Benchrest history from Ann Brummell’s diaries, notes etc. 1965 – 1989

1965 - November 13th and 21st billed as First Bench Rest Championships to be conducted on all SSAA rifle ranges as follows:
Sporting - 10 lbs, 6X scope, 2X5 shots @ 100 and 200 yards
Varmint – 14 lbs, 12X scope, 2X5 shots @ 100 and 200 yards
Open – Unlimited 2X10 shots @ 100 and 200 yards

On a postal basis – a few months later then Chairman Harry Madden thanked Queensland for co-ordinating the event and Max Coady for scoring 150 targets. (Only reference to the results is from NSW meeting minutes where committee congratulates Robyn (2nd in Varmint class) and Peter Nesbitt (3rd in Open class) on their fine showing in the National Benchrest Championships. (Unable to locate any other results).

1966 – Harry Madden promised modifications to 1965 “Nationals” and advised it is hoped that 1966 will be shoulder to shoulder in Sydney towards the end of the year. (Unfortunately cannot locate the results or even verify if such happened).

1967 – Nationals held at Belmont, Queensland on 11th June then it was the wettest June in history (at that time) some 11.27” in 11 hours and 30MPH winds. Washaways at Range entrance gate were 18” deep.

Sporting – 10lbs, 6X scope, 2X5 shots @ 100 and 200 yards
Varmint – 14lbs, 12X scope, 2X5 shots @ 100 and 200 yards
Open – Unlimited 2X10 shots @ 100 and 200 yards
Grand Aggregate Winners:
Sporting class – Ray Starkey
Varmint class – Bill Hambly-Clark Jnr.
Open class – Nev Madden

August – Sierra releases their new .30cal 165grain H.P.B.T bullets

October – Advice the 14th Annual American National BR Championships won by Red Cornelison using a 23-40, Remington 722 action, Shilen barrel with Smithing and projectiles credited to self.
1968 - January – SSAA National Conference agreed that all SSAA National competitions should be held in one state during Easter – the first scheduled for 1969 in Sydney. A Committee, chaired by Harry Madden, formed to contact NBRSA and any other country that holds national benchrest competitions to formulate rules suitable for international competition.

February – Advert for Douglas premium grade barrel blanks imported to Australia by Shooter Supplies Melbourne.

**Nationals** - held at Tynong, Victoria. SSAA National Conference on 27th and 28th January adopted the following classes to be applicable for the 1968 Nationals
Sporting – 8lbs 8 ozs, 6X scope, 2X5 shots @ 100 and 200 yards
Light Varmint – 10 lbs 8 ozs, 12X scope, 2X5 shots @ 100 and 200 yards
Heavy Varmint – 14 lbs, unrestricted scope, 2X5 shots @ 100 and 200 yards
Open Class – Unlimited, 2X10 shots @ 100 and 200 yards

Ralph Stolle who began shooting benchrest in 1954 produces the first Stolle bear action, the 15” Grizzly for Unlimited rifles, from his business named Bear Hollow Products.

1969 – **Nationals** held at Baulkham Hills NSW. Equipment stats as adopted at the 1968 SSAA National Conference. Any shooter who made in and out of Baulko with all their gear was regarded as a super athlete. It was an exercise in physical prowess, 109 steps hewn into the side of a gorge, walk along a jungle track and cross a swinging bridge toting gear and some had to make more than one trip to get equipment to the range – no wonder at the conclusion of the Nationals many elected to leave stands, sand bags and other goods behind on the range.

Grand Aggregate Winners
Sporter class – Barry Nelis
Light Varmint – Helmut Schleinitz
Heavy Varmint – Keith Tyack
Open class – Bill Marden Snr.
4 Gun - Keith Tyack (Only 4 competitors competed in every class)
Top 10 in every class i.e. 40 shooters all but 8 used 53 grain Sierra bullets.
1970 – Nationals held at Tynong, Victoria. Again the rifle specifications were as per the 1968 resolutions. The events are best remembered for the weather which was described as “glum” with teeming rain and freezing temperatures. In Sporting class the moving backers would not operate at 100 due to paper tearing in the wet. Number of disqualifications at weigh in was also a feature – in Sporter 3 failed to make weight or scope restriction, in Light Varmint again 3 disqualifications and 1 in Heavy Varmint all for presenting with equipment that did not comply.

Grand Aggregate Winners:
Sporter – Barry Rodgers
Light Varmint – Aileen Tate
Heavy Varmint – Barry Nelis
Open class – Ron Marsden
4 Gun – Doug Fairlie

October - First International Postal shoot between USA and Australia. Light Varmint class with unrestricted scope and course of fire 5X5 shots @ 100 and 200 yards. Australian team was Rosemary and Les Chinnock, John and Ray Starkey, Cary Smith, Peter Nesbitt, Harold McKee, Syd Hollingsworth, Ron Marsden and Bill Marden Jnr.

October - Nev Madden represented Australia at the 40th World Shooting Championships. These were sponsored by I.S.U. and hosted by N.R.A. in Phoenix. Nev shot in 300 metre Army Rifle collecting a Gold Masters badge, 3 Position Standard rifle collecting a Bronze Masters medal and Free rifle prone, standing and kneeling. It was not long after that Nev first met and established a relationship with barrel maker Pat McMillan that endured for years.

1971- Nationals held at Brisbane, Queensland and equipment as per 1968. The emergence of equipment outside what had been the norm – Les and Rosemary Chinnock’s sporter – a sleeved XP100 with skeletonised bull-pup design stock. A standard Omark 7.62 in the hands of Harry Kirby medalled in Light. A Remington 40XB-BR factory rifle debuted in Australia in the hands of Jack Shelley. Nev Madden, the victor in Open class with a return to battery which had an aluminium block that accommodated two Hart barrels one in .222 and the other chambered in .308.

Grand Aggregate Winners:
Sporter – Noelene Guyatt
Light Varmint – Herb Valerius
Heavy Varmint Peter Nesbit
Open class – Nev Madden
4 Gun – Nev Madden

1972 – Nationals held in Canberra, ACT and again equipment specifications as proclaimed in 1968, but this would be last time these specifications would be applicable.
In a report by Gordon Nelis he stated that Benchrest shooters will remember these Nationals as “the year of the big wind and the year those 11X% new targets were introduced”. That is the 11” X 17” with 5 aiming marks gone and replaced by a sighter and match target of 31/2” X 51/4” and 2 aiming marks and scoring shots within the match target borders @ 100 yards (200 yards double the size). These targets were side by side to suit vertical backers as horizontal were only on the far horizon at this stage.

The events were almost a Jack Shelley clean sweep
Grand Aggregate Winners:
Sporter – Jack Shelley
Light Varmint – Peter Nesbitt
Heavy Varmint – Jack Shelley
Open class – Jack Shelley
4 Gun – Jack Shelley

In March 1972 after the Nationals the SSAA National body revised the rules and adopted a complete set of rules for all registered benchrest matches.
New rifle weights and scope restrictions –
Sporter - 3.9KG (8 lbs 10 ozs) still with 6X scope
Light Varmint – 4.8KG (10lbs 9 ozs) scope to now be unrestricted power
Heavy Varmint – 6.2KG (13 lbs 9 ozs)
Hunter – 4.5KG (10 lbs) with 6X scope
Open Class – guides and rails permitted

1.250” barrel diameter restriction deleted, legal barrel length no less than 18”, no restrictions on barrel contours, tapers, sleeving or barrel blocking.

For end total stock width no more than 3” and can be shaped flat, convex or concave.

Targets as used at 1972 Nationals adopted with amendment that the large square aiming mark to the bottom of the target and the ½ square to the top.
Course of fire amended to 10 targets i.e. 5X5 @ 100 and 200 yards in Sporter, Light and Heavy and 10X5 at both ranges in Open class.

All classes (except Open class) competitors must use sand bags and no clamping devices allowed.

Rules to be static for 5 years unless for International purposes. The rules as adopted to be used from now on for all registered tournaments.

National undertook to draw up, print and distribute the Rule Book.

Australia’s International Postal teams:
Light Varmint team Peter Coles, Jack Shelley, Nev Madden, Chas. Brown and Herb Valerius
Heavy Varmint team Peter Nesbitt, Syd Hollingsworth, Nev Madden, Peter Coles and Jack Shelley.

Around the end of 1972 Nev Madden via his company PSECo. secured the importation rights to McMillan barrels and begins fitting same. Nev maintained his relationship with Pat and worked with him for a considerable time which resulted in the production of Maddco barrels in mid to late 1970’s.

1973 – Nationals held at Para SA. It had been anticipated the 10 target matches would come into effect for 1974 Nationals but as the rules were now in circulation (albeit in sheet not booklet form with still more appraisals and amendments to be made) and South Australian administration was ready for and requested the change to ten targets in this year as they saw such a move as an avenue to get Para built to acceptable standards. The 1973 National Conference in January agreed thus these became the first National held over the 10 target course of fire in Australia. This arrangement caused a bit of a stir as at this time most competitors went preloaded for at least one event and with the added number of rounds required there was a mad scramble to get sufficient cases ready before Easter.

Winners:
Sporter 100 Nev Madden, 200 Jack Shelley, G/A Nev Madden
Light 100 Nev Madden, 200 Bruce Treloar, G/A Nev Madden
Heavy 100 Ann Brummell, 200 Harry Madden, G/A Syd Miller
Experimental 100 David Billinghurst, 200 Nev Madden, G/A Syd Miller
4 Gun Winner Nev Madden
Special medals designed by Tony Roberts were presented and depicted motifs of targets from the different SSAA disciplines.

The events also became the first Nationals to attract Centrefire Group HOF points but the decision not until 1982 when the final criteria established.

The real highlight came on the final night at a formal cabaret held at Kariwara Hotel in Elizabeth when “Pop” Coady (Max’s Dad) and Harry Madden (Nev’s Dad) were both conferred with National Life Memberships.

With a change of Editor and publishing arrangements from Brisbane to Adelaide for “The Australian Shooters’ Journal” (now Australian Shooter) during March 1973 (hence no March 1973 Journal published) the new Editor, Heinz Raz introduced a monthly column devoted entirely to Benchrest. The first scribe was Nev Madden with the debut column in the May issue.

May – Skip Gordon organises Super Shoot #1 in USA that was held in abominable conditions with tornadoes present. Apart from Skip and Johanna’s efforts the event would not have gotten off the ground without the financial and administrative assistance of Bob and Bill Ohaus of Ohaus Scales.

International Postal shoot in Light, Heavy and Experimental contested by USA, Australia, Canada and England and Australia finished 2nd in every class with USA winning all classes. Light Varmint team Ron Marsden, Nev Madden, John Starkey, Randall Miller and John Giles.
Heavy Varmint team Nev Madden, David Billinghurst, John Giles, Bill Marden Jnr and Mike Gibbons Snr, Experimental team Ron Marsden, David Billinghurst, Nev Madden, Bill Marden Jnr and Mike Gibbons Snr.

1974 – January 26th – first National Speer Benchrest Postal event sponsored by F C Lovelock
Winner in Light Mike Leisser and winner in Heavy Varmint David Billinghurst
Recipient of Rosebowl Trophy donated by Speer Co USA David Billinghurst

**Nationals** held at Dapto, NSW. It rained for a week before Easter and then a couple of days prior to the commencement the heavens really opened and the torrential rain made the only entrance road a slosh heap and some competitors asking if the events would proceed. The organisers did everything they could to ensure competitors could get into the range proper such as
placing shovels and gravel strategically placed along the length of the entrance road to dig out vehicles that got bogged. Some managed to traverse the quagmire but those with vehicles not designed for such or not willing to risk it were trucked in and out with their gear every day on the back of heavy duty trucks. A couple of shooters from Springsure found the slop under foot alien and invested in gum boots for the first time in their lives. Another notable event was the presence of a streaker in the camping area after Heavy Varmint.

Winners of Aggregates:
Sporter 100 Herb Valerius, 200 Ann Brummell, G/A Herb Valerius
Light 100 Bruce Treloar, 200 Herb Valerius, G/A Bruce Treloar
Heavy 100 Ann Brummell, 200 Herb Valerius, G/A Ann Brummell
Experimental 100 Bill Marden Jnr, 200 John Giles, G/A Bill Marden Jnr
4 Gun winner Herb Valerius

May – Skip Gordon organises Super Shoot #2 in USA.

1975- In the opinion of some a year when Australian Benchrest came of age. SSAA National Conference revised benchrest rules to be the first organisation to give shooters a competition class with rimfires to a national level. Specifications set were 7lb 12ozs, 6X scope with 2” stock width (this amended a couple of months later). The class was designed to restrict the class to hunting type rifles yet allow innovation.

Heavy Varmint 13lb 8ozs and Light Varmint to be 10lb 8ozs bringing both into line with international standards.
Rules revised and provided to delegates and interested parties for discussion and evaluation during Nationals and referral to 1976 National Conference.

Nationals – held in Brisbane Queensland. Ann Brummell won the National Heavy Varmint 100 yard aggregate for the third year in succession. Included in the events was Rimfire Benchrest for the first time with specifications as decided by the January SSAA National Conference. Rimfire class was a resounding success and attracted a large entry number so much so the event ran well over the anticipated finish and ran out of daylight, it was left to finish the match with targets illuminated by car headlights on high beam (thanks to Rob Carnell and others).
Winners of Aggregates:

Sporter 100 Mike Gibbons Snr, 200 Herb Valerius, G/A John Giles,

Light 100 Mike Gibbons Snr, 200 Michael Marsden, G/A Jack Leu,

Heavy 100 Ann Brummell, 200 John Giles, G/A John Giles,

Experimental 100 Ron Marsden, 200 John Giles, G/A John Giles,

4 Gun John Giles Hunter class Nev Madden

.22LR R/F 50 Syd Miller, 100 David Alland G/A David Alland

National Benchrest meeting after the Nationals delegates discussed and decided upon the following amendments to the rules that were later ratified by the National body:

Class restricted to .22 long rifle calibre rifles only

Change name of Rimfire Benchrest to .22 Long Rifle Rimfire Benchrest Rifle and stock width to 2.25”

Shots outside border classed as misses and measure shots inside border and add MOA for each missing shot.

Time allowed to lodge protest reduced to 30 minutes.

Warm Up group eligible for smallest group at any distance being contested Restricted and unrestricted rests permitted in Open /Experimental.

May – Tony Boyer wins his first USA HOF point. Skip Gordon organises Super Shoot #3 in USA with conditions whereby mirage was so thick one could not see a bullet hole at 100.

During May Winchester sponsored a postal Hunter Class competition where each branch or range could hold only one competition and competitors only permitted to compete once.

Specifications for Hunter at that time – 10lb (4.5KG), 6X scope and with a magazine that held 2 or more loaded rounds that would feed, chamber and fire. (2013 Rule Book #8 dropped feed, chamber and fire).

Event won by Bruce Treloar who won a Winchester Model 70 C/F bolt action rifle, second was Ken Wilson who won a Winchester Model 670 C/F bolt action
November of 1975 – After much correspondence between Harry Madden, Ian Coombes and Herb Valerius over a 14 month period “Destination Down Under” became reality when 24 individuals from the United States of America and 1 Canadian led by Skip and Johanna Gordon graced our shores and competed in matches in Canberra and Brisbane before a holiday on Heron Island. This was a private undertaking, not to be viewed as a USA vs Australia affair. The group’s mantra was relax, have fun and make long lasting friendships and all of that seemed to be achieved. The Canberra match was billed as the Australian Speer matches under the sponsorship of FC Lovelock P/L spearheaded by Ray Stone and the Brisbane matches as Queensland Varmint title under the auspices of SSAA Brisbane. A plaque donated by Wally Hart designated “Bob Hart Memorial Trophy” went to the winner of the Queensland 2 Gun and that was Nev Madden.

Canberra Aggregate Winners
Light 100 Skip Gordon, 200 Ed Shilen, G/A Ed Shilen
Heavy 100 Ann Brummell, 200 Ed Shilen, G/A Skip Gordon
2 Gun Ed Shilen

Brisbane winners
Light 100 Charlie Womack, 200 Nev Madden G/A Chet Brown
Heavy 100 Chet Brown, 200 John Giles G/A John Giles
2 Gun Nev Madden

December 5th - The year ended on a sad note not only for Benchrest and S.S.A.A. but for the shooting world in general with the death of Harry Madden – a legend in his own time.

December - Nev Madden’s last Benchrest column in ASJ


Ann Brummell debuts as a guest columnist in IBS’s Precision Shooting.
March – Skip Gordon takes over as the regular writer of the Benchrest column in Australian Shooters’ Journal.
Nationals - held in Canberra ACT. Sporter was held in cold windy conditions and still with a 12X scope. During Heavy a deluge at the change of distance saw 11 shooters over the border then in Light the wind stayed and saw 13 in the fail to qualify category. Experimental saw 185 groups fired at 200 and only 9 of those were under the 1” - a fair indication of the conditions.

Hunter class will be best remembered for the number of crossfires advised, reported and noted but when checked out all had flown away. Equipment wise carbon fibre stocks manufactured by McMillan and Six were common and RTM cast alloy stocks made their initial appearance. The emergence of the first PPC chambered (by RTM) rifle in Australia and the importation of the cases to suit courtesy of Robin Elton. Barrels by Pat McMillan and imported by PSECo. (Nev Madden) were out in force and making a real mark in the Top Ten lists.

In .22LR Rimfire Benchrest Tenex was the favourite and rifles mainly factory.

Aggregate Winners:
Sporter 100 David Billinghurst, 200 Ron Marsden, G/A David Billinghurst
Light 100 Garry Foster, 200 Kevin Edwards, G/A Garry Foster
Heavy 100 Russ McNamee, 200 John Giles, G/A John Giles
Experimental 100 David Billinghurst, 200 John Giles, G/A John Giles

4 Gun David Billinghurst
Hunter 100 Denis Tobler, 200 Robin Elton, G/S Robin Elton
.22LR R/F 50 William O’Connor, 100 David Alland, G/A David Alland

May Super Shoot #4 USA - Tom Stone competed and observed the ins and outs noting the finer points for inclusion in Super Shoot #1 in Australia a few months later. Whilst there Tom donated a beautiful opal for the competitor closest to a 200 yard Heavy Varmint mystery aggregate and the winner was Homer Culver.

July saw a group of Australians visit the USA – Ron Marsden, Syd Hollingsworth, Mike Valentine and Robin & Carrie Elton to compete in the NBRSA Sporter and Varmint Championships to be the forerunner of many shooters to follow in their footsteps. In these matches Ron had his purely Aussie alloy stock on his rifle without much reaction on range but when he shot the smallest group of .099 competitor interest peaked. Comments from Pat McMillan were the stock represented a major development in the craft-art science of precision rifle making. The stock was illegal by NBRSA rules but this was overcome by inserting balsa between the rails to form a flat for end thus
making it 100% legal. The group had the pleasure of spending time with Lou Palmisano, Ferris Pindell and Clarence Detsch who Ron had been a pen pal with for quite a time.

July – NRA Exhibition release of new products –
Lyman 25X LWBR first production model
Federal their nickel plated match grade cases
Leupold 24X scope
Conetol streamlined mounts
B-Square all manner of gadgets

October long weekend – Australian Super Shoot #1 in Canberra ACT for Light Varmint and Heavy Varmint rifles.
Souvenir program put together by Heinz Raz.
The prize list was impressive with great support from the Firearms Industry both here and overseas. The random distribution of prizes was a real hit with 60 special merchandise awards throughout the placings – a couple of examples 40th in Light a spotting scope, 26th in Heavy a typewriter and 45th 500 Treloar projectiles. There was a mystery group prize donated by Tom Stone, a Winchester model 70 rifle in .308 for shooting the secret group or closest to it, .842 group at 200 yards to the credit of Carrie Elton.

Light Varmint was shot in flukey winds from 5MPH to 25MPH but was only an entrée to what was to come. Conditions became atrocious, during Heavy an Act of God erupted with targets blown off the frames and backers in a dishevelled unwound soggy mess. Heavy 200 was unforgettable with 30 minutes postponements for torrential rain, even a stationary Masonite backer was felled and targets blown to oblivion never to be seen again. Wild, wild time. The conditions prevailed into the 100 yard stage with those changing targets soaked through to the skin.

Winners Super Shoot #1 Australia
Light 100 Herb Valerius, 200 Mike Valentine, G/A Mike Valentine
Heavy 100 Mike Valentine, 200 Nev Mdden, G/A Nev Madden

The 2 Gun Trophy was the Harry Madden Memorial Trophy brought from the USA by Skip Gordon and donated in the names of the USA and Canadian shooters who were in ACT and Queensland in late November 1975 a few weeks before Harry’s demise. This trophy was won by Nev and after his winning the
Bob Hart plaque in late 1975 was the recipient of trophies commemorating two pioneers and mentors of benchrest shooting.

Two interesting facts – Herb Valerius shot a .222.5 - a magnum shorted by 50 thou and in a laminated timber skeletonised cutaway thumbhole stock and Mike Valentine used a Sherer barrel the first in Australia.

**1977** – Started on a sad note with the death of Warren Page on 22\textsuperscript{nd} January. Mr Page was the author of “The Accurate Rifle” that was a virtual bible for benchrest shooters in the early 1970s.

**Nationals** - held at Para SA was a smorgasbord of conditions – something to please or agitate competitors – dust storm, heavy rain, low temperatures and finally balmy days. Top Ten patches designed by Herb Valerius were awarded for the first time at Nationals. Wally Siebert on his regular sojourn to Australia became the first Aussie/American to win a Benchrest title at the Australian Nationals. The H.I.Madden Memorial Perpetual Trophy was awarded for the first time to the winner of the Heavy Varmint 200 yard aggregate - won by Ron Marsden. 13\textsuperscript{th} in each class were presented with a prize courtesy of Keith Herron P/L. Marco Seider used David Alland’s winning .22LR rifle from 1975 and 1976.

**Aggregate Winners:**
- Sporter 100 David Billinghurst, 200 Robin Elton, G/A Robin Elton
- Light 100 Herb Valerius, 200 Denis Tobler, G/A Ron Marsden
- Heavy 100 Carrie Elton, 200 Ron Marsden, G/A Wally Siebert
- Experimental 100 Jack Shelley, 200 Nev Madden, G/A Jack Shelley
- Hunter Class Barry Kirk
- .22 LR R/F 50 Marco Seider, 100 Denis Tobler, G/A Denis Tobler

The Nationals were another marathon with Centrefire, Hunter and .22LR Rimfire events all contested and shooters were beginning to question the viability of all classes being held over Easter.

Mid 1977 saw Benchrest Bulletin’s owner and administrator, Rob Carnell in the USA and competing in the NBRSA Sporter and Varmint Championships using a rifle on loan from Fred Sinclair for 4\textsuperscript{th} in Light and 18\textsuperscript{th} in 3 Gun. Rob was delighted with his performances but the highlight of his trip was playing pool for hours with and in the home of Ferris Pindell of PPC fame who was more
than competent at the game having held State titles. From then on Rob and Ferris formed a long lasting friendship until Ferris’ demise in 2011.

July – An electric trigger presented at NBRSA Sporter and Varmint Championships and a week late accepted as legal under the rules.

October long weekend - Australian Super Shoot #2 held at Para SA with the Shoot Director, Ray Stone, using his Firearms Industry connections to amass a steady stream of donated prizes including cash. There were 40 individual Australian based donors and 4 from overseas. The single target, 7 minute time limit introduced for the first time at a major Australian shoot as prior to this two targets per time were posted with 3 visits to the bench (included an optional warm up and target A, then B and C together and lastly D and E). The conditions at the Nationals a few months earlier were mirrored and disqualifications for over the border were aplenty. The underground power supply was flooded so 250 yards of extension cord was required to run the backers but the actual backers withstood the downpours, wind and hail thanks to Stuart Morcom’s waterproofing strategies. Best illustration of the conditions of the 50 groups fired by the Top Ten Heavy Varmint shooters at 100 only 5 were under .300

Aggregate Winners:
Light 100 Barry Kirk, 200 Michael Marsden, G/A Paul Sullivan
Heavy 100 Harold McKee, 200 Nev Madden, G/A Paul Sullivan

Overall winner of Super Shoot #2 was Paul Sullivan who collected cash for various aggregates and for the overall a Sako Forester .243 rifle donated by D.W.Custer and the H.I. Madden Trophy that was first presented in 1976 by the shooters who visited our shores in 1975. In addition Paul as the winner was asked to name a branch to be the recipient of an Oehler Chronograph donated by F.C Lovelock and naturally Paul nominated Springsure.

1978 – January A reward poster with sponsorship shared between SSAA Brisbane, PSECo (Nev Madden) and John Giles projectiles for any one of the following - $100 for first group under .100, for first 100 yard aggregate under .2500 and for first grand aggregate under .350 in Sporter all of which had not at this time been achieved in a registered tournament.

Ann Brummell elected SSAA National Secretary.
News release from Remington advising they have designed a new benchrest cartridge. The cartridge seemed to be a close relative of Alan King’s 6X39 and the PPC and called Remington BR. Cases to match were untapered .308s with small rifle primer that required at least 6 steps before ready to fire.

Wally Siebert now converting Lyman 25X to 30X
Conetrol rings and bases now available in Australia via Keith Herron P/L

**Nationals** – held at Belmont, Queensland. The established format with a Good Friday start had to be amended as permission to shoot on that day was withdrawn by the Inspector of Rifle Ranges and with six classes to be decided Hunter Class had to be held over for the extra day.
Again the weather was not kind with a deluge on the Saturday night that resulted in plenty of mud underfoot the next day. During Sporter many were unable to see bullet holes with 12X scopes thus started a ground swell to increase the scope power that didn’t come to fruition for years.

The equipment list shows Remington actions preferred, Barrel preference for the four classes was shared between Hart and McMillan. In the Gunsmith column also shared between PSECo (Nev Madden) and RTM (Ron Marsden) and Treloar projectiles appearing in all Top Ten lists.

**Aggregate Winners:**
Sporter 100 Alan Jones, 200 Ron Marsden, G/A Alan Jones
Light 100 Nev Madden, 200 Syd Miller, G/A Nev Madden
Heavy 100 Nev Madden, 200 Dixon Watson, G/A Nev Madden
Experimental 100 Jack Shelley, 200 Jack Shelley, G/A Jack Shelley
4 Gun Nev Madden
Hunter Ron Marsden
.22 LR R/F 50 Ron Watson, 100 Randal Miller, G/A Randal Miller

At the National Benchrest meeting items discussed were that Hunter Class records be established and a Centrefire Group HOF be introduced (based on the USA system but much discussion was to take place between 1978 and 1982 regarding criteria, sponsorship, points, entry numbers etc.)

Discussion on the value of shooting 2 targets at each visit to the bench – this would eventually be changed to single target.
During March, April and May – A competition sponsored by Boustead Australia for the aggregate of three tournaments for Sporter class, conducted under Rules for registered tournaments on capital city ranges was conducted.

Results were as follows:
1st Remington BDL .222 rifle won by Nev Madden
2nd Remington 581 Rimfire rifle won by John Giles
3rd, 4th and 5th places filled by Ken Wilson, Tony Smith and Tony Brown and each rewarded with 500 Remington 52 grain projectiles.

May – Advice from overseas of a shortage of match grade barrels reported delivery times, McMillan 12 months, Hart 9 months and Shilen 4 months. Sherer admits early barrels “soft” but advised that is all behind them. Their production limited but not yet in a position to set up a distributor in Australia.

Federal Cartridge Corp produced a five colour patch for shooters who establish an official national record confirmed using federal primers or cases. This award was extended to SSAA record holders on production of award certificate and equipment data card (discontinued in 1980’s).

In July a RTM (Ron Marsden) alloy stock used on one of Dick Baker’s rifles in winning the Three Gun in the IBS Sporter and Varmint titles in the USA. Initial win for the 6mm Remington BR piloted by Bill Zachary in NBRSA Sporter.

June – Speer Lovelock matches – the single target system in operation
Light 100 Noel Weston, 200 Col Tucker, G/A Col Tucker
Heavy 100, 200 Grand Aggregate and 2 Gun Brendan Atkinson

In September Contrary to earlier advice from Federal Cartridge factory the factory will not be supplying cases for the Remington BR cartridge but such would be considered in the future.

December Fuller Firearms started to import 6 Hercules powders
Details of itinerary released for American and Canadian shooters to attend the Southern Varmint titles during September/October 1979.

Mulwala explores the possibility of marketing a range of powders similar to DuPont.
1979 – April MTM releases an accessory equipment box that is not yet available in this country.

May – Bill Ackerman of Weaver presents the first production model of the Weaver 25X scope at Super Shoot VII USA.

Skip Gordon announced Benchrest person of the year at Super Shoot USA and announces he will be retiring from Super Shoot but 1980 to be run jointly by the Gordons and Sixes and from 1981 by Six Enterprises.
Super Shoot VII USA held in worst conditions George Kelbly had ever experienced in his 25 years of competition. Cold, 25-35 mph winds and monsoon like rain into faces and barrels.
New products released at the event stocks by H-S Precision Co., Brown Precision a glass version of the Berger stock, the Six Enterprises SST model and at least six various neck turners. Sonny Malsby who has been making projectiles since 1974, during which time his bullets have set 6 NBRSA records and as of then another 7 pending advises he is moving to making projectiles full time.
Allan Hall’s stainless steel actions make their appearance with Bill Minnemann.

**Nationals** held at Pinjar Range Complex – Wanneroo WA.
This year was Western Australia’s 150th year celebrations and special medals were struck to commemorate the founding of the Swan River colony in 1829 - a real collector’s item, and awarded in additional the national medals. Each discipline had a memorial cloth patch made with the discipline name, in WA colours and a stylised swan for all competitors.

The four Centrefire classes as single target affairs were followed by Hunter and .22LR Rimfire and competitors in the latter two buffeted by wind and rain. Winchester (Aust) donated one of the new T6 Weaver scopes to the Four Gun winner – Col Tucker from SA.

The .22LR Rimfire class was so well attended it was deemed necessary to revert to the old two target system and all sympathies went to the target crew who had to handle the soggy targets and backers whilst getting soaked.

**Aggregate Winners:**
Sporter 100, 200 and Grand Aggregate Brendan Atkinson
Light 100, 200 and Grand Aggregate John Matthews
Heavy 100 Brendan Atkinson, 200 Neil Henderson, G/A Col Tucker
Experimental 100 Syd Miller, 200 and G/A Col Tucker
4 Gun Col Tucker
Hunter Col Tucker
.22LR R/F 50 Syd Miller, 200 and G/A Brendan Atkinson

June – Shooters domiciled in Germany form Deutscher Benchrest Verband

August – Brisbane hosts Super Shoot II Australia with 28 sponsors
Aggregate Winners:
Light 100 Ann Brummell, 200 Ron Watson, G/A Allan Jones
Heavy 100 Harold McKee, 200 Denis Tobler, G/A Denis Tobler
2 Gun Allan Jones

September 29 – October 2 at Para SA the Southern Varmint titles. Not billed as a merchandise shoot but friends in the trade kindly offered cash and trophy assistance that was much appreciated to organisers and competitors. Bill Minnemann donated a heap of gear, Rob Carnell donated quantities of his custom projectiles and Eley sponsored the trophies. So extensive were the donations that the prize list extended to 27th placing in 2 Gun.

The group of Americans, a couple who were return visitors from the 1976 Down Under tour, and a Canadian, again led by Johanna and Skip Gordon were in attendance. Aussie benchresters looked in awe as the visitors unpacked their equipment that Australians had only heard about materialised – Bill Minnemann’s (Mr MTM) stainless steel Hall action, Siebert converted scopes, fluted barrels, switch barrels, and the latest Shilen action, the BP-NS, a lightweight version of the DGA. Then there was Pete Callen with his switch barrel “Peter Rabbit Rifle” the stock a real work of art (Robert Tobler purchased and still owns this beautiful rifle). This was not the only equipment to stay in Australia after the shoot as much trading and dealing went on for rifles, scopes, powder throwers, and even jackets. Bill Minneman purchases a Maddco 6mm barrel believed to be the first to make it to America.

Before Gordon’s Mob travelled to Adelaide some ventured to Moree under the guidance of Alan McKee for a pig hunt whilst others visited the Opal fields at Lightning Ridge. After the shoot the group took a short break at Heron Island.

Two days before the shoot there was a deluge that left the range flooded and mud everywhere. Weather for the start of the shoot on the Saturday was less than ideal with rain squalls, Sunday was cool and overcast with switching cross
winds. Monday was bright and clear but after the rain heavy running mirage and the last day fine, warm and windy but this time a twitching up range wind.

Following early finishes on the four days with the backing strips still in operation the visitors, all of who joined the Association, attempted to shoot their SSAA Medal Awards. Wayne Miller from Canada shot Silver, Gold, Ruby and Diamond Awards, Chick Kleptz and, Gordon Schenzer likewise with Pete Callen claiming Ruby and Diamond and Johanna Gordon a Ruby. Most admirable and pleasing was that the only junior member to compete, Robert Tobler was also successful in claiming his Diamond Medal Award.

Aggregate Winners of Southern Varmint titles:
Light 100, Brendan Atkinson, 200 Noel Weston G/A Brendan Atkinson
Heavy 100 John Matthews, 200 Syd Miller, G/A Sid Miller

The Two Gun was the Harry Madden Memorial Shield that went to the winner of the two previous Super Shoots and with no Super Shoot since 1977 these titles were the glamour event of 1979 so such award was considered worthy. The winner of the shield was Brendan Atkinson.

October – Benchrest’79 held at Hart’s range an initiative of Richie Moorehead and IBS as a benchrest school – a 3 day hands on seminar with a planned curriculum designed to cover all phases of competitive shooting for theory, range safety and manners as well as coaching, bullet making and manufacture of components.

December SSAA Benchrest Rule Book #1 finally published in booklet form and available at minimal cost. The National body promised this in 1972, Harry Madden got the project off the ground, Nev Madden worked on the undertaking Ann Brummell finalised and presented to National for publication. Benchrest became the first discipline in SSAA to present and have printed in booklet form an Official Rule Book #1 for general promulgation.

Ann Brummell becomes National Benchrest Chairman after the resignation of Nev Madden.

1980 – Inaugural Australia Day matches with the first horizontal backing strip system with target machinery designed and manufactured by Herb Valerius with assistance from Stuart Elliott. The system necessitated new targets modelled on the IBS/NBRSA ones but in red (the colour was decided many
years before). Classes held were Sporter and Heavy Varmint with Sporter 100 in daylight and 200 at night with Heavy around the other way. Herb Valerius’ prowess was everywhere – backers, program design and printing, match patch design plus trophy design and manufacture. Australia Day has become an annual event only called off once, in 2003 (up to 2016) that being due to the tragic and disastrous fires in Canberra.

Winners of Sporter in the daylight and Heavy under artificial light
Sporter 100 Ron Marsden, 200 Charley Beck, G/A Charly Beck
Heavy 100 Charly Beck, 200 Tony Allinson, G/A Allan Jones
2Gun Allan Jones

February 17th - advice that Clyde Hart of Hart barrels had passed away.

March – Ritchie Moorehead advises Benchrest ’80 will take place in July/August and plans to ask Ron Marsden and Ann Brummell to take part.

**Nationals** – held at Madden Range, Queensland and shot in what was best described as despicable and inhospitable weather conditions. Again no centrefire on Good Friday but so as to not lose a day negotiations allowed .22LR Rimfire Benchrest to be shot first in an event where Lyman 6 power scopes and Eley Tenex dominated.

The equipment lists in the centrefire classes show the introduction of two relatively new Australian made products – Maddco barrels by Nev Madden and glass stocks by Bruce Treloar. Brendan Atkinson used powder that was a preproduction batch manufactured by Mulwala Experimental factory called AR2207 that was not commercially available at that time.

**Aggregate Winners:**
Sporter 100 Denis Tobler, 200 Ken Sullivan, G/A Charly Beck
Light 100 Robin Elton, 200 and G/A Brendan Atkinson
Heavy 100 Syd Miller, 200 and G/A Nev Madden
Experimental 100 Tom Brummell, 200 John Giles, G/A Jack Shelley
4 Gun John Giles
Hunter class Brendan Atkinson
.22LR R/F 50 Col Tucker, 100 and G/A Brendan Atkinson

At the National Benchrest meeting Herb Valerius presented a working model of a wind indicator that in a practical demonstration proved superior to any other
currently in use in Australia. He undertook to make drawings available to delegates for their shooters’ evaluations. Chair advised that the Centrefire Group HOF in final stages of criteria and formula, tailored to Australian conditions and priorities. One aspect tied down during the year was with Heinz Raz, Managing Editor of “The Australian Shooters’ Journal” as the sponsoring catalyst. Herb Valerius presented draft patch design for HOF and along with draft criteria would also be submitted to State delegates for final submissions and evaluation.

The meeting also endorsed that C/F HOF Award #1 be awarded to Harry Madden on a posthumous basis.

May - Super Shoot VIII USA Benchrest Person of the Year, not a single entity but the Earp Family.

June – Bob White runs evaluation of the Fred Decker Rifle Vice

July saw four Australian benchresters fly 12,000 miles east – Brendan Atkinson took in the Canadian Super Shoot, NBRSA Sporter and Varmint titles picking up a small group award, a weekend at Englishtown NJ, Hunter matches in Louisianna using one of Don Geraci’s rifles and IBS titles at Camillus. Ron Marsden and the Brummells competed at Visalia in Californian 2 Gun, flew then to Ohio first for practise in Mr MTM’s underground tunnel then to Kelbly’s to join Brendan at the NBRSA titles. During the NBRSA National had the pleasure of being chauffeured by Ferris Pindell (P in PPC) when the Gordons were attending to business plus being entertained by Lou Palmisano (other half of PPC) at his home. From there to Hart’s Council Cup range at Wapwallopen for “Benchrest’80” as Ron and Ann were invited guests and part of teaching staff.

Benchrest ‘80 event was a follow up to the successful “Benchrest ’79 the brain child of Richie and Precision Shooting (IBS) and consisted of a 3 day hands on seminar and coaching clinic. The input from Ron and Ann was considered a win on all fronts – great experience for themselves appearing with such luminaries as Ally Euber, Ritchie Moorehead, Rick Hornbeck, Mike Walker, Bob White, Myles Hollister and Jerry Hart as well as the students from USA, Canada and South Africa.

After this they retired to the Gordon household where disaster struck with Ron having a heart attack and landing in ICU at Dover General but he insisted the
Gordons and Brummells compete at Englishtown. The New Jersey State titles proved successful as Ann won Heavy Varmint, fourth in Light and second in the 2 Gun. While still in hospital Ron insisted we all go to Camillus but that changed when he was back in ICU after surgery for blood clots in the legs. The journey home from Newark to Sydney via San Jose was an experience not to be repeated as Ron was adamant the Brummells were not going home without him in tow.

August saw the announcement that Sako 220 Russian cases for PPC were now in stock imported by Custers. IBS and NBRSA Unlimited (Experimental) Championship run concurrently at Kelblys Range.

October – 200 and 300 yard titles at Para S.A. Well supported by the trade with 788 Remington rifle, Shilen barrel, Weaver 25X T scope and powder in addition to trophies on offer. Conditions were a duplicate of the previous year. South Australia’s drought was broken with a tropical deluge preceded by 24 hours of strong winds and bitter cold. Day 1, 200 yards Light, cold but clear but only 5 groups under the 1” then the targets moved to 300. Many competitors were shooting 300 yards for the first time proved a baptism of fire and a real exercise in futility – target A – 4 FTQs, next relay 5 FTQs then relays 4 and 5 another 7 FTQs. Day 2 wasn’t much better - wind still tricky and raining.

Aggregate Winners:
Light 100 Col Tucker, 200 and Grand Aggregate Tony Allinson,
Heavy 100 Grand Agg and 2 Gun Brendan Atkinson, 200 Col Tucker

During the course of the matches Brendan Atkinson shot .461 group in light at 300 and a 300 agg in heavy of .3490 both of which appeared to be under world record claimed anywhere in the world at that time. Ron Marsden as SSAA’s International Benchrest representative undertook to submit to IBS to have such recognised as SSAA had IBS affiliation. Of interest Brendan used McCracken projectiles he picked up whilst at the Canadian Super shoot earlier in the year.

October – Tom Brummell at the behest of the potential distributor conducted comprehensive testing on AR 2207 using a Heavy chambered in 6mm PPC and shot over the bags. Final written assessment found the powder equal to any other powder commercially available at that time, burnt clean, metered well
through the measure and would fill a void as it is a locally made product and not subject to the vagaries of importation.

Result of 1980 International Postal Shoot reveals that Australia was first in the world in Experimental, 2nd to Italy in Light and 2nd to the USA in Heavy. The victorious Australian Experimental team consisted of Ron Marsden, Tom Brummell, Steve Sori, Denis Tobler and John Henry.

Ann Brummell a regular columnist with Precision Shooting since 1976 terminated her contributions to the magazine in November when Richie Moorehead resigned for family reasons.

December new products to be imported by RTM – Earp and Malsby projectiles in 224s and 243s and Belding and Mull stainless cleaning rods and brushes.

Late in the year Ralph Stolle moves from West Virginia to Kelbly’s Ohio

December – A shock announcement that Winchester, owned by Olin, is doomed due to heavy losses over the previous years.

1981 – Unfortunately have no diary notes applicable to Australia Day matches but have from a reliable source that Paul Sunderland won the 2 Gun.

January 16th Joyce Hornady President of Hornady Manufacturing Co and two of his employees, A. Heers (engineer) and James Garber (sales) killed when twin engine plane plunges into a lake 100’ short of a runway in New Orleans in adverse weather conditions.

March – Ralph Stolle enters into business with George Kelbly and production of the Panda is back in full swing.
Bullet makers blame the lack of suitable jackets for a worldwide shortage of projectiles however anticipated the situation should improve as Sierra about to start shipping and J-4 confident of supplying a suitable product.

Ann Brummell doesn’t stand for re-election as SSAA National Secretary

During the first quarter of 1981 much time and effort went into a proposal for an Australian seminar similar to the USA Benchrest ‘80 that Ron Marsden and Ann Brummell attended but it is felt parochial interests put paid to the project.
Nationals – held at Majura Range, ACT. The weather was rough and windy as is usually the case in Canberra at Easter. Skip Gordon visited again and shot in Light and Heavy. His travelling companion was Dave Wolfe of Wolfe Publishing (Handloader and Rifle Magazines) who spectated and donated autographed books to those shooting mystery class grand aggregates. Another donation was from Begonia Books who donated a magnificent coffee table book. The Top Ten in all classes was dominated by PPCs using Sako cases. And Maddco barrels also dominated. This was the first single target Nationals using the horizontal backing strip system. International competitors Skip Gordon USA and Graeme Smith New Zealand both competed.

On the Sunday evening an unusual occurrence – Whilst on the way back to the motel Tony Allinson’s vehicle came into contact with an escapee young camel it came off second best and unfortunately had to be euthanased.

Aggregate Winners:
Sporter 100 John Giles, 200 and Grand Aggregate Herb Valerius
Light 100 Ann Brummell, 200 and Grand Aggregate Keith Davey
Heavy 100 Herb Valerius, 200 and Grand Aggregate John Giles
Experimental 100 Tony Allinson, 200 and Grand Aggregate Nev Madden
4 Gun John Giles
Hunter class Brendan Atkinson
.22LR R/F 50 Nancye McKenzie, 100 Syd Miller, Grand Agg Alex Chryss
Alex used Ron Marsden’s rimfire rifle as Ron was not feeling well and left early.

The National Benchrest meeting discussed:
The abolition of the Warm Up target at registered matches however decided to make it optional to tournament organisers.
Proposal for registered tournaments in all classes for score soundly defeated.
A resolution passed that branches holding registered tournaments to use a PA system and timed tape for Commence Fire, time calls and Cease Fire

May – Super Shoot IX USA Cindy and Lee Six planned and ran the event successfully. Johanna Gordon takes part in her first Super Shoot as a competitor after eight years as an administrator.
Brummells and Ron Marsden donated trophies for the Junior Shoot program at Super Shoot and these are won by Eric Euber, Dale and Russell Boop. They also donated opal brooch and tie pin for Top husband and wife team these won by
Faye and Tony Boyer. (At WBC in France in 2011 Faye mentioned the trophies and informs that the items are a prized part of their trophy cabinet).

Annie and Stuart Elliott holidayed in the United States with Annie shooting smallest 200 yard group in a match at Visalia, California.

Nev Madden moved his family and barrel making operations from Brisbane to Toowoomba and set up an associate company Austral Arms. At the same time John Giles purchased and became the owner of PSECo.

NSW State Benchrest Point score trophy donated by Keith Herron was presented to Tony Allinson and the RTM trophy for the most improved in the state went to Alex Chryss (formal presentation made at 1982 Nationals).

July – Prototype Jongman action to suite 222 length cartridges made in NZ with the company ready to transfer manufacturing to Australia. Bill Minneman in the USA got around to fitting the Maddco barrel he purchased while in Australia in 1979 to a Hall for Heavy Varmint, the result his first aggregate under .2 (.1968) and reported this was the best he’d ever shot in IBS titles.

September – A consortium formed by the Vice President of Sperry Vickers acquires Winchester land, factory, offices, equipment, tooling and name plus intends to build a new factory on the land next to Yale University.

**1982** - Australia Day matches – Heavy all in daylight and Sporter under artificial light with both 100 yards on Saturday and both 200 yards on Sunday. This was a change from 1980 and 1981 as grand aggregate records are to be either daylight or artificial light not a mixture of both. The events this year were acknowledged as part of the Australia Day Games thanks to the Minister for the Capital Territory and such recognition meant great press exposure plus a magnificent medal provided by The Australia Day Council. The medal has “One Nation – One Future” on one side and “For achievement in Sport” on the reverse set in a green velvet case with gold lining.

Saturday morning – for Heavy 100 rain and 15 knot winds and the same conditions in the evening for Sporter 100 that did not finish until 1AM. Sunday was all 200 with conditions clear, warm and heaps of mirage during the day. The evening weather was eerily calm then strong winds and 180 degree switches and the later it got the more mystery verticals were encountered.
Aggregate Winners:
Heavy 100 Tom Brummell, 200 and G/A Ann Brummell
Sporter 100 Charly Beck 200 (new artificial light record) and G/A Alex Chryss
2 Gun Ann Brummell received the magnificent medal mentioned previous along cash and the Bob Daniels Trophy.
Plaudits to ACT for the revised event format at the Easter National Benchrest meeting.

Nationals – held at Newcastle NSW. Backing strips, target frames and motors were loaned by and transported from Silverdale to facilitate the holding the events, Ross Hicks drove and lent his truck for the operation assisted by Doug Rose, Tony Allinson and Paul Sunderland. Range registration and NSW Police Range Licence for Bruce Range were both completed just before the start date.

The events had an international flavour with Peter Hammerich from West Germany and Graeme Smith from New Zealand both competing.

Day 1 – dawned bright and clear with winds that were termed mild for Seaham but strong everywhere else. Sporter 100 aggregate was won by John Matthews and the 200 by Alex Chryss. Robin Elton won the event with a rifle that featured a Treloar stock weighing just 9ozs. Bruce turned out a reinforced the gun stock where he perfected the mating of Kevlar Aramid fibre with carbon fibre as a reinforcing agent set in epoxy with an injection moulding process.

Day 2 – much the same as the previous day except the winds increased in velocity with switches and washy mirage. Annie Elliott won the Heavy 100 yard aggregate, being the only competitor under .3, with the Stolle Panda she purchased during the 1981 holiday stateside. The 200 and grand aggregate was won by John Giles.
Smallest group at 200 was shot by Peter Hammerich visiting from West Germany who when he was in the USA later that year for the USA Super Shoot told shooters that Newcastle was the most inane conditions he had ever seen and never imagined there were such conditions.

Day 3 – Light Varmint the wind still hadn’t gone away with Brendan Atkinson winning the 100 aggregate. By the time the event got to 200 the wind had picked up considerably with 360 degree switches. The conditions made no shortage of groups over 2” and almost as many having a DNQ score for having shots not even make paper one shooter to survive the conditions was the 200
aggregate winner – Ken Wilson. Nev Madden won the grand and it is believed was a first .308 to be a winner in the light varmint class.

The Elliott Stolle Panda made another appearance when Denis Tobler had a disaster with a trigger malfunction in Experimental thoughtfully Annie and Stuart handed the Panda over to Denis that permitted him to complete the event and ultimately pick up silver in the class grand aggregate. Nev Madden with 100 aggregate and grand shared the spoils with John Giles who won the 200 yard aggregate.

Busiest man for the whole Easter and gave up his opportunity to shoot, except in Experimental was Tony Allinson who was the Range Captain as well as Tournament Director. Keith Smith was also on the hop making milk deliveries to customers, supermarkets, campers and canteen in the wee small hours before taking his place on the firing line. Also the wind indicators used on range were designed and manufactured by Keith.

The most outstanding story from the 1982 Nationals was Nev Madden and John Giles who shared a .308 in Light and Heavy finishing 1 and 2 (John in front), Light finishing 1 and 3 (Nev in front). Experimental 1 and 3 (John in front using a .308 rig), then in 4 Gun 1 and 2 (Nev in front). All had Maddco barrels manufactured Nev and built by John as PSECo and Nev was at pains to thank John for his contribution. Donations to winners were made by Newcastle Motor Wholesale and bottles of Hunter Valley Reds and Whites by Tom Haley.

.22LR Rimfire saw Newcastle shooters win both aggregates with 50 going to Randal Miller and 100 to Tony Allinson but the grand was victory to Syd Miller.

Hunter class was won by Brendan Atkinson.

Formal presentation of NSW Point Score and most improved in NSW made to Tony Allinson and Alex Chryss (as mentioned previous).

At the National Benchrest meeting discussion centred on the placement and development of wind indicators. A decision on a mandatory specification was seen as a deterrent to development of unproven types. Also consensus was provision of wind indicators remain the prerogative of the host but be placed no less than 5 benches apart. Correspondence from NZSGSA suggested a Rimfire Trans Tasman event for 1982 with shoulder to shoulder in 1983. 1982 event on postal basis held but
no interest shown by Australian shooters for a postal event in 1983 however support for proposed shoulder to shoulder event in 1983.

Centrefire HOF parameters arrived at – sponsorship by Raz via ASJ locked in, patch design by Herb Valerius accepted and two parties volunteered to have brazzard manufacture attended to.

Warm Up target be dropped if host club so desires. 1982 Nationals had problems completing Experimental and last target of the aggregate held over until the next morning thus exercising notice in Nationals advert that events were subject to alteration. Dropping the Warm Up target in all four classes would have seen Experimental finalised in one day as expected – recommendation that future hosts consider this but if not recommend advertising that program was subject to alteration.

June – Announcements out of USA – Wally Hart planning on selling Council Cup Range and Ed Shilen who had not shot since Brisbane 1975 was considering making a comeback to Benchrest.

July 12th – Heinz Raz passed away unexpectedly after almost a decade as Journal Editor where he took ASJ from a struggling almost bankrupt publication to a much sought after and financial publication on newstands.

September 28th – Ralph Stolle has a massive coronary and doesn’t survive.

1983 – The 4th Australia matches Day held at Canberra. Classes held Sporter and Heavy and again part of the Australia Day Council events who supplied three of the “One Nation – One Future” medals this time for winners of both classes and 2 Gun. Start times were changed from previous years with 2PM for Sporter in day light and 9PM for Heavy under artificial light. Temperatures during Sporter were over 100 degrees F (before celcius) with heaps of mirage and a light breeze. Cooled off around sun down but still very hot then just on the 9PM start for Heavy the wind started.

Day 2 – the temperature still over the ton but with dust and the wind stayed.

Stuart Elliott acted as Tournament Captain, Range officer and competitor and was ably assisted by Herb Valerius. Ian Josselyn provided the TRS-80 computer that was piloted by Anni Valerius – the machine showed competitors their standing after each group. The whole weekend ran like clockwork.
Aggregate Winners:
Sporter 100 Alex Chryss, 200 Brendan Atkinson, G/A Robin Elton
Heavy 100 saw a new record of .2416 to Ann Brummell
200 won by Robert Tobler and G/A to Karl Kuehn.
2 Gun - Robin Elton. Runner up in the 2 Gun was Brendan Atkinson and for him this was the fourth year in succession as the bridesmaid.

April – Rod Marvell appointed as Managing Journal Editor. Rod had been with ASJ for 6 years as Assistant Editor to Heinz and previous to that as a writer.

**Nationals** - held at Para SA. The posting of the Warm Up target option was not taken up by the organisers.
Day 1 - Right on cue the wind started and the clouds opened up, although April 1st was not a joke, with slippery mud everywhere, reminiscent of 1974 but this time red gooey mud not heavy black stuff. The target crew had a tough time but just getting to benches, tents and ablutions was unpleasant.
Sporter 100 and grand aggregate went to Charly Beck using an action of his own handiwork with chambering credited to self.
Day 2 - The rain bucketed down for heavy drenching the target crew resulting in them having to transverse the range on foot as it was impossible to get a vehicle up range in safety. It was also necessary to a nail plastic sheet each end of the firing line to prevent shooters on benches 1,2,19 and 20 from drowning.
Ken Wilson shot the first ever group under .100 (a .098) at an Australian Championship to take smallest 100 group. The rifle with RTM alloy stock was the only firearm to survive a house fire in one piece – well heat treated.

Day 3 – The rain abated but the wind stayed, the mud got deeper and more slippery than ever. Stalwart SA and Nationals competitor, Syd Miller took part as just had to be part of the show despite disobeying doctor’s orders after open heart surgery. In the event only three shooters kept their 100 yard aggregate under .3 with Noel Weston taking the gold and going on to win. The smallest group was shot by Robert Tobler, then a junior who did his own gun smithing on the rifle.

Day 4 – Experimental with only a minority handling the atrocious conditions with only three shooters under .4 aggregate at 100 and only Tom Koverick under .7 aggregate to win at 200. 190 targets were shot at 200 with only three groups just scaping in as diamonds - .922 to .978.
Rimfire Benchrest – showed custom and factory built rifles now equally distributed in the Top 10 but with Eley Tenex dominating. At 50 metres only John Wyatt was the only competitor to shoot an aggregate under 1” thus winning to 50 metre gold. Similarly Russ McNamee was the only one to record an aggregate under the 1” at 100 yards to win that aggregate. It had been anticipated a group of New Zealanders would attend and take part in the .22LR Rimfire event to allow a Trans Tasman event to run concurrently but due to a recognition problem in NZ the result was a lack of finance by way of grants for travel expenses.

Hunter Class dominated by 6PPCs and Lyman 6X scopes.

Aggregate Winners:
Sporter 100 Charly Beck, 200 John Wyatt, G/A Charly Beck,
Light 100 Noel Weston, 200 John Radford, G/A Noel Weston
Heavy 100 John Radford, 200 Tony Allinson, G/A John Radford
Experimental 100 John Giles, 200 Tom Kvarick, G/A John Giles
4 Gun John Giles – piloting a .308 in all classes
Hunter class Paul Sunderland
.22LR R/F 50 John Wyatt, 100 Russ McNamee, G/A Bill Jupp

National Benchrest meeting discussed:-
That hosts of registered tournaments be encouraged to supply and place more wind indicators than the minimum stated in Rule Book.
Shooters who win Top Ten patches encouraged to display on shooting jackets.
Targets and backers lodged as potential records now mandatory to be accompanied by Record target application form – duly filled in with information/signatures sought on the form or not be eligible.
3 minute cleaning time no longer applicable the exception being in Experimental when double target posting matches held.

Centrefire HOF discussed – with the unexpected demise of Heinz Raz sponsorship via Journal profits no longer available as the incoming editor employed on a totally different contractual arrangement to that of Heinz. Also it transpired that the parties who in 1982 undertook to attend to the manufacture of the patches had reneged and no progress made. Ron Marsden and Ann Brummell undertook to resolve the outstanding matters with the sponsorship and patch manufacture.
June – Advice that between 1976 and March 1983 400,000 220 Russian cases had been imported into the USA from Sako Finland and an estimated 50,000 into Australia by D W Custer.

July – AR powder 2206, 2207, 2208 and 2209 released to dealers in 500 gram containers and distributor Dixie Trading advises that continuity of supply will be dictated entirely by shooter demand.

July – RTM Products now a partnership between Tony Allinson and Fred Lawler (FWL) with Ron Marsden retiring as a firearms dealer.

October - Trans Tasman .22LR Rimfire benchrest shoulder to shoulder match took place at Silverdale. The winner of the match was - Brendan Atkinson.

During the presentation Brendan Atkinson was presented with a Raleigh silver tray provided by SSAA National in recognition of two World records shot at 200/300 matches for Light Varmint group at 300 of .461 and Heavy Varmint 300 aggregate of .3490 in 1980. (Certificates for Steve Sori verifying and recognising the world records arrived from IBS in early 1983).

November – As they had undertaken Ron Marsden and Ann Brummell organised and then financed the artwork and first run of the HOF patches as no sponsor including the Association were in a position to finance. This required the cost was passed onto the recipients – (the same situation a few years later with jackets) although some states were proud to contribute to their member’s brazzard. (Years later the cost of the patches became part of the Chairman’s expenses).

December – Brendan Atkinson presented with Heinz Raz Memorial shield as the South Australian shooter of 1983 for outstanding achievements.

1984 – January 14th – All SSAA shooters saddened by the death of “Pop” Coady. “Pop” was the measurer, record keeper and despatcher of SSAA group awards to every shooter who qualified for same so he touched many lives.

The 5th Australia Day matches –Sporter at night and Heavy during daylight hours, again included as part of the 1984 Australia Day Games and the highly prized “One Nation – One Future” medals for achievement in sport on offer.
Under instruction from the Supervising Tournament Captain, Stuart Elliott
Day 1 - Heavy Varmint got underway at 2PM in light fishtailing breezes from
left to right with a touch of mirage. Tony Brown won 100 but the top ten was
close with .0444 separating 1st and 10th.
9PM Sporter 100 – same as the afternoon but the mirage disappeared.
Finished around midnight with John Giles on his first trip to Australia Day
matches steered a 6PPC to a new aggregate record of .3040.

Day 2 - 2PM Heavy Varmint at 200 yards with sky threatening and winds taking
many shots close to the border and just as the yardage finished the rain pelted
down becoming more unpleasant by the minute with water flowing through
tents and streaming down the firing line. Winner of the aggregate was a new
face on the line Ralph Garlick.
The Grand aggregate winner for Heavy Varmint was Tony Allinson.

9PM for start of Sporter still raining hard and looking to worsen. Two of the
target crew got shocks, everything saturated and the backer line “live”, even
the generator supplying power became “live” and knocked Jim McKinley off his
feet – no mean feat. The match was abandoned and results based on one and
a half gun aggregate that resulted in Ken Wilson being named the 1984 winner.
This meant a different shooter had won Australia Day so far.

March – George Kelbly announced his range at Nth Lawrence Ohio to be
extended from 40 to 60 benches.

Ann Brummell elected SSAA National Snr Vice President

**Nationals** - held at Brisbane Qld – and had an international flavour with Wally
Siebert on his regular sojourn from the USA.

No shooting on Good Friday so National Benchrest meeting held.
Sporter scope restrictions discussed as opinions divided between leave alone
at 12X and make unlimited the issue to go to a referendum and allow those
that shoot the event decide.
Ron Marsden and Ann Brummell reported on the Centrefire HOF issue and
meeting applauded the efforts – finality achieved.

Day 1 - Sporter – no warmer target. The result a duplicate of 1982 with John
Wyatt winning 200 aggregate and 100 and grand to Charly Beck.
Day 2 – Heavy Varmint dark skies with rain promised with the 100 yard aggregate going to Paul Sunderland. 200 aggregate to Paul Sullivan by the virtual street but the grand aggregate saw Tony Allinson victorious.

Day 3 – Light Varmint Light tricky winds and plenty of mirage did not confuse Andy Dymytryk who won 100 with a .2348 aggregate and his first HOF point. At 200 yards Karl Kuehn didn’t win a match but didn’t shoot any big ones. The grand went to Tony Allinson claimed his second class gold in two days.

Day 4 – Experimental was held in warm and windy conditions – 100 yard aggregate went to Ann Brummell with Tony Allinson winning 200 yards – leaving him on 9 HOF points. Ann Brummell won the grand aggregate.

4 Gun Agg and a new National record of .3667 won by Paul Sullivan.

Next day was Anzac Day so no shooting until 11AM when Hunter started but course of fire was 2X5 at 100 and 200 yards. At the closer range 6 shooters recorded 100 points and the winner was decided on X rings – winner Ross Hicks with 100.8. The 200 winner was John Flower with 99.2 and when added to his 99.7 gave him the class win.

.22LR Rimfire – Tony Allinson carried on his hot streak and runaway winner at 50 metres, 100 yards (the only shooter under 1” aggregate) made the grand aggregate a forgone conclusion.

The 22 Waldog debuted at Australian titles in the hands of Paul Sullivan. Wally Siebert showed a couple of 36X Leupold scopes with his conversion to 45X and advised that 45 is the maximum that 36X can be bumped up to.

May – Super Shoot #12 at Kelbly Range, Ohio USA. – Disneyland for Benchrest shooters – Ann and Tom Brummell and Jean and Denis Tobler – 3 shooters among the 260 with Jean playing mother. As Aussies impressed to see Harry Madden’s name up on the Benchrest Memorial and Homer Culver inducted into the USA HOF during Super Shoot.

Items that made a lasting impression- the shooting of Don Geraci especially his 200 yard agg in Sporter in horrendous winds. Denis showed great interest in all the gadgets – collapsible cleaning rest, micrometer neck sizer, customised powder throwers, Outters chamber cleaning tool and the amount of second hand equipment that changed hands.
Denis persuaded Rorchach to part with a set of bullet dies and Ann secured Ally Euber’s rifle but only after his son Eric had finalised his events.

The group also visited many establishments - Shilen where Ed showed every aspect of their operation, Dan Bechtel of B-Square showed all manner of gadgets, and at Hart barrels privileged to see the manufacture of Rimfire barrels for the 1984 USA Olympic shooting team.

May – Moves being taken to bring IBS and NBRSA under one banner with the establishment of a five point plan to be put to both organisations.

June – Ann Brummell as National Benchrest Chair had talks while in the USA with various parties with a view to an International event, not postal and committed Australia to be part of any such moves (eventually WBC under WBSF) however it was too late for the European event planned for September.

July – John Galbraith, SSAA Qld President, presented Harry Madden’s #1 HOF patch to his widow Audrey and #2 to John Giles and #3 to Nev Madden

September – First European-America Benchrest Competition – at Wiesbaden with 42 shooters from Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland and USA.

October – Second half of European-America event with 40 shooters (no Swiss this time) at Sarree

December – Denis Tobler completes his acquisition of machinery and finalises setting up for barrel manufacture as Tobler barrels and R.D.T. Products.

December – Benchrest Rule Book #2 printed with amendments approved by National subsequent to Book #1.

1985 – Australia Day matches in Canberra Sporter 2PM start in daylight and Heavy at 9PM under artificial light. Again the matches part of the listing for Australia Day Games with memorial medals.
Stuart Elliott again the Tournament Director and chief Range Officer. Range and surrounding areas were tinder dry and all were warned about the danger of fire and all precautions taken and vigilance required.
By the start of Heavy the wind indicators were dancing merrily and as the sun baked earth was still warm the mirage took a circular pattern. Alan Peake had many things on his bucket list – to win an aggregate at a big tournament and
shoot an aggregate under .25 and as he achieved both with a 100 yard aggregate win of .2440 that was two of many ticked off.

Finish of sporter (200) breezy and plenty of mirage – a couple of details copped some howler conditions with 2” groups the norm sending their ambitions out the door. The clean sweep of 100, 200 and grand went to Kevin Davey. Prior to the start of heavy and the end of sporter conditions were fairly calm but Commence Fire changed that, then the dead calm on the last target was when unexplained verticals came out bringing many unstuck. John Giles won the 200 aggregate and Barry Warwick the grand.

2 Gun went to Herb Valerius who used his sporter in both classes with the scope change for heavy.

Debut for Tobler barrels - Denis confident of getting into full production in the weeks after Australia Day.

March – Ann Brummell re-elected SSSAA Snr National Vice President.

**Nationals** - scheduled for Eagle Park – didn’t happen – events abandoned.

May – Tony Boyer wins his 10th point and enters USA HOF

July – PPC’s celebrates 11 years. Talk of an international event at Bisley UK

**1986** – Australia Day this time Sporter under artificial light and Heavy in daylight. Again part of the Australia Day Games promotion. Shoot sponsored by Mulwex with powder prizes for the aggregate winners.

Heavy 100 yard aggregate and grand to Ross Hicks and 200 yard aggregate to Tony Allinson with his trusty 6X47. In Sporter the 100 aggregate was won by Tony Allinson and the 200 went to Paul Osborne with the grand to Ross Hicks. The 2 Gun a forgone conclusion – Ross Hicks

A couple of interesting items – in Heavy John Radford sported a Jimmy Meyer action on his rifle. In the barrel department Maddcos were out in force and a few Toblers that are now available - both Australian made products.

January – Sako advises they will be supplying factory ammunition and producing rifles in both 22 and 6MM PPC
**Nationals** - held at Para SA. South Australian Sesquicentenary. All competitors presented with a certificate to certify they took part in South Australia’s 150th commemorations.
The state was drought stricken with the range and surrounds a dust bowl.

Sporter the weather turned nasty. 100 yard aggregate was won by Brian Steer (his first HOF point) as the match began at 200 the wind picked up and it was dusty and oppressively hot, over 100 degrees (F), Stuart Elliott was the winner at 200 with Brian Steer (2 more HOF points) taking the grand aggregate.

Heavy started in warm and windy conditions but an improvement on the previous day. 100 aggregate went to Lexie Hicks, the 200 to Alan Peake and the grand aggregate to Ann Brummell. During that evening the wind really howled at 2AM sending the campers into a frenzy of hammering tent pegs back and there was no abatement for the next day.

In Light the 100 yard aggregate went to Ann Brummell, the 200 to Brian Steer (now up to 4 HOF points) and the grand and 2 Gun to Ann Brummell. Experimental – the 100 to Paul Sullivan, 200 to Brendan Atkinson and the grand to Terry Fear, who was experiencing blown primers every group.

4 Gun was won by Stuart Elliott using his Panda action in all classes and utilising the switch barrel technique.

.22 R/F B/R conditions settled with just a little fishtail to catch those not watching closely. 50 metres to Neil Henderson and the 100 yards to Tony Allinson and Neil prevailed to win the class, a successful comeback as he hadn’t shot a National since 1979.

Hunter Centrefire – first 10 targets National for the class in hot and dusty conditions. Tony Allinson won 100, 200 to Ross Hicks and the grand to Stuart Elliott with the podium places separated by Xs.

Hunter Rimfire debuted at these Nationals and like centrefire a 10 target affair. 50 metres won by Paul Mogridge, 100 to Ross Hicks and the grand to Paul Mogridge.

Stuart Elliott elected National Benchrest Chairman

May – preliminary plans under way for some Americans to come to Australia Day in 1988 to celebrate Australia’s Bicentennary.
September – American shooters at Bisley UK – not to be viewed as a competitive occasion but a demonstration event with the principle reasons to be expose UK to equipment, coach, counsel and establish a workable benchrest program in UK despite the legislative impediments.

December – IBS International Postal matches cancelled. The manner of the cancellation disappointed as SSAA had no notification and the abandonment was gleaned from an overseas magazine. An alternate postal event proposed on behalf of NBRSA was held over for discussion at the Easter 1987 Benchrest delegates’ meeting.

December 6th – Ian Josselyn passed away. Ian will be remembered for being instrumental taking benchrest scoring and reporting in Australia into the computer age during 1981 as well as being a keen competitor.

1987 - January started with the annual Australia Day matches and again part of the Australia Day Games with winners’ medals from that organisation.
Aggregate Winners:
Sporter 100 and G/A Denis Tobler using a Tobler barrel, 200 Stuart Elliott
Heavy 100 Herb Valerius, 200 won by Ross Hicks with the first aggregate under .2, a .1934 and the grand also to Ross to dove tail with his 1986 win.

The first six competitors in the Heavy G/A were all under the existing record. The 200 aggregate saw the first seven under the existing record.

A real show of Australian made products at the matches – Maddco and Tobler barrels, RTM alloy and Treloar composite stocks and Kuehn and Treloar projectiles.
January – Skip Gordon’s last Benchrest column in ASJ.
February – Brendan Atkinson first column as Benchrest writer in ASJ that was to continue until as restructuring at the end of 2002 when some specific discipline columns including Benchrest were discontinued.

Nationals - held at Kwinana W.A. The venue was white sand country therefore plenty of mirage.
Sporter 100 Denis Tobler then at 200 the Fremantle Doctor arrived and some of the front runners fell foul with the arrival shooting 2” groups. Charly Beck won through at 200 taking him to 9 HOF points but the Grand Aggregate went
to Brian Steer who defended his 1986 title. (Charly stayed on 9 points for 12 years scoring his 10th point in 1999 and HOF #20).

Heavy was a clean sweep to Ross Hicks taking the 100, 200 and grand but the first sixteen competitors recorded under .3 aggregate.

Conditions for Light was not as good as the previous days with a nasty straight down range wind with right to left gusts plus the 3 metre mound at 75 made for some strange verticals. Murray Hicks, then a junior claimed his first national medal – smallest 100 yard group a .103 the only sub .2 of the match. Winners – 100 John Edmed, at 200 the whirlpool wind eased with the aggregate win to Ann Brummell, Grand Aggregate winner Greg Latemore.

Experimental – 100 to Terry Fear, 200 and Grand Aggregate to Ann Brummell. A new perpetual trophy donated by David Billinghurst was introduced for the winner of experimental the “Ron Marsden Shield” - the first recipient being Ann and presented in person by Ron and David.

One of two Holy Grails of Benchrest is the 4 Gun and this went to Ann Brummell after 17 years of trying and some 2nd and 3rd placings over that period.

Another shield on offer depicting Dr Lou Palmisano for the winning State team was won by NSW – team members Ann Brummell, Ross Hicks, Denis Tobler and Barry Warwick.

.22LR Rimfire rifles on the line now taking on a more sophisticated air with stainless barrels and custom stocks in alloy, fibreglass etc. Maddco rimfire barrels made their initial appearance at these Nationals. Winners 50 Tony Allinson, 100 Syd Hammond and G/A Tony Allinson

.22LR Rimfire Hunter – 50 Brendan Atkinson - a national record 250.10. 100 Ross Hicks and Grand to Stuart Elliot doubling on Brendan’s rifle

Centrefire Hunter 100 Paul Mogridge, 200 and Grand to John Giles. John was doubling on Nick Catlan’s rifle and didn’t shoot Hunter very often but with his mother visiting on range did her proud.

National Benchrest meeting discussed an alternate for postal matches if NBRSA looking to reinstate such. Suggest for Light, Heavy and Experimental to be
taken over two shoots, one being the Nationals and the other each State’s state titles. NSW wishes to retain the dates set aside for international postal matches and not have the state titles as the second event. Meeting agreed.

Nick Brill-Suie sought the viability of producing in magazine form “Benchrest Bulletin” distributed by subscription as the discipline is getting less and less results in the SSAA publication. Meeting felt a good idea and will be trialled and if successful and well received will go ahead.

A promotional booklet for benchrest proposed. Delegates considered a worthy proposal but nobody volunteered to work on a draft.

August – Vindication of Rules pertaining to stuck live round in SSAA events with the advice of a fatality in the USA with a person attempting to remove a stuck live round with a cleaning rod.


October – Proposed visit of USA shooter for Bi-Centennial Australia Day matches called off however some may come to 1988 Nationals.

November – Advice that Dr Lou Palmisano as Technical Director to USA Olympic shooting teams has assembled a team to work on creating a superbly accurate .22LR rimfire cartridge.

Throughout 1987 Alan Peake, Tim Josselyn and Rod Browitt spent many hours undertaking the reworking of the software in Ian Josselyn’s benchrest scoring program to incorporate more sophisticated elements.

December – Speer Reloading Manual #11 released but not readily available in Australia (this didn’t happen until December 1989).

1988 – Australia’s Bi-Centennial year.

Competition for the year kicked off with the Australia Day matches as the first 3 gun registered tournament in the country. Shooters’ spirits were down and some thought this may be the last big shoot as the governments of NSW and Victoria were threatening to implement draconian gun control measures that could jeopardise large scale events. Thankfully that did not transpire in 1988 with the defeat of the Unsworth government in NSW.
Light and Heavy shot during the daylight and Sporter under artificial light. Stuart Elliott advised he would be stepping down as Tournament director after this year having served 9 years at the helm.

Introduction of the Ian Josselyn Memorial Trophy for Sporter G/A that was financed by Jim McKinley, Stuart and Annie Elliott, Herb Valerius, Rod Browitt and John Radford with the winner to receive a keeper each year. The trophy was crafted by Herb Valerius in three types of walnut – very impressive. The matches had an international flavour with Wally Siebert and Johanna and Skip Gordon all taking part. The range had a new lighting design by Rod Browitt that shooters voted the best layout yet.

Winners – Light was windy and dusty but Stuart Elliott prevailed at 100 then for 200 the conditions did not improve, the winner of the yardage aggregate was Lexie Hicks with the grand to her other half Ross Hicks. Heavy – no improvement in conditions and again Stuart Elliott was the winner at 100, at 200 the wind and mirage persisted but Ross Hicks won through and also won the class grand aggregate. Sporter – the wind died about an hour before start time and the calm was ominous as shortly after was in full blow mode that made for 2” verticals. Winners – 100 Charly Beck, 200 and G/A Harry McDonald

2Gun winner Harry McDonald and as such was the inaugural winner of the Ian Josselyn Memorial Trophy presented that evening by Ian’s son Tim. The 3 Gun and trophy of nice looking wall clock went to Ross Hicks.

After 9 years records show there had been 9 different winners of the Australia Day 2 Gun Aggregate.

A couple of outstanding paint jobs on stocks – Garry Cherry’s startling pink and Wally Siebert’s patriotic combo of German, American and Australian colours. John Radford used as Stolle Teddy action, with switch barrels, smithing done by George Kelbly, a completely imported outfit. Harry McDonald used 66 grain projectiles by Jeff Fowler the first imported into Australia.

A presentation evening was a dinner/dance function at the original Yarralumla Wool Shed – part of the Yarralumla Station where the homestead is now the Governor General’s residence. During proceedings two trophies supplied by IBS were presented to winners of Light and Heavy at the previous Nationals.
These trophies were in the place of the abandoned postal matches and should have been presented to the 1987 winners but damage in transit from the USA meant much work and renovation was required and attended to by Herb Valerius.

February – Wally Siebert advises he will be having six months residency in Australia and will be performing scope conversions on Lymans and Leupolds during his stay.

**Nationals** - wettest for years – bucketed down from Day 1 (Sporter) to Day 6 (Hunter) 15” recorded in the week.

NSW Bicentennial Council provided a Certificate of Participation to all competitors with Certificates of Appreciation to volunteers in recognition of a valuable contribution to the Bicentennial.

Sporter was first event conducted still topped with 12X scopes. Light conditions but wet.
Winner 100 - Steve Sori, 200 Alan Peake and G/A Ann Brummell
Heavy 100 John Radford, 200 Stuart Elliott and G/A Erik Nielsen (Elf)
Light 100 Alan Peake 200 Roy Hopwood, G/A Lexie Hicks
In Light Lexie had a bet with Ross that if she beat him he had to give up the smokes – well he did at least for the week or at least while under scrutiny.
Experimental 100 Steve Sori, shot a .2128 agg that was under both the NBRSA and IBS World Records.
200 Denis Tobler but there was some hard luck stories. Relay 1, A target Barry Warwick shot a .340 national record but that relay on the B target experienced a downpour that obliterated the targets for 7-12 minutes with competitors shooting blind cruelling all chances.
Grand Aggregate was won by Steve Sori.
4 Gun went to Alan Peake who shot a Light Varmint rifle in 3 classes.

.22LR Rimfire saw an array of rifles from bunny guns to fancy custom jobs
50 Andy Drymytryk, 100 and G/A Phil McClelland

.22LR R/F Hunter – National records all round – 50 metre, 100 yds and G/A
50 Kasi Baltokiewics 250.12 and G/A 493.14 and 100 Phil McClelland 246.3
C/F Hunter 100 Brendan Atkinson from John Dark after what at that time was a complicated tie breaking system. 200 Ross Hicks with a record 249.6
The tournament director was Tom Brummell assisted every step of the way by Bruce Fryer who both took holidays and toiled for just on two weeks compensated with only a bag full of wet clothes and little recognition or plaudits.

National meeting discussed:
Hall of Fame to be set up for Hunter class both Centrefire and Rimfire retrospective to 1986 when the matches comprising ten target matches first introduced to the National event program.
Recommend mirages board to be mandatory at all registered tournaments. Taped and timed calls to be mandatory with manual back up.
Delegates sought progress report on promotional booklet for benchrest that was proposed in 1987 – there was nothing to report although a couple of individuals collaborating on same and working towards being publication ready at the 1989 delegate’s meeting for forwarding to SSAA National in 1990.

April - Europe holds Super Shoot #3 at Grasse in France for Light and Heavy Varmints. In Light Herwig Fack was the winner using a Maddco 6mm barrel. Maddco 7.62 barrels had had success in Europe prior to this but this was a first for a 6mm.

Dan Lilja, barrelmaker, produces a gain twist barrel – 13.75 in front of the chamber and speeds up to 13 twist 6” from the muzzle.

October – Graeme Smith from New Zealand advises he intends to introduce Rimfire Hunter and Rimfire Benchrest events into the New Zealand National Championships next year.

May- Targets, backers etc. allied to Steve Sori’s potential world record in Experimental sent away to the IBS measuring committee for recognition and verification.
July – Hercules powder released in Australia – appears to have a burning rate equivalent to AR2206

September –The NSW Bicentennial Council presents Ann Brummell a coveted award for Excellence in Women’s Sport.

November – Nev Madden named Special Achiever in the Queensland Executive of the Year Awards.
1989 - January – Decision taken that the traditional 7 days of shooting National titles would be split – the five group classes at Easter and the two Hunter classes later in the year. This was an option open to and taken up by ACT with the Hunter classes in October with both Nationals hosted by ACT.

Australia Day matches kicked off the season. This was the 10th running of the event, a day/nighter with Rod Browitt the Tournament Director. Conditions were rough and to stay on the right side of the border lines one had to exercise guile and prudently judged hold offs. The events attracted good media exposure courtesy of Col Allison from “Robbo’s Newsworld”.

Sporter 100 started at 2PM in warm conditions with plenty of mirage but Tony Allinson conquered all that to win the aggregate. Heavy began around the 9PM mark and local knowledge came to the fore with Herb Valerius taking the aggregate. Back again the next afternoon for Sporter in gusty winds with dust and mirage Harry McDonald won the aggregate and claimed the grand as well to win the Ian Josselyn Memorial Trophy. Heavy 200 saw the gusty winds drop to a light breeze but with enough quick switches of direction to deter those that “machine gun”. The aggregate went to a very careful “picker” another local Rod Browitt. To complete the local flavour the Heavy Grand aggregate and 2 Gun both went to Herb Valerius.

During the event Denis Tobler used one of his own actions on his Sporter but was not planning into going into production. Wally Siebert shows off the new matt silver Leupold 36X that he helped design. David Billinghurst used “Billo” 68 grain projectiles that had a similar look to Treloars maybe the reason being they are both using Detsch dies.

March – Shooters in the USA report a shortage of PPC cases however this situation is not apparent at this stage in Australia. Finally after follow up correspondence a certificate confirming and recognising Steve Sori’s world record that was shot at the 1988 Nationals arrived.

Nationals for Group - held at Canberra ACT. The bench line had been extended to 32 benches with still a bit of work to do to join up the rooflines.
Alan Peake’s scope checker was a real eye opener as scopes marked 12X were few and far between such magnification – some were battling to be 11.5X and a couple shown to be 10X.

Sporter – Winner of 100 aggregate was Alan Peake with a potential national record of .2344 bringing him within one point of HOF glory. 200 started in heavy mirage but tamed by winner Harry McDonald.

Grand aggregate went to David Billinghurst shooting his own projectiles plus the valuable two points made him HOF #9 after sitting on 9 points for a decade. However, to be fair he did drop out of the competitive scene for a number of years as his young family were into swimming and lifesaving and David supported them 100% serving in administration posts with SLSA.

Most gratifying for David was that his feat was witnessed by his friend and mentor Ron Marsden attending his last National before his demise.

Heavy Varmint 100 aggregate was won by Tommy Doyle
Heavy Varmint 200 and Grand Aggregate to Ross Hicks

Light Varmint 100 was won by Nick Brille-Suie
Light Varmint 200 the winner was Paul Sunderland
Light Varmint Grand Aggregate went to Ross Hicks

Experimental was shot in cool to cold windy conditions with drizzle patches and the rifles on the line were an equal mix of bag guns and rigs.
100 aggregate was won by Harry McDonald
The 200 aggregate developed into a Tobler father son shoot out with the elder, Denis on .4108 just edging out Robert on .4148.
Grand aggregate went to Ross Hicks
4 Gun – No clairvoyance needed – Ross Hicks.
Giving Ross a total of 10 points in one National a rarity and HOF entry as #10 Apart from the HOF, medals, Top Ten patches he took home the Chas Brown Trophy (4 Gun), IBS shields for Light and Heavy and the Ron Marsden shield for Experimental – quite a haul.

.22LR Rimfire was a mixture of rifles from as factory turned out to custom jobs and even a Walther small bore barrelled action with an ultralight weight stock used by John Rawson. The field was enhanced by some field rifle competitors with the morning being sunny - a definite improvement on the previous day.
Winners were 50 metre aggregate Bill Jupp
At 100 yards there was plenty of wind and dancing mirage but Brendan Atkinson prevailed to take the yardage aggregate and class Grand Aggregate.

Items discussed at National Benchrest meeting:
A promotional booklet to assist branches setting up a new range or rebuilding an existing one proposed.
Mirage boards to be mandatory in registered tournaments.
Unrestricted rests in Experimental maybe clamped to the bench.
Discussion on redraft of action regarding protests, disputes and appeals (1989 rules superseded in Rule Book #8 of 2013 by direction from SSAA National and included in all Rule Books as deemed prudent by National).

April – Mulwala factory privatised and will be a private company manufacturing propellants but on face value things should remain the same with the price comparable to imported powders.
BM1 similar to AR2206
BM2 similar to AR2208
Both should be available in a couple of months both considered suitable for PPC based cartridges.

May – Hoppes release Hoppe’s BR #9 Copper solvent

September – First issue of Benchrest Bulletin thanks to the advertising and publication expertise of Nick Brill-Suie contained shoot results, coming events etc. and 8 issues a year was the anticipated schedule. Well received and appreciated. (Later under the ownership and stewardship of Rob Carnell morphed into the electronic medium).

September/October – Hunter class for .22LR Rimfire and Centrefire hosted by ACT and held separate to the five group classes for the first time.

.22LR Rimfire at 50 conditions were tough but it didn’t stop the X rings coming a thick and fast rate, by the E target the wind had really picked up but still the first half dozen were tightly packed. In the score wash up four shooters were on 247 and the winner had to be decided on X rings and this was Barry Woods with 10 centrals.
At 100 the conditions did not improve but the clear winner was Phil McClelland.
The grand score for the class, like the 50 went down to the wire with Barry Woods the winner, with 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} just a point behind with their tie broken by again by X rings.
Barry used Nancy McKenzies’s rifle as she was unable to attend.

Centrefire Hunter class – conditions for the match was not conducive to high scoring as it was blowing and dusty. Shooters in an effort to keep the dust out of the actions and barrels they stuffed rags into the actions and muzzle caps on to the end of the barrel until the last moment before commence fire.
Leading score at 100 was shot by Brendan Atkinson
At 200 winner was Herb Valerius and Herb also took the class score with 488.18 five centrals in front of the next placegetter.

2 Gun for .22LR Rimfire and Centrefire was Brendan Atkinson

November – 11\textsuperscript{th} to be exact SSAA, benchrest, those he mentored, family and a myriad of friends were devastated by the death of Ron Marsden, Mr RTM, and HOF #5 (1978). Ron had been fighting ill health for nine years.
Obituary tributes can be gleaned at Centrefire HOF details on Benchrest Bulletin.


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