



The Rose Hill Challenge

A FALL FAVORITE SAYS **STEVE FISCHER**

For many of us die-hards, the September NSCA Nationals marks the end of the Big Blasts and the beginning of clay target withdrawal symptoms. The long haul to February next year and the Seminole Cup is at the cost of long months of cold weather, snow, freezing temperatures and occasional bouts of 'cabin fever'. For that all too brief interim between the last of the clays, or for some, the hunting season, and the beginning of Winter's worst, there is one last hurrah – The Rose Hill Challenge.

Five years ago, Rose Hill Manager, Larry Corbett, and family, in conjunction with Barry Davis, also from North Carolina, and David Peckham of Southdown GC in Great Britain, teamed up for what was at that time called the

first UK/US Masters. The idea was to present the finest in target presentations with a European flavor. Today's version, now known simply as The Rose Hill Challenge, has again teamed Rose Hill Farm's gorgeous terrain with UK's David Peckham, as well as the talents of some of our own US target setters – Chuck Frasier and Dave Fiedler. Each person would design two Parcours with Dave Peckham doing layouts one and two, Chuck Frasier on three and four and Dave Fiedler setting the fifth and sixth layout. The result? Six Parcours of 150 superb Parcours de Chasse type targets, designed and set for competition at a World class level.

A sporting Pre-lim was offered on Friday and was every bit as challenging as the Main Event. But first, let me tell you of the magic

and history that abounds on the grounds of this exceptional shooting destination.

GREAT VENUE

Rose Hill Farms is a unique and very beautiful old Southern style plantation, with gentle rolling hills, several impoundments full of fish, a stream or two and several stands of trees within its 850 acres of North Carolina farmland. The main house is an Antebellum 1800's style mansion all in white – replete with several tall columns

guarding the main double door entrance. One could just about picture Scarlet O'Hara waiting on the porch steps for her carriage to arrive down the gravel covered drive way that encircles a beautiful flower bed and fountain. Today, besides being a first class shooting facility, this beautiful piece of Southern history is one of the largest convention sites in North Carolina.

The actual shooting grounds are located below the main house and are complete with skeet, trap, 5-stand and Make-A-Break, as well as an almost unlimited selection of great spots for sporting stands.

This three day tournament had plenty of shooting for everyone, over and above the Pre-lim and Main Event. There were two practice Parcours, with one set up with a daily purse for the competition minded, as did the 5-stand and the Make-A-Break.

The clubhouse offers shooters a wide selection of Hull ammunition, the major sponsor of this event, as well as rental guns and instruction for all levels of ability – staffed by the Corbett family who are overflowing with friendly smiles and true Southern hospitality. A small snack bar offering burgers and sandwiches sits beside a beautiful deck and swimming pool just above the 5-stand and office area, where guests



THE 5-STAND OFFERED WARM-UP AND PRACTICE AS WELL AS A DAILY PAID OUT PURSE FOR HIGH SCORE.

can enjoy a light lunch and drink under the shade of a large gazebo overlooking the pool.

PRE-LIM RESULTS

For those that arrived a day early, the Rose Hill staff set up a 13 station sporting course. The superb selection of trap locations provided the shooters with a fine variety of target presentations. The course meandered along the open flat land and dropped down the hillside past several stands of trees and a couple of ponds – making a complete circle – eventually arriving back at the beginning of the course.

Rick Hemmingway showed us all how it was done by posting the only score in the 90s, constructing a fine score of 92 for HOA. Phillip Williams and Will Fennell took Master 1 and 2 respectively with a pair of 88s and Joe Cantey was third with 87. William Josey topped AA at 84 with Bob Christensen second at 81. Other class winners included Mathew Peterson (A-81), Carl Brandt (B-79), John Hood (C-74), Phil Lewis (D-65) and Vandy Hall (E-62). In the Concurrents Bruce Otvos, usually refereeing, took top honors in the Super Veterans (72) while the Veteran top shot was Joe Cantey (87). Lady winner was Lois Morrissy (67). Only two Juniors shot the Pre-lim – the top gun was Hub Johnson (87) – while Taylor Tew, the only Sub-Junior, shot an excellent 57.

RAVE REVIEWS

After five years of attending this shoot, the regular attendees know what to expect in the form of target presentations for the FITASC Main Event – it is the prime reason many attend and continue to return, year after year. Championship quality FITASC targets designed and set by experts to challenge, mystify,

thrill and entertain those most ardent devotees of Parcour de Chasse are found here each year.

Each layout is set over specific terrain and the targets are set to compliment and use this terrain to best effect. Each presentation was obviously well thought out. Some were long and some were fast, some were deceptive in both speed and distance and yet all were hittable. As usual, many shooters admitted that they missed several targets that looked quite close and easy. A closer look usually showed the target making some subtle yet definite change of direction, or perhaps it dropped low right or left just as the shooter pulled the trigger causing a miss over the top. Can I hear an Amen to that one?

Notable in its absence was the usual 'overabundance' of the quartering shot, found (unfortunately) too often at many other tournaments this year. At this shoot it was replaced, frequently, with a true crosser, which is arguably the most missed shot in the average shooters



SATURDAY NIGHT'S 'PIG-PICKIN' WAS COMPLETE WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS INCLUDING HOT APPLE COBBLER! WHAT COULD BE MORE 'SOUTHERN'?

repertoire – primarily because of the lack of available practice on this type of target.

There were some beautiful, albeit long chandelle shots on several Parcour, as well as a few hot battues, rabbits and 90mm midis. A particular favorite of mine was a long and low incomer on Parcour 6, it was almost straight at the shooter at both peg one and peg two, which I am sure caused white knuckles for some while

waiting for just the right spot to make the shot. It came in almost directly at the shooter at about three feet off the ground from behind the top of a knoll. Timing was paramount on this shot as the target dropped like a rock when it ran out of steam, and if you waited too long it would settle lightly on the grass as your shot string passed just over the top!

AND THE WINNERS WERE...

The Main Event was nothing short of awesome and Will Fennell once again showed us all he was up for the challenge posting an incredible 125 ex150 for HOA – a full 13 targets ahead of Runner-up Joe Cantey's 112 for Master 1. Richie Frisella took Master 2 (109),



MIKE HICKS WAS TOTALLY FOCUSED FOR THE LONG CHANDELLE ON LAYOUT 4.



CHAMPION FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW, WILL FENNEL!

followed by Lynn Berryman in third (108). AA winner was Dicky Jones (107) with Tim Burke second (105), followed by Chris Ferres (103). A class was topped by Matthew Peterson (102) with Butch Carr second (100) and Jett Ferebee third (97).

B class was won by Carl Brandt (89) with Otto Loving (88) taking second and Brett Porter third (85). David Bishop (86) took the honors in C class followed by Gary Gerard (82) and Mark White (78). D class was won by Charlie Cato (80) with Phil Lewis second (73) and Richard Bayles (49) third. E class winner was David McKenney (69) followed home by Matthew Chaney (67) and Tim Bastyr (64).

The Concurrent awards for some reason were only given down two places. Generally, FITASC type events are awarded to three places in the Gold, Silver, Bronze style, as in the Olympics. An oversight possibly, that will hopefully be remedied at next year's event. Along with his Runner-up award, Joe Cantey won the Veteran's Concurrent (112) followed by Richie Frisella in second (109) and Steve Fischer (107) third.



RICHIE FRISELLA RECEIVING HIS RU TROPHY IN THE VETERAN'S CONCURRENT.

Super Veteran Champion was Dick Phillips (98) followed by Troy Peak (93) and Fred Abbott (82). Junior Champion was John Ray (105) with Matthew Peterson (102) second

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and Hub Johnson (101) third. Lady shooter Paula Moore (87) took the honors followed by Susan Wall (82) and Theresa Frisella (77).

Most worthy of comment is that this was the first year that The Rose Hill Challenge ran as a registered NSCA tournament. Despite all the 'doomsayers' on the internet chat room (you know the one!), the shoot picked up an additional 20 shooters over last year! Those who listened to the 'Trolls' on that site and stayed away missed possibly the best shoot at Rose Hill to date!

Not an iota of change was planned or made by the management to this tournament other than the NSCA Members would have their targets registered – and those who wished to remain outside the NSCA still came and enjoyed the targets, ate at the now famous 'pig-pickin' barbeque and enjoyed the most congenial Southern hospitality, shooting as a hunter. For those who have never had the pleasure of attending this yearly event, well, you missed something truly special – and I can promise you that The Rose Hill Challenge is one of the first shoots on my 'do not miss' list for next year. ■