



ON TARGET

Newsletter of the Buffalo Rifle Association of Australia Issue 3 March 2013

APERTURE (the editors view)

Finally a successful Whiskey Shoot at Cooyal on February 23-24, marred only by a bit of rain on Saturday arvo. Not enough to dampen our spirits (or our powder) but enough to drive us under cover for one event. We are indeed fortunate to have the facility to shoot from the clubhouse verandah at Cooyal.

Will somebody get Kelly some ear plugs!



We also owe a huge debt of gratitude to Jim for the very successful spotting and scoring camera and monitor set-up. It wasn't without considerable frustration, angst and several trips to Mudgee that Jim finally got it working and ... work it did, very well indeed. This addition has now removed any doubt about scoring and spotting close to the target. With Pam at the controls and Kelly on the scope there can be no more controversy about just where fall of shot is. Many thanks Jim, Pam and Kelly.

.....smokin' Sf

THE POSSE

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SHOT TO BITZ

We had ten shooters and BRAA welcomed two new shooters for this event, Steve (aka Roy) and Eric (aka Eric) both of whom put in creditable performances for a first shoot with an untried rifle.

In spite of missing the January shoot we stuck with the program so on Saturday the 700 yd and 500 yd were shot before lunch. After lunch the rain stopped the 300 yd 'off-hand' event and you could feel the disappointment from the guys at not being able to heft these 'dainty' little rifles and shoot from the standing position. So the 300yd event was quickly replaced with a '610 yd under cover' shot through the rain haze.

The **700 yds** event saw mixed results with Jim (Wounded Knees) coming out on top with a score of 20 including one 'heart' shot. Bill (Hickory Will) was a close second with 19 including 2 'heart' shots. Mike (Kodiak) was third with 18 points.

The **500 yds** event saw much better results all round. Notable was Mike (Kodiak) with a score of 31 points including two 'heart' shots, Brad (Sitting Bear) was second with 29 points and a 'heart' shot snuck it at the last. Third was Kelvin (Six Guns) shooting a muzzleloader on 28 points and two 'heart' shots, a very creditable performance. The rest were very close behind indicated by the lowest score of 20.

As already advised the **610 yds** was shot from the verandah of the clubhouse. This was where the competition really got fierce. First was Gary (Chris Madsen) with a score of 34 points including two 'hearts' and a Possible. Well-done Gary. Second was Mike (Kodiak) with a close 31 points and two 'hearts'. Yours truly (Sugarfoot) managed 29 points and one (miserable) 'heart' shot. Shooting in the rain is not much fun but most managed scores in the 20's.

Sunday morning saw clear skies and very still conditions, at least for the early part of the **900 yds** match. This event usually sorts out the men from the boys, myself being one of the 'boys' on this occasion. Most of us would know that it's extremely frustrating when you shoot 4 out of 5 in the sighters and score only 1 out of 10 in the match! Nine shooters competed, having 'lost' Six Guns overnight to another muzzle loading match. Top score was Gary (Chris Madsen) with 15 points followed by Mike (Kodiak) on 11 points including one 'heart'. The rest were on 6's and 3's.

Overall scores for the match;	Score
Mike Fahey (Kodiak)	91
Gary Vandersluis (Chris Madsen)	84
Bill Sherman (Hickory Will)	75



Quigley Bucket Shoot (Side event)

Ten shooters had 3 shots each at the Quigley bucket. Off-hand at about 350 yds. Despite all the bravado and dust flying the bucket lives to fight another day.



ON THE LINE

There are no revisions to the calendar so keep them in the diary.

January - *CANCELLED*

February 22/23/24 - Cooyal (7-5-3-9)

March 30/31/01 - Canberra

April 26/27/28 - Cooyal (6-4-2-8)

May 24/25/26 - Nioka -Via Manila NSW

June 21/22/23 - Cooyal (7-5-3-9)

July 26/27/28 - Cooyal (6-4-2-8)

August 23/24/25 - Cooyal (7-5-3-9)

September 27/28/29 Nioka - plus AGM

October 25/26/27 - Cooyal (6-4-2-8)

November 22/23/24 - Cooyal (7-5-3-9)

Next one is the **March Canberra Shoot** henceforth to be known as **“The Federal Shoot.”** (Not to be taken literally, much as you might like to - please don't shoot the Federales’).

Festivities begin on Friday afternoon with camp set-up, coolade, nibbles, and dinner at the local.

The Canberra Range has excellent facilities including a well-appointed Clubhouse, a Bunkhouse for the non-camping orientated and great Ablution blocks.



This is a great opportunity to test your skills out to 1000 yards and your resistance to Canberra's icy conditions. Even though it's Easter we always get a great roll up especially by the southerners who can't often make the 'northern' shoots. It's a great opportunity to meet old friends and make new acquaintances, tell lies and generally have a good time.



The Federal Shoot - Match Rules are attached to the newsletter.

Oh - and bring some woolies just in case!

BISON TALES

The Buffalo Rifle in History and Today - Part 3

The second great event was the decision by General Nelson Miles, head of the United States Army in the West to pacify the warring Indian tribes by decimating their food source. To the plains Indians the American Bison commonly called the buffalo was a cultural icon. Its meat fed them, its sinews made bowstrings and sewing thread, and its hide clothed them and covered their Tep'ees. They took only what they needed and used nearly every part of the animal.

Gen. Miles encouraged the hunters on the Great Plains to destroy the buffalo in great numbers. Unfortunately for the Indians this also came at a time when buffalo hides were in great demand in the East where it had been discovered that Buffalo leather was both stronger and lighter than cowhide and could be used to power the steam driven belts powering the machinery of the Industrial revolution taking place at the time. The tongue of the Buffalo when pickled had also become a delicacy in the Mansions of St Louis and New York and a buffalo robe was considered essential to cover the ladies and gentlemen travelling in coaches in winter.

The two great herds of buffalo numbered in the millions. A Buffalo hide could be worth up to \$50.00 and that was a small fortune to a hunter. Hunters came to the Plains in great numbers to hunt buffalo and by 1878 the animal was approaching extinction. The hunters were only interested in the hides and tongues; the rest of the animal was left to rot.

Understandably the Indians were outraged by this activity and there were many instances of Buffalo Hunters being killed by Indians after having been tortured in the most horrible ways. The term "bite the Bullet" comes from the Hunters' habit of carrying a cartridge containing a glass vial of Cyanide that a hunter would rather bite on than be taken alive and tortured to death. to be continued

GUNSMITH

BP Cartridge Calibres - Part 3

.45-120 and .45-125 Sharps (Straight)

Introduced late in 1878 or early in 1879, the .45-120 Sharps was a very powerful bison cartridge that arrived too late to make much difference in the fate of the great herds. This huge rimmed, straight taper case was 3.25" long with a head diameter of .506" and a neck diameter of .490". COL was 4.16"!

Cases were made with two different wall thicknesses, which therefore had different maximum powder capacities. Hence the .45-120 and .45-125 designations. Externally the two were identical, and the same rifle could fire either cartridge.

Factory loads drove a 500 grain lead bullet at a MV of 1520 fps with ME of 2561 ft. lbs. A 550 grain bullet could be given a MV of 1500 fps and ME of 2749 ft. lbs. by 120 grains of black powder. One account stated that the recoil of the big cartridge was surprisingly mild. The reported 19 pound weight of Sharps rifles so chambered may have had something to do with this.

.45-75 Sharps (.45-70 Sharps)

In 1875 a civilian version of the .45-70 Government was produced by the Sharps Company as the .45-75 Sharps (Straight), and sometimes called the .45-70 Sharps. The Sharps Company liked the name on their rifles to match the name on the cartridge it used, a common marketing strategy at the time. These cartridges were actually dimensionally identical to the .45-70 Govt., and factory loads used a 400 grain bullet at a MV of 1330 fps and ME of 1580 ft. lbs.

..... more calibres to follow