



SHOOTING PRACTICE

Welsh STYLE

The term 'long-range shooting seminar' has set off some heated arguments. Due to the increasing frequency of hunting journal reports on such events, many hunters fear that they are being encouraged to be unsportsmanlike by taking long shots at game. In truth, the opposite is true!

Text and Photos: Gunther Stoschek







Wales is one of the six Celtic nations and Welsh is still spoken there with bilingual signage seen almost everywhere



For Andrew, a thumbhole stock is a 'must' even for the smallbore .22 rifles used in the warmup exercises

Simple but effective: Spray-painted targets made of extremely tough through-hardened high tensile steel. One can clearly see and hear the hits, even at long range. The bullets practically disintegrate upon impact



Andrew Venables from Ceredigion in Wales, professional shooting instructor and head of the Blaser Academy UK, makes his point: "Under normal conditions, roe deer should be taken at less than 150 meters, red deer at less than 200 meters." Nonetheless the shooting pro recommends target shooting at much longer distances. "It increases the hunter's ability to hit at normal ranges. Long-range training has the same effect on the hunter as driver's safety training does on the owner of a fast Porsche: Practicing under difficult conditions improves both ability and self-confidence."

A training day begins modestly with shots from a .22 rimfire rifle in different shooting positions at a distance of only 75 or 100 meters. The lightweight .22 rifle has only a single-stage trigger since, according to Andrew Venables, a set trigger is an unnecessary complication. After two or three hours of training in small groups, they then bring the Blaser R8 in .308 caliber onto the range for test firing at 100 meters. Just like the .22 rifles, all R8s are equipped with thumbhole stocks. "No question about it, every hunter shoots better with one!" states Andrew. And just like the smallbore rifles, every R8 is equipped with a sound moderator. Those who have never had the opportunity to shoot with a silencer in the field are thrilled after the first shot. 🐾🐾🐾





Andrew and Helena Venables are unbelievably patient when it comes to every aspect of practical shooting

The wide Welsh landscape unexpectedly reveals idyllic places such as this secluded haven



One can score excellent hits even standing behind a quadpod!



Report and recoil are more like that of a .222 and the impact of the bullet is more audible than ever before. All participants agree that they shoot better scores just by using the silencer. There is one other thing upon which they agree: Other countries should follow the example of Great Britain. Although the firearm laws of the island nation are among the strictest in Europe, the use of a sound moderator for hunting is common and in some regions encouraged. In other nations special permission is required, and applications from ordinary hunters are routinely denied. Yet hope for less bureaucracy here has not completely died out.

Under Andrew's supervision, the shooters proceed to the 200-meter firing point around noon. Andrew is satisfied with the results. "First come the compulsory exercises, and then you can have a go at free-style!" 300 meters, 450 meters, 500 meters (550 yards) – with almost every shot one hears the clear ring of the steel targets thanks to Andrew's expert reading of the wind and his precise instructions for adjusting the elevation settings on the ZEISS ASV scopes with bullet drop compensators. Now he instructs them to shoot at even greater distances. The range finally tops out at 850 meters (930 yards) in prone position. Ding! Ding! Our shooters can hardly believe that they are still hitting the targets! At the end of the day, Andrew unscrews the silencers and asks for one last round at the targets. The results are sobering. The uncomfortable muzzle blast and recoil bring us back to reality and they will accompany us once again when we return home to familiar hunting grounds. Here we had missed neither! 🐾



Shooting is a real pleasure when you attach a suppressor to reduce the noise and recoil. Note the typical cloud of white powder smoke



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If desired clients may arrange to use WMS rifles without charge.

Those who wish to compete with other shooters can do so without judgment: As one can see, a great time was had by all!