

Huddersfield Rifle Club – Match Report 50mtr Open Benchrest Competition 23/10/2017

Sunday 05.30 Hours. Alarm goes off. 05.50 Hours. Alarm goes off again – this time it means it

“I must be a masochist” Thought Goldieknobs loading the jalopy up for another expedition to parts unknown.

A quick message to The Bloop implied transport would be arriving promptly...it didn't, instead the Benchmobile arrived outside Bloop Towers where all was dark – no sign of life, Goldieknobs fumbled for the latch and went to investigate as Gav bundled his kit and caboodle into the car with the grace and aplomb of a ninja master....

Car tetris was becoming second nature by now.

“Why are we doing this” bemoaned The Bloop as Goldieknobs realised he wasn't being car jacked and dropped the tyre iron. “Have you seen the weather?”

“Oh aye” Piped Goldieknobs chirpily, “ar-e end of Storm Brian isn't it? Should make things interesting today.”

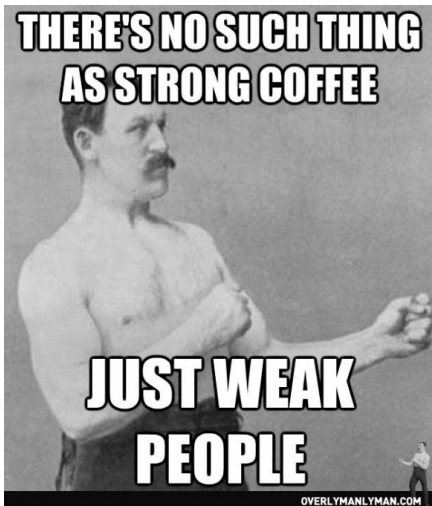
The Bloop remained tight lipped.

An hour into the journey and our ~~gallant ambassadors~~ INSANE FOOLS made their pit stop at a certain burger franchise somewhere between Chapeltown and Penistone (no laughing at the back)

At this point we thought (naively hoped) Storm Brian was long gone.



Applying lessons learnt from his last outing, Dan remarked “No coffee today, well just this one, no more, two double espressos please!”



Appetites sated, emboldened with a cheeky double kick of caffeine we wandered on into the South Yorkshire Badlands, no lycra clad cyclists hogging the lanes as they snaked toward their destination, just the final right and left before the ascent toward their objective.

HRC itself sits just outside Huddersfield on the side of what lowlanders and southern shandies might call a blummin gre't mountain, at the end of a valley – stunning views accompanied by unpredictable wind, sideways rain and plenty of banter, throw in the promise from our host, John, of a bowl of homemade stew steeled our boys into what was would be considered fool hardy, dedicated or just pure madness by any sane person.

I hear Bills mother lives over there.



Mmm-mmmm sideways rain is the best rain.



There's more to HRC than meets the eye, you'd be forgiven for mistaking the 100 mtr point and yellow stone car park is all that's on offer but the sharper eye will notice a 200 & 500mtr backstop with their respective firing points, club house and facilities dotted up and down the hillside. Each firing point benefits from covered firing positions (Prone except for benchresters) Cameras cover the forward target points and signs warning of hefty fines for anyone who puts a round through one are plainly visible.

Bags are hauled out of cars as shooters begin setting up, the usual myriad of flags and other wind measuring devices appear along the line and down the range. Even those secured with tent pegs and sand bags weren't guaranteed to be standing at the end of the day such was the wind.

The 25 roundel targets are pinned into position and the RO hunkers out of the wind allowing shooters to get rifles into position and centred on targets before giving the command “Insert bolts, load, your twenty minutes starts now”

Roughly 11 minutes later even the most experienced shooters have finished, the first line decants from benches expertly weaving between the second line as stools, rests,

back bags, clocks and rifles are swapped over and shelved. In between shivering and not being blown off the hillside conversation becomes philosophical. Conjecture on the number of shots dropped and how likely it'd be for anyone to hit a 250 point card around.

Boots Or Sturdy Trainers Only!



As the second cards were being shot it seemed Goldieknobs was becoming delusional – muttering about hot flasks of soup and maybe sitting in the car with the heating on much to the amusement of the local shooters who replied with “This ain’t cold – you want to try shooting the 200 point prone wi’ a foot o’ snow on’t ground.” No I don’t. Not in these silly shoes. All credit to the team at HRC who kept everything running smoothly in tough conditions and got both lines of shooters through the 3 card match, down the hill without incident and rewarded with John’s cracking Irish Stew.

Overall it was a tough day in the sport even by the accounts of those who are good at it – Gavin bagged 686/750 with 10X with Dan working hard for his 678/750 with 15X (and not last place!). By contrast the winning score was 726/750 26X which comes close to telling how trying conditions were on the day – experience and instinct indeed tested by the elements. Earlier in the year the upper half of the table comprised 750’s & 749’s

Well done to Gavin for pipping Dan.....again (harrumph)..... Here’s looking forward to Portishead in November.

Even the sun stopped by momentarily to laugh at Goldieknobs and the Bloop’s endeavours.



Just as the matches ended Storm Brian decided we’d had enough, talk about timing!



Cards dried out yet mate?



Great challenge on the day, sometimes you’ve just gotta get in there and grind it out, albeit The Bloops idea that Goldieknobs turn up clean shaven and in short trousers next time so he might be in with a shot of winning a juniors medal could be a thing.....

To be continued....