



Great Britain Tour Diary 2006

Wednesday 23rd August

By This Correspondent

Wednesday dawned and with it the second stage of the Governor General's Prize, the Canadian version of the Queen's. Except it's not really a second stage, it's a second part of the first stage, because there's no cut-off after the Letson: the aggregate of Letson and President's scores determines the 50 lucky people who get to shoot in the Governor General's Final on Saturday.

David Armstrong's day didn't start too well: by going 4, 4, 4 for his sighters and first to count at 300m, he dropped his first short range point of the Canadian meeting. Another David had seen another landmark pass the previous day: little Lucky had dropped his first points in the Grand, and with them his first points on 'A' Range (500 and 600 yards) since 1998! Both were disappointed, but what these facts really mean is that they really are excellent shots. To be honest, this correspondent has been hugely impressed by the standard of all the team's shooting and has been finding it very hard to get anywhere near keeping up!

One small triumph in that endeavour, however, was a somewhat cheeky 50.1 at 800m in the first range of the Gibson competition (continued tomorrow), which was greeted with much mirth by all and sundry but with commiseration by the range officer – apparently one of the Life Governors awards a prize for a 50.0. David Dyson challenged this cheek with a 50.2 while a few others put in more conventional 50s, led by Henry Jeens on 50.9. With threatening clouds often visible, and with some periods of much stronger wind and angle changes interspersed with the more benign stuff, this was a day for getting on with it: make your mind up about the wind and then fire quickly and hope to get off the point before it changes too much.

In the President's, half a dozen team members managed 150s with Jane Messer heading the list on an excellent 150.25. The cut-off for the final looked like it might be somewhat higher this year than last – perhaps 251 out of 255, leaving quite a few team members on a knife-edge.



Storm clouds a-threatening

Possibly the most impressive performance in the President's, however, was Rick Shouler's in scoring 49 out of 50 at 600 yards. What made it impressive was this: just before his shoot, Rick discovered that the zip on his shooting jacket wouldn't do up. So some gaffer tape was procured and some friends went round and round him with the tape, tightening his jacket around him! The NCCRA Corn Roast has a lot to answer for.



Will Rick have to stay like this all week?

The team left the range sharply today, in order to get back to the hotel in time to change, devour some pre-ordered pizza and get back to the range in order to co-host a party, along with the Americans and Germans, at which the overseas teams return the Canadians' excellent hospitality.

James Watson prepares and the Captain looks on while one of our more genial hosts, Stan Frost, celebrates that at least HE can get into his shooting jacket



Over pizza the news came through: Jane Messer had won the President's by two clear V-bulls with 150.25, while the qualifying score for the Governor General's Final was 251.26, making this correspondent the 50th and last qualifier!

Sixteen Great Britain team members (plus one other Brit) qualified, with scores out of 255 as follows:

- 255 Jane Messer, Danny Coleman, Nigel Ball
- 254 Jon Underwood, David Calvert, Henry Jeens, John Pugsley
- 253 David Luckman, Toby Raincock, David Armstrong, Nick Brasier, James Watson
- 252 Ross McQuillan (+ Iain Robertson)
- 251 Rick Shouler, Andy Luckman, Matt Charlton

Meanwhile, David Luckman leads the Macdonald Stewart Grand Aggregate from Jane Messer, with an amazing nine Great Britain team members now in the top fourteen overall.

And, while the rest of the team hosted the reception for the Canadians, Michael Walton ferried Rick Shouler to the cobblers' to have his shooting jacket fixed. The success of the enterprise led Rick to award Mike a new Shouler designation: he was now "a legend and a half."

Wednesday's results (GBRT unless stated):

President's (300m, 500 & 600 yards)

- 1. Jane Messer 150.25
- 2. Jim Paton (Canada) 150.23
- 3. Emil Praslick III (USA) 150.22
- 5. David Luckman 150.22
- 6. David Calvert 150.22
- 7. Danny Coleman 150.19
- 8. Nigel Ball 150.18
- 14. Henry. Jeens 150.16

Grand Aggregate (up to Wednesday)

- 1. David Luckman 653.89
- 2. Jane Messer 651.83
- 3. Alain Marion (Canada) 651.72
- 4. Ross McQuillan 650.82
- 6. David Calvert 649.81
- 9. Henry Jeens 649.77
- 10. Jon Underwood 647.87
- 11. David Armstrong 647.78
- 12. Nigel Ball 647.70
- 14. John Pugsley 645.72
- 24. Gaz Morris 643.71
- 25. Nick Brasier 643.71