

**A REPORT BY  
HUGH SMITH**

Laang Range is located approximately 150 miles South West of Melbourne, near the coastal town of Warrnambool in Victoria. The region is dairy farmland with outcrops of several species of Eucalyptus – home of the Koala Bear – one of which spent the four days of competition watching the competitors on the Beretta layout!

The facility, under the guidance of Steve Chilton, President of

Laang Range, had made considerable effort to accommodate the requirements of the competitors representing 26 countries. There was adequate catering facilities and numerous trade stands in a tented village to maintain the interest of shooters.

America was represented by five teams – Seniors, Veterans, Ladies, Super Veterans and Juniors. The US was one of only four nations able to provide a full house of teams. Great Britain, for

instance, were unable to send Super Veterans and Ladies teams.

It was good to see some of the 'old school' US competitors at this event – Andy Duffy and Jon Kruger were determined to give the Brits a run for their money and with Gregg Wolf and Will Fennell made up a formidable Senior team. Darby Fennell was expected to give the World's ladies a run for their money and medal hopes were high for Super Veterans Joe Cantey, Ronald Shafer and Michael Taylor. In all, some 30 competitors made the trip from America.

# WORLD FITASC SPORTING CHAMPIONSHIP

## Four and Change

Structure of the Championship was 200 targets over four days, with the first one hundred targets shot on Beretta, Corsivia GB, Winchester/Browning and Blaser F3 Parcours before changing the layouts for the final hundred targets. The four Parcours were in



**SOME 650 COMPETITORS MADE THEIR WAY TO AUSTRALIA FOR THE 31ST WORLD FITASC CHAMPIONSHIP (NOVEMBER 16-22).**



rolling open meadow land, supplemented by a number of mechanical high lifts with good use of the undulating often steep terrain. Hans Venger, President of the FITASC Sporting Technical Commission, and Glen Rider, Australian representative of the FITASC Sporting

Technical Commission, vetted, categorized and authorized the targets.

Four Parcours and then change was a disappointment for many competitors – particularly those that had flown half way around the world for this Championship. Many had anticipated the usual eight Parcours for a World Championship. Disappointingly, Ray McFarlane, Vice President of FITASC Oceania and joint Chairman of the event organizing committee, authorized four layouts with a change. Even more disappointing was the fact that the change was minimal – only the shooting positions moved. Hardly what you would expect for a World Championship. McFarlane was also individually responsible for setting all the competition targets.

## Day 1 and 2

As is usual, the first day is a settling in period – though George Digweed and Damien

### WORLD FITASC STATISTICS

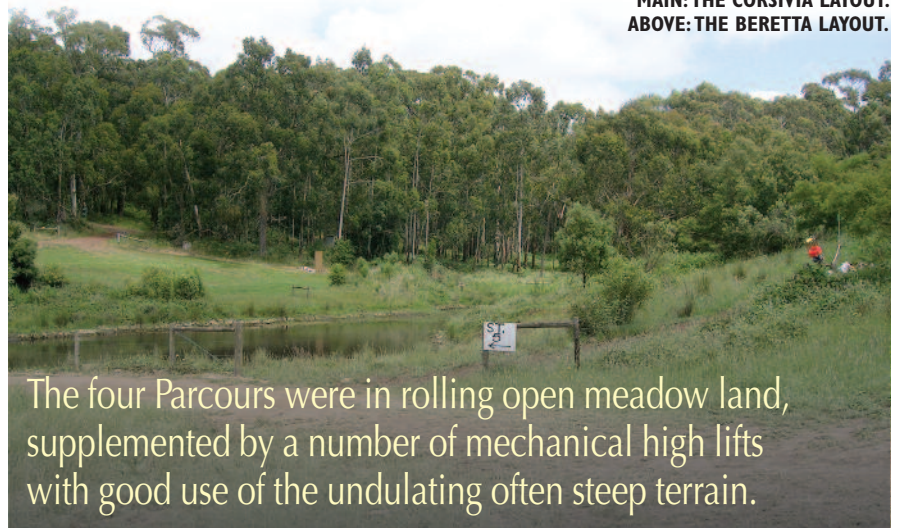
- Highest score was shot by Damien Birgan of Australia (24, 25, 23, 23, 24, 23, 22, 23) for a total of 187.
- Lowest completed score was shot by Mark Dunn of Australia (7, 9, 10, 7, 4, 9, 9, 8) for a total of 63.
- The average score of the 650 competitors over the four days and 200 targets was 64.3%.
- There were only nine maximum layout scores (25) shot by Damien Birgan, George Digweed (2), Mark Marshall, Ben Husthwaite, Andy Duffy, Sox Pilipasidis, Alan Coy and Michael Birgan.
- Of the 650 competitors from 26 countries, over 400 came from Australia. 36 Australians were placed in the last 600-650th positions.
- Only five competitors out of 650 did not complete the 8 Parcours.

Birgan of Australia each posted 49ex50 with Mark Marshall (GB) on 48. Top US Senior at this early stage was Cory Kruse on 46.

On completion of Day 2 many competitors thought that Blaser was shooting tougher than the other Parcours with Beretta close behind. There were four maximum scores posted on the other three layouts – none on Blaser. After two days, Birgan led the pack with 95ex100 followed by Digweed (94) and John Younger (93) of Australia. Heading up the American challenge were Kruger (90 – 7th) and Wolf (89 – 8th). Kruse (88) was 12th. Darby



**MAIN: THE CORSIVIA LAYOUT.  
ABOVE: THE BERETTA LAYOUT.**



The four Parcours were in rolling open meadow land, supplemented by a number of mechanical high lifts with good use of the undulating often steep terrain.

Fennell (74) was 3rd in the Ladies, Brian De Quesnay (82) was 5th in Veterans, Cantey (80) was 2nd in the Super Veterans and Able Spire (85) was 5th in the Juniors. In the team placings at half way, the Australian senior team was in the lead with 352, USA was one target adrift at 351 and Great Britain (346) was third.

## Day 3 and 4

Over the next two days, it became clear that the race to the Senior's finish line was between Digweed, Birgan and Marshall of Great Britain. The American senior team shot well as individuals but were unable to make up ground on the front runners.

Changing weather conditions affected some rotations more than others, with a lost target here and there proving to be most costly – none more so than for Digweed who shot an uncharacteristic 19 on

FITASC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS		
CH	DAMIEN BIRGAN (AUS)	187
RU	GEORGE DIGWEED (GB)	186
3 <sup>RD</sup>	MARK MARSHALL (GB)	184
9 <sup>TH</sup>	JON KRUGER (USA)	177
10 <sup>TH</sup>	CORY KRUSE (USA)	177
11 <sup>TH</sup>	ANDY DUFFY (USA)	176
16 <sup>TH</sup>	GREGG WOLF (USA)	174
L1	BEATRIZ CUENCA (SPAIN)	149
L2	CELINE RODDE (FRANCE)	145
L3	KATIUSCIA SPADA (ITALY)	144
L10	DARBY FENNEL (USA)	135
L25	CAITLIN CONNOR (USA)	123
V1	JOHN DYSON (GB)	166
V2	NEVILLE JAY (GB)	165
V3	RANDY TRAVALIA (USA)	161
V7	BRIAN DEQUESNAY (USA)	155
V33	LEWIS M'MURRAN (USA)	135
SV1	JOE CANTEY (USA)	159
SV2	ALAN COY (GB)	155
SV3	WILLIAM FALLS (USA)	154
SV4	MICHAEL TAYLOR (USA)	153
SV5	RON SHAFER (USA)	152
SV14	RICHARD VANCE (USA)	130
J1	DAVIDE GASPARINI	175
J2	BASTIEN HAVART	171
J3	ABEL SPIRE (USA)	170
J7	BRODY SIKES (USA)	162
J14	LOGAN GASKINS (USA)	147

WORLD FITASC TEAM MEDALS		
SNR GOLD	GREAT BRITAIN	707
SNR SILVER	AUSTRALIA	696
SNR BRONZE	USA	688
US TEAM MEMBERS: DUFFY (176), FENNEL (161), KRUGER (177) AND WOLF (174)		
LADIES GOLD	FRANCE	410
LADIES SILVER	AUSTRALIA	406
LADIES BRONZE	ITALY	388
LADIES 5 <sup>TH</sup>	USA	354
US TEAM MEMBERS: SHAMI BIFFLE (96), CAITLIN CONNOR (123) AND DARBY FENNEL (135)		
VET GOLD	GB	471
VET SILVER	AUSTRALIA	437
VET BRONZE	FRANCE	435
VET 4TH	USA	421
US TEAM MEMBERS: GEORGE GALEENER (131), DAVID LAUZEN (129) AND RANDY TRAVLIA (161)		
SUP VET GOLD	USA	464
SUP VET SILVER	ITALY	399
SUP VET BRONZE	FRANCE	395
US TEAM MEMBERS: JOE CANTEY (159), RON SHAFER (152) AND MICHAEL TAYLOR (153)		
JUN GOLD	ITALY	510
JUN SILVER	USA	479
JUN BRONZE	FRANCE	460
US TEAM MEMBERS: LOGAN GASKINS (147), BRODY SIKES (162) AND ABEL SPIRE (170)		

his last layout to finish one target behind the outright winner – Damien Birgan (187) of Australia. Full results are shown in the accompanying panels.

For some, the second 100 target change was disappointing and was perhaps reflected in their mind set. Darby Fennell slipped to a 61ex100 giving her a total of 135 and 10th place in the Ladies. Able Spire managed to match his first 100 score (85 and 85) for 170 and 3rd place in the Juniors. But Randy Travalia and Joe Cantey – both stalwarts of international competition – were on a roll. Travalia improved his first 100 score of 77 by seven targets (84) to finish 3rd in Veterans (161) and Cantey (155) won the Super Veterans with William Falls (154) 3rd, Michael Taylor (153) 4th and Ron Shafer (152) 5th – no wonder they won the Super Veterans Team Gold medal.

## Conclusion

The FITASC World Championship is much anticipated by shooters all around the world. Sadly this year's event was not up to standard – particularly for those who had traveled such long distances to compete in what should be a showcase event. As shooters, and FITASC customers, our World Championships should be nothing less than eight first class Parours. Though the targets were satisfactory, the changeovers for the second half of the event were just not good enough. That said, there was an enormous amount of work put into this event and for that the executives of Laang Range should be commended.

The 2010 FITASC World Championship is to be held in Italy (July) and promises to be a cracker-jack event. It needs to be – see you there. ■



L TO R: GERORGE DIGWEED, DAMIEN BIRGEN AND MARK MARSHALL.