



Great Britain Tour Diary 2006

Tuesday 22nd August

By That Correspondent

First story of the morning involved management. Apparently Andy told Martin this morning that he had been woken up by the Captain, er, "bouncing around on the bed"...?

Arriving at the range, it was shaping up to be another sunny day; although the weather report said that there could be the chance of thunderstorms later in the afternoon. Still, the winds started off very light, and the early scores coming off the Letson match, the Canadian equivalent of Queen's I, bore testimony to this. By lunchtime, the winds had picked up a bit more and had started to swing through zero, resulting in one or two points being dropped. Despite the entertaining conditions, a number of GB shots managed to keep them all in the bull. Jon Underwood beat Danny to the punch by a single vee.

The Letson (300m/500x/600x)

1. Jon Underwood 105.15
2. Danny Coleman 105.14
3. Ray Gross (USA) 105.14
4. John Pugsley 105.13
8. David Armstrong 105.12
10. Jane Messer 105.12
12. Nigel Ball 105.11
13. Iain Robertson 105.11
17. James Watson 105.11

A few of our shooters were warned for closing the bolt before it was their turn to shoot, despite their rifles being safely pointed towards the butts. When this was queried, they were informed that they were breaking rule 42 and jumping the gun as regards the 45 second regulation, which was deemed to start when the bolt was closed. The interpretation was that by closing the bolt they could fire out of turn or somehow gain some unfair advantage. On later examination of the rulebook, however, no sign could be found of this rule, and a number of people pointed out that this gave shooters effectively unlimited time to wait for the wind to return to a more amenable value as, provided they did not close the bolt, they could not be penalised for taking too long. We await further ruling on this matter.

Mind you, some weren't sure whether it was a 45 second rule being applied. Matt was tapped on the shoulder by a range officer and shown a stopwatch displaying 36 seconds. "I just wanted you to know how long you were taking" said the range officer. Not quite sure why. Er, thanks.

Throughout the day, the wind started to freshen and shift. The earlier details of the Alexander of Tunis saw many good shooters end up with scores in the 46 region; however one or two were significantly worse as values from 7 left to 4 right were reported in a single detail. The following detail saw 5 to 9 to 2 to 7 left, all on the angle, with the learning process taking longer for some than for others. Ross, the jammy so-and-so who had already benefited from three string shoots after no-shows from his partners, had the next best thing in the Tunis in having Speedy Gonzalez Pugsley as his partner and, despite always having 2 minutes more on his sights than the generally agreed call, managed a superb 50.3 to give himself an excellent chance in the Macdonald Stewart Grand Aggregate overnight.

The later details were less tricky, aiding Michael Walton and David Luckman in surpassing Ross with 50.7 and 50.6 in the Tunis. David Calvert tried to make things harder for himself in the Letson by not taking any ammunition with him to 600

yards. His van-mate didn't want to risk management's wrath by driving a van back to fetch it, but fortunately he and DC had similar chamber sizes so an ammo loan was arranged.

Meanwhile Henry Jeens, winner of the Col. John Brick competition, received a substantial shock when the Captain idly noted that all prize money won by team members went into team funds. The term he used to describe this practice was, I believe, "outrageous".

The Alexander of Tunis (900M)

1. Michael Walton 50.7
2. David Luckman 50.6
3. Antony Betts (Canada) 50.6
5. Ross McQuillan 50.3
9. Kitty Jack 49.4
18. David Calvert 48.3
19. Mary Boston 48.3

To close out the day, David Luckman and James Lewis went head-to-head at 800 metres for the Norman Beckett. Both had good sighters, but Dave cut a vee and a 5 in a bold display of confidence; although he did later admit that he mistakenly thought that Jumbo had converted a vee second sighter. With the rapidly shifting winds of the afternoon having relaxed back down to something a little more manageable, both put in scores of 25, but Dave put his final two shots in the vee to win 25.4 to 25.1. The F Class tie-shoot next door was eventually settled by the toss of a coin after one of the competitors ran out of ammunition.



Clockwise from top left:

David Luckman on his way to winning the Norm Beckett

James Lewis and his Bull, to David's Vee

"I hear you won, old man!"

At the end of the day, David Luckman was leading the Grand Agg, a couple of Vees ahead of Ross. A number of other GB shots made the top 25.

The Klondike Aggregate and the Grand Aggregate (up to Tuesday; GBRT unless stated)

1. David Luckman 453.60
2. Ross McQuillan 453.56
3. Gary Rasmussen (USA) 452.49
4. Jane Messer 451.54
7. Jon Underwood 449.61
9. Michael Walton 449.55
10. David Armstrong 449.55
11. David Calvert 449.52
12. Henry Jeens 449.52
16. John Pugsley 448.54
17. Gaz Morris 448.50
22. Nigel Ball 447.45

Off to the NCRRA corn boil next door for dinner, some much deserved ethanolic refreshment, and a final word of wisdom from James Watson: "one sausage is never enough."

Many of the team were tired out after that but a few braved the pool, with some of them new members of the GBRT Swimming Club. Quite what Kitty meant when she paused mid-length and exclaimed "Flaps!" we may never know, but she was more graceful in the pool than the rest so it may have been a description of our technique.