

The Bristol Bulletin

B&DR&PC NEWSLETTER

September 2008

Editorial

Shooting discipline essential!

I feel it impossible to publish this months newsletter without mentioning some of the tragic recent happening associated with firearms.

I am sure the whole shooting community will be appalled at the murder, in Shropshire, of Jillian Foster and her 15 year old daughter Kirstie by their husband and father Christopher Foster, who then committed suicide before setting his home ablaze. This tragic loss of life apparently provoked by financial problems.

In some ways more worrying and equally tragic is the death of 18 month old Rashid Ullah, shot in the back of the head by his sister with an air pistol left lying about after her father, after some target practice in

the garden at their family home in Washwood Heath, Birmingham.

Both incidents have brought about the usual hue and cry from the anti-gun lobby so is it worth stating the obvious? The term "shooting disciplines", is important and it is obvious that discipline was something which Mr Foster's deranged mind lost control of. Equally the lack of discipline displayed by Rashid Ullah's father will leave a scar on the family that will remain with them for ever.

Whatever our opinion is of the gun-control faction we must respect the views of all members of our society as the rights and freedoms we hold dear will, hopefully, be those rights that

permit both freedom of expression and the continued and disciplined use of firearms by members of the public.

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On a brighter note the Paralympics is just getting underway and on 8th. September two Olympic debutants, Nathan Millgate and Matt Skelhorn will be competing in round one of the standing 10 metre air rifle.

Their chances are excellent for bringing home the medal that unfortunately eluded Team GB in the earlier games. Matt Skelhorn is apparently hard to "miss" (deliberate pun intended!) as he usually sports a red Mohican style hair cut. Good luck to them both!

Ed

## Forthcoming events

The Club Winter Aggregate for the G— P— Trophy gets underway on Sunday 12th. October with the first of six rounds to be shot each month until March 2009. Details of the matches are enclosed with the newsletter, come along and have a go—it's fun.

A range maintenance day has been arranged for October to complete the clearing of the overgrowth. Members should be aware that the **Failand Ranges will be closed for shooting on Sunday 19th. October.**

Your assistance with range

maintenance will be appreciated and without a good turnout the Committee may have to resort to dipping into club funds to employ contractors to keep the range up to standard.

Thank you.

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### Autumn Action Weekend

#### Bisley

Sat./Sun. 25th./26th. October 2008

The final NRA gallery rifle match of the season will be held at the National Shooting Centre, Bisley on the weekend of 25th./26th. October 2008.

The usual range of events for small-bore and centre-fire gallery rifle and long barrelled pistol and revolver will be accompanied by some full bore events for military rifles and the McQueen sniper match.

Entry forms will be posted on the notice board in the Hamilton Range.

Full details at: -

[www.nra.org.uk](http://www.nra.org.uk)

## Ammunition the .303" British - still going 120 years on!

Last time we took a short look at the SMLE rifle (August newsletter), this month we can find out a little about the round that feeds it—the venerable .303" British.

The .303" round was designed towards the end of the 19th. Century to take advantage of the new smokeless propellants introduced by the French in the 1880s. The British smokeless propellant, known as Cordite from its long stands, was not ready in time for the new ammunition and it was initially loaded with 95 grains of black powder and had a 215 grain round nosed bullet. The resultant muzzle velocity was below 2,000 fps but the ballistic performance was a great improvement over the .45" service round it replaced.

During the 1890s Cordite finally became available and the new combina-

tion saw a 174 grain copper jacketed pointed bullet being driven in excess of 2,400 fps. This brought British small arms bang up to date and the round remained virtually unchanged until the adoption of the 7.62 mm NATO cartridge in the 1950s. Although many ammunition enthusiasts have written volumes on the different versions of the .303" ammunition, and there have been many, the main changes over the years were the introduction of non-corrosive propellants and primers and the heavier 180 grain bullet designed for use in machine guns.

Ex-military ammunition is becoming scarce now but over the past few years there has been Greek, South African and Yugoslavian surplus ammunition sold. The Balkan states obviously seeing the logic of producing ammunition themselves for the firearms air

dropped to them during the Second World War. Commercially produced ammunition is still available from many of the well established manufacturers and supplies should remain good as long as the Americans remain enthusiastic about shooting Enfield rifles. The reloading option is still a good choice with both military and target grade components available, although case life in Enfield rifles can be short unless reduced charges are used.

The Enfield rifle and .303" ammunition combination are an established part of our military history in the 20th. Century and I for one still enjoy shooting with them. If you are thinking of having a go at service rifle shooting then this is a great starting option.

Next month I will take a look at black powder shooting, starting with the muzzle loading revolver.

## Range talk

From January 2009, if you wish to shoot on MOD Ranges, you must have a card showing that you have passed an NRA approved safety test. These are your options.

1. If you only intend to shoot at Failand with .22RF, gallery rifle or muzzle loading firearms, you do not need to do anything, as the regulations only apply to MOD Ranges.
2. If you think you may be shooting any of the above firearms as a guest or in a competition with a club which uses an MOD Range,

## MOD Range safety certification!

you will need an NRA certificate. These can be obtained from our Club Chairman after a safety assessment which can be done at Failand. You need to be assessed for each class of firearm.

3. If you wish to shoot full bore and/or muzzle loading rifles, other than those allowed at Failand, you will almost certainly need an NRA certificate. We will be booking Short Siberia Range at Bisley (200 yards) on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>. October 2008 all day for members who need a NRA certificate for these firearms. The Chairman will then

be able to issue the certificates.

Please make sure you arrange to be assessed and get the right certificate for the firearms which you want to use. Having almost lost civilian use of MOD Ranges last year, we must take these safety rules seriously. Remember it is your responsibility, NO CERTIFICATE – NO SHOOT.

If you have any questions or worries please contact me, S— D—, or for further information the NRA Website is: [www.nra.org.uk](http://www.nra.org.uk).

S— D— (*Rifle Captain*)

## Club news

I omitted to mention last month that two new probationers were accepted into the club; D— P— and N— F— . N— is already an FAC holder who shoots with the Frome Club.

This month H— K— and P— W— were accepted as probationary members. Pete has a shotgun certificate and both have attended guest days and have found the club "friendly".

## what went on at committee?

Welcome to all of you and we look forward to meeting you on the range.

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The Post Office Box issues are slowly being resolved with all but a handful of members yet to contact **D— W— (The Membership Secretary)** regarding renewal. In the meantime Dave will endeavour to contact individually those members yet to renew. Thank you for your perseverance with this

matter. Any problems give D— a ring.

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A new Post Office Box has been applied for and details will be circulated soon.

*The Committee*