

shooting

My fears of complacency in my last report have proved groundless, and it was with profound satisfaction that we concluded our .22 season yet again unbeaten. Not only were our scores steady, but they were also very high: 601, 603, 599, 607, 603, 613 ex 640 for the first stage of Country Life which formed the basis of most of our matches. To cap all this, we won the British Schools' Long Range .22 Championships at the Ham and Peter-sham Rifle Club, with Philip Dawes winning the individual title. It was a pity that the vile weather—frost, snow, gales, sleet, rain and more sleet—put off some schools, but it made victory all the sweeter.

Results:

Bedford School	770	Oundle School	719
Haileybury College	683	Bedford School	770
Bedford School	1,327	Cambridge Univ.	1,297
Bedford School	603	B.M.S.	535
Bedford School	1,602	Old Bedfordians	1,501

The Croker Cup for .22 Match Aggregate was won for the second year running by Lindsay Smith.

1: S. L. Smith, 855/895, 2: A. P. Sykes, 846, 3: P. Dawes, 843.

Minor Sports Colours were awarded to: A. B. Keith, M. W. Eatly and J. R. G. Martin.

Club Colours were awarded to M. R. Ebbetts.

VIII: D. A. Lord (Captain), A. P. Sykes, S. L. Smith, P. Dawes, A. B. Keith, M. W. Eatly, J. R. G. Martin, M. R. Ebbetts.

Cadet pair: Gompertz and Simpson.

If I have hurried over the banalities of our season, it is not to belittle the contributions of the many other members who have helped us achieve our successes, but because this is in a way a valedictory report and I am going to make some personal remarks about some of those who have shot for so many years and who are now leaving the School. Since they will not be able to answer me back—for once—this seems too good an opportunity to miss . . .

Paul Liller may not have made the VIII, but he has grown into a fine shot and he overcame severe difficulties to win the silver medal in the 9th Man at Bisley last year. His work for the pistol section has pioneered the Schools' entry into this field. Rumours that he intends to settle in Belfast are, I am assured, unfounded.

Angus Keith showed great promise as a junior, but was brought face to face with declining form, and had to bring out all his determination to hold his place in the VIII until he recovered his flair.

Mike Eatly, as an introspective competitor, has caused me more heart failure for less cause than anyone I can remember. And yet he has always managed to dominate his mercurial temperament when it matters. His cheerful warnings of impending disaster—did I hear the name "Senna"?—will be missed.

Lindsay Smith, in contrast, is an ice-cool competitor (it runs in the family)—so cool, in fact, that I am not entirely sure that he cares as passionately about winning as I do. But to lift the Croker Cup two years in succession, especially under the covetous eyes of Andrew Sykes, is quite an achievement.

Philip Dawes is without any doubt the most improved

marksman in the Club, and has won his place in the County VIII this year. For two seasons he shot first detail for us in our matches, and provided the steady start on which we have built our victories. A special thanks to him, too, for the many hours he has spent helping me run the Club: no member has done more.

Finally, David Lord has been a Captain in the fullest sense of leading as well as pushing his team, coaching the beginners, taking part in all the Club's activities, and . . . putting up with me. I prophesy much enjoyable shooting for him in the future and would like to express my warmest gratitude for the job he has done and the way in which he has done it.

We go to Bisley now, even less prepared than last year, but with a fine win over a successful Haileybury team under our belts, a determination to do our best, and a prayer mat to pray for fine weather. It is good to know that there will be a fair number of Old Bedfordians there on The Day to cheer us on, both on and off the firing point.

T.J.E.

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It is very satisfying to be able to report another successful season at all levels. From top to bottom the competitive spirit brought victory in 16 out of the 26 matches played with 1 match tied. As 4 of these defeats were at the hands of adult teams then the school only lost 5 out of the 21 school matches. The success of the younger teams suggests that a high standard should be maintained into the foreseeable future.

Under 14 and under 15 team. (Peck, Lloyd-williams, Burroughs, Thurston).

As the Under 14's, they hammered B.M.S. by 144 points and then as the Under 15's, they had convincing wins over Denstone by 74 and B.M.S. by 70. Peck was the outstanding player but the other three are all very good prospects.

The return match for the Under 14's at B.M.S. was played with our reserve side of Scrivens, Holbrook, Marson and Mobbs who fought a very creditable tie.

Colts. (Davies, Kemp, Brittain, Malek and Saunderson.)

A physically strong side their skill developed steadily throughout the season. Their success came from a very even balance of ability and a consistent effort in doubles. The only defeat was at St. Paul's by 7 points and all the other matches were won as follows:

Haileybury by 110; Denstone by 85; Oundle by 76; Rugby by 156; B.M.S. by 12.

The win over B.M.S. was a fitting end to the season for as Under 15's the previous year this match had been lost.

2nd. IV. (Chalmers, Gray, Saunderson, Hicks and Allen.)

As none of these players were strong enough to be competing for a place in the 1st. IV not a lot was expected of them. Having beaten Haileybury by 36 in their first match they later lost to B.M.S. by 76 and to the O.B.s by 73.

1st. IV. (J. M. W. Oakley, R. W. Poole, D. A. B. Dance and C. W. Pattison.)

In past years we have had a powerful first string singles player and have thinned out quite sharply towards the