

2023 Rockville Fish & Game Grand Prix Match Report

Dates: August 4th-6th

Location: Fish & Game Rd, Vernon, CT

Match Site: Woods, shaded (both courses)

Temperature: 65-80 degrees Fahrenheit (all three days) with low humidity

Wind: 1-4 MPH, mostly calm conditions (all three days)

Number of shooters: 34 (including 5 one day shooters)

Thanks to The RFG Volunteers

I wish to immensely thank all the following RFG volunteers who helped big and small to make the RFG Grand Prix event happen this year.

Cindy Milewski Bill Milewski Matt Squiers Scott Verch Alan Egolf Pete Sweeney
Jay Ortiz Bernie Ducat Bruce Samborski Mark McLean Linda McLean
John Jordan Rich Agosta (videographer) Betty Fonseca John Shields
Kris Moulard Jeff Olson Joy Nowak Garrett Eastman Greg Morander
Jonathan Frey Heriberto (PETE) Irizarry Liz Galyas Dan Wolf
Lisa Wolf Kyle McDonald Mary McDonald James Sirignano Melissa Sirignano
Michael Ringbloom Daryl Dwyer

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The Weather

We were blessed with fall like weather conditions in August. It was not typical muggy summer conditions. It was ideal weather for a GP match. We were lucky since it was forecasted on Friday for heavy thunderstorms at the beginning of the week. As a match director, I always get anxious and get heartburn whenever gloomy weather is forecast for any of our matches.

COVID protocols

Unfortunately, the weekend before the GP match, our club had a BBQ event where several of our GP volunteers contracted COVID after a few days. They did not work and did not shoot at the GP event. We had to change things around to do most of our gathering outdoors safely instead of indoors in the clubhouse. I promptly informed all our participants and issued a refund if they wanted to withdraw from the event because of the risk factors. Fortunately, we only lost a handful of shooters. The majority were made aware of the risks and went ahead with the event.

Friday, Pistol Match and All Standing Rifle Match

After eating lunch, we proceeded to the air pistol and all standing rifle match.

I set up the pistol course to be the at the borderline lowest limit of difficulty required under AAFTA rules. At 30.06 difficulty rating, the course only had (4) 1" reducers and (1) ½" reducer. The rest were full sized. This allowed us to do an all-standing offhand match to run concurrently with the pistol match.

We originally had 11 people sign up for the pistol match but ended up with just seven in the end when the match started. We had three people shoot the all-standing match including myself. I shot the pistol course as well as the standing match. I shot my pistol all offhand in the limited division.

My intention was to make the pistol course easy enough that someone can shoot a perfect score. Alas the wind dashed those hopes. Nevertheless, Brian Van Liew shot an excellent score of 37 in Hunter pistol with Nathan Thomas scoring a 36 in limited. As for the standing match, I placed my own money \$40 to the 1st place winner while Chas Di Capua would give \$20 for 2nd place and \$10 for 3rd. It ended up that I kept my money with a score of 35 and Chas had to pay Paul Cray \$20 who scored a 34. Chas paid Paul with a \$20 check the next day.

Note: I will continue to offer the all-standing rifle match with cash prizes for those who want to test their offhand skills regardless of your equipment choices.

WFTF Style Rifle Courses

Here are some principles I used to create both rifle courses. All of them align very closely to World Field Target Federation rules.

- Use only three kill zone sizes for simple replacement of targets.
- Less than 25% of the total number of targets will have a reducer (7 max out of 30).
 - Used one ½" and six 1" reducers on the upper pond course.
 - Used six 1" reducers on the clubhouse course.
- Average distance will be a minimum of 40 yards.
 - More than half of the targets will be greater than 40 yards.
- Have at least one high angle tree shot.
- All targets have numbered signs and were shot in ascending order.
- Wind, no matter how light will make any course harder than normal.

- Troyer Difficulty for both courses ended up at 32.5T without wind or lighting factors.

See link below for aerial maps for both courses.

[Air Gun Events – RF&G Club \(rockvillefishandgameclub.com\)](http://rockvillefishandgameclub.com)

Saturday, Rifle Match at the Upper Pond Course

Light breakfast was served at the outdoor pavilion.

After getting everyone speed checked with the chronograph (issued a green RFG sticker) and delivering the typical shooter safety meeting, the match started with several cold lines on the first few lanes. The first one was a bad string and had to cut off more than 12 feet off to get to the good part to attach to the target. The second one was a string getting caught under the faceplate hinge bolt. The third one was a faulty target that will later fail on the fourth cold line. I replaced that target with another one. Towards the end of the match, another cold line was for the metal arm bracket that swung up in front of the kill zone blocking it. Unfortunately, my second marshal got sick from Covid, and I thought I could handle the course by myself. Next time I will have at least two marshals for the upper pond course.

We had some people call cold lines when it was not a safety issue and only the Marshal can call a cold line. Running around the course fixing stuff during match does not do well for your shooting. Lesson learned.

As for the rest of the match, it went smoothly with very good scores posted. Brian Van Liew (Open PCP) and Paul Cray (WFTF PCP) both scored 57. Al Padilla and Bill Day (Hunter PCP) both scored 52. Chas (WFTF PCP) was not far behind with a 50. Still impressive, a good number of shooters were shooting in the mid-40s including Jim Wheeler (Hunter Piston) 43 and Nathan Thomas (WFTF Piston) 45. Eli Feuer only shot Saturday as well as Gerard O'Toole.

Wind was sometimes present downrange with the leaves moving but there would be nothing felt at the shooting line.

We had RFG volunteers handing out snacks to the shooters during the match.

Sunday, Rifle Match at the Clubhouse Course

A light continental breakfast was served for the shooters before the match started.

Three one day shooters joined us on Sunday. All were from Nenameseck Sportsmen's Club in Palmer, MA. Bob, Dick, and Dave were squadded together on lane 12 with the rest of the 30 shooters on Lanes 1 to 11.

Everyone got speed checked again (issued a red RFG sticker). A short safety meeting was given addressing some of the issues from yesterday. This time around we were on the more compact course next to the clubhouse with the practice range beside it. I was expecting better scores than yesterday with little to no wind when we first started shooting. Again, light winds were shifting here and there. It was enough to generate misses.

After a few lanes we had another series of cold lines because of strings breaking. We had at least 4 of them. I just replaced them as they broke with our spare string sets. We had another cold line towards the end of the match. It was a target that had shifted off its base and clamps.

On lane 7, we had an airplane target 29 feet up a tree. It is a 38-degree angle shot. Some people had trouble hitting this relatively close target with 1" kill zone. Some people employed ingenious ways to shoot it. Look at some of the photos posted on the OneDrive link.

Lunch was served outside under pop-up tents with folding tables and chairs around 1:30 pm. In the end some people came back shooting better than yesterday. Several notable improvements were Karen Reis, Matt Squiers, Doug Rogers, Greg Shirhall and me. Enough improvement to place and get an award. Bill Day and Paul Cray maintained their lead and won their respective classes. During the match, we had RFG volunteers give out snacks for some hungry shooters.

Shoot Off at the Practice Range

Both Matt Squiers and Doug Rogers ended with a two-day score of 90. We had to do a shoot off for 4th and 5th places. We set up two targets. One at 25 yards with a 15mm (.591") kill zone bird target and another headshot Crow target with a 25mm (~1") kill zone. As per AAFTA rules, we had them shoot sitting first, then kneeling and standing last if they were still tied. To be fair, I reminded them if one person wants to shoot standing instead of kneeling, the other person should shoot standing as well. If it went to the positional shots, I had a spare crow target with a 40mm (1.575") kill zone on hand.

Doug shot first at the 25-yard target and knocked it down once with two shots. Matt did the same with his two shots. Doug then shot the 45-yard target and missed twice. The wind was blowing now. Matt took one shot and knocked it down for his 4th place finish with Doug grabbing 5th place. Well done to both shooters.

Silent Auction to Final Bids

After lunch, we ended the silent bids and started to take verbal last bids on all the auction items. It was interesting to say the least. Some items had no challengers to the bids while others went back and forth in short order. The most memorable was the bidding for Creedmoor Bum Bag. It ended up with a \$100 winning bid for a \$65 item. Congratulations to all the winning bidders. We unfortunately forgot to photograph the bidders with their items for our sponsors.

Sightron SIII 10-50x60 Target Dot Scope	Pete Sweeney
Athlon Heras SPR 6-24x56 Scope	Brian Wagner
Athlon Talos 20-60x80 Spotting Scope	Brian Wagner
Hawke Nature Trek 20-60x80 Spotting Scope	Bill Day
Aztec Optics Emerald 5.5-25x50 Scope	Bill Milewski
Air Venturi Avenger .177 PCP Rifle w/pump	Bill Milewski
Seneca Dragonfly Pneumatic Pump Rifle	John Eroh
Crosman F4 Gas Piston Air Rifle	Bill Milewski
Creedmoor Sports Bum Bag	Paul Cray
Creedmoor Sports Knee Roll	Tom Wade
Lexington Air Guns Alligator Target	John Jordan
Paul's Custom Target Resetting Target	Brian Wagner
Paul's Custom Target Black Dragon Faceplate	Matt Squiers
Paul's Custom Target Murder Hornet Faceplate	Dave Ferro
Bullseye Mind Book	Bill Day
Mantis X10 Elite – Shooting Performance System	James Sirignano
UTG Pro TBNR Bipod 7"-9" High	Brian Van Liew

UTG Pro TBNR Bipod 8.5"-11" High	Bruce Samborski
OdB Airgun Silencer 110C Black .177	Dave Ferro
OdB Airgun Silencer 110C Black .177	John Eroh

Raffle Items

I had Karen Reis pick out the winners for the three raffle items. The winners are listed below.

Tom Wade	\$100 Pyramyd Air Gift Card
Scott Verch	\$100 J.D. Custom Design Gift Card
Paul Manktelow	\$100 The Marksman's Den Gift Card

Winners – Rifle

Place	Hunter PCP	Hunter Piston	Open PCP	WFTF PCP	WFTF Piston
1 st	Bill Day	Greg Shirhall	Brain Van Liew	Paul Cray	Leo Gonzales
2 nd	Al Padilla	Jim Wheeler	Brian Wagner	Chas Di Capua	Nathan Thomas
3 rd	Karen Reis	Paul Manktelow			
4 th	Matt Squiers				
5 th	Douglas Rogers				

Winners - Pistol Match

Place	Hunter Pistol	Limited Pistol
1 st	Brian Van Liew	Nathan Thomas
2 nd	Alan Egolf	
3 rd	Rick Vaeth	

Gratitude to All Participants and Volunteers

Thank you to all the RFG volunteers and shooters who made our first ever Grand Prix match at Rockville Fish & Game possible. It was not all perfect, but we tried our best to make it safe and enjoyable in the end. We will strive to do better (with fewer cold lines especially) next year.

Any comments and suggestions will be welcome.

Regards,

Leo

Virgilio Gonzales

Match Director/Air Gun Chairman

Rockville Fish & Game Club