

## Scout Championships

Over 500 Scouts and Leaders from many parts of England and Wales took part in the 27th National Scout Air Rifle Championships at Walton Firs in Surrey over the weekend of 17 to 19 October. The Championships are sponsored by the NSRA and features both air rifle and air pistol events for individuals and Group teams.

Scouts, Explorer Scouts and Leaders travelled from places as far afield as Manchester, Nottingham and Swansea as well as from many nearer parts of the South and East of England to enjoy a weekend of camping and marksmanship which has become an established part of the annual programme for an increasing number Groups.

The main part of the competition features four different types of airgun shooting, air rifle, air pistol, field target and a reactive target knockout. Air rifles and pistols are supplied for these. This format keeps everyone involved over the whole weekend as most competitors fire one event during each of Saturday morning, afternoon and evening and Sunday morning. In addition, there are events in which competitors fire their own (or their club's) airguns.

Amongst this busy programme of shooting, there is still time for other activities during the weekend. These included Jamboree on the Air and Jamboree on the Internet stations and associated electronics workshops; an Archery competition and a display of shooting equipment (with the opportunity to purchase!) mounted by the NSRA.

Numbers at the event have more than tripled in the last five years and this growth has been made possible by increasing use of the NSRA's mobile airgun ranges. This year saw the largest single array of these yet - twenty-four lanes, all with target retrieval mechanisms.

The organisational task in mounting the Championships can be illustrated by the fact that over 60 qualified Range Conducting Officers were required to keep the shooting programme on course. Many of the range staff also compete in the event, but give up a substantial part of their weekend to supervise other people's shooting, a contribution which is

greatly appreciated.

The first of the three air rifle classes was six-yard air rifle (the type with which most Scouts are familiar) fired standing unsupported on the NSRA's range set up directly outside the Site's Training Hut. ASI Gamo CF16 rifles are used with Cadet Deltas available for the youngest age group. The competition is based on the best two of four targets (five shots on each). Hampshire took the top three places in this event. The Webley Scott Shield, the team trophy for 6 yard Air Rifle going to 9th Bramshill (Yateley) Group, with 1st Bishop's Waltham from Meon Valley as runners-up and 1st Liphook in third place. Pierre Reader of 1st Liphook, won the Ken White Memorial Trophy for the best individual performance by a Scout.

The Air Pistol competition also took place on the six-yard NSRA range and Gamo Compact air pistols were used. The Pistol Team trophy was won by 1st Bishop's Waltham and the individual champions were Martyn Fletcher of 1st Bishop's Waltham in the Juniors and David Robinson of Woking in the Seniors.

The Field Target competition involves outdoor shooting over various distances at reactive targets

that spin when hit. To comply with Scout rules, the targets are of plain geometrical design instead of the more usual animal shapes. As the name implies this is an outdoor form of the sport in which the

weather plays its part but this year it was kind to shooters throughout the weekend. Field Target Champions this year were (Junior) Philip Strange of 9th Bramshill (Yateley) and (Senior) Simon O'Rourke of 47th Swansea (Killay).

The aggregate scores in Air Rifle, Air Pistol and Field Target are the basis for awarding the two Connaught Shields, Senior and Junior. These are magnificent trophies dating back to the earliest years of Scouting and have travelled as far afield as Canada, South Africa and New Zealand.

Fiennes Explorer Scout Unit of SW Cheshire, with an unchanged team of Simon Shenton, John Brookes and Andrew Brookes, narrowly retained the Senior Connaught Trophy by the slender margin of just 1.5 points, beating 47th Swansea (Killay) by 614.5 ex-750 to 613. Meon Valley ESU was placed third with 609. 9th Bramshill (Yateley) held on to the Junior Connaught, with 593 points, over 60 points clear of the runners up, the 1st Bishop's Waltham "A" team.

The Chief's Prize for the highest individual aggregate score in Air Rifle, Air Pistol and Field Target by a Scout was awarded to Robert Chester of 1st Liphook. The NSRA Cup is awarded on a similar basis to Seniors aged 14 and above and was won by Simon O'Rourke of 47th Swansea (Killay), who also won gold





medals in two of the three constituent events (6-yard air rifle and Field Target).

The Ladies' Plate is awarded on the aggregate score in these three events subject to an age handicap. The effect of the handicap system was that Rebekah Pidgley of Meon Valley ESU just pipped last year's winner, Sara Young of the 15th SW Cheshire, who is just one year older.

The fourth ingredient in the Main event "package" was the air rifle "rapid fire" Knockout competition, fired shoulder to shoulder at targets which fall when hit, allowing each competitor to see how they are doing compared with their opponent. This type of shooting is a spectator sport and excitement grew as the event reached the finals around Sunday lunchtime. The gold medallists in this class were Charlotte Bain of 1st Bishop's Waltham and Rebekah Pidgley.

Additional matches were available for those with their own rifles. "Own Rifle" in this context includes those owned by Scout Groups as well as by individuals. There were separate classes at 6 yards for Juniors and Seniors with recoiling air rifles and an Open ten-metre class in which recoilless air rifles may be used. Chris Lacey of Meon Valley ESU won this class with a magnificent 98, including one card scoring a perfect 50. Chris started his shooting career in the Scouts and his achievements to date include being the British Junior Men's Air Rifle Champion, British Record holder and GB representative at the recent European Championships. However, Chris has not forgotten his roots and continues to attend the Scout Championships, offering an example to others of what can be achieved through a combination of natural talent and sustained commitment to sheer hard work.

Chris is not the only Scout in the Great Britain Junior National and Development Squads. Jake Carter, also both of Meon Valley and the GB National Squad, took the 10-metre silver medal with a score of 88. Melanie Flowers, of 3rd Hampton Hill and the Development Squad was placed fifth. The top six shooters in this event all scored over 80. As a lasting expression of their appreciation of the start in the sport which they have received from Scouting and in particular from Norman Beckett, the founder and chief Instructor of Meon Valley Scout Rifle Club, Chris and Jake have presented a new perpetual trophy to the Championships.

The "Own Pistol" class was won by Geoff Lacey of 1st Bishop's Waltham with

a score of 91. In the six-yard own rifle classes Amit Chauhan of 19th Harrow won the gold medal in the junior class with a score of 86 and John Dohoo scored 90 to win the senior class.

There is also a special competition for Vintage Rifles, which means those made before 1950, although some used in this class date back to before the First World War! Simon O'Rourke added to his impressive haul of gold medals, taking the Bill Cook Trophy with a score of 87.

Geoff Doe, NSRA Director of Shooting, presented the trophies and praised the high standards of shooting, range safety and of sportsmanship shown by all competitors. He also congratulated the range staff and scorers on the running of the events. He had been delighted to see so many young people enjoying themselves in a variety of target shooting disciplines and all in a thoroughly responsible way. An event spanning all ages and skill levels from ten-year-old beginners to the GB Junior record holder was impressive in itself. The continuing growth in the numbers present was also most encouraging. Scouting was clearly offering to many young people the opportunity to take up the sport of target shooting and to progress within it.

## British Schools SBRA

### 2003 RESULTS

#### Postal International

Scotland A	1929
Wales A	1923
England A	1920
Channel Is. A	1892

England B	1917
Scotland B	1894
Wales B	1838
Channel Is. B	1829

<b>Reserves</b>	
Scotland A	377
Wales A	376
England A	375
Channel Is. A	356

England B	368
Scotland B	361
Channel Is. B	349
Wales B	270

#### Association Championship

Firman (Gresham's)	296
Thomson (George Watson's)	295

Champion (George Watson's)	294
Chapman (Gresham's)	294
Beardsworth (Felsted)	294
Lempriere (Jersey CG)	292
Sothey (Felsted)	292
Jacklin (Gresham's)	292
Scott R (George Watson's)	291
Scott G (George Watson's)	291

### Junior Championship

M Kershaw (Gresham's)	198
R Honhold (George Watson's)	195
J Shanahan (Gresham's)	194
S Hunter (Ardvreck)	193
C Galleymore (Felsted)	192
C Bell (Ardvreck)	191
E Levine (Ardvreck)	190
D Williams (Gresham's)	189
B Atterton (Felsted)	189
J Turner (Dollar)	187

### Staff Championship

Ms J. Stevens (Wycombe Abbey)	
Mr W.S. Cowell (Gresham's)	

### Summer League

#### Section A

1	Gresham's A	
2	Gresham's C	
3	Ardvreck C	

#### Section B

1	Perse B	
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#### Section C

1	Gresham's E	
2	Ellesmere C	
3	Queen Mary's B	
4	Ardvreck K	
5	Perse C	
6	Bloxham B	

#### Section D

1	Gresham's G	
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### Veterans Postal match 2002/03

Watsonians	488
<b>Fletcher Cup</b>	
Old Victorians A	485
Old Johnians	484
Old Victorians D	484
George Heriot's FP	483
Monmouth School Vets	483
Old Victorians C	483
Jersey College for Girls	481
Old Victorians B	478
Old Wrekinians A	469
Old Tonbridgeans	455
Old Wrekinians B	443