



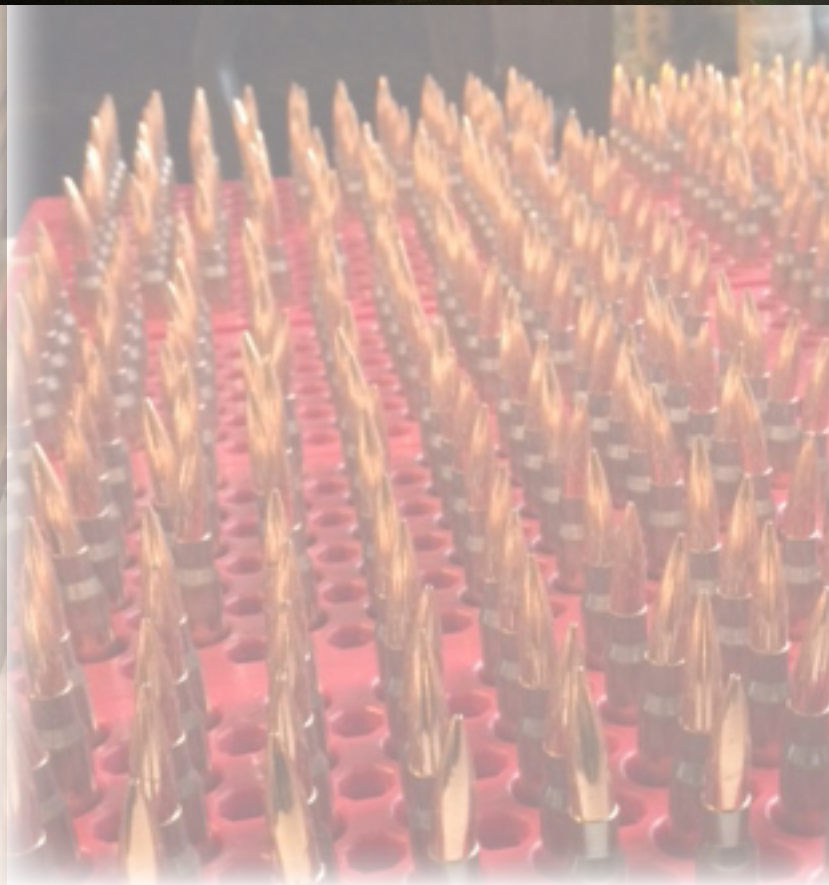
England Rifle Team

Canada 2019



ELLESMERE TARGET SPORTS

GUNSMITHING • COACHING • AMMUNITION • ACCESSORIES



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England Rifle Team

Canada 2019

Captain: Tom Rylands

Vice-Captain: Andrew Lothian

Adjutant: Stephen Penrose

Shooters: Jamie Allum
Nigel Ball
Andy Barnes
Harriet Bramwell
Saxon Brewer-Marchant
Trevor Bryan
Katherine Fleck
Jemima Hince
Ellie Hoolahan
Jack Keates
Chris Mitchell
David Nuthall
James Postle
David Rose
Tom Smith
Lucinda Taylor
Jeremy Tuck
Jon Underwood
Paul Wheeler
Archie Whicher

Reserve: Ben Craig





WELLINGTON
COLLEGE

Good Luck!

TO WELLINGTON REPRESENTATIVES
JEMIMA HINCE, JAMIE ALLUM & NIGEL BALL,
AND THE REST OF THE ENGLAND TEAM IN
CANADA THIS SUMMER.

www.wellingtoncollege.org.uk

Captain's Foreword

It is a great honour and huge privilege to be asked to captain one's country and I am extremely grateful to the English Twenty Council for the opportunity they have given me and indeed the faith they have put in me! My first trip to Canada in 1988 was my first GB Cap and it is a real pleasure to be returning for what will be my third year in a row after GB in 2017 and as Commandant of the Athelings last year. I have always been impressed by the warm welcome extended to me on my visits and I am sure this year will be no exception.

We are particularly pleased to include a visit to Quebec this year to celebrate the PQRA's 150th Anniversary. The last time a representative team visited Quebec was in 1973 so we are long overdue! I am most grateful to Gale Stewart, Nicole Rossignol and Alain Marion for their help in making this possible and the team is very much looking forward to competing in their Provincial Prize meeting.

Tours such as this do not just happen, they require an effective management team and a great deal of hard work. I am indebted to my very able officers, Andrew Lothian (Vice-Captain) and Stephan Penrose (Adjutant) who have taken on the lion's share in the planning and preparation work. The team's success also depends upon the enthusiasm of the full squad and of course the support of friends and family left behind.

I am delighted to be bringing a team which blends youth with experience; our recently formed Lions' program has produced some outstanding talent and I am sure we will reap the benefit of that. We have a significant challenge ahead of us, but one that I know our team will embrace and enjoy, doing so in the finest spirit of international competition.

I also want to thank our sponsors who have contributed significantly to making the tour possible, the National Rifle Association for their continued support and most importantly to our families who always make the biggest sacrifice to enable us to pursue our chosen sport.

Strong competition awaits, but so too does new and renewed friendships and I am certain the tour will provide lasting and enjoyable memories both on and off the range!

Tom Rylands

Captain





***England Rifle Team
Canada 2019***

Itinerary

August 8 th	Depart from Heathrow for Montreal
August 9 th	Drive to Quebec and afternoon practice at Quebec ranges
August 10 th - 11 th	Quebec RA - 150 th Open meeting
August 12 th - 13 th	Rest days in/around Quebec
August 14 th	Travel to Ottawa and preparation for shooting
August 15 th	Shoot in Long Range competitions pre-Canadian Fullbore Championships
August 16 th	AM - Free time in Ottawa. PM – shoot Navy & Army Competition
August 17 th - 24 th	Canadian Fullbore Championships
August 23 rd	Canada Match (Short range)
August 24 th	Morning – Commonwealth Match (Long range) Afternoon – Governor General's Final
August 25 th	Pack up and drive to Montreal Fly from Montreal to Heathrow
August 26 th	Land at Heathrow and coach back to Bisley



It's In The Blood!

A personal reflection - by Tom Rylands

I am often asked how I got into shooting and it prompted me into a little research!

There are many routes into shooting – through school, cadets, university, local clubs – however it seems that, for full-bore shooting at least, family links are equally important and a significant factor in getting started.

Looking back through NRA history, we find the very first Queen's Prize winner, Edward Ross, a Cambridge undergraduate, was indeed a member of a distinguished shooting family which at one point provided half the Scottish Elcho team.

Another notable name comes to mind – 3 generations of Fulton's winning the Sovereign's Prize.

In the modern era, many familiar names appear as father/son, father/daughter or mother/daughter combinations – Du Toit, Hossack, Kent, Le Cheminant, Lothian, Luckman, Mallett, Messer, Moeller, Oliver-Bellassis, Payne, Penrose, Pugsley, Richards and many many more.

There is a theme of success too! Fulton, Hossack, Jeens, Luckman, Pugsley, Richards, Ross - all have Sovereign's prize winners among the family: Fulton, Luckman, Messer, Pugsley – grand aggregate winners and there are international representations too numerous to mention.

We are the lucky ones, where support and encouragement has been close to hand, provision of equipment, transport to shoots and so on.

So – how did you get into shooting? Do you know of any family links? How far back can you trace your shooting ancestry or are you the first? I was amazed to find out how many shooting links I have been able to find, some which I have only discovered in the last 2 years even though I have been shooting for over 40!



I started full bore shooting relatively late, at university, and it wasn't until my first Bisley that I discovered I wasn't the first in my family by any means!

I knew my Father had shot in his school VIII along with a cousin back in the 1930's and had competed in the Ashburton. What I didn't know was that my maternal grandfather and some of his siblings had also shot, one of them as far back as 1896!

My mother just happened to say, 'Oh yes, your grandfather shot at Bisley and won a medal' -further investigation revealed he was a member of the Winchester school VIII in 1904 and was last man down at the final range – not knowing that he had to get a bull with his last shot for Winchester to beat Clifton - that medal? A winning Ashburton medal!

I later learnt that another branch of my mother's family had been associated with Bisley for many years and that there was an Olympic silver medal in the family from 1908 (now in the NRA Museum) – the last time full-bore featured in the Olympics. Arthur Bates, my cousin, was Adjutant for that GB Team.

Some years ago, we organised a family reunion at Bisley for all branches of the family connected with shooting – it was my father's first visit to Bisley for 50 years (he said it hadn't changed a bit!!) and with 3 family members in current school VIII's and 4 shooting in the PS Veterans, we numbered 10 across 3 generations!

One of my proudest shooting moments to date was the Australia Match in 2010; I was brought in as the reserve to replace David Calvert - he had won the Queen's for the first time the day before and had been given a choice – have an early night and shoot or.....!



100 years earlier in 1910, Arthur Bates was Adjutant for GB for the same match (then the Empire Match) – the photographs of the two teams sit side by side in the North London Clubhouse.

The relevance to this year's Canada tour: extremely proud to be Captain of the England Team, 88 years after the 1931 GB tour whose Captain, Commander Sir Lionel Fletcher was, yes, you've guessed it - another relation! And I am especially pleased to have in my shooting collection a Bronze Buffalo (currently on display in the NRA Museum), presented to him on the occasion of the first Canada Match!



England Team 2019

Tom Rylands - Captain



Tom reluctantly has to accept he will be a 'Senior' member (old fogey!) of any team he tours with, however on this occasion he is delighted not to be the oldest even though it appears he started shooting before several members of the team were born!

Tom's first Bisley was in 1978 and he hasn't missed one since – his first visit to Canada was in 1988 on his first GB Tour and he has represented GB in 5 Palma Teams and 6 Australia Matches as well as returning to

Canada in 1998, 2017 and 2018, the latter as Commandant of the Athelings. He has toured the USA and South Africa with England teams and is looking forward to leading England in Canada.

After an initial career in the agricultural industry, Tom is now a gunsmith and shooting coach and has been instrumental in encouraging 2 schools to compete in the Bisley Schools meeting after many years' absence – he was particularly proud to see one of those, Ellesmere College, win the Ashburton for the first time in 2015.

Andrew Lothian – Vice-Captain

The Vice-Captain first shot at Bisley in 1971 with a No. 4 .303" Lee Enfield with which he sometimes did quite well. It is said that he should have quit whilst he was still ahead, but persevered, an occasional flash in the pan encouraging continuation in a sport that provided many close friends, many highs and lows and much humour.

He first met the Captain in 1984 when they were both on the NRA team to the Channel Islands, Tom was wearing a silly bow tie.



Andrew regards his primary role on this tour is to enjoy the company of our Canadian hosts and of his delightful team mates, but above all, to try to ensure his Captain doesn't spend his whole-time fettling rifles!



Stephan Penrose – Adjutant

Stephen is thrilled to be going back to Canada again and having the chance to shoot at and visit Quebec. This will be his 6th shooting trip to Canada, the first having been as an Atheling in 1976. He has visited the country on a number of other occasions to participate in his other great hobby of skiing. Stephen started shooting whilst at Rugby School and continued it through Cambridge University. After extending his time there, enabling him to keep shooting intensively for seven years, he qualified as a veterinary surgeon. He has been fortunate enough to shoot all over the world with the GB and England teams. His first tour was with the immensely enjoyable GB team to Africa in 1993 for which Tom Rylands

was the Adjutant – so he is delighted to be able repay Tom and do a lot of the organising this year for him.



Jamie Allum

Jamie Allum started shooting when he was 10 on air rifle, before moving onto .22 when he joined Wellington College in 2007. In 2008/9 academic year he began shooting full bore and since then has shot in a winning Ashburton team (2012), shot for University of London Rifle Club, North London Rifle Club and more recently was invited to join the English Lions squad, after having applied in 2018 after two good years of Imperial shooting. A teacher by trade, he always enjoys learning new things and then being able to try and pass this knowledge on to the next generation. As a side role, Jamie assists Wellington College with Coaching for full bore. Jamie has learnt a lot in the past year, especially from his time as a Lion, and is excited to be going to Canada to represent England this year. Fun fact: Jamie loves thunderstorms and will go and film them if they're local to him.



Nigel Ball

Nigel is no stranger to Canada having been on a variety of GB teams previously. This will be his first England tour to the country and also his first visit to the Quebec meeting, an event he is very much looking forward too.

Usually seen at Bisley with a host of his school pupils avidly following him and breaking rifles he thought that touring was one place to escape however it was not to be. Two former pupils have followed his lead and claimed places on the team but he insists they are former pupils and not his responsibility, we will see.

Nigel has gained a few Grand Agg, Queens Final and Georges badges in his time but it is team shooting he relishes most. In his opinion there is nothing like a well-oiled team that flows and supports each other to perform to the best hence his quest to be on as many teams as possible.

In the scant spare time Nigel has away from school duties and pupils he likes to partake of a gallon or two of red wine and good food and even manages a holiday with his wife at times but not enough in her opinion, she is obviously not a shooter.



Andy Barnes

This will be Andy's second trip to Canada, the first being with the GB Rifle Team in 2013. Andy (aka 'Turbo') began shooting in 1981 at Bedford School. During the intervening years he has had a handful of successes, having won the Donaldson Memorial, Wimbledon, LMRA Open, and Stickledown (2x). He also has a couple of GB tours, an England tour (Guyana) and National and Lawrence match representations under his belt. He shoots for Hertfordshire (whenever they'll have him!) and is the long suffering

secretary of the Bedfordians Rifle Club.



Andy anticipates that upcoming financial burdens, in the shape of two 'favourite' daughters who have both taken up shooting the last few years, may restrict his future shooting opportunities. In fact, 'favourite' daughter Nia, who will also be in Canada at the same time touring with the Welsh team, is already a significant drain on resources. As such, he intends to make the most of this tour while looking forward to some serious family rivalry, and insists he will not be subbing her (\$\$\$s) when he's out there!

Andy works for a large pharmaceutical company, previously in a number of sales management roles and currently as IT Business Partner. When not shooting, he enjoys 5 A-Side football and fishing.

Harriet Bramwell

Harriet Bramwell started shooting at Sedbergh school when she became a cadet at the age of 13. She absolutely loved it from day one, and continued shooting at Shrewsbury School when she was in sixth form, so she's lucky enough to be on a team with both her school coaches, David Nuthall and Tom Rylands. Her first tour was with the UKCRT to Jersey in 2016, followed by competing for the GB U19 Rifle Team in South Africa when she was only 16. Having captained the Athelings in 2017, she's looking forward to going back to Canada, and can't believe that this time it's with the England team.



Harriet lives in the Lake District and has two brothers, George and Arthur, who are also often seen shooting at Bisley. She has just finished a year out before university which has involved travel, volunteering and forklift truck driving. She starts Bristol University in September to study medicine which she is looking forward to but currently is enjoying the break from exams!



Saxon Brewer-Marchant

Saxon started Target Rifle shooting at the age of 14, a sport made available to him after moving to Guernsey. Originally born in Norfolk, growing up on the island provided a wide variety of sporting opportunity, and target rifle took its place at the forefront. With the cadets, he travelled to Canada as part of the Athelings, and a year later was made Captain of the GB U19 rifle team. He is looking forward to returning to Canada this year to compete in the full bore championships.

After achieving a first class degree in Sustainable Product Design, Saxon has recently moved back to Guernsey to help renovate the family home and is currently working as a visual designer and a sustainable design consultant; enjoying problem solving and transferring his knowledge from product to packaging and layout design. When not designing, building or behind the bolt, Saxon can be found in the gym, on the bike or on the cliff paths that encompass the beautiful island on which he resides



Trevor Bryan

Trevor joined the army cadets dreaming of a shooting career but after eighteen months of crawling round on his stomach, doing drills and a bad case of nettle rash he had only one shooting opportunity with twenty rounds of .22 rim fire and so gave it up as a bad job.

Later in life he decided to revisit his childhood passion and restarted his Target Rifle shooting career, taking part in a couple of Imperial meetings in the early 1990s. Work and family commitments meant he did not shoot the Imperial until 2006 and then again in 2007 and after another short break he has not missed one since 2011. A member of Altcar Rifle Club and Huddersfield Rifle Club he has shot for Lancashire in most County competitions over the last few years and took part in his first England tour to Trinidad and Guyana two years ago (2017). Since then he has toured with the GB veterans to South Africa (2018) and is now back in the England Team, very much looking forward to this Canada Tour.



Katherine Fleck

Katherine Fleck started shooting at Sedbergh School, under the expert tuition of David Nuthall. She was captain of her school team for 2 years and travelled to Jersey with the UK Cadet Rifle Team in 2015. Katherine was selected as reserve for the British Cadet Rifle Team in 2016 and is therefore looking forward to touring Canada, having missed out in 2016.

Now studying Veterinary Medicine at Cambridge, she is the incoming captain of CURA. Katherine is also a keen sailor and was the Laser 3000 U18 national champion. When not shooting or studying, she can also be found on walks with identical twin Nicola and vizla Lily.

Katherine is very excited about her visit to Quebec and Connaught on her first senior tour.

Jemima Hince

Jemima began shooting in 2016 at Wellington College under the supervision of Nigel Ball and for the past year and a half has captained the team.

This will be Jemima's fourth tour, having been to Jersey with UKCRT, South Africa with GB U19, and most recently Canada with the Athelings. Whilst out in Canada, Jemima was lucky enough to win the National Cadet Fullbore Championships and be selected to represent GB U25 in the America Match.

When at Bisley, Jemima represents the North London Rifle Club, County of London and Wellington College.

Jemima has just completed her A Levels in Maths, Chemistry and Computer Science, and hopes to go to Exeter University in 2020 to study Mechanical Engineering.





Ellie Hoolahan

Ellie started shooting aged 13 at Sevenoaks School, going on to keep the sport up after leaving, firstly for the sixth form then at Southampton University.

Notable successes in Ellie's shooting career include winning the Edna Parker Trophy in Guernsey whilst touring with the NRA team in 2012, and then going on to tour with England to South Africa in 2013. On home turf, she has secured second place in the Police Rifle Aggregate during the Imperial meeting for the last two years, then winning the Police Sport UK Championships short range competitions in 2018.

Sadly a demanding career takes away the rest of her time, and being a shift worker, she can probably never tell you what day or time it is! In her spare hours, Ellie also teaches various fitness classes and regularly takes part in Spartan obstacle course races, acclimatised of course by wet and muddy ranges!

Jack Keates

Jack is a communications systems operator serving in the Royal signals in the British army. He is currently a LCpl and is posted to 3rd (UK) division signal regiment in Bulford, Wiltshire. Jack first started shooting at the age of 12 whilst in the CCF at Stamford school. Since leaving Stamford school he joined the army in March 2013. Whilst serving in the army Jack has had the opportunity to shoot all kinds of weapons (much to his enjoyment). Jack has represented His regiment, Corps and the Army in Service rifle competitions in Pirbright/ Bisley and has placed three times (46th in 2015, 31st in 2018 and 51st in 2019) within the coveted army 100 at DEFOSC (defence operational shooting competition) which is held annually in June. In June 2015 after a successful DEFOSC (Maj) Sandy Gill invited Jack to come along to an Army TR training weekend. Ever since that weekend he fell in love with the sport and has toured with the British army TR team to South Africa, the Channel Islands and Canada. Jack has also represented GBu25's and was selected to be a reserve for England in the National in last year's imperial.



Chris Mitchell



Chris began shooting at the Oratory School in 2003 before continuing on at Exeter University. During this time, he shot as part of the GB U19, U25 and NRA CI teams as well as Berkshire County. Chris won his first England cap during the 2014 National and followed that with his first GB cap as part of the 2017 tour to Canada. Chris is excited to return to Canada and is hoping to build on his performances from the previous trip.

Outside of shooting Chris works as a Project Engineer on station upgrades for London Underground. Having tried his hand at most other sports and convincing himself that shooting wasn't taking up enough of his time, Chris has begun competing in triathlons this year. This

culminates in a half Ironman less than a month after returning from Canada, a decision he feels he may live to regret.



David Nuthall

David started shooting with an air rifle in the garden and was thrilled when he was picked for the squad at school.

He still treasures the team successes at school more highly than any other shooting accolade and was so inspired by his shooting master that he decided to become one himself, running the shooting at Sedbergh for five years before taking charge at Epsom. Other shooting highlights include reaching a deserted Jubilee Range at dusk in Blair Atholl, Scotland; swimming in the sea in Jersey, water fights at Bisley and winning the Second Stage of the Queen's Prize in 2011.



James Postle



James started shooting at his prep school aged 11 and continued with small-bore at Brighton College, but it wasn't until he joined Reading University that he started visiting Bisley. In 1995 James was appointed Shooting Master at Epsom College and enjoyed 13 years coaching teams. He is delighted to be travelling to Canada not only with three of his former pupils but also our tour Vice-Captain, who he persuaded to coach the Cadet Pair one Ashburton; 18 years later AWCL is still helping Epsom teams!

After leaving Epsom, James continued his involvement with cadet shooting by becoming the Director of the British Cadet Rifle Team (The Athelings) and is a Trustee of CCRS. He was Adjutant of the Athelings in 2001, Commandant in 2010 and is looking forward to returning to Connaught to see if he can add to his two Governor General badges. James now works at Millfield School as the Registrar and lives in Cheltenham with his wife Eve.

Dave Rose

Dave is a self-employed Operations and Systems consultant who works mainly in London. He lives in Surrey and spends a lot of his time finding slots in the diary to enable him to go on tour.

Dave started shooting at Epsom College where he finished as the Captain in a record setting year and the second of two Ashburton wins, then continuing at Southampton University and with his club The Old Epsomians. Focussing on Fullbore more in recent years he has toured over 10 times and visited all the major shooting nations around the world, to date the high point being part of the victorious Palma team in 2015 in the USA.



A self-confessed shooting and touring addict Dave is yet again heading off on tour and is looking forward immensely to visiting Canada again and seeing old friends.



Tom Smith



Tom Smith started shooting in 2005 with Warwickshire ACF. He first journeyed to Connaught in 2008 on the CLIM course run by the Canadian Cadet Force. His successes there secured selection to the British Cadet Rifle Team in 2010 where he enjoyed his return visit winning the Short Range Aggregate. Bitten with the touring bug, Tom then travelled to South Africa with GB U19, followed by the NRA team to the Channel Islands in 2012 and then competed for GB U25 in the World Championships in 2015 at Camp Perry. Tom returned to South Africa in 2017 with GB U25.

Away from Bisley Tom runs his own business as a carpenter and joiner specialist. He is delighted to be travelling on his first senior tour and returning to Canada for the first time in nine years.

Lucinda Taylor

After 6 years of hockey, it was time for a new sport! Lucinda started shooting at Epsom College and was in the winning Ashburton VIII in 2011. Over the years, Lucinda has represented the Old Epsomians, Surrey, Lancashire and GBU25. Having been reserve twice for Great Britain to Canada, she is very excited to FINALLY go, especially in the company of 4 other OE's!

Lucinda is putting her politics degree to good use and is currently a L&D Consultant in the Head Office of Lidl. Contrary to the British public, it's actually pronounced Lee-dull not Lidl like fiddle – but the firm now accepts the way Brits say it.



If she has any spare time (which is rare), Lucinda ventures to the golf course as a member of Walton Heath and the SEJ Society. The jury is still out on which sport requires the most kit to carry and money to spend!



Jeremy Tuck

Jeremy started shooting at Whitgift School aged 12 and continued shooting whilst a submariner in the Royal Navy, representing both the RN and Combined Services. Highlights over the years have included Imperial Meeting wins in the Daily Telegraph and Times, and appearances for Surrey and England for the National and European Long Range. Jeremy's tours include NRA to the Channel Islands in 2011, GB to Canada in 2013, BCRC 'goodwill' trip to Camp Perry USA as part of the Palma training squad in 2014 and a 2016 GB tour to USA

and Canada.

As an 'apprentice retiree' he is learning lots of new skills around travelling and holidays alongside shooting – anything to avoid the ever-increasing amount of gardening and DIY that should demand his attention!



Jon Underwood

Jon's passion for target shooting started at the tender age of 11 at Aldro School on a 20-yard range in a converted greenhouse. Jon continued to enjoy the sport, learning about fullbore shooting and 'Bisley' when he moved to the Royal Grammar School at Guildford. With the sport becoming more than just a hobby, he continued his shooting career at London University, subsequently making regular appearances for Surrey County. Jon has achieved a number of notable successes over the years including winning the Grand Aggregate in 2005 and 2009, and the Queens Prize in 2006. He has also been a member of many successful teams representing England and Great Britain including representing England at the Commonwealth Games. Back home, Jon looks after his family business interests in Surrey (handy for Bisley), including a tool hire business and property rental business and in 'spare time' has returned to Guildford Grammar School to help with the coaching. Jon also has the responsibility of looking after Ted – 'The Underdog'!



Paul Wheeler



Paul Wheeler (aka Wheelybin) started shooting at RGS Guildford when he was a not so wee nipper in shorts (little has changed on this front apart from the waistband). He's done loads of tours with the Old Guildfordians to trendily wildlife friendly climes and also with GB a couple of times to Canada and USA (where he was instrumental in finding the best watering holes).

Paul's aims for this tour are to find a bear wrestler to wrestle, expand his Canadian gin knowledge, and learn to gargle and bathe in maple syrup.

Off the range Paul pretends to work really hard in the City, and spends his spare time expanding his Gin based experiences and entertaining his kids by getting Archie to pull faces

Archie Whicher

General Archibald Cakeeater started his shooting career in Canada during the Seven Years War (aka Athelings). Having emerged victorious, he proceeded to spend some time at Horseguards (aka London University) and a second tour of duty in South Africa during the Boer war (aka Old Guildfordians South Africa tour). He enjoyed his tour of South Africa and could frequently be heard scoffing at the Zulus and wrestling rhinos with his bare hands. Archie is looking forward to wrestling some bears in Canada. After his tours of duty, he retired to look after the home guard (aka Berkshire County) and young recruits (aka RGS Guildford – winners of this year's Schools' competition).



Outside shooting, Archie enjoys sitting in his armchair with a pipe and slippers whilst watching Love Island. Archie is a keen bingo player at his local village hall where he woos the ladies of the parish with his war wounds.





Reserve – Ben Craig

Ben started shooting while reading Mathematics at the University of Oxford, and was proud to be a part of the victorious Chancellors' team in his final year. Since graduating, he has regularly shot with the NLRC (of which he is Captain) and Manchester RC, and returned to coach Oxford for several years. He has represented Cheshire for over ten years, and served as county captain. Ben has previously toured to the Channel Islands with the NRA and OCRA, and to Canada as a member of the Great Britain team.

Away from the ranges, Ben works in London for Ayming, an innovation funding consultancy where he manages a team of tax advisors. He lives in north London, maintains an armchair interest in cricket and rugby, and enjoys a wide and eclectic selection of music. He is disappointed that this tour has not followed the England tradition of including FRTs in the team kit.

Acknowledgements

The England Rifle Team would like to thank the organisations, companies and individuals below for their support towards our preparations for the tour and to all our families, friends and colleagues who have supported us and enabled us to tour.

Alain Marion

Berger Bullets

Bisley V Club

Canada House

Chloe Evans

Commonside Firearms

Ellesmere Target Sports

Epsom College

Gale Stewart

Gary Alexander

Gilkes

H P S Target Rifles Ltd

Kath Corcoran

Lindsay Peden

Nick Tremlett

Nicole Rossignol

NRA Range Office Team

On Target Outdoor Sports

Rex Brewer

Rylands Family

Sierra Bullets

Shard Capital

Ted Molyneux

Ten Point Nine Tailoring

The Cumbria Community Foundation

The Dominion of Canada Rifle Association

The Kendal and District Lions Club

The Miles Clark Scholarship (Shrewsbury School)

The North London Rifle Club

The Province of Quebec Rifle Association

The Surrey Rifle Association

Travel Places

Tyler's Sportswear

Wellington Colleg





The members of the **NLRC** wish good luck and the best of success to the **England Team** going to **Canada** in **August 2019**

Particular best wishes go to our members Andy, Jamie, Jemima, and Nigel.

In the last hundred years, 30 members of the NLRC have won the Sovereign's Prize in the Imperial.

We'd love to help you be the next!

Visit our website for more information at <https://sites.google.com/site/northlondon/>



The Story of a Winning Team

I have extremely fond memories of my time in the shooting team at my school, RGS Guildford. We were a rowdy bunch who wanted to win and went about it in a fairly organised manner with boy teaching skills to boy (with a fair amount of beasting), happy socialising and pretty big success over the years, even with our antiquated Number 4 Lee Enfield rifles firing .303 ammunition.

However, one of the few trophies that eluded my years at school was also possibly the most prestigious. The Schools fullbore competition known as the Ashburton Shield, now shot at 300, 500 and 600 yards (in my day it was 200 and 500 yards only) as a team of eight with all coaching performed within the team. I always like to think that I made some contribution to its capture by the school two years after I left - most probably because I wasn't there to shoot!

A few years ago (15 to be precise) an email arrived in my inbox inviting me to discuss a situation at school. The existing shooting coach was leaving and with no-one with experience to take over, the continuation of shooting at the school was under threat.

RGS Guildford had, at that time, many years of successful target shooting behind it, as witnessed by many pictures of past teams and trophies hanging on the range walls. It was unthinkable to let this happen.



Fairly shortly thereafter, I found myself, together with another reasonably experienced old boy (Jon Underwood GM, GC, SC, WC, and most importantly a member of the winning Ashburton eight in 1986), in the headmaster's study - a few years previously a situation that would have been uncomfortable to say the very least.

The school had a capable "master in charge" to take over the organisation of the boys but they needed someone with expertise to help coach them. To cut a long story short, the meeting ended with myself and Jon being persuaded to help out on various days for a year or two, until such time that suitable school staff could be found and trained up. So began the two year period that continues today some 15 years later.

Jon and I had only previously helped coach our fellow peers and juniors whilst at school, so from a teaching perspective we were starting pretty much from scratch.

In the early days we coached using .22 rim-fire rifles, including the much-missed Lee Enfield Number 8, at 25 yards during the winter and spring terms, and 7.62 Cadet Target Rifle during the summer term. Boys ranged in ages from 13 to 18 and started off shooting using sandbag supports, progressing to jacket and sling once they could consistently group to 1/2 an inch with the .22" rifles.

I'm sure we made plenty of mistakes in the early years but eventually honed our coaching to concentrate on the basic principles, namely :

Position - Firm, Supportive and Consistent

Alignment - Naturally pointing at the target

Aiming - Breathing and pointing it in the middle

Shot release - Trigger squeeze and follow through

There are various challenges related to teaching these principles, not least the fact that boys tend to come in various heights and sizes. A 13 year old may be 3 1/2 feet tall and weigh the same as an anorexic ferret, with arms that reach almost to their knees. Others may be six foot tall and would give a gorilla a run for its money. They also have the capacity to change said dimensions very quickly (although seldom shrinking), so one position does not match all. Another issue is that boys can only listen for 10 seconds at a time (it took us a while to realise this).

Over the first five years we gradually got our act together as demonstrated by individual results. However we were still lacking a cohesive team performance and the Cadet Target Rifle results were still disappointing. Frustratingly it was difficult to get the entire team together due to the differing demands of academia, other sports, family, and even Saturday work.

What changed? Not just the efforts of the master in charge and the growing experience of the coaches but success. The saying 'Success breeds success' does indeed seem to be true. Once we started to win things then the team became more 'tight', they wanted to win more, and they tried harder. This success also attracted others who wanted to share that success where otherwise they may have chosen to do other things. Small-bore shooting became better and better and soon we were competing with the best, and winning a lot.

Full-bore still lagged behind, once again due to the demands on pupils. Our preparations were hampered by all 14 to 15 and 17 to 18 year olds only having three practices before going on 'exam study leave' for six weeks. This meant that over 50% of the team would have hardly any practice other than in matches... hardly ideal when using a rifle requiring the strength of a gibbon on steroids with an especially strong finger to let it off. Added to this there is annual lottery of 'practice ammo' which may or may not have been previously rejected by the machine gun corp.



Adding an Easter Camp was the next step, with a couple of days over the Easter holidays factored in to boost the skillset of the boys pre-season. Within a couple of years we started to have boys selected for the Maple Taste UKCRT and Athelings training sessions in March which further enhanced their skills. Before long they were Channel Islands or Canada bound.

This was a critical point in the development of the learning process for the whole team. Expertise began to pass from boy to boy, which seems to be so much more effective than old duffers like us trying to pass it on. The team started to bond, socialising and raising our blood pressure with their antics. All of a sudden I started to see a team like the one I had been in so many years ago - a happy (usually), cohesive (most of the time), organised (not always) supportive (sharing skills) team, in a social environment.

A final focus on coaching skills and team drills left us in a situation where we had the tools and the skills to take the shield. However the thing about the Ashburton is that it is 100% up to the boys - the coaches and masters simply dish out the ammo and then watch it all happen, with the occasional wise and supportive word between ranges.

So by 2017 we were really ready to be winners and showed our intent during the pre-schools meeting matches. But come the main event we were found lacking. 2018 a few more refinements, a few different faces, same good team, but same result. What were we doing wrong?

On reflection, I think the answer is not much other than dealing with the nerves. The only change in 2019 was a focus on removing any 'flustering' by drilling the team so that there was no need to impose order. The team did well in the pre-season matches but some underperformed in the initial schools meet - resulting in a tweak to the eight, throwing two younger guns into the fray.

Come the day, the first shooters started well at 300 yards, and it carried on in the same vein, and on and on - to such an extent that RGS had a score of 263 out of 280, 10 points ahead of the nearest team, Sedbergh. On fall back to 600 yards the coaches and shooters shot well but Sedbergh pulled back 4 points. A spot of lunch and finally forward again to 500 yards. Here Gresham's school proceeded to put in an amazing 261. For us, after six shooters things were not necessarily going to plan. We still had a chance.... a 34 put us back on track, but the last shoot was a nervy one from a new cap and it looked likely to be down to the last shot or two ... We banked 250 but the question was, had we done enough to keep hold of our lead?

The scores rolled in and finally, with a massive sigh of relief, we realised that after 33 years we had done it - a win by three points. Phew!

This was the boy's victory, shot by the boys, and wind coached by the boys. As a coach I felt like a proud father, but also a nervous wreck!



- Archie Whicher



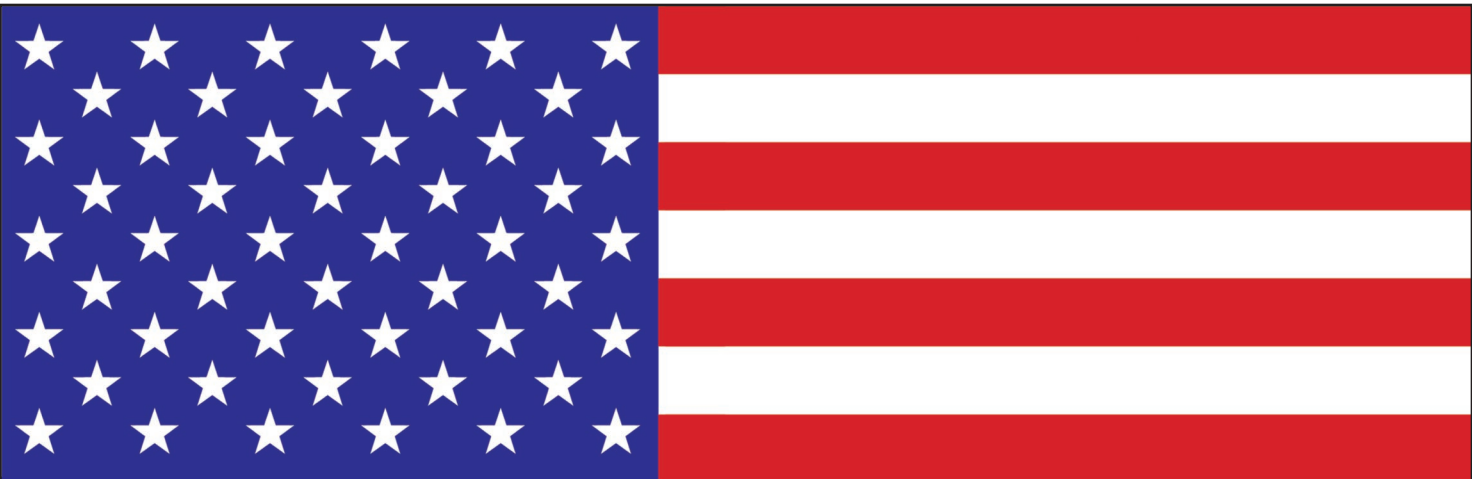


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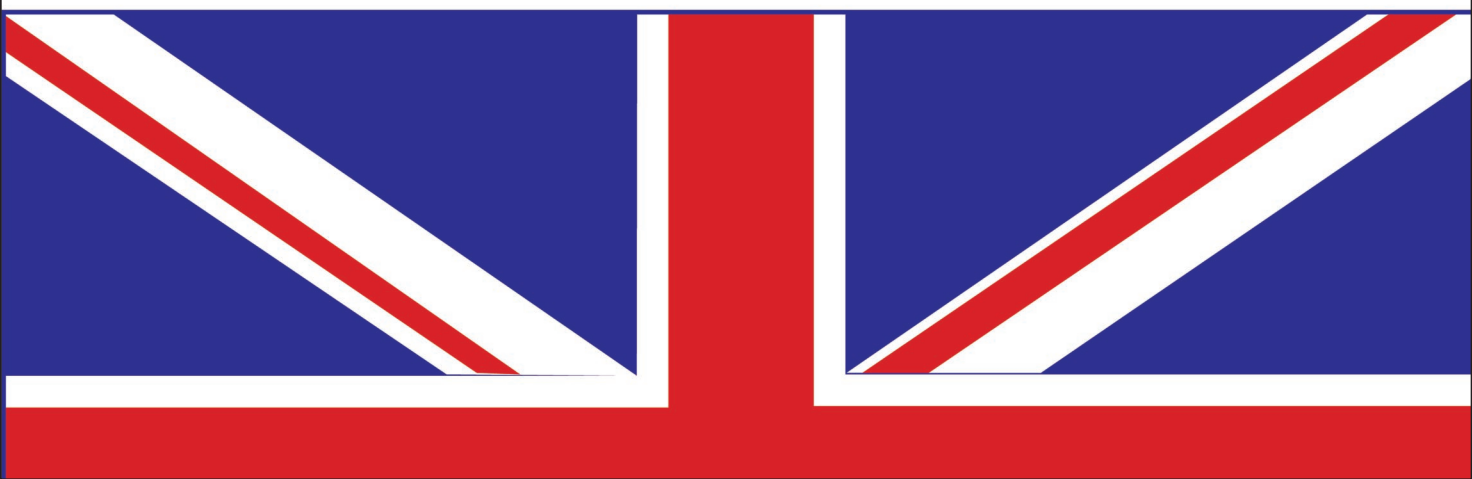
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