

## Elements be damned! OF shooters lift the Long Range Cup.

April 13, 2013

*Our sighters now are ended. These our bullets,  
As I foretold you, we put them down the range*

*Are melted into air, into thick black cloud:  
And, like the baseless fabric of these poor OFs' waterproofs,  
The cloud-capp'd towers, the sodden canvas jackets,  
The solemn Stickledown, the great range itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve  
And, just like our soggy, grumpy, windswept riflemen  
Leave not a round behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our ridiculous sport  
Is rounded with a F\*\*\* O\*\* B\*\*\*\*\*Ks. ..*

With apologies to the great Bard for deliberately misquoting - but he never had to put up with the filthy weather a clutch of intrepid OFs had to endure when he penned *The Tempest*.

It was so grim, ducks were hitch-hiking.

It was windier than the office of the quality controller at the Heinz Baked Beans factory.

It was colder than an Inuit's underpants.

And wetter than a frog's galoshes.

And we still won.

Trying to consistently put a small bullet into a two-foot bullseye at better than half a mile is challenging at the best of times, but it really does get tricky when:

One, the clouds are so low and the rain so thick that you cannot make out the target number never mind locate the target itself.

Two, you are shivering – not good news for the shoppers of Guildford.

Three, your rifle malfunctions – three of them. Seriously.

Four, your double-layered heavy canvas jacket is so wet it's welded to your skin.

Five, the rest of the water just goes down your neck.

Six, a fish-tailing wind is coming from behind you so your waterproofs get blown over your head (and the rifle).

Seven, you've been wet and cold for the best part of six months and finally you meet all your OF mates on the range for the first OF Event of the season and what do you get – wet and extremely pissed off.

Eight, just like everything else, your ammunition is wet – which causes the rounds to over-pressure and fly high. This has a similar effect on the Chairman's blood pressure.

### **Beloved leader**

Speaking of the Chairman, it emerged at a jolly lunch that Beloved Leader Nigel Burnip has also been elected Chairman of the prestigious North London RC at Bisley. The more senior the man, the shorter the title. Ergo the Beloved Chairman shall now be known simply as 'C'.

And so it was, the first round down the range with C on the firing point and Steve 'Caliban' McDowell in the coach's chair. This takes courage, as the Chairman, like all self-respecting autocrats, expects to shoot well. He does of course, but McDowell is a buffoon and underestimates the wind. Add howling gale, rain, wet ammo (see above) and the latter is lucky to escape with only a deathstare.

Jon 'Red Leader' Ford makes a welcome appearance shooting simultaneously for the RAF, he simply paddles up the range, drops his soggy kit down and slots an excellent 47.

Buffoonery continuing McDowell foresight is practically blown off by his own muzzle blast yet still manages to creep around the bull while coached by John 'Prospero' Halahan. Halahan, whose dual role as both skipper and technical officer, loves a challenge – and the McDowell/rifle combo certainly provides that.

### **Runny tummy**

Regrettably, we are one man down. James 'Sycorax' Mehta has had a nasty one-on-one with a Colchester oyster and come off second best – as did his plumbing.

So stepping into the breach we see the welcome sight of David 'Antonio' Argent. The calming influence of the canny GB veteran is embraced the OFs as we well know that he only ever shows up when there's silverware to be won.

Yet, even the highly-gifted Argent struggles with the dreadful conditions, unusually dropping 12 points over the two ranges.

We are also joined by Chas 'Doctor Faust' Lister, Brian 'President for Life' Smith, John 'Ariel' Horton and the ever present Neil 'Methuselah' Joy.

All have a gallant stab in the appalling conditions but struggle with completing the scores due to rifle malfunctions, general dampness and malfunctioning riflemen.

### **Wildest rounds**

Even the ever-reliable Halahan fails to trouble the scorers. Though happily the pedestrians of Guildford remain unmolested by the skipper's wildest rounds

Our friends from the opposition have had enough too and gradually slope away. At the end of the day, we are supposed to be doing this for fun and it really isn't.

But OFs are made of sterner stuff – must have been all those cold showers – and we discover to our delight that we have won the Long Range Trophy from the Auld Enemy the Old Lawrentians by a clear six points with Cranleigh in third.

McDowell, with a 92.6 just pips Red Leader for the gong.

We gather again for the Q Match on May 11th. We summon the rain gods, because they really couldn't make it worse.

	900	1000	Aggr
N Burnip	45.1	45.2	90.3
S McDowell	46.1	46.5	92.6
J Ford	47.1	45.3	92.4
D Argent	43.1	45.2	88.3
			362.16

<b>Old Lawrentians</b>	178v11	176v11	354v22
<b>Old Cranleighans</b>	183v9	171v9	354v18
<b>KCS Old Boys</b>	168v1	153v3	321v4
<b>Old Albanians</b>	163v5	124v3	287v8
<b>Old Lancing</b>	190v16	91v10	281v26