

Muzzle Loaders Associations International Committee

Dear Delegates,

Both of the MLAIC Zone Championships have now been completed, and these events will make up the first part of Newsletter No. 126.

1. European Zone Championships – Halikko, Finland

Reijo Naatanen and his team of hosts conducted one of the best-run and most pleasant Zone Championships I have ever attended. They are to be commended for the excellent quality of this event, where many exceptional scores were attained. The range at Halikko was well-designed for good shooting, and one need only take a look at the official results to see the high level of shooting skills that were displayed at this event. It would take pages and pages to give the deserved individual accolades to shooters, but one particular event does demand special attention. Six outstanding competitors achieved perfect scores of 100 in the replica class of the Vetterli event. Gold went to Walter Massing (Germany), silver to Thomas Baumhagl (Germany), bronze to Herve Amann (France), 4th to Jean-Sebastien Lagrue (France), 5th to Michael Frey (Germany) and 6th to Andreas Gassner (Austria). The next five scores were 99 and the following three were 98! The winning score in the Vetterli team event – Pforzheim – was Germany's amazing 299! Congratulations to all of these fine shooters!

A special demonstration event was requested by Germany and fired on Friday afternoon. The event utilized a special target with four bullseyes; one for sighters and the other three for five record shots each, for a total possible score of 150. Fifteen top shooters were the participants in this event, with Josef Mayr of Germany winning, scoring 145 in the original category and Rob Duijf of Netherlands winning the replica category with a score of 147. Outstanding shooting in an interesting event.

Those who volunteered their time to serve on both the Firearms Inspection staff and the Arbitration Committee also deserve our grateful appreciation for doing their work so professionally and efficiently that very few problems were encountered.

And last, but certainly not least, I again want to compliment the organizers of this year's European Zone Championship for not only hosting an extremely well-run shooting event, but also for preparing the finest Shooters' Buffet I have ever attended and an especially nice final dinner. Well done!!

2. Pacific Zone Championships – Bristol, Indiana, USA and Monarto, So. Australia

The shooters from Australia and New Zealand had completed their section of the event in late June/early July in conjunction with their Trans-Tasman shooting tournament. They turned in some excellent scores, which offered a real challenge to the group of competitors who later completed the event in the United States. We were pleased that participation was notably greater in the Australian part of the Zone event by allowing the match to be completed at two locations this year.

Inclement weather interfered with what had promised to be a smoothly-run event on an excellent shooting range in northern Indiana. Heavy downpouring of rain, very strong winds, and even a nearby touchdown of a tornado took its toll on range time. When a lightning bolt struck the ground at the end of the range near the camping area, there was concern that the event might not be able to continue. However, when the skies cleared sufficiently, all of the targets that could be retrieved from the wooded area surrounding

the range were brought back to the buildings to dry out and shooting began again the following day. The sun finally peeked out to stay on the final day, but some good scores were posted despite the interferences from “Mother Nature.” Shooters relaxed at the end of the last event with a chicken and ribs barbeque at the shooting range, relieved that they had actually been able to complete the event.

One welcome part of this past Pacific Zone Championship was the addition of three events for youth – a 100 meter prone rifle event named the Ferris match, a 50 meter offhand rifle event named the Soper match and a 25-clay bird shotgun event named the Mortimer match. A total of eight young shooters participated from Australia, Canada and the United States, posting some impressive scores and giving us high expectations for the future of our sport.

Many people worked very hard in Indiana under extremely difficult conditions, and we are most grateful to them for their support at this event.

3. 2004 – 21st World Championships to be held in the USA

The USIMLC Board of Directors, after much deliberation on several site proposals for the 21st World Championships, voted to award the location of the event to the Tri-County Sportsmen’s shooting range outside of Batesville, Indiana. Batesville is located in the southeastern section of the state, and is about one hour from two major international airports – Indianapolis (Indiana) and Cincinnati (Ohio). A large variety of international flights arrive and depart from both airports, making either one good choices for incoming participants. The dates have been set for Sunday, August 22, through Saturday, August 28, 2004. The fall national matches at Friendship, Indiana, will be held from September 11 through 18, which should be convenient for those who would like to extend their stay in the country to attend those matches, as well. Friendship is approximately one-half hour from Batesville. The tentative schedule for the World Championships is below, and more specific information will be forthcoming very soon to assist all participants in making their plans for accommodation and other arrangements.

Sunday, August 22, 2004:	Team registration 12 Noon to 6 PM at the range. Firearms inspection 12 Noon to 6 PM at the range.
Monday, August 23, 2004:	Registration continues 8 AM to 6 PM. Firearms inspection continues 8 AM to 6 PM. Practice 8 AM to 6 PM.
Tuesday, August 24, 2004:	Practice 8 AM to 4 PM. Delegates’ Luncheon 12 Noon. Opening Ceremonies 4 PM.
Wednesday, August 25, 2004:	Competition – first day 8 AM to 5 PM. Shooters’ Buffet 5 PM, following last practice relay.
Thursday, August 26, 2004:	Competition – second day 8 AM to 5 PM.
Friday, August 27, 2004:	Competition – third day 8 AM to 5 PM.
Saturday, August 28, 2004:	Final day of competition 8 AM to 2 PM. Shotgun shoot-offs as necessary 8 AM to 2 PM. Closing Dinner, time to be set.

4. MLAIC Events

I spoke with many delegates this past summer about a growing problem in the Vetterli event – one which surely displayed itself at the immediate past European Zone Championship. Scores of 100 in this event are becoming commonplace as the event is now shot, which makes the challenge of winning a medal in the event a very difficult one to overcome. Delegates must be prepared to find a workable solution to the problem, and I offer to you below a few for your consideration.

- a. Move the entire event from 50 meters to 100 meters, as was done in the Walkyrie event after the first 100 was achieved at the 1980 World Championships.
- b. Reduce the size of the 50 meter ISU pistol target now being used for this event.
- c. Forbid the use of the thick jackets and shooting pants for this event only. Many believe these shooting accessories give an added advantage.
- d. Divide the present Vetterli event into two separate events:
 - (1) Leave the present 50-meter Vetterli event as it now is shot, but limit it to roundball firearms only, and
 - (2) Add a new "Vetterli"-type event, with a new name, for slug-gun firearms only, with a suitable target, distance, etc.

I would ask that each delegate give this problem serious consideration, and also request that some proposals be offered for the upcoming Delegates' Meeting in Indiana.

5. Zone Championships in 2005

The European Zone Championships in 2005 will be held at Pforzheim, Germany. Both Canada and Japan have expressed interest in hosting the Pacific Zone Championships, and a decision will be made regarding this, hopefully, in the near future.

I will be sending out another newsletter after the World Long Range Matches have been completed later this month and welcome any news items from delegates. All of you have received the proposals sent out on behalf of Great Britain by David Brigden, and I will publish any additional proposals received prior to the 2004 World Championships so that you can give them due consideration prior to our Delegates' Meeting there.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donald W. Malson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Don Malson, Secretary-General