

Arizona State Field Target Championships & AAFTA Grand Prix
Hosted by Airgunners of Arizona
February 18 & 19, 2012 – Ben Avery Shooting Range, Phoenix, AZ

Winter in the desert. I cannot think of anyplace that beats this location for shooting air gun. We have heard from multiple sources that we live in air gun heaven, and I believe them. For the past several years, this particular weekend it has rained, but not this year. The air gun gods were smiling on us once again.

Day One started out with lots of sunshine and high, wispy stratus cloud cover that quickly moved out. I say quickly because it was one windy bugger. It was chilly enough that a sweatshirt felt good and warmed into the low 70's as the day progressed.

Day Two was a little different story. It was relatively calm at first, but with heavy cloud cover. The weather report called for a 10% chance of rain. Well, with a cloud ceiling of about 1000 feet, we did see virga (Rain that falls but evaporates before it hits the ground) about 100 feet or so below that. Let's see, 100 feet is 10% of 1000 feet, so there is your 10% chance of rain. By late morning the clouds either blew off or were burned off by bright sunshine and some wind that was reminiscent of the previous day. It started out cooler, somewhere in the low 50's and warmed to the mid to upper 60's as the day progressed.

I have no idea what the weather was like in the rest of the country, but I gave all you folks in "winter wonderland" an opportunity for a vacation and a break from shoveling snow. Some took advantage of it and enjoyed themselves.

We had 29 shooters representing 5 states converge on Ben Avery shooting range in north Phoenix to do battle in a 100 shot match over the course of two days. As such, I believe we qualified as the first AAFTA Grand Prix match of the 2012 season.

An enthusiastic (literary license usage in place) group of club members gathered on the previous 5 weekends to make the range ready for this past weekend's festivities and I will single them out at the end of the report, but to say they did a phenomenal job would be an understatement. We got there early on Friday morning and were able to place all the targets within about

an hour and a half due to pre-plotting the course. We had 24 lanes with 2 targets per lane with the exception of lanes 23 and 24. We had 3 targets on each of those lanes. The match set-up had half of the group shooting the odd numbered targets one day and the even numbered targets the next, and vice-versa. This format has worked well for us in the past and continues to do so. We figured the course to be about a Troyer 37 or 38. The wind would take care of launching that rating even higher.

Saturday morning arrived and we were ready. The first group of members started stretching strings and doing a final walk through. We cannot put the strings out beforehand or we will lose them to the packrats. They will chew off strings and drag anything shiny or colorful into their dens and we will never see them again. We put them out in the morning and take them in at night. Once you understand how the desert critters operate, it all becomes second nature and you don't even have to think about it.

We had about 19 or 20 folks who took the time to pre-register, but the remainder showed up at the door. We were glad to see them; we just did not know who was coming and who was not. A number of folks from various locales emailed to say they would be there, but ended up being no-shows. After sight in and warm up, we had a shooters safety meeting a few minutes later than normal due to someone locking their keys in the trunk of the car. The sound of the car alarm was a bit annoying, but anyone knowing Hector will understand. The rest of the morning was uneventful save for the wind.

I was squadded with Dave Alsup from Dallas. Turns out that Dave is also a firefighter, so with he, Rick M, Rick E, and myself, there were four current or former members of the brotherhood in attendance. Dave describes himself as 150 lbs of fury when it comes to firefighting, but today he was calm, collected, a perfect gentleman, and proceeded to kick my butt right out of the gate.

The wind, as I mentioned before, was a real woolly-bugger (Dave's words) and was blowing somewhere between 5 and 9 mph, when it wasn't gusting or buffeting. The mirage downrange was moving horizontally in one direction while the wind at the firing line was moving in the opposite direction. I weigh about 225 lbs and if it is blowing hard enough to move me while seated, then it is moving pretty good. I heard more than a few "expletives" used to describe it. Regardless, everyone seemed to be having a good time.

We finished the first days shooting with Bobby Corcoran in the lead in Open-PCP class with a 46, followed by Dave Alsup with 45 and Steve Montgomery in hot pursuit with a 44. James Brinkley had a comfortable lead in Open-Piston class with a 29 and Rick Eaton was leading HFT-PCP with a 31. This is incredible shooting considering the course and the wind conditions.

We came off the course and had several party platters provided by the local Subway Sandwich shop for lunch. This was supplemented by a bunch of goodies make up by Debbie Keiser. No one when away hungry. After a brief period of story telling and air gun chat, we commenced with our annual fund raiser raffle. Because we do not own club property, we have to lease various venues. In this case, we are charged a daily per shooter fee by Ben Avery Range for the use of their facilities, and when we shoot at the Mormon Lake venue, we lease the land from the USDA forestry service. The match fees only cover a portion of our operating expenses and required insurance coverage, and we generate the rest through the raffle.

This year Airguns of Arizona (Robert Buchanan) very generously donated pellets, paper targets and holders, an FX scope, a red dot scope, 2 soft sided gun cases, and 3 rifles; a Mendoza spring piston gun, a CO2 rifle (not sure of make), and a Hammerli Pnuema.

Top Gun Air Gun (Boris & Peter Plesinger) donated an assortment of JSB pellets.

Yegua Target Co. (Scotty York) donated one of their very well made field targets.

Club member Steve Timarac made and donated a range caddy.

We are very thankful and appreciative of these fine folks for their very generous donations and continued promotion of the sport of air gunning. Airgunners of Arizona cannot thank them enough.

Day Two started out one hour earlier (9:00 am instead of 10:00 am) in order to give our out of state travelers a head start on their journey home. As noted previously, the cloud cover was thick with almost no wind. It made

conditions a bit darker, but that would change by late morning, and we finished up the match in bright sunshine and slightly warmer temps.

Today I was squadded with Rick Eaton, another firefighter. Seems as if this is a good sport for firefighters. I am going to have to start recruiting from the ranks of the various local departments....LOL. Rick was shooting his Marauder and shooting VERY well in HFT class and continued what Dave did the day before; kick my butt. I was starting to feel like Rodney Dangerfield. Where we shot on the odd numbered lanes yesterday, we shot the even numbered lanes today. Same course but with different looks. The wind gradually picked up during the match, but not to the extent from the day before. There were still a lot of scores flip-flopping and a few folks with gun issues. Also Ric Grassmick was able to join us for today to shoot the second half of the match. It was good to see him after an extended hiatus.

After all the dust settled, Dave Alsup emerged on top with a smoking score of 91/100. Bobby was one point behind with a 90 to claim AZ state champion. He was then followed by Wayne Burns with an 82 and Dale Keiser with an 81 in Open-PCP class.

In Open-piston class, James Brinkley easily extended his lead to finish with a 61 followed by Ron Jobbes and Jim Russell.

In HFT-PCP class we had a tie at 63 between Rick Eaton and Bill Stevens. A shoot off was set up on the sight in range and these guys dueled until we got tired of watching them keep knocking the targets over. So the targets were moved farther out, a LOT farther out. These guys were putting on a clinic and kept knocking them over until (finally) Bill edged Rick by one shot. Great shooting by two really great guys.

In addition to the class scores, Dave Alsup won high out-of-state, Wayne Burns won high senior, Odin Frostad won high junior, and Debbie Keiser won high lady.

Here are the scores:

After the awards ceremony and picture taking, everyone packed their gear and started to reluctantly get ready to leave. The club membership took less than half an hour to collect all of the targets, strings and clamps and store

them away in the shed until next month. It was the perfect ending to a perfect weekend; everyone working in harmony for a common goal. Thanks also to Luis and James for providing pictures after my camera battery died.

There are a number of standouts that need to be recognized for going above and beyond the call to make this match a success:

Debbie & Dale Keiser – repaired and repainted all the targets and helped set up the match. Debbie also ran on site registration and made lunch goodies.

Bobby Corcorran – participated in several weekend work parties to groom and layout the course.

Steve Timarac – spent several days grooming the course and could not attend the match. Also donated one of the raffle prizes.

Rick Malanowski – participated in several weekend work parties to groom the course and sight in range.

Scott Jones – participated in grooming the course and sight in range.

Len Tlapa - participated in grooming and setting up the course.

Larry Piercy – participated in laying out the course.

Luis Ruiz – supplied all the concrete blocks used for target bases.

William Stevens – participated in grooming the course and sight-in range.

A big thank you goes to all the club members who helped take in the targets and other equipment after the match. Many hands make for easy work. If I have forgotten to acknowledge anyone who assisted, I sincerely apologize.

Our next match will be Saturday, March 17 at Ben Avery Range. I will send out a reminder the week prior.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Kauffman
Secretary, Airgunners of Arizona

Position	Name	State	Day 1	Day 2	Total/100	Class	Gun	Scope	Pellet
1 / High Visitor	David Alsup	TX	45	46	91	PCP	Alsup FT	March 8-80	CPH 10.5
State Champion	Bobby Corcorran	AZ	46	44	90	PCP	USFT	Bushnell 8-32	CPH 10.5
2 / High Sr	Wayne Burns	OR	40	42	82	PCP	USFT	Nikko 10-50	H&N 10.6
3	Dale Keiser	AZ	40	41	81	PCP	Daystate CR-X	Burriss 8-32	CPH 10.5
4	Steve Montgomery	AZ	44	33	77	PCP	Daystate Panther	Bushnell 6-24	JSB 10.3
4	Scott Jones	AZ	41	36	77	PCP	Daystate Huntsman	Nikko 10-50	JSB 10.3
4	Larry Nelson	AZ	37	40	77	PCP	Daystate Timberwolf	Bushnell 8-32	JSB 10.3
7	Larry Piercy	AZ	41	35	76	PCP	Daystate CR-X	Cust.Sup. 8-40	CP 14.3
8	Luis Ruiz	AZ	35	36	71	PCP	Daystate MK4	Hawke 8-32	CPH 10.5
9	Klayton Kidd	AZ	35	35	70	PCP	Daystate X-2	B&L 6-24	CPH 10.5
10 / High Lady	Debbie Keiser	AZ	32	34	66	PCP	Daystate SR97 SE	Burriss 8-32	CPH 10.5
11	Mark Kauffman	AZ	32	33	65	PCP	Daystate CR-X ST	Bushnell 6-24	JSB 8.44
12	Robin Montgomery	AZ	32	29	61	PCP	USFT	Nikko 10-50	JSB 10.3
13	Vince Pacheco	CA	28	32	60	PCP	USFT	Nikko 10-50	JSB 10.3
14	Len Tlapa	AZ	26	33	59	PCP	AA NJR	Burriss 8-32	CPH 10.5
15	Carl Shrader	AZ	28	28	56	PCP	Daystate MK4	Hawke 8-32	JSB 10.3
16	Rick Malanowski	AZ	21	26	46	PCP	Daystate Huntsman	Bushnell 8-32	CPH 10.5
17	Robert Seau	AZ	17	26	43	PCP	Steyr 110 FT	Nikko 10-50	H&N 10.19
17	Dan Feiss	AZ	20	23	43	PCP	Daystate MK4 Plat.	Bushnell 8-32	CPH 10.5
19	Hector Alfaro	CA	32	DNF	32	PCP	USFT	Premier 20-50	JSB 8.44
19	Albert Waterford	CA	18	14	32	PCP	Steyr GL110	Nikko 10-50	H&N 10.6
21	Ric Grassmick	AZ	-	20	20	PCP	BSA Ultra	Bushnell 6-24	CP 7.9
1	James Brinkley	CA	29	32	61	Piston	Whiscombe JW60	Nikko 10-50	JSB 10.3
2	Ron Jobbes	CA	22	28	50	Piston	AA TX200	Bushnell 8-32	JSB 8.44
3	Jim Russell	AZ	21	22	43	Piston	AA TX200	Bushnell 6-24	JSB 8.44
4	Greg Frostad	NM	17	24	41	Piston	AA TX200	Bushnell 8-32	JSB 8.44

1	William Stevens	AZ	29	34	63	HFT	Daystate X-2 FT	MTC Viper 12	JSB 8.44
2	Rick Eaton	AZ	31	32	63	HFT	Benji Marauder	Tasco 2.5- 10	CPH 10.5
3 / High Junior	Odin Frostad	NM	13	17	30	HFT	Benji Discovery	Bushnell 12	JSB 10.3