



2018 Nevada AAFTA Grand Prix match report (June 1-3)

Oh my, my...what looked for sure, in my estimation, to be a canceled match due to lack of registration, turned out to be NAG's (Nevada air gunners) largest AAFTA Grand Prix turnout to date! and what an adventure it was.

Horse Canyon, near Battle Mountain is a discreetly tucked away oasis that even most locals have never set foot in. There is a running creek fed by mountain springs and snow melt. There are baby trout swimming in the pools, chukars clucking from enormous rock formations, sage grouse making their way up the mountain side bush to bush, Tiger swallow tail butterflies fluttering by, and even Pronghorn antelope galloping through the valley.

The mountain range that surrounds the valley is quite vast. The small town of Battle Mountain is the base camp to the Nevada Outback. The location is remote, the terrain is rugged, and the amenities are few. Battle Mountain's mantra on their chamber of commerce sign literally says, "Battle Mountain, are you tough enough" However that's exactly why we do this match each year. How often do you have an opportunity to shoot field target in a setting like this?

Well, this year, 27 shooters seeking AAFTA glory tested their skills against the metal quarry installed on the canyon walls amongst the lush sage, next to a running creek, bordered by rockwork, and cotton willows. Some of us camped out in the canyon to enjoy the natural setting day and night, some took advantage of the reasonable cost of lodging in town only a short drive away. This year we invested in two heavy duty 10x15 shade canopies to cover the picnic table area, a small BBQ, and also arranged for the much coveted porta potty service delivered to our site.



The weather that week was a bit precarious for setting up the target course. Intermittent thunderstorms rolled through a few times Tuesday and Wednesday. At one point 25-30mph winds rudely attempted remove our shade canopy. Fortunately, we wisely tied the and staked the canopy down the day before. When the high winds showed however, we had to tie it off on the roof rack of my truck. The canopy took some wear and tear but it thankfully stayed put and we were able to work on. By that evening, we had all the lanes staked out and distributed the assembled targets to each lane, ready for install Thursday morning. With an early start, and some very much appreciated afternoon help from Jim and Scott from Sacramento Valley FT, we had a GP quality course set and ready to shoot by that evening.

Fridays activities included a 1:00pm pistol match. By then, the weather had cleared and temps were pretty nice. We had only light winds and a beautiful sky. A solid dozen PFT shooters, six in Limited and six in Hunter readied themselves. The 40 shot PFT contest with a course Troyer rating of 31.76T was pretty challenging, but necessary as you can see by the scores. Ronnie shot a very strong PFT match for the win in Limited. Also a very close contest for 2-4 in Limited and a shoot off for 1st place in Hunter between Jessica and Scott of which even Scott was rooting for Jessica but he was going to make her earn it. It took two rounds, and Scott prevailed.

Limited Pistol

Ronnie Easton	36/40
Rizdale Marquez	32
Scott Hull	31
Cameron Kerndt	30
Vince Pacheco	18
Ron Jobbes	15

Hunter Pistol

Scott Schneider	32/40 (1 st by shoot off)
Jessica Kerndt	32
Randy Ebersole	30
Wayne Burns	29
Terry Eannetta	21
John Knapp	14

For Saturday and Sundays rifle match we had some warmer temps in store for us. Forecast said mid 80's with 5-10 mph winds to contend with on Saturday and only intermittent light winds on Sunday. Near perfect conditions I say, to test the marksmanship skills at an AAFTA Grand Prix match. Our course is set with 27 lanes along fire road that snakes its way up the canyon crossing the creek multiple times. However, due to heavy rains and higher creek flowage, this years course was set up limited to only one "shallow boot sole deep" crossing. The 27 lanes are divided in to two courses, a Red course (ODD number lanes) or Yellow course (even number lanes). To improve organization and reduce confusion The scorecards, the Lane # signs, and Target signs are color matched either Red or Yellow per their course assignments. Course difficulty calculated out to 28.61T on the Yellow course which consisted of 13 lanes sporting 26 targets. The Red course difficulty calculated to 29.00T with 14 lanes consisting of 28 targets.....Total of 108 shots possible. Awards were given for 1st-3rd in each division. The Troyer difficulty was on the minimal side for an AAFTA GP but the conditions were tough. With the warm dry temps, challenging winds and updrafts, lots of distance changes between targets and wide variety of angles and direction to the winds, nobody dominated the course. At the same time, it was a close contest in every division. 1st place in WFTF PCP had to be decided by shoot off between Wayne and Rizalde.

Rifles scores:

Open-PCP

1. Jim Whittlesey	86/108
2. Ronnie Easton	83
3. Scott Hull	81
Vince Pacheco	78
Chris Merritt	77
Jessica Kerndt	75
Terry Eannetta	72
Andrea Schwab	63
Ron Jobbes	51
John Berquist	

Hunter-PCP

1. Scott Schneider	88/108
2. Chris Lovitt	85
3. John Knapp	84
Jim Cyran	77
Al Padilla	76
Scott Steenhok	71
Jim Mizer	63
Fred Biergiel	60
John Bagakis	58
Len Niles	29

WFTF-PCP

1.Rizalde Marquez	81/108
2.Wayne Burns	81
3.Randy Ebersole	62
Pat Callihan	55

WFTF-Piston

1. Lonnie Smith	67
2. Bob Kidd	61
3. Cameron Kerndt	58

After each match we met at the picnic area for a backcountry BBQ picnic lunch. The menu consisted of BBQ chicken, Sausage and hot links, burgers with fresh lettuce tomato and onions, Potato chips, fresh fruit, potato salad, and various beverages. Of course, with the warm weather we kept the cooler full of ice cold water at all times so everyone could stay hydrated

I will close the report with ... Congratulations to all the shooters for there accomplishments. Thank you for making the 2018 NV-GP such a success. Additional thanks to all that helped take down the course. I appreciate that very much. A special thank you to Chris Merritt for arranging the use of this wonderful location. I also want to thank Dave at Blue Moon portables for trucking those porta potties and handwashing station out to our site. Job well done sir!!

Lonnie Smith- MD NV-GP