

# BEST TARGETS

## ***BEST Targets Shooting Team After Action Report (AAR)***

**Event:** 2016 Mammoth Sniper Challenge  
**Date:** January 8-10, 2016  
**Location:** Rockcastle Shooting Center, Park City, KY  
**Websites:** [www.mammothsniperchallenge.com](http://www.mammothsniperchallenge.com)  
[www.rockcastleshootingcenter.com](http://www.rockcastleshootingcenter.com)

**Shooter:** Chris Andrews  
**Rifle:** GA Precision GAP-10 chambered in 6.0 Creedmoor  
**Ammo:** Copper Creek Cartridge 6.0 Creedmoor with Hornady 105 gr BTHP  
**Gear:** Vortex PST 6-24x in Vortex precision rings with a Vortex scope level, Kahntrol Solutions muzzle brake, Harris Bipod w/Kahntrol Solutions Pod-Mod Adapters, Mechanix Wear gloves & Wiebad bags

**Shooter:** Scott Whitehead  
**Rifle:** Stiller Action/BruX Barrel/KRG X-Ray Chassis Rifle in 6.5 Creedmoor by Clowdis Precision  
**Ammo:** 6.5 Creedmoor Handloads. Berger 140 Hybrids, 43.0gr H4350, Lots R8a, R8c  
**Gear:** Vortex PST 6-24x in Vortex Precision Rings, Harris BiPod w/Kahntrol Pod-Mod Adapters & Wiebad bags

### **Facility Notes**

The Rockcastle Shooting Center located in Park City, KY bills itself as the ultimate shooting destination resort in the United States and we see why. In addition to the Mammoth Sniper Challenge, the Rock hosts the Benelli Tactical Shotgun Championship, the Trijicon Shooting Challenge, the Blue Ridge Mountain 3-Gun Championship and many more competition events and training sessions. They have recently launched Rockcastle Estates, our nation's first second amendment residential community where you can build a house right on the range and golf course facility. We shot our first ever precision rifle event here two years ago, the 2014 Mammoth Sniper Challenge, and this trip back reminded us of how large a facility this is. If you ever have a chance to shoot at Rockcastle don't pass it up.

### **Event Format**

The two person teams competing in the Mammoth Sniper Challenge are divided into three divisions: Open, Tough Man and Extreme Tough Man. Each division shoots the same eleven stage setups but the Open shooters do so with slightly different instructions than the Tough Man shooters. Open teams drive from stage to stage, shoot all day and stay at the Rockcastle Resort or a nearby hotel every night. Tough Man teams hike from the resort to their first stage every morning, hike from stage to stage all day and hike back to the resort at night to eat and sleep there. These hikes range from 1.5 to 4.5 miles each. Extreme Tough Man teams do the same hikes but also pack enough gear to camp out on the range for two nights. The Tough Man competitors must average 18 minute miles to make the time cut off from stage to stage. If you don't make the time cut off you drop out of the scoring system. We shot in the Open division for the third year in a row. Although the Tough Man divisions sound like an awesome challenge we haven't yet stepped up to it ... and may not ever.

Teams are grouped into Squads of 11-12 two person teams. We were assigned to Squad 6. Each Squad has a Range Officer that leads the group from stage to stage throughout the weekend. At each stage another Range Officer delivers the stage briefing, answers any questions and keeps score for each team. A Stage Spotter was assigned to each stage to call hits on targets. Squads of teams from all three divisions rotate around the complex for three days to complete all the stages. Because of the large rotation some squads shoot some stages on different days or at different times than others but this is just a consequence of being such a large match. Scores were only posted at the end of the event Sunday.

We were warned/instructed by Joe Harris at the 7:15 am Friday match briefing to pay attention to the details of the stage briefs as they were delivered and to ask any questions in the five minute question and answer time after the briefing. This turned out to be key information as the stage briefings contained important information that many teams missed. Range Officers were instructed to not help any team with pointers or suggestions during a stage. Although this was frustrating to everyone (including us) at times it was fair and equal for everyone. Unlike PRS events the time to complete a stage is not a factor in the scoring. At the end of each stage a team member had to sign a score sheet to confirm their stage score. After the match briefing we broke off into squads, lined up our vehicles and headed out to our first stage of the day.

The first stage we shot was Stage 10 - PARTNER ASSIST. This was a 4 min. stage. There were (4) targets ranging from a 10" round at 204 yds to an IPSC torso at 350 yds. Both shooters could engage all (4) targets with a maximum of (4) rounds. Only one hit could be scored per target. The shooter was to shoot using a partner assisted/supported position. Only the team's feet could touch the ground. No other gear could be used.

Scott and I chose a standing position resting our rifles across each other's shoulders. Although we were not happy with our score here there were a few teams that scored zero points because they had their supporting team member sit or kneel which was not allowed by the stage brief. After one stage teams had suffered for not paying attention to the brief.

Chris – We had planned to shoot with us both standing, but after the stage started, we realized that we had misjudged the angle of the shot. Scott needed to crouch lower than we planned, but we adjusted quickly. I scored only one hit. Scott and I tried to communicate to cycle his breathing with my target acquisition but this turned out to be a very unstable position. We practiced this once with John Boyette from the Trace Armory Group but we definitely need to practice this more.

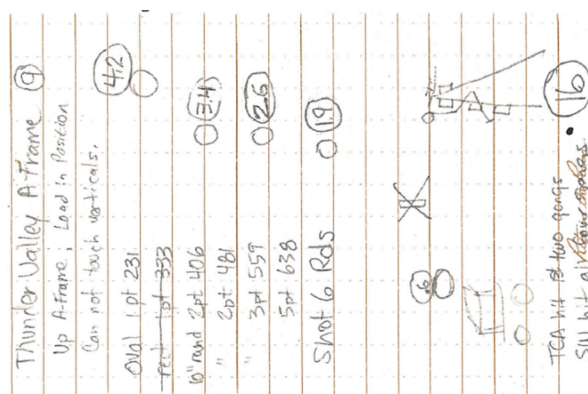
Scott – The standing partner assisted position was not very stable. During my first few shots, I completely forgot to call for BREATHE and HOLD because I was concentrating so much on the trigger squeeze so as not to screw up an already unstable shot. I was able to connect with three of the four targets. Shooting with only a partner assist is definitely a skill that requires practice and we need more of it.

The second stage we shot was Stage 9 – A FRAME. This was a 4 min. stage. There were (6) targets here ranging from a BEST Targets oval at 231 yds to a round at 638 yds. Both shooters could engage any (4) of the (6) targets with a maximum of (4) rounds per target. Only one hit could be scored per target. The shooting position was seated on a ladder looking step at the back of the top of a wooden a-frame about 15 feet in the air. The shooters could only touch horizontal elements of the a-frame. At the buzzer both team members were to climb up into position and then divide up the time however they decided to so as to maximize their team points.

Rather than panning across the field to engage (4) close targets Scott and I planned to each engage the (4) circles that were lined up between 406 and 638 yds in a path in the grass. This would let both of us to shoot with little movement.

Chris – I climbed into position quickly and Scott handed me my rifle before he climbed up next to me. It took me a while to get a solid position but when I did I hit the first two targets I engaged with the second round on each. I struggled to hit the third target so after my fourth shot I called out to Scott to take over and cleared my rifle.

Scott – After spotting for Chris with my rifle I had already built a somewhat stable position on the A-Frame. The two boards in front of us were only maybe 10" apart and the shots were slightly downhill, so I used a small Str8 Laced bag under the front of the rifle and set the magazine on the rear board. I squeezed on the front bag with my weak side hand to control elevation providing a very stable position. Per our plan I skipped the first two smaller targets with lower point values and went straight to four farther gongs – and was able to hit all four of them.



The third stage we shot was Stage 5 – BACK RIDGE. This was an 8 min. stage. There were (4) targets here of varying size and point value and all were 706 yds away. The shooter could engage any target at any time in any order but had to report to the Stage Spotter and Scorer which target they were shooting at. The shooting position was prone off a small pile of rocks. The targets were in a small clearing on a hillside on the opposite side of a valley. This valley had a huge wind passing thru it. Each shooter was allowed to fire 20 rounds for score but they had to quit after 5 misses. As an option one of the team members could shoot partner assisted. If this option was chosen any hits counted for double points and since their team mate wasn't available to spot the Stage Spotter would help by calling the misses until a hit was scored. If this option was chosen the partner assisted shooter was also allowed to shoot all of their 20 rounds regardless of misses.

In our prep for this stage we came up with what we thought was a good plan. Chris would shoot first partner assisted off of Scott's shoulder. This would afford us 20 shots to get a good wind call and would also give us the advantage of using the Stage Spotter's experience and good glass to get us on target.

Chris – I was able to get into position quickly behind Scott with my left knee on the ground and my right elbow supported on my right knee. Scott provided a solid shoulder to rest on and the Stage Spotter called my misses well. I connected on my third shot and proceeded to hit the 1 point target 9 times in 20 rounds for a total of 18 points. This was awesome. As I got up to get on the spotting scope for Scott I let him know that I had been hitting by holding 0.5 mil off the right edge of the target. The mistake that we made next cost us many points. In the swap of positions I failed to notice that Scott didn't call out his target. I spotted his first shot high and right. I spotted his second shot off the left edge. Scott center punched the target with his next three rounds but they didn't score. The spotter could not tell us what we were doing wrong. Ugh.

Scott – When I was supporting Chris in his shots, I concentrated completely on being stable and following his breathing commands. I chose to start on the large target to make sure I had the wind call right, and built a position on the rock using a front bag. My first two shots were misses and Chris called them well which got me on target on the third shot. After making contact, both of us seeing the hit, and hearing the target ring, we were surprised that the scorer did not call a hit. We immediately tried to figure out what was wrong thinking that maybe my position was somehow not allowed. I changed to using the bipod since using the front bag was not explicitly spelled out in the rules. I connected again, but still got no hit call from the scorer. We scrambled again to identify the problem, changed a few more things, got another hit, but still scored no points. Now that we had 5 misses and our stage was over the RO told us we were not being scored because we had not identified what target we were shooting. I was sure I had called out "same target" or something like that. Since I was shooting at the same target as we had been shooting on before – we had not changed targets – no call should have been needed but there was no point in arguing now – I would receive a zero for this stage.

The final stage we shot on Friday was Stage 4 – FRONT RIDGE. This was an 8 min. stage. There were (4) targets here of varying size and point value and all were 860 yds away. The shooter could engage any target at any time in any order but had to report to the Stage Spotter and Scorer which target they were shooting at. There were two prone positions to shoot from and both shooters could shoot 10 rounds from each position. The two positions were only 10 yds from each other.

The plan here was simple. Scott would shoot from each position first and I would follow.

Chris – I was not able to see trace or spot misses as easily here as on the last stage. After Scott scored (6) hits from the first position I followed up with (3) more. Neither of us hit from the second position even though it was only 10 yards away from the first. After the stage ended the scorer told us that Scott hadn't called a target from the low position. In addition to being a mistake on his part I also missed it. We vowed for the rest of the event to yell out our targets so loud it was funny.

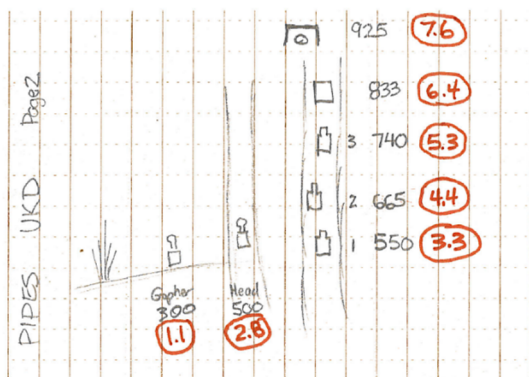
Scott – It took a few rounds for me to get the wind call from the first position but once I did I was able to score (6) hits. After Chris shot that position and racked up another three hits we moved to the further forward position. Unfortunately, from this position I was not able to score a single hit, and I have no idea why.

Saturday morning we met at 7:00 am and proceeded to Stage 8 – PIPES. This was an 8 min. stage and it included 15 minutes of time before the first team shot for all of the teams to be able to mill dot range the targets. There were (6) targets plus another bonus target. Distances ranged from a gopher at 300 yds thru (3) IPSC torso at 550, 665 745 and finally a square at 833 yds. The bonus target was a round at 925 yds and it could only be engaged after ALL (6) targets were engaged. The shooting and spotting positions were both on a concrete pad where there were (2) sets of (4) 6" diameter PVC tubes laid out. The shooter had to shoot from on top of the (4) tubes on the left and he could have with him a rifle, a bipod/front bag and a rear bag. The spotter had to spot from on top of the (4) tubes on the right. All gear had to be carried thru the stage. No gear or body part was allowed to touch the ground. The tubes must remain parallel with each other. There were many details and technicalities to pay attention to on this stage.

In the 15 min. ranging time Scott measured the height and width of all the targets while I drew a range card. We used the *Mil-Dot Rangefinder* app on my smartphone to do the mil and dimension to yardage conversion. We were confident in our ranging as we used both the height and width of all the targets. Many teams made the mistake of using only one dimension and had incorrect ranges as some of the targets were angled in the side view. Scott and I planned on hitting the (4) targets lined up from 550 to 833 yds first so that we wouldn't have to pan over to the left to hit the closer lower point value targets. We planned on our spotter not spotting the targets but instead watching all the gear for infractions and keeping an eye on the spotter/scorer. If the spotter/scorer or range officer saw any infraction they would come off the spotting scope and not score any hits. It was key here for the spotter to let the shooter know when he was clear to shoot.

Chris – I got into the shooting position first and although the tubes were difficult to get into position on I was surprised at how stable I was once I got my position established. I hit the first (2) targets on their second shot but then I sent four rounds at the 3<sup>rd</sup> target with no luck so I cleared my rifle and tagged out to let Scott get into position.

Scott – When I got onto the tubes, Chris helped me move the tubes into position where I needed them just like I had done for him. I had the front of the rifle under one tube, a second tube under my armpits supporting my upper body, one under my waist, and one just above my knees to prevent my sagging pants (at the knees) from touching the ground like Chris fought while he was shooting. I was able to hit all three of the IPSCs and the square that we had planned to shoot and had time to follow up on the smaller head target for a few more points. Because of our teamwork and planning this was a very strong stage for both of us. This was also a stage where many teams scored zero points due to procedural errors.



Our next stage was a short walk up the hill to Stage 11 – THE HIDE. This was also an 8 min. stage. The two man team had to crawl under barbed wire to get into position into a hide build out of cedar logs. There were (7) targets to engage with up to (4) rounds each but only one hit could be scored per target. Distances to the targets ranged from 565 to 836 yds. The catch to this stage was that once the shooter was in position only the spotter could ask the scorer the distance to each target and then he had to relay it to the shooter as they moved to engage it.

Chris – Scott got into the shooting position first and I relayed the distances to each target as I got them from the scorer. He hit (6) of the (7) targets and moved to the right and out of the hide to let me get into position. The shooting position was awkward as my scope was hitting the roof of the hide when the rifle was on target. I only hit (1) of the targets. There was a strong wind here in thunder valley and after talking to Scott about the stage I'm sure I was missing the wind call.

Scott – After crawling under the barbed wire and getting into the hide I quickly found the position was far more awkward than it seemed. There was very little vertical space between the bottom of the shooting port and the top of the inside of the hide. This meant the scope was hitting a few of the tree limbs used to construct the hide. I got the rifle as low as I could and was certainly not comfortable shooting here but I was stable. After hitting the first large target with the first shot and holding no wind, I moved to a smaller target, and missed it. Chris made an excellent call – seeing my trace go off the right edge. I held 0.3 left wind and center punched it on the second shot. As I continued to move across the backside of Thunder Valley the hits kept coming with a gradually increasing wind call. I hit 6 targets here – more than I think any other shooter in our division. We made the decision to keep me shooting for a little longer than half the time since I was doing well but this left Chris a little short on time to get his shots at all the targets in.

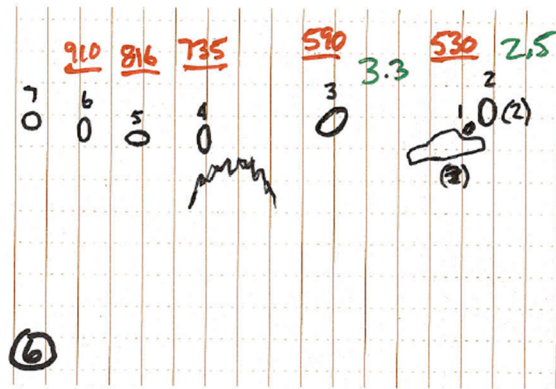
After the HIDE we hiked to the other side of Thunder Valley to Stage 6 – TOBACCO BARN. This was an 8 min. stage. The tobacco barn is a fixture stage at the Mammoth events at Rockcastle. The two man team had to climb up onto a platform and then up a ladder to a deck in the loft of the barn. (6) targets had to be ranged with a laser rangefinder from the deck and then could be engaged by both shooters in any order. All of the targets on this stage were BEST Targets ovals and they ranged from 530 to 910 yds. There was also a bonus target at approx. 1000 yds.

Scott and I had a good plan here that we ended up using again at two more stages later in the event. Scott got into the shooting position first and ranged all the targets while I got in position to spot and call out the ranges back to him.

Chris – After he ranged the first (6) targets Scott hit all (6) of them with (6) shots as I called them out to the scorer and reminded Scott to adjust his turrets and watch his scope level for each shot. I called Scott off the bonus target here. He wanted to take a shot at it but since we weren't able to range it we didn't have good dope and I felt like this would be wasted time. After we swapped positions I hit targets 2, 4 and had a great shot and hit on target 5 as Scott yelled out "5 seconds". We always run our own timer to help us manage our time and I was just squaring up on the target when he yelled out. I squeezed the trigger, heard the buzzer go off on the timer and then heard the ring of steel 816 yds away ☺.

Scott – After climbing the ladder into the barn I grabbed the range finder and started ranging targets and calling them out to Chris who was setting up his spotting scope and writing the ranges down. When we were done ranging targets I started to get behind the gun and found the shooting position for the first target to be rather uncomfortable. The way the platform was oriented you could take the first two shots weak side or from a rather twisted up strong side. I chose the latter and it worked rather well. As I moved from right to left across the target array the position got more comfortable. I hit all 6 targets on the first shot – taking the time to make each shot count. I wanted to take a shot at the bonus target but I had to switch

out and we didn't have a good range from the rangefinder so it would have been a guess. Chris got behind his gun and was able to connect with 3 of the 6 targets. His hit on the last target was a buzzer beater – I actually heard the shot break before the buzzer and the clang of the gong after the buzzer. Once again our time management helped us here.



The final stage we shot on Saturday was Stage 7 – THE CAR. This was a 4 min. stage. There were two shooting positions here for both shooters to shoot from and all the targets needed to be ranged with a rangefinder after the stage started. The first position was a 90° canted shot where the rifle had to be laid on it's side on the hood of a small SUV. A backback or bag could be used for support. Both shooters had to engage two round targets here and they were 270 and 350 yds out. After both shooters did this the first one had to climb into the back of the SUV and shoot (2) diamonds 460 yards away. The second shooter moved into this position as the first shooter moved out. There was a lot of movement required on this stage and not a lot of time to do it.

We planned for me to shoot both positions first as my gas gun should get me done sooner and give Scott more time.

Chris – I am very confident in my 90° shooting as we've done the math and practiced several times. I hit both targets with single shots and cleared the position for Scott to do the same. After he was done I climbed into the back of the SUV and hit the first diamond with one shot and the second diamond on the second shot. As I was coming out of the side door of the SUV I checked the countdown timer velcroed to my arm and yelled out to Scott "you have 15 seconds!"

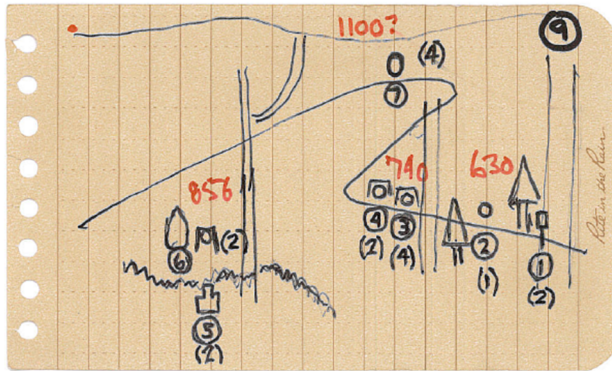
Scott – After Chris connected with his two 90° shots, the pressure was on for me to do the same. I connected with the first shot but pulled my second shot and had to make it up with a third. Either way, we both cleaned the 90° targets which was worth a lot of points AND something which very few teams did. While Chris climbed into the back of the SUV I pretty much decided that I was not going to get in the back due to time and we would use whatever time we needed to in order to get Chris some points here. After Chris connected with both diamonds I got ready to dive in. As I was diving in Chris told me I had only 15 seconds and the pressure was on to get at least one clean shot – but I pulled the first one. I knew it the second the shot broke and before the round ever impacted anything I was running the bolt for a follow-up shot. And for the second time in the weekend, I heard three sounds.... BANG! BEEEEEP!! And DING! We had another buzzer-beater!

Sunday morning we met again at 7:00 am and headed out into the below freezing temperatures, light snow and gusting winds towards Stage 3 – GOLF COURSE. This was an 8 minute stage and it included (7) targets spread across the far hillside of a golf course. The shooting position was up on a set of (4) large cable spools. We had to pull our gear to the spools for about 20 yards in a sled. There were several rules about bipod position and what could be touching what and where. This was a stage that many teams had scored zero points on earlier in the weekend. Scott and I shot this stage last in our squad and most everyone we heard scored zero hits. Once again this was a laser rangefinder stage.

Scott and I planned to run this stage exactly like the Tobacco Barn stage. After we pulled the sled to the spools he would get in the shooting position and start ranging targets. I would setup the spotting scope and start writing down the ranges as he called them out. He would shoot while I spotted and then we'd change positions. We selected our target order based on distance, visibility and the ability to see splash.

Chris – After pulling the sled we both got into our positions quickly. Scott ranged a few targets then struggled on one. He called out for the backup rangefinder and I got that to him quickly from the sled. The trace and the misses were very easy to see in these conditions and I was able to help Scott hit (2) of the first (3) targets he shot at. We had already tied the one team in our squad that had a few hits when Scott had to reload. I looked at the timer and there was only 1:30 left. I made a quick call here and told Scott that we weren't going to be able to swap positions and have me score hits with that little time left so I told him to move to the 1100 yd high point value target. We had just over a minute to take (4) shots and hit it. Scott's first shot blew off the right edge. I told him to make a .2-.3 mil adjustment and his second shot went just off the right edge as well. I yelled out "you need to make a more aggressive adjustment and we have 30 seconds left for two shots" and then he center punched the 18" wide x 36" tall BEST Targets oval at 1100 yds scoring us 4 points.

Scott – We definitely had a good stage plan here. We shot near the end of the squad and we rehearsed who was doing what a few times. When the rangefinder hiccupped on one target we already had a plan to use the backup and that worked very well – although I think the problem was more due to branches and conditions than the rangefinder itself. We started on the target where we could best see splash and this was a very good decision. Chris and I figured out the wind on the first target and that helped us a lot. We got a few hits on some intermediate range targets and then had one or two targets that we could not make contact with. When Chris decided I should keep shooting and try to score on the longest range target I settled down a bit. I guessed on the first wind call and Chris spotted it perfectly off the right edge. I added a little wind, but not enough, and the wind must have picked up a bit as well and we sent another shot off the right edge. After Chris prodded me to make a bigger wind adjustment I added .5 mils and that's just what it needed. Sometimes we all get a little bashful about those big wind adjustments but boldness is often rewarded.



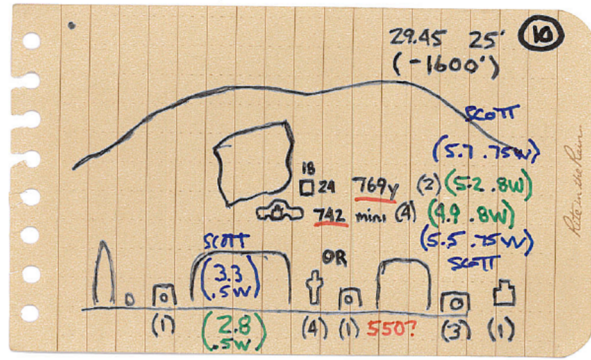
After the GOLF COURSE we drove to the Red Barn for Stage 1 – TIRES. This was an 8 min. stage. The shooting position for this stage was up on a raised platform that had car tires laid out on it. All gear could only be touching the tires and not the framework of the deck or the plywood under the tires. Another requirement of the shooting position was that your arms from wrist to shoulder could not be touching the tires. There were (5) targets at a treeline that had to be hit with a laser rangefinder first and (2) more targets up a hill behind them at 742 and 769 yds out. This stage was setup in an open field and the cold weather and blowing snow made the wait for this stage a challenge in itself.

We planned to run this stage exactly like the two previous laser rangefinder stages. Scott would climb up to the shooting position and range the lower targets while I setup the spotting scope. After I spotted for Scott and he engaged all the targets we'd swap positions and finish. We used our Kestrel to monitor the wind before we moved to the on deck position.

Chris – Scott was able to get into position quickly. He ranged the lower targets at 550 yds and I got on the spotting scope. Scott missed the first target off the right edge four times. He moved to the second target and hit it on the third shot. He hit one more target on the second shot but the wind calls I was giving him from the Kestrel seemed unusually low for what it felt like. When he went to reload Scott yelled that he needed help. His fingers were so cold he couldn't pull the magazine from the pouch on his belt. It occurred to me that I should have called him down from the position at that point but instead I helped him with the magazine so that he could get off two more shots. Both were misses so we rotated positions. I struggled to get into position and launched two poor shots at the first target before time expired.

Scott – Prior to the stage we carefully watched the wind. It was blowing from left to right, never going below 5mph, and gusting to 10mph. We could see the snow blowing downrange and the wind was consistent all the way to the targets. I bracketed my wind call based on those winds and knew what I was going to need to hold – or so I thought. After fighting with the shooting position for a few minutes I felt like I was finally stable and started shooting at the first target. With Chris unable to see trace I was feeling my way around between my wind brackets – and missing. When I got to the second target I finally connected but it was taking me a long time and I was missing a lot. My fingers started getting cold but I felt like I could still feel the trigger (regardless, my cold fingers were getting my attention when I should have been concentrating on my shooting). After two hits and lots of misses I needed to change magazines but my fingers were so cold and my AW magazines sit so low in my mag pouches that I could not reach them. I had to ask Chris for help getting the magazine out of the pouch. Even though I didn't know where we were on time at this point I should have known to quit right there – but I was being stubborn or trying to be tough – I'm not sure which. It took a while for the spotter to get on glass after my reload because I left the empty magazine on the platform inside a tire – no equipment was allowed to touch any surface except for the top of the tires. My next two shots were misses and we switched positions. Like Chris, I could not see any trace, and I could not help him at all behind the scope.

After the stage the spotters said they could see most of my shots off to the right and they said we were definitely under-calling wind. Others with Kestrels said that our wind numbers were way low. We're not sure if it was the low battery or a sticky or dirty impeller but the Kestrel combined with our lack of experience in reading wind bit us here. My lack of a good cold weather shooting glove I had confidence in cost me as well. One of our sponsors Mechanix Wear makes a great cold weather glove that I'll have in my shooting bag next time and I need to resolve the mag pouch situation ASAP.



Our last stage of the event was Stage 2 – PLATFORM AND BENCH. This was a 4 min. stage and was very PRS-like. There were (4) targets – a BEST Targets oval at 319 yds, a very small circle at 357 yds, a diamond at 392 yds and a rectangle at 464 yds. There were (2) shooting positions – the first shooter was to engage all (4) targets from a standing position placing only the bipod and one arm on a bench and the second shooter was to engage them from a weight bench resting their rifle on a crossbar.

Chris – Because the ranges of these targets fell on 0.25 mil increments I planned to use holdovers to engage them quickly. After I hit the first target with the first shot I changed plans and dialed for the next three. I hit the circle on the first shot. I hit the diamond on the first shot but the scorer did not call a hit. Scott yelled out that my left foot was touching the upright on the platform so I moved it over and hit the diamond again. I moved to the rectangle and hit it with the first shot then cleared my rifle for Scott to get into position. After we finished this stage the RO and Scorer did not count my second hit on the diamond because they claimed I had moved on to the rectangle and then came back to the diamond. I don't believe I did that and we had a heated conversation about it but in the end this discrepancy cost us 2 points.

Scott – After Chris cleaned his section of this stage I had a boost of confidence moving into my position on the incline bench. The position I had planned did not work as well as I thought though – I had mis-estimated the shooting position during the walk-through. My leg was not flat on the bench in the shooting position – instead it floating just above it which gave up a lot of the stability I was counting on. I still felt pretty stable and was able to connect with three of the four targets. My wind call was just not good enough to hit the narrow rectangle/wind strip.



## Things Done Well

The biggest strength we showed as a team at this event was our communication, time management, planning and execution. We listened closely to the stage briefs (as we were warned to do) and caught a few details or instructions that other teams missed. 90° canted shooting continues to be a highlight for us as we've done the math and practiced it. Scott has been shooting his 6.5 Creedmoor for a few years now and together they've become a solid package out to 1100 yds.

Chris – By the end of this match I had put 500 rounds thru my new GAP-10 6.0 Creedmoor. I'm definitely getting the bugs worked out and the rifle shoots awesome inside 700 yds. I was happy with my spotting and communication and I know that the more info I can get to Scott the better he'll shoot. My backpack and gear all worked flawlessly. The full sized Tahoe we took to the event turned out to be a good choice as the ridge stages took an off road trek to get to.

Scott – I generally shot this match very well. My zero was dead-on to start the weekend (put two shots in the same hole in the dead center of the target on zero day) and my data worked well all weekend. I was reasonably good in various positions and Chris and I worked well together. There is no doubt the more we communicate, the better we perform.

## Results & Lessons Learned

Out of 73 two person teams the BEST Targets team finished 5<sup>th</sup> Overall and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Open Division. This was our third Mammoth Sniper Challenge in three years and we've come a long, long way from where we started. We had set a goal for ourselves to finish in the top 10 and I think we even surprised ourselves with our finish.

At every competition we learn something new about competition events, our gear, our abilities and our weaknesses.

Chris's takeaways/to do's:

- I need to work on shooting the GAP-10 6.0 Creedmoor past 700 yds. My hit percentage is too low out there.
- Our partner assisted shooting continues to be weak. We've had to do this at 2-3 events now and it's tough.

- We need to add a ribbon to the center post of the tripod to help with wind calls.
- We need more practice with wind calls and wind holds.
- We need to figure out how to not let the stressor of cold weather affect our performance.

Scott's takeaways/to do's:

- We need to make sure our electronic equipment is fresh and ready for competition. Have back-ups to every major functioning tool in the arsenal – both batteries, and the tools themselves.
- I need a better plan for carrying magazines of different depths than can be drawn quickly.
- I need to have a better selection of cold weather gloves to shoot in. I'm looking forward to implementing some of the cold-weather options from Mechanix Wear.
- Be bold in wind holds. Making an adjustment less than half the width of the target is a waste of time. In most cases an adjustment should be between 3/4 of a target, and 1 target width.

## Summary

Once again the Mammoth Sniper Challenge proved to be a great challenge. We're proud of our finish but know we could have done even better. It's fun to look back to a few years ago see the progress we've made. The event's return to the Rockcastle Shooting Center made for better stages than last year. Joe Harris, Marcus Harrison and all the ROs and Scorers did a great job moving the squads around efficiently. We know we made a few mistakes that cost us a few points so we know that we could have done better ... which is exactly what will have us coming back again next year for more.



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