

Bill McGuire and George Digweed take the top honors

MEADOWS CLASSIC



A REPORT BY MICHAEL BRUNTON

with pictures by Tom Thompson,
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Michael Brunton

TOP: BILL MCGUIRE ON DOGWOOD,
HEADING FOR A MAJOR WIN.
INSET: THE KRIEGHOFF PARCOURS DE
CHASSE SUPER FINALISTS (FROM LEFT)
GEORGE DIGWEED, JOHN BIDWELL,
MARK MARSHALL, DOUG VINE,
BEN HUSTHWAITE AND RICHARD FAULDS.



Not since the US Open of 1998 has The Meadows National Gun Club hosted such a major championship. The 3rd Leg of the Triple Classic World Series attracted 820 competitors for the 200 target Peter Crabtree Memorial Main Event and 360 competitors for the Krieghoff Parcours de Chasse. In all, competitors came from 42 States of

Mr Vladimir Lisin and Fox Lodge of Moscow, Russia. Mr Lisin, who attended each event, was delighted with the success of the series. "While clay target shooting is growing in popularity, the international dimension of the sport needs to be encouraged" he said. "The Triple Classic achieved just that and I believe was a great success. I have therefore asked

GREAT TEAMWORK

With the high standards set at Highclere Castle in England (June '05) and Fox Lodge, Russia (October '05) it fell to The Meadows National Gun Club to host the third leg in March – and what a fantastic job they did. The ground was in tip-top condition and despite a stiff easterly breeze at lunchtime each day, the four days

Krieghoff Parcours de Chasse 150 target event were set on land adjacent to The Meadows by Ben Brunton (ClayShootingUSA) and Graham Brown of Purbeck Shooting School in England. General consensus was that these were world-class targets complemented by terrain that included woodland, open fields and ponds.

MAIN EVENT

With Lois Lessing on hand to help Wendy Crabtree and her administration team, registration was a breeze as each competitor picked up their paperwork, Triple Classic pin badge and free box of Baschieri & Pellagri ammunition. Shooting started each day at 8.30 and finished promptly at 4.30 with scores posted on the internet by early evening.

The rotation system used for the Triple Classic saw competitors shoot sporting clays over two days (Thursday/Friday or Saturday/Sunday) and Parcours de Chasse over two days (Thursday/Friday or Saturday/Sunday). This added to the excitement in that the final results of



America and 10 countries – including 120 from Great Britain.

The concept of a series of championships held over 12 months across several continents to promote the international appeal of sporting clays was no easy task. The fact that it was a success, attracting over 3,500 entries across all championships, was down to the enthusiasm and generous support of the top-line sponsor –

ClayShootingUSA, together with Andy Castle of West London Sporting Targets, to start planning a second series. Now that the first World Series is complete, I hope that other industry sponsors will recognize its success and step forward to join with me in ensuring that this concept can become an established event in the international calendar."

of competition took place in almost perfect shooting conditions – with the weekend recording temperatures of 80°.

Targets for the Main Event were set by Deck and Cliff Jr. Evans. The two 100 target courses complemented each other perfectly. As befits an international event, Dogwood had a distinct American style while Azalea was more European.

The six layouts for the

ANDY CASTLE (LEFT), REPRESENTING MR LISIN AND FOX LODGE, LOSES HIS BET TO DECK EVANS WHO CORRECTLY PREDICTED THE TOP SCORE ON THE DOGWOOD AND AZALEA SPORTING CLAYS COURSES.

TRIPLE CLASSIC
GREAT BRITAIN | RUSSIA | USA

each event did not become clear until late on the last day.

The 15 stations of the Dogwood course stretched across open pastures and back toward the club house amongst woodland. A good balance of true pairs and report targets saw the course shot in about two hours with no hold-ups. A strong mix of rabbits, midis and chandelles with traditional standard quartering, incoming and crossers added to the entertainment value of this course that saw some 16 shooters record scores of 90 and over. Making a rare visit to the US before traveling to the Commonwealth Games in Australia, Richard Faulds of England set the pace on Dogwood on day one with a score of 95.

Over on Azalea the targets were more challenging with birds thrown over water, under the shooting position and high in the sky. Azalea also featured two of the toughest stations in the whole championship. Station 9 included a fast low left to right quartering bird and a right to left 40 yard high chandelle shot as a true pair. If you were slow on the crosser the

chandelle was well on its way down to the ground – if you shot the chandelle first the crosser had gone!

Station 15 included a high and fast going away midi from a tower and a 50 yard plus right to left battue high in the sky – often further out due to the breeze. Both stations were run numerous times, but for most competitors these were costly stations.

By the end of Friday, scores of 89 from Faulds and 88 from Mark Marshall indicated that Azalea was shooting 6-7 targets harder than Dogwood – but there was still 540 shooters to complete this Main Event on Saturday and Sunday

under blue skies and better shooting conditions.

Conversation at the Shooter's Welcome Party on Friday evening, held in Forsyth and hosted by the Holiday Inn, was of whether Faulds had done enough with 184/200 and which big names were still to shoot.

Of those on the Saturday and Sunday rotation, all eyes were on Digweed, who managed to squeeze another target out of Azalea for a round of 90 leaving him in the position of needing 95 on Dogwood to take the lead. Reaching his last couple of stations for 97, he dropped four targets on station one for a score of 93. Not

quite good enough.

Saturday proved to be a special day for Bill McGuire – his 95/100 on the tough Azalea course was a delight and surprise to most. It was an outstanding round – putting him five ahead of an international class field. What would his Sunday round on Dogwood bring?

If McGuire's 95 on Azalea wasn't enough to talk about, the Make-A-Break super final after the Saturday shoot party was. Shot under lights, the top 16 went head to head. Star of the show was Christa Littlefield, an AA shooter from Arkansas. In the semi-final she drew George Digweed – no contest! Wrong. Digweed had forced her into having to take the 7 bird to win by one. The 350-strong crowd held their breath and broke into rapturous applause and cheers as she smoked her last target.



DOGWOOD COURSE AMONGST THE PINE TREES.



AZALEA COURSE INCLUDED TARGETS UNDER THE SHOOTING POSITION AND OVER WATER.



LITTLEFIELD DOES THE BUSINESS!

Game over for GD. Littlefield then moved on to the final against Gregg Wolf who took top spot and the cash. But this night clearly belonged to Littlefield – what a story she has to tell for many years to come.

Sunday dawned with blue skies and very little breeze. McGuire had done his waiting and at 11.30 joined the Dogwood course. Six stations later he was only a couple down. After 11 stations targets were slipping away faster than he'd like. "I felt the nerves getting to me", said McGuire, who was



IS THAT A STANDARD OR A MIDI?



SHOOTING OVER WATER ON PARCOUR RUSSIA.



THE WALTON SISTERS ENJOYED THE FITASC, HAVING COMPETED AT EACH OF THE EVENTS IN UK, RUSSIA AND USA.

delighted to finish the course with 91 and a total score of 186, two ahead of Faulds and three ahead of Digweed.

You couldn't wish for a better result. A 200 target championship across two very different courses, both of which recorded high scores of 95, and won overall by a true American gentleman in the face of fierce competition from the best Europe has to offer. Perfect.

In the classes, Digweed held on to M1 with Gregg Wolf (183) second on the same score. Jeff Davis (166) won AA and Alex Clark (160) took A class. Justin Johnson (159) stamped his authority on B class, four ahead of Art Harris while C, D and E class were won by Mark Wood (154), Jason Howard (143) and Larry Lewis (129) respectively.

In the concurrents, honors went to Casey Lynch (SJ – 162), Brandon Powell (J – 171), Kate Brown (L – 160), Paddy Howe (SV – 158) and Jeff Massey (H – 155). The Veterans concurrent was particularly competitive with some 185 entries – almost larger than Master class! With a score of 90 on Dogwood and 80 on Azalea, top spot went to John Bidwell, just one ahead of Bruce Ney.

PARCOURS DE CHASSE

The Krieghoff Parcours de Chasse over 150 targets and six layouts was a different story – the Europeans fielded a strong team of top internationals that dominated the event.

The six layouts of America, Mexico, Russia, Jamaica, Canada and Europe were shot over spectacular terrain that included open pasture, woodland and ponds. Target variety was entertaining – from crossers and loopers over water; fast quartering targets, teal and rabbits under the shooter's position in the woods; to long incomers, crossers, chandelles and battues in the open. Tricky doubles, forcing the shooter to move their foot position, stole targets like a professional pick-pocket.

In terms of scores and degree of difficulty all six layouts were well balanced. Twenty-five straights were achieved on America, Canada (2), Mexico (3) and Europe with each layout boasting a host of 24s and 23s. Special mention must go to Craig Simpson of D class for his twenty-five straight on Canada – no doubt the reason he won his class by nine targets.



Digweed (137), Wendell Cherry (134) and Brandon Powell (134) set the pace on Thursday and Friday – with Cherry knowing that his first layout score of 19/25 would be costly. The Saturday and Sunday rotations kicked off with a bang – Faulds and Doug Vine both recording 25s. Vine continued to apply the pressure on Sunday finishing two ahead of Digweed. The top six to make the Super Final on Sunday were Vine (139), Digweed (137), Faulds (137), John Bidwell (136), Ben Husthwaite (135) and Mark Marshall (135) – all British. And what a display it was!

Fast quartering targets, a rabbit, 40 yard chandelle and 50 yard battue made up the menu for 25 targets old system shot from two hoops at ground level and one hoop on a platform. Four hundred watched as the gladiators entered the arena at 5.30 sharp. Four of the finalists had faltered by the time they got to the third hoop. It had become a head-to-head between

Faulds and Digweed. Faulds (24/25) blinked first while the 14 times World Champion went on to shoot a magnificent 25/25 and take the honors. It was a fantastic climax to the Championship.

With Digweed and Faulds having secured the top two spots, the remaining Super Finalists moved back into Master class taking the top four spots – Vine (M1 - 139+19), Bidwell (M2 – 136+22), Husthwaite (M3 – 135+21) and Marshall (135+20) followed home by Michael Simpson (M5 – 134) and Wendell Cherry (M6 – 134). Elsewhere in the classes and concurrents honors went to Casey Atkinson (AA and Ladies – 127), John Newman (A – 124), John de la Haye (B – 132), Iain Beck (C – 114), Craig Simpson (D – 114), Duane Hearn (E – 103), Michael Simpson (J – 134), John Bidwell (– 136) and Brian Brewton (SV – 125).

The top seven competitors at each of the Krieghoff sponsored

Parcours de Chasse competitions held in the UK, Russia and USA were awarded points (10, 8, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1) as in Formula 1 motor racing. The overall



series winner was generously awarded a bonus prize of a Krieghoff K80 and sponsorship package. The outright winner was Richard Faulds (above left) who accepted his bonus at prize-giving from Steve Phillips, Krieghoff International Inc. Director of Sales (above right). Unable, for obvious reasons, to accept such a sponsorship package, Faulds will receive a cash bonus from Krieghoff.

ALL OVER

The closing ceremony was quickly under way with special thanks to Wendy Crabtree, Cliff, Deck, Cliff Jr and all the Evans family and the staff of The Meadows who had administered such a top class event. A good-humored prize giving and an announcement that Mr Lisin has agreed to the planning of a 2006/7 Triple Classic rounded off this spectacular four

day festival of shooting. Late Sunday evening, as the last competitors left the ground, it fell deathly quiet. Only the massive clear-up task remained.

Though plans for the next Triple Classic World Series have only just started, it has been confirmed that the first leg of the 2006/7 series will be held in England at E.J. Churchill Shooting Ground at High Wycombe (on the outskirts of London) on 14-17th June 2006. (See www.tripleclassicsporting.com for more details). Future legs of this championship will be in USA, Scotland and possibly Russia in 2007. ■

BELOW L-R: DIANE SORANTINO (2ND), KATE BROWN (HOA) AND DEEANN MASSEY (3RD) IN THE LADIES MAIN EVENT. INSET: CASEY ATKINSON, LADY CHAMPION OF THE PARCOURS DE CHASSE.



VENDORS ROW WAS CONSTANTLY BUSY – WITH PROMATIC SUPPLYING TRAPS AND ENGINEERING BACKUP TO ALL THREE EVENTS IN THE WORLD SERIES.

...special thanks

“No such championship or series of international events can be successful without major sponsorship and total commitment to organization and planning. The sport in general and those thousands of competitors who have competed in the Triple Classic World Series are indebted to the generous financial support of Mr Vladimir Lisin and Fox Lodge, without whom this World Series would not have been possible.

“The administrative, organizational and marketing skills of ClayShootingUSA, supported by Andy Castle of West London Sporting Targets on behalf of Mr Lisin, ensured the success of this imaginative series of championships.

“Aided by generous sponsorship from Promatic, who supplied traps and engineering backup, and Krieghoff who sponsored the Parours de Chasse, the 3rd Leg of the series at The Meadows was an outstanding success. Well done all – and on behalf of all competitors we look forward to supporting the 2006/07 series.”

George Digweed



MR VLADIMIR LISIN OF FOX LODGE, RUSSIA, TOPLINE SPONSOR OF THE TRIPLE CLASSIC WORLD SERIES.



TRIPLE CLASSIC RESULTS

MAIN EVENT

CH	BILL MCGUIRE	186
RU	RICHARD FAULDS	184

M1	GEORGE DIGWEED	183
M2	GREGG WOLF	183
M3	MARK MARSHALL	181

AA1	JEFF DAVIS	166
AA2	DAN MULCAHY	165
AA3	JASON GLEN MOORE	162

A1	ALEX RYAN CLARK	160
A2	WARREN T HITT	157
A3	MIKE MINTON	155

B1	JUSTIN I JOHNSON	159
B2	ART HARRIS	155
B3	LUKE TAYLOR	155

C1	MARK WOOD	154
C2	ROCKY MC CLUSKEY	152
C3	RALPH F WHELIHAN IV	152

D1	JASON HOWARD	143
D2	CHANDLER SHORT	141
D3	DAVID COPPAGE	139

E1	LARRY W LEWIS	129
E2	DUANE HEARN	128
E3	GARY RIDGEWAY	126

L1	KATIE BROWN	160
L2	DIANE M SORANTINO	156
L3	DEEANN MASSEY	154

SJ1	CASEY K LYNCH	162
SJ2	SAM GREEN	157
SJ3	BRETT WINSTANLEY	153

J1	BRANDON POWELL	171
J2	RYAN KENTON	167
J3	JOHN A RAY	165

V1	JOHN BIDWELL	170
V2	BRUCE K NEY	169
V3	TOM MEGARGEE	166

SV1	PATRICK HOWE	158
SV2	FRED ABBOTT	154
SV3	DAVID J SKEWES	150

H1	JEFF MASSEY	155
H2	JEFF MERRILL	130
H3	HAL COTTINGHAM	128

KRIEGHOFF Parcours de Chasse

CH	GEORGE DIGWEED	162
RU	RICHARD FAULDS	161

M1	DOUG VINE	158
M2	JOHN BIDWELL	158
M3	BEN HUSTHWAITE	156

AA1	CASEY O ATKINSON	127
AA2	ROBERT L BARLOW	123
AA3	ANTHONY BALL	122

A1	JOHN NEWMAN	124
A2	ANDREW HARVISON	123
A3	WARREN T HITT	122

B1	JOHN DE LA HAYE	132
B2	BRETT WINSTANLEY	123
B3	VALERIE KONSHIN	121

C1	IAIN BECK	114
C2	ERIC WARRING	113
C3	DOUGLAS DU QUESNAY	110

D1	CRAIG SIMPSON	114
D2	TEDA L HUSKEY	105
D3	LENIN THOMPSON	98

E1	DUANE HEARN	103
E2	ALAN G ASHWORTH	94
E3	WILLIAM C MC MORRIS	94

L1	CASEY O ATKINSON	127
L2	DIANE M SORANTINO	124
L3	KATIE BROWN	119

J1	MICHAEL SIMPSON	134
J2	BRANDON POWELL	134
J3	MATT HOUTTEMAN	126

V1	JOHN BIDWELL	136
V2	MIKE BITTMANN	132
V3	AJ SMITH	128

SV1	BRIAN E BREWTON	125
SV2	ROBERT L BARLOW	123
SV3	ANTHONY BALL	122

RIGHT: BILL MCGUIRE, A WELL DESERVED WINNER OF THE MAIN EVENT.

