

## **Southern Open Grand Prix - May 19-21, 2017**

The preparations for the match started months ago, targets cleaned/adjusted/painted, course design, catering and logistics all have to be taken care of. Then your worst nightmare looms large on the horizon, a very large chance of a rain out!!! NO!!! Not a rain out! After all the planning, hard work, worrying it's not fair for it to end that way.

For well over a week prior to the match the forecast called for rain in varying percentages on Sunday. We watched and prayed they got it wrong but as the match got closer the chances went up! After discussions with the AAFTA BoG it was decided to run both matches on Saturday. It was Plan B but it was the only option that made sense.

Friday morning: Friday was the day for sight in, catching up with friends from around the country and the pistol field target match. The warm sunny day was ideal. The sight in range was busy all day, lead was flying as well as catching up with shooting buddies and making new ones. Ron Brown, Paul Porch and Bob Dye coordinated to run the pistol match. Bob Dye designed the course, Ron Brown cleared and set up lanes, Paul Porch brought his beautiful targets from NC (almost too beautiful to shoot at). Eighteen shooters signed up for the pistol match, which out of forty total was a great success! The 40 shot course was challenging without being overly difficult, lighting and terrain added to the fun. The Hunter Pistol class top honors go to Mike Niksch 37/40, Mike Schultz 36/40, and Steve English 32/40. Limited Pistol class top honors go to Tyler Patner 35/40, Chris Corey 30/40, and a tie for third between Chris Berry and Jeff Paddock 28/40. A huge thank you to all that participated in the pistol match.

Friday night as we checked the weather forecast for Saturday we got the shocking news that now the bad weather was coming up faster, it might be here by noon on Saturday!! We watched it during the wee hours of the morning and looked at other options but decided to get the match started early and try to get it done before the rain set in.

Saturday morning: Shooters were on the practice range waiting for the 7am opening of the range, the sun was coming up over the trees with not a cloud in the sky as a gentle breeze blew keeping things cooled off for a bit. Pretty soon the firing line was full and the happy sounds of airguns popping mixed with friends discussing wind drift affecting pellets at 50 yards. This is the music of pre match mornings, good for our souls.

We held the shooters meeting at 8:30, consisting of the usual safety reminders, course layout notes, shooting order, etc... And a reminder that the bad weather was coming so we needed to keep moving along. We ran both courses of 13 lanes each for morning and afternoon matches which allowed us to run squads of two that really speeds things up. The upper Green course was set at a 33 Tdf (13 shots over 40yds, 7.63 SD) with several extreme downhill and uphill shots, long open wind affected shots and "interesting" kneeling and standing shots. The lower Red course was set at 32.6 Tdf (11 shots over 40yds, 8.55 SD), extreme uphill shots and open field shots into the shadows with more traditional kneeling and standing shots. Spreadsheets full of numbers don't do justice to the courses, with the foliage, terrain/topography, and scenery so many interesting lanes can be dreamed up, it never gets boring.

We are fortunate to have many top level shooters in all the classes attend the match, the scores reflect just how good they really are. We are also proud to have shooters who came great distances just to test their skills against the Heflin courses. They came from New York, Wisconsin, Ohio, Maryland, North

Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee.

We got the morning match started early and everything seemed to go along quit well, a cold line or two for string issues, as the heat started to go up during the match the wind picked up too. By 11:45 we were done shooting and sitting down to a tasty lunch. The lunch menu was Beef Brisket, Shrimp & Grits, coleslaw, baked beans, rolls, and for dessert Pecan pie cobbler!! That was some really good food, a big thank you! To the caterers.

The top guys in the morning match were: WFTF PCP: Danny Ayers 48/52 Green course, Hunter PCP: Phil Eakley 46/52 Green course, Open PCP: Mike Vrendenburg 49/52 Red course, Hunter Piston: Thomas Wade 18/52 Red course, WFTF Piston: Brad Troyer 48/52!! Red course. Amazing shooting by all. Open PCP was very tight with several guys within striking range. Phil Eakley had a notable lead in Hunter PCP really good shooting. Brad Troyer was barely ahead of Rod Bradley both with incredible scores.

The afternoon match got underway around 1pm after another brief shooters meeting. Now we were racing the storms, the clouds started to blow across the sky and I know I did some serious praying for it to hold off just a little bit longer. The clouds brought dark shadows and more wind! It sure made things more interesting as the time passed, I think it was obvious that the rain was near and competitors finished up and headed for shelter to pack up gear before it hit. Mrs Brown was using her ATV cart to shuttle tired weary shooters back to their cars from the courses, many people were glad for the ride! A big thank you to the wonderful Mrs. Brown and her ATV!!! I heard she got a \$10 tip from one grateful shooter.

After totaling score cards we had one shoot off for third place in Open PCP between Scott Allen and Mike Vredenburg. As we got ready for the shoot off the rain set in but glory be praised we were all in off the courses!! We made it!!! Mike prevailed over Scott in the shoot off to take third in Open PCP. Awards were handed out to the deserving winners, as follows:

Open PCP:

- 1- Will Piatt 95/104
- 2- Chris Berry 93/104
- 3- Mike Vredenburg 90/104

Hunter Piston:

- 1- Gabriel Sallusti 35/104

Hunter PCP:

- 1- Phil Eakley 91/104
- 2- Bob Dye 82/104
- 3- Mike Schultz 81/104

WFTF PCP:

- 1- Ken Hughes 95/104
- 2- Mike Niksch 94/104
- 3- Harold Rushton 92/104

WFTF Piston:

- 1- Brad Troyer 95/104 \* This is AMAZING!!! Shooting. JMHO

It was a full day of competitive shooting in the heat, not as rough as last year by any means, and I think it went really well. I know I was tired when it was over but what great fun it is to have your buddies come shoot with you and enjoy themselves, doesn't get any better folks.

Thank you's go out to the city of Heflin for having the fore site to build such a great Airgun park, to the members of the Mt Cheaha Airgun club and Airgunning Atlanta club who worked hard as usual, the caterer for great food, Mrs Brown for lending us her ATV cart, and my wife Deborah for being such a huge help with keeping me sane and keeping up with all the information/administrative side of things. Without this huge support system it would not be possible to do these matches so thanks guys!!

We also want to thank everyone who came out to shoot with us, it is for all of you that we do the work and it's our pleasure to do it so we can enjoy each other's company. We look forward to doing it again in the future.

Ken Hughes  
Match Director, Southern Open



Southern Open Grand Prix - 2017					
Name	Score (104)	Place	Rifle	Pellet	Scope
	<b>Hunter PCP</b>				
Phil Eakley	91	1 <sup>st</sup>	Raw TM 1000	JSB 13.4	Optivision Viper
Bob Dye	82	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Raw TM 1000	AA 10.3	Optivision Viper
Mike Schultz	81	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Thomas Carbine	JSB Monster 13.4	Hawke Sidewinder 3-12
Walt Roller	74		Protarget	AA 10.3	Burriss 6-24
Larry Cleveland	72		HM 1000	JSB 10.3	Hawke 4x16
Bill Liebke	70		TM1000	JSB 13.4	Sightron 10-50x60
Andy Burns	66		RAW TM1000	JSB 10.3	Sightron 10-50x60
Charles Browning	54		Maurader	AA 10.3	Hawke Sport Optics 8-32x56
Michael Loar	35		Benjamin Maurader GEI	JSB 10.34	Hawke Airmax SF 3x12x44 AMX
Alex Repogle	32		Benjamin Maurader	AA 10.3	aeon 10-40x56
Chip Hunnicutt	19		Benjamin Maurader	CPC 10.6	Leupold VX
	<b>Hunter Piston</b>				
Gabriel Sallusti	35	1 <sup>st</sup>	HW77k	AA 8.44	Nikko 4-16x52
Thomas Wade	30		HW97k	AA 8.4	Hawke Airmax SF30 6-24x50
	<b>Open PCP</b>				
Will Piatt	95	1 <sup>st</sup>	Steyr LG-110	AA 10.3	Sightron 10-50x60
Chris Berry	93	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Thomas FT	JSB 13.4	Sightron 10-50x60
Mike Vrendenburg	90	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Daystate Grand Prix	JSB 10.34	Nikko 10-50
Scott Allen	90	shoot off	Thomas FT	JSB 13.4	March x 8-80
Mike Koratich	84		Walther 300	JSB 10.3	Sightron 10-50x60
Roz Sumpter	83		Raw TM 1000	AA 10.3	Sightron 10-50x60
Paul Porch	81		Styer LG110 FT	JSB 10.34	Sightron 10-50x60
Chris Corey	80		Steyr LG110	JSB 13.4	March x 8-80
Cliff Smith	80		RAW TM1000	AA 8.4	Bushnell Elite 4200 8-32x40
Ray Barnett	79		Benjamin Marauder .177	AA Diabolo Field Heavy	Aeon 10-40x56
Dennis Todd	79		Steyr LG-110FT	JSB 13.4	Sightron III 10-30x50
Pat O'Brien	68		RAW TM1000	JSB 10.3	Nikko 10-50
Stylee Edwards	64		Ripley AR5s	CHP 10.5	Nightforce 36x56
	<b>WFTF PCP</b>				
Ken Hughes	95	1 <sup>st</sup>	Steyr LG-110	AA 8.4	Leopold Competition 35x
Michael Niksch	94	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Thomas FT	JSB Exact 8.44	Leopold Competition 35x
Harold Rushton	92	3 <sup>rd</sup>	AA FTP900	AA 8.4	Sightron 10-50x60
Keith Knoblauch	91		Steyr LG-110FT	JSB Exact 8.44	Leupold 35x45 competition
Danny Ayers	88		Steyr LG-110FT	H&N 8.5	Sightron 10-50x60
Tyler Patner	87		Steyr LG-110	AA 7.9	March 10-60x52
Rob Seiden	80		Steyr LG-110FT	AA 8.4	Vortex-Goldau
Doug Vinson	80		Ripley AR5s	AA 8.4	March x 8-80
Ron Brown	76		Steyr LG-110	AA 8.4	Sightron 10-50x60
David Slade	70		Styer LG110 FT	JSB 8.44	Nikko 10-50
	<b>WFTF Piston</b>				
Brad Troyer	95	1 <sup>st</sup>	Air Arms TX200 MK1	AA 8.44	Sightron 10-50x60
Rod Bradley	91		TW60FB	JSB 7.9	Sightron 10-50x60
Steve English	82		HW97k	JSB 8.44	Sightron 10-50x60
Jeff Paddock	71		HW97	CPL 7.9	Leupold 35x45 competition

Southern Open Grand Prix - 2017					
Name	Score (40)	Place	Pistol	Pellet	Scope
	<b>Hunter Pistol</b>				
Michael Niksch	37	1 <sup>st</sup>	Thomas	JSB 8.4	Hawke 3-12
Mike Schultz	36	2 <sup>nd</sup>			
Steve English	34	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Crossman 1720T	JSB 8.4	Hawke 4-12 x50
Bob Dye	32		CZ200S-Pardini	AA 10.34	UTG 3-12x 44mm
Ron Brown	31		Crosman 1720T	AA 8.4	UTG 3-12x50
Paul Porch	31		Crosman 1720T	AA 8.4	UTG 3-12x50
Mike Vrendenburg	28		FX Ranchero	JSB 8.4	Leapers 3x12
Phil Eakley	27		Crosman 1720T	JSB 8.4	Optisan Viper 3-12
Bill Liebke	27		Crossman 1720T	AA 8.4	MTC Viper 3-12
Gabriel Sallusti	24		Crossman 22xx Hybrid	Crosman P	Leapers 3x12
Ray Barnett	22		Crossman 1720T	JSB 8.4	Hawke 4-12 x50
Larry Cleveland	15		Crossman 1720T	JSB 8.4	Hawke 4-12 x50
Thomas Wade	8		Crossman 1720T	AA 8.4	Leapers 3x12
	<b>Limited Pistol</b>				
Tyler Patner	35	1 <sup>st</sup>	Padawkimata	JSB 8.4	Hawke 10x
Chris Corey	30	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Crossman 1720T	AA 10.34	Optisan Viper 3-12
Chris Berry	28	3 <sup>rd</sup> (tie)	Thomas	AA 8.4	Hawke 4-12 x50
Jeff Paddock	28	3 <sup>rd</sup> (tie)	Padawkimata	JSB 8.4	Hawke 10x