

Team Member's Report on New Zealand Trip

by Trevor Hutton



Doug McMillan, and by the Bank representative for publicity purposes.

We left Brisbane later than scheduled and arrived in Christchurch at about midnight, where we were met by Don Stringer, who is

N.Z.P.A. Jury Chairman. Don was able to make the passage through customs and the police a very simple procedure.

The team used taxis and Don's car to get to the motel by about 1 am where there was a slight problem concerning the accommodation which was soon sorted out.

TUESDAY 24TH FEBRUARY, 1981

I did not get much sleep before the time came to go to the airport again for the flight to Dunedin. This flight was also delayed by more than one hour but we soon arrived in Dunedin where it was windy and very cold.

We were met by Lindsay Strong and Rowan Whyte of the OTAGO PISTOL CLUB, and also collected the mini bus (Ford Transit Van) which Dick was talked into driving for the remainder of the trip. I had not expected so much help from the OTAGO CLUB REPRESENTATIVES. Lindsay and Rowan did everything possible to make our stay worry-free and as enjoyable as possible.

The team stayed at the Shoreline Motel where the accommodation was excellent and very little noise was heard at night. During the afternoon, we visited the Pistol Club to find that it is built in sand dunes with two banks of two turning targets and about fifteen precision bays where the duelling is also shot. The air pistol range is in the Gun Club Clubhouse.

WEDNESDAY 25TH FEBRUARY, 1981

Practice Day

We arrived at the range in mid-morning to find the weather rather cold and a cold wind blowing into our faces at the shooting line. I do not do very much shooting on a practice day. My idea is to make sure that all guns are in working order and that the sights are properly alligned. I did a little rapid practice and found it difficult to hold the gun tight and to squeeze the trigger because of the cold.

THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY, 1981

The First Day of Competition

Since I was not shooting, I went sight-seeing with Helen, Lynne and Gary. While in town I purchased a pair of gloves to try to keep my hands warm during shooting.

FRIDAY 27TH FEBRUARY, 1981

Free and Standard

I commenced free pistol at 11.30 am with two local shooters. The match is shot in two sections each of 1½ hours duration. Each competitor has a large target frame with 4 targets attached. The top left is the sighting and followed clockwise by the competition cards. I have never seen this before but later found out that this is the method of shooting free pistol throughout New Zealand.

The weather was good with no wind. I shot above average but found it difficult to shoot on the top card, because the bottom of the top card continued onto the top of the bottom card leaving a very large area of white, and since I aim low on the target I was getting more low shots than usual.

There was a 45 minute break before the second half because the other two shooters decided to have lunch, since this is the usual practice during free pistol.

SCORE: 523

The standard match commenced late at 4.30 pm, when the weather had changed for the worse.

The gloves came in very helpful during this period, but I still could not hold the gun tight and squeeze off the shot during the 20 and 10 second series.

By the end of the match I was so cold that I was beginning to shiver and the more I shot the worse I became.

There were 5 shots per card and the targets were not scored on the line but taken away and scored later. I had not previously used a score book, but it became necessary to record each series (with possible line shots) so that scores could be checked later.

SCORE: 543

SATURDAY 28TH FEBRUARY, 1981

½ Rapid, Air Pistol and Centre/Fire Precision

I managed to be squadded for the first rapid fire detail of the competition at 8.30 am. As usual it was cold with the icy wind blowing into my face. The sighting series did not help my confidence with two malfunctions caused by the cold weather. With the advice from Peter, I kept the loaded magazine in my pocket

(to keep it warm) and had no more malfunctions. As in standard match I had the problem of trying to hold the gun tight and then lacking a smooth trigger release, or relaxing the grip and finding the gun moving around too much. I managed to shoot 90 for the four seconds giving me a ½ course of 285.

Air Pistol

This match was shot indoors and I found the lighting a little dull. I could not obtain a clear sight picture and struggled throughout match. My final shot for the day was an accidental discharge giving me 39 shots for the match.

SCORE: 353

Central/Fire Precision

The weather was good and I was able to concentrate well for the first couple of cards. I then found it difficult to get the shot away and tended to rush. After the 30 shots, I finished with my average score of 278.

SUNDAY 1ST MARCH, 1981

2nd ½ Rapid and Centre/Fire Duelling

Good Weather

Before the start of the rapid fire at 10.00 am, I did twenty minutes of dry firing in the team caravan. I used the five patches which Peter had placed on the wall and his audible count-down timer. The previous time I had done this type of dry firing was at the Nationals in Blacktown where it also helped me to shoot a score of 290.

At all major shoots where time permits, I will now do 15 to 20 minutes dry firing before the rapid fire and duelling matches, because I know that it calms me down and allows for much improved trigger control.

Duelling 11.30 am

The weather was even better with most people taking off their coats.

With the sand behind the targets, the shot holes are very easy to see, so that I needed to concentrate very much on my sights. I did not have any problems and finished with a score of 288.

The presentations were made on Sunday afternoon with Queensland finishing with some excellent results.

The organisation of the National Championships was of a high standard and the publication of their score book (squadding details) was the best I have seen. There were about six members of the OTAGO PISTOL CLUB who did the majority of the work and those members are to be commended on the excellent work they performed.

The standard of competition could be compared to that of a state championship with the majority of the 40 New Zealand shooters being B and C grade. This standard was increased with the inclusion of ten members of the New South Wales team which was managed by HERMAN KRELLER.

This competition was the first time that the Queensland team had travelled and stayed together. The 20 minute trip to and from the range each day enabled me to obtain much more information concerning the training procedures of the other team members and their attitude towards the sport. I found the evenings at the motel to be most enjoyable and informative, and gained considerable knowledge in the difficulties and expense involved for the northern shooters to compete at open shoots. I hope that this knowledge will help me in the position of South East Zone delegate to the Q.A.P.S.A.

The great team spirit which was derived from this trip should enable the Queensland team to perform much better at the forthcoming Nationals at Blacktown.

I hope that in the future, other state teams will be able to travel to major shoots other than the Australian Nationals because I know that the experience gained will enable Queensland teams to perform better at the Australian Nationals.
