

ACTION SECTION NEWS

December, 2003

Well the shooting season has been building in intensity with the Kiwi Cup, Action Nationals and finally with Oceania Champs, all of which were held at the Hamilton Pistol Club over the last two months.

With the Action Nationals being the final trial for Oceania selection, the match was keenly contested. Most shooters rose to the challenge, whilst some crashed and burned. Once again it was good to see the Australian's here again. The NZ Champion for 2003 is Brent Millard with a score of 1918-159X, with Iain Buchanan of Australia with 1914-162X second and third was Karl Piper with 1912-163X.

The Kiwi Cup again a great match to take part in, with a good turn out of local shooters and group from Australia including their Oceania team. The match was won by Barry Marsh with 1918-175X, with Craig Ginger second and Harry Hoover third. Thanks must go to Mr and Mrs X for their continued generous sponsorship of the prizes and prize money for this event, which I am pleased to say was spread evenly across the grades. These are great matches to attend and take part in, how about you "club only" shooters try them out. You may even find you enjoy both the match and the company.

OCEANIA

The team positions were looking to end up as per shooters form, until the Nationals (being a mandatory score for selection) were shot and things changed dramatically. The final team positions were A Team: Karl Piper, Brent Millard and Robert Colman. The B Team: Hisaya Ishii, Ian Coates and Georgina Torrington. With the C Team: Harry Hoover, Ivan Marshall and Andrew Torrington. Congratulations to the successful trialists.

The Australian's decision to send only one team for Oceania was disappointing to say the least. Although the team of Barry Marsh, Craig Ginger and Lee Webb was one of the highest calibre. The teams results are gold to New Zealand A, silver New Zealand C and the Bronze medal went to Australia. The individual match was won by Craig Ginger (Aust) 1918-167X with Silver going to Harry Hoover 1918-165X and Bronze to Lee Webb (Aust) with 1914-170X. My congratulations go to all trialists and competitors.

Thanks must go to Graeme Purves, from all involved in the Oceania trials. His coaching, as usual, was of the highest calibre. The time and personal expense that he has invested in other shooters is greatly appreciated and will be sorely missed.

RULE CHANGES

The much-talked about rule changes by the NRA have been passed and will be ratified in Jan 2004. The changes are briefly as follows:

Stock Class has been simplified in regards to what pistol can and can't be used. Basically any pistol with a barrel of less than 6 1/4 in and a revolver with a barrel of 8 5/8 in length with no compensator is acceptable.

Open class has removed the prone position from all matches except the 50 yard position in the Practical Event. Whether you like this rule change or not, it's just another challenge in that match, that continues to frustrate us all.

STANDARD CLASS NATIONALS

Next year I propose to hold a new national event, being an Action Match Stock Class Championship. With the growing interest in shooting stock, it should be a good event and would like to see one or two of the Standard IPSC shooters there now there is no problem with their pistols not complying with the rules. Your feedback would be great.

EVENTS

I'm looking for clubs to host events for 2004. The events we require venues for are, the North and South Island Action Pistol, the Nationals in Action Pistol and Service Pistol, and North and South Island Speed Steel. Clubs wishing to hold these events please contact me.

WORLD ACTION CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Action Pistol World Champ's will be held in conjunction with the Bianchi Cup in the USA, May 2004.

Those wishing to trial for team positions, please contact me. I would like to enter one or more teams if possible.

See you on the ranges.

Ian Lochore

Action Section Director

The Sharp End Of The Year

With three major shoots in only the space of one month it certainly was going to be busy. Over twelve months of training and trials would end with the selection of the NZ teams to shoot in the Oceania Shooting Champs. The Nationals at Hamilton was the final trial and the team selection was to be announced at the prize giving. It was also a compulsory match with the score counting, good or bad, towards your final selection.

The next shoot would be The Kiwi Cup match, which is a sponsored prize shoot, again hosted by the Hamilton Pistol Club and the final practice before the goal of many of the shooters The Oceania Shooting Champs. The Nationals are a two day shoot but with only 35 shooters (nine from Australia) it was not a rushed affair with time to socialize between matches.

The disasters for some shooters started with the sound of the buzzer and carried on through the weekend to a larger or lesser degree. Overtime on the plates, overtime on the mover and gun jams were the order of the day for some people (me included), plus a few 8s and 5s thrown in for good measure.

Brent Millard was only two points down after the first day but was equal with Ian Buchanan and Robert Colman. Brent's final match was the practical event and he shot a clean 480 and with his nearest rivals having to shoot the mover he must have been feeling quietly confident. Robert was first up and shot a 474 with Ian following up with a steady 476. It looked all sorted but Karl Piper (who was six points down on the first day) shot a 478 practical match and tied scores with Robert and actually snuck into 3rd place on a higher X count.

With the Pistol NZ medals presented, the shooters fund presented prizes to the grade winners and then it was time for the teams to be announced. With the way the disasters of varying magnitude had sorted the scores it was no surprise when some people ended up in teams they didn't expect to be in at the start of the weekend.

Now the teams were sorted out everyone prepared for the Kiwi and hopefully to sort out any problems they had. Two weekends of practice and the BIG weekend arrived with brilliant sunshine and big butterflies.

The Aussie team was over and using this match as a warm up for the Champ's on Monday and Tuesday. They lost no time in giving us a ribbing about the cricket, basketball, soccer etc and we were hoping like hell that the Abs were going to win.

Again some people were off to a shaky start but overall most people seemed to be more relaxed and on top of these problems. No major gun stoppages and generally scores had crept up a notch or two but it was still the mover that was sorting everyone out. Barry Marsh (Aus) shot a clean mover as did Robert Colman but they both dropped points on the practical event. Harry Hoover and Craig Ginger (Aus) had shot clean practical events so at the end of the first day there was a log jam at the top of the order. BUGGER we lost the rugby! Harry had to be in Auckland to shoot in the ISSF section of the Oceania's on Sunday afternoon so shot the mover first up and dropped four points and then Craig dropped two points. Meanwhile on the practical range Robert Colman dropped four points and Barry Marsh only two. Two Aussies tied at the top with Barry inching out Craig on X count and Harry and Robert tied for third with Harry getting it on X count again. 5th, 6th and 7th places were ties and had to be decided on X count (who said X's don't matter). The prize giving was at the Hamilton Airport Motor Inn and our match sponsor presented great prizes to winners and place getters in all the grades. He then had a draw on competitor numbers and gave away CD and DVD players. All in all it was a great shoot, great prizes and the lunch was superb. And YES Craig did mention the football.

For some of us the day wasn't over, as we had the match briefing for Oceania and the range was still open for practice and testing. Guns cleaned, tested and locked away it was time to put the feet up and have a cold one.

With twelve shooters in the match, there was only one squad, which meant that the other shooters were looking over your shoulder every time you shot. This helps to create an atmosphere of nervous tension and what was so aptly mentioned as 'The Pucker Factor'.

The match started with the barricade event and straight away there was an upset with Harry shooting an 8 at 35yds. The rest of us went through clean but next up was the mover; the sorter out of the men from the boys. This it certainly did for a few of us, with us new comers suffering badly from nerves and a certain degree of brain fade. Harry "the mover" Hoover shot a very nice 480-37x and set the bench mark for everyone else to beat. Craig was up to the task and equaled Harry's score, with Lee Webb (Aus) shooting a very creditable 478-35x with his revolver. Barry Marsh was going along nicely until the last 15yd string, then it was two shots, along silence and then one shot. Three shots missing! The next string had another shot not fired. Four shots not fired, forty points lost in one event, this was a disaster for Australia and threw the match wide open for the

second day. Barry left the line, worked on his gun and got it functioning again to finish the match with the loss of another four points.

The last day of competition saw us start off on the plates, with no brain fades, lost shots or disasters except for yours truly who had the bottom break off his holster and land at his feet. Use the lock, carry on and borrow a piece to fix it later.

The practical event, with its weak hand string, can be just as cruel as the mover some days. And this was no exception! Lee Webb shot two 8s that dropped him out of first place contention and then Craig dropped an 8. Harry had to shoot a 480 with a very high X count to better Craig and he gave it his all. He shot a brilliant 480 but was three short on Xs to overhaul Craig. While this little drama was going on, the rest of the Kiwi's were not disgracing themselves and were posting some very solid performances with a 480 being shot in every team.

The match was over and the calculators came out to sort the final positions. As you can see from the results, it ended up a good day for the Kiwi's (gold and silver in the teams and silver in the individuals) and I certainly enjoyed my first taste of representing NZ. There is a lot of things that go on behind the scenes to get these teams to the line and not least of all is the work the coach puts in. Graeme Purves has been the driving force behind NZ Action Pistol teams for the last nine years and he tells me that this was his last year. He has given a vast amount of his time and expertise at no cost to the shooter, with his only reward being the success of the shooters he has coached. I hope these teams can continue to flourish and improve because the World Shoot is at the Bianchi Cup next year and we should be looking to send at least one team to shoot against the worlds best in their own backyard.

Ian Coates, Thames Valley Pistol Club