

We did it in style... including a couple of GB records!

MLAIC World Championships August 2008 - Adelaide, Australia

by Victor Chopin-John



*left to right
Front row – Victor Chopin-John (Team Captain), Martin Crix, John Marsh, Frank Thibault, Nick Harvey, David Brigden
Middle – Bev Keeble, Paul Roberts, Gareth Callan, Jane Capewell
Back – Sandy Robertson, Helen Harper-Smith, Jon Harper-Smith*

Preparations started in September last year with enquiries, research into hotels and official documentation.

It was around May when we found a shipping agent for our guns and equipment. They tried hard to find an airline that would agree to carry our guns as only a handful of airlines appear willing to ship arms, some classing them as 'Weapons of War'. Not only that, but arrangements also had to be made to get 'over-fly' rights from the various countries through who's air space the aircraft needed to fly and most of this was only concluded the week before we were due to fly out!

However, after X e-mails and dozens of telephone calls to Australia, 16 of us arrived at Heathrow on the evening of August 3rd and check-in was smooth. The rest of our party had left UK earlier and were on various tours in OZ visiting friends and family before joining the rest of us in Adelaide.

We boarded our flight and 26 hours later landed in Sydney for a three night acclimatising where we spent the days being tourists – mostly in the rain. Some of the more hearty decided to climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge – an experience not to be missed with spectacular views from the top where you are much higher than the Sydney Opera House.

We left Sydney in the morning of August 8th and arrived at our hotel in Adelaide that same afternoon where we had two days free to be tourists before the real work began at the range on Monday 11th.

Monarto range is 65 kilometres southeast of the city of Adelaide and it took us an hour by coach. We left promptly at seven o'clock every morning.

Two days were taken up with registration, practice and gun control/scrutiny. Our share of Scrutiny duty was ably performed

by John Marsh and Jeff Tanner but as there did not appear to be many other countries keen to carry out their share of scrutiny, John and Jeff found themselves doing much more than their allotted time. They worked hard but secretly, we are all sure, they probably enjoyed themselves looking at and handling a great variety of guns. In one case when they disallowed entry to a person's pistol, it caused all sorts of protests and complaints lasting almost to the end of the competition! I'm sure they have dined out on that one.

The Team had a good practice and no one appeared to have any problems with guns or their equipment except for incessant rain which came and went all day, every day! A lot of the time our feet and cloths were damp and we were all glad to have brought warm clothing as it was pretty cold.



*Pictured right:
Sylvia Harvey
keeps warm*

The opening ceremony was held on Wednesday 12th evening, fifteen minutes walk from our hotel in the Torrens Parade Ground Barracks where we were suitably welcomed by members of the Fort Glanville Historical Society dressed in ceremonial uniforms and making a splendidly colourful spectacle. It had rained most of that day but mercifully stopped for us to gather and form up outside.

All the teams formed up in country alphabetical order in the parade ground and were then marched to the music of a splendid Pipes and Drums band into the main building where welcoming

speeches were made and food was laid on. Formalities over, the Historical Society in their splendid uniforms, put on a short drill display which included firing their rifles and finally a cannon to signify the opening of the competition.

The Championships started on an overcast, damp and cold morning and continued for three days through generally inclement weather. The sun did make a few brief appearances and one morning in particular, it shone directly into our eyes on the firing point!

Most of the Team shot four disciplines each with no insurmountable equipment problems though I made about 15 challenges for Team members targets with a number of 'squeakers' some of which turned out to our advantage. After the first three or four challenges, they were resolved quite quickly because we had built up a rapport with a number of the scorers in the main office enabling me to bypass much of the red tape and suggested costs for challenges!

All our hard work paid off as at the end of the competition, the Team had won 3 gold, 7 silver and 5 bronze in the individual competitions which gave us third place overall. We were also top with 48 in the number of places from 1 to 10. **Table - 1**

We also held third place in the Team events with 2 Gold, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze, giving us a total medal count of 9 Gold, 10 Silver and 8 Bronze, 27 medals in all which, to date, is a record for the most the GB Team has ever won at a world class event. **Table - 2**

This was a great achievement, especially with a diminished team due to the cost of getting to Australia.

The Team also won a number of 4th, 5th and 6th places giving us 11 certificates in all. These added to our 27 medals, gave us top place in the 1 to 10 positions with 38 awards, which is another Team record.

Anybody interested in viewing the full competition results, should find these either through our MLAGB website or directly on the Australian one at: www.ssaasa.org.au/wmlc-new.htm.



Historical Society Soldiers

Individual Comp.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	>10	DNS
	34	34	34	34	33	31	31	29	28	28	542	6
Germany	12	7	9	9	8	5	3	6	7	5	43	1
Sweden	5	2	1	1					1	1	29	
Great Britain	3	7	5	3	4	4	2	1	1	3	48	
Spain	3	1	2	4	5		3	3	2	2	41	3

Medals and Positions up to 10
Table - 1. Top four countries

Team-Comp.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	>10	DNS
	21	21	20	18	16	13	12	7	7	6	9	
Germany	11	2	3	1	1	1						
France	5	5	3	1	1							
Great Britain	2	1	1	1	2			1	1		3	
Austria	1	4	1	3	1	1	1	1		1		

Table - 2. Top four countries

Team Medals by Discipline

Individual Pistol Medals

Cominazzo (O)	John Marsh	Silver
	Nick Harvey	Bronze
Cominazzo (R)	Nick Harvey	Silver
Kuchenreuter (O)	Nick Harvey	Gold
Tanzutsu (O)	John Marsh	Gold
	Nick Harvey	Silver
	Victor Chopin-John	Bronze

Team Pistol Medals

Kunimoto (Tan – R)	Paul Roberts	
	Frank Thibault	Bronze
	Sandy Robertson	

Individual Rifle Medals

Tanegashima (O)	Jon Harper-Smith	Silver
Hizadai (O)	Jon Harper-Smith	Silver
Pennsylvania (O)	Jon Harper-Smith	Silver
	David Brigden	Bronze
Walkyrie	Helen Harper-Smith	Bronze
Maximilian (O)	Jon Harper-Smith	Gold

Team Rifle Medals

Nobunga (Tan – O)	Jon Harper-Smith	
	David Brigden	Gold
	Gareth Callan	
Wedgnoek (Max – O)	Jon Harper-Smith	
	Gareth Callan	Gold
	David Brigden	

Individual Shotgun Medals

Lorenzoni (O)	Martin Crix	Silver
	Jane Capewell	Bronze

Team Shotgun Medals

Batesville (Lor – R)	Martin Crix	
	Jane Capewell	Silver
	Bev Keeble	



Competition over and feeling justifiably pleased with ourselves, we had Saturday 16th morning to look around Adelaide and do some shopping before getting ready that evening for our final official engagement that evening at the reception and Closing Banquet.

The banquet was held in the Adelaide Convention Centre just across the street from our hotel. We all duly turned out in our No. 1's looking very smart, as did the other teams, and were greeted at the reception with a glass or two of champagne.

There was a country, Hill Billy style, four piece band to entertain us here and two of our members ended up joining them for a couple of numbers, showing that we shooters have hidden talents!

Dinner was called and we were ushered into the main dining room and seated at large round, well decorated tables for ten around the dance floor.

The Australian menu consisted of Blue Swimmer Crab followed by Seared kangaroo loin or Flamed Grilled Chicken and desert was Drunken date and walnut spiced pudding, all washed down with a Jacobs Creek, Angrove Artist or a Hasselgrove Sovereign Shiraz wine. A different band entertained us at dinner and some of the Team even took to the dance floor.

After dinner there were official speeches including one to welcome David Brigden to his new position of Secretary General of the MLAIC. The raffle was then drawn and the evening came to a close around 10.30 p.m. when we said our goodbye's to old and new friends for another two years, and returned to our hotel at the end of a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

A very big welcome must go to our three new members to the Team who were on their first international - Sylvia Harvey who

comes from West Sussex and John Munt and John Taylor who both come from South Wales. All three are regulars at all the shoots and show great promise. We wish them well for the coming season and look forward to having them with us on our next challenge at the European Championships in Spain next year when we hope to do even better.

Finally, our thanks must go to our lovely 'Supporters Club' consisting of Team members' partners. They played a big part in assisting all of us with lots of encouragement, cups of tea and food.

A special thanks to Ros who looked after the daily distribution of powder and caps, assisted with scoring, took many of the photographs and generally helped me with my duties.

We hope they will all be willing to look after us once again in Spain next year.



*The Teams' Ladies were the Supporters Club
l-r Clare Mills, Maureen Asker, Ros Chopin-John,
Heather Marsh and Susan Keeble*

DTL Shotgun at the World Championships, August 2008

"The worst winter in 31 years", is how the weather presenter described it in Adelaide during the World Championships in Adelaide.

It was windy, very cold and it rained on and off all week - these were some of the worst conditions I had shot in during a major competition. Fortunately, the clay team often train in similar conditions in Northampton just to be prepared for moments like this and I am happy to report that it paid off.

In the Lorenzoni event (original percussion) Martin Crix won silver after a shoot off with Harry Sparks from the USA. This was Martin's first opportunity to win gold and even though Harry has been shooting for many years longer than most of us, it was his best individual placing. The shoot off started with Martin hitting his first clay - Harry missed his. I am sure at that point Harry thought it was all over, but no, both competitors hit their second and third clays. Martin missed number 4. Harry thought he now had a second chance and hit his clay. They were now back on an even keel. Martin missed his 5th clay and with hands visibly shaking and I'm sure his heart racing, Harry hit number 5 and it was all over. Both competitors shot 45/50 but Harry had won his first World Championship. I should point out that Harry had come straight from the rifle range after shooting in another event and he was the last person expecting to do so well in the shoot off, so well done to him.



Jane Capewell showing the Flag

Overall Shotgun Results

Lorenzoni Original

2nd Martin Crix
3rd Jane Capewell
4th Bev Keeble

Manton Original

5th Jane Capewell

Manton Replica

5th Dave Elvin

Batesville

2nd Jane Capewell, Martin Crix, Bev Keeble

Hawker

Jane Capewell, Dave Elvin, Bev Keeble – 4th
(although reported incorrectly as 5th)

I scooped 3rd place and Bev Keeble kept up his good form by finishing 4th. The three of us made up the Batesville 3 man team and won silver with our combined score of 130.

In the Manton event we were calling on Dave Elvin's expertise to bring home a medal. Unfortunately, things did not quite go according to plan. Franz Lotspeich from Germany had already shot 25 out of 25 in his first round in good conditions but as the day went on the weather took a turn for the worst and Dave could not match Franz's score. However, during his second round he stepped up to the mark and put in a credible score to bring him in to medal contention and in to a shoot off position for 2nd and 3rd with Bob Pence from the USA (or so we thought).

In lining up for the shoot off, we discovered that one of the French competitors had achieved a better score than Dave and Bob to take silver outright. We also learnt that one of the Spanish shooters had equalled them, so we had a 3 man tie for the bronze medal. The Spanish shooter was nowhere to be seen on the range when the time came for the shoot off to begin. The officials had determined that he was unaware that he was in a shoot off and that he had already packed his guns up and cleared them with the Customs officials ready for them to be sent home. Finally some one tracked him down and got him to the range just in time. This obviously didn't fluster him at all as he managed to beat Dave and Bob and take home the bronze medal.

I would like to thank Clare Mills and Susan Keeble for supporting the team during a week of terrible weather, very early mornings and late nights and for plying us with tea to keep us warm and brollies to keep us dry.

Results aside, the week on the clay range was marred, not only by the bad weather but also by organisational problems and a faulty trap, something you do not want to be faced with during a World Championships. However, I am proud of the stalwart performance the team put in under the circumstances and I am sure there will be some updates to the rules in the coming years to try and help alleviate the issues that we were confronted with in Adelaide. Notwithstanding, I would applaud the efforts of members of the Australian team and their volunteer helpers who battled through to improve the consistency of the trap and to familiarise themselves with the rules at very short notice in order to run the range to the expected standards.

Jane Capewell

DTL Discipline Secretary



Shotgun Team

David Elvin, Bev Keeble, Martin Crix and Jane Capewell



*Prize winners: Lorenzoni Original
Martin Crix, Jane Capewell & Bev Keeble*