

The Wind Is Your Friend

February, 2012

WHAT IS “THE WIND IS YOUR FRIEND”?

BY DAVE MUNCH

This is the inaugural issue of a newsletter dedicated to Long Range Muzzle Loading (LRML). This newsletter was originally the idea of Arleen and Ed Decker, and Lee Shaver, but they didn't have to twist my arm too hard to agree to help with editing. The concept is to provide a newsletter that can both provide information to those just starting the sport and for those that have loved it for years. We hope to provide information on upcoming matches, the history of long range muzzle loading, tips on how to improve your shooting, upcoming matches, results of matches and much more. We also encourage you to send in your questions about LRML. We have access to some of the most knowledgeable long range muzzle loaders to answer your questions.

This is meant to be YOUR newsletter. The only way that this is going to work is if you send in your information and articles for publication. If you know other people that are interested in LRML but haven't received a copy, please feel free to forward this on to them, and also ask them to send me their e-mail address so I can add them to the list of recipients.

To provide suggestions, questions or articles, please sent them to:

dmunch451ml@gmail.com ©



The 2011 United States International Long Range Muzzleloading Team

Front Row L-R: Ed Decker, Ray Hopkins, Team Captain, Dave Munch, Lieutenant.

Back Row L-R: Lee Shaver, Ike Leggett, Dave Gullo, Kenn Heismann

ACROSS THE POND

BY ED DECKER

The 8th World Long Range Muzzleloading Championships were held at Camp Bisley in London, England Sept. 10-17, 2011.

There were 72 competitors from 11 countries: United States, England, South Africa, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Australia, Sweden, and Switzerland.

The US brought home a team silver medal in the long range team event. Dave Gullo won gold for the individual aggregate, shooting Lee Shaver's new Ferris American reproduction rifle. Lee Shaver placed 5th in the aggregate, and Ed Decker placed 4th at 500 yards and

5th at 300 yards with a Pedersoli. Another gold medal was won with Lee's Ferris by Corena deBeer of South Africa (300 yards). Not bad for the rifle's first World Championship.



U.S. Silver Winning Long Range Team

Ray Hopkins, Ed Decker, Dave Gullo, Lee Shaver

Harald Ruediger of Germany did something no one has ever done before—he shot a perfect 50 (with 5 V's) at 500 yards! It was a team match, so unfortunately the score didn't go into the individual records books—but everyone knows he did it.

We were warned that the Brits didn't stop shooting because of rain, and we learned that they meant it. Even the arrival of Hurricane Katia, with 45 mph winds and driving rain, did not cancel the relays.



At 600 yards the wind blew my shooting box right off the table and scattered the contents everywhere. Luckily, three bullets and powder vials managed to stay in the tray, and that's exactly how many shots I had left.

One of the highlights of the World Championships is making new friends from all over the world, and seeing old friends you haven't seen in two years.

Also, I want to express many thanks to George Arnold who coordinated the match and who bent over backwards to do everything possible to accommodate the competitors.



Bisley Firing Line

The next World Championships will be held in September, 2013 in South Africa. I predict the US will win! ☺

The Woe's of Corporal Peake

Whitworth Cartridges, the Queen's Prize lost and Putney under fire!

by David Minshall

The National Rifle Association (NRA) was established in 1859 "for the encouragement of Volunteer Rifle Corps and the promotion of rifle shooting throughout Great Britain." When the NRA planned their inaugural Rifle Meeting in 1860, royal patronage came

from Queen Victoria who offered encouragement by founding an annual prize that Volunteers competed for in two stages; the first at 300, 500 and 600 yards, and the second at 800, 900 and 1000 yards. Prize money was £250. From 1861, 200 yards replaced the 300 yards range.

For the first stage the long Enfield was used by competitors. The Enfield was however deemed of insufficient accuracy for the second stage and annual gunmakers trials were established to select a suitable rifle for issue to those reaching the second stage. Mr. Whitworth and a deputation of Birmingham gun makers contested the trials in 1860, with the Whitworth rifle being the clear winner. With the exception of 1865 when the trials were won by a Rigby rifle, the Whitworth prevailed winning each of the trails until the last which was held for the Queen's Prize of 1866. The NRA subsequently obtained a supply of Whitworth rifles to be used by Queen's Prize finalists until 1871, when for the first time the match was shot throughout with breech-loaders. The Snider replaced the Enfield in the first stage, and the War Office made a special issue of Martini-Henry's for the second stage.

During the trials held in 1863, and while shooting at 500 yards, Mr. Whitworth breached one of the Regulations governing them. The Regulation required "No cleaning out after trial shots, or during the 20 recorded shots, shall be allowed." His breach was the use of a mechanically fitting ramrod constructed so as to push the lubricator wad down on the powder, and in doing so drive the fouling of the rifle down also, leaving a clean bore for the bullet. It was considered that this infringed the

rule that no cleaning rod be used. The recorded shots were ordered to be cancelled, and the shots fired anew. In the end though there was only slight difference between the recorded targets and the Whitworth rifle emerged the winner.

Not to be out done by the regulations, Mr. Whitworth later transferred the scraper from the end of the rod to the base of the bullet itself, the whole contained within a cartridge. This idea was developed and improved upon by making the scraper double, and by introducing between the metal plates a thin layer of lubricating substance. Pictured below is a Whitworth cartridge, which although missing an outer wrapper does permit sight of the scraping discs and lubricating wad.



Pictures courtesy of Terry White

The year 1868 saw Corporal Peake of the 6th Lancashire finish 30th in the First Stage of the Queen's Prize. This was enough to secure Peake £15 in prize money and advancement to the

Second Stage where the top sixty riflemen were issued with Whitworth rifles to compete for the honour of the Queen's Prize and its £250 prize money.

The competition took place on Tuesday 21 July, during which Peake fired the then highest recorded score in the event. When news of his winning achievement spread he was carried off accompanied by a band and feted by his fellow Volunteers. The celebrations were however short lived, a protest being lodged later that day that he had tampered with the supplied ammunition. Some press reports erroneously suggested that Peake had loaded from a powder flask.

In order that all competitors should load and fire under equal conditions the following was to have been complied with: "Competitors in the second stage of the Queen's are to shoot with the made-up cartridges as issued on the ground from the tent of the armourer of the National Rifle Association."

It seems it was an exceptionally hot at Wimbledon that year with temperatures reaching 128 deg.F in the sun and 101 deg.F in the shade! The suggestion was that in these extreme temperatures the lubricating properties of the Whitworth wad were poor, as the great heat tended to dry and harden the wad between the two pieces of metal. Witnesses alleged that Peake had replaced the wad with one giving better lubricating properties.

The NRA Council met to inquire into the circumstances of the allegation and after considering the evidence produced by both Peake and other witnesses issued the following statement:

Queen's Prize (Second Stage)

The Council having inquired into an allegation made that Corporal Peake, of the 6th Lancashire Rifle Volunteers, a competitor for the Queen's Prize, has in shooting for the second stage yesterday used a wad other than that prescribed by the regulations for the same, have decided that Corporal Peake has not complied with the regulations, and is therefore disqualified as a competitor for the prize; and that the Queen's Prize be awarded to the competitor making the next highest score.

By order,

July 22, 1868
E. St. J. Mildmay

The gold medal and £250 prize were awarded to Lieut. J.B. Carslake of the 5th Somerset Rifle Volunteers.

Peake denied using anything other than the issued ammunition, although he did admit to having separated the bullet and wad in some instances, ramming them down individually rather than together. A later Court of Inquiry by the 1st Manchester Rifle Volunteers cleared Peake of using anything other than the issued wad, and concluded "It is, therefore, of opinion that Corporal Peake's character for honourable dealing is in no way impugned by his conduct during the competition."

It seems Corporal Peake's troubles did not finish in 1868. The following year while practising in his tent with the loading and discharge of a breech loader and what he thought were

“dummy” cartridges one happened to fire! Despite the bullet passing through several tents, through a wooden hoarding and heading in the direction of Putney, by some miracle, no one was injured. Peake reported the incident to the NRA and he was barred from further competitions in the meeting. Earlier in the week he had won the Prince of Wales’ prize valued at £100 which distinction he retained. ©

The Canadian BP National Match

by Dave Munch

I received an e-mail from Frank Monikowski through Lee Shaver concerning the Canadian BP National Match. In the e-mail Frank states: “The course of fire is 200, 300, 500, 600 x 2 yards on day 1, 700, 800 x 2, 900 x 2 meters on day 2, and 900 x 3 meters on day 3. They use paid target pullers so no butt duty. This is a class facility where you get to shoot a lot each day. They use the 5V or V-bull targets. The match occurs mid-August on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday.” (letter from Chris Jones follows) ©

Hello to all.

With the 2011 shooting season behind us I am again compelled to extend thanks to those on both sides of the border whose encouragement and support led to another successful National Championship last August. Events over the last two years have reaffirmed not only interest in our sport in this country and the active promotion of it on the part of individuals too numerous to mention here, but also the ongoing commitment on the part of the DCRA to continue its endorsement of Long Range Black Powder competition. It recognizes our events as an important component of the Canadian Fullbore Championship. But more importantly, the DCRA acknowledges that we represent the legacy of the first international shooting matches in the latter half of the 19th Century, and reminds those engaged in modern disciplines that their competitions, now enjoyed by so many, are largely the consequence of the efforts of our predecessors.

All sports evolve. Technological and scientific investigation into the material, physiological and even psychological aspects of virtually any current sport one cares to mention have led to improvements resulting in performance unimaginable in generations past. It would be silly to presume that we haven't benefited from advances in engineering at the very least...comparing a bullet mould from the 1800s to even the least expensive commercial ones available today is one obvious example of how far we've come. Our ancestors could only have dreamed of the choices, quality, availability and affordability of equipment we now enjoy.

But, despite the advances, we remain fundamentally inhibited by the basic nature of Black Powder shooting. There probably isn't another shooting sport less technologically driven than ours. In terms of equipment and components we play on a more even field than those in any other discipline that comes to mind. It's the person behind the gun, who casts a better bullet, reads wind and conditions better, has a better grasp of fouling control, and most importantly is always willing to learn, who will win. The human factor is our key to success.

All of which brings me to the point I'd like to make this time around. We have always chosen to do things the hard way compared to other shooters. Many of us for their own reasons have taken this to the next level by taking up muzzle loading, the popularity of which internationally has been rising for years. I'm not going to get into a debate about the virtues of Cartridge versus Muzzle Loading in terms of difficulty or purity of purpose, but simply remind all of the fact that *we support muzzle loading*. We recognize it in our National Championship. There has been an award structure in place for muzzle loading competitors for years, and I would welcome greater participation on the part of those so inclined. Please, contact me if you're interested and want more information...we've missed you and would love to see muzzle loaders in the field this year.

The 2012 Canadian Black Powder Championship will be held at the Connaught Ranges and Primary Training Centre from 17 to 19 August. As always, information can be obtained from the DCRA office or by contacting me directly via e-mail at chrisandpete@sympatico.ca, snail mail to the DCRA office address found elsewhere on this web site, or phoning me at 613-820-4759 after 7:00 PM EST. The DCRA and I wish you all a happy, successful and prosperous 2012, and look forward to seeing you in August.

Keep your shots in the black if you can, learn from those that aren't, and never forget those whose past sacrifices made it possible.

Chris Jones
January, 2012

2012 Match Calendar

March 30-April 1	Oak Ridge (300, 600, 1,000 yds) Contact: Rick Weber, rweber@cvs.com
April 28-29	Quantico, VA (200, 300, 600) Contact: James Morgan, xmorgan@hotmail.com
May 5-6	Camp Atterbury (2-300, 2-500, 2-600) (Alt Date: May 26-27) Contact: Pete Terpstra, terpstra86@comcast.net
May 19-20	Milan, IL Mid-Range (300, 600) Contact: Jason Lewis, siuforester@yahoo.com
June 7-8	NMLRA Spring Nationals Camp Atterbury, IN (800, 900, 1,000) Contact: Pete Terpstra, terpstra86@comcast.net
June 9-16	NMLRA Spring Nationals, Friendship, Indiana Contact: www.nmlra.org
June 23-24	Ultimate LR Championship, Grayling, MI Contact: Paul Behe, spidercontrolinc@aol.com
July 7-8	Cincinnati Mid-Range Match (300, 500, 600) Contact: Dave Munch, dmunch451ml@gmail.com
July 7-8	Milan, IL Mid-Range Match (300, 600) Contact: Jason Lewis, siuforester@yahoo.com
August 18-19	LR Regional Championship, Grayling, MI Contact: Paul Behe, spidercontrolinc@aol.com
August 19-25	NRA Black Powder Nationals, Raton, New Mexico Contact: www.nrawc.org
Sept. 6-7	NMLRA Fall Nationals Camp Atterbury (800, 900, 1,000) Alt Date: Sept 11-12 Contact: Pete Terpstra, terpstra86@comcast.net
Sept. 8-15	NMLRA Fall Nationals, Friendship, Indiana Contact: www.nmlra.org
Oct. 6-7	Joseph Hepsworth 1,200 Yard Memorial Match (1,000, 1,100, 1,200) Camp Atterbury, IN Contact: Pete Terpstra, terpstra86@comcast.net
Nov. 1-2	Camp Atterbury, IN (800, 900, 1,000) Not confirmed yet
NOTE:	Camp Butner dates have not been confirmed yet