

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

2009 was another busy year for the Association with a number of changes taking place. The new rule requiring anyone using military ranges to have a 'shooter certificate' came into effect without too many problems, though the system puts additional pressure on club chairmen who have to accept the responsibility that their members are competent to shoot on military ranges, which includes Bisley, when they sign the certificates. However, our use of military ranges continued to decline with the move of the Scottish Open Championships from Barry to Blair Atholl and the East of Scotland Championships had to be moved to Blair Atholl for the second time because of problems with getting access to Castlelaw range. The MOD has recently advised the NRA that they wish to restrict access to military ranges at weekends as a way of saving money on overtime even though this will reduce their income and this could affect civilian clubs throughout the UK. This raises the question of how much longer we will be able to get access to MOD ranges at all.

2009 started with the Scotland Team tour to South Africa for their 85th anniversary championships in March and April under the captaincy of Allan Mabon. Shooting at Bloemfontein was interesting and challenging, having to acclimatise to relatively high altitude and very hot and dry conditions in the middle of the day. Wind conditions vary through the day as the ground heats up and very strong mirage causes problems with target visibility. The championships were well attended and the competition was very strong with teams from all the home countries as well as the USA. South Africa, USA and England were the main contenders for the international team matches.

The Scottish Open Championships were moved from Barry to Blair Atholl because of the disruption to shooting in recent years and the increasing cost of running events on military ranges, particularly in Scotland with the requirement to have 2 range wardens on duty at all times. With the move to Blair Atholl we decided to limit the entry to a maximum of 60 – partly to be certain we could cope with only 6 targets but also in recognition that the entry would be reduced anyway because of the number of UK shooters who went to South Africa in March and April. As it turned out we received 60 entries without turning anyone away though only 56 actually shot. We used the same programme of events as previous years and despite the damp conditions the programme was completed without any problems and the electronic targets worked very well – the only misses reported were due to firing on the wrong targets! The Scottish Championship was won by Peter Bromley with the only score of 147 in the final and the Grand Aggregate was won by James Anderson with a score of 510.58v – 4v-bulls ahead of Mike Barlow -- and James Anderson also won the Caledonian Shield. The F/TR Grand Agg. was won by Peter Burbridge. The Lawrence Trophy Match was very close with a win for Scotland by 1 point. Following our positive experience last

year we have decided to hold this year's Scottish Championships at Blair Atholl again and to increase the maximum entry to 72.

There were 24 entries for the Long Range Championships which was a few less than normal and the Grand Aggregate was won by Mike Barton by a clear margin of 5 points and Paul Crosbie won the F/TR Grand and Peter Hunt won the F-Open Class Grand. Kenny MacDonald won the Grand Masters competition finishing with a very good score of 73 at 1000 yards. The Pentagonal Regional Team match for TR was won by the West of Scotland by a healthy margin of 23 points and the Finlux match for F-Class was won by Fife & Kinross. I will leave Lindsay Peden to report on the Scotland Team results for the year.

The shooting programme for 2010 is attached to the copies of my report. The dates for the Scottish Championship events are different this year because the NRA has moved the date of the Inter Counties match at Bisley to earlier in June which could have affected the entries we get from the South for our Open Championships. Consequently we will run the Scottish Long Range Championships over the weekend of June 5th/6th and the Scottish Open Championships on June 18th-20th. The other dates are similar to last year but with the addition of the European Long Range Championships at Bisley in October and the Scotland v London & Middlesex match will be at Blair Atholl on October 16th/17th. Also, David Hossack is taking a Scotland team to Australia to compete in the 150th anniversary Championships of the New South Wales Association which are taking place in Sydney in September.

The NRA project to set up a 300 metre range at Dechmont has not made any progress after 5 years and we do not believe the MOD will give the range a safety certificate. However, the Scottish Target Shooting Federation has reached agreement with the Scottish Government that the shooting events for the 2014 Commonwealth Games do not need to be held on military or police land which opens up the possibility of getting a legacy for shooting from the Games. The SRA is supporting the STSF in developing a plan for building a shooting centre near Livingston to cater for all the shooting events in the Commonwealth Games including full bore shooting – the proposed site is on privately owned land where there is already a clay pigeon range. We have agreed to help fund the initial design work at a cost of £2,000 which we may get back if the project goes ahead. However, there is a risk that we will lose this money but the SRA Council felt it was worth the investment if it means that we might get a new range in the central belt of Scotland. The funding to build the range would come from the money already allocated for the shooting venues for the Games.

Another project which is going ahead this year is to replace the head phones that the coaches use for our team matches – the existing set of head phones is no longer reliable and is not worth repairing. The cost is just under £4,000 and the NRC of S has agreed to cover 25% of the cost and the SRA will need to find the balance – during the year we will be asking for contributions from SRA members who wish to donate towards the cost. The Association funds will be depleted because of the cost of these projects but our finances are still in a satisfactory state and Hamish Hunter will take us through the accounts shortly. Our membership numbers remain steady at around 150.

I wish to thank all the members who have helped in running the various shooting events and the members of Council who have contributed towards the running of the Association. Special thanks are due to Allan Mabon who organised the team tour to South Africa and has also been running the High Performance Squad in preparation for the Commonwealth Games in Delhi later this year which has involved significant time at the various training weekends. Allan has been organising the Scottish Open Championships for the last 8 years and has decided it is time to hand over this job to someone new, so we are looking for a willing volunteer to understudy Allan this year and to take over running the Championships next year. If there is anyone here today wishing to take over this job please speak to me after the meeting.

The SRA website has been expanded this year and my thanks to Brian Woodroffe for running the website for us and I would be happy to receive any suggestions on what could be added to the website to make it more useful to the membership.

Lindsay Peden took over as Captain last year and he has highlighted the need to provide help to the Scottish schools that have shooting as one of their sports. As a starting point, the Association ran a weekend course for shooting masters at Dollar School in January which was well received. We want to follow this up by providing more help to any of the schools that stay on at Bisley to take part in the Imperial Meeting. Lindsay is also arranging a training session on the 300metre range at Bisley over the weekend of April 17/18 which will be open to any SRA members. The full list of team matches and training weekends is on the website and anyone interested in taking part should return the availability form to Lindsay Peden.

We have a full programme of shooting events and team matches this year and as always I encourage the membership to support the National and Regional championships, either by participating or helping with the organisation so that these events will continue in the future. In my view we need to ensure that we maintain the existing structure of National and Regional Championship events though we need to be prepared to modify the events as necessary to attract more entries. If the project for getting a new range facility from the Commonwealth Games does come about it will make a very significant difference for shooting in Scotland, particularly for shooters living near Edinburgh and Glasgow and we need to make sure we are in a position to take advantage of having access to a new range.