

LEWIS McMURRAN TAKES ZONE 2 HONORS

DEREK MOORE REPORTS FROM M & M SPORTING CLAYS, NEW JERSEY



RUSSELL TAGLIARENI, CHARLES PEEBLES, LEWIS McMURRAN, THE EVER SMILING STEVE EDMONDSON AND GARY PHILLIPS WITH ANTHONY JR IN THE BACKGROUND.

WITH THE NATIONALS BEING PUSHED BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF NOVEMBER, THE MATARESE FAMILY TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE TIME TO HAVE WHAT TURNED OUT TO BE THE BEST ZONE 2 SHOOT IN ITS HISTORY. THE WEATHER WAS HOT, REACHING 90 DEGREES AND HUMID DURING THE AFTERNOON.

The drag of a two and a half hour drive to M & M is always tempered by the thought of shooting some of the most challenging targets in the country. I was looking forward to the shoot having not entered many competitions over the summer due to visiting family and recently changing my shells. I needed to get some course time before the Nationals. Where better than the Zone 2 Championship?

Speaking of shells, costs are going through the roof. After trying all the domestic varieties and many of the European offerings, I settled on Clay Cartridge. It's a well made low recoil shell at a reasonable price, distributed throughout the country by people that are shooters with no hidden agenda other than trying to keep shooting costs at an affordable level.

PRE-LIM EVENT

With over 300 signed up for the Main Event, 199 showed up to shoot the Pre-lim. Anthony Matarese generally sets these targets a little lighter than the Main Event and this course was no exception – but they were deceptive and devious as always. Differing speed and angles set the tone of the day. This time though, the targets were set by Anthony Jr.

The event consisted of thirteen stations with 11 stands of eight targets and 2 stands of six targets – with a good mix of on report and true pairs. The targets were all quality with none being impossible but you had to keep your head in

the game to step up to the challenge.

Station 6 was four true pair, one about 40 yard out crossing left to right with a good amount of steam through the trees, with a chandelle which suddenly appeared high in the trees hurtling downwards. Moving to the pond, station 7 was an illusive rising trap target, starting 40 yards in front, veering more to the left than it seemed, taking targets right off the scorecard. On report was a fast crossing battue. Joe Carey, who shot the winning score of 97, dropped two of his three targets here. Station 13, in the left corner of the large field off the main road included a low fast crosser going

all the way out to the other side of the field and a speedy target coming from the right corner of the field towards you – becoming an even faster crosser on report. It was difficult to be consistent here and I saw lots of misses in front of the first and behind the second target.

Shoots at M & M are always well attended, no matter what they are called. This was probably the largest Zone 2 shoot I have seen. I guess it is because they have the right ingredients – Lois Lessing on target count, backed up by Donna and Mandy Materese at check in. Both Anthony Jr. and Sr. with brother Mike and Manager Rob Di Maio and their field crew kept the traps and targets running like clockwork.

MAIN EVENT

After a scorching day in the sun on Saturday, we readied ourselves for more of the same in the Main Event – and were not disappointed. I shot with Tony Deguillio, Don Dunning and Joanne Sweeney. It was a good squad and we moved through the

stands smoothly with no real delays. There were 16 stands, 14 with three pair and 2 with four pair – just how I like it. Spreading the shoot over 16 stands keeps the flow going much better than shooting 5 pair at each of 10 stands (my least favorite). The targets were enjoyable to shoot, not turned up too much in distance, but still testy.

Stand 3 included three true pair, a rabbit looping away from you on edge with a looong incomer out about 55 feet at its closest. Stand 4 gave us three pair, a high chandelle left to right out 50 feet and a right to left high on edge target on report, also out a ways over the water. Station 15 was in the woods, 3 true pair, one a close incoming crosser with a rising target on report. My favorite was stand 8, three true pair from the low tower screaming from the right towards the trees on the left at very different speeds. By the time you shot the first one, the second was heading very rapidly in the direction of the Delaware bridge. They looked fairly straight forward but after watching many shooters, Gary Phillips was the only one I saw clean it.

The shoot had all the flavor of a larger shoot with good vendor support and lots of games for the addicted. In the Main Event there were five 95's. It made for a well attended shoot off to see who became Zone 2 Champion. Gary Phillips, Russell Tagliareni, Charles Peebles, the ever smiling Steve Edmondson and Virginian, Lewis McMurrin, shot off for Zone honors, carefully overseen by Anthony Jr. After a couple of rounds, Lewis McMurrin came out the winner and 2007 Zone 2 Champion. Lewis was also FITASC Champion – so he had a really good weekend. ■



A LOOK FROM STAND 9 TOWARDS 5, 6 AND 7 IN THE BACK FIELD.



2007 ZONE 2 CHAMPION, LEWIS McMURRAN.

For all scores from all events go to www.wyshotgun.com