

# The Bristol bullet in

B&DR&PC NEWSLETTER

July 2008

## Editorial gallery rifle comes of age!

Whilst watching events at Wimbledon this week it struck me that, like the men's singles championship, the 1500 Match has become the premier gallery rifle event. More shooters have national 1500 classifications in the centre-fire category than with any other type of firearm, although things may change with increasing ownership of long barrelled pistols and revolvers. I can understand why the 1500 is deemed the ultimate challenge as it tests ability at long (50m) and short (10m) range, at quick-fire and precision, and multi-positional shooting.

What I find more surprising is that other countries, were pistol shooting is still available, have also taken up gallery rifle shooting and

for the past few years have visited the National Shooting Centre at Bisley to take part in the gallery rifle events, mainly at the phoenix Meeting.

In response to this international context, in 2005, the Phoenix Meeting introduced an informal international 1500 Match for centre-fire gallery rifle. The match has become and annual feature of the Phoenix Meeting and has been contested by teams from Germany, Ireland and a Phoenix Team of UK shooters for the last three years.

Things changed this year as the Phoenix Team has been adopted by the National Rifle Association and it is now officially the UK Gallery Rifle Team. With gallery rifle shooting being the

only discipline available in this country it will probably come as no surprise that the UK Team won this years Phoenix Meeting, but not by as wide a margin as you would think (scores available on the NRA Web Site).

The final piece in the jigsaw will be put into place on 11<sup>th</sup>. July 2008, when the first European Gallery Rifle Championships will be hosted by Ireland at the Fermoy Rifle Club in County Cork. Annual European Championships are planned, with Germany scheduled to host the 2009 event.

Modesty prevents me sharing the make up of the UK - squad this year, but I will report the results in the next edition.

Ed

## Forthcoming events

The NRA "Imperial" Meeting gallery rifle events are held on Melville Range between 16-20 July, with events being turn up and shot on the day format. So if the sun shines then load up and get on down to Bisley for a great day out.

Club competitions continue with the Frome Club hosting a black powder Timed and Precision Match on Watkins Range on Sunday 20 July .

At Bulford there is a long range (100/200/300 yard) gallery rifle match on Sun-

day 31 August, don't forget to check with the Rifle Captain, **Steve D**—, before you set out .

Full details in the calendar of forthcoming events, enclosed with this newsletter.

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### Summer Sunshine Shootout

Saturday 16 August 2008

Hamilton Range

*Now in its third year this event, comprising the Timed and Precision 1&2, Multi-target and Phoenix A Matches plus a full 1500, is hosted by FDPC. It is a full days shooting, requiring 304 rounds of ammunition (if you wish to shoot all five matches) and a packed lunch.*

*You can shoot with gallery rifle, LBR or LBP, or you can mix and match. Small fee for targets is payable – turn up and enter on the day all welcome.*

*If you fancy a bit of match practice or you want to try some match shooting for the first time then come along.*

## Ammunition

When Smith and Wesson introduced their 357 Magnum round in 1935 it was the most powerful handgun cartridge in the world and remained so until the introduction of the 44 Magnum in the 1950s.

The idea behind the 357 was to extract the maximum potential from the well established 38 Special round, by loading it to high pressures for additional muzzle velocity. The heavy-weight "Highway Patrolman" model Smith and Wesson revolver could withstand these high pressures and was used during load development.

The result was over 450 fps extra muzzle velocity and nearly 2½ times the muzzle energy compared with the standard 38 Special loading. The cartridge was otherwise identical to the standard 38 and to avoid the potentially disastrous consequences of load-

## 357 Magnum - Big Brother to the 38

ing one of these high pressure cartridges in a standard lightweight 38 revolver the case was lengthened by a tenth of an inch.

What was the purpose of this high powered cartridge and how is it used today? Well in America it is very popular for handgun hunting, a pursuit not available this side of the pond. We Brits use it mainly for long range shooting, with heavier bullets between 170-200 grains; it is particularly effective for target shooting in both gallery rifles and long barrelled revolver competitions at 100, 200 and 300 yards.

Although I have tried it out in my gallery rifle at 500 yards with some effect, the practical limit of pistol bullets with relatively poor long range ballistics is about 300 yards. Even at this range the trajectory is far from flat, starting at 1,500 fps or more bullets are near to

sub-sonic 300 yards downrange and bullets may have dropped 10-12 feet. If you fancy a try at this range your sights will need plenty of vertical adjustment if you want to remain aiming at the centre of the target. See the calendar of forthcoming events, there is a club match being held at Bulford in August if you want to have a go.

The 357 Magnum still remains one of the most popular high powered handgun cartridges and is available in a wide range of loading from most of the current manufactures. Reloading data and components are also remain available, but not plentiful, in the UK.

Many shooters use 357 cases, downloaded loaded 38 levels - it is a better fit in rifles chambered for 357 and some say more accurate. It is also cheaper, less noisy and does not disturb the neighbours.

## Range talk

A .17" HMR (Harrington and Richards Magnum Rimfire) cartridge case was found on the range floor recently and if it was discharged at Failand it exceeded the range envelope. So what is a range envelope and why is it important? The envelope is the limit on the speed and power of ammunition that it is permitted to use and is defined in the range certificate, displayed on the notice board in the Hamilton Range.

It is important because if it comes to light that members have knowingly uses overpowered or excessively fast ammunition and it comes to the no-

## what is a range envelope?

tice of the licensing authorities then the range certification could be jeopardised.

Briefly ammunition of .22" calibre or less with a muzzle velocity of less than 2,000 fps is suitable. The .17" HMR and Eley Mach 2 (a similar high powered rimfire round) greatly exceed this limit. For calibres above .22" then the velocity limit is 1,695 fps, which covers most of the old pistol calibres (even from a rifle) but not the standard rifle loadings such as .303" and 7.62mm.

The Committee feel that is it permissible to use downloaded rifle ammuni-

tion as long as it remains within the envelope, but the onus is on the shooter to prove they are not exceeding it. This can only effectively be done by measuring the muzzle velocity with a chronograph. If challenged members should be in a position to prove they are not in breach of these regulations.

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If you have any doubt about which calibres and what types of ammunition you can safely use at Failand then please speak with a Committee Member.

## Club news

**G—— (Jo) B——** a probationary member who joined us last year has completed the necessary attendances and training sessions and has thoroughly enjoyed himself. He has been accepted for full membership at the July Committee Meeting, congratulations Jo.

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On Sunday 27th. July 2008 the range will be closed for shooting for mainte-

## what went on at committee?

nance. Once again there is a lot to do and those who turn up to lend a hand will be rewarded with bacon sandwiches and probably a few blisters. Please try to get along if you can.

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A spent .17" HMR cartridge case was found on the range floor recently. Members are reminded that observance of the range envelope is mandatory and any infringement will be dealt

with under the discipline provisions of the constitution. For further information on which types of ammunition members are permitted to use at Failand, see the short article above.

Thank you.

*The Committee*