

The Bristol Bulletin

B&DR&PC NEWSLETTER

October 2007

Editorial

PROPORTIONALITY IS THE TEST OF DEMOCRACY!

The shooting provisions of the Violent Crime Reduction Act come into effect this month. Put concisely traders selling airguns need to become Registered Firearms Dealers (RFD), buyers need to be 18 years old and face to face only sales requirement effectively brings to an end mail order airgun sales.

In a democracy elected politicians are temporary custodians, empowered for a brief period, to decree the rules by which its citizens live. Our constitution requires these powers be exercised proportionately and for the general good. The inference being that bad law can be overturned by successive governments, but does this happen in practice - well no, so does this imply all laws enacted

are therefore good?

Only time will tell if new laws are proportionate but the consequences for dealers are burdensome. The obvious additional overheads for registered dealers may have some unintended benefits. Airgun dealers now requiring RFD status might expand their stock range to include the requisites for the section 1 shooter. Conversely I fear that many mail order traders will no longer be viable and the current network of shop based dealers cannot offer the extensive product range current supplied by mail order boys. Add to this the recent, but unannounced, change of policy by Parcel Force who will no longer undertake the carriage of firearms.

Is all this important? Well I

think it is! For many the first shooting experience is with airguns and it is a fast growing part of our sport, witness the explosion of competitions for hunter field target shooting and the enthusiasm for the Junior Airgun Section (JAGS) of our own club.

The effects of this legislation and other regulation that has made primers very hard to come by of late, is cumulative and makes the pursuit of shooting just that bit more difficult. One test of the proportionality of this law may be measured in future Olympic Games. There is but a single rifle shooter representing GB in Beijing next year (good luck to Jon Hammond), how many will be there at the London Games?

Ed

Forthcoming events

Details of the new format for the winter aggregate for the Winter Aggregate Trophy appear on the reverse of the calendar of forthcoming events enclosed with this newsletter. The date for the first round (of six) is Sunday 14th, October 2007 and will continue

each month until March 2008.

The current calendar takes us through until the end of the year, with the last of the nationally classified Gallery Rifle Meetings at Bisley at the end of October, some rifle shooting dates in No-

vember and the Christmas fun shoot in December makes you start thinking about what you might want to find in your stocking this year.

Let me think!

Dear Santa,

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Winter Aggregate

Starts

Sunday 14th. October

Shot over six rounds at Failand Ranges

Full details—see back of calendar of forthcoming events

Best three cards in each event count towards the aggregate

Prizes for the overall aggregate and the best aggregate of each match

You have to be in it to win it!

Shooting Equipment —part 5 fitting the scope?

Having chosen your scope and mounting system it is now time to put them all together on your rifle.

We haven't mentioned the important issue of eye relief yet, so look thought the scope and move it backwards and forwards until you find the point at which the viewable circular area fills the scope tube. Now measure the distance from the back lens of the scope and the front of your eye, this is the eye relief, usually about 3 to 4 inches, but it can vary with some specialist scopes or those scope with a deliberately long eye relief used for pistol shooting. On some variable magnification scopes the eye relief can be different at different magnifications.

It is important you know the eye relief of your scope as you will need to mount it so as your head position, when the rifle is shouldered, puts your

eye exactly this distance behind the rear lens of the scope.

Fix the scope base on the rifle and fit the rings loosely to the base. Put the scope into the rings but before finally tightening the rings you must ensure not only that the eye relief correct but also that the vertical and horizontal cross hairs are correctly aligned.

Now look through the scope at a plain surface an infinite distance away, I usually look into the sky, best on a cloudy day and be careful **not to look into the sun!** Set the adjustable objective to infinity, if one is fitted it will be the focus ring on the objective lens itself or the focus wheel on the side of the scope, the infinity sign looks like a number 8 lying on its side. You can now move the focus ring on the eyepiece until the crosshairs are perfectly in focus, the scope is now focused for

your eyes and the lock ring on the focus ring (if one is fitted) can be tightened to ensure it doesn't move.

If you are concerned that your scope or mountings may work loose under the stress of many firings then you can apply a small drop of thread lock compound to the screws before final tightening, I usually thread lock the scope rail but not the rings and remember to use a good brand, such as "Loctite".

Don't do this until you are certain that you have fitted and adjusted the scope correctly. To do this you must zero your scope at a pre-determined distance of your choice. For a gallery rifle I zero at 50 metres but for hunting or longer range target shooting 100 metres is a more usual starting point. Next time we will look at this final zeroing of the scope and it will be ready for use!

Range talk

The third Cadet Skill at Arms Match was held at Failand Ranges on Sunday 23rd. September.

Thirty shooters in ten teams took part with the Army Cadet Team taking the winners trophy ahead of the Air Cadets for the third successive year, what happened to the Leaders Teams you might ask?

Thanks go to **The Junior Airgun Captain** and the Cadet Leaders for organising the event. In addition the club would like to thank the four members who helped supervised the .22 shooting. As usual the Competition Secre-

tary and his able assistant who put on the excellent sausages and burgers which went down a treat and kept spirits up on a dull and chilly day—could we order better weather next year please?.

Further a field the club outing to Bisley on 21st. September was attended by only five shooters, who reported a great days shooting. The date was made with short notice after a cancellation of a previous date due to the foot and mouth outbreak near to Bisley. This may account for the poor

what the members think!

turnout.

The club effectively subsidised the event as the cost of hiring two lanes at Bisley is about £200 and the range fee paid by those attending was set at £10. The club has no objection in principle to such subsidies but they are not viable in the long term unless such events gain greater support.

In future more notice will be given to members to allow them to plan ahead, please give the Rifle Captain if you are interested in attending rifle shooting dates.

Club news

The implementation of the new computerised national firearms licensing system coupled with the move of the Bristol Licensing Department from New Bridewell to Feeder Road is causing delays in the issue of certificates. New applications for initial grant of FAC is taking up to sixteen weeks.

The Committee has noticed that renewals are causing some confusion as well, specifically the matter of referees, one of which must be an officer of the

club. The club officers are the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, so as soon you get notification of your renewal speak with one of the officers and they will complete one of the two required references. Another common fault with renewals is the number of photographs; you now need to supply four.

When you get your renewal—don't delay. I know we are swift to criticise bureaucracy but FAC renewals only

what went on at committee?

come round every five years. We are asking society to invest a high level of trust in us as holders of potentially very dangerous equipment. If we want to be critical of the system I think we need to do are best to ensure we play our part in making it work to give the authorities the best chance of meeting our expectations.

The Committee