

# The Bristol bullet in

B&DR&PC NEWSLETTER

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## Editorial

### OLYMPIC SHOOTING SUCCESS—AT LAST!

Congratulations to Matt Skelhorn who won Britain's first shooting gold of the 2008 Paralympics (and only medal of any colour for Britain at the Paralympics or summer games), with a near perfect display in Round 3 of the 10m air rifle prone at Beijing's Shooting Hall Range.

Skelhorn shot a perfect 10 in all six of his first series, scoring a world record-equalling 600 points. The standard of shooting was so high that fellow Brit Nathan Millgate did not make the final with a score of 599, dropping just one point.

The quality continued into the final, where Skelhorn needed fractions to separate him from Chinese shooter Zhang Cuiping, who took silver.

To score 600 out of 600 after just one-and-a-half years of serious training is a fantastic achievement and I am sure he is looking forward eagerly to the return match on home turf in 2010.

Modestly when asked about his performance Skelhorn said: "I don't know how I did it, I just calmed down and shot.

Less modestly he added "I am satisfied with 704.9 [in total], although I could have done better. I actually put a lot of pressure on myself".

Without detracting from the excellent performances by the British Shooters, I cannot feel that the increasing pressure of legislation in Britain must be effecting our sport.

Additional millions have been poured into Olympic Sports (£12 millions per medal at the summer games) but we never hear of additional funding for shooting.

The one slight ray of hope is the current financial situation, which is making Boris (that's Johnson the Mayor of London) jittery about the projected cost of the London Games.

There are already moves afoot to save money on creating special, often temporary, venues rather than utilising the excellent pre-existing ones. A multi-million pound investment at Bisley would give shooting a shot in the arm, deliberate pun intended!

Ed

## Forthcoming events

The article on page two is about black powder revolvers. If you have such a firearm, or can borrow one, then on Sunday 30 November a precision match will be hosted at Failand by the Frome Club—all comers welcome.

If you have a telescopic sighted rifle then why not get along to Yoxter on Saturday 8 November and take part in the McQueen Match hosted by the Frome Club. This match is loosely based on sniping at rapidly appearing targets at 200 yards.

Remember the next round of the Winter Aggregate will be held on 9 November at Failand.

Full details of shooting until the end of the year are in the calendar enclosed with this newsletter.

### *This issue*

Editorial	1
Forthcoming Events	1
Winter Sports	1
Black Powder Revolvers	2
Range Talk	2
Club News	2

### Winter Shooting Events

The festive period is almost upon us and it is just nine weeks until Christmas.

Time to start thinking about what you want Santa to bring for your stockings.

The usual festive shoots will be held at Failand, the first hosted by the Frome Club on Saturday 20th.

December takes the form of random and fun shoots with the bring a prize (approx. £5) and take a prize format.

The date for our Christmas Clay Pigeon Shoot is yet to be confirmed—this is a very popular event and even if you don't have a shotgun there will be plenty on hand to borrow. The ideal way to try shotgun for first timers. The event is usually an open day so full members can bring guests.

## Fire arms

Being the only type of conventional repeating handguns permitted to shooters in mainland Britain, black powder revolvers, although messy are both fun and affordable and should therefore be given serious consideration. All the necessary reloading is done on the range and although a hundred shots may cost up to £25 (say £10 for the ball, £5 for the caps and £10 for the powder), 50 or 60 shots is considered by most to be a full days black powder shooting.

Competitions are shot regularly, with classes for original, spirit of the original (i.e. authentic reproductions) and open (i.e. reproductions with modern sights or totally modern designs) firearms.

So what is the choice? There are two main types and two main calibres to choose from. The Colt designs are

## black powder revolvers

typical of the open frame type and the Remington is the quintessential closed frame design (see pictures on the reverse of the calendar of forthcoming events enclosed with this newsletter). The closed frame design is considered stringer and the sights are slightly more practical but otherwise there is little difference in performance. The Colt design does require care to prevent shattered caps falling into the action causing misfires and jams and the Remington types are therefore more suited to rapid fire events.

The calibre choice is .36" or .44", with 44s predominating. The mild recoil of black powder firearms makes little difference to calibre choice, with one being more economical and the other making larger holes on the target.

There are modern revolver designs available; typified by the Ruger Old

Army, which looks for all the world like a Remington on steroids and one Italian company produced a muzzle loading version of the ubiquitous Colt "Peacemaker" model for western shooting fans.

Why not give it a try, if you find you like it at less than £200 for a new gun they are excellent value. Investment in an original firearm may set you back a bit more but they are unlikely to depreciate. You won't make many new friends though as your smoke drifts across the sight picture of the smokeless shooters on the firing line!

Next time I will continue the black powder theme with a short look at black powder cartridge rifles. These are versatile firearms that can be shot with accuracy from close range out to over 1,000 yards.

## Range talk

Round One of the Winter Aggregate for the G— P— Trophy was shot on Sunday 12 October, with eight shooters taking part. Four posted scores of 290+ in the Police Match and three scored in excess of 100 in the Service Match. This years competition, for the Bristol Blue trophy, is likely to be tougher than ever.

The third element in the precision match, shot in the form of a postal competition, with six marked cards being issued to be completed by mid March. I will be issuing precision cards on Sundays so if you want to take part just ask.

## competition and certification news

Round Two will be shot on 9 November and if you missed the first round then don't worry the aggregate is the best three rounds out of a maximum of six.

I will publish the scores in future newsletters so you can keep track of how everyone is doing. Medals for each of the three matches (Police, Service and Precision) plus the overall aggregate and Greg Patterson Trophy will be presented at the AGM in spring 2009.

Thanks to S— D— (*Rifle Captain*) who organised a range certification

event at Bisley last month and the few club members attended satisfied Steve that they were safe to shoot and will be recommended for club certification.

If you want to know more about the certification required to shoot at MOD Ranges then have a look at the article in last months newsletter.

S— is currently unwell but I am sure if there is sufficient demand another certification event will be arranged when he is back on his feet.

## Club news

Congratulations to P— W— who was elected full club member at the Committee Meeting on 8 October. Pete will be an asset to the club with a wealth of shooting knowledge and experience behind him.

At the same meeting G— C— and S— P— were accepted as probationary members. G— an S— are new to shooting sports and both mentioned finding a friendly atmosphere when visiting the club on a guest day.

## what went on at committee?

The Committee approved a quote from gardening contractors to clear back the overgrowth on the range sides and approach roads. If you find gardeners working on the range when you turn up to shoot then they have been briefed to work in areas so that shooting can continue. Thank you for your patience with this.

The Committee agreed expanding the range of club firearms for use by members. It is desirable that members have

access to all of the types of guns that can be used at Failand. Unfortunately because of Home Office restrictions this does not extend to long barrelled revolvers and pistols. If anyone has ideas please speak with a Committee Member but for now we are looking into obtaining a black powder muzzle percussion loading rifle.

*The Committee*