

THE BLACK POWDER SHOOTING UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Formerly The Historical Firearms Shooting Union Founded in 1958



Affiliated to:

MUZZLE LOADERS' ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
MUZZLE LOADERS' ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN
WORLD LONG RANGE HISTORICAL RIFLE SHOOTING ASSOCIATION
SOUTH AFRICAN BISLEY UNION (SABU)

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NEWSFLASH 14 OF 2008

Dear BPSU Members,

In Newsflash 1 of 2008 we circulated the requirements for qualification for die 7th MLAIC Mid- and Long Range Championships in Camp Butner, North Carolina 2009.

From then onwards all interested BPSU members participated in several specially arranged events as well as several Bisley events to record scores for the final trails to select a group of 10 members shooting replica rifles and as many as possible shooting original rifles.

Initially we started off with a group of about 18 potential shooters, but as the year progressed the numbers marginally reduced.

On 17 June 2008 we've circulated Newsflash 10 of 2008 announcing the venue and final trials to determine the top 10 replica participants and the qualifying original rifle participants.

On Wednesday 4 September 2008 we all gathered at the Nottingham Road Rifle Club in KZN and we all stayed over in the clubhouse courtesy of the Club. This immediately created an atmosphere of belonging; but also silently created the correct atmosphere of serious participation. I must further place on record that we had a wonderful experience of healthy competitiveness, but even more so of real camaraderie – this immediately comforted me in such a way that I believe that we had the correct selection of shooters present of which any 10 could fit into a team travelling and spending time in each others faces for two weeks or longer (Camp Butner, USA). We also had John Visser and Roger Ingle from KZN supporting us on the range – John will make contact with the Nottingham Road guys to get KZN black powder long range shooting on the road again.

Most of us are used to shooting 3 mid- or long range distances per day. Hardly ever do we exceed that rhythm apart for one or two shoots some of us attended. The wonderful thing of these final trails was twofold:

- None of the participants ever shot at the Merrivale Military range (nobody had any muzzle loader sight settings);
- All participants had to show fitness because the program dictated five (5) distances per day over three days (15 mid- long range distance; really very testing on the body and equipment)

On conclusion of the final trails, adding the best two trial scores recorded by each individual during 2008, the final group was selected and I think all other BPSU members should congratulate the members on their achievements thus far. All scores will be posted on the web page www.bpsu.co.za.

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In the original class we only selected one shooter being Kobus de Villiers. Apart from going through the normal selection process he is also the current World Champion in the original class and therefore qualified already to defend his title. He however had to do the trails to position himself for the team events – well done Kobus; in advance we already bank on good scores from you in Camp Butner.

In the replica class all the participants used Pedersoli Gibbs rifles. Very good scores came to the fore and after the last day at Merrivale positions on the top 10 ranking changed dramatically – as mentioned earlier, although very hard on mind-, soul- and equipment we can rest assure that the best 10 this country has to present, was selected.

The replica top 10 selected were (in no specific order):

- Ronnie Blake;
- Tertius Smit;
- Gavin James;
- Vince de Souza (new cap);
- Japie Maritz;
- Casper Badenhorst;
- Corena de Beer;
- Johan de Beer;
- Eugene Kuisis; and
- Merwe van Rensburg

Although we have a good indication at this stage of who would be selected in the two different teams (Mid- and Long Range) we elect not to make any announcements on that as yet as Camp Butner is a year away and a lot can still happen. The Coach will also have to make his final inputs after the individual matches at Camp Butner before we will exactly know who will be the team members in the team events defending the two world titles.

From early January 2009 onwards all the hard work starts all over again for the selected members. The Manco together with involved Exco members selected Mr Willem du Plooy from SABU as the Coach of the team. He is one of the most capped Protea shooters in this country and apart from shooting Bisley himself he also acted as Bisley- and F-Class coach before. For the remaining months of this year he will familiarize himself with our rifles and shooting style and from as early as January 2009 the selected members will all fall in with a training program provided by the Coach. Details of that program will be circulated to all the selected team members.

Congratulations to all shooters selected. You all went through an extremely hard year showing total commitment to the task ahead of us. Thank you for that and I wish you well for the next 11 months in final preparation. (An Eagle does not catch flies!!!!)

Thanks to SABU and all its Provinces assisting where they can to provide opportunities to participate.

Good shooting

MERWE VAN RENSBURG
CHAIRMAN: BPSU of SA