



National Rifle Association Journal

Spring 2008

Volume LXXXVII

Number 1



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Cover photo: Bill Ellis of the Highpower Rifle Association competing in the NRA Civilian Service Rifle Meeting held on Sunday 2 March at Bisley. Photo by Iain Robertson.

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NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



by
*Glynn
Alger*

Muzzle Energy

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has recently informed the NRA that the MoD is not prepared to accept any risk arising from civilians using MoD ranges (which includes Bisley). The NRA is in the process of agreeing the procedures that will allow clubs to continue shooting on MoD ranges. Additional procedures on the range will apply to those using rifle/ammunition combinations exceeding 4500 Joules muzzle energy - broadly, the larger and more powerful loads in F Class and Match Rifle. Negotiations with MoD are ongoing. Please read the article on page 42 for the latest details.

History Repeating Itself?

Up until the 1970s most target shooters used common equipment based upon the service rifle and ammunition. As a result there was a common understanding among the target shooting community whether a serviceman, reservist, cadet, club, county, regional, national or international shot, that everyone used basically the same equipment and could compete at their desired level but, at the same time, understand the drivers of others in the sport.

During the early 70s the NRA was presented with a dilemma with the move to Self Loading Rifles by the military. The new service rifle was not accurate up to distances of 1000 yards, hence in target rifle circles there was a decision to move to more bespoke designs for long range shooting, which effectively split the sport into factions, divided by differences in equipment. Effectively this decision changed a cohesive sport, where nearly everyone used the same type of rifles, into a divided one as TR, in particular, became more and more technical and expensive. At a domestic level the sport would probably have remained healthier if there had been a decision to introduce some sort of 'standard rifle' for all, to allow competition to continue on a level playing field.

However, we are where we are. In the interim, those involved in the sport have addressed some of the

issues by keeping young people shooting, through schools and the cadet movement, by introducing the cadet rifle, thus acting as a feeder into target shooting, ensuring that, compared with elsewhere in the world, target rifle remains healthy in the UK.

The National Rifle Association has, for a long time, had a policy of supporting youth because this ensures the future health of shooting in the UK. For instance, the UK has resisted the move to hand-loaded ammunition in its major events to ensure young shooters are not deterred by the need to source or make hand-loads and to make sure they can compete on equal terms. We have stuck to this decision, despite criticism, because we have seen first-hand the adverse effect this has had on youth shooting in other countries.

The latest threat to TR shooting in the UK is posed by the International Confederation of Fullbore Rifle Associations (ICFRA) and the determination to fundamentally change the sport by making shooting increasingly technical, thus expensive. In recent times we have seen ICFRA approve the introduction of eagle-eye sights, reduction in trigger weights and changes to conditions around rifle weights. In our survey regarding eagle eye sights, young shooters expressed grave concern about the expense issue. The NRA could not approve a reduction in trigger weights at a time when we have to introduce exhaustive safety measures to enable civilians to continue to shoot on military ranges. We have been and will be derided for not supporting the changes to international rules. More importantly these changes have the potential to adversely affect the ability of overseas visitors to compete in the UK.

The end result of the drive towards a more and more technical sport is, inevitably, the contraction of that sport.

There seems to be a fundamental view in ICFRA that 'if you are having trouble shooting straight there is a technical answer to solve it.' This may work for a few but it has dire consequences for any intentions to broaden the appeal of our sport.

Luck of the Irish

As you may be aware there is currently a dispute between the various factions that wish to be recognised as representing Ireland. The main protagonists are the Irish Rifle Club (IRC) (formerly the Irish Rifle Association (IRA)) and the newly formed National Rifle Association of Ireland (NRAI). The background to this dispute is that the IRC has a long history (traceable back to 1867) and traditionally acted as the selectors of any Ireland (All Ireland) teams. Effectively the IRC for years have selected representatives from both north and south of the border to represent Ireland in international competitions.

However, with a change in the law in the Republic recently there has been an increased interest in shooting sports. The NRAI was created in the Republic

of Ireland and quite rightly asked to be recognised. Both parties approached the NRA to adjudicate as to who had the authority to select teams. The Association adopted a view that it was not in a position to make such a decision in that the NRAI and the IRC had claims that each interfered with the other.

Our advice to both parties was that they should talk to each other and come to an agreement similar to that which exists in Rugby Union, whereby the Republic and Northern Ireland have come to a mutual agreement over a selection process. As is usual in these circumstances one party or the other will probably take things badly and assume one is taking sides. In this case, for no good reason, because we would not find in their favour, the NRAI went into propaganda mode and alleged the NRA was working against their interests. The truth of the matter was that we were not acting in anybody's interest, preferring to let the parties concerned sort it out for themselves.

The next move by the NRAI was to approach ICFRA to be formally recognised, despite not having any status even in the Republic. ICFRA mistakenly recognised the NRAI without even being aware of or considering the claims of the IRC. At this stage the NRAI were recognised as the national governing body for the Republic of Ireland. The NRAI has behaved ever since as though they were the national governing body for All Ireland, refusing to recognise any other potential claims or to enter into discussions whereby a compromise could be found between the two parties.

The NRA has offered to host a meeting and attempt to mediate between the two parties.

NATSS

As a result of gaining Government funding to look at the possible merger of the CPSA, NSRA and NRA, a company called Performance Matters has been appointed who have expertise in the modernisation of sports organisations.

The first phase of the project looking at a potential amalgamation has been consultation. This started with a national forum at Bisley, followed by an online survey and continues with a series of regional forums across the country. The aim is to get the views of as many people involved in target shooting across all disciplines to understand what is required from a single national body, from the point of view of you the customer.

The results from the online survey have been very interesting in that 2601 people responded, which is statistically a significant figure when looking at the overall memberships of the three bodies. Usually, in such an exercise, the experts would expect to see approximately 20% for amalgamation, 60% undecided and 20% against. In our case 88% of those responding were supporting the creation of a single national body.

However, they identified five key priorities for the new body to succeed:

- Protection of the sport
- Repositioning of the sport in the media and public perception
- Introduction of sports shooting in schools
- Widening and increasing membership
- Protecting the heritage of the sport

Basically we are being told that if we get better at publicising, marketing and protecting our sport to politicians, the media and the public, more people will be willing to be members. This is a message of which we all need to take notice, to broaden the appeal of our sport as we progress.

Olympic Shooting Venue and Bisley Development

The National Rifle Association has been working with the CPSA and the NSRA for some time through GBTSF (British Shooting) to get the Olympic shooting events moved from Woolwich to either Dartford or Bisley. The Government, British Olympic Committee, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and the ISSF have been consistent in their insistence that the shooting events will be at Woolwich. One has to say that when concerns or objections have been raised LOCOG has dealt with them.

Privately, the NRA has been convinced for some months that the Games would not move from Woolwich to Bisley. As a result, we thought about the question of legacy in different terms to others, being convinced that, whatever happened at Woolwich, shooting had to gain something from 2012. The NRA, working with our partners, have applied for and got Olympic Training Venue status which will help with any plans to develop Bisley.

The aim is to create world class shooting facilities at Bisley, as well as creating the commercial facilities at Bisley which will create an ongoing income, thus enabling the Association to support shooting on a national basis. This will be our legacy from 2012.

General Notices

Annual General Meeting

The 2008 Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 13 June at 17:30 in the NRA Pavilion.

Bisley General Meeting

The 2008 Bisley General Meeting will be held in the Umbrella Tent at 21:00 on Wednesday 23 July.

Team Captains

We would like to congratulate Ed Welford on his appointment as Captain of the GB Under 25 team for 2008.

Onwards and Upwards

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SHOOTING



by
*Martin
Farnan*

Open Days

Two NRA Open Days will be held this year, one on Saturday 3 May and the other on Saturday 13 September 2008. These days will be administered by the NSC but all the firing points will be staffed by NRA appointed coaches. Members of the public as well as members of the NRA and affiliated clubs may, under a Home Office dispensation, shoot without the normal requirement to have a Firearms Certificate etc. A registration fee of £8 per person will be payable. Booklets of tickets may then be purchased, which may be used to pay the fees to shoot a number of different firearms ranging from air pistol to fullbore rifle.

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

Phoenix Meeting

This year the Phoenix Meeting will be held over the long weekend Friday 23 to Monday 26 May. The event is again being organised by the NSC on behalf of the NRA and the planning committee is chaired by Brian Thomas, the Assistant Director of Shooting. Over 100 events will be held, ranging from 25m Air Pistol to 1000 yards F Class Rifle.

The entry form and courses of fire are available to download and you can enter online via the NRA website. The match conditions, rules and entry forms

are also available from the NRA, and copies may be obtained by ringing the NRA Range Office or the Shooting Division Secretary, Sally Agnew (extensions 152 or 160 respectively). Copies of the entry form are being sent out to all those who are on the Gallery Rifle database.

Imperial Meeting

Dates

This year's Imperial Meeting is two days earlier than last year. First Saturday will be 12 July and Final Saturday will be 26 July.

Entry Forms

The individual TR, MR and F Class entry forms may now be downloaded from the NRA/NSC websites and a copy is included with this Journal. However we recommend that you enter online, which will be easier, quicker and more accurate (and will save a postage stamp!). In addition it will make life considerably easier for the Squadding staff since all entries made online can be uploaded directly to the Imperial Meeting entry and stats program, thus saving many hours of manual entry of the details, reducing inputting errors and making your entry more secure. I therefore encourage all those wishing to enter the Imperial to do so online.

When you see the entry form you will note that the form layout has been changed and is now, hopefully, a little clearer. Behind the scenes a lot of work has been done to simplify and standardise the costs for each competition and to eradicate a number of the anomalies that have crept in over the past few years. At the same time, the NRA is determined to encourage younger shooters to take part, and to assist those at the other end of the age spectrum. To this end a composite discount rate has been calculated to provide approximately the same level of support for entry fees as in previous years.

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

Entries

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

be notified to the Squadding Department as quickly as possible.

Late entry fees for individual TR, MR and F Class events will again be payable after 31 May (10% extra) with 25% extra payable after 30 June. The previous 50% late entry fee for entry within 48 hours of the start of a competition has been abolished. No entries for any squaddled competition will be accepted after 12.00 noon the day before that competition.

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

Individual Entry Fees (issued ammunition)

With the ending of the MoD/NRA ammunition agreement, whereby ammunition was given by the MoD in exchange for range use, the NRA will have to purchase ammunition this year. In addition the ending of this agreement will mean that the NRA will have to fund those services previously supplied by the military, including storage, transportation and delivery of the ammunition, range stores for rigging etc. This additional cost approximates to 14% of last year's entry fees.

To arrive at the revised entry fees for 2008, the value of the ammunition that previously came from MoD has been deducted from last year's entry fee, 14% added (to cover the additional costs explained above) and then the actual purchase price of the ammunition that the NRA will buy direct from the manufacturers has been added at cost price. To encourage more entries, the entry fees for aggregates and sweepstakes will, however, remain exactly as for last year.

Competitors using their own ammunition (Match Rifle, RG Aggregate and F Class) have not been charged for ammunition. In view of the potential complexity of the entry form, F Class using their own ammunition will have a separate entry form, similar to the TR/MR entry form, but with their own 'ammunition-free' entry fees shown. These entry forms will be available to download from the NRA website or by contacting the Squadding Department at squadding@nra.org.uk or by telephoning 01483 797777 ext 146.

Marker Fees

Given that the figures on the entry form all have to be changed anyway, the opportunity has been taken to rationalise some other costs and simplify the entry

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

The various discounts have been adjusted so that they now apply to the entire cost of a competition. Discounts used to be applied to the various elements in different ways for different groups - inconsistent and confusing. The percentages for the age discounts have been recalculated to give the same total discounts as before, but as the discounts are now applied to the full cost (competition + ammunition + marker), these percentages have changed. These changes result in a less complex form, with the basic price for a competition being a more accurate reflection of what you will actually pay - if you are not entitled to discounts and are not due to pay late entry fees, the competition entry fee quoted is exactly what you will pay.

Aggregates

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

- Block C including Grand Aggregate matches only
- Block D including Middle Saturday matches
- Block E including First Friday matches
- Block G including all MR competitions

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

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

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

Competitor RCOs

The paid NRA RCOs will be responsible for ensuring that each range is fully equipped with all the required

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

Service Rifle

Entry forms for both Service and Civilian competitors may be obtained from the Shooting Division Secretary on ext 160. They should be returned by 27 June 2008. With the complete revision of the CENTSAM programme, there will be some major changes to the NRA SR events, including the fact that all service individual competitions are likely to have to be fired concurrently with matches being shot during the various Service Skill-at-Arms Meetings. The squadded team events will, however, still be shot as stand alone matches. Details will be finalised shortly and will be published in the Summer Journal.

Target Rifle

The major change to this year's TR meeting will be to the Chairman's Prize. This competition will be run under new conditions this year. The qualifying scores will be those achieved in the Grand Aggregate, and the competition will be open to the top 75 Class O and the top 75 Class T qualifiers who have not qualified for Queen's II. The qualifiers will shoot 2 sighters and 10 to count at 900 yards on Friday afternoon, concurrent with the Queen's Consolation, and at 300 and 600 yards on Saturday morning, concurrent with the Howard Wilkinson. Entry to the Chairman's Prize itself will be free of charge, but all those entering this competition will be required to enter both the Queen's Consolation and the Howard Wilkinson at the normal entry fees.

F Class

The major change this year will be that the F Class Queen's Prize and St George's Finals will now be shot as stand alone competitions on Second Friday under the same match conditions as those for TR, but using F Class targets.

Schools

The revised Schools entry form will be sent to all Schools before Easter. Entry fees will rise by about 3%.

The match conditions of the Marling were revised last year to (as far as is possible) eliminate the possibility of ties. Competitors now engage targets at 100, 200 and 300 yards, with differential scoring at each distance. To ensure that targets are engaged at all three distances an additional match condition will be added this year

to the effect that no more than four hits will count at any one distance.

It is likely that both the Schools Meeting and the Inter-Service Cadet Rifle Meeting will again be shot using the Lynx back sight, and it is hoped that this will include those purchased from public funds as well as those issued by ABRO. Further details will be given in the letter to Schools which will be sent before Easter.

Schools Veterans

The Schools Veterans team match will be shot at 500 yards commencing at 17:15 on Thursday 17 July. The fact that the Ashburton 500 yards is being fired after lunch, from 13:15 to 14:50 should allow Old Boys time to visit their old School team in the final stages of this match, and still allow time for practice from 16:00 to 16:45 for the Schools Veterans match. Team captains will be required to certify on the team register that all members of their team are safe and competent shooters.

Match Rifle

No official overseas MR team will be competing in the Imperial Meeting this year. The Any Rifle Extras, shot at 1000, 1100 and 1200 yards, will be shot on Pre Friday, and the Any Rifle 1200 yards competition will be shot on First Thursday after the Humphry. It is possible that the Humphry may revert to being shot in the morning on First Thursday rather than the afternoon, but this will be confirmed, or otherwise, in the Summer Journal.

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

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

Centenary McQueen competition

No changes are proposed for this match this year. It is of note, however, that the Entente Cordiale Trophy, the only gold trophy awarded by the NRA, was presented in 1908, and as many as possible are encouraged to enter this extremely challenging competition this year.

Gallery Rifle and Muzzle Loading Pistol

The programme for this meeting will be changed again this year, largely reverting to the events previously shot prior to 2007. In view of the low number of entrants on Second Monday and Second Tuesday these days will be discontinued and, aside from the matches run specifically for cadet competitors

during the Schools Meeting on First Tuesday and First Wednesday, this meeting will be shot from First Thursday to Middle Sunday. All the squadded events will be shot during the Middle Weekend. Entry forms will shortly be available for download on the website or from the Range Office (ext 152) or the Shooting Division Secretary, Sally Agnew (ext 160).

Bisley Bible

The Bisley Bible is currently in production and is expected to be published in early April. All those who have paid for a copy with their membership renewal or with their Imperial Meeting entry will receive them by post as soon as they are available.

Prize Lists

As last year, all prize lists will be produced in CD format rather than as a printed book. This will considerably reduce the time taken to produce these lists and to post to competitors. All competitors in the Grand Aggregate or the Hopton Match Rifle Aggregate, and all Schools competing in the Ashburton, will receive a complete Prize List CD. This cost is reflected in the entry fees. The CD will be sent to all qualified competitors after the Imperial Meeting. CDs will be available at a cost of about £5.00 to Club Secretaries and those not eligible for a free copy.

Medals and Bars

All competitors will again be required to complete the appropriate box on the entry form if they wish their medals and bars sent to them along with their Prize List CD.

Sponsorship

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

Range Conducting Officers (RCOs)

There is a continuing annual requirement to augment our Imperial Meeting RCOs, particularly this year. The Imperial Meeting cannot be run without competent RCOs, and I invite those of you who would like to be considered for this important position to contact me as soon as possible. We particularly need more RCOs during the Schools Meeting, so any TR or F Class competitors who would like to help before the TR Meeting starts are encouraged to apply.

Ammunition

Prices

The worldwide price of metals, especially lead and copper, has risen by nearly 80% in the last year. As a result the manufacturing price of ammunition has

risen significantly. I regret that we will therefore have to increase the price of ammunition by 4p per round with effect from 1 April 2008. The pricing structure for 2008 will therefore be as follows:

for orders from 1 to 4999	52p per round;
for orders from 5000 to 12999	51p per round;
for orders from 13000 to 19999	50p per round;
for orders of 20000 and over	49p per round.

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

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

Ammunition for County Open Meetings

It has again been agreed that, as an exception to the prices shown above, all 7.62mm RG 155 grains ammunition (of whatever quantity) bought for use at County Open Meetings only (not for resale outside the County Meeting) will be priced at 49p per round, ie with the maximum discount possible. Any ammunition remaining unused after the Meeting may be returned for a full refund, and must not be retained for resale. County Secretaries should contact the Armourer for further details.

Ranges

Bisley Range Regulations

Issue 1 of the 2008 Range Regulations has now been published. All range hire prices have been increased by approx 3%. Copies of the Range Regulations are available from the Range Office on request. Please note that a new and revised version will be issued on 2 April which will incorporate the revised procedures required by the MoD in respect of certification of safety and competence, and High Muzzle Energy (HME) firearms (which develop muzzle energies in excess of 4,500 Joules). Please see the article elsewhere in this Journal for further details of these requirements.

Electronic Targets

The manufacturers of these targets are determined to overcome the problems which have beset them for some time. They are steadily becoming more popular, and with fewer glitches. Their great advantage is that they are available on the spot without the requirement to book a marker in advance. At present the targets simply replicate the current manual system, requiring a scorecard and a score sheet. Printouts can be requested by radioing the Range Office and asking this

to be made at the end of a shoot. You are encouraged to try these targets which are available at all distances on Century and Stickle-down.

Reverse Echelon Shooting on Century

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

Range Radios

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

Firing Points

All defects reported by range users have been rectified during the Low Season and the firing point on the right hand side of 1200 yards has been extended forwards giving the correct depth to accommodate both firers and RCOs. This is to be turfed and will be out of action for some time to allow the grass to settle. In addition the left hand side (firing points 17 - 21) has been levelled so that competitors no longer need to climb up to their firing point.

Butt Markers

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

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

Complaints about the standard of marking should be made, in the first instance, to the Butt Supervisor over the radio. The Butt Supervisor will then stand in the vicinity of the marker in question and will keep an

eye on him or her. If the problem is not rectified the firer should speak to Control (the Range Office) on the Control channel (Channel 8 or 16 depending on the type of radio issued), highlighting the problem. Disciplinary action will be taken where necessary.

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

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

Vehicles on Ranges

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

Shooting Matters

Match Conditions

All shooters, particularly Club Secretaries, are reminded that the rules and match conditions of all meetings, in all disciplines, have to be approved by the Shooting Committee on behalf of the Council. This is to ensure that safety is not compromised. In practice this means that 'standard' match conditions, such as are contained in the Bisley Bible, the Gallery Rifle Rules, the Phoenix Meeting etc, have already been approved. Any Club considering shooting any match which might be considered in any way out of the ordinary, should first seek advice from the Director of Shooting.

Civilian Service Rifle Meetings

The programme of Civilian Service Rifle meetings has continued, with competitions being held in November and December 2007, and in January, February and March 2008. Further meetings will be held throughout the year - keep an eye on the NRA website for details. The competitions shot are many and varied and include rapids, timed fire, snap shooting and fire with movement in the prone, kneeling, sitting and standing

positions at all ranges from 100 yards to 500 yards. The most recent innovation is the use of SAAB electric targets which may be used in the form of a three-lane ETR or a four-lane CGR on Butt Zero on Stickledown. Entry forms are on the NRA website and entries may be made by post, fax, e-mail or telephone.

Attendance Records

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

The Range Office staff will be on hand to assist if you need guidance. An important point to remember is that, when your personal record is opened, it is that date which is automatically entered on to the attendance record so no retrospective records can be entered. You must log your attendance on the day you use your firearms. You are encouraged to record the use of all your firearms to justify their continued possession.

The 2008 Ages Match

Teams which competed in this match at the end of October last year, again confirmed that they had

enjoyed it so much that they wanted it to be continued as an excellent end of season weekend when they could enjoy a fun shoot. It has therefore been decided to hold an Ages Match over the weekend 25 - 26 October 2008, and to follow the same broad programme as last year. The team size will remain at 12. The annual Grand Fireworks Display by Dragon Fireworks will also be held on the Saturday evening at 19:00. Further details will be given in the Summer Journal but please note this weekend in your diary now.

Marksman's Calendar

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

The full Marksman's Calendar 2008 is available on the NRA website. The main advantage of this version is that it is constantly being updated, with new or amended events, changes of date etc. For this reason it is likely that the 2008 Marksman's Calendar will be the last in printed format, and from next year it will be available online, as it is currently, and will be updated frequently.

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NOTES FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BISLEY



by
Jeremy
Staples

Electronic Targets

We have experienced a number of difficulties on Century with the electronic targets during the winter, while those on Stickle-down have worked well.

New software updates and the relocation of the aerials on Century within the last ten days seems to have resolved all the problems and they are now working particularly well. We are carrying out extensive testing and are hopeful that all the electronic targets will now work effectively. Targets are available to book by the half day. Also there will be a Range Office Target (ROT) available by the hour during the week and at most weekends. To book please contact the Range Office on 01483 797777 ext 152.

Century Shelf

Following the very heavy rains of 2006 that had washed away the sand on Century butts, we have now installed a shelf along the whole length of the butts. Our thanks goes to Brian Brimfield, once again, for his work, particularly over the very wet winter period. The shelf will prevent or reduce the risk of any further slippages and will assist in future butt maintenance.

1200 Yards Firing Point

The 1200 yards firing point has been widened by between two and three metres along the whole of the width. We will be turfing the top of the firing point as the weather improves (hopefully by the start of the shooting season) and this will be an improvement for those shooting at 1200 yards.

Dolphin Lodge

Thanks to Mik Maksimovic and his team for assisting in the conversion of the former Ladies Dormitory into four en-suite rooms, two of which are suitable for disabled use. Already these have proved very popular and if you would like to view or reserve one of these rooms, then please contact Amanda Vaughan on 01483 797777 ext 135. We will be looking to construct further

accommodation of this quality within the next twelve months or so.

NRA Open Day

The next Open Day is on Saturday 3 May 2008 and we will once again be looking for members to volunteer their services to help coach and act as support staff on the day. We are expecting in the region of 1000 people. If you are able to help please contact Karen Robertson on 01483 797777 ext 146 or Libby Gendall on 01483 798806.

Clay Pavilion

We have carried out a complete redecoration and upgrading of the Clay Pavilion and improved the visual appearance. In addition we have upgraded the quality of the catering and would recommend that you try this when you are at Bisley.

Site Security

Following the success of having special site security staff during the last Imperial Meeting, we will again be employing security staff to man the entrance to the Estate and patrol during the evenings in this year's Imperial Meeting.

Range Office

I am pleased to announce that John Gardener has been promoted to Senior Range Office Supervisor and will be happy to help with any of your enquiries in the Range Office.

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NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF TRAINING



by
*Phyllis
Farnan*

During 2008 there will be a number of important changes which will affect clubs that use military ranges. During the recent meetings between the MoD and the NRA, it became apparent that the MoD was no longer willing to accept any risk resulting from the recreational activities of civilian shooters on their ranges. As part of the requirements to allow civilians to continue using MoD ranges (which are still being finalised), the NRA was required to undertake a generic risk assessment for target shooting and to introduce an auditable Safe Training System (STS) for its members and the members of affiliated clubs.

The British Deer Society and the Muzzle Loaders Association of Great Britain already have codes of practice, which are approved by the MoD, but other civilian organisations wishing to use MoD ranges must either adopt the NRA STS or have their own training schemes vetted and approved by the NRA.

Special training and zeroing procedures have been agreed which will allow the MoD to lift the ban on ammunition with a muzzle energy in excess of 4500 Joules from 2 April 2008. Full details of all the new training procedures are given below.

The NRA Safe Training System

All clubs affiliated to the NRA who use military ranges must adopt the NRA Safe Training System (STS) from April 2008 and an annual certificate of competence, signed by the club chairman, will be required for each club member by January 2009.

The NRA STS is based on four elements: safe person, safe equipment, safe practice and safe place.

Safe Person

The safe shooter is someone who has received the information, training and supervision to enable him or her to acquire knowledge and develop the skills necessary to demonstrate that he or she can safely handle firearms and ammunition. The NRA Probationary Course provides this training and is not limited to target rifle.

Safe Equipment

The NRA Rules of Shooting, published annually, define the types of firearms and ammunition used for civilian target shooting. The individual firer is responsible for ensuring that his firearms are properly maintained and that the ammunition used is completely safe and within the range parameters for muzzle velocity (MV) and muzzle energy (ME).

Safe Practice

The NRA Rules of Shooting contain detailed regulations concerning the conduct of shooting for all its shooting disciplines. Qualified NRA RCOs are responsible for the safe running of MoD ranges for civilian shooters. Additional RCO qualifications will be required if sporting rifles, muzzle loading firearms, or firearms with an ME greater than 4500 Joules are being used on MoD ranges. There will also be specific zeroing practices required for those firearms with ME in excess of 4500 Joules.

Safe Place

A safe place is one in which the controls which are necessary to enable shooting to be conducted safely have been identified by a site specific risk assessment and are set out in the Range Standing Orders. All MoD ranges have site specific Range Standing Orders, which must be complied with at all times. MoD ranges are maintained by the Range Administering Unit and are subject to regular inspections. The NRA RCO running the range for a civilian club must sign for the range on the MoD Form 906 certifying that he or she is qualified to conduct the shooting practice and that he or she has read and will comply with the Range Standing Orders.

The NRA and NSRA have produced advice material on the Construction of Ranges and the Safe Management of Ranges for those clubs who own their own ranges.

New Procedures for Muzzle Energy Exceeding 4500 Joules

After 2 April 2008 ammunition developing an ME greater than 4500 Joules but under the maximum limit of 7000 Joules, may be fired on MoD ranges providing the firer carries out special zeroing procedures. This must be done at 200 yards with sights set at 600 yards using the special zero target available from the NRA. The firer must achieve a five round group in the designated area of the target before being allowed to fire at longer ranges. The RCO, who runs the range, must be specially qualified as an RCO (High Muzzle Energy), and must sign and date the target, which must be retained by the club for 12 months. The zeroing procedures must be completed on each visit to the range except when firing on consecutive days. In these circumstances, zeroing need only take place on the first day. The RCO (HME) must also annotate the MoD 906 to show the number of firers using

firearm and ammunition combinations generating a ME greater than 4500 Joules on the range that day.

RCO (HME) Qualification

When ammunition with an ME exceeding 4500 Joules is being fired on an MoD range (after 2 April 2008), the RCO running the range must be specially trained to carry out the agreed zeroing procedures. The RCO (HME) qualification will be an additional 'bolt on' qualification. A large number of NRA RCO Assessors have already undergone training so that they are able to offer this course to qualified NRA RCOs in the regions. An RCO (HME) course will be held at Altcar on Sunday 6 April and a course will be held at Bisley on Saturday 19 April. Any RCO who wishes to attend either of these courses should contact Maureen Peach for further details and an application form. All RCOs who obtain this additional qualification will have it recorded on their RCO photo ID card.

RCO Assessors' Course

The RCO Assessors' Course planned for the 19 - 20 April has been postponed so that a RCO (HME) course can take place.

RCO Manual Amendment

An additional annex containing the details of the new zeroing procedures to be followed by the RCO (HME) will be issued shortly. The amendment will also be available to download from the NRA website.

Standard RCO Course

RCO Courses will be held at the National Shooting Centre Bisley on the 10 - 11 May, 4 - 5 October and 8 - 9 November. Courses can also be held regionally by arrangement. To book a place on an RCO course please contact Maureen Peach (see below).

RCO Renewals

Those RCOs who qualified in 2002 will need to renew their qualification during this year. The expiry date is shown on the RCO photo ID card. Please contact Maureen Peach for details of the documentation required for renewal (see below).

Instructor Workshop

This has now been postponed from 29 March until 2 November 2008. This workshop, covering methods of instruction, is for those who would like to become RCO Assessors or Club Coaches.

Basic Handloading Course

As notified in the Winter Journal, a basic handloading course took place at Bisley on 8 - 9 March 2008. This course was fully booked and an extra course will be held on 19 - 20 April for those who are still on the waiting list. A handloading course will be offered annually from next year.

Probationary Training

All clubs will shortly receive a free copy of the syllabus for the generic probationary training course. A full training pack, including probationer's manual, teaching materials and assessment forms, will be available to clubs on request from the end of March. From April 2008 affiliated clubs must adopt the NRA training scheme for their probationers or submit their own course for approval if preferred.

The next Probationary Course at Bisley will begin on 5 April and Probationary Course 2008/3 will begin on 31 May.

Skills Courses

Twenty-seven cadets from CCF and open cadet units attended Skills Courses at the National Shooting Centre during the February half-term holiday.

The next Skills Course for members of the NRA and its affiliated clubs will be run on the weekend 11 - 12 October at Bisley. This course is for less experienced shooters and those who have recently completed the Probationary Course. The course fee is £120 for NRA members and £140 for non-members of the NRA.

Club Instructor Course

Nine cadet force adults successfully completed a Club Instructors Course held at the National Shooting Centre in February.

The next course for members of the NRA and its affiliated clubs will take place at Bisley on 11 - 12 October. The course fee is £120 for NRA members and £140 for non-members of the NRA.

NRA Club Coach Course

Six cadet force adults successfully completed the Club Coach Course at Bisley in February.

The next Club Coach Course will be held on 15 - 16 November. Applicants must be individual members of the NRA and should have previously completed the NRA Club Instructor Course. The course fee is £120.

Wind Coaching Course

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

For further information about NRA training courses contact the Director of Training on 01483 797777 ext 150 or e-mail: training@nra.org.uk

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

REGIONAL MATTERS

Fullbore Shooting in Yorkshire & Humberside

by John Warburton

Fullbore shooting is alive and well in Yorkshire. There are currently over 30 clubs affiliated to the NRA actively shooting across the region, from the borders of Lancashire in the west to the North Sea coast in the east. As well as the better-known clubs such as Huddersfield, Leeds and Sheffield there are many more clubs like Mattersey, Stead Hall and York Decoy that serve the local shooting community. These clubs cater for all forms of fullbore shooting from conventional TR and F Class to Gallery Rifle and muzzle loading pistol.

With two large military range complexes at Catterick and Strensall many of the clubs rely on these for their shooting programmes, however, as is the case across the rest of the country, access to MoD ranges is becoming increasingly difficult and expensive. In fact Strensall was closed to civilian clubs in mid 2007 due to an influx of local dog walkers in the danger area! In an effort to offset the spiraling costs of shooting at Strensall, clubs are coordinating bookings to allow as many clubs and shooters to use the range on the same day.

The good news is that not everyone is experiencing problems with range access as there are a number of private ranges in Yorkshire. Mattersey Rifle and Pistol Club near Doncaster has developed an impressive range complex, with fullbore ranges up to 100 yards in an old disused quarry, where they run a busy schedule of competitions throughout the year. Stead Hall Rifle and Pistol Club near Ilkley have recently built a two lane 100 yards indoor range designed around two 2m diameter concrete pipes built into the hillside. Huddersfield Rifle Club have had their own three target range, Brockholes, with firing points at 200 and 500 yards, for many years and the club continues to go from strength to strength. The Canadian Rifle team that visits the UK every summer always like to include a match at Brockholes on their itinerary.

In 2004 Huddersfield decided to embrace technology and installed two electronic targets at 500 yards. This proved to be an instant success and these were swiftly followed in 2005 by two additional targets at 200 yards, an investment made possible by a loan from the NRA. With range use booming the club added one extra electronic target at both 200 and 500 yards in 2007. Over this period the number of active shooters using the range has risen by over 30%. Ever eager to add new facilities for an expanding membership the club are in the process of developing a 100 yards outdoor small-bore range.

Inevitably Yorkshire, like everywhere else in the country, has suffered range closures, notably Tottle near Sheffield and Hawksworth on Ilkley Moor, which shut in 1987 after over 100 years in use and was the home to Leeds Service Rifle Club for 40 years. Despite setbacks and difficulties the true Yorkshire traits of resourcefulness, stubbornness and good humour have come to the fore and many people continue to enjoy shooting in England's largest county.



Shooting at 200 yards at Brockholes range, home of Huddersfield RC.

The Bingham Shield 2007

This annual match is shot between Huddersfield, Leeds and Sheffield at the end of every season. Usually shot at Strensall the match was moved to Huddersfield's Brockholes range in 2007 due to ongoing difficulties with access at Strensall. The fact that three teams were able to complete the match (2&15 @ 200 & 500 yards) on three targets in an afternoon is testament to the benefits of electronic targets - and no message 4s!

In 2007 the match was won by the hosts Huddersfield. Overall scoring was high with leading scorers being: David Dyson 150.20, Steve Robinson 150.19 and Richard Hirst 149.22.

Results

- 1 Huddersfield RC 1744.197 (Dave Dyson 150.20)
- 2 Leeds SRC 1680.130 (Mark Silson 148.22)
- 3 Sheffield RC 1649.121 (Chris White 147.18)

For more details on shooting opportunities and clubs in Yorkshire please contact the NRA Regional Manager by e-mail regman@nra.org.uk or telephone 01483 797777 ext 156.

SHOOTING PROGRAMME FOR SCOTLAND IN 2008

by Tim Kidner

The National Match was planned to be held in Scotland this year at Barry Buddon. Unfortunately this has had to be cancelled due to uncertainty on the availability of the Barry North range, which is closed awaiting a complete rebuild of the stop butt, and also doubt about the range charges for running a much larger event compared to previous years. If at all possible, it is intended to run a normal Scottish Championships event but it was felt that there was too much risk of a last minute cancellation to allow the National Match to go ahead this year. However, if all the issues can be resolved it is hoped to be able to hold the National Match at Barry Buddon in 2009.

The main Target Rifle and F Class competitions this year start with the West of Scotland Championships at Blair Atholl over the weekend of 3 and 4 May, shooting one day at short range and one day at long range. The Scottish Championships are planned to take place over the weekend of 7 and 8 June and the programme will depend on whether Barry North range is available to use. The Scottish Long Range Championships at Blair Atholl will be over the weekend of 28 and 29 June with all shooting taking place at 900 and 1000 yards. The

Tayside Championships will be on 2 and 3 August, also at Blair Atholl, with a similar programme to the West of Scotland Championships. The Invernesshire Championships are on 9 and 10 August at Cawdor and the East of Scotland Championships on 27 September at Castlelaw near Edinburgh, both competitions fired at short ranges. All these Regional Championships have separate TR and F Class Open and F/TR sections and the F Class UK Association is also organising two rounds of their National League competition in Scotland. Both rounds will be at Blair Atholl on 14 and 15 June and 9 and 10 August, shooting at long range only. The Inter Region Team Championships will be on 6 July at Blair Atholl with separate team matches for Target Rifle and F Class.

The Match Rifle events, run by the National Rifle Club of Scotland, will take place at Blair Atholl with the Spring Championships on 24 and 25 May (closed event for NRC of S members) and the Autumn Championships on 13 and 14 September which is an open event.

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

You will have noticed from this report how often Blair Atholl range is in use. It is used every weekend plus some weekdays from the middle of March to the middle of October by a large number of different clubs and associations. The West Atholl Rifle Club, which runs the range, has taken the brave decision to install electronic targets to be used at all distances, including long range to 1200 yards. The targets have been ordered and are due to be installed and commissioned for the start of the season, using the existing target frames so that conventional targets can still be used, when required, or if there is a complete system failure of the electronic targets. The benefits are expected to be more shooting per day and the savings from not requiring to hire markers for the main Championship events. The West Atholl Club has also made the decision to purchase moveable gazebos to provide shooter protection from the rain to avoid shoots being cancelled or curtailed by bad weather - 2007 was particularly bad for matches being affected by the weather. The experience gained by West Atholl may be of interest to other clubs considering the change to electronic targets and the Club will be happy to provide information once the system is fully operational.

Norman Clark

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CORNWALL OPEN TARGET RIFLE MEETING

Millpool Range 25 – 26 August 2007

by Adrian Pettman

Fine weather greeted the firers on the Saturday morning, a welcome change from earlier years. Although the numbers competing were a few down on last year the standard of shooting was as high as ever.

Possibles abounded in the first 300 yards competition, the Nat West Trophy, the top spot being filled by Keith Ellett with a 50.9 and Andrew Wilde runner up with 50.8.

This year it was decided to reduce the metric shoot to ten rounds from fifteen as the difference in points dropped was a little out of proportion to the usual scoring on NRA match targets. The good news here was delivered by Donald Anderson with a convincing 100.5 with second place going to Paul Cann on 99.6.

After lunch the event moved to 500 yards for a fifteen round shoot, the ECC/Imerys Group Trophy; here the effects of a variable breeze kept the scores down a trifle. Nevertheless, 74.7 was the top score by Roger Ellis followed by Ian Luckman on 74.6. Later in the afternoon the conditions eased somewhat for the MWT Trophy at 600 yards when Andrew Wilde came past the post first with a 50.7 contested closely by Alastair Kinross on 50.6 and Clive Wall on 50.5.

Sunday dawned bright and warm but a firm wind dominated the day. Fifteen shots at 600 and 500 yards was the first order of the day with concurrent team events. The top score here was achieved by Gary Childs with 148.18 closely followed by Paul Cann with 147.21. The County Challenge Match resulted in Cornwall coming in with 850.70 just pipping Devon on 847.77 – a very close contest indeed.

The Sunday afternoon brought with it one of those sudden quirks of nature which was totally unexpected. Large numbers of flying ants descended on the range and then proceeded to crawl into any orifice

that presented itself both human and mechanical. Competitors were completely coated with these insects, sights were blocked up and all other equipment attacked in some form. However, such is the way, the show went on with the final of the Duke of Cornwall Trophy. In this event only one sighter was permitted. The winner on this occasion was Ian Luckman racing for the line with 74.8 with Robin Hallows close on his heels with 74.7, Alastair Kinross taking third place with 73.7.

So ended all the main shooting events but there were numerous aggregate prizes. The Grand Aggregate, the Jobson Rose Bowl, out of a total of 375 was won by Paul Cann with 367.38, Andrew Wilde was second on 366.33 and Gary Childs third on 365.32.

The Harvey Shield over the same course of fire, but confined to members of the Cornwall Rifle Club, went to Keith Ellett with 361.21 with M Frost runner up with 361.21 and L Garnett on 358.20.

The results of the other aggregate competitions were as follows:

E Thomas Construction Trophy

1	A Wilde	100.15
2	RE Ellis	99.15
3	KG Ellett	99.11

Royal Ordnance Trophy (RG Ammo) ex 225

1	A Wilde	220.15
2	RW Hallows	217.13
3	J Garnett	216.13

The Cornwall Shield (teams of four)

1	Devon	871.54
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Helena Rubenstein Trophy (Ladies Grand Agg)

1	June Barden	113.4
---	-------------	-------

Dave Lumby Memorial (ex 85)

1	P Cann	84.10
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Paul Cann won the Jobson Rose Bowl for the Grand Aggregate.



Keith Ellett won the Harvey Shield for Cornwall's top gun.

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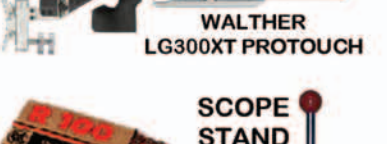
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1	P Cann and G Childs	536.46
Junior Prize		
1	JD Webber	333.21
F Class Saturday Aggregate		
1	C Dew	288.6
2	I Mowbray	286.3
F Class Grand Aggregate		
1	I Mowbray	394.3
2	S Richards	387.2
Home Loads Trophy		
1	RE Ellis	365.31
2	RW Shaw	361.30
3	A Kinross	361.28

This year the whole meeting was organised by Keith Ellett to whom we are indebted for all the time and effort he put into the administration. Our thanks must go to Mike Hallows who put in hours of work on the computer to give us a fast and accurate list of results during the weekend. Once again we are greatly indebted to Rob Moyle the CO of the cadets who continue to give us a first class marking service. The prizes were presented by Mrs Pauline Hallows.

Our sponsors all deserve our gratitude for their generosity in contributing handsomely to the prize fund. Those involved being Albie Fox who kindly provided many vouchers for sweatshirts, HPS for



The Devon team with the Cornwall Shield.

donating a free bedding service, RPA (Trakker sight), Roy Jobson, Keith Ellett, the NRA, the L&MRA, the City Rifle Club and Norman Clark.

For 2008 it has been decided to move this event to the weekend following the August Bank Holiday, namely the 30 and 31 August. This action, it is hoped, may encourage a few more shooters to enter who might otherwise have been discouraged by the local holiday traffic. Keith Ellett has kindly agreed to be in charge of this meeting again and anyone who is interested in taking part should contact Keith on 01822 614567.

The Cornwall Rifle Club looks forward to welcoming as many of you as possible this coming summer.

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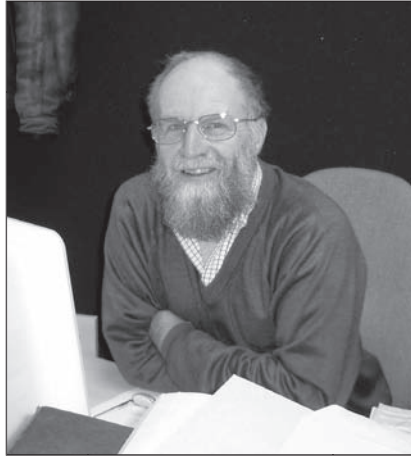
PO Box 28896, London, SW13 0YD

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

E-mail: James@AndrewTuckerTargetSports.co.uk

NOTES FROM THE NRA FIREARMS LIAISON OFFICER

by
Roger
Speak



Just a short note from me in this edition. I have just completed and sent to each of the relevant firearms licensing managers throughout the country the list of those NRA members who have not registered as shooting at Bisley during 2007.

Out of approximately 5500 NRA members, about 3500 members had not registered on the Range Office shooting database computer that they had shot here during the year. About three quarters of those people have not given the NRA any details at all regarding their Firearm Certificate, expiry date, their firearms details and their Primary Club (as shown on the front page of your Firearms Certificate). If we do not have these details on our database, we cannot assess why you did not shoot during the year and thus must send your details to the police as required by firearms law. You are thus likely to be contacted by them and questions asked.

Even if the NRA is not registered as your primary club, it is most helpful to us, and to you, if you could kindly provide us with the above details so that we can update our shooting database on your behalf. It is quite simple - just send an e-mail with your details to me at firearmsliaison@nra.org.uk or fill in a change slip at the Range Office and we will do the updating. Once you have done that, please make sure that every time you shoot at Bisley, you log onto the database in the Range Office computer. To put it bluntly, it is your responsibility to fill in the computer database not anyone else's! In the last few weeks, I have been told that a member thought that when he bought a new gun, then the gunsmith somehow automatically entered the purchase on the Range Office computer. Someone else insisted that it was his county Firearms Licensing Department's responsibility to amend the NRA Range Office computer! Our databases are extremely secure and only very few staff have access to them for alterations.

Finally, may I remind members that if you change address, buy or sell firearms or change any other details, please let the NRA know as soon as possible so that we may update the shooting and the membership databases. There have been a number of Life Members who have moved house a number of times since joining the NRA, but have not notified their address change. Consequently, after papers are returned "not at this address" and nothing is heard from you for a while, we may assume that you no longer have an active interest in the NRA and you may be removed from membership privileges and ultimately from membership of NRA.

Please help us help you by notifying us of changes and keeping us up to date and always remember - Sign in, Use it or Lose it!

Happy shooting!



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NEW

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All three main political parties have backed the launch of National Shooting Week in 2008, and now the organisers need the backing of the shooting clubs. NRA affiliated clubs and ranges are needed to hold guest days for the public during National Shooting Week - an event which enables us to promote our sport on our terms.

This year's week will take place from Saturday 3 May to Sunday 11 May, when thousands of people across the UK will try one of the most exciting sports during Olympic year. The event was conceived by the Countryside Alliance on behalf of the British Shooting Sports Council, and the NRA plays a key role in organising the event.



As in 2007, the Countryside Alliance is putting up £10,000 for the first 40 clubs and grounds (£250 each) that register and commit to placing an advert in their main local paper. National Shooting Week posters and fliers will be sent to registered event organisers and retailers to help promote local events. There will also be sustained PR nationwide with an opportunity provided by the Olympic Games taking place just weeks later.

Gerry Sutcliffe MP, Minister of Sport said: "UK teams are terrific at winning international medals for shooting so I welcome National Shooting Week as a responsible initiative to promote the sport ahead of Beijing 2008 and London 2012."



Government spokesman for shooting and angling Martin Salter MP said: "I am delighted to support National Shooting Week in 2008. Labour's Charter For Shooting encourages exactly this sort of participation event to demystify firearms and teach responsible and safe use."

Hugh Robertson MP, Conservative Shadow Minister for Sport and for the Olympics, said: "I welcome the return of National Shooting Week and wish the organisers every success in raising the profile of a fine sporting discipline. Shooting is one of the most inclusive Olympic and Paralympic sports, where gender, age and disability are no barriers to success which is one of the reasons why we are pushing the government to lift the restrictions on Olympic target pistol shooters."

The Liberal Democrats have given their support for the first time. Don Foster MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport said: "National Shooting Week is a great way to promote one of our most successful sports in a clear demonstration of safe use of legal firearms as opposed to criminal abuse of illegal firearms."

The organisers hope to build on the success of last year's event when thousands of people tried shooting for the first time. Monitoring of national and regional media suggested that an estimated 15 million people learned that shooting was accessible, took place nearby and that they could have a go, taking the family for a great day out in a safe environment.

Whilst it is easier to run shotgun and airgun-based events, rifle and muzzle-loading clubs can use their guest day facility to invite a 'recognised outside organisation', such as the Scouts, schools, Rotary Club or Women's Institutes, so everyone can do something

Clubs need to register online and they will receive posters, fliers, a fact booklet for journalists and an Organiser Pack. For more information, call 020 7840 9212 or e-mail info@nationalshootingweek.co.uk

To register, go to: www.nationalshootingweek.co.uk



SHOOTING DISCIPLINE MATTERS

Classics

from Rae Wills

As in the Chinese curse “May You Live in Interesting Times”, the bombshell of a proposed energy limit for firearms on MoD ranges dropped so suddenly in the autumn, raising the possibility of even a Brown Bess being banned, certainly made life interesting!

However common sense by all parties has come to our rescue and, with some not too irksome restrictions on how we shoot firearms with energies above about that of a target rifle and how we manage our Clubs, we can carry on. I will not comment further as I am writing this in early February and by the time you read this you will have already learnt all about it from the horse’s mouth and in other articles in this Journal.

And here I must say that over the years I have often been critical of NRA management, and certainly some decisions in the now distant past did us no favours at all. But in this instance I cannot praise enough the NRA and all those involved in the negotiations, who, with the stalwart assistance of Col Bowles of the MoD, have, through an enormous amount of work, saved our bacon; without their knowledge and patient negotiating skills most of the shooting we know would have been gone for good. If you complain about the lack of communication, this was perhaps regrettable, but inevitable given the nature of the workload, and fast moving confidential discussions.

Last year we came to the end of our supply of the Round Bull 200 yards targets, also used to make the black and white Tin Hat. To have these reprinted was going to be very expensive, not only in setting up the printing die, but the minimum order would be way above foreseeable consumption. So a small working party was directed by the Classics Sub Committee to find a solution.

This has now been achieved, and the new target will be made by modifying the standard NRA 200 yards item.

NRA 200 yards		Old Historic		New Historic adapted NRA 200 yards		Change
Aim mark	16”	Aim mark	16”	Aim mark	16”	-
V	2.1”			-	Deleted	
5	3.5”	V	4”	V bull	3.5”	- 0.5”
4	7”	5	8”	5 bull	7”	-1”
3	10.5”		-	-	Deleted	
2	16”	4	16”	4 inner	16” (edge of aim mark)	-
1	Rest of target	3	24”	3 magpie	New scribed circle 24”	-
		2	Rest of target	2 outer	New scribed circle 36”	added outer
				1 hit	Rest of target	-

Dimensions in inches

One important factor is that the aiming mark remains the same (so no need to change target foresights) and the V bull and bull are reduced. So some change with high scores harder to get, but the added outer may help sorting out those with more variable rifles previously tied.

Looking forward to the Imperial Meeting, again it is frustrating that many items are still in the final planning stage but by the time you read this they should be finalised. However to give a preview, we have looked closely to find improvements and to listen to your comments. Loudest moans concern cost of entry and, although we would love to lower our prices, costs still have to be covered. But to be in line with the Trafalgar, entry fees for snaps and rapids will very much reduced.

New matches are planned in line with those that were trialled under the "white card" scheme, now finished to the great relief of Stats, whom I right royally confused with it!

So look out for classes for Optical Sights in Deliberate and Double Snaps, and a match for Double Rifles; patch ball we would like to add, but finding range space, sadly, is probably impossible.

These added matches have proved the straw for the camel's back with regard to the entry form, as even with a magnifying glass no more could be squeezed in, so a new simpler entry form and related match list will appear, very closely modelled on that for the Trafalgar, and the programme will also have a new look.

As to when and where to hold the NRA Percussion Revolver Championship, it is always the case of not being able to please all the people all the time. This year it will still be part of the Meeting, but will be in two details, morning and afternoon, with the usual three classes, but on the Friday only.

Next year we may achieve our objective in having the Championship as a separate event at a different venue; a prime candidate is the range at Prees, which is reasonably more central and located just off the junction of the A41/49 just South of Whitchurch in Shropshire. Unfortunately there is no accommodation on site, but the famous Midway Truckstop is just up the road, home of the Desperate Dan breakfast - triple everything anyone?

300 Metres

from Ian Shirra-Gibb

The 2007 season came to an end with the GB 300m Rifle Club's annual championships. From a reasonable entry of 15 the winner this year was a new face to the discipline - David Tracey from Australia (but living in London) who shot a creditable score of 587 with his TR rifle.

This weekend in October also brought the Sunday TR League to an end with last year's winners Dorking retaining the crown from the Riff Raff Club. Dave Crispin was again overall top gunscore.

Dates for shooting in Butt 10 will be published in the Marksmans Calendar so please contact us if you or your club has an interest in sharpening up your V count at short range on a Saturday. All NRA members are most welcome to try our electronic targets and we look forward to teams entering the Sunday afternoon TR league.

The NRA 300m Championships will be held on 10 and 11 May with a TR event on Saturday afternoon but it does not stop you shooting both events ie free rifle prone with the same rifle on the Sunday.

As it is Olympic year we will have four European cups to attend as an NRA/GB team this year plus a final in September in Switzerland. Selection will be made from the current National Squad.

ARMY TARGET SHOOTING CLUB

PISTOL OPEN

10 & 11 MAY 2008

National Squad Nominated Meeting

Air Pistol - ISSF 50m (Free) Pistol

ML Pistol/Revolver - Gallery/Sport Rifle

Individual & Aggregate Competitions

Entry Forms from your Club Secretary

or download from

**[www.army.mod.uk/sportandadventure/Clubs/
Competition_entry_forms/index.htm](http://www.army.mod.uk/sportandadventure/Clubs/Competition_entry_forms/index.htm)**

or The Meeting Secretary, ATSC (TP) Open Meeting,

ATSC Club House, Bisley Camp, Brookwood,

Woking, Surrey GU24 ONY

THE NRA RIFLE CLUB HUNDRED POSTAL COMPETITION

by Kevin Hill

Due to the dwindling numbers of participants, the NRA, in 2005, decided to stop running this competition which is a three positional shoot competition. A number of shooters got together and gained permission from the NRA to continue running this discipline. The purpose of this article is to encourage more shooters to 'have a go'.

The NRA Rifle Club Hundred was introduced in 1948 by Captain DS Swanston OBE RN and gave the target rifle shooter the chance to compete using all of the three positions - Prone, Standing and Kneeling. The competition is shot at 200 yards on a scaled down 300 metres UIT target. For each discipline up to four non convertible sighting shots are permitted followed by ten shots to count.

Three position shooting is well known for being an Olympic discipline and Malcolm Cooper brought home Gold from both the 1984 and 1988 Olympics. He also became world champion in 1986 for 300 metres standard rifle.

Rifles and Equipment

The idea of the competition is to use your existing target rifle equipment - 7.62mm NATO and .303" British are permitted (other calibres may be considered). Triggers must conform to the 1.5kg rule. The only extra item you may require is a kneeling roll but you can improvise by rolling up a shooting mat or an item of clothing.

The Prone Position

Nothing special here as you shoot with a sling as normal. Sorry, no bipods or rests permitted.



The prone position.

Standing Position

This is where the fun starts. Remove your sling and enlarge your foresight. If you keep the rifle upright you will not need to adjust your sights. Try and find a comfortable position with your feet at shoulder width apart or wider. The rifle can be supported by your forearm with your upper arm resting against your chest. These are only guidelines but they work for me. If you are not familiar with this position then you will soon find that it is not easy. Take your time - don't hold the rifle in the aim for long periods of time. Rest between shots. Trigger control is very important - points can be gained if your trigger is smooth and correctly adjusted.



The standing position.



Resting between shots.



The 200 yards metric target - the bull counts as ten and is very satisfying to hit from the standing position!



The NRA 200 yards target for comparison.



The standing position - note how the forearm supports the rifle.

The Kneeling Position

This, to some people including me, is the most uncomfortable position. You will need your sling again for this position. Shoot as if you were in the Prone position but with your left elbow on your left knee. The kneeling roll (mentioned earlier) is placed under the right calf and prevents you from flattening your right foot. A good pair of walking boots will also help.



The kneeling position - note the use of a kneeling roll.

The Sitting Position

Because a number of people find the kneeling position too painful, it has been suggested that the sitting

position be permitted as an alternative to the kneeling position. Sit with your legs crossed and support the rifle in the same way as the kneeling position ie support your left elbow with your left knee.



The sitting position - an alternative to the kneeling position.

Safety

Keeping the barrel pointing down the range is not always possible with the standing, kneeling and sitting positions. However only closing the bolt once the barrel is pointing down range is possible. Both shooter and range officer should be extra vigilant during shooting. Remember that if you get tired in the standing position and wish to rest, open that bolt first before any other movement.

How to enter the Competition for 2008

Entry forms and copies of the rules may be obtained by sending an e-mail to club100.nra@ntlworld.com. A small entry fee will be charged to cover the cost of badges etc and the Swanston Trophy will be awarded to the person with the highest score. Please remember that this is a postal competition and may therefore be shot on any range that permits these disciplines to be shot at 200 yards.

2007 Results for the Swanston Trophy

	Name	Club	p	s	k/s	Total
1	KB Hill	WFBRC	95	71	80	246
2	D Jessup	SHGRPC	86	48	69	203
3	CA Painting	Pumas RC	97	39	62	198
4	J Wilson	SHGRPC	91	39	58	188
5	RE Ellis	WFBRC	85	26	56	167
6	D Brigden	SHGRPC	90	22	45	157
7	PL Jordan	Pumas RC	82	14	53	149
8	S Wilson	SHGRPC	94	22	24	140

Key:

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

WFBRC Wandsworth Fullbore Rifle Club

WHAT EXACTLY DOES JOHN GARDENER DO?

All articles submitted by John Gardener

Twilight Club

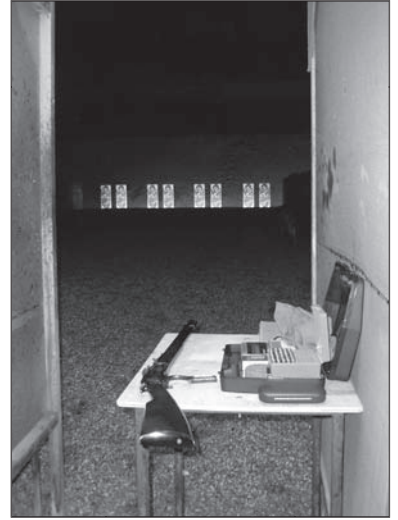
A new Wednesday evening venture, the Twilight Club started on 16 January. Ten shooters turned up to shoot on Cheylesmore Range under floodlights. Thanks to some hard work by the camp electrician, (helped by the butch one) and Les Pullen the Pistol Range Warden, we now have two well-lit bays for use together with tea and coffee facilities in the back room.



On 23 January fifteen competitors shot a competition with a Celtic flavour, followed by Haggis, neeps and tatties, accompanied by a wee dram, courtesy of the London and Middlesex Clubhouse. More 'themed' evenings are planned.

Though not intended as a weekly event, we hope to run some competition shoots with stages 'outside the box' ie not PP1 or 1500 etc. Two bays gives us the flexibility to allow room for practice shooting and the two hours or so planned for these evenings gives the 'working class' a chance for a bit of relaxation on the way home.

John Gardener is the co-ordinator for these evenings. John can be contacted by e-mail on rangesup@nra.org.uk or telephone 01483 797777 ext 152. Watch the NSC notice boards and NRA website for details of future events.



The Cheylesmore Challenge

On Sunday 24 February the NSC hosted a Gallery Rifle Centre-fire competition, which attracted just enough entrants to fill a bay all day.

The competitors shot a number of stages, which, although non-standard, were interesting and challenging, hence the name of the competition. It was challenging enough for a number of 'procedural errors' to be made resulting in a surprising winner. Yours truly came from a very long way back in GR experience to take, by a very small margin, first place.

We managed to construct some very interesting stages using the turning targets and by moving to different firing positions. It is of course, perfectly safe to move with a lever actioned rifle with rounds in the tube and action open, despite a round being presented in the breech. Load one - fire one, is a very interesting concept! Safety was the main concern (with fun coming a very close second) with each competitor being individually followed by a Range Officer and applying rules adopted by the UKPSA. As a tyro GR shooter I am indebted to all the competitors, as all got



involved in officiating, running and suggesting stages. I am also grateful that they let me win in order to maintain my interest! I must pay particular thanks to Vanessa Duffy who did the scoring and to Rene, the new addition to the Duffy household who kept us all entertained between shoots. Keep your eye on the NRA website for the next event and come along.

Any club wishing to run a similar event, please get in touch and I'll advise you of the ground rules, safety requirements, suggested stages etc. I might even ask for an entry form!

Thanks to Jeremy Staples, Glynn Alger and Martin Farnan for the help and support in preparation, and for allowing us to run the event. Gun rhymes with fun and that's what we had.



From the Range Office

We have recently received complaints from local residents about the “persistent shooting noise, especially at weekends”. The person concerned, with whom I spoke on the telephone, was very polite and put her points concisely and clearly. She was very articulate and, without being patronising, obviously well educated and determined.

What to do? I could of course just ignore it; adopt the “We were here first” approach. Well, approach is the wrong word, for that would have been no approach at all.

The background to this is, she had complained to the local council about the ‘persistent noise’ and they had sent along two inspectors to investigate. They, in their defence, were unbiased and open minded. After two discussion periods with Jeremy Staples, I became somewhat concerned for my sport (not to mention my job!). They left to investigate further. We had advised these inspectors that, in the event we are closed, the military would reclaim their ranges (which we lease) and move in, resulting, probably in increased use of the ranges. We also pointed out that, as a leisure industry (for that is what we are, funding the NRA and your sport) our busiest, and thus most profitable times were weekends.

They returned a couple of weeks later to report that they had found that, in law, there was nothing to be done to prevent or curtail our activities, and sent her a letter to that effect.

The lady had, following receipt of the letter, decided to ring the Range Office on a very busy Sunday and had been forced to leave a message on the answer machine. This had, understandably vexed her and it showed in her voice message. So I rang. She was, as I said, calm and polite and thanked me for ringing. I explained that I was not in a position to have a discussion with her, being only an employee, but that I would pass on her message.

Now we could dismiss this lady as a crank, a grouch, a spoilsport. But she has genuine concerns that her weekends are being spoiled. She is a neighbour and no-one wants to fall out with their neighbours. So why, after living in Bisley for sixteen years, is she complaining? A change of lifestyle, recently retired perhaps? We don’t know. I hope, for all our sakes, that the matter can be resolved amicably. Her suggestion that we close for one Sunday every two months may not seem unreasonable to her, but Sundays are our busiest day. She also suggested starting at 10:00 instead of 08:30. The military won’t do that for they are already pushed to find range space for troops preparing to go and fight in Afghanistan and Iraq. Would you come to Bisley for less than a full days shooting? Probably not, so what is the solution? I don’t know, but you can rest assured that someone

here has taken this onboard and will, hopefully settle the matter to the satisfaction of all.

What, I wonder, is your local range’s position with the local residents? What, I ask are you doing to give our sport a positive countenance? It is no good sticking our heads in the sand and hoping it will go away. The future of our sport is in our own hands, so get off your backsides, and do something positive.

What do they do in the Range Office?

You may have read my articles ‘From the Butts’ and ‘From the Firing Point’; well this is a follow up and it is in response to some feedback and comments I received over the Christmas Holiday.

We start at 07:30 and open the doors at 07:45. During those fifteen minutes we count the tills, check the daily detail sheets, check the marker list, radios and of course, put the kettle on (often throwing away the cold tea at about 09:00).

Then we sit on our backsides all day, ignore the telephone and send meaningless and trivial replies to any e-mails we deign to open. On Wednesdays it takes three of us to do that. Four if you count the Accommodation Officer and Range Office Manager, Amanda.

In winter we finish at 17:00, we, on most days manage an hour for lunch. No other official breaks are taken although we do manage to ditch up to a dozen half drunk, cold cups of tea each day.

In summer we finish no earlier than an hour after shooting finishes and we try our best to be walking out of the office just as you return to buy ammunition at two minutes to going home time. This is, of course, a deliberate ploy on our part to annoy you. Other things we like to factor in to the ‘let’s be awkward’ equation are:

We never have enough radios to give you your own pair.

We don’t stock your particular powder or bullet head.

We never order popular ammunition calibres.

We don’t give away free range space.

Arranging for targets to be in the wrong place is one of our particular favorites.

During the course of our day we make the odd booking, do the odd tour of the ranges and of course make tea.

If you would like to sample some of the good life, contact me in the Range Office and I’ll arrange for you to spend a day with us. You will need to bring a clean cup, ear defenders and a rhinoceros skin if you can find one. I look forward to your visit.

THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION, ITS TRAMWAYS AND THE LONDON AND SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

by Christopher C Bunch

Introduction

The Range Tramways of the NRA appeared as a three part article in the Summer 2006, Winter 2006 and Spring 2007 editions respectively of the NRA Journal. However shortly afterwards the NRA Letter Books became available. These contain copies of almost all the letters written by successive NRA Secretaries from 1860 until recent times including several hundred letters written to Officers of the London & South Western Railway which had been so closely associated with the NRA from the early 1860s to the end of 1922 when it was absorbed into the Southern Railway. Although most of the received letters have not been located a small collection, covering the period from 1900 onwards, remains in the archives. It has therefore been the present intention to include a postscript with corrections and additions to the original article as well as widening the scope to include other aspects of the NRA's long-standing relationship with the L&SWR.

The Letter Books record correspondence with all the L&SWR General Managers from Archibald Scott to Herbert Walker and also other senior officials of the Company including such prominent personalities as William Adams and Dugald Drummond, successive Locomotive Superintendents, Sam Fay, later General Manager of the Great Central Railway, and Henry Holmes, Fay's successor as Superintendent of the Line.

The Horse Tramway at Wimbledon

The NRA was established in 1859 as a direct result of a 'war scare' with France with the purpose of assisting the rifle shooting proficiency of the newly formed Volunteers. It held competitions in target shooting at its Annual Meeting in July on Wimbledon Common from 1860 until 1889, moving to its present home at Bisley in 1890.

PUTNEY, WEEK DAYS.		PUTNEY, SUNDAYS.		WIMBLEDON, WEEK DAYS.		WIMBLEDON, SUNDAYS.	
Leave Waterloo (Branch Line).	Leave Putney.	Leave Waterloo (Branch Line).	Leave Putney.	Leave Waterloo (Main Line).	Leave Wimbledon.	Leave Waterloo (Main Line).	Leave Wimbledon.
7 20	8 15	8 30	9 20	8 15	9 05	8 20	9 10
8 20	9 15	9 30	10 20	9 15	10 05	9 20	10 10
9 20	10 15	10 30	11 20	10 15	11 05	10 20	11 10
10 20	11 15	11 30	12 20	11 15	12 05	11 20	12 10
11 20	12 15	12 30	1 20	12 15	1 05	12 20	1 10
12 20	1 15	1 30	2 20	1 15	2 05	1 20	2 10
1 20	2 15	2 30	3 20	2 15	3 05	2 20	3 10
2 20	3 15	3 30	4 20	3 15	4 05	3 20	4 10
3 20	4 15	4 30	5 20	4 15	5 05	4 20	5 10
4 20	5 15	5 30	6 20	5 15	6 05	5 20	6 10
5 20	6 15	6 30	7 20	6 15	7 05	6 20	7 10
6 20	7 15	7 30	8 20	7 15	8 05	7 20	8 10
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8 20	9 15	9 30	10 20	9 15	10 05	9 20	10 10
9 20	10 15	10 30	11 20	10 15	11 05	10 20	11 10
10 20	11 15	11 30	12 20	11 15	12 05	11 20	12 10
11 20	12 15	12 30	1 20	12 15	1 05	12 20	1 10
12 20	1 15	1 30	2 20	1 15	2 05	1 20	2 10
1 20	2 15	2 30	3 20	2 15	3 05	2 20	3 10
2 20	3 15	3 30	4 20	3 15	4 05	3 20	4 10
3 20	4 15	4 30	5 20	4 15	5 05	4 20	5 10
4 20	5 15	5 30	6 20	5 15	6 05	5 20	6 10
5 20	6 15	6 30	7 20	6 15	7 05	6 20	7 10
6 20	7 15	7 30	8 20	7 15	8 05	7 20	8 10
7 20	8 15	8 30	9 20	8 15	9 05	8 20	9 10
8 20	9 15	9 30	10 20	9 15	10 05	9 20	10 10
9 20	10 15	10 30	11 20	10 15	11 05	10 20	11 10
10 20	11 15	11 30	12 20	11 15	12 05	11 20	12 10
11 20	12 15	12 30	1 20	12 15	1 05	12 20	1 10
12 20	1 15	1 30	2 20	1 15	2 05	1 20	2 10

L&SWR Timetable from the 1863 NRA Wimbledon Handbook.

For the 1864 Annual Meeting a horse-drawn tramway, using portable track, was established on Wimbledon Common to carry Volunteers and visitors to the firing points of the various ranges. The earliest letters related to the tramway currently identified date from the period 1867 to 1869. A letter of 7 September 1867 addressed to H Thompson, the original tramway and camp contractor, refers to some missing medical artefacts which were

apparently used to treat the broken leg of a female victim of a tramway accident. The tone of this letter, and others, suggests that the relationship between the NRA and Thompson was becoming somewhat strained. Indeed Thompson was replaced in 1868 by a new contractor, Messrs John Aird and Son of Belvedere Road, Lambeth, initially on a temporary basis. Aird's made an immediate success of the job and this was acknowledged in a letter, dated 15 August 1868, from the NRA Secretary, Edmond St John-Mildmay.

... The work was admirably executed, and as proof of it, I may tell you that this is the first year that the tramway was used from the first day till the last without it once being stopped from any accident ...

(This statement effectively dismisses the assertion in the original article that there were no further accidents after those recorded at the opening of the tramway in 1864!)

Following this a letter, dated 22 March 1869, confirms that Aird were awarded an annual contract to lay the tramway for the July Meeting and to dismantle it afterwards. This was the same John Aird & Son who were appointed as the main contractor for the widening of the Woking to Basingstoke section of the L&SWR Main Line between 1899 and 1905.

Contemporary drawings of the original back-to-back tramcars and the 'loose coupling' method of horse haulage indicate inherent dangers especially with the uncertainty of the primitive 'break'. However by 1878 photographic evidence shows that all six cars originally supplied had been rebuilt on the original underframes to a much safer design, rather in the style of the narrow gauge slate wagons common in Wales at the time, but with inward facing seats and safety rails, however springs were not thought necessary! The enlargement in the photograph at the top of the following page catches a glimpse of a train of these cars at Bisley in 1896.

Merryweather's Steam Tram Engine

The provision of a steam tram engine to work the service has been subject to some confusion. The letter book correspondence clarifies this to a large extent, although the actual origins of 'Wharncliffe', reputed to have been the same locomotive tried out, during 1876, on the Ryde Pier tramway in the Isle of Wight, are not yet proven.

As early as 1872 Aird drew the attention of the NRA to the availability of a small steam engine to replace the horses used on the tramway. The NRA Secretary, Edmond St John-Mildmay, always ready to consider the latest technology, responded to Aird in a letter dated 4 April 1872.

Have you any news to give me about the little engine? If so a line from you will greatly oblige me - I hear that there is an 18 horse power engine at Woolwich



At the 1896 Bisley Meeting a section from a Volunteer Cyclists Battalion, equipped with Martini Henry Rifles, wait to start the Starley Competition which was held over a three quarter mile point-to-point course with a total of ten shots to be completed in nine minutes. They are close to the 1891 Camp terminus of the range tramway adjacent to the firing point for Butt 7 at the south west corner of the 90 Butt (now Century) Range. Just visible behind the right hand cyclist is the original tramway engine shed. On the left of the picture (and shown enlarged) are some of the original Wimbledon Cars in their early livery of blue and white.

but it would never do. 1st It would be much too large and noisy, and 2ndly it is made for a much narrower gauge than our's is. Your little one with coke will I am sure be the very thing for us.

However nothing further came of this until 1877 when Merryweather & Sons provided one of their tram engines for trials during the NRA Meeting. Details are lacking but this locomotive must have been already constructed to suit the 3ft 6ins gauge of the tramway and was quite possibly one of the early designs fitted with the 'Field' vertical boiler also used in Merryweather's fire pumps. A description appeared in the NRA Report for the year.

Another novelty on the ground was the Steam Tramway Engine, which Messrs Merryweather and Sons kindly placed at the disposal of the Council. It was perfectly successful, and being noiseless, did not in any way disturb the visitors or the shooters at the firing points. It should be noticed, that though the rails had never been intended for the traffic of an engine, no alteration whatsoever was required, and that they withstood the severe test during nearly the whole Meeting, without the slightest injury resulting to the tramway.

At the same time Merryweather supplied one of their steam fire pumps and, although the NRA were initially very reluctant to accept the pump, claiming that cases of fire were extremely rare in the Camp and the means of dealing with them were adequate, a rather novel use for it was soon formulated and put to the manufacturer!

June 29 1877

The Council of the National Rifle Association are much obliged to you for placing one of your Engines at their disposal during the Wimbledon Meeting. The

Officer who will take charge of it is Captain Salmond of the Royal Engineers, who, in the event of a fire occurring has command of the "fire party".

The Council wish me to ask you whether you have any objection to the Engine being used for the purpose of throwing from time to time a jet of water on the grass in front of Lord Wharncliffe's Tents and those of the Staff. We have 2 Watering Carts from Messrs Braby, but in very hot and dry weather they hardly suffice for the watering of the grass as we keep them at work on the dusty roads - the engine being through your kindness lent to the Association the Council would not use it as proposed without your sanction.

In 1878 Merryweather again offered to supply, free of charge, 'a Tram engine' to the NRA for further trials, but subject to certain conditions. The details were contained in a letter from the NRA Secretary to Aird dated 3 April 1878.

I am sorry to be so troublesome, but I must ask you to be so good as to give me the benefit of your kind advice in the following matter.

Messrs Merryweather have again kindly placed an Engine at our disposal free of charge, but we must do one of two things, either widen our present Gauge to 4' 8½", or else ask them to narrow the width between the wheels of their engine to our present Gauge; the latter plan would cost about £100, but we have no notion of the cost of widening our Gauge - Will you then kindly let me know if you could ascertain for us which of the two plans would be the cheapest or most advantageous. If we increase the Gauge we shall have to increase also the width of our 6 Cars, which would entail a considerable expense, I presume.

The Committee have recommended that the tramway should be extended 150 yards. I will submit this recommendation to the Council in a few days; will you let me know the latest date for sending you the order for the work.

The final outcome was that the NRA Council agreed to the purchase of this locomotive and the Secretary confirmed this in a letter to Merryweather dated 20 May 1878. The requirement to change the gauge seems to confirm that this was not the same engine as had been supplied on trial in 1877.

In reference to your letter of the 3rd of May, I am now directed by the Council of the National Rifle Association that they have pleasure in accepting your liberal offer to supply the Association with one of your Patent Steam Tramway Engines for the sum of £320 and I am further directed to convey to you their expression of thanks for your liberality.

The Council also authorised the extension of the tramway as far as the Clock Tower in time for the July meeting.

The locomotive was named "Wharncliffe" in 1879, after the then Chairman of the NRA, the Earl of Wharncliffe, and turned out to be entirely to the NRA's satisfaction

for, on 2 January 1882, St John-Mildmay wrote to Merryweather expressing the Council's appreciation:

. . . as to neatness and efficiency it leaves nothing to be desired.

At this period Merryweather were in the process of redesigning their tram engines. Originally equipped with the 'Field' vertical boiler, also used in the same manufacturer's fire engines, they were now of the 'standard type' with a conventional 'Shand Mason' horizontal boiler. Merryweather also simplified the body and roof design. "Wharncliffe", although it seems to have been the first of Merryweather's standard Type 1 Tram Engine, was constructed with the earlier body design thereby remaining a unique hybrid.



Wimbledon c1880 - "Wharncliffe" runs round its train at the 'Camp' terminus near the NRA Offices. The Clock Tower was transferred to Bisley in 1890 and became a feature there for many years (but with a new clock). The prefabricated building in the background, known as 'the Pavilion' was also moved to Bisley but had to be replaced in the 1920s.

In 1883 the NRA were approached by the Electro-Motor Syndicate to trial their electric propulsion system. A report on this was carried in *The Railway Times* of 4 August 1883 and also in the NRA Report for the year. *The Railway Times* stated that, although the train successfully negotiated the length of the line at an average speed of 6 mph:

The familiar track of light rails laid down 22 years ago, with carriages of the same date, the sleepers loose in the sandy soil, is not the kind of line for an electrically driven train to be shown off upon, especially when the wheels of the cars are so much furrowed that their bearing surfaces bump on every chair of the rails they pass over.

Unfortunately this pioneering experiment in electric traction was reported as a failure and the Syndicate was wound up shortly afterwards.

The NRA and the L&SWR

Correspondence with Railway Companies dates from 1860 and the earliest letter to the L&SWR so far identified was sent by Edmond St John-Mildmay, then newly appointed as the NRA Secretary, to Archibald Scott, the L&SWR Traffic Manager (his title was changed to General Manager in 1870).

9th August 1860

Archibald Scott Esq

Sir,

I beg to enclose a cheque for £2.1.0 for conveyance of Mr Godfrey & 40 men of the Coldstream Guards to Wimbledon and back - I have to request that you will send me a receipt for the same.

In 1861 Lord Elcho, in a letter to the Railway Clearing House (but addressed as the Railway Association), moved to establish a comprehensive fare reduction policy agreement with the major railway companies, placing particular emphasis on their 'expensive fares'.

St James's Place

April 11th 1861

Sir

As Chairman of the National Rifle Association I have to request the favor of your bringing before the Board of the Railway Association the subject of the Coming Prize Meeting which will take place on Wimbledon Common on the 24th June.

By one of the rules of the N.R. Association the number of Volunteers sent up to compete may be in the following ratio "4 from a Corps consisting of any number of enrolled Volunteers above 500; below 500 and above 300, 3; below 300 and above 100, 1;" What the actual no of Competitors will be we are at present unable to State, but we do not Calculate more than 600 or 700, as many will, we fear, be deterred from coming by the expense of Travelling. It is therefore on this point that I would now Call your attention in the hope that the Railway Authorities may be induced to Concede to the Volunteers who are sent up as Competitors by their respective Corps the privilege of travelling at reduced fares. Nothing would I am Confident Contribute more than this to the Success of our Prize Meeting, and I venture to hope that the great public importance of this Annual national rifle gathering may lead the Board to view this subject with favor.

Your obedient servant

Signed Elcho

There are also further letters to Archibald Scott during this period. One written in 1868 is of considerable interest as it reflects the increasing importance of the NRA Annual Meetings to the L&SWR.

July 10th 1868

Sir,

The Council will esteem it as a favour if you will be so good as make the same arrangements during the Prize Meeting, as regards the stopping at Putney of trains which do not usually stop at the Station, as were made by you in 1867.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your obedient Servant
Edmond St John-Mildmay
Archibald Scott Esq.
Waterloo Bridge Station

Further evidence of a growing relationship is indicated in a letter, dated 10th February 1874 in which the NRA wrote regarding arrangements for the 'Easter Monday Review' with of course the usual request for fare concessions. Some years later the NRA again wrote to Scott in connection with a Review to be held at Portsmouth.

Revenue Committee
February 11 1882

Archibald Scott Esq.
General Manager London & South Western
Railway

Sir,

I am directed by the Hon. Secretaries of the Metropolitan Volunteers Commanding Officers to write and inform you that, at a Meeting of the Sub Committee held at this office yesterday, they were informed by a deputation which waited on them, from Portsmouth; that the same facilities as to Fares etc. for the Conveyance of Volunteers, Horses, Guns etc. had been offered to them by the London & South Western Railway Company in the event of a Review being held at that place as was extended to this Force by the London & Brighton Railway Company last year

I am directed to ask you if you would be so good as to communicate with the Honorary Secretaries in time to lay your letter before the next Meeting on Friday the 17th instant @ 3 o'clock giving them the necessary information to lay before a General Meeting of Metropolitan Commanding Officers on the same day at 3.30 o'clock.

The Sub Committee propose leaving the Waterloo Station by the 9.30 train on Thursday the 16th instant to inspect the Ground at Portsmouth and would be glad to be favored with Carriage accommodation as on former occasions.

DISTRICT RAILWAY.
CHOOSE THE "MANSION HOUSE" DIRECT ROUTE
TO WIMBLEDON CAMP.
BOOK TO PUTNEY BRIDGE OR TO THE NEW
"SOUTHFIELDS" STATION.
Conveyances at CHEAP FARES and at frequent Intervals between
PUTNEY BRIDGE STATION and the CAMP.
TERMINUS BOOKINGS to and from PUTNEY BRIDGE STATION and HARWELL, SOUTHALL, WEST DRAYTON
(for Putney, Oldbrook and Station), ELSTREE & WINDSOR, via EALING, and also to and from STATIONS
on the METROPOLITAN, GREAT WESTERN, GREAT LONDON, GREAT & SOUTHERN, and
GREAT EASTERN RAILWAYS.
MANSION HOUSE is the Central City Station.
SOUTHFIELDS Station, on the new WIMBLEDON LINE, is about 20 Minutes'
walk of the Camp.
ALWAYS ASK FOR TICKETS via "DISTRICT RAILWAY."
ONE SHILLING.

EVERYONE GOING TO
WIMBLEDON
SHOULD BUY EITHER A COPY OF THE
"DISTRICT RAILWAY"
MAP OF LONDON
OR THE
THE DIRECT ROUTE TO
PUTNEY OR SOUTHFIELDS
FROM
WIMBLEDON CAMP.
PRICE SIXPENCE
Mounted on Lines ... 1/6
In a Leatherette Case ... 2/6
On Rollers and Laminated ... 4/-
In a COPY GUIDE TO LONDON:
Price SIXPENCE.
Both Maps and Guides are obtainable at District
Railway Booking Offices, and at Station-Bookstalls.

The District Railway's extension from Putney Bridge to Wimbledon, exercising running-powers over L&SWR track, opened in 1889, offered a fleeting period of competition to the L&SWR's monopoly of the Annual Meeting.

A much closer association of the NRA and the L&SWR effectively started in 1888 when Charles Scotter, who

had succeeded Archibald Scott as the L&SWR General Manager in 1885, was instructed by his Court of Directors to take all possible measures to persuade the NRA to settle on 'L&SWR territory' when they moved from Wimbledon. His efforts were an important influence on the NRA's final choice of Bisley Camp, adjacent to the L&SWR's Brookwood Station.

On 30 October 1889 the Acting Secretary of the NRA, AP Humphry wrote to FJ Macaulay, the L&SWR Secretary, regarding the charges for carrying the Military Working Parties, who were to construct the Ranges and much of the Brookwood - Bisley 'tramway', between Aldershot and Brookwood.

I should be much obliged if you would be good enough to obtain for me a statement of the rate which will be charged by your Company for carrying the military working parties to and fro between Aldershot and Brookwood; the information being necessary to enable us to estimate our probable outlay for works.

I take it that the total charge will be treated as matter of account as against the contribution of £1000 which your Company was good enough to give to this Association.

On the same day Humphry wrote another letter to the L&SWR, this time to their Solicitor, Sam Bircham. The NRA at this point had some concerns about the routing of the 'tramway'.

I am asked by Lord Wantage to write to you with reference to the fact that this agreement which it is proposed should be entered into as regards the tramway from Brookwood station to the Camp contains nothing to the effect that a physical junction is to be made between the tramway and the railway of the L.&S.W.R. Co. Such a junction was contemplated by the Railway Company, as shown in the minute of a meeting between representatives of the Railway Co. and of this Association.

Lord Wantage thinks this point of importance as it affects the possibility of running from the railway line over the tramway into the Camp without breaking bulk.

The ordnance sheet, which I have to thank you for sending me is not explicit in this; the tramway as there shown stops considerably short of Brookwood station.

The move of plant from Wimbledon was also being dealt with by the L&SWR. The planned dates were contained in a letter dated 7 February 1890 from Humphry to the L&SWR Goods Manager, then Charles Owens who was to become General Manager on Scotter's retirement.

With reference to your letter of 5th inst. I am afraid we cannot begin immediately to move our plant from Wimbledon, but I am endeavouring to push matters on, and hope we may be able to effect the move between the 24th inst. and 15th March.

The method of working the 'tramway' was also being negotiated with the L&SWR at this time.

It had been assumed, in the earlier article, that the Military Working Parties (who were Royal Engineers), also laid the Range Tramway. However the letter books show that Aird actually undertook this task on a similar basis to that at Wimbledon.

9th June 1890

To Messrs John Aird & Sons

Kindly undertake the laying of our Tramway at Bisley Common on the same terms as heretofore at Wimbledon; repairing and replacing rails & sleepers etc. as you may find necessary.

As regards dimensions of sleepers, perhaps you will be good enough to discuss the matter with Mr. Hoey who may have something to say as regards portability, in case it should be desired to move any part or all of the line elsewhere or into store.'

Captain Hoey was the NRA's Works Foreman or Clerk of the Works at Bisley; he had worked for the NRA since 1878 in Wimbledon days. Aird retained the maintenance contract for the Range Tramway until 1892.

As late as 28 June 1890 the NRA were making final arrangements, through their local Agents Messrs Cronk, for the visit of Edward Prince of Wales, the Patron of the NRA, and Princess Alexandra who were to open the Camp on 12 July. The 'tramway' still required inspection by the Railway Inspection Officer, Major General Hutchinson, and the NRA was obviously becoming extremely concerned about the looming deadline!

June 28th 1890

Dear Mr. Cronk,

Lord Wantage has a meeting at Waterloo Station on Monday at 10 o'clock with Mr. Scotter in reference to arrangements for the 12th of July. I was directed by his Lordship to enquire today to Capt. Maxwell to know if the Brookwood Tramway is in a position to be officially inspected by Col. Hutchinson with a view to it being used by the Prince and Princess of Wales on the 12th. If you have any information you had better come here on Monday and see Mr. Humphry.

The original station at Bisley Camp, constructed for the opening of the Camp in 1890, proved inconvenient and the L&SWR agreed to rebuild it on the other (east) side of the Camp level crossing in time for the 1891 Meeting. This alteration necessitated, once again, the attendance of Major General Hutchinson, to whom the NRA Secretary (the newly appointed Colonel W Mackinnon) now wrote a personal letter.

17th June 1891

Dear General Hutchinson

Would you make an early opportunity to inspect our altered Bisley Tramway; though not finished, the L&SWR would like you, as time presses, to see it in

view of any work not in hand but which you may consider necessary

Major General C. Hutchinson C.B.
8 Richmond Terrace
Whitehall
S.W.



This photograph provides a tantalising glimpse of the short-lived Bisley Camp Station of 1890 (known as the Pavilion Station) shortly after the opening of the Camp by the Prince and Princess of Wales in July that year. The Class O2 Locomotive leaving with its train for Brookwood is believed to be the 'Royal' engine No 185 'Alexandra'. The two Luggage Vans in the foreground are, on the left, a 24ft Van of 1887 (lettered 'L&SWR 76 Luggage Van') and, on the right, an unidentified 22 ft luggage van of 1883. The view is towards the South West with the Pirbright Military encampment in the background.

In 1893 Scotter made a verbal offer to the NRA to take over the maintenance of the Range Tramway and its rolling stock, including the tram engine "Wharncliffe". The NRA took this up with enthusiasm especially as Merryweather had already written to state that "Wharncliffe" now needed major repairs.

15th May 1893

Dear Colonel Scotter,

Referring to our conversation which you may remember when you kindly said that the repairs of our small Tram line and working the Tram Engine might be done by South Western Railway men; may we reckon upon this assistance?

The work would be.

1st To repair the line.

2: To clean and put into working order the Tram Engine and to supply from 15th to 22nd July the necessary staff for driving the engine. After the Meeting to clean and tallow over the engine in proper order for storing.

The Association to pay for labour and material.

Colonel Charles Scotter
General Superintendent
London & S.W. Railway.

(Due to its Volunteer origins the NRA tended to use military titles in its correspondence - Scotter was an officer of the Engineer and Railway Volunteer Staff Corps

as were many senior railway officials at the time. The NRA's use of military titles, especially for competitors, was maintained up until the 1950s).

Merryweather, who had already put in their annual bid to move "Wharncliffe" to and from store and to operate it during the 1893 season, were informed by the NRA Secretary that the L&SWR had now offered to take over the latter task and that the moving of the locomotive had, in fact, been carried out by the NRA's own men for the previous three years and 'would they kindly enquire into the matter'.

A summary of the repairs needed to "Wharncliffe", already supplied by Merryweather, were forwarded to the L&SWR through Scotter's Office.

We should recommend that before the engine is put to work again the boiler should be taken off and thoroughly examined, and the foundation ring, which has been leaking slightly for the past two years, repaired. It should then be tested by water pressure.

Most of the working parts of the engine want some slight repairs, and the engine should be lifted to put the axle box bearers in order. There are also several other little matters that should be attended to. We mention this as we have been in the habit of sending our man some days beforehand in order to do anything that might be required. The Boiler and lifting the engine is however quite another matter, and should be attended to before the engine is again put to work.

The NRA now received a letter from William Adams, Locomotive Superintendent of the L&SWR, in which he proposed that "Wharncliffe" be sent to Nine Elms, the L&SWR's Locomotive Works in London, for examination and thorough repair. The NRA Council agreed to this and it was also decided to take out insurance on the boiler, Scotter being advised that the National Boiler & General Insurance Co would be involved in boiler inspections during its repair.

On 20 September 1893 the NRA Secretary wrote to Scotter again this time about both the Bisley - Brookwood 'Tramway' and the Range Tramway.

Dear Colonel Scotter,

I am much obliged to you for your letter 20582 of 19th being cover to your Engineers Report on the insufficient waterway under our Tram embankment.

I have a further favour to ask; would you allow one of your staff to inspect our little tramline. It is dreadfully rough, due I hope only to the truck wheels being worn hollow and there is a demand for extensions at both ends. I would meet your official there on any day he might appoint.

This led directly to the appointment of the L&SWR's Resident Engineer, E Andrews, to inspect the line and rolling stock.

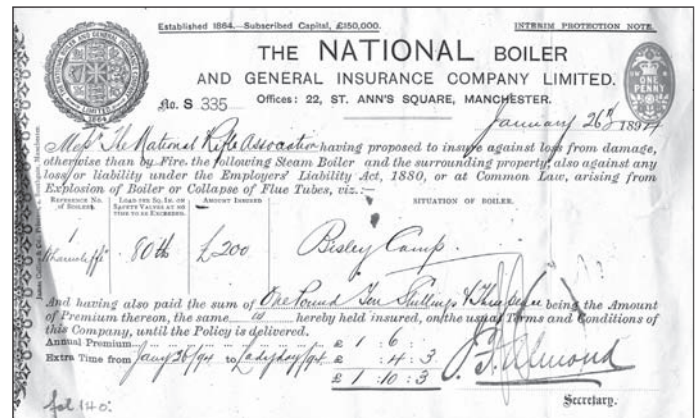
By now the NRA Secretary was having a fairly regular correspondence with William Adams. On 21 September 1893 further instructions regarding the repairs to "Wharncliffe" were issued.

Bisley Tramway Engine

The Inspector National Boiler Co reports that the engine should be retubed, and asks that all the tubes may be withdrawn to enable him to make special internal inspection of the barrel. Will your kindly have this done and let me know when the engine is ready for further inspection.

I have told the Company that all the Inspector's suggestions shall be carried out.

W. Adams Esq.
London & S.W. Railway
Locomotive Engineers Office
Nine Elms Works S.W.



The Interim Protection Note issued in respect of "Wharncliffe's" Boiler Insurance during its repair at Nine Elms.

At the end of the year Adams evidently wrote to the NRA offering to repaint "Wharncliffe". He received the following rather engaging reply from the Secretary.

3rd January 1894

Dear Sir,

Bisley Tram Engine

By all means have the "Wharncliffe" repainted.

May I call at your works to see the engine?

W. Adams Esq.
Nine Elms Works
L & S.W. Railway
S.W.

By March the repair of "Wharncliffe" was nearing completion and the NRA Secretary, besides advising Adams on how it was to be delivered to Bisley, raised the interesting possibility of using it over the tram line between the Camp and Brookwood.

28th March 1894

"Wharncliffe Engine"

Will you kindly give Mr Hoey our Foreman at Bisley at least three days notice of the despatch of the Engine,

as he will have to make preparations for taking it of the truck, and please do not send it on a Saturday.

Is the engine capable of drawing say two very light passenger trucks, over the tram line between Brookwood and Bisley Stations? If so we think a third rail might be laid on the existing sleepers and the line be utilised for conveyance of competitors at other times of the year than during the Meeting.

Three days later Mackinnon wrote to Scotter in which he listed the recommendations by the L&SWR Engineer, Andrews, regarding the Range Tramway. The three main alternatives put forward were as follows.

- 1 Replacing present worn out sleepers with new ones supplied by the L&SWR. Also the latter to find some 'good old flat bottom rail' to replace the existing.
- 2 Using the old rails with steel sleepers.
- 3 To lay down an entirely new line of 18 or 20 inch gauge.

(There was already an extensive 20 inch gauge tramway at Bisley. This was the Butts tramway which had been laid by the Royal Engineers in 1890 and connected the target sheds with the Century (originally 90 Butt Range) and Siberia Range Butts to transport the heavy targets. It was worked by hand.)

The Council agreed to the first alternative, being the cheapest, and also requested that the line be extended 100 yards towards the Siberia Ranges (called thus because they were so remote!).

Meanwhile Mackinnon had replied to an Adam's letter regarding the hauling power of "Wharncliffe".

April 1894

Dear Sir,

Bisley Tramline

"Wharncliffe" Engine

I am obliged to you for your letter of 30th March in reply to my question regarding the hauling power of the "Wharncliffe", and asking one for the weight of the Passenger trucks and the number of passengers they will carry.

I cannot get our trucks weighed, and they are nearly worn out. To carry out the idea of utilizing the engine between Brookwood station and Bisley Camp it would be necessary to have trucks especially made. If you could calculate approximately the hauling power of the engine, having regard to the gradients and curves of the line (information on which you can obtain from your Resident Engineer) one might perhaps get trucks made directed to the engine power.

This intriguing idea of putting in mixed gauge between Bisley Camp and Brookwood was never proceeded with although it was revived again at the turn of the century. The correspondence with Adams concluded with the

return of "Wharncliffe", the following letter being the last.

20th April 1894

Dear Sir,

Bisley Tram Engine "Wharncliffe"

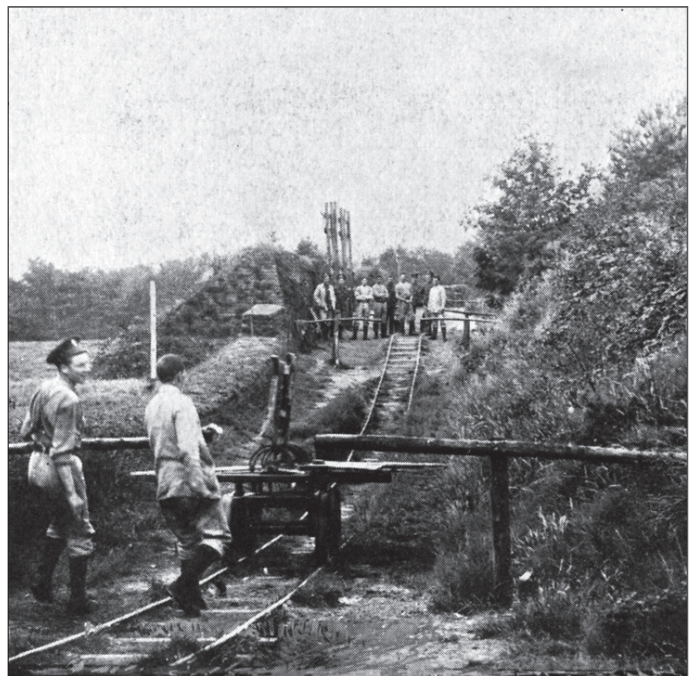
I am much obliged to you for the information regarding the traction power of our Engine.

Please forward the Engine to Bisley, but not on a Saturday, and giving a week's notice to

*Mr. Hoey
Bisley Camp
Pirbright*

To enable him to have labour ready.

Adams retired, through ill health, in 1895 and was succeeded by Dugald Drummond. The NRA Secretary seems to have quickly established a productive relationship with the new Locomotive Superintendent for, in 1897, Drummond oversaw the design and construction of a new target truck at Nine Elms for the re-sited 'Running Deer' Range at Bisley (at about this time Drummond would have probably been engaged in the design of his T9 Class Express locomotives for the fastest L&SWR services!). This had been recommended by Andrews, the L&SWR Resident Engineer, who had also stated that the rails for the new range could be supplied and laid by the L&SWR.



The Running Deer Target, which was originally designed by Sir Edwin Landseer the eminent Victorian animal painter, is seen here, circa 1906, mounted on its L&SWR built truck and running on rails supplied and laid by the L&SWR. The Deer is about to traverse the gap in the Butt where it would be visible to the shooters at a maximum range of 110 yards. It would then be brought to a halt by the second team, seen at the far end, who would reverse it on its built-in turntable and return it as required.

However, when the truck duly arrived but the rails for the new range did not, Mackinnon wrote to Drummond.

14th June 1897

Dear Sir,

The truck for the running deer duly arrived; but the rails have not been sent; your assistant who met our Committee at Bisley went into the question of rails as well as truck and one understood that the rails would be supplied and laid by the Railway.

I have applied to Sir Charles Scotter for the annual necessary overhaul of our small tram engine and tramway; if the requisite rails and stores for constructing the Running Deer line could be sent to Bisley, the party who will repair the tram line might be allowed to lay down the Running Deer line also.

Drummond, a very different character from Adams and renowned for his fiery temperament and 'short fuse', replied the following day pointing out that the rails were not his responsibility and that Mackinnon should write to Scotter about the matter! This Mackinnon duly did, in an urgent and apologetic letter date 16 June since it was less than one month before the Annual Meeting. The efficiency of the late-Victorian mail service left nothing to be desired and the L&SWR completed the job in time for the Meeting.

Scotter retired in 1898 and was succeeded by Charles Owens, formerly the L&SWR Goods Manager. From this period much of the correspondence tended to devolve onto other senior officials of the Company especially the incumbent Superintendent of the Line who was responsible for all train services. The old Wimbledon Tramcars were now in urgent need of replacement as they were thoroughly worn out. The NRA Acting Secretary, Mathews, wrote to JW Panter, the L&SWR Carriage and Wagon Superintendent at Eastleigh Works, to ask him if he had any surplus rolling stock that might be suitable for the Range Tramway. Panter provided drawings of carriages about to be withdrawn and Mathews replied in a second letter.

Nov. 29th 1898

Dear Sir,

I am obliged by your letter of 25th inst. covering drawings of carriages which will shortly be withdrawn from traffic.

The Council of the National Rifle Association are obtaining tenders from different Builders for new tram cars for use on the light railway on their ranges, but it occurred to them that you might have some old carriages which could be adapted for the purpose at a less cost than new cars could be constructed. Would you care to undertake the construction of the new underframes etc. necessary to enable your old carriages to be used for our purpose. The gauge of our line is 3ft 5½ ins and the curves on it would render it necessary for the carriages to be run on bogies.

Panter seems to have replied that it would be more economical to purchase new tramcars and, in fact, the NRA was already receiving quotes from prospective

suppliers. Thus the incongruous sight of superannuated ex-L&SWR carriages, re-equipped with narrow gauge bogies and being hauled by the diminutive "Wharncliffe" round the Bisley Ranges was not to be!

The well-known railway carriage building firm of Brown Marshall did produce drawings and specifications but negotiations were then handed over to the NRA's Agent, Kuhner Henderson and Co and a Consulting Engineer, Arthur Pain, who seem to have recommended Messrs J and F Howard of the Britannia Iron Works, Bedford. Howard's were originally agricultural engineers who had diversified into light railways during the 1890s. Their bid was accepted by the NRA resulting in the two 'toast rack' bogie tramcars delivered in 1899.

At this period letters were also being exchanged with Dugald Drummond regarding the hauling power of "Wharncliffe" in respect of the proposed new cars.

Nov 14th 1898

Dear Sir,

As you know all about the capacity of our "Wharncliffe" engine the Council of the National Rifle Association will be obliged if will give your opinion as to the capability of the engine to haul new tram cars which they are proposing to have built for them.

It is proposed to have 2 bogie cars, each about 20ft long by about 7ft wide with iron underframes. To be open cars without roof. - I suppose the weight will be about a ton each unloaded.

The final weight of the cars in fact turned out to be three tons unloaded and five tons loaded! The pair of cars was beyond "Wharncliffe's" capabilities with its existing 80lbs psi boiler and the L&SWR were unable to assist. Fortunately, towards the end of 1899, the NRA was approached by Merryweather with an offer to either construct a new engine or replace the existing boiler with one of 120lbs psi. The NRA agreed to the supply of a new boiler in a letter dated 8 February 1900.

Messrs Merryweather & Sons
Greenwich. S.E.

Dear Sir,

Bisley Camp Tramway Engine

Your letter of the 19th ult. in which you tender to supply and fit a new boiler for this engine, and test the same complete for the sum of £168 net, was before the Council at their meeting yesterday when it was decided, that providing a satisfactory assurance can be obtained that the engine will be capable of performing the work required of it when re-boilered, your tender should be accepted.

When I had the pleasure of seeing your Mr. Merryweather here sometime ago, he stated that if this engine were put into thorough repair it would only be able to draw one of our cars, (weight when loaded about 5 tons) as the cylinders are only 6 ins in

diameter. From your telephone message of some days back, I understood you to state that when re-boilered as you propose the engine will be capable of drawing 27 tons (including its own weight) on the level, and 12 tons into an incline of 1 in 80. If the engine can do this it will be sufficient for our purpose, and before ordering the new boiler I am instructed to ask you whether after thoroughly examining the engine you will be prepared to guarantee the engine that, when re-boilered as you propose, it will be capable of doing the work mentioned in your telephone message as above.

Crosse, having received the NRA Council's approval for the fitting of a new boiler, requested that Merryweather move "Wharncliffe" to their Greenwich Works for the work to be done. On 2 March, after the locomotive had arrived at the Works, he was able to confirm that the necessary repairs and fitting of the new boiler could take place at a price not to exceed £200.

This order throws an interesting light on Merryweather's capabilities a full eight years after they had completed their last steam tram locomotive. The Letter Books also record two further repairs by Merryweather to

"Wharncliffe"; the boiler in 1906, and the last major repair, this time to the firebox, which took place in 1909. They also confirm that the 1914 Meeting was the last at which it worked on the Range Tramway.



The 600 yards Firing Point of the Century Range with the First Stage of the 1911 King's Prize underway. In the right middle distance "Wharncliffe", with a single bogie tramcar, heads towards the Camp Station.

The second part of this article will appear in the Summer Journal.

NRA SHOOTING MENTORS (AUNTS AND UNCLES) SCHEME 2008

Because the scheme has become so successful, it had also become more time-consuming for me to the extent that I was not sure how I was going to cope in 2008, given my personal circumstances.

To my great relief and pleasure, Bruce Roth, of Scotland and Kent, has offered to come in with me to run the scheme after shadowing it all for a year.

Let me remind you of how it works: there is a box on the Entry Form, both the online and the paper versions, where any TR or F Class (but not yet MR) competitor, young or old, can place a tick if s/he wishes to have someone to turn to for help and advice.

What we propose, for 2008 and to reduce as far as possible the element of change after the major and very successful shift to online booking of 2007, is as follows:

- I will continue to set up the Aunts and Uncles as in the past, dealing with any particular requests (and there are usually several).
- Bruce (bruceroth@hotmail.com) will invite other suitable coaches to join the team.
- I will continue to react initially to all who seek help, and Bruce will match Aunts and Uncles with Nephews and Nieces.
- Timings will be notified to all concerned in the usual way. Broadly speaking, Aunts and Uncles are put in the picture as and when and everyone receives full details early in July.

To summarise, I will be setting things up and Bruce will be running the scheme. We will be communicating, as we have been for a year already, by e-mail: this maximises flexibility and underscores the importance of the use of this medium.

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

Telephone and Fax: 01234 740334 Mobile: 07932 706171 E-mail: tje@easynet.co.uk

NEW TO BISLEY - DOLPHIN LODGE

The National Shooting Centre is pleased to announce that Dolphin Lodge is now completed and available for hire.

The Lodge consists of four large en-suite twin rooms: two of these rooms are suitable for wheelchair users and two can be converted to triple occupancy. The rooms also have a fully equipped kitchenette and television. All linen and towels are provided.

The cost per room is £65 per night. Should you wish to book any of these rooms or require further information please contact Amanda Vaughan on extension 135.



From the old Ladies Dormitory . . .



. . . to Dolphin Lodge!



THE IMPERIAL MEETING 2008

by Paul Monaghan, Iain Robertson and Martin Farnan

There are a number of changes to the format of the Imperial Meeting for 2008. Some will be less welcome than others. The good news is that the entry form is a little simpler. The less good news is that costs have had to rise. Most of the changes result from the ending of the old 'MoD agreement' and the conclusion of a new agreement. The old agreement was a deal of 'x' rounds for an agreed number of days use of the ranges by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and 'y' rounds per day of additional range use during the year. The MoD contracted to source the ammunition and supply it to the NRA and it was this ammunition that has been issued 'free' for past Imperial Meetings. A continuation of the old agreement was discussed, ie a swap of ammunition for range use, but this was rejected by the MoD in favour of a straight cash for range usage arrangement. No-one can have missed the publicity surrounding the financial difficulties of the MoD, which have been readily apparent over the last few months. Clearly this was not going to be an easy negotiation, and whilst the complications of the calculations do not concern us here, the overall deal is one the NRA is comfortable with.

The Armed Services have a long history of involvement with the Imperial Meeting and this will continue with the Services' Skill-At-Arms meetings held immediately before the Imperial Meeting MR and TR competitions. Historically, some of the squad of soldiers who run the Services' events have been kept on to carry out various duties at the Imperial Meeting. The primary reason for their presence at our civilian event was to secure and issue the ammunition, which had been supplied from military sources and is referred to by many NRA members as "free". In reality it was nothing of the sort.

Unfortunately, with the end of the arrangement which provided for the ammunition to be supplied by MoD to the NRA, we have also lost the service personnel who issued the ammunition on the firing point, the tannoy systems across the ranges, the ropes and barriers etc, so we now have to find and provide suitable secure storage and transport for the ammunition. All this will cost money and a conservative estimate gives a figure of around £20K. Finally your government will now take VAT on the purchase of the ammunition, which was not applicable under the previous arrangements. All this means an increase in the entry fee of about 14%.

The Imperial Meeting is the NRA's flagship event and one of the success stories of world TR shooting is the number of TR shooters here in GB. We believe we have the most viable long-term TR community anywhere in the world and much of that comes from our efforts to encourage cadets and younger shooters. Increasing the price of entry is therefore not something

that has been done without much discussion, but the NRA just does not have the ability to swallow this increased cost. Staging the Imperial Meeting is one of the Association's Charter Objectives, and the price rise has been held to the absolute minimum given the current financial position.

There have been a number of meetings, over the last 12 months, addressing all aspects of the costs of the Imperial Meeting. A long list of possibilities were identified. Where costs could be cut, they have been. Where they have been left unchanged it is because they were seen to be providing the essential structure to the Meeting, for it was universally accepted that the 'feeling' of the Meeting must remain fundamentally unchanged.

So when you see the entry form, you will note that the prices have risen. In addition, the layout of the form has been changed and is now, hopefully, a little clearer. Behind the scenes a lot of work has been done to simplify and standardise the costs for each competition and to iron out a number of the anomalies that have arisen over the past few years. At the same time, the NRA is determined to encourage younger shooters to take part, and to assist those at the other end of the age spectrum. To this end a composite discount rate has been calculated to provide approximately the same level of support for entry fees as in previous years

To arrive at the increased prices for the 2008 Imperial Meeting, the organisers have deducted the value of the ammunition that would have come from MoD (32p per round), added 14% for the reasons explained above and then added back the price of the ammunition for 2008 (48p per round) at cost. This is obviously less than you will have to pay 'over-the-counter'.

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

Secondly, the various discounts have been adjusted so that they apply to the entire cost of a competition. Discounts used to be applied to the various elements in different ways for different groups - inconsistent and confusing. The percentages for the age discounts have been recalculated to give the same total discounts as before, but as the discounts are now applied to

the full cost (competition + ammunition + marker), these percentages have changed. These changes result in a less complex form, with the basic price for a competition being a more accurate reflection of what you will actually pay – if you are not entitled to discounts and are not due to pay late entry fees, the competition entry fee quoted is exactly what you will pay.

Which ammunition?

As explained above, the agreement between the NRA and the MoD, whereby military ammunition was provided in payment for military use of NRA ranges, will end on 31 March 2008. This forces us, the NRA, to reconsider the process and sources of providing ammunition for the Imperial Meeting. That reconsideration is ongoing, and indeed will be a long-term feature of the management of the Imperial Meeting. However, a decision has been reached for this year (2008).

After much thought, the NRA has decided to place a contract with Radway Green for supply of approximately 500,000 rounds of 155grs RG Target ammunition for the Imperial Meeting 2008 at a price of 40.5p per round plus VAT. To some of you, that may not seem to be an obviously correct decision, so it requires some explanation. Three factors were particularly significant in the decision.

Firstly, the perception that RG ammunition is a poor or inconsistent product, though widespread, is largely untrue. We believe the perception stems from two main sources. The performance of the 144grs ammunition supplied before 1999 was undoubtedly of variable quality. More importantly, in 2004 a fire halted production at RG for several months. Production recommenced in mid-May 2004, and although fast enough to supply the quantity needed for the Meeting, did not generate enough stock to allow us to be selective about which batches we would use. While anyone with long experience will have encountered some poor ammunition as a result of one or other of these factors, it should be obvious that the experience is not representative of today's product in normal circumstances. Since RG is currently running at full production, and maintains a separate line just for target grade ammunition, there is no reason to expect a product of less than the highest quality. Briefly reviewing the results for the 2005 to 2007 Imperial Meetings gives some interesting data. The target bull dimensions are designed to give 2% possibles (two in every hundred shooters score a 50 or 75). The figures for 2005, 2006 and 2007 are 4.74%, 5.10% and 7.98% respectively and speak for themselves.

Secondly, the final payment in ammunition for range facilities is being made progressively over the next few months. By 1 April 2008 the NRA will have received approximately 200,000 rounds of RG from the MoD in payment for range facilities between 1 August 2007 and 31 March 2008. The NRA has to recoup the cash

value of that ammunition by selling it. Now 200,000 rounds is historically just about what is sold at Bisley in the first six months of the year, so we expect to be essentially sold out around the start of the Meeting. If the Meeting was to be shot with another brand of ammunition, there would be considerable demand for that brand at the expense of RG in the run-up to July, and the NRA would risk a substantial financial loss.

Thirdly, the decision to terminate the ammunition-for-ranges contract was only taken late in Autumn 2007. This left very little time to carry out the extensive contract negotiation and testing required if we were to select another supplier. Given the standard achieved for the last three years, the fact that a usable contract already existed (essentially change "MoD" to "NRA" and carry on), and that a great deal of work (which would have cost money) would be avoided, it was considered reasonable to continue with RG for this year.

For 2009 and beyond, the NRA will actively manage the ammunition, and will explore alternative supplies in detail. However, there are some major constraints on the alternatives. Allowing competitors to supply their own ammunition was considered, and firmly rejected. The main reason was the probable impact on young competitors. Great Britain is the only country where target rifle is a flourishing and increasing discipline, exemplified by more than 300 shooters in the Imperial Meeting being under the age of 25. The complexities of ammunition purchase and handling by our many young competitors, coupled with the possible advantage accruing to the very few, mostly older competitors who understand handloading, led us to decide that retaining issued ammunition was essential for the long-term future of the sport.

There are very stringent security regulations surrounding the transport of bulk ammunition by sea freight, and the cost of air freight is prohibitive. We are therefore limited to Western European suppliers, despite the attractions of the excellent products available further afield. In examining the alternatives to RG, we are driven by accuracy at all ranges, reliability, compatibility in all rifles, and price. In choosing future suppliers, we will test for accuracy, and will ensure that the contract provides incentives for the supplier to maintain accuracy and deliver reliability at an affordable price. There is frankly a compatibility advantage to RG - every British-built target rifle is set up to run on it, and any alternative would have to not only conform to the specification, but also perform properly in a rifle set up for RG.

So, for 2008 we will go with RG. During Spring 2008 we will conduct trials of other ammunition and decide on the basis of cost and performance what we will use for the future. Cost is not a trivial issue. Current estimates indicate that there could be a difference of up to 20p per round. Back to the youth question - we have to nurture our young shooters. Even if it were notably better, can our youngsters afford it?

INTRODUCING OUR NEW CHAIRMAN - BILL RICHARDS

by Tony de Launay

On the last occasion that I had this particular discussion with an incoming Chairman of the Association, the victim was well known to many in shooting circles. This time everything is different: a lawyer with sporting connections, unknown to shooters, propellant powder-free and with no obvious baggage to accompany him. So what was it that interested him enough that he was prepared to go through the competitive selection process that took him from the Prince of Wales' Charities Office short list to a secret ballot of General Council members on 23 February?

"I saw a new and different challenge with interesting issues", he said. "I saw also an organisation that has the hallmark of the famous temples of sporting excellence: Wimbledon and tennis, Lords and cricket, St Andrews and golf, Henley and rowing - and Bisley and shooting".

On a personal level he sees his own background of association with many sports and their governance as something that he can offer to shooting. It is a mix of putting back lessons learned in similar environments for the good of the participants, with the personal challenge in an unknown environment. "Shooting is a sport in which we win medals. We need to grow participation on the back of that success and we need to make it attractive by having the right facilities".

He has a life-long passion for sport, having been an accomplished cricket and rugby player at school and old boys club level. His wife, whom he met on the first tee of the Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club in his first foray into mixed golf, is a current club champion and course record holder in her own right. They inherited their passion for sport from their parents and have passed it on to their children.

But he is realistic enough to admit that this does not qualify as the equivalent of an honours degree for the world of target shooting. He knows that his appointment presents him with a steep learning curve and relishes the challenge that it creates.

"What I see in shooting is a unique mixture of sporting excellence and that thoroughly comfortable club atmosphere where the participant wants to enjoy their activity. We should seek constant improvement to these contrasting ideals, to be done with tact and sensitivity. We should seek subtle and positive change for the good of the sport while ensuring that our heritage is maintained".

He accepts absolutely that people do not like surprises. He believes that people should be engaged in the debate about the future direction of their sport, that



there should be transparency in dealing with issues and that in this way there should be no shocks. "I want to make sure that I visit and see and hear for myself what our members want around the UK. We have a national centre at Bisley but I am conscious of the need to engage with the grass roots out in the regions".

The next question is straightforward: what does he see as immediate priorities for the Association and its members? There are three at the top of the first draft of his list. "The move towards one unified body for shooting in the UK, maximising the benefits for our sport arising from the London 2012 Olympics, and the sympathetic development of Bisley facilities for the modern sporting world".

He sees the first as a step to a more powerful voice for the whole shooting community, wherever they practice the many disciplines of the sport. "If we can have one single voice, if we can present one united community, and if we are seen to have a large following, then we can be an influential governing body. In the eyes of the politician, fragmented approaches are nothing more than a nuisance: but they respect the united front".

As we move towards the London Olympics he believes that the Association should continue to do everything within its power to assist the organisers to make a success of the event with the maximum legacy for shooting. "At the moment it looks as certain as it can be that the event will be at Woolwich. We have offered Bisley as a training centre and everything that we do should be geared towards deriving value from that function as well as from the final events at Woolwich".

As to Bisley? "My aim would be to see us capitalise on what we have, to develop our facilities into a modern user friendly centre whilst preserving the unique

historic values that we have. Look at what has been done at Twickenham and the plans for Lords. True those are both multi million pound investments, but they both represent the historical heart of their sports. We have to adopt our own realistic scale, but can we not at least look at the art of what is achievable for shooting? As I have already said, no surprises, no shocks, transparency with progress”.

It has not escaped him that there is a need to examine the sport’s profile in the public arena. Is there now the start of a realisation in the public mind that target shooting sports simply have no relation to the gun crime on the streets? “I really do not know” is the honest answer. “But if we can educate the public, and in particular our youth, that what we have is a disciplined sport at which they can achieve prowess, medals and recognition as sporting stars coupled with fun and camaraderie, then we can influence public opinion”. It is something to which he will return.

He has lived and spent much of his life in the Surrey / Sussex area. He has a son (15) and a daughter (13) and reached the top of his professional tree having recently stepped down after more than 12 years as first Managing then Senior Partner of law firm Lawrence Graham to move into a risk and compliance role

with the firm. He is heavily involved with Christ’s Hospital School. How will he fit his new role into his schedule?

“I said at the General Council that I expected to devote up to a day a week to the role, knowing that days occasionally seem to have more than 24 hours in them! The last week has been like a whirlwind but I rather expected that would happen.

What I do believe is important is that the staff of the Association receive my full support and that they have a clear set of objectives to work towards. They are the ones who have the knowledge and competencies to meet our aims. The post to which I have been elected is that of non-executive Chairman and I believe it is important to remember that.”

There is an old aphorism: if you want something done, find a busy person. But when you do, expect him or her to get straight to the point. I have the impression, from the short discussions that I have had with Bill Richards, that he can make an impact. He wants to know what shooters want for their future: history is certainly not bunkum, but today and the future is where we live. I look forward to reading his assessment in these columns in nine or twelve months time - or even sooner.

NEW TRUSTEE

James Ragg Co-opted

James is a law graduate and a chartered accountant working for a national firm where he runs a specialist team advising charities, schools and membership associations. James started shooting with an air rifle at the age of 8, moving on to .22 at prep school and fullbore at Wellington College where he shot the Schools and the Imperial Meetings for several years. He is also a keen clay and game shot. Brought up a few miles from Bisley, and now living once more in Surrey after ten years in London, James has a good understanding of Bisley’s place in the local community and brings particular specialist expertise in the governance and financial management of charities to the NRA.



The Bisley Pavilion Hotel

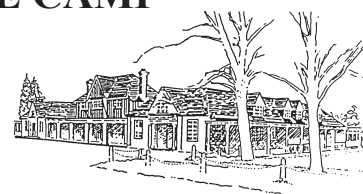
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MUZZLE ENERGY

by the Muzzle Energy Working Group

Last year, we were all caught by surprise when new conditions were imposed on civilians using MoD ranges – the NRA found out about these new conditions at the same time as the shooters and immediately engaged with the MoD to see what could be worked out. Although the headline issue raised at the time was the 3800 Joule limit on Muzzle Energy (ME), which was imposed in October, there were other issues which the MoD wanted to address.

Since then, extensive negotiations with the MoD have given us a much better understanding of their concerns. These negotiations have also resulted in agreement to raise the ME limit from 3800J to 4500J. However, as is always the case the devil is in the detail and we are still working with the MoD on the detail.

Unfortunately this means we can't give you a "final answer" right now on the changes in rules and procedure for future civilian shooting on MoD ranges. Instead, the purpose of this article is to tell you more about why this situation has arisen and what we have been doing about it. The article has been prepared by the Muzzle Energy Working Group, formed specifically to deal with this issue on behalf of the Trustees. The members of this group are James Watson (Working Group Chairman), Mark Haszlkiewicz, Paul Monaghan, Charles Murton and Martin Farnan.

The Challenge

The MoD has an Operational Requirement to provide troops who are combat-ready. These troops must be properly trained before they are deployed on operations. Much of this training carries some risk which, although it is minimised, the MoD must carry to ensure that the troops have the necessary skills to operate effectively in the field.

However, there is no military requirement to allow civilians to use MoD ranges. Most military ranges now belong to the Defence Training Estate (DTE) and are ultimately owned by Defence Estates (DE). DE derives very little benefit from civilian shooting clubs. The Occupier's Liability Acts place a clear duty on the MoD to prevent any civilians who are using the MoD estate from causing harm either to themselves or to others. The MoD will not, therefore, underwrite any risk arising from civilian use of MoD ranges. If there is any doubt, civilian shooting will simply be stopped.

Incidentally, just to be clear – all this does affect Bisley. Although the Bisley ranges are run by the NSC on behalf of the NRA, some of the range land is leased from the MoD. More significantly, the danger area for the Bisley ranges is MoD owned and operated. So any impact on shooting in the UK will be felt at Bisley as much as anywhere else.

If it is going to allow civilians to use its ranges, the MoD must be confident that these civilians will be competent and safe. All organisations (both military and civilian) using MoD ranges must be able to demonstrate that they have an appropriate training system in place. The system must ensure that all practical steps have been taken to eradicate risk and it must be auditable by the MoD. The military achieve this through the Safe System of Training (SST), which is based on four main elements: Safe Person, Safe Equipment, Safe Practice and Safe Place.

One specific risk which the MoD has identified relates to ME. When reviewing their range templates in relation to the use of .338 sniper rifles, they discovered that 7.62 rounds could potentially escape from the danger areas on most of their ranges. They therefore formulated plans to stop all firing of ammunition with ME greater than 3800J – on the basis that they were confident that rounds fired with a quadrant elevation of less than 70 mils (4 degrees) with ME less than or equal to 3800J would not escape the danger areas. This limit affected almost all civilian use of MoD ranges. However, it also affected a significant proportion of military range use. This is because 3800J is the ME produced by a "standard" military 7.62mm NATO round – using a 144gns bullet. Almost all civilians, and some military personnel (eg snipers) shooting 7.62mm NATO use heavier bullets in rounds that produce over 3800J.

The Solution

As already mentioned, we have successfully negotiated a relaxation of the ME limit to 4500J – so this limit will now have no impact on most civilian shooters. Even those wishing to shoot ammunition with an ME over 4500J (up to 7000J) will be able to continue to shoot on MoD ranges – provided they follow specific procedures to ensure that all rounds fired are captured by the stop butts. More on this follows.

To provide assurance that civilian shooters are safe and competent (regardless of the ME of their ammunition), the MoD has instructed the NRA to introduce a scheme which follows the same basic principles as the military

SST already mentioned. Under this scheme, all new shooters will need to be trained to a common standard in order to shoot on MoD ranges. All shooters who wish to shoot on MoD ranges will need to be certified annually by their club chairmen as safe and competent for each type of firearm they wish to shoot.

This is where the "devil in the detail" comment comes in. As you can imagine, sorting out exactly how the new training and certification requirements are going to be met is taking quite a bit of effort. We can't tell you exactly how it will all turn out, but we are of course working to minimise the impact on your shooting. What we can tell you at this stage is that we have time in hand to sort out much of the detail. The timetable we have agreed with the MoD is as follows:

2 April 2008

Civilian shooters will be able to shoot ammunition with an ME above 4500J provided they follow specific zeroing procedures under the supervision of a High Muzzle Energy (HME) RCO. The zeroing procedures are almost complete and RCO (HME) training is underway.

New shooters wishing to shoot on MoD ranges will undertake the NRA Probationary Course (either at Bisley or in their local club) or an equivalent probationary course which has been endorsed by the NRA. The necessary changes have been made to the NRA Probationary Course and the course materials are being distributed to the clubs.

1 January 2009

All shooters visiting an MoD range will be required to produce their certificate of safety and competence before shooting.

This means that, for most of you, nothing really changes until 1 January. Obviously we need to ensure that everyone is certified by then, so we will be working hard over the coming weeks to sort out exactly how the certification system will operate, what the responsibilities of clubs (and particularly club chairmen) will be and what the responsibilities of the NRA will be. We will, of course, keep you informed of progress. Keep an eye on your e-mail and on the website.



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WOODSTOCK RIFLE AND PISTOL CLUB

by Michelle Ballard

Since our last article in the Journal one of our members has taken it upon himself to get some things made for the club, like printed shirts and stickers. The proceeds from these items will pay for the production costs with a small profit that will then go to the club; hopefully in time the club will have enough money to buy new equipment. The fullbore Captain, Val, has spent a very long time designing the club logo which has a significant meaning to the County of Kent and to our shooting club.

Recently, one of our members, Paul, spent three days at Bisley doing the RCO course, on the advice of his mentor, Val. He could not believe how intense the course was. The two day course was long, hard and useful. The first day started at 08:30 and finished at 19:00, this was a full day of classroom work. The second day started at 08:30 and finished at 16:30 with a large amount of time spent out on the range. The weekend was a success as Paul, along with everyone else, passed the course and are all now putting their new qualifications to great use. Do not get the wrong idea, the course is not easy and a lot of homework went into it.

Our oldest member had his 80th birthday last year. He spent the day with some of his friends on the firing point at Bisley scoring an impressive 48. Happy belated birthday Don.

Our fullbore Captain, Val, and her husband Phil, shot in a competition with the LMRA and won the division with high scores coming from another of our long standing members, Dick.

Our smallbore members club had its annual dinner where medals and trophies were presented. This was organised by our committee, who I might add do a fantastic job. One of the members, Paul, who has been with the club for just over a year, was handed two of

the five trophies, a Magnum and Treasures Cup in memory of Tom Martin. Paul was totally astonished as he did not think that this was possible in such a short time, and Paul's dad, George, walked away with the Robertson Shield.

The smallbore members have just started a new competition called the One Hundred Club. What they have to do is shoot the perfect score of one hundred; when someone gets the score they win a t-shirt with a score card printed on the front of it. This all started with two of the members, Ted and George, arguing over the perfect score, they could get close getting 98s and 99s but never the 100, but then Ted managed to do it. No one has managed to do this since, but all are still trying.

We have our very own ice cream gang. No matter the weather, rain or shine, summer or winter they have to have their ice cream and they get rather disappointed if the van does not turn up. One of our members wives, Gill, was very disappointed because she missed the van one day when he came round, but later in the day she caught up with him and that put a smile back on her face!

The club is still looking for new members, for both fullbore and smallbore, so if you would like to join then please contact the NRA and they will give you details of the club chairperson. You will then be invited to come shooting with us in probably the most safest sport in the world, where everyone is willing to help anyone that asks. You will never be stuck for long as there is always someone that has seen a problem, or has had the same problem that you have, and will be willing to share with you.

So if you are a long standing member of another club or new to shooting then please get in touch, join our club and have some fun.



Here's the birthday boy.



The ice cream gang.

NRA COACH TRIPS TO THE CLA GAME FAIR



The CLA Game Fair is the world's original, largest and most prestigious countryside exhibition. This year marks its 50th anniversary and the NRA has teamed up with the CPSA and NSRA to organise the ultimate day out. With every imaginable country sport and rural activity comprehensively represented, this very special annual event appeals equally to country sports enthusiasts, countryside lovers and visitors of all ages. Whether you have been before or not, don't miss this chance to experience a fantastic day out for all the family!



This year the CLA Game Fair is being held at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire on Friday 25 to Sunday 27 July. Tickets will be available for any of the three days. For those who have entered the Imperial Meeting, the first two days will, with luck, be taken up with shooting but the Sunday is the ideal opportunity to round off the week and subject your Queen's Final hangover to a bit of fresh air!

Ticket prices are Adults £32; Children (9-18) £15; Under 9s £8.

Ticket prices include return coach fare from Bisley Camp and entrance to the Game Fair. Tickets will be allocated on a first come first served basis and must be paid for in advance. Closing date for ticket applications is 1 July 2008.

Planned timings are to leave Bisley at 08:00 and return from Blenheim Palace at 18:00.

For more details please take a look at the CLA website at www.gamefair.co.uk

To book your tickets please send a cheque (payable to National Rifle Association) for the total ticket price to Karen Robertson, Bisley National Shooting Centre, Brookwood, Woking, Surrey GU24 0PB. Please include contact details, the names of those attending and state which day you wish to attend.

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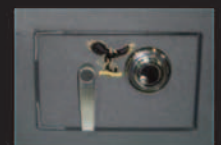


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THE FIRST CANADIAN RIFLE TEAM

by Ted Molyneux and Karen Robertson

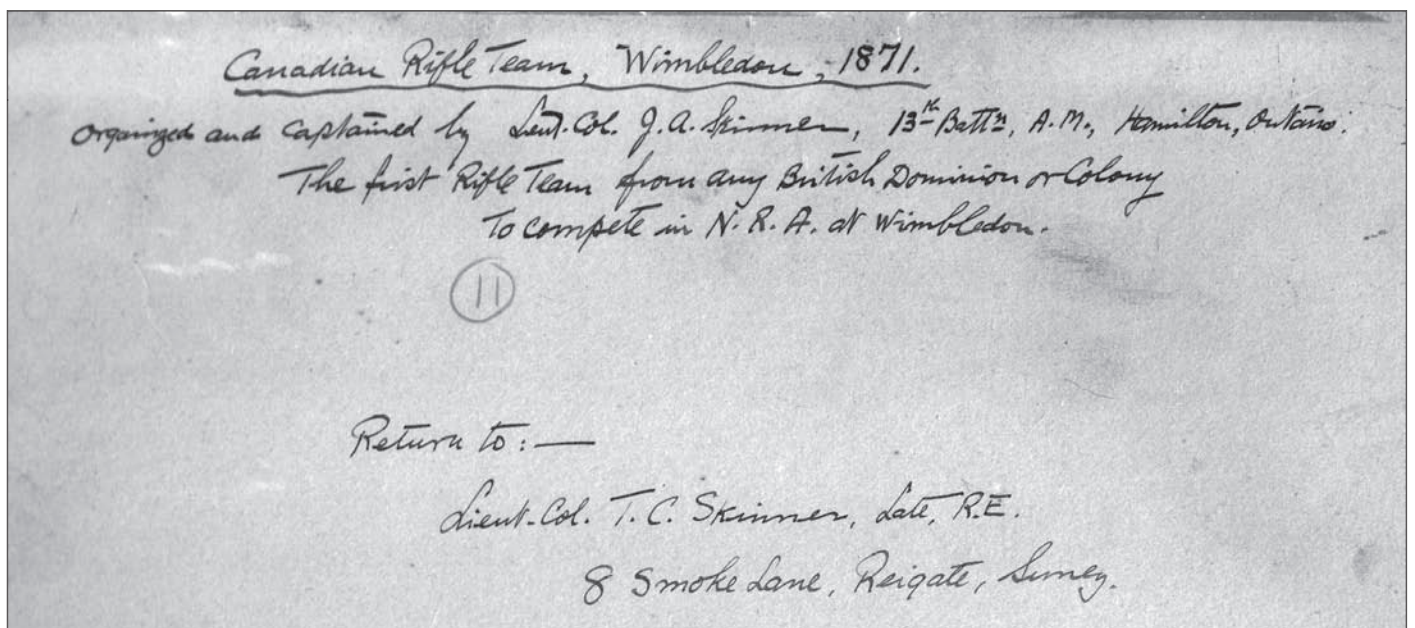


The NRA Museum has recently been given a photograph depicting the first rifle team from any Dominion or Colony to compete in the NRA Meeting at Wimbledon. The back of the photograph describes the team as the Canadian team although NRA records at the time refer to them as the Ontario team.

The Ontario team competed in the first Kolapore Match against the United Team from the Mother Country. Only two teams competed in this first match although the Bombay Rifle Association requested permission to shoot in the match on their own range as "they could not get to Wimbledon". Not surprisingly

the NRA Council refused permission! The Demerara Rifle Association (West Indies) had also intended to compete but eventually were not able to get to England.

In the NRA Council Minutes of 26 April 1871 the Rules for the Match resolved that "the minimum number of competitors in each team will be eight". In addition the Minute stated that "the Team representing the Mother Country shall be regulated as to number by that of the smallest Indian or Colonial teams and that the teams shall be the highest scores in the International Trophy Match of that year". Therefore the final number of



The back of the photograph.

competitors in each team was 20 (the Ontario Captain Lt Col JA Skinner did not shoot).

The members of the 1871 Ontario Team pictured are:

Capt WR Bell	2 nd Canada
Lt J Burch	2 nd Battalion
Capt WH Cotton	Ottawa
Capt D Gibson	Toronto Garrison Artillery
Sgt Maj HJ Harris	Ottawa
Pte WT Jennings	2 nd Battalion
Sgt RG Kincaid	14 th Battalion
Lt J Little	13 th Battalion (<i>Adjutant</i>)
Pte J Mason	13 th Battalion
Capt A McCleneghan	22 nd Battalion
Sgt Dr AA McDonald	2 nd Battalion
Sgt T McMullen	10 th Battalion
Sgt Maj EA McNachtan	Cobourg Garrison Artillery
Pte G Murison	13 th Battalion
CSgt R Omand	13 th Battalion
Pte Dr J Oronhyatekha	49 th Battalion
Sgt F Sache	13 th Battalion
Lt Col JA Skinner	13 th Battalion (<i>Captain</i>)
Ens T Wastie	7 th Battalion
Capt F Werner	14 th Battalion
Sgt H Wilkinson	2 nd Canada

Coaching was allowed from within the firers and Team Officers. The course of fire was 200 yards (fired

standing) and 500 and 600 yards (fired prone) with seven counting shots at each distance with a bull scoring only four points. The rifles used were three-groove long Snider of bona fide Government pattern, bearing Government Viewer's Mark.

The result of the first Kolapore Match was a win for the United Team with 1155 points to Ontario's 1054.

The photograph shows 21 men although Pte Adam of the 13th Battalion also competed in the 1871 Meeting. It is not known if he was a travelling reserve or an individual competitor.

One team member worthy of mention was Pte Dr J Oronhyatekha (*middle row fifth from left*). Oronhyatekha (meaning Burning Sky) was a Mohawk born on the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario. In 1860 Oronhyatekha, on behalf of the Six Nations, gave the welcoming address to the Prince of Wales. He impressed the Royal Party so much that he was invited to study in England resulting in him becoming the first North American aboriginal to attend Oxford University. He returned to Canada in 1863 graduating from the University of Toronto Medical School in 1866. During this time he joined the University militia corps as well as the Queen's Own Rifles. In 1874 he became President of the Grand Indian Council and was Supreme Chief Ranger of the Independent Order of Foresters for 26 years until his death in 1907.

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NOTICE

LIFE MEMBERS OF WEMBLEY RIFLE CLUB

Would anyone who was a life member of Wembley Rifle Club on 4 July 2004, or any personal representative of any life member of Wembley Rifle Club who was alive on 4 July 2004 but who has since died, please send full current contact details together with information as to when and how membership was obtained to:

Adam Colenso,
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Atrium Court, 15 Jockey's Fields,
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Ref: JAC/TRU/4/1.

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NEW YEAR'S HONOURS - A WELCOME OBE FOR MICK GAULT

by Tony de Launay

Shooters of all disciplines will be delighted that Mick Gault's achievements in pistol shooting have at last been recognised with an OBE.

Gault, formerly a serving RAF Sergeant and now a civilian technician, began his career as a top flight international shot in the 1991, in the years prior to the 1994 Commonwealth Games held in Victoria, Canada.

At Victoria he took the Free Pistol individual gold and the pairs' silver medals as the first step to his record breaking 15 Commonwealth Games medals, shattering Karen Pickering's record at Melbourne in 2006. He may yet be able to improve on his own record in New Delhi in 2010.

He has achieved this through a single-minded dedication to his sport despite all the difficulties of not being able to practice elements of his disciplines inside the UK due to restrictive firearms legislation. He also spends time coaching up and coming young shooters.

The shooting sports will also exhale a small sigh of relief that the Government has at last recognised some of the outstanding achievements of British shooting since Richard Faulds' MBE, after his trap shooting gold medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Gault's Commonwealth Games Record

1994 Victoria, Canada: 1 gold (free pistol indiv); 1 silver (free pistol pairs).

1998 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: 4 gold (air pistol indiv & pairs, free pistol indiv & pairs).

2002 Manchester, England: 3 gold (air pistol indiv & pairs, free pistol indiv).

2006 Melbourne, Australia: 1 gold (standard pistol indiv); 2 silver (air pistol pairs, free pistol indiv); 1 bronze (free pistol pairs).

NOT QUITE AN OBE BUT . . .

Congratulations to Mick Barr, Captain of the victorious Great Britain Veterans team, for winning the Veteran Achievement Award at the Comet Sports Awards 2007.

In the same awards Great Britain Palma Team Captain Martin Townsend found himself up against a 23 year old newcomer for Sports Personality of the Year. However that newcomer was Lewis Hamilton so unfortunately no trophies for Martin this time!



Photo courtesy of the Eastern Daily Press.

GOLF BUGGY HIRE DURING THE IMPERIAL MEETING

If you are interested in hiring a golf buggy for the duration of the Imperial Meeting (Saturday 12 July to Saturday 26 July) please contact Chris Hockley by e-mail at seejay.hockley@virgin.net.

Costs are to be confirmed but should be less than £300 per buggy for a two week hire including insurance.

Please send expressions of interest by 1 May to Chris Hockley at the above e-mail address who will send further details when available.

Definite bookings must be made by 25 May and paid for in advance.

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL AND
PRINCIPAL COMMITTEES 2006/2007**
by Elected Ordinary, Regional and Shooting Discipline Members of the General Council
From 1 September 2006 to 31 August 2007

Unfortunately the attendance figures published in the last Journal were incorrect as one Shooting Committee Meeting had been omitted. The correct figures are shown below.

No of meetings	General Council 3	Shooting 3	Membership 5	
Bailie HRM	2	x	x	(R)
Barnard GV	2	1	x	(R)
Bennett ID	3	x	x	(R)
Black MJM	0	x	x	(R)
Bloomfield JPS	3	0	x	(O)
Boston MZJ	1	x	x	(O)
Brooks CM	2	x	x	(O)
Calvert DP	0	2	x	(O)
Cargill Thompson AMW	1	2	x	(D)
Carmichael JH	3	2	x	(O)
Clayton ARK	3	x	x	(O)
Coley PR	2	x	x	(R)
East SJ	2	x	x	(R)
Horrocks AR	2	1	x	(O)
Hunter P	2	1	x	(D)
Kidner TLW	0	x	x	(R)
Kynoch JM	1	3	x	(D)
Law CD	1	x	x	(R)
Maksimovic M*	3	x	4	(O)
Monaghan P*	3	3	x	(D)
Murton CJ*	2	3	4	(D)
Rankin JM	1	x	1	(O)
Robertson IW	3	2	x	(OD)
Robertson KD	3	x	5	(O)
Shirra Gibb I	2	3	x	(D)
Spittles DE	0	1	x	(D)
Walton MWT	0	x	x	(O)
Warburton JD	2	x	x	(R)
Watson JA*	2	x	5	(O)
Watt DD	2	x	x	(R)
Wills RHF	3	3	x	(D)
Young DG*	3	x	x	(R)

* = Members of the Council (Board of Trustees). The Council meet at least 7 to 8 times per annum and its members are expected to attend all or most of such meetings. In addition, Trustees give attendance at other times for formal decisions.

x = not a member of that committee

(O) = Ordinary Member

(R) = Regional Member

(D) = Shooting Discipline Member

PROCEDURE FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2008

Eligibility of Candidates and Proposers

Only persons who are Registered Members of the Association and who have fully paid-up their subscriptions for 2008 by 31 March are eligible to be Candidates for election to the General Council and to be Proposers for such Candidates.

Regional and Shooting Discipline Candidature and Voting

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

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

Eligibility for voting will be determined as at 30 April 2008.

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

Curriculum Vitae

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

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

The Programme of key dates for Elections

31 March 2008

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

30 April 2008

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

30 May 2008

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

21 July 2008

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

Scrutineers appointed by the Council

To be notified after the Council Meeting on 24 April 2008.

Routine Vacancies

There will be the following vacancies in 2008, all of whom are entitled to stand for re-election.

Five Ordinary Members

JPS Bloomfield
MZJ Boston
Wg Cdr DP Calvert
Miss JM Rankin *
Flt Lt IW Robertson

Four Regional Members

SJ East *	Southern
HRM Bailie	Northern Ireland
TLK Kidner	Scotland
GV Barnard	East Midlands

Four Shooting Discipline Members

Alex Cargill Thompson Match Rifle	
Charles Murton	Gallery Rifle & Pistol
Rae Wills	Classics
Ian Shirra-Gibb	300 Metres

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* not standing for re-election.

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100 YEARS AGO

by Ted Molyneux

The year 1908 dawned with high hopes for all amateur sportsmen and sportswomen as it was the year in which the 4th Olympiad was to be held in London. The rifle and pistol shooting was held at Bisley and the clay bird shooting at Uxendon.

There were 13 international shooting competitions at Bisley as follows:

- 1 International Teams – 200, 500, 600, 800, 900 and 1000 yards
- 2 Individual – 1000 yards
- 3 Teams – 300 metres
- 4 Individual – 300 metres
- 5 Miniature – Teams – 50 and 100 yards
- 6 Miniature – Stationary – Individual – 50 and 100 yards
- 7 Miniature – Disappearing – Individual – 25 yards
- 8 Miniature – Moving - Individual
- 9 Revolver and Pistol – Teams – 50 yards
- 10 Revolver and Pistol – Individual – 50 yards
- 11 Running Deer - Teams
- 12 Running Deer –Single Shot - Individual
- 13 Running Deer – Double Shot – Individual

The International Teams event was won by the United States with a score of 2531, with the United Kingdom team of Sgt H Ommundsen, Maj FE Varley, Pte AG Fulton, Maj PW Richardson, QMS Padgett and Arm Sgt Martin taking the silver medals with a score of 2497. Canada was third with 2439 (nine teams competed).



Individual 1000 yards gold medallist Col JK Millner.

In the Individual 1000 yards, Col JK Millner and M Blood won the gold and bronze medals respectively for the UK. There were 49 competitors.

The UK team could only manage sixth place (of nine teams) in the 300 Metres Teams event and our best individual was Sgt Maj JA Wallingford in tenth place of 51 competitors.

The Miniature Teams gold medals went to the UK team of MK Matthews, HR Humby, WE Pimm and EJ Amooore ahead of Sweden and France. AA Carnell, HR Humby and G Barnes respectively made a clean sweep of the Individual medals. In fact UK competitors took the top nine places in this event.

WK Styles, HI Hawkins and EJ Amooore repeated the clean sweep in the Individual Disappearing Targets and we had the top six placings as well as another five in the top fifteen.

Again, in the Individual Moving Targets, AF Fleming, MK Matthews and WB Marsden took the medals and UK shooters took the top seven places plus ninth, tenth and thirteenth.



The United Kingdom team's winning target.

In the Revolver and Pistol events the UK team of Sgt Maj Wallingford, GH Coles, Capt HG Lynch-Staunton and W Ellicott took the bronze medals behind the United States and Belgium. Seven teams took part. In the Individual event our best place was fifth.

Only two teams entered in the Running Deer, which was won by Sweden with 86 points closely followed by the UK team of Maj CJA Nix, WR Lane-Joynt, W Ellicott and Capt T Ranken with 85 points for the silver medals.

In the Single Shot Running Deer Capt T Ranken won the silver medal and AE Roberts the bronze. Capt Ranken also won the silver medal in the Double Shot.

So in the final analysis of the events held at Bisley, the UK topped the table with five golds, seven silvers and six bronzes above the USA, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, France and Canada.

The clay bird competitions took place at the Uxendon Shooting School Club, situated between Wembley Park and Harrow. The shoots were in three stages.

In the Teams event the UK First Team of A Maunder, JF Pike, C Palmer, J Postans, FW Moore and P Easte took the gold medals from Canada with the UK Second Team of G Whitaker, GH Skinner, JH Burt, WB Morris, HP Creasey and R Hutton taking the bronze. A Maunder took the bronze medal in the Individual event.

Overall the shooting events added a considerable number of medals to the United Kingdom's credits and have done so with a degree of consistency in subsequent Games.

Incidentally the NRA Museum has the gold medal of AA Carnell and the silver medal of HI Hawkins currently on display.

Meanwhile the arrangements for the Annual Bisley Prize Meeting continued relatively unaffected.



Olympic gold and silver medals on display in the NRA Museum.



King's Prize winner Pte G Gray of the 5th Scottish Rifles.

It was also the year of the birth of the Territorial Army and unique in that the Territorial Force and Bisley were associated for the first time.

Harrow won the Ashburton (57 teams competed) and the Mother Country won the Rajah of Kolapore's Cup from Canada, Guernsey, Malay States Guides, West Indies and India in that order. England won the Mackinnon and Scotland the National.

The King's Prize was won by Pte G Gray of the 5th Scottish Rifles; the St Georges by Sgt WM Foster, 6th Hampshire Regiment and the Grand Aggregate by Sgt FH Morris of Canada.

Affiliated rifle clubs increased by 28 fullbore and 221 small-bore clubs to a total of 1,530, representing a total membership of 102,752.

So generally it was a good year for shooting sports. There was much healthy enthusiasm and the future looked rosy. The press were both interested and knowledgeable with 30 from their ranks competing for the press prizes.

Nowadays the media appear to have little real knowledge of shooting sports or of firearms related matters in general, which is a great pity. The term "politically incorrect" seems to be applied to so many things purely out of ignorance of the subject!

Hopefully this state of affairs can be corrected by education but don't hold your breath!

Philip Plater

Olympic history is full of hard luck stories but few can match the misfortune suffered by British marksman Philip Plater in the individual small-bore event in 1908.

The conditions of the competition permitted twelve entries from each country but as the entry forms for George Barnes, the nominee of the Twenty Two Club, went astray, Philip Plater was named as the twelfth British entry in his place. Shortly afterwards, the entry form for George Barnes arrived and as the USA had been granted an extension to the closing date for entries, a similar facility was given to Great Britain and Barnes' entry was duly accepted. This meant, of course, that Britain had thirteen official entries instead of the permitted twelve but greater confusion was to follow.

When the competition got underway, the British team officials lost count of the number of British marksmen who had shot in the competition. Thinking that only eleven men had already fired, Plater was called on although there was only half an hour to spare before the time limit for the competition expired. Plater ran

to the firing point and in varying light, a gusty wind and fine drizzle, he moved from mat to mat and fired his 80 rounds in less than 30 minutes. In his 40 rounds from 50 yards Plater fell only five points short of the maximum possible and at 100 yards he dropped only four points. His total of 391 points was a new world record and in the initial results list issued by the National Rifle Association Philip Plater was shown as the winner of the competition and the Olympic champion.

It then transpired that the British team officials had made a major error and at the time Plater shot, the permitted number of twelve British marksmen had already taken part. It took some days to decide whether the score of Plater or that of Barnes should be erased from the records and eventually George Barnes was declared the official British entrant.

In October, Philip Plater was presented with a special gold medal and a record diploma by the British Olympic Council but his amazing feat of marksmanship remains unrecorded in the official Olympic records.



60 YEARS OF FULLBORE OR THE MEMOIRS OF A RIFLEMAN

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

As the previous Chairman says in his Foreword "Memoirs of members are rare" and "add to the recorded history of our Association". It tells of starting with a .22 at Prep school before WW2, then with a SMLE at Public School followed by service with the Grenadier Guards and Sandhurst as well as his experiences of two years in Kenya. The booklet is full of amusing events which have improved with the telling at the bar over the years. .303 is fired from Lee-Enfields and a Bren; 7.62 from Target and Match Rifles.



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

e-mail john@hissey.net

T REX AND THE HAKOSAUR

Playing With the Disks

I am obliged to an anonymous Hakosaur for sending me a couple of intriguing computer disks found wedged in the sorting mechanism of Pteradactyl Direct Delivery. Imagine my surprise when they turned out to contain a dinosauric database of all Triceratops claiming Cycad benefits from the storage bunkers of NOTE (National Office of Tithe Extraction).

I must confess that it was rather easy to circumvent the password ('Gimme') with the aid of my Megolith password cracker programme (£15.99 from all good hacker stores). It would have been even easier to set up a highly profitable series of financial movements that could have poured ill-gotten gain into my Meteor Retirement Fund for deserving carnivorous lizards.



However, I have resisted the temptation and, when the reward has hit an acceptable level, will be returning the offending items via the front page of the Daily Raptor. This will be done after the authorities have been allowed to run around in ever more frantic and decreasing circles blaming the post boy and anyone else - rather than their suspect procedures.

Donor Cards

I am pleased to announce that donor cards are available to allow you to support the deputy Grand Lizard election fund. The cards should be carried with you at all times, stitched to your wallet or purse. This will allow you (or anyone searching your pockets) to give a substantial donation at any time and in any state - whether prone, supine or comatose - to the T Rex Muzzle Energy Fund.

The fund is designed to assist me in my quest to keep my scaly image as high as possible notwithstanding disasters that rain about me. Just think of it as a ready conduit to my seat of influence and patronage. Careful diversion, although I prefer to call it "aiming off", allows me to invest in fine wines and food to satisfy my increasing need for energy. My solicitors Messrs Sleaze, Ffinger and Poynte have been instructed to take appropriate action against any persons making suggestions of impropriety.

Adrift with His Dreams

It has been suggested in some quarters that the person in the canoe featured in the watery pictures in the last edition of this Journal was not in fact the shortly-to-be winner of HM the Queen's Prize, but a somewhat lost former prison warden on his way back from sunnier South American parts. When interviewed, the canoe's occupant said that he could not ever remember encountering weather like that, nor could he remember anything else for that matter. In truth he had mistaken the nearby Basingstoke canal for that of Panama and had been swept along on a tide of enthusiasm before becoming impaled on a target number peg. Border patrols have now been stepped up.

Rival to T Rex?

Can it possibly be? It appears that a student has laid claim to discovery of a rival carnivorous dinosaur with the handle carcharodontosaurus iguidensis. Said beast is estimated to have measured some 13 metres in length and to have had teeth the size of bananas. The 'shark-toothed' lizard lived some 95 million years ago in Africa and was, allegedly, more slender and faster moving than I.

Olympus

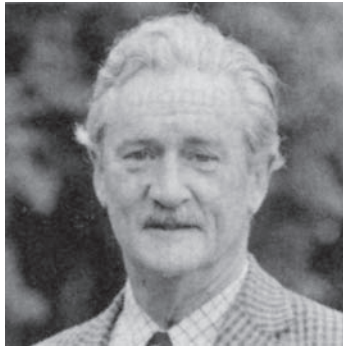
Rumours that I shall be moving my championship shooting ground to a boggy spit in the Thames Estuary, have surfaced. However, the senior burgers of Londinium vigintiduodecim have made clear their preference for a local 'barax' (or ancient encampment).

My advisors, fresh from a trip to view a mid European lake - or Legersee - have made helpful suggestions that have pleased no one. But that is the way of advisors. Positions are well entrenched all round and noses well out of joint. What a pity that 25 million good reasons may well go swirling down the antediluvian plug-hole, leaving little but a transient warm glow after the event. We wait to see how this stand-off can be rescued.

OBITUARIES

Brigadier Peter Prescott MC

In early 1943 the Commandant, the Second in Command and the Adjutant of the Military Academy, Sandhurst were observing a dawn training attack on the part of Officer Cadets of the 101st Officer Cadet Training Unit based at Sandhurst. A hundred yards away a bored Officer Cadet, commanding a Valentine tank, was idling away his time by lining up the cross hairs of his main armament on this august group of senior officers. It was a natural conclusion to this act to press the firing pedal. The resulting discharge came as a complete surprise to Officer Cadet Peter Prescott, commanding the Valentine, who had not known that his loader had loaded the two pounder with a blank cartridge, but not half the surprise that it gave the senior officers at whom it was aimed. Being good and experienced officers, to a man, they vanished to earth.



Now Barossa Common is not known for its dry sandy soil, in fact quite the reverse, so it was with some difficulty that the Commandant was able to maintain any dignity and presence when the offending Officer Cadet was dragged out of his tank, brought before him, and then locked up, pending a decision about his future use to the British Army.

Peter Prescott was a boy at Eton when war broke out in 1939. When he left the school he enlisted in the Grenadier Guards as a Guardsman in December 1942. After passing officer selection, and despite the explosive start to his officer training, he was commissioned into the Grenadier Guards and posted to Battle Camp in Wales, in command, before moving to Yorkshire to take command of a troop of tanks in the 2nd Armoured Battalion, Grenadier Guards, based at Helmsley.

He remained with this unit until he became a casualty in April 1945 at Heerschlingen, near Cuxhaven.

His unit moved to Hove in April 1944, as part of the force earmarked for the D Day landings, now equipped with Sherman tanks, and found himself in Normandy in June 1944.

His first action was in the breakout from the beachhead as part of Operation Goodwood, when his unit attacked Cagny. He was mortified when, in the course of this attack, two FW 190s strafed his tank and he was unable to return fire because the cupola mounted .50" Browning machine gun refused to function.

At the end of July his troop was moved to the Caumont area to assist the US Army breakout. He was given a particularly well-defended German strongpoint to attack with his troop. During the attack his lead tank was knocked out and he dismounted and continued to lead the attack on foot, despite being wounded, eventually overrunning the position.

He was found to have six pieces of shrapnel in his back when the captured position was consolidated. For his determination and leadership he was awarded the Military Cross.

He continued with his unit in the advance to Brussels, during which he was again wounded.

He took part in Operation Market Garden, Montgomery's plan to seize the bridges across the major rivers between the Dutch border and the Ruhr by airborne assault and drive a force, led by the Guards Armoured Brigade, to link up with the US and British Airborne Forces holding the bridges. The fighting for the bridge at Nijmegen was particularly fierce and although the film "A Bridge Too Far" emphasises the efforts of the US Airborne troops to seize the bridge, the fighting needed to reach the southern end of the bridge by Guards Armoured was amongst the bloodiest of the European mainland war. Peter Prescott's tank was destroyed 200 yards short of the bridge, though on this occasion he survived without any serious injury.

Thereafter he was involved in assisting the US Army to hold the German Ardennes offensive, before advancing through Germany. He was again wounded, seriously on this occasion, whilst fighting between Bremen and Hamburg, and 'casevaced' back to the UK.

After the war he followed the path of peacetime regular army officers in staff training, staff appointments and commands within his battalion before taking command of the 2nd Battalion the Grenadier Guards in 1966 in Germany (BAOR).

By this time he had shown himself to be a humane and popular commander, having a genuine interest in the welfare of those he commanded, but at the same time a man who accepted nothing but the highest standards from his soldiers. He was far sighted in his training programme for his Battalion and, having been involved as a staff officer in the design of a number of infantry weapons subsequently introduced into the army, including the General Purpose Machine Gun, the 81mm mortar and the Carl Gustav anti tank weapon, was well informed in the wider aspects of the British Army and its possible deployment in the event of the 'cold war' going 'hot'.

He relinquished command of his Battalion in 1969 and between then and his retirement from the army and his arrival as the Secretary of the NRA in 1981, held a number of senior posts including Deputy Director of

Army Training, Commander of 51st Infantry Brigade in Hong Kong and Deputy Commander of North East District, based in York.

Peter Prescott was the last Secretary of the National Rifle Association. He served from the beginning of 1981 until the appointment of his successor in May 1988, holding office, briefly, in the new role of Chief Executive created, with the commencement of other management and governance changes and developments, in 1987.

A modest and rather private man, most members were unaware of Peter's previous career and exploits. A senior manager of the NRA during the 1980s has observed that Peter was seen as a man of considerable stature, always courteous and unflappable, a natural leader, but who let his staff get on with their job without undue interference and always supportive.

This appraisal is wholly consistent with what we now learn of his past. His former comrades in the Grenadier Guards, along with all others at his Memorial Service, clearly remember Peter Prescott with considerable respect and affection.

Peter Prescott was already familiar with the role of the NRA when he joined, but did not realise the extent of the pressure and mounting friction from unfulfilled aspirations of the growing number of shooting disciplines which emerged following the demise of the standard service rifle for all rifle target shooting - commonly the Lee Enfield and he was soon to recognise that the NRA was also caught in a time warp.

The resources (staffing and equipment) with which he was provided were wholly inadequate to meet expectations together with working with procedures which were unmodernised. The writer recalls how Peter was so frustrated that he complained that he "could not even buy a new typewriter without a resolution of the Executive Committee!" He never blamed his predecessors. In any event, some of the problems were representative of the times.

However, against this background, Peter, often unrecognised for his own considerable contribution, enabled many initiatives by active volunteers to develop during his seven years at the helm.

To name some of the most significant of these may surprise some readers because of the dire events which occurred after Peter Prescott stood down from office and progress was halted, overshadowing his improvements.

- Peter believed in communication and soon the Journal improved its format and content which has proved durable;
- Relations were consolidated by achieving trust from the Home Office when there was some pressure from the public and police forces to

further restrict the ownership of firearms. (NB even before the Hungerford massacre, the NRA's reputation arguably saved further restrictions being imposed and the NRA played its full part in the new Firearms Consultative Committee). The Home Secretary (Douglas, now Lord Hurd) was one of the presenters of the prizes at the Imperial Meeting;

- Peter pressed the case of the NRA membership with the MoD on the use of ranges;
- The, then controversial, concept of reaching out for sponsorship was encouraged by Peter, bringing in such names as Land Rover and Save & Prosper to add to Nat West and Barclays;
- A PR company was recruited, a book commissioned, annual Open Press Days on the ranges were introduced;
- Talks were started to form a united shooting body with the NSRA and CPSA, but which, in the event, went no further than the formation of the GBTSF. A Pistol Council was formed to combine the resources of the NRA and NSRA in this activity (but increasingly overshadowed by the NPA which was formed out of frustration of lack of attention by some pistol shooters in the late 1970s);
- He introduced a manager for centrally organised coaching;
- It was recognised that the NRA needed to treat Bisley more commercially and to be developed, including clay target ranges as well as a new small-bore facility, to become a true National Shooting Centre. Radical and innovative plans were drawn up.

Most importantly, the NRA embarked on its first major re-organisation for over 100 years to provide a more accountable Management and Committee structure.

This recognised that the emerging (as well as existing) shooting disciplines needed better representation and that a regional organisation with elected representatives was required to better support members outside the Bisley catchment area and especially those who had been badly affected, for some time, by the closure of ranges following the Nugent Report, but also for ongoing economic and safety considerations.

Much of what is reported above was controversial at the time as members found it hard to reconcile aspirations for retention of the traditions of the status quo, on the one hand, and the aspirations for radical development and change on the other.

During all this almost frenetic period, Peter Prescott maintained his level headed demeanour which was, as it turned out, sorely missed after his retirement.

David Cooper and John Jackman

Dennis Gibbons

Dennis was born in 1928 in London in the vicinity of Bow Bells. His parents moved house a number of times and he began school life at the Convent School in Strood. Later they bought the Park Gate public house at Hollingbourne, which they ran for about four years and subsequently moved to Grove Green Road, Weaving, and then on to Rochester. His secondary schooling was at the Commercial School in Maidstone, which prepared the way for his career in banking.



He began his interest in shooting during WW2 and joined Bearsted and Thurnham Rifle Club in 1942. He went on to do his National Service in the RAF at Moreton-in-Marsh and thought he would be given a job where he could use his aptitude for figures. However, the powers that be had other ideas and he became Dennis Gibbons Instrument Mechanic.

After his National Service he joined the Midland Bank in Maidstone, where he rose to become Chief Cashier. It was in 1952 that he married Margaret at Boxley. They had their reception at the Bull, Penenden Heath and ended up living in the attic at the Bull in Wrotham! Then in 1954 they moved to Stockett Lane and put down their roots, bringing up their children Ann and Tony - and a variety of dogs!

In 1984 major changes were happening at the bank and with the advent of computerisation Dennis decided after 40 years to take early retirement, particularly as his health was no longer so good. This didn't stop his interest in shooting, in fact if anything it allowed him to become even more involved.

It was 1968 when Dennis became Secretary to the Rifle Club. He was always very willing to help in whatever way possible. He shot both rifle and pistol and was a registered coach and undertook every conceivable job for the club - he has kept the club going virtually single-handedly for many years. He stored the firearms, organised targets and ammunition, selected the teams and handled the competition entries and results. He managed the vetting of new members and was the contact with the Police and held the firearms certificate.

He became a committee member of the Kent County Small-bore Shooting Association in 1961, treasurer in 1968 after Frank Stiggins and was made Vice-President in 2004. He was also for many years as it happens the last treasurer for the Maidstone League, which has sadly recently folded.

For his and Margaret's 25th wedding anniversary he agreed to accommodate a number of Frenchmen, this was the start of an exchange competition with Valenciennes. They ended up with nine in the house and the caravan

and the evening get together for the visitors was at their house and went on until 7am the next day! Nothing was ever too much trouble for Dennis.

He was a true gentleman and friend to so many. We all have very fond memories of him and pledge to keep his memory alive both when shooting in the Dennis Gibbons Range in Bearsted and each year with a club shoot for the Dennis Gibbons trophy.

Thank you Dennis - from all your friends in shooting and especially at Bearsted and Thurnham Rifle Club.

Richard Aldous

Ken Sykes

Lancashire, Great Britain and Morecambe in particular, lost one of their greatest battlers in December last year, when Ken Sykes died. He had not been well for some time and passed away peacefully.

Ken represented Morecambe R&PC at CLSTSA Council Meetings for many years and his work in the defence of shooting, in all forms, was recognised nationally. As well as his connection with Lancashire Small-bore, he was also President of Morecambe Bay Wild Fowls Association and was also a fullbore rifle shooter.

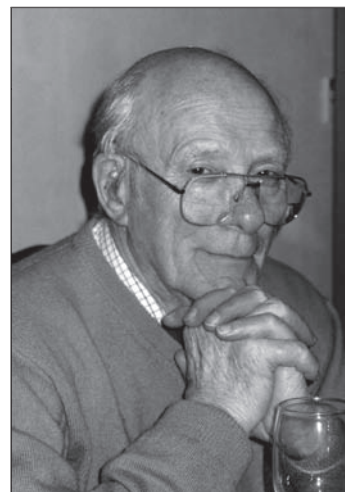
He campaigned relentlessly over the years for the rights of people to be able to use guns for legitimate purposes, writing to politicians and relevant authorities in support and defence of our sport. He wished to protect the future of shooting in UK, becoming a thorn in the side of those who oppose shooting, as we know it.

Ken received respect from whoever he met. But, this was no accident, for he gave respect to everyone he met, was genuinely interested in them and brought out the best in people. Ken was a gentleman in all senses of the word. He was a stickler for accepted standards, tradition and behaviour and always led by example. Whenever he stood to address a meeting everyone went quiet and listened intently to his well researched and presented arguments.

His best known phrase was "For any of you gentlemen who don't know me, my name is Ken Sykes".

At the Civil Ceremony funeral the chapel was packed, standing room only, with friends and fellow shooters coming from far and wide. Ken leaves a widow Audrey and a son Keith. He also leaves a garage full of things he couldn't throw away. He will be greatly missed at Lancashire meetings.

Reg Cox



Hans Wulffraat

It is with deep regret that we hear of the sad passing of Hans Wulffraat from Holland. His first visit to Bisley was in 1976 and he has been a familiar sight on the ranges at National small-bore and fullbore meetings.



Hans started shooting at the KSVR Club in Holland and was soon arranging shoots between his club and Colchester Rifle Club where he became a life member. He made many friends with his humour and knowledge of both small-bore and fullbore and later years saw him and his family as regular visitors to Bisley. When he was not shooting he could always be found enjoying a drink with friends at the many clubs at Bisley.

There was always a cheerful air and a Dutch coffee to be had in their caravan where the Dutch flag was always flying. In fact Hans often described England as his second home and was really sad to miss the last year through ill health.

Hans was a big man in every way and his size was a reflection of his determination to enjoy life to the full. In later years he brought one of his mopeds to Bisley from his shop in Skibrok in order to ease the strain on his legs.

Hans was also a life member of the NRA, NSRA and the LMRA. The photograph above shows him as most of us will remember him.

Hans leaves a wife Inga, two sons and three grandchildren.

Ivor French

Colin Robson

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the death of Colin Robson on 6 October 2007, aged 70 years. He suffered from pancreatic cancer and, fortunately, he did not have a prolonged illness.

He leaves a widow, sons and step-sons. He was always cheerful and unselfishly helped others and is sorely missed by his family and shooting friends.

Tom Cosens



John Drury, Ena Goodacre and Bill Sharman

We are sad to announce the deaths of John Drury of the British Pistol Association, Ena Goodacre of Sussex and Bill Sharman of the Royal Air Force Target Rifle Club. Full obituaries will appear in the next Journal.

TARA TARGET RIFLE (TR) TRAINING WEEKEND AND INTER-SERVICES CLUB MATCH 30 MAY – 1 JUNE 2008

This year's TR training weekend will be targeted at beginners, so we are seeking new blood as students and a number of experienced shooters who will instruct the beginners, get some practice and form the TARA team for the Inter-Services Club match on the Sunday.

The aim of the course is to provide the opportunity for:

- a Shooters with very little if any TR experience but with a sound knowledge of the principles of marksmanship, to gain knowledge and experience of Bisley TR shooting.
- b Experienced TR shooters to instruct the beginners, gain practice and more experience of team shooting and coaching, particularly at long range.

The main objectives are to win:

- a The annual Inter Club Match against the Royal Navy, the Army Target Shooting Club (TR), the Royal Air Force Target Rifle Club and the Civil Service. The TARA team can include serving and past members of the TA (Sunday 1 June 2008 at 300, 600, 900 & 1000 yards)
- b The Inter-Services Short Range (Tuesday 22 July 2008) and Long Range (Thursday 24 July 2008) Matches during the NRA Imperial Meeting at Bisley (open to serving members only).

Any current or former member of the TA and Cadet Adults, who are interested in attending the TARA TR Course should contact TARA by e-mail, gina@taraccrs.co.uk, or phone 01483 473095 for the course letter and application form which needs to be submitted, by no later than 19 April 2008. Full details of the weekend will be issued to applicants in late April.

LETTERS

Prize Lists in CD rather than Book form

from Paul Charlton

I wish to lodge my formal disapproval of the fact that the Prize List will again be in CD only format.

The basis of my complaint is on several grounds.

- 1 Books are quick and easy to use to browse a particular result.
- 2 CDs are not able to be stacked next to toilets for contemplative research.
- 3 CDs are of little use at Bisley as they also require a computer to be able to read them.
- 4 Cadets will find it difficult to have their deeds of derring do pointed out to aged grandparents, maiden aunts etc from a CD whilst a book can be passed around easily.
- 5 In the few short years that I have used computers, since being at college, the common popular computer data reading devices have been:
 - a Card decks
 - b Punch tape
 - c Cassette tape
 - d Large floppy disks
 - e Small (rigid) floppy discs of 360kb, 720kb, 1.44mb
 - f CDs
 - g USB Sticks

That is seven different media of which my current desktop can handle three but my laptop only two. This gives rise to the fact that computer data storage devices have an average popularity of five years. Books remain readable for a great deal longer, the oldest prize list that I have dates from well before the war, that is from the 1930s not pre Gulf War 2.

You at one time offered either book or CD, or on an additional payment both, this surely satisfied both camps. If the costings basis was wrong then surely this could be addressed the following year.

Please offer the book version again at a reasonably costed basis.

Home Reloading

from RD Crispin

I am a member of three gun clubs with an approximate total membership of around 250/300, with discussion groups and people I know around the country this number is considerable, most reload their own ammunition.

It would seem that people reload from around five to ten rounds, some like myself reload any where from

five to sometimes 350 rounds. During the course of a shooting year I expect to shoot approximately 3000 rounds, all reloaded in small batches. From discussions with shooters and asking what is the principal reason for reloading, the answer is always cost. From a personal point of view my reasons are, cost, better accuracy and reduced recoil, particularly during gallery rifle events. If I were to take into account the cost of buying commercial ammo, club fees, fuel and ancillary costs, my new additional costs and hassle of sending one or a few rounds for testing, by specialist carrier, I would have to curtail or give up some disciplines in shooting. So it could be with a great many others.

During 55 plus years of shooting I have experienced a Luger pistol going full auto, fortunately only a few rounds. I heard of a guy whose Beretta went full auto and a Winchester's magazine bursting while being loaded, all using commercial ammo. The only problems with reloaded ammo that I have come across have been from auto presses, with a round having no powder and causing a ring bulge.

One gun bursting is one too many, six is horrendous. What can be done! Not more rules and regulations, we have seen this many times. From speaking to various club secretaries it would appear that a new member, on enquiring about reloading is told to buy a book, good advice but in my opinion not good enough. Education is the way forward. Maybe a club member, who has good experience could attend a national course and obtain certification to conduct teaching sessions for that clubs members, who would of course be covered by insurance.

Personally I consider the most dangerous part of shooting is the car journey to and from shoots. We insure against accidents and mishaps and have to accept the risks involved in all that we do. So it is with our sport, we do not want any mishaps but they happen. I think we have to accept that there are risks, it is a case of minimising those risks through study, reading and club instructors.

NATSS

from JAC Smart

I am increasingly concerned that this Association is spending funds on "continuing to progress the organisation into a truly National Governing body" (Mr Alger's wording in "Glynn's Bits") without any proper mandate from the membership. In this connection I completed an online survey fairly recently which I considered should have asked members in a much more straightforward manner whether they wanted the NRA to merge or metamorphosise into some other sort of body. It rather reminded me of the

way in with the Mayor of London sought, by means of a slanted questionnaire, to justify the Congestion Charge which was on the cards.

The Association is of course a registered charity and I for one feel that charitable funds are better spent elsewhere.

In my opinion, before further charitable funds are spent on developing a proposal which the members of the Association may well reject, a proper poll of members should be taken. I say this both as a member of the NRA of about 25 years' standing and as a member of the Chancery Bar experienced in matters of trust law.

Anyone for Golf?

from Robert Stafford

For several years Chris Hockley has run a golf day near to Bisley, sponsored by Matthew Clark, to raise money for the Overseas Teams Fund. While this has raised over £9,000 over four years it has become increasingly difficult to get support from non-shooters for the day.

As an alternative, I wonder if there are enough NRA members who play golf, who would like to join a Golf Society? This would have the joint objectives of arranging enjoyable golf days for its members and in the process raising some money for the OTF. The organisation of the society and golf days would kept as simple as possible so that the membership fee would go straight in to the OTF and the days would run at cost.

If you are a golfer and feel this idea is a possibility please send me your contact details, handicap and club, without any commitment, to robert.stafford1@ntlworld.com.

Rip Off Britain?

from Frank Page

About four years ago I wrote an article for our club magazine titled "Long Range Shooting for Short Sighted People". It told how the government was not going to ban directly the ownership of rifles but that it would do so by removing ranges and limiting distances that one may shoot at as well as extra health and safety regulations. By having nowhere to shoot one would have no good reason for ownership and hence would have to dispose of ones rifles. There would be a glut of arms on the market and with no one able to purchase them the price would plummet and being unable to sell them they would have to be surrendered to the police at no cost to the government.

Recently it seems that my predictions almost came true but does it stop there? I wonder are there individuals within the shooting fraternity who are not helping? Some of our suppliers are pulling our leg.

I visited a "famous" establishment at Bisley and asked for a roll of four by two. I was offered a small roll for £3.50. I explained that I wanted a full roll not just a few yards. This they said they did not have and offered me five small rolls which they claimed was the same size as a full roll and the price they said would be the same. I pointed out that the five rolls were nowhere near a full roll as I could squash the cloth in my hands to a smaller size than that of a full roll. They explained that when unrolled it was easier to squash up than when tightly rolled (obviously a university graduate) and then told me that they could not get four by two because it was all going to the war effort!

Dealers may be having a hard time but the cost of smokeless powder is past joking about. I am asked £37 for a pound of Reloader 7 but the price in the US is only £9 or even less. Why are we being charged more than four times the cost in the US? I know that I am going to be told that it is transport costs but that argument falls short when one looks at the cost of Swiss Black Powder. A kilogram of Swiss powder costs £36 in the UK (some charge more) but a kilogram in Australia only costs £18 and the distance to transport it there is far greater.

Would someone like to offer a reasonable explanation?

Sir, I am ready to give up my sport not because of the interference from the government but because of dealers that extract the proverbial as well as our cash. I am not a tight fisted shooter but I do not like being taken for a ride.

The Catastrophy Match – a Challenge

from Henry Watson

The trophy for the Catastrophy Match, a fine barometer kindly donated by the Riff-Raff Rifle Club, is currently held by the Royal Navy Target Rifle Club (RNTRC).

This team match is shot under NRA Rules, with Target Rifles, and 'standard' 7.62mm (up to 155 grains bullet) ammunition, at ranges of 900, 1000 and 1100 yards, two convertible sighting shots and ten rounds to count at each range. Teams of best 8 from 10 firers or as agreed by team Captains at the start of the match.

The RNTRC will be shooting this course of fire, at NSC Bisley, on Sunday 10 August and challenge other Rifle Clubs, affiliated to the NRA, to attempt to better our score on the day and gain the right to hold the trophy for a year. Acceptance of the challenge will be demonstrated by the booking of targets alongside the RNTRC and fielding a team on the day. It is requested that acceptance of this Challenge is also notified to the Hon. Secretary of the RNTRC, Iain Thomson (Iain.Thomson269@mod.uk). It is expected that each team will provide a souvenir for the highest scoring firer of another team.

Over 65 Team for the Ages Match.

from Carol Painting

Please would all those who qualify for the over 65 team this year and who are interested in taking part (shooting, coaching or helping) please contact me, preferably by e-mail to cpainting@iee.org. If you don't have e-mail you can telephone 023 9235 2855.

Memories of Alan Bishop

from Tony de Launay

Martin and Pearl Townsend's obituary of Alan Bishop reminds me of the time some 15 or more years ago when the 'Bish' came at my invitation to the Engineering Employers' Federation to talk about the use of graphology. His theme, to a regular meeting of a group of very senior Personnel Directors from some of the UK's largest engineering companies, was the use of graphology in assessing the character of potential recruits.

If Bish was nervous in the face of a bunch of sceptical hard-bitten pragmatists, used to dealing in equal measure with employees in revolt and chief executives in unstoppable fast forward mode, he never showed it. One of the group had supplied me with a hand written envelope which I had passed to Alan as he walked into the room. No one there knew this had been done - with the exception of the supplier. By way of demonstration

Alan proceeded to give an unvarnished summary of the characteristics of the writer.

As he finished the members of the group turned, as one, to the startled supplier of the envelope and chorused "that must be your Chief Executive, John". It was. Alan might just have said "Heed the word of the Bishop and never re-use your boss's dead envelopes".

AWOL

from Chris Fitzpatrick

Our flag left his post on our flagpole on the night of the Bullet Ball 2007. We would dearly like to have him back and would forgive him and those he went away with. His original home was Sweden so he is unique in the UK and I am sure he is missing us as much as we miss him. If you know of his whereabouts please speak to Chris Fitzpatrick at the RAF Clubhouse or Karen Robertson at the NRA.



NRA SIGNS UP TO BINGOLOTTO



The National Rifle Association is delighted to announce it will be amongst the beneficiaries of BingoLotto - a new TV game which will raise money for sport and the voluntary sector.

BingoLotto is a weekly game broadcast on digital TV channels Virgin1 and Challenge. Tickets are on sale from outlets around the country and will allow viewers to take part in the BingoLotto game from the comfort of their own homes, with a 1 in 9.5 chance of winning.

The BingoLotto game has run in Sweden since 1991 where it has raised just under £1bn for charities and sports organisations. At least 20% from each ticket sold in the UK will be distributed to sport and recreation projects up and down the country. Profits from the show will be distributed to the governing and representative bodies of sport and recreation.

The funding the National Rifle Association will receive will be spent on new and enhanced programmes of activity at the grassroots or on special projects, like infrastructure improvement and capacity building, for which funding is currently unavailable.

The game's motto is 'Real people. Real winners.' and it will offer life-enhancing, rather than life-changing prizes to winners. The prizes in the game are varied and range from tickets for the following week's game, through to cars and holidays, to a maximum cash prize of £100,000.

The more tickets are sold each week, the more the National Rifle Association benefits.

For more information visit www.bingolotto.tv



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MEMBERS PAGE

More from John Gardener . . .

Can I Pay When I've Finished?

Why can't I pay when I've finished?
I might not be pleased when I'm done
I'm only shooting for practice
To zero me new sporting gun

So please can I pay when I've finished?
You seem more stupid than some
I'd prefer not to pay until I go home
Rather than pay when I come

I must pay elsewhere at commencement
I cannot play golf or buy shoes
Unless I fork out when I'm starting
By deferring I've nothing to lose

I can't have you going home early
A twelve hour day's far too short
So wait extra time just for me, mate
Keep you in your place, as you ought.

I don't want to pay before shooting
And here's a merry old jape
If I linger 'til after you've gone home
I might not pay at all – just escape

*(I'll finish this later – it's one minute to five – I'm off
down the pub)*

The NRA Armourer



. . . is available to fix your firearm or administer
First Aid!



Steve Green took this photo of a sign by the side of an Oregon country road, just east of Portland heading up to a scenic viewpoint over the Cascade Mountains. If you look at the large hole closely you can see that someone has held a shotgun close to the sign and expressed their feelings . . .

Feedback received from an RCO Course

Our instructors amazed me with their tolerance to our stupidity. I can only wonder at their dedication to our sport. They don't get paid either. Dealing with 18 or 20 dimwits would drive me to drink. I think we should try and get them a knighthood for services to sport or at least a burial at sea with the girl of their choice.

Imperial Meeting CD Prize List

Apologies to Cameron Lamont whose fantastic photo of a flooded Century Range during the Imperial Meeting was used on the front of the Prize List CD. Unfortunately a busy Editor forgot to include it on the CD credits - sorry Cameron!

Queen's and King's Final Badges

I am currently trying to put together a collection of Queen's and King's Final badges for eventual display in the NRA Museum. The idea is to have one badge from each year on display together with the name and details of each badge's winner where known. Obviously this collection is going to take some considerable time to create!

Whilst I am sure that you all treasure your Queen's (or maybe even King's) Final badges and are unlikely to let them out of your sight, if you have any unwanted badges or would like to include them in the collection then please contact Karen Robertson (contact details on page 1) with details of the badges and who won them (where known).

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