

DFTC November 16 Match Results

Today was the final match for the 2008 FT Season at Diablo Field Target in Concord, CA.. The year has been fun and competitive in both Springer and PCP class. In PCP class, Lonnie Smith and I were tied points-wise going into this match. Through the course of the season, we had 2 shoot offs, and we were both crossing our fingers that this final match would not end with another shoot off between the two of us, so the stage was set for our dance at the final match. In Springer Class, the competition is heavy for the shooters that are trying to push the envelope and those that are just casual shooters seeking fun. Kevin Yee, is the current California State Champion in Springer Class and ranked 3rd at the National Level, Doug Burke is currently ranked #3 in the state! Pat Jacobs -- who is a phenomenal shooter and the competition -- is hot in the points race. Given the many veteran and new springer shooters that continue to show up with strong shooting and a desire to beat their last scores and have a good time at it, springer class continues to be the class with excitement and lots of surprises.

I gotta tell ya, when Lonnie and I found out we were tied up points wise, we both were intent on getting our rigs sorted out as we both had some mysterious POI shifts occurring. We both got our guns shooting better than they were at the previous match but admittedly, we weren't 100% confident going into this match.

We intended to practice religiously, lol, to that end, Lonnie did much better and with the match coming up, I had to just Plan on my usual bad habit of practicing the day before, figuring either I got it or I don't when its game time! Unfortunately I woke up Saturday feeling a pending migraine forming, so I did all my normal stuff to make it go away so that I could practice. After hot showers, massage, back alignment, acupuncture and pulse magnetic therapy it would not go away completely, plus I just felt drained; then my wife asked, could you be getting sick? Then it rang clear as a bell, my daughters classmates mother asked me the other day to pick up her daughter because they had been sick for over a week and she just was feeling dead tired, so I did pick her up and now I'm fighting a bug!!!

So its Saturday, I'm dead, couldn't even get my gear sorted out until around 9pm! Sunday morning, get up, load the van up and get on the road. Nice clear weather, slightest of winds at hand when I arrive at the range. Feeling dead but man, it perks me up pulling into our range, seeing familiar cars/trucks parked and seeing everybody! I unloaded my gear and started helping set up the range.

Once set up, everybody was warming up, checking their numbers and getting ready!



I was reasonably confident on my POI shift being corrected based on the warm up session but admittedly, doubts were lingering in my head! My POI shifts occurred at 35 to 55 yards, and I knew Lonnie and his S400ERB were shooting just fine at those ranges

The shooters-meeting is called and guess what, Lonnie and I are paired up, like we didn't see this happening in advance, lol! We're set to start the day off on Lane 1, the start of the longest targets on our course, the Litmus test for me and my rig for sure, knowing full well that if I blow lanes 1 & 2 and Lonnie cleans them as expected, I'm virtually out of the race! Lonnie easily cleaned Lane 1s targets, the first target dropped easily for me with the big kill zone but the second target, set out around 40 yds, dropped the first time but stood proud on my second shot. Everything felt and looked perfect, must have been a freak flyer as I took a 3rd shot to double check and it dropped! Lane 2 with the farthest shots were cleared by both of us but, as it transpired, Lonnie emphasized luck on his Buzzard shot which is the farthest target at Diablo. Before I shot it, he tells me to look at where he hit in the kill zone, the marks were at the farthest edge of the paddle, just squeaking them in there, all I could think is, I know who's got luck on their side today!

From that point on it was trying to stay close on Lonnie and hope for an opportunity to catch him. With the offhand targets upon us, this is where I knew Lonnie was gonna open up his lead on me as he's consistently a better offhand shooter than me.

Shooting the offhand lane in front of us is veteran springer extraordinaire Pat Jacobs (HW97K Blue Laminate) and a brand new shooter, Paul Rogers, with his TX200MKIII. I was watching Paul easily taking out the off-handers:



Lonnie dropped the first target easily twice, then set up for the second target and missed the first shot. On the second shot, I notice that he changes up his hand position, giving up the usual forehead under the knee riser and grasping the fore stock in front of the trigger guard for the second shot, a missed shot -- me thinks fatigue, why else the change?

Now its my turn, I figure this is my chance to not lose more ground if I can just get my usual 2 points out of 4 possible. This is where my USFT shines over the Vanquish at FT, off-handers are much more stable/less fatiguing! I managed to get 3 out of 4 points, big breath of relief as this could-of really put me in a hole!

Now we're back on the ground and I'm feeling like I have a chance to keep with Lonnie, he's cleaning targets and I'm hanging then here comes a easy-peasy squirrel target on the ground about 17 yards with a giant 1 or so kill zone -- easy money right? My big BSA scope's target dot is swimming in the middle of a barn door that's taped up bright red, the JSBH SMACKS dead center and the target shakes but doesn't drop, I motion to protest the target as being defective on a clean hit, then Lonnie points out look at the cord! Apparently I was stepping on a tight reset cord so the target could NOT FALL!!! Ok, monster metal error, can't come unraveled now, roll with it and try to tighten up

Here's a pic of Frank B. and Daniel R. shooting his tuned B40 on the same lane WITHOUT his foot on the reset cord!:



Now we're at one of the clubs most loved and hated targets, a partridge/quail with a 3/8 kill zone that's pounded/stretched smaller after years of use, cheers and tears! Much to my surprise, this target showed no love for Lonnie, defiantly standing after 2 shots!

I'm seeing light at the end of the tunnel if I can pull these 2 shots off; after double checking that I clicked correctly for the range, I checked my JSBH before loading it and on both attempts it fell! Next target is a larger pheasant about 20 yards out, Lonnie clears it easily, my first shot drops it, second shot goes flying over the target!!! Must of been a bad pellet, unexplainable flyer!!! This cat and mouse game is wearing us out but motivating at the same time, I just kept thinking, keep a tight head and finish the match!!!

Now we're at the final lanes that are full of small kill zones and elevated targets. Facing us defiantly are another pair of favorite nemesis aka Super Squirrel with his 1/2 kill zone set about 19 yards out and 8 up in the air and a Black Bear with 1/2 kill zone about 18 yards out! Adding to this FT Mayhem is a tiny bird set at 10yds about 8 up which forced some shooters to have to scoot back a few feet so they could focus clearly!!!

While down here, I'm watching new shooter Paul R. and his TX200MKIII take out these small kz targets and am amazed first time shooting FT, no straps or kneepad and whacking small kzs. Then Pat Jacobs informs me that he's shooting with a 12 power scope and .22 caliber!!! Wow, as Daniel put it after the match, he must be an Airgun Shark, lol, a ringer that just shows up!

Speaking of Daniel, he hasn't shot since the September match, and he posted a score 3 points better than that score! He's a new shooter that truly tries to improve his scores every match.

Elsewhere on the course, Kevin Yee is working the course with his Walther LG300 Dominator paired up with Paul A. shooting an HW97khmmm wait a minute, Kevin's the current CA State springer champ; the State Championship is next Sunday, and he's shooting a PCP? Wonder what class he's shooting next Sunday?!?!?!?!:)



It was good seeing some of our shooters -- Frank Bobbio and Caesar G. from Sacramento -- being able to make the trip down to compete. Frank's been busy with other hobbies and life and Caesar has been out hunting!

Here's a pic of Caesar G(blue shirt). and Erik K. at the offhand lane:



At the end of the day, the scores were as follows:

Springer Class:

Pat J. 35
Daniel R. 30
Doug B. 29
Paul A. 29
Paul R. 28
Eric K. 23
Caesar G. 18

PCP Class:

Kevin Y. 45
Tony I. 43
John L. 42
Lonnie S. 39
Frank B. 35

It was a heck of a match for everyone involved. In PCP Class, Lonnie and I enjoyed the cat and mouse game that provided a ton of stress and fun. Kevin Y. showed how a great shooter can make adjustments on the fly with a gun that isn't sighted in with all the dope sorted out. Having veteran shooter Frank B. show up is an occurrence we hope to see more often next

season, he's a heck of a shot and a cool guy. The continuing trend of John L.s shooting is nothing less than amazing, he's been consistently improving his game and for the first time ever broke 40 with 42 points which is a 5 point gain over his last match score that was his highest for the year until this match! John is clearly refining his game and his equipment, I think he's gonna do fine heading down for the State Championship next weekend. Next season is gonna be competitive for sure!!!

In Springer Class, Pat J, Doug B., Daniel R., Paul A., Eric K. and Caesar continue to show strong and consistent scores. Doug will be heading down to the State Championship to defend his title and have fun no matter what! Welcoming new shooter Paul R. was excellent, and we look forward to seeing him at the next Fun Shoot and next season as well. We'll be keeping an eye on him! It was really good to see Caesar and Frank show up. Caesar was shooting the course without having all of his holdover points set up, just knowing that he was shooting flat between X and Y yards! I suspect his scores are going to continue upwards when he gets his gun dialed in at the Fun Shoot and during the off season!

After the match, we got to relax, hang out, bbq, eat, drink, and plink away. I may regret it, but I sold Lonnie a FT Rifle that well, lets just say he was printing awful nice groups at 45yards with it. I hope that rifle doesn't come back to haunt me next season!!!

This was a dynamic year for the new club that was rife with change on every level. New leadership, shooters, course layouts and a supportive attitude, combined with a fun yet competitive spirit was developing throughout the entire year. Looking forward to going down to the State Championship with some of these guys this weekend and the Fun Shoot in a few weeks!

Regards,

Tony

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