

COMMITTEE INFO

Chairman:
Don L

Treasurer:
Roger H

Club Captain:
Simon F

Secretary:
Alan S

Membership Officer:
Barry D

Training Officer:
Steve C

CPO:
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Webmaster:
Rhid T

Armourer:
Kevin S

Communications Officer:
Sarah J



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Club News

Hello, and welcome to the winter edition of the SPRC Times!

In this edition of the newsletter, we talk competitions, competition bodies, Firearms certificate and Club etiquette.

It's been a busy competition season for the Club, so far this year, with several successes seen in the Summer 22 season. These results are featured in this month's newsletter.

This edition sees us discuss the benefits of obtaining a Firearms certificate. For those who are eager to try shooting outside of the Club, it's worth considering.

Finally, we wanted to just remind members of some basic Club etiquette. With such a chatty and friendly Club, it can sometimes lead to some basic considerations being forgotten, so we've outlined a few of these in this edition, as a reminder.

In other news, SPRC celebrates it's 40th anniversary at Eureka Road in January 2023 and we'd love to celebrate it with you. Join us for a social afternoon of games, fun shoots, quiz and food on **29th January 2023!** Full details still to come so, for now, save the date!

We hope you enjoy this edition and, as ever, if you have any ideas on potential feature articles, contact Sarah on communications@surbitonpostalrifleclub.com.



RECENT RESULTS

Summer 22 season:

- Surrey 50m Prone, Individual:
Winner Div 7
- Surrey 50m Prone, Team:
Winners Div 3
- Surrey Prone, Individual:
Winner Div 6
Winner Div 11
Winner Div 19
- Surrey Benchrest, Individual:
Winner Div 8
- Surrey Benchrest, Team:
Winners Div 1
- Eley final
3rd, LSR Timed, Class B
2nd, Air Rifle, Class A
1st, LSR Precision, Class C

Competitions

It's been another season of competition success for SPRC, including a very promising number of new members entering (and doing remarkably well)!

With the Winter 22/23 season now underway, we have noticed a drop in the number of entries for competitions that take place away from Club premises.

Whilst it can be a little daunting to consider entering these kinds of competitions, they can offer a great opportunity to experience new competitions, distances, ranges and different shooting conditions. One such competition, the National Small Bore Rifle Meeting (aka 'Bisley week') was documented by **Ian P**, whose engaging report can be read in full at the end of this newsletter.

We would urge you – in particular newer members – to give some of these competitions a try. SPRC has a rich history of competition entry and success, and it is important for the future of the club that we continue to enter.

Each competition has its own set of rules and regulations so do let us know if you are interested and we can help steer you in the right direction (not to mention assist you if you do typically use club rifles).

If you would like to document your competition experience for the Club, please contact our Comms Officer, Sarah (communications@surbitonpostalrifleclub.com). We'd love to feature your report in our newsletters!

In the meantime, good luck to all Winter 22/23 season entrants!
Just please ensure you take note of the submission deadline for each round.



Surbiton Postal
Rifle Club

Firearms certificate

As mentioned, we would highly recommend members consider signing up for competitions that take place outside of Club premises. A Firearms Certificate, or FAC, is a very useful document to hold for such events.

An FAC allows you to purchase your own rifle(s), your own ammunition and to travel outside the club with these rifle(s) and ammunition.

If you intend to shoot at other ranges then an FAC is ideal, otherwise you will have to rely on another authorised person to take out and bring back a club rifle and ammunition for you.

At SPRC, an FAC allows you to shoot at the club outside of Club hours – known as Out of Hours Shooting.

Membership lasts 5 years, with first application costing £88 and renewals costing £62 (based on current prices).

You can now apply for an FAC online, which makes the whole process so much easier than it was. However, it can be a daunting experience – especially if you are new to the sport, so do ask if you have any questions. Any of the committee can answer your questions about FACs and the club is preparing a hints and tips sheet to assist club members in their applications.



Club Etiquette

We're not a Club with many rules but those we do have are there to allow members to visit the club in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Bookings

Introduced as part of our Covid mitigations, the ability to book a space at a range has proven to be a popular and useful feature, and so has been retained for the foreseeable future. It provides members with the assurance that they have a space reserved at the range, and allows Desk Officers to know roughly how many people they can expect at the Club. However, we do have instances whereby members who have booked a space do not then attend. If you book a spot and are no longer able to make it, we ask that you cancel your booking as soon as you are able, to allow another member to book.

Checking equipment

Whilst there is a benefit to using Club equipment – no need for Firearms Certificate, no need to own and store a rifle – a downside is that the firearm you use regularly may also be used by others, including in inductions. It is unfortunately not possible to allocate a rifle for exclusive use by a single Club member, so there is a certain level of acceptance required that a piece of equipment you use regularly may not always be set up as you would like.

As such, we ask for your patience and understanding, and encourage you to review the settings on any equipment you use (sight setting, location of hand stop, sling setting etc) so that you can adjust these settings should you need to.

Preparing to shoot

Setting up for shooting can be a somewhat lengthy process – especially for those who use Club equipment. Finding the right jacket, setting up the mat, scope etc can be time consuming, no matter how quick you try to be. As such, we ask that members prepare as much as possible outside of the range and in the main Club room (e.g. making adjustments to rifles, wearing jackets etc). This helps to minimise breaks to concentration and focus for those already in the range and ready to shoot. The Committee will be implementing some changes to help facilitate this, such as moving jackets and gloves to the main club room.

Also, whilst we are a sociable club, we ask members to keep catching up and discussing matters to the main Club room, rather than in the ranges.

Rifle cleaning

A short while ago, we sent out an email regarding cleaning of club rifles after each round of shooting. To those who have been cleaning their rifles, a huge thanks! To those who have not yet cleaned their rifles, we have made a laminated copy of the guide available on the main desk of the Club, for easy access and use. Please do clean your rifles. Our equipment is only as good as the care we taken in looking after it.

Finally – don't forget to clean up after yourselves! Put empty shells, used sighters, trimmed card edges etc in the bins provided!



National Small-bore Rifle Meeting – Bisley 13-20 August 2022

Report by Ian Potts

This was always going to be a different Bisley; the first in 3 years due to the pandemic; the centenary of the event at Bisley and, last but not least, the extreme heat. So I thought that I'd document the event in the hope that it may help others who plan to shoot Bisley Week in future (or perhaps just for general interest!).

A little background for those who've never taken part, "Bisley Week" is usually in the second full week of August and is the main national small-bore rifle event of the year. It is split into many competitions, the majority of which are sub-divided into classes. This means that everyone gets a chance of winning something and that less experienced shots are not pitched up against seasoned international competitors. The competitions are broadly grouped into the Weekend Aggregate (shot over the first weekend); the Championship Aggregate (shot from Monday to Thursday) and The Roberts which is the British prone championship shot on the Friday and second Saturday. There is no compulsion to enter everything, so those who are time constrained could for example just enter the weekend aggregate and/or the Roberts if they wish.

With few exceptions all competitions are shot at 50 m and/or 100 yds and all details are of 20 minutes duration, allowing for unlimited sighters and 20 match shots. The venue is the main Century Range at Bisley, where there are approximately 250 firing points stretching out across the field. This year roughly half of the range was used from around FP110 to FP220 or so. Whilst the range is "covered" by an awning it is, to all intents and purposes, an outdoor range and shooters are exposed to the elements, be they sun, rain, wind, hail etc.

Although the competition is shot in August, you'll usually experience most of the weather conditions at some point during the week, so it's a good idea to be prepared! Another point to keep in mind is that everyone in a class shoots on the same details for each of the main competitions in order to minimise the effects of conditions giving anyone an unfair advantage over their competitors. During the week you can expect to get an early detail (shooting starts at 08:30), a late one (maybe 15:30) and others in between. For those who prefer not to commute, then there are options to camp at Bisley with a tent or caravan. This is also very convenient if you feel like frequenting the various bars and clubhouses in the evenings. There are also some "unsquadded" competitions which can be shot at any time during the week, so there's often some tactics involved in deciding when to shoot them to get the easiest conditions (if any conditions on Century range could be called easy!). This is when we all become amateur weather forecasters and quickly learn what a black art it can be!

Although we entered way back in April, the time flew by and before we knew it the start of Bisley was upon us. Had we trained enough and were we ready? The day of reckoning had arrived and so at 08:30 on Saturday 13th August, we set off on the trek from the car park at Bisley onto the savanna of Century Range to check in and collect our stickers and targets. It was great to meet up with old friends who we'd not seen for a few years and finally get back towards the normality of life before the pandemic.



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The weekend aggregate would be our first competition of the week, starting with the 50 m details at 10:15 before a break until the afternoon for our 100 yd details. This competition consists of 60 shots at each distance and there are also separate competitions for each distance and a Dewar course of fire. The weather could only be described as brutal for shooting in, with the temperature reaching 34C. While there are tents nearby to shelter in (usually from the rain), these were a bit like greenhouses in the heat and so there was little respite. Keeping hydrated was clearly going to be an issue from the outset and during the day I drank more than 8 litres, the only evidence of which was a sweaty shooting mat after each detail! Fanar P and I shot steadily to finish about a third of the way down in our respective classes. This year the NSRA had arranged for golf buggies to transfer people between the car park and the range (and back). After a day's shooting this was most welcome for the journey back up the hill to the car park.

On the Sunday, our first match was the Eley final at 12:30. It was great to see a couple of our younger members, Augustine and Zita DM, taking part in their first shoot away from the club and even better to see their results. Augustine won his class and was also top junior overall, with Zita not far behind in 8th place in the same class. Huge congratulations are due to them both and hopefully there are many more successes to come! Fanar shot steadily for a 4th place in her class and I ended up 5th in mine.

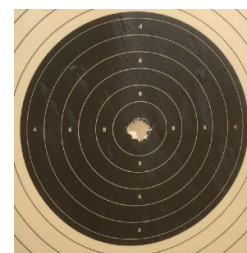
In the afternoon the final of the Queen Alexandra Cup competition was held. This is for county teams of 6 who will have previously qualified by shooting a 25 yd card precision and a time-limit card (10 shots in 90 seconds). I was a member of the Surrey team and we had high hopes of success going into the final. The course of fire then becomes 2 precision cards, 2 time limit cards and finally a skirmisher card (as many shots as you can fire in 60 seconds). After the precision all was still good, but the time-limit section told us that it was not going to be our day as unfortunately one of our members had a malfunction and thus scored 0 (dropping us back by a potential 100 points). It was the first time that I'd shot a skirmisher card and I was quite pleased to get 10 shots away and all in the black (just), which seemed to be much the norm across the team. The final result saw us way down the leader board, 92 points behind the winning team (so that was an expensive malfunction!).

My intention for the weekend had been to get used to the conditions and the range in preparation for the main week as the range really is like no other. This worked well and I made an adjustment to my sling which had strayed from its normal setting and had opened up my groups a little, but after this I felt as well prepared for the week as possible. The temperature was forecast to drop down a few degrees during the week, with the prospect of rain arriving too. I never thought I'd be looking forward to rain at Bisley but there you go!



National Small-bore Rifle Meeting – Bisley 13-20 August 2022

The weather on Monday was a little more benign, with slightly lower temperatures and a gentle, consistent breeze coming from the right. It was also the time to make some new acquaintances with the shooters around me, as we'd be squaddled together for the week. The conditions worked well for me and I coming secured 2nd in my class, some 4 points off the winning score. In the afternoon a steady shoot at 100 yds again put me 4 points off the pace, but put me 2nd at that point in the Championship Aggregate.



The forecast for Tuesday had been for showers to arrive but, despite clouding over a bit, we were fortunate to remain dry throughout. My 50 m shoot was down on the previous days, but the afternoon shoot at 100 yds went well for another 2nd place and maintained my position in the Championship aggregate. Fanar chose to shoot her unsquaddled match, the Centenary Competition, which comprised an English Match (60 shots at 50 m) followed by 40 shots at 100 yds. She shot very steadily throughout and won her division by 16 points. Not bad for someone who had her entire position rebuilt just 3 weeks before Bisley!



I commuted each day to Bisley, but Wednesday morning reminded me of the risk of doing so. There was a bad accident on the A3 and I was fortunate to get past it before the road was closed. A few minutes later and I would have sat there for more than an hour and missed my shoot. Luckily my delay was very brief and I arrived just a few minutes behind my planned time and still with plenty of time to get to the range and set my kit up etc. without panic. This was the day when the weather finally changed, starting somewhat overcast and also making it quite difficult to get a clear sight picture or spot the shots, even at 50 m which is not normally troublesome. The previous detail had been shooting at 100 yds so the target frames needed to be brought back to 50 m at the start of the first detail, at which point a problem came to light - my target frame wouldn't stand upright! The tubes which are sunk into the ground and into which the target frame legs are placed had worked loose. A quick discussion with the Range Officer saw me moved to another firing point, but it was all a bit of a rush in an already tight schedule and I wasn't as relaxed for the shoot as I had planned. Whilst my placing in this competition was down a bit on those from the previous days, the scores were fairly tight and I managed to stay in 4th place in the aggregate.

The sky become very threatening during the morning and so I took all my kit back to the car in the dry and then went across to the Lord Roberts Centre, where I had a RWS batch testing session booked after lunch. Boy was I glad about that, as the heavens opened while I was over there. I felt sorry (but only for a short while 😊) for the shooters who were out on Century that afternoon. The batch testing consisted of clamping the rifle in a vice which was mounted on a steel frame which in turn was bolted to the floor and then shooting 10-shot groups with each of the 8 or so batches of ammunition that were available. This is coupled with electronic targets so that you can see how each group builds up and its dimensions.



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Most of the batches yielded average results, but fortunately there was one which was comparable to a selected batch I acquired in 2021. The downside was that they had only 1500 rds left, so those are going to be kept for the matches that matter.

Thursday was the first of my early starts (shooting started at 08:30 for me so that meant arriving at the range at around 07:30) and was for 60 shots at 100 yds. The lighting was difficult again and the wind had picked up and was more variable, not the best ingredients for a 100 yd shoot. It went steadily though, placing me 20th but not that many points behind the winner.

Although I'd not won any of the comps during the week, my consistency throughout the week left me in 4th place in A class. Being in the top 10% of a class means promotion for the following year (similarly demotion awaits those in the bottom 10%), so I had achieved one of my goals by getting into X class for next year - woohoo! The icing on the cake was that it also meant I was selected for the England team in the Home Countries International to be shot on the Friday afternoon. In the afternoon I went over to the Malcolm Cooper (50 m) range at Lord Roberts Centre and shot the first of my double English Match competitions. I'd entered these for a couple of reasons; partly to get more experience on shooting on electronic targets but more importantly to give me the opportunity to focus on my shooting process and technique.

The Century range is one of the toughest to shoot on and it's easy to get into bad habits when trying to cope with it, so the chance to "reset" was really useful. Friday was another early start, this time for The Roberts which comprises a single Dewar course of fire. Shooters are split evenly from the classes across each detail, with the top third of each detail qualifying to shoot in the second stage the following day. The light was much better than the past couple of days but I struggled with the wind in my face making my eyes water and I missed the cut by 3 points. Clearly a lot of people struggled as shown by the cut-off point being some 10-12 points below the usual level, but I now know of an area of weakness that I need to address for next time.

Fanar shot steadily in her details and narrowly missed the cut for the second stage too, but there is a bonus in that the top 3 of each class (B and below) go into the "Bob's" competition which is shot alongside the second stage of the Roberts. So the great news was that Fanar had qualified to shoot again the following day...her reward for this good work would be another early start! Straight after lunch I ventured over to the Malcolm Cooper range again to shoot my second English Match and do some training.

The afternoon saw the Home Countries International match take place in very windy conditions, blowing me from the 7 ring on one side of the 100 yd target to the 7 ring on the other side when I got it wrong.

Fortunately I redeemed myself on the 50 m to hide some of my embarrassment from the 100 yds and we were pleased to win the competition.



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Kevin S was also busy at Bisley throughout the week, focussing upon the 3x20 competitions in the Lord Roberts Centre. The NSRA had chosen to move the British 3P Championships at short notice earlier in the year to the British 50 m Championships in June, which unfortunately prevented us all from taking part due to a clash with another event. However this time there was some consolation for Kevin as he finished up in second place overall.

The weather on Saturday was slightly calmer but nice and bright for Fanar's shoot in stage 2 of the "Bob's". She shot very well again (mental note to self, must train harder) and qualified for the final in the afternoon. So on only her second Bisley, Fanar was going to get to shoot alongside the final of the Roberts! The course of fire was a double-Dewar (40 shots at 50 m and 40 shots at 100 yds.) Each shooter has a board behind them and a spotter (I now know my place) to plot the shots so that the spectators get a view as to how everyone's getting on. It's a great atmosphere and the pressure builds as the scores get confirmed. Fanar finished in a very creditable 6th position.



The Roberts match itself was a very closely contested affair, with a tie shoot being required between Lina J and Dom C who had both finished the final on 784 for the Double Dewar. This involved an extra card at 100 yds, throughout which the wind was horrendous, but it was fascinating to see the different approaches used by the shooters. Dom shot quickly at first, but slowed down as his group was poor by his standards. Lina started off very slowly and methodically, dropping only 1 point in the first 10 shots. She did then have to pick up the pace to finish within time, but still kept the group pretty tight for the second 10 shots to take the win. It was a real experience to witness the delivery of such a master class.

The last activity of the week was then to adjourn to the Lord Roberts Centre for the prizegiving, where there was an impressive display of silverware. Due to the number of competitions only the winners received their trophies on the day, with other medallists receiving their awards by post alongside the results in due course.

The NSRA are currently uploading the results to their website and they may viewed via <https://www.nsr.co.uk/index.php/results/live-results/bisley-week-competition-results-2022>.

Huge thanks, once again, to Ian for his report. If you'd like to volunteer to diarise your experience, please get in touch!

