

July 28, 2007 Gong Shoot

The morning of Saturday, July 28 was overcast and slightly humid as buffalo hunter Gary Gahagen crawled into a prone position and peered through the early morning fog atop a grassy knoll overlooking a small herd of buffalo. His spotter, Groves Herrick pointed out one of the herd leaders not more than 50 yards away. Gahagen smiled and nodded as he laid his big 45-70 buffalo rifle into the cross sticks that Groves had all set up for him. Both men knew from experience that if they dropped a leader first, the herd would not be likely to scatter. After sliding one of those long 45-70 black powder cartridges into the chamber and carefully closing the rifle's action, Gary took aim and gently squeezed the trigger. Down went the buff and when the smoke cloud drifted off to the side, both hunter and spotter knew they had made the right choice for the first shot. The small herd was still there grazing away as they thought their leader was unconcerned with the loud boom and had just laid down to rest. And so it went for the rest of the day as 14 buffalo hunters boomed away for a very successful hunt at the Blue Hill Rifle and Pistol Club's range in Blue Hill, Maine for the Club's third Gung shoot of the season. The targets were actually metal buffalos.

Credits:

Richard Noble and his brother-in-law Richard Passmore worked on the range in mid-week before the event. The club's riding mower was out of commission so Noble spent hours mowing with a push mower while Passmore preformed much needed repairs to a picnic table and a very shaky old shooting bench. A very big "thank you" as I know it was very hot that day !

Another very big "thank you" to Groves Herrick and also to all the shooter/spotters who took time out from their shooting to assist their fellow competitors in scoring as well as spotting. It's nothing short of great to see everyone helping everyone else.

Last, but certainly not least, an extra big "thank you" to my wife Phyllis as she did a super job with registration, lunch, final score tally and filling out certificates for the first three place winners of each class at the end of the day. This was a very big job for one person that lasted from 8 AM to 5 PM !

Highlights:

In the Senior (60+) Sporting Rifle class, it was a very tight race between Wayne Morse of Saco, Maine and Jerry Bishop of Lucerne-in-Maine with Morse winning by one shot at the end.

Two new competitors to Gong shooting, Larry Stutz of Ilesboro and Scott Whitman of Appleton each took home 1st place certificates. Stutz won the regular Sporting Rifle class while Whitman took top honors in the Smokeless Sporting Rifle event. Nice going guys !

There were a couple of tied scores that day. In the regular Sporting Rifle class, Richard Noble of Gouldsboro and Bill Enos of Belmont tied in a hot battle for second place. These events are very casual and relaxed, so we do not go on time. Shoot-offs are conducted usually only for first place ties or we may even call that a draw depending on the time of day. Speaking of draws, a first time Gong Shooter and club member Darin Gray of Sedgwick tied for 3rd place with an old pro Buffalo hunter, Bob Ellis of Ellsworth. Good shooting Darin ! Bob can be a tough competitor.

To all the Riflemen and Helpers, “thank you” for an excellent hunt and another fine day on the grassy knolls in Blue Hill, Maine ! Also, let’s not forget the Club’s very first “Mini Gong Shoot” for the young folks on Saturday August 11 at the club range. Three age levels from 11 through 16 using 22 caliber rifles and shooting at metal bears. Info on the club website at: www.bluehillr-p.org .

Shoot Results:

Senior Sporting Rifle

- 1st Wayne Morse of Saco
- 2nd Jerry Bishop of Lucerne-in-Maine
- 3rd Gary Gahagen of Belfast

Smokeless Sporting Rifle

- 1st Scott Whitman of Appleton
- 2nd Stuart Sachs of Hampden

Military Rifle

- 1st Will Cotton of Winterport
- 2nd Bill Guay of Glenburn
- 3rd Bob Ellis of Ellsworth
- 3rd (tie) Darin Gray of Sedgwick

Muzzleloader – Flintlock

- 1st Bill Enos of Belmont
- 2nd Will Cotton of Winterport
- 3rd James McCaleb of Etna

Buckshot Bish (Shootmeister)

Next Gong Shoots: Saturday, Aug. 25
Saturday, Sept. 29 (Maine State Championships)

Sporting Rifle

- 1st Larry Stutz of Islesboro
- 2nd Richard Noble of Gouldsboro
- 2nd (tie) Bill Enos of Belmont
- 3rd Bob Ellis of Ellsworth
- 4th Will Cotton of Winterport
- 5th Gary Gahagen of Belfast

Senior Military Rifle

- 1st Jerry Bishop of Lucerne-in-Maine

Muzzleloader – Percussion

- 1st Ashby Morton of Little Deer Isle
- 2nd Will Cotton of Winterport

Senior Muzzleloader – Flintlock

- 1st James McCaleb of Etna

Cap & Ball Pistol

- 1st Ashby Morton of Little Deer Isle
- 2nd Bill Enos of Belmont
- 3rd Bob Ellis of Ellsworth
- 4th James McCaleb of Etna
- 5th Will Cotton of Winterport