

## Temecula 2014 (May 17-18) – It Was Challenging

Around us Southern CA was burning, 95 degree temperatures, 8-10 mph winds gusting to 20, smokey, hazy, dust filled air and more best describes the opening day of the match on Saturday. You knew it was going to be a great competition. Twenty nine hearty souls braved the conditions and descended on LD's mountain top home to participate in the annual sadistic ritual commonly referred to as the Temecula Challenge. Those poor souls had no idea what they were in for.

On Friday, the sight in range was empty at 5pm, no one wanted to shoot in 20 mph winds. By about 6:30 pm the winds subsided enough to shoot and the sight in line started to fill. What targets still remained standing began filling with .177 caliber holes. It was hot, Thursday was near 100 and on Friday the temps reached the mid 90s. What all of us shooters didn't realize was that we should have been practicing in the 20mph winds and 95 degree temps at 5pm.

LD had been preparing for this year's match for several months. In 2013 three of the competitors actually had the gall to shoot scores over 90%. The old match directors were demoted to minions and LD began his task of restoring the Challenge's reputation. Six new lanes were cut, new shooting lines were selected and several other little tricks were added to the layout to trip up competitors. When the slave labor, I mean volunteers, arrived on Thursday to begin the final course set up it was near 100 degrees, windy and bone dry. Scott and Alan Hull, Bobby Corcoran, Steve Montgomery and myself tackled the task of setting and leveling the targets. The terrain, as you can see in the pictures, makes this a daunting task. Climbing up and down the rocks to set the targets in 100 degree temps was brutal. We managed to finish about 90% of the work on Thursday with no serious injuries (unlike last year). On Friday Wayne Burns joined in and we finished the course for Day 1.

As the shooters started trickling in on Friday and walking parts of the course you could sense the apprehension building. They kept looking at me with that what are you doing look, I would just point to LD. The die was cast. The course had few close, smaller kill zone shots (better in the wind) and more long, larger KZ shots (worse in the wind). The raw Troyer rating would be deceptive. The course follows a 360 degree pattern through boulder strewn draws, presenting steep up and down angled shoots. Very few of the lanes had common wind patterns. It would be a crap shoot.

Saturday morning started somewhat calmly, smoke was in the air from the fires burning all around us, the winds were light and the temperatures warm. We all hoped that the winds would be forgiving, we were not so lucky. By the time the shooters meeting started the wind speed and temperatures were on the rise. Both would continue to climb throughout the day. Food and beverages were provided to the competitors throughout the day. You were given the option of stopping for lunch, the wise shooters shot through and had lunch after they were finished. In addition to all the other hazards, there is a long steep hill climb that all shooters

had to make at least once on Saturday and depending on your starting lane perhaps twice. All the senior shooters really appreciated the added exercise 😊

Saturday was a difficult day, the wind blew hard, the temperatures were high and the humidity was non-existent. You could not sweat, the moisture evaporated almost immediately, you had to drink liquids almost continuously to stay hydrated. As the smoke cleared on Saturday and the shooters trickled in it was clear it was a massacre. Only two shooters managed to break 80% and then by the slimmest of margins. What was scary was they left their competition in the dust. As LD would say "them Morro Bay boys can shoot". Alan Hull shooting Hunter Class with a nicely modified Marauder .177 shot a 46/56 to lead the field. In what was probably an even more remarkable performance his dad, Scott, shot a 45/56 in the Piston Class shooting a Diana 54. Jim Whittlesey and Kevin Yee were close behind with scores of 44 and 43 respectively in the PCP Class. I think most of the shooters felt like I did, wondering how I could safely damage my rifle so I could graciously withdraw and not have to face the same humiliation on Sunday. It was only when I tallied the scores on Saturday that I realized that I was not alone in my agony. I had prided myself in being able to shoot in the wind, I didn't realize how bad I really was.

After the match on Saturday, the minions had to scurry around and set an almost entirely new course for Sunday. We had 4 new lanes and we took the best seven of Saturday's lanes and moved the targets and changed the kill zones. We finished setting the new course at about 8pm. It had been a long day.

Sunday broke with a promise, the air was cool, a coastal layer hung over the valley, the winds were calm and balloons were flying, some competitors were even smiling. We had a great eggs and sausage breakfast thanks to Andrea, a brief shooters meeting, paired the contenders together and started the match. For about 2 lanes the winds were mild to moderate, life was good. Soon the marine layer burned off, the temperature began to climb and the winds along with it. Sunday started to look a lot like Saturday, the only salvation being the highs stayed on the high 70's and low 80's.

As the match progressed some little kinks in the armor began to occur. Scott Hull was having mechanical problems with the Diana and had dropped several shots early in the match. The young Alan Hull shooting with the wily old veteran LD was making some uncharacteristic mental mistakes in spite of all the help LD was offering him. It was starting to look like Sunday's course might be even tougher than Saturday's. A special shout out to George Doganis and Mark Gravelle who for some unknown reason decided to shoot WFTF PCP at 12 ft lbs, what was I thinking!

As the scores came in on Sunday, it was clear that the top shooters held their ground. Alan recovered to shoot the high Hunter score of the day, Scott never was able to get the Diana back to where it was on Saturday but he didn't have to shoot on Sunday to win his class. The action was in the Open Class. Jim

Whittlesley, Kevin Yee and Doug Miller held a classic shootout as you would expect from 3 of the top shooters in the country. Jim shooting a .22 USFT just might have had a small advantage with the heavier pellets and shot a great score of 34 to put him into what looked like a solid first place. Well, as is the case, when you have the best shooters competing someone seems to step up and grab the ring. Shooting a day's high score of 38/44 Steve Montgomery jumped over 4 other shooters to tie Jim for top spot in the PCP Class. Not to be left out, Alan Hull shot a fine 32/44 to tie Jim and Steve with a high match score of 78. We were going to have a shoot off to determine the Match Champion and 1st Place PCP shooter.

After everyone finished lunch the shoot off lane was set in LD's back yard so we didn't have to trudge up and down the hills to watch the finish. One 3/8 inch spinner at about 23 yards and one 3/4 inch bell target at 38-40 yards. The wind was really blowing as the shooters took their positions. Each shooter would take two shoots at each target, the scores for the 4 shots would be tallied. If there were ties additional rounds would be shot until a winner was established.

Steve was first shooter, he calmly hit his first 3 shots, missing his last. Jim was next, and managed to hit only his first shot. That put the pressure right on Alan. He hit his first two shots and missed the third, forcing him to hit his last shot to stay in the competition. He must have picked up something from shooting with LD as he was able to hit his 4th shot and keep the competition going. The pressure was now back on Steve. The winds picked up and Steve was able to hit only one of his second four shots. The door was now open for Alan who probably not so calmly hit his second and third shots to claim the Overall Champions award. The kid held his own among some of the best shooters in the country. It was an exciting finish to a great match.

In talking to many of the shooters after the match the consensus was this was one of the toughest matches they had ever participated in. The raw Troyer was deceptive at just a little over 30 without wind, but the wind, terrain and temperatures conspired to make this one extremely difficult match. It was not unusual to hold off the faceplate on many of the shots. With several National Champions and top three finishers in the field, I think the scores show that the Temecula Challenge has reclaimed it's position as the toughest Field Target match in the country.

Some of the participants deserve a real thank you for contributing to overall success of the match. First a special thanks to Jerry Moragne who donated a 45 cu.ft. Scott carbon fiber tank that was awarded to the overall match winner. Jerry is a regular TC participant who comes out and shoots and has fun. We always enjoy his presence and sincerely thank him for his wonderful donation. Another special thanks to Jim Zigler who was responsible for feeding and watering everyone. Jim has single handedly taken care of the food at the last two challenges and I know of no one who went to bed hungry or dry. Also special thanks to Bobby Corcoran, Scott and Alan Hull, Steve Montgomery and Terry Depew without whose help we would not have had a course to shoot. Setting up

the course at the TC requires a lot of work preparing targets and physical labor carrying blocks and targets up steep rocky hillsides and then running strings, these volunteers made sure the course was as ready as we were on Saturday.

And finally a special thanks Andrea who open up her home every year to the participants, without her and LD there would be no Temecula Challenge. That leaves LD, one of the warmest, cuddliest, quietest people you will ever meet when compared to a Honey Badger. You should come the the Challenge just to sit in LD's garage and workshop for 2 days looking at the history of air guns scattered about, looking at air gun trophies won that are older than many of the competitors and listening to the man discuss all things airgun and shooting related. If you can listen quietly and absorb you will leave the match far more knowledgeable than you arrived.

Also the TC team of LD, Wayne, Jim Z and I would like to thank all the competitors for joining us, without you and your camaraderie the TC wouldn't be the great event it is.

Jim in Sacramento

<b>Temecula 2014 Final Results by AAFTA Class</b>							
<b>Name</b>	<b>Day 1 (56)</b>	<b>Day 2 (44)</b>	<b>Total (100)</b>	<b>Hit %</b>	<b>Rifle</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Pellet</b>
<b>Open PCP</b>							
Steve Montgomery	40	38	78	78.00%	USFT	Schmidt & Bender 5-25	JSB 10.3
Jim Whittlesey	44	34	78	78.00%	USFT #158 .22	Nikko !0-50	Falcon 13.43
Kevin Yee	43	32	75	75.00%	Steyr 110	Nikko !0-50	JSB
Bobby Corcoran	41	31	72	72.00%	Steyr 100	Bushnell 4200 8-32	JSB 10.3
Doug Miller	41	31	72	72.00%	FWB P70 DM	Nikko 10-50	Crosman 10.5
Vipha Miller	37	30	67	67.00%	FWB P70 DM	Nikko 10-50	JSB 10.3
Chris Merritt	32	33	65	65.00%	USFT #27	Accushot 24x	AA 10.4
Bob Pont	37	27	64	64.00%	Marauder .177	Aeon 10-40	JSB 8.4
Matt Kellerman	33	30	63	63.00%	USFT #22	Hakko	.22 Cal JSB 13.4
Dave Freidach	32	30	62	62.00%	USFT #13	Tasco 10-40	JSB 10.3
Rick Rogers	29	26	55	55.00%	TM1000	Sightron 10-50x60	AA 10.4
Wayne Burns	25	28	53	53.00%	USFT #94	BSA 10-50	AA 8.4
Ron Jobbes	25	27	52	52.00%	TM1000	Nikko !0-50	AA 10.4
Tim McMurray	26	19	45	45.00%	USFT #7 .22	Leupold Comp 35x	JSB RS 13.4
<b>WFTF PCP</b>							
George Dogonis	32	28	60	60.00%	Steyr 110	Sightron 10-50	JSB 7.9
Mark Gravelle	16	11	27	27.00%	Marauder .177	Leupold Comp 35x	JSB 7.9
<b>Hunter Piston</b>							
Scott Hull	45	22	67	67.00%	Diana 54	UTG 3-12x44	JSB 10.3
Jeff Carmello	21	21	42	42.00%	Diana 54	Cntr Pnt 4-16x40	JSB 10.3
Art Burciaga	21	19	40	40.00%	TX200	Accushot 4-16	AA 10.4
<b>Open Piston</b>							
Vince Pacheco	19	16	35	35.00%	HW77	B&L 8-32	Crosman 7.9
Terry Depew	18	8	26	26.00%	TX200	Bushnell 4200 8-32	Crosman 7.9
<b>Hunter PCP</b>							
Alan Hull	46	32	78	78.00%	Marauder .177	UTG 4-12x44	Crosman 10.5
Larry Durham	37	31	68	68.00%	USFT #97.177	Aeon 4-16	Crosman 10.5
Jim Cyran	32	29	61	61.00%	USFT #98 .177	Hawke 4.5-14x42	Crosman 10.5
Brad Stevenson	23	22	45	45.00%	USFT	Vortex 4-16	Crosman 10.5
Jim Zigler	24	19	43	43.00%	USFT #110	Hawke 4.5-14x42	Crosman 10.5