

SATURDAY: WARM-UPS END; GRAND BEGINS

Saturday is the first TR day that is entirely given over to individual shooting, with the final two warmup shoots covering the shortest and longest ranges, and the Daily Telegraph – the first 15-shot shoot, the first shoot in the Grand Aggregate and the start of the period for which the keener shooters will have aimed to peak (but all too often the first occasion when some shooters slip up!).

Despite the small 300 yard bullseye, the early details of the Donegall usually count among the more straightforward shoots of the Meeting and, despite a breeze and the approaching rain clouds, so it proved for many. The prize list was replete with 50s – 175 of them (24% of entries)! - headed by five who will need to shoot off for the trophy after scoring perfect 50.10s: Ant Ringer (UVRC), Mark Buchanan from Australia, Messrs Rewston (English XX) and Mollan (RAF) and Cadet Shakhman of Gresham's School.

Because of the smaller capacity on Stickledown Range, the 1000 yard Lovell match is spread over the whole day, so the conditions can vary substantially. On Stickledown, the rain could be seen approaching from further away than on Century – at first threatening the second detail, starting to manifest itself in mist across the range, and then appearing in firm, er, drizzle to provide a lightly moist coating to rifles, mats and competitors. Later on in the day, there was a stiffer breeze, with wind in the 7 to 11 bracket only really visible on the tips and angle of the distant flags (by some – others found the changes very hard to believe) and all too often switching between the extremes while the firer was on aim. Some competitors leaked points and thanked their lucky stars that this was a pre-Grand shoot, while others coped admirably. The best of them, with 50.9, was Roseville 'roo Mark Buchanan, who was having a rather good day!

The main event, of course, was the Daily Telegraph at 500 yards – 2 sighters and 15 shots to count of serious business. Wind conditions were not too challenging for most of the afternoon, but a surprising number of good shots performed below their expectations in this first important competition. Not, however, the 50-odd scorers (out of 793 competitors) of maximum possible 75s. Guernsey's Peter Jory, Scotland's Bruce Logan, South Africa's Alex Coetzee, Australia's Jim Corbett and Englishmen Tom Rylands, Chris Haley, David Armstrong and Jeremy Hinde all scored excellent 75.13s, but all fell short of Englishwoman Lauren Crowson's (Old Sedberghian) perfect 75.15 – a fine score on which to be the initial leader of this year's Grand Aggregate.

With Buchanan having dropped two points in the Telegraph, another Old Sedberghian - Peter Bromley - took the Saturday Aggregate with 174.28, edging out David Luckman, Parag Patel and Simon Osmond. In the Tucker Aggregate of all the warm-up shoots, John Warburton dropped only one point out of 250 but was edged out by Reg Roberts on 249.38.

The shooting day finished with the first TR tie shoot of the Meeting between Jack Alexander and Reg Roberts for the Century. Reg scored 25.2 but was beaten by Jack's 25.4 – a fine way for Jack to finish a day that had begun inauspiciously with two missed sighters, a magpie, a mystery and an eventual re-shoot. Well done Jack!

Without wishing to draw people away from clubhouse dinners or Jenny's, your correspondent can recommend the pizzas served beside the Pavilion as a quick and tasty alternative to a barbecue or to an off-site meal – especially helpful if there's limited time before a social event. Between them and

the delicious Piggy Rolls place, they are open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, but the latter only for dinner if people are there and buying/eating!

A final word for all those visiting with overseas teams – don't forget to go to the British Commonwealth Club for the reception (starting imminently) that its members host in your honour. It is always a great pleasure to see you all at Bisley and we hope you have a thoroughly e