

2018 Pacific Regional Shooting Championships

The 7th Pacific Regional Shooting Championships – Rifle Silhouette were hosted at Tokoroa Shooting Sport Complex, Tokoroa New Zealand on 13th -15th November 2018.

It was great to catch up with the regular members in the teams and meet the new faces debuting or those that were making a return for their country.

Most of the shooters had just competed in the New Zealand Silhouette Nationals which was a good warmup for this event with just a day's rest in between.

Andrew Judd laid down the rules and shooting got under way in Air Rifle in good weather which was to stay with us all the way through these Championships.

For those not familiar with our shooting format, team and individual matches are shot at the same time, with both countries putting up three (2 people) teams each. NZ Rifle Silhouette is fairly small especially with shooters shooting all 3 disciplines however we are proud that we are still able to put up three teams to make this a real competition. The teams were:

	New Zealand	Australia
A Team	Nikki Matheson Bryn Blythen	Theo Cassidy Dann Suthern
B Team	Geoff Brewer Allan Murray	Tony Powell Mark West
C Team	Erik Clausen Darin Grenz	James O'Brien Paul Dunn

After the first round there was only five points between Theo, Dann, Nikki, Mark and James. The shooters needed to bring their A game for the last round if they wanted to medal. After both rounds were tallied Theo and secured 1st place and Dann 2nd and there needed to be a shoot off between Nikki and Mark for third. Nikki, NZ's master of shoot offs won this one with 5/5 turkeys.

In the team's event 1st Australia A, 2nd Australia B and 3rd NZ A.

Day 2 was Smallbore Rifle class. Same format as the day before but all rifles are weighed and measured to make sure they fit the rules, with all rifles passing no problems. Shooting got under way and the scores were all very close after the first round again. In the second round Dann pulled out a 38 to take out 1st followed by Theo in 2nd and then Nikki with another third place. In the teams event 1st was Australia A, 2nd NZ A and 3rd Australia B.

Third and last day was Light Rifle (Hunter Class) again same format and the rifles checked this time for weight and all triggers get checked for a minimum of two pounds pull. There were some close ones but all passed much to the relief of their owners.

Some shooters use the same rifle for both classes (Smallbore and Light Rifle) and in Smallbore they may have a slight disadvantage but then they can have some advantage in Light Rifle as the two pound trigger can make this class much harder to shoot especially after shooting a lighter trigger in Air and Smallbore. Nikki's consistency throughout the competition was paying off as Theo and Dann's scores were down today. 1st was Nikki, 2nd Dann and 3rd Bryn. In the teams event 1st NZ A, 2nd Australia A, 3rd Australia B.

Prize giving this took place at the range where all the medals were handed out for the three days of competition.

NZ is proud of the performance of it's A team, medalling in all events. Bryn was making his debut in the NZ Silhouette team and had also just competed in the NZ A 3P team. He really found his mojo on the last day with 3rd individually. Nikki came into the event injured with concussion and a badly sprained wrist and performed admirably under the circumstances. Also worth noting that Allan Murray also shot well in the B team especially since he had recently had knee surgery and was still recovering.

All teams were well paired with just a few targets separating the teams every day. This makes for a great close competition. This style of competition is good for both NZ and Australia and helps us challenge our elite shooters. It also helps encourage our up and coming shooters by giving them something to aim for and can give some an introduction to international competition.

It is all over for another two years. We are scheduled to do battle again in Tokoroa 2020.

Thanks to all the shooters for their efforts and to Con Smith whom did all the scoring and to Juddy (Andrew Judd) for officiating the shoot.