

2020 Riflemen's Weekend

Most of the year 2020 up to this point has seemed to go rather “wrong”, so it was an exceptionally nice change that our Riflemen's Weekend went “just right”. Reade Range hosted the match, as they do each year. I don't believe there is a greater blessing than spending three gorgeous early fall days shooting here with the best people on earth!

Friday was the Long Range Championship. Thirty-nine sling shooters and eighteen F-Class shooters came out. It started out pretty calm, but before long the wind started playing some tricks. Bill Gelet stayed ahead of them, though, and stayed ahead of all the other prone shooters as well. His 399-16x earned him the PA Long Range Prone Champion jacket. Michael Drass shot a pair of 197s on that little F-Class target to win the Long Range F-Class State Championship with his 394-17x.

The Mid Range Championship on Saturday was the biggest and busiest day of the weekend. We had seventy-one shooters and an ambitious 80-shot schedule (20 shots at 300 yards, 20 shots at 500 yards, and 40 shots at 600 yards.) It was a pretty long day, especially after climbing to the top of the 500 yard firing point several times. But the weather was perfect and the match ran smoothly, so we were able to complete the entire course of fire. The 300 yard stage lulled some of us into false sense of security early on, as there were a lot of cleans fired, including George VanWhy's 200-19x on the F-Class end of the range. Gwen Basalla didn't let up, though. She cleaned the 300 yard line, the 500 yard line, and one of the 600 yard stages, only dropping two points all day long! That well-deserved 798-43x got Gwen the title of Mid Range F-Class Champion. It wasn't quite as simple on the other end of the range. There were several very good scores fired, but Jeff Browning came out on top, putting a 799-51x on the board. But, until Jeff moves north of the Mason-Dixon, he can't be the PA State Champion. That title for Mid Range Prone went to Carl Bernosky who was right on Jeff's heels with a 799-44x.

On Sunday we ran the across-the-course match, which is also the PA NRA Service Rifle Championship. We had fifty-one shooters total, forth-two with service rifles and nine match rifles. Allen Castle won the match rifle class with a 792-33x. Even with a great score like that, though, he couldn't quite catch Amanda Elsenboss with her service rifle, who shot a 796-38 to become this year's PA State Service Rifle Champion.

Each year at Riflemen's Weekend we name our Ultimate Rifleman. The honor is earned by the shooter who fires the highest combined long range, mid range, and across-the-course score. Amanda put together three days of great shooting to add the 2020 Ultimate Rifleman label to her jacket!

I'd like to include a special thank you to everyone from Reade who helped to run the matches and make certain everything was in order. Thank you to Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol Club for their help with additional targets. Thank you to Browning Custom Databooks and Geissele Automatics for donating prizes. And especially thank you to all the shooters who travelled from ten different states to make this a successful, fun match and a much-needed vacation from 2020!

God Bless,
Jeremy Castle