

A BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY

Jon Snowdon swapped a day's stalking for the rifle range as he travelled to WMS Firearms Training in Wales to try out Minox's new riflescope range

One of the pleasures of this job is that occasionally I am asked to go off to events which are often very enjoyable. I was asked if I could travel down to Wales and spend a day with WMS Firearms Training, who was hosting the company Minox for a day's training its range, and to see the new product range that Minox is producing.

Minox was well known for its cameras over the years, and with its experience in optics the company has now moved in to riflescope manufacture, covering both sporting and tactical models.

WMS are a well known firearms training company that goes beyond the

usual range facility and this is what interested me in the trip. A busman's holiday you may think. However, my shooting, and the training I carry out, is about shooting at distances to result in clean humane despatch. WMS trains you to shoot at all distances, but it also has the facility to fire out to ranges that I had never had the experience of. And all of us, no matter how experienced, can always learn.

The Minox tactical scopes we used on the day were from the ZP range with tactical reticules, that is that they had graded markings in the reticule to compensate for bullet drop and wind deflection over various ranges. Some of

the tactical reticules I have used in the past are cluttered, but the Minox scope I experienced was clear out to some 900 yards, enabling accurate shooting after adjusting the optics and the ballistic turrets to counteract for the extreme range. It also had variable magnification and could be adjusted easily to enable a clear target at any distance. Having said that, to achieve the best results, accuracy is not always gained by winding the magnification up to maximum!

A satisfying gong

After the clear safety brief from Andrew Venables, managing director and lead firearms trainer of WMS, everyone started

WHM Firearms Training's Andrew Venables giving the safety briefing for the Minox training day



A Steelcore Cyclone and PGW Timberwolf were fitted with Minox scopes, which were excellent at all the ranges, from 100 to 900 yards



by shooting .22, .243 and .308 out to 100 and 200 yards. Andrew, who runs WMS with his wife Helena, made everyone relax during the brief and this was obviously going to be a fun, enjoyable day.

The WMS range has various areas festooned with steel targets of all kinds and all erected with safe backstops. I have to say the sound of the hit on the targets gave a very satisfying gong, some seconds later – so far, so good.

We then moved off to another range with two rifles – .308 Steelcore Cyclone fitted with the Minox ZP-3-15x56 and my favourite rifle of the day, the PGW Timberwolf .338LM rifle shooting with HPS 300-grain ammunition and on top a Minox ZP-5-25x56 scope – it was now off to the 900-yard range!

Again there was clear instruction from Andrew about wind and scope adjustment before we lay prone to shoot at the target way in the distance. Now this was interesting. On setting up the scope with the magnification increased to x15, I then looked at the angle of the



Looking through the spotting scope, you could see the disturbance of air caused by the bullet

barrel and it was some metres above the target. The surprise for me, prompted by Andrew, was that through the scope, due to the distance I was shooting at, you could see the shimmering disturbance of air throughout the bullet's trajectory as it lobbed in to the target. The returning

gong took some four seconds! WMS now have a range that enables shooting out to a mile, and I can't wait for the next trip!

Minox produces a range of scopes both sporting and tactical, binoculars, spotting scopes and trail cameras that are well worth a look if you are considering new kit.

The day with Andrew and Helena at WMS Firearms Training was smoothly run, informative, safe and above all great fun. I can recommend the day to anyone prepared to improve their shooting technique and to learn new disciplines. **SG**

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