



ALAMO MUZZLE LOADING GUN CLUB

www.amlgc.org

SMOKE SIGNAL NEWSLETTER

March 19th, 2021

Editor – Ian Straus

APRIL SHOOT DATE CHANGED:

Because April 4th is Easter Sunday, we have changed the April first-Sunday shoot to a second-Sunday shoot. **Sunday, April 11th is our monthly club shoot date** and we will have a 40-shot silhouette shoot, rifles with round ball only.

WORK PARTY tomorrow, Saturday March 20th, as announced last month. We will fix rooves, fix fences, and do a general spring cleanup. Come by 9AM, work 'til noon (but it would be good if someone would work later if the roof is open to the sky). Bring appropriate tools and work gloves. Our range is not "them" it is us.

The 4-H Medina County shoot had three 4-H clubs and 65 competitors. Thanks to Clif Denny for taking pictures;



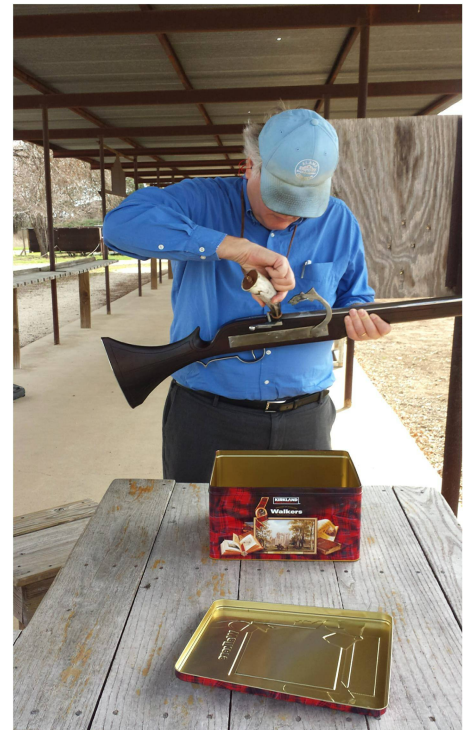
SAFETY note: Our range rules say shoot at paper targets unless the board of directors makes an exception, as at skirmish shoots. Look at this glass pot lid that was carefully glued to wires and found hanging from a frame: Do you think the maker would have picked up all the glass splinters if it was shot? "Shooting this is a good way to get kicked out." – quote from the board meeting



FEBRUARY 4TH SHOOT SCORES: Expect to see some movement between classes, because class is computed on the last two months' scores and there are some awfully good scores in class B winners.

		25 Yd Ground Hog		25 Yd 6 Bull		50Yd 3 Bull		50Yd Bear
Class A:	1	Dennis Rich 43	1	Dennis Rich 48X	1	Bill Knipscher 43	1	Clif Denny 41X
	2	Bill Knipscher 43	2	Bill Knipscher 48	2	Clif Denny 43	2	Bill Knipscher 37X
	3	Clif Denny 43	3	Clif Denny 46X	3	Dennis Rich 25	3	Dennis Rich 21X
Class B:	1	Gareth Henderson 42	1	Gary Quandt 46	1	Rich Beardsley 42	1	John Burke, Jr 42X
	2	Gary Quandt 42	2	Gareth Henderson 46	2	Alex Michlberger 41	2	Alex Michlberger 39X
	3	John Burke, Jr 38	3	John Burke, Jr 45	3	John Burke, Sr 32	3	John Burke, Sr 31
Class A Rifle Agg:			1	Clif Denny 173 2X	2	Bill Knipscher 171X	3	Dennis Rich 137 2X
Class B Rifle Agg:			1	Alex Michlberger 162X	2	Rich Beardsley 143	3	Gary Quandt 142
Class A Pistol:			1	Chuck Rine 85	2	Clif Denny 80	3	Dennis Rich 52
Class B Pistol:			1	John Burke, Sr 69	2	Gary Quandt 68	3	John Burke, Jr 60

New toy: A couple of weeks ago I received my new pride and joy, a matchlock musket, .75 caliber smoothbore, a reproduction of an English gun from the early 1600s. Note that before I bought it, we discussed safety for it in the directors' meeting: The only extraordinary safety precaution for our range is to put the lit match cord in a can while loading, (NOT to follow the original drill which would involve putting the match in my left hand along with the musket, while loading with my right hand). I also won't burn the match at both ends, as the original users used to do. They didn't have butane lighters. The third obvious deviation from the original drill is to prime on the firing line (according to our range rules) as one of the last steps in loading. rather than priming before putting powder in the bore.



(The last steps in preparing to fire are to put the match into the clamp on the serpentine and to test where it falls before opening the pan cover.)

So far I have learned that managing the lit match so it doesn't go out is a skill, putting it into the serpentine so that it will contact the pan and not bend to the side is also a skill, and that I need to do "follow through" with a matchlock just like with a flintlock. I have nitrated my own hemp match cord and it's not yet as good as the cotton slow match from Dixie Gun Works, that's also a skill.

The gun is surprisingly accurate at 25 yards with just a loose fitting ball, no patch or Alox (and no rear sight): See the first target I shot, at right.

I am still finding my sight picture: if I bend my head low to sight, then the raised "fishtail" of the stock will whack me in the face when it recoils. There is a reason stock shapes changed!

It shoots dirty: with the loose ball the pressure is not as high, so the powder burns incompletely. I brush the bore more frequently than I would in a rifled musket skirmish.



I bought a forked rest, and just as cross sticks don't improve my rifle scores, the rest has not improved my matchlock musket accuracy so far. But it looks cool, just like a woodcut from the 1600s.



RESTROOM: Most of you know two copper pipes in our range restroom froze and broke in the great Texas freeze and power failure. Everyone should thank Alan Pinel, who cut the water off before much leaked. The club brought in two porta-potties for the 4-H county match. We have contracted with a plumber, and the pipes should be fixed this week. The wall between men's and women's rooms will have to be replaced. Well, that wall was on our repair list anyway. But until the pipes are fixed, bring your own drinking water to the range.

Until next month –
Ian Straus

