

Muzzle Loaders Associations International Committee

Dear Delegates,

Well, the Zone Championships for 2005 are now a part of MLAIC history and much good shooting was again seen at both venues. I was pleased to have been in attendance at both Zones and can report a very enjoyable time in both Germany and Canada.

The European Zones held in Pforzheim, Germany were on a level to match the finest World Championship. The shooting range, with its excellent electronic target system, provided a fine shooting environment for all of the 300-plus shooters. The efficiency with which the match was run was indeed impressive. From the moment we arrived at the airport to the moment of our departure we were treated with the utmost hospitality, making our visit to Europe full of good memories. We were saddened that our good friend Erich Illing retired at this event from his position with the Deutscher Schuetzenbund, but for the moment he is staying on as delegate. We expressed our hope that he will continue in this position, as his knowledge and expertise is most valuable to all of us. He would be very difficult to replace. Perhaps one of the most impressive aspects of this well-conducted event was the lack of protests and the atmosphere of great camaraderie that existed throughout the week. It would be wonderful if this could be the case all of the time!!

We were home only a few days (long enough to do some laundry and repack it!) before leaving again for the Pacific Zone Championships at Barrie, Ontario in Canada. Our friends in Canada hosted a fine, if smaller, Zone Championship that was run with both efficiency and style. The atmosphere was again friendly, which always lends itself to the enjoyment of everyone participating. Youth events were part of the Canadian program, and we saw some excellent shooting by young people who will certainly be offering a challenge to the rest of us very soon!

I was unable to attend the Long Range World Championship event held at Bisley, England earlier this month, but have been informed that it was a great success, with eight nations in attendance. The shooting conditions were very good and a number of new world records were set. Shooters from Great Britain set all five of the new records in the original category, and four of the five events in the reproduction category also saw new records (2005 was the first year for the separation of the classes in Long Range competition). The mid-range aggregate gold was won by Germany, setting a new record of 496.21, and the long-range aggregate was won by the U.S.A, setting a new record score of 409.10. The entire set of results and a number of photographs taken during the competition can be seen at the website of the MLAGB, which is www.mlagb.com/bisley2005. This part of the MLAIC shooting program is growing in popularity, and more nations are participating each year. South Africa has submitted a bid to host the Long Range World Championship in 2007 in Cape Town, and discussion among those present at Bisley seemed to support this bid. However, the final decision of venue will be confirmed at the Delegate's Meeting in Bordeaux next August.

I returned from the Zone Championships with a number of questions concerning improvement or clarification of our existing rules, changes to them, and possibly some new rules. I have sent this list of questions out to the Commission members for their thoughts and opinions. Once their responses have been returned to me I will send out another newsletter informing all of you. Some, if not all, of these items will undoubtedly be on the agenda for the meeting in Bordeaux.

Finally, our organization continues to grow, with the probable addition in Bordeaux of Poland and Croatia, and possibly Greece. Increasing interest and participation in our sport of muzzle loading competition is one of our goals, and I am pleased to see new nations coming into the MLAIC. Please welcome these new nations as they become full members and offer them your encouragement.

Best regards,
Donald W. Malson, Secretary-General