

## - The Single Shot Black Powder Cartridge Rifle Club of Great Britain -

www.ssbpcrc.co.uk

Affiliated to the N.R.A. – No. 1285

# BLACK THUNDER

The Official Newsletter

No. 2 July 2002

## One down ... many more to come!

Well, here it is folks, Newsletter No. 2 and it has a name! It only seems like two months since the last one, but as promised, we'll update you with results and information on a regular basis.

The Club looks as if its well on track now and set for a prosperous future. Interest in what we are up to has spread far and wide. There can be no doubt that our web site has been a major player in spreading the word. If you haven't yet visited the site, its at: [www.ssbpcrc.co.uk](http://www.ssbpcrc.co.uk). There have even been hints of some friendly competition with our American brothers. We'll mull this one over for a while and see if there is any enthusiasm with members. Ideally, we ought to get a bit more experience (and practice) before taking on these guys ... some of them live and breath black powder cartridge rifles. Perhaps we'll be ready to host some sort of event in 2003 - 2004. Or even get the chance of an away shoot. Put me down for that!

## New at the game of BPCR?

If you are only just starting to get into the game of Black Powder Cartridge Rifle or feel that there is room to learn just a little bit more, then there are some really interesting and useful books available on the subject.

The American shooter Paul Matthews has written some excellent books on virtually every aspect of

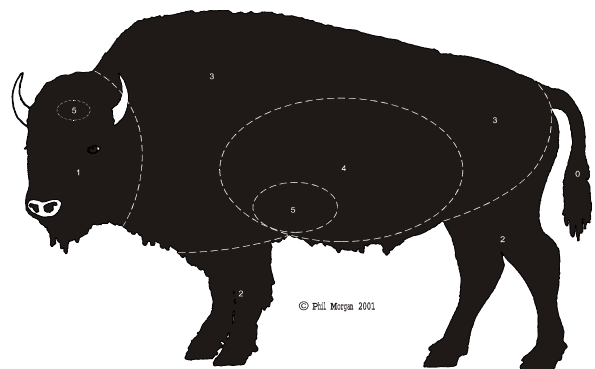
BPCR. Published by Wolfe, some of the most informative ones, which I guarantee you'll pick up and put down many times are:

- Loading the Black Powder Rifle Cartridge
- How-To's for the Black Powder Cartridge Rifle Shooter
- The Paper Jacket
- 40 years with the .45-70

If you or someone you know has access to our web site, there is a book called "Introduction to BPCR Loading" by Chuck Raithel which you can print out. It is a useful reference book and lists some pet loads.

## Match Report

### May Buffalo Shoot was almost a washout!



The first Buffalo Shoot looked as if it was going to be a wash-out. The weather forecast said "rain moving north in the morning". It didn't say what time it would be leaving Bisley! However, after Phil Morgan and Clive Taylor had shot the first couple of 200 yard details in heavy drizzle (you know that drizzle that goes right through you), the weather brightened up

until, by mid afternoon, when the 600 yard stage of the competition was well under way, the sun was shining and it was at least 50 degrees warmer! A strong cross wind had Clive adding 18' of windage, 12' up-front and 6' at the back end!

In the morning, the standard of shooting was so high that the centre of the 5 scoring zone became shot-out! It was impossible to place marker discs in the holes without them falling out. Luckily, Clive had anticipated this problem and a new section of target was pasted over the holes. Are we prepared or what!



Dale Murphy doing some serious damage to that buffalo at the 200 yards stage to score 85/100. Rifle is a Pedersoli Quigley in .45-110 2 " shooting a paper patched bullet over a full case of Swiss No. 4. Clive Taylor is spotting and scoring from a safe distance.

Clive had problems with case separation with the front half of the case jamming solid into his rifling. It happened once at 200 yards and 5 times at 600 yard! The last 3 being consecutive ... he was not happy and the air was bluer than a new pair of Levis! Not what you want happening at the best of times and certainly not in a timed event! The reasons for why this happened are still being discussed as I write. In fact, it is even being discussed with our shooting friends in the USA. There's a vast pool of knowledge and wisdom out there if you ever need it. Don't be afraid to ask.



Another shot of Dale, this time looking down-range at 200 yards. That buffalo measures 5 feet from nose to tail but it still looks small.



Paul 'Jacko' Jackson just about to squeeze off one of his winning shots at 200 yards. Sharps is .40-65 calibre.

## Results

The final results for the Buffalo #1 shoot on 18th May were as follows. They are listed in the order of shooting. Maximum possible score was 200.

Shooter	200	600	Total	Place
Morgan	76	65	141	2nd
Taylor	88	37	125	5th
Milchem	81	40	121	7th
Murphy	85	38	123	6th
Andrews	85	53	138	4th *
Bennion	91	47	138	3rd *
Jackson	91	59	150	1st

\* 3rd and 4th place was decided by count-back on Fives.

### Another fine rifle ...

It was good to see some new members and their rifles at the Buffalo shoot. We'll get a group photograph and close ups of some of these rifles at a later date. But for now, here's one of Simon 'Sid' Bennion with his very tasty Meacham in .45-90 (2.4"). If you fancy one of these beautiful rifles, there is a link to the Meacham web site from our own site. Start saving now!!

By the way, Sid's score for the 200 yard stage was 91/100. Nice one Sid.





Sid displays his Meacham rifle by the firing point at Short Siberia range, Bisley

# T - Shirts

We're ready to start supplying T-shirts with the Club logo on the front. They'll be about £5 with a little bit added for postage. Available in the usual sizes of M, L, XL etc. Let Clive Taylor know if you're interested.



"We can't guarantee it'll make you look as cool as Charlie"

# Bullets & Stuff

It's always interesting to see what ammo other people are shooting. At the last shoot a selection of different rounds was spotted.

From left to right they are:

.45-110-2 " 540 gn paper patched bullet, Swiss No.4  
 .45-90-2.4" Paul Jones Creedmoor bullet, Swiss No. 5  
 .45-70-2.1" NEI bullet, Swiss No.4  
 .45-70-2.1" 510 gn Jim Allison bullet (Australian)  
 70 gn of TPPH  
 .40-65 SAECO 410 gn bullet, Swiss No.4.

For your information, the .40-65 won the Buffalo competition.



A nice selection of rounds

## Forthcoming Bisley Shoots

Creedmoor	1000 yards	27th July
Buffalo	200 and 600	3rd August
Silhouette	300 and 500	28th September

The next shoot should be good fun. We are shooting on the 36" square Creedmoor target at 1000 yards. If you've never done this distance before, give it a go. You'll be surprised how even the humble .45-70 performs consistently well. There'll be plenty of help with sight settings if you need it.

Also, the following week is the second Buff shoot at which the magnificent trophy will be presented by it's sponsor, Geoff Hoden. The winner will get to gloat over it until next year. This is a good-fun shoot so try to make it if you can.

## Don't forget to book if you wanna shoot!

If you want to enter any of the shoots, do send your entries off in good time. It helps to plan the squadding and makes the shoot run smoothly. Thanks for your co-operation.

# How far will a Sharps shoot?

From an article by Mike Venturino and reproduced with his kind permission

Just how far will a Sharps rifle throw a bullet? Most people will not believe it when told, so let me give you some background first.

Back in November 1992, former Shiloh owner Wolfgang Droege, Shiloh's gunsmith Dennis Bardon, and I accompanied one of Shiloh's present owners, Kirk Bryan, to the government proving grounds at Yuma, Arizona. Shiloh had been approached by a group of forensic scientists who were going to have a seminar there. For this meeting, the scientists would have access to some newly declassified radar devices which would actually track a single bullet in flight.

What the scientists specifically wanted was a .50-90 rifle because one of them had written in their newsletter that Billy Dixon could not have made his famous 1,538 yard shot in 1874. That particular scientist had calculated that a Sharps could not push a .50 caliber bullet that far.

The first load tried consisted of a 675 grain .50-90 caliber bullet propelled by 90 grains of FFG. Using Yuma's own gun cradle which had been converted from a Russian T-72 tank gun carrier, the Shiloh Model 1874 was elevated to 35 degrees and a round touched off.

I was inside looking over the scientists' shoulders at the computer screens. When the data was read out they started muttering, "It couldn't be; it just couldn't be!" You see, they couldn't accept that a blackpowder powered bullet that left the muzzle at only 1,216 fps could have landed 3,600 yards away. Several fellows muttered, "Something must not be working right. Shoot another one." This time the bullet weighed only 650 grains (still over 90 grains of FFG) and left the muzzle at 1,301 fps. Again with the muzzle elevated to 35 degrees, the bullet landed 3,245 yards downrange. The scientist who wrote that Billy Dixon ballistically could not have made a 1,538 yard shot got very red in the face.

From here on out it was all fun. We elevated the muzzle to 45 degrees and fired another of the loads with 650 grain bullets. Muzzle velocity was 1,275 fps. The bullet impacted out at 3,190 yards, but the amazing part was that it went 4,000 feet high and was in the air a full 30 seconds. One scientist had a lap-top computer along, and

after a bit of tapping on it said, "Elevate your muzzle to about 4 ½ degrees and you'll get a Billy Dixon shot." We did and the bullet landed at 1,517 yards. We tried one light bullet loaded in the .50-90. It carried a 450 grain bullet over 100 grains of FFG. Again, elevation was 35 degrees, and point of impact that time was only 2,585 yards away. Certainly, the bullet weight does make a difference.

Next we turned to a .45-110 loaded with 559 grain bullets over 100 grains of FFG. Muzzle velocity was 1,322 fps and impact was 3,575 yards downrange. This was with 35 degrees muzzle elevation. Then we dropped the elevation to 5 degrees and fired another round. This time muzzle velocity was 1,361 fps and the bullet travelled 1,430 yards.

The last rifle we tested was a Shiloh chambered for .40-70 Sharps Straight. Bullet weight was 403 grains and powder charge 60 grains of FFG. The bullet left the muzzle at 1,333 fps and with the muzzle elevated to 5 degrees it hit the ground at 1,155 yards.

Keep in mind, you potential Sharps shooters, none of this is just hearsay. It was done by scientists under controlled conditions. So, when someone asks you how far a Sharps will shoot, you can safely say, "A long, long way."

## Sales & Wants

If there's something you want to get rid of or something you're after, let us all know about it here. It doesn't matter if it's a rifle or an old bullet mould, there's always someone out there who who's looking to buy or sell.



Compression dies, wad cutting dies, sizing dies and cleaning jags made to order.

Phone for details: 01908 615995

**BLACK THUNDER** is edited by Phil Morgan

Contact: phil@ssbpcrc.co.uk with any articles, pictures or ads. for the next issue.

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