



Long Range



Firing at long range from the prone position. Note the use of a wrist rest, the high sight setting and additional padding to the cheek piece to give a consistent head position.

August will see the close of the MLAGB series of mid and long range rifle matches at Bisley with a weekend of shooting on 30/31 August. The events scheduled are the National 900 and 1000 yard Rifle Championships. Shooting muzzle loading rifles at these extended distances is a fascinating challenge and recreates the heyday of the muzzle loading match rifle era and the original NRA matches at Wimbledon.

The long range shooter needs to have developed an accurate load for his rifle and ideally have gained some experience at mid-range (200-600 yards) shooting. The shorter ranges permit the shooter to gain confidence and develop his marksmanship skills such that once progressing to long

range, his attention can be better focussed on the prevailing weather conditions and wind/light changes.

Shooting is most often from the prone position where slings or wrist rests are permitted for support. Some shooters however prefer the back position, which once practised can provide a very stable platform indeed. An added advantage of the back position for some is also that recoil can better be tolerated. With muzzle loading match rifles will typically being fired with a 530-560 grain paper patched bullet propelled by a charge of 85-100 grains of black powder (depending on grain size and brand), recoil is not insubstantial.

With the elevations necessary at long range and the high head position required to look through the rear sight, cheek contact on the stock can be limited and many shooters will use some form of additional cheek rest on their rifle. This not only enables a consistent head position but gives some support and reduces strain on the neck.

In recent years these matches have seen a considerable growth in interest and scores have been improving. Shooters who have previously fired at long range in centre fire disciplines have been able to adapt to the challenge of long range muzzle loading well. Once



At distances beyond 600 yards the back position may be used. Once practised this provides a very stable platform.

they learn the essentials of management of the muzzle loading match rifle, shooters from other disciplines have progressed rapidly and been able to challenge established muzzle loaders for places in the prize list.

If any reader is looking for a new discipline to challenge their marksmanship skills then mid and long range shooting with muzzle loading match rifles should be given serious consideration. The Long Range Rifles Branch (www.longrangerifles.co.uk) of the MLAGB specialises in the discipline and includes members from throughout the UK, plus France, Holland and the USA. There is also a web site dedicated to long range muzzle loading at www.lrml.org which includes much technical and historical information.

Short Range Championships

The MLAGB's National Short Range Championships will be held at the Association's Wedgnock range complex on the weekend of 27 and 28 September. There is plenty of shooting opportunity with ten 50m events and fourteen 100m events and competitions include for original and reproduction arms. Entrants should note that this is not an 'open' competition but confined to members of the MLAGB.

English Pistol Championships

Held at Wedgnock and on the same weekend as the Short Range Championships (i.e. 27/28 September), the English Pistol Championships follows the standard Muzzle Loading Associations International Committee

(MLAIC) competition schedule with events in two categories - O (Original firearms) and R (Replica firearms). As with the rifle event, membership of the MLAGB is mandatory.

Entry Forms for both foregoing will be sent to those who have competed in recent years, will be available on the MLAGB web site or by request (and SAE) from the discipline secretaries.

National Muzzle Loading Skeet Championships

This event will be held at Lakenheath Clay Target Centre, Suffolk on Sunday 14 September. Competitions are:

- Any muzzle loading double barrel shotgun (25 clays - singles & doubles)

- Any muzzle loading percussion shotgun (15 clays - singles)
- Any muzzle loading flintlock shotgun (15 clays - singles)
- Ladies Challenge - any muzzle loading percussion shotgun (15 clays - singles)
- Hammer Gun - Black Powder Cartridges only (25 clays singles & doubles)

Lakenheath Clay Target Centre has a web site at www.lctc.co.uk where information on Lakenheath Muzzle Loaders and other disciplines at the Centre can be found. For details of the Skeet Championships contact: Martin Crix (T) 01394 386999 or (E) shotgun.sec@mlagb.com

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