

Eastern Southland and Southland Shooting Championships

Invercargill, 6-7 December 2025

After much anticipation, the Southland Championships got underway at the Invercargill RC range located at Cobbe Road/ Stead St.

It was another glorious day in Southland, yet the forecasters threatened relentless heavy rain for Day 2 of the Championships. Event Management, therefore, snapped up the opportunity to kick on. It was determined that there were more than enough daylight hours to get some extra firing in before the heavens opened. The like-minded shooters embraced the idea of not getting wet and fired through the programme with such efficiency that we completed the full 2-day course of fire by 4pm in full sunshine. Our appreciation goes to the locals who helped run the event and witness the spectacle of NRANZ target shooting.

The course of fire was:

2 x 300 yards (10 shots)

2 x 500 yards (10 shots)

2 x 600 yards (15 shots)

The TR A-Grade competitors comprising Ken Chittock (Gore RC), Bruce Horwood (Ashburton & Invercargill), Martin Fleming (Ashburton) and John Snowden (Ashburton) started off as a close fought battle.

Snowden led the way with a 50.6 to Horwood's 50.5 and Flemings 50.4. Fleming led after the second 300 with the only 100 ex 100. 500 yards resulted in a shake-up, with Horwood firing a shot on the wrong target after one of several short aeroplane-induced cease fires. He was not the only one.

With Horwood taking himself out of contention, it became a tight battle between *Les Visiteurs* ...until Fleming interacted with his rear sight on one too many occasions. Points dropped. Mattered not - Snowden was on fire and ruthless with his finishing. The mirage occasionally switched directions which caught a few shooters out, but not Snowden. His master-class of 150 ex 150 in the 600 yard aggregate gave him a 5-point margin in the Grand Aggregate over Fleming. Horwood was a further point adrift and Chittock, always a threat, five behind Horwood.

Barry Brown (Malvern) fired consistently throughout the day to win B-Grade. Digby Taylor dusted off the trusty musket to claim C-Grade.

Meanwhile, in F-Open, Les Grimsey (Oamaru) fought off all comers. He was just two points down in the Eastern Southland Championships and seven down after the 6 shoots in the Southland Grand Agg. John Pearce (Oamaru) and Phil Gardiner (KBRC) had a close fought tussle in FTR. The spoils were shared with Gardiner claiming honours in the Eastern Southland Championships and Pearce the Southland Championships for the aggregate of all shoots.

FTR-Classic saw a 4-way battle with Sharon Grimsey being the victor over fellow Oamaru sharpshooter, Athol Henderson.

Ashburton claimed the concurrent Teams Match ahead of Oamaru.

Shooters enjoyed a well-deserved night out on the town after their 70 shots to count. The much-predicted rain never arrived so Sunday was a day of R&R and chance to enjoy the sunshine and/ or a leisurely drive home (all the way to Marlborough for PG).

Thanks to CK, Snowdy and Fingers for their guidance with the SMTs. Till next year.