, will you immediately apply for a High Court order for immediate possession?

Chairman:

I assume the answer is yes.

Are there any further questions?

Phil Northam, North Herts Rifles, BYSA and numerous others

Good evening.

Mildly related, the Times newspaper in the last few years has been one of the most vociferous anti-shooting gorgon-headed scandal sheets, which in my view, makes its inclusion in our Grand Aggregate a little less grand.

Is it not time, considering I believe they pay no contribution for their free advertising of their name in our Grand Aggregate, to consider to retire this trophy and that competition name and possibly some other newspapers as well and replace them with something more progressive, more in tune, and more supportive of our venture?

Chairman:

Let us take that under advisement – perhaps we could have the “Facebook” trophy at 300 yards instead.

Henry Awin, Old Epsomians Rifle Club:

Sorry to go back to ammunition, or vaguely based on ammunition, but I have a few questions on your policy to refund for the Imperial Meeting, on a first hand account not by rumour, Facebook or social media etc.

I know of one particular person who was refused a refund for their entry into the Grand Aggregate with the ammunition not working. From your face I don't think you know that. I

hope we can get that sorted.

Chairman:

We're dumbfounded. I'd be very surprised.

Henry Awin:

I'll happily talk to you about that later.

Chairman:

Yes, please do because that is a complete surprise!

Henry Awin:

Therefore, I want to know, if you can answer the question. If we got to a point last year where we limited it to the Sierra bullet that was the factor of failing ammo, was Sierra ever held responsible for that, did the NRA get a refund on that ammo? And if they did, or if they do for this year when we find out what is wrong with the ammo, in particular whoever is responsible, at what point do competitors get a refund for that, rather than just becoming guinea pigs for the competition and ammo?

Andrew Mercer:

I think the issue regarding the Sierra bullets last year was an interesting one. I actually put Sierra on notice about the consequential losses that we were expecting from having ammunition that we could not sell.

To my considerable surprise, the 2018 batch has sold like hot cakes. And despite there actually being widespread concerns being expressed that the ammunition was unusable and unsellable, I think we have pretty much sold out!

So the absolute loss to the NRA in financial loss that I can evidence to sustain a claim was pretty much zero!

Our greatest ambition was to make sure that the problems that caused the issue with fliers in 2018 were not repeated and we had good quality projectiles for 2019, at an attractive price, and that is effectively what we have got.

What we weren't expecting were the problems that we have sustained this year. That came at us as a considerable surprise, as has already been explained.

Again, what we do with the balance of 2019 GGG, what are the financial arrangements as a

result of that, is something we have yet to address.

Henry Awin:

I understand what you are saying. I do agree with you in terms of this year's flying very straight when I can read the wind. But with the greatest respect, I'm not questioning the loss of money to the NRA for the 2018 batch.

I am asking about competitors' entry to the Grand Aggregate and the Imperial Meeting. Hundreds of people who spend thousands of pounds to be here, who are getting substandard product in many people's views, and whether they will be getting any compensation for that issue.

Andrew Mercer:

That is something that we will certainly consider. There are issues in terms of doing what is fair and reasonable. I think there are also issues in terms of making sure that we are fair in our dealings with, in the first instance the competitors, but also in the second instance with our suppliers.

I think one of the concerns I have is that the NRA, with issued ammunition, has been through several suppliers. We've had RG, who were dispensed with, we had RWS who were dispensed with, we've got issues at the moment with GGG.

One of the things I have noticed is that it is a very rare contract that we offer where the degree of scrutiny the ammunition is put under is probably as intense as any ammunition order that is placed by most people in the world.

So what you raise is a very fair point and I think it is particularly important for us to offer and deliver good value to our competitors, and also be seen to be fair in offering good value to our competitors.

I feel that the 2019 ammunition has put that at risk and that is something that we will certainly be taking up with GGG. I was talking to GGG on Sunday morning, expressing some firm views in terms of the experiences we've had.

Our focus, to be candid, when we realised as the problems started to develop, our focus switched from trying to work out what was the problem to what was going to be the practical solution on delivering a meeting that could take place.

I think the challenge in terms of the ammunition is always when you reach a certain point when the technical analysis has to step back, and we have to then focus on the practical

consequences of putting practices into play that allow the meeting to take place.

It has not been a perfect meeting in terms of ammunition by any stretch of the imagination. And I can tell you without any doubt or any fear of contradiction that it has been a particularly challenging experience, both for the competitors, but also for my staff and the technical team that we have engaged to try and keep the meeting going.

It is something that we are desperately keen not to repeat, and after the instance of last year, I was particularly keen to have quality ammunition that was trouble free and that is a bitter regret for me that hasn't been delivered.

Henry Awin:

Thank you for answering my question and I'll come in to talk to you about that refund that I mentioned earlier.

(Post Script: the competitor in question had shot the competitions entered and therefore was not due a refund)

Chairman:

Does anybody have any further questions?

Paul Cutts, general member:

We've been sat here this evening listening to how the Association is going to maximise its profits, when we have a building over here which has been sitting idle for 2,3,4 years. It's outrageous!

Chairman:

Do you know it's sitting idle?

Paul Cutts:

It's partially derelict. I spend a lot of time at Bisley, and I've never seen anybody in there other than a few cadets last year.

Andrew Mercer:

We have got an active planning application - a listed building application. We've already been through a pre-application enquiry which has been signed off. So we are just putting the final touches to an application with the expectation that application will be granted and we will be starting work in the Autumn.

So next year I am confident you will see that building back in the condition that it deserves to be in.

In terms of it sitting idle, it has been used for filming and other purposes and has generated a very decent amount of money when it has not been used as a clubhouse.

Paul Cutts:

The bottom line is it has not been used as a club house, which is what it is. It's the Exhibition Hut; for many many years and over the last 3 or 4 years it's not been to the benefit of the members for the members to use, other than, as you say, unbeknown to us, been used for filming at a fee.

Andrew Mercer:

And in fairness it will be bought back into play for the use of members. The plan is and the design that we've settled on that we have outline approval for, is for it to be a club house for the day for visiting clubs.

So rather than have a building committed to one club, we are going to have a building that is bookable by many clubs who come to Bisley and it will be a multi-functional building. And I think it will be a very valuable part of the Bisley real estate for the benefit of the club community.

It has been re-tasked since the lease of the Muzzle Loaders came to an end.

Paul Cutts:

Can you tell this meeting Mr Mercer, how long the building has been empty as a clubhouse?

Andrew Mercer:

I think it's been empty for 5 years. It was originally going to be the Visitor Centre. That didn't come to pass.

Paul Cutts:

Can you explain why?

Andrew Mercer:

We had issues with the Conservation Officer.

Paul Cutts:

So you didn't go to pre-app first then?

Andrew Mercer:

No we didn't, because we didn't think that the work that we had engaged in required it.

We had a challenge. Some helpful person actually raised concerns with the planning authority, they came out, they investigated, that delayed us 6 or 9 months, by which time the Pavilion became available, and we relocated the reception to that area there.

Paul Cutts:

But to say you didn't think, isn't that negligent?

Andrew Mercer:

I'm prepared to say I made a mistake on that point. But the reality was the Conservation Officer, after 6-9 months deliberation decided that there was no need to progress on the matter.

Paul Cutts:

Sorry, it's taken five years? And it's still not resolved?

Andrew Mercer:

It's on the point of being resolved.

Paul Cutts:

On the point? Yours or theirs?

Andrew Mercer:

They've agreed the pre-application that we've made.

Paul Cutts:

Well I've had many pre-apps that have been turned down so....thank you very much.

Charles Dickenson:

If I may be permitted to make a general request to the membership, rather than a specific question to the Chairman.

My name is Charles Dickenson for those of you who don't know me. I'm the Target Rifle discipline representative on General Council.

One of the things I'm trying to do is to increase the level of training and encouragement, particularly of the younger shooters. The British Young Shooters Association, BYSA, is doing a sterling job and deserve your support fully.

What I am trying to do in association with that, and particularly aimed at the universities, is to try and give them some more training.

As you are probably aware, there are some universities who already hold a training week over the Easter period. What I am trying to do is to arrange a communal training week for those who would like to, who don't have necessarily the support from alumni, from people they know to come and give them some coaching. A week where we can provide some good coaching, some quality instructors in a lead up to the USEF (is this BUSF?) championships.

What I really want is for those of you who are alumni of universities who have, or had, shooting clubs to help your old universities by giving them support wherever and whenever you can, preferably practical support in terms coaching and training, but financial support always goes down very well, because they are always on a very tight shoestring budget.

What I am trying to do is establish a way of making alumni able to get in contact with their previous university club so that they can be put in touch and actually able to offer that assistance.

So if you are an alumnus of a university that shoots at the moment, or has shot in the past, and has potentially students who would like to re-establish that facility, your help will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much.

Chairman:

Well done Charles, thank you.

It's 10.26pm, we've time for one more question if anybody wants to ask anything?

Silke Lohmann:

Andrew, hand on heart, can you say that the ammunition is absolutely safe in the weather conditions we are expecting in the next few days?

Chairman:

I think I'll pass that to John Bloomfield.

John Bloomfield:

Yes!

Stephanie Yates:

9pm is a bit of a late start! I'm not sure if there is the opportunity to start slightly earlier, because some of us need to get home afterwards.

Chairman:

Thank you for that.

Thank you everybody. Before we wrap up, I have one obviously important announcement to make.

I can tell you that in Her Majesty The Queen's prize first stage, we had a total of 884 firers competing. The winner of the NRA bronze medal, and the NRA bronze badge is Mr K Crabtree of the London & Middlesex Rifle Association with a score of 105.15v.

Our congratulations go to him on an excellent shoot.

And the last score in, scoring 33.4v at 600 yards, is 99.8v. The wind clearly got to us. So I will repeat that, the last score in is a 99.8v, scoring 33.4v at 600 yards.

Thank you very much everybody, I wish you a very good evening.

The meeting closed at 10.30pm