

THE DCRA THOUSAND YARD BLACK POWDER PROGRAM

The immediate pre-Confederation predecessor of the DCRA, the Upper Canada Rifle Association, was conducting two day All Comer and Any Rifle black powder annual prize meetings, including team events, out to 800 yards as early as 1862. The obverse of the DCRA medals is a scene of a rifle range near Hamilton, ON, in 1862. The prize list, done in beautiful copperplate handwriting is in the Canadian National Archives.

The DCRA first annual prize meeting of 1868, at Lachine, QC, attracted 2,076 entries, of which no fewer than 403 were in the thousand yard match. The present DCRA Black Powder Program was re-instituted in 1967 as part of Canada's Centennial celebrations, and endeavors to preserve the general flavour and conditions of the long range black powder matches of the latter half of the 19th Century. Chapter 19 of the DCRA Rulebook lists the current Black Powder rules, which intentionally permit wide, but not unlimited, latitude of individual choice in the selection of equipment and shooting style as an encouragement to newcomers.

The DCRA Black Powder matches celebrate the half-mile Canadian marksmanship tradition and are a more leisurely, less formal and less rule encumbered pursuit than many other modern shooting disciplines. Nearly two inches of rear sight elevation adjustment are required to range out to 1,000 yards in black powder shooting with elongated bullets. The popular .45-70 Govt. 500 grain bullet takes 3.29 seconds to reach the thousand yard backstop.

A shooter can fire, put his rifle down, roll over, and watch through his spotting scope for impact of his bullet in the backstop. The midrange trajectory is typically over 40 feet.

THE VENUE

Located in Canada's capital, the Connaught Range and Primary Training Centre is a Canadian Department of National Defense facility which covers 1,058 hectares along the shoreline of the Ottawa River. Since 1921 it has been a centre for military training and research and, after 1929, a Canadian crown game sanctuary. It is also the home range of the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association, which was called upon to design its layout, and hosts the annual DCRA Canadian Fullbore Rifle Championships of which the National Black Powder Competitions are a component.

GENERAL MATCH INFORMATION

Shooters will be triple squadded, firing alternately, always keeping the appropriate partner's match ticket. No register keepers are provided.

All matches are 10 shots on score, H.P.S. 50-10V. Fouling shots may be fired off the target after declaring them.

Up to five sighting shots may be fired, but only the last two or final sighter may be converted to score per DCRA Rules. In all cases where a distance is fired twice, e.g. 600, 800 and 900, only the best result of the two is used in the calculation of aggregate score.

If you have missed four consecutive shots you must retire and let your partner complete his or her match. You may then resume fire, without any more sighting shots, if match time allows.

Effective in 2011, *only* Black Powder loads and plain based lead bullets are permitted. Ammunition *may* be subject to disassembly and examination per DCRA rules to determine eligibility.

Wrist rests, slings or crossed sticks are permitted for rifle support. Competitors are urged to refer to DCRA Rule 19.13 (“Black Powder Positions and Rests) for specific restrictions and allowable combinations.

The use of a machine rest, benchrest or table is prohibited.

RIFLE CLASSES

WILF BLACK CLASS (MILITARY AND SPORTING) – Any original (*not replica*) unmodified sporting or black powder military rifle on regular issue, either breech or muzzle loading. While this class rifle can be fired in other matches, no special prizes will be awarded for doing so. PLEASE NOTE: The Wilf Black is a stand-alone match with a separate prize list. Those not shooting for record may use the match for warm-up or initial elevation determination.

CARTRIDGE and MUZZLE LOADING RIFLE CLASS (as defined by DCRA Rules Chapter 19). *No distinction will be made in competition for individual awards;* however, each class will be recognized separately in the Short Range, Long Range and Grand Aggregates, with an award structure described below.

BPCR SCOPED RIFLE CLASS – Effective in 2011, any Cartridge Rifle, as defined by DCRA Rules, and equipped with a telescopic sight consistent with DCRA Rule 19.09 (“BP Sights”), will be recognized in a new class, eligible for Aggregate awards if no less than three in-class entries are registered, and Individual Awards if no less than five in-class entries are registered.

THE INDIVIDUAL MATCHES

THE WILF BLACK MATCH

Wilf Black was a Korean War veteran who later joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. This 200 yard novelty match is a traditional event open to specific types of rifles described above. Other classes may be fired alongside, but these are not eligible for the prizes offered. This match score does not count towards the Grand Aggregate.

Prizes: Gold, Silver and Bronze medallions or bar, if more than 3 entries

THE VICTORIAN

The 300yard Victorian is named after Queen Victoria, who fired the first shot at 400 yards from a mechanical rest to open the first National Meeting in 1860. The Whitworth rifle struck one-half inch from dead centre. The NRA still has the target and the Whitworth rifle.

Prizes: Gold, Silver and Bronze medallions or bar.

THE CREEDMOOR

This 500 yard match is named after the Creedmoor Range on Long Island, New York, where in 1874, Irish and American Teams contested a now famous match at 800, 900 and 1,000 yards. The American Team won the match when one of the Irish cross fired a miss. The range is long gone, replaced at one point by the grounds of an insane asylum.

Prizes: Gold, Silver and Bronze medallions or bar.

THE WIMBLEDON I and II

This 600 yard match is one of three which offer the competitor two chances at scoring for record. It is named after Wimbledon Common, south of London, where a temporary range was set up each summer, 1860-1888. When the pointed, jacketed .303 bullets were adopted the Safety Area became too short, and the NRA moved to Bisley. The butts are still there, in amongst the tennis courts.

Prizes: Gold, Silver and Bronze medallions or bar.

THE BLACK POWDER 700 (700 meters, 765 yards)

Prizes: Gold, Silver and Bronze medallions or bar.

THE LONG RANGE I AND II (800 meters, 875 yards)

Prizes: Gold, Silver and Bronze medallions or bar.

These metric matches are the closest we can come to the traditional 800 and 900 yard distances.

THE BLACK POWDER 1000 (900 meters, 984 yards)

This match is the climax of the National Black Powder Competitions. As with the Wimbledon and Long Range Matches, the highest score from either of two opportunities per range is entered for record.

Prizes: Gold, Silver and Bronze medallions or bar.

THE TEAM MATCHES

SHORT & LONG RANGE CONCURRENT TEAM: THE LOYALIST & RANGER CUPS

Awarded to the three-person team with the best aggregate score in the Short (300, 500 and 600 yard) and Long (700, 800, and 900 meter) Range events. Teams may consist of competitors using either Cartridge or Muzzle Loading rifles, and effective 2011, may include *one* member from the new Scoped Rifle class. Team lists must be submitted by 1200 hrs on Friday

The DCRA Loyalist (Short Range) and Ranger (Long Range) Cups were donated by former Black Powder Committee Chairman Major Don Holmes. The trophies were executed by Birks of Ottawa third generation master engraver Alan D. Payne.

BLACK POWDER INTERNATIONAL TEAM MATCH

Plaques are presented to 8-team members based on the best aggregate score in three consecutive 900m events. Team members may use Cartridge, Muzzle Loading rifles, and effective 2011, scoped rifles.

Prize: Gold and Silver, and Bronze team plaques.

THE BLACK POWDER AGGREGATES

SHORT RANGE AGGREGATE

Total score of the Victorian, Creedmoor and Wimbledon matches.

Prizes: First, Second or Third place Plaques for Cartridge Rifle and Muzzle Loading Rifle Classes

LONG RANGE AGGREGATE

Total score of the BP700, LR and BP1000 matches.

Prizes: First, Second or Third place Plaques for Cartridge Rifle and Muzzle Loading Rifle Classes

MUZZLE LOADING RIFLE GRAND AGGREGATE: THE QUAICHE CUP

Donated by the Muzzle Loading Association of Great Britain and awarded to the top shooter in the Grand Aggregate shooting a Muzzle Loading rifle if three or more competitors are registered.

Prize: Gold Medallion and Plaque

CARTRIDGE RIFLE GRAND AGGREGATE: THE NORTH AMERICAN TROPHY

Presented to the top shooter in the Grand Aggregate shooting a Cartridge rifle if three or more participants enter.

BPCR SCOPED RIFLE GRAND AGGREGATE:

Presented to the top shooter in the Grand Aggregate shooting a scoped Cartridge rifle if three or more participants enter.

Prize: Gold Medallion and Plaque

For additional information, directions or entry forms contact:

*DCRA BP Program Chairman, Chris Jones,
c/o The Dominion of Canada Rifle Association
45 Shirley Blvd., Nepean, ON K2K 2W6.
Tel: (613) 829-828 Fax: (613) 829-0099
or e-mail: office@dcra.ca*