

Briggsdale County Shootists:

“Return of the Buffalo to the Plains” Annual Shoot

By Hawkeye Sam SASS Life/Regulator#20180 and Pawnee Drifter SASS#68380

Dark, angry, moisture laden clouds hung low over the short grass prairie of northeastern Colorado as they had for the last three days. The Rocky Mountain peaks to the west had also disappeared several days earlier in a blanket of grey and black. Small mountain creeks turned into raging rivers and had emptied their muddy contents into the South Platte and Cache La Poudre Rivers causing flooding on a massive scale. Roads, bridges and even whole towns were closed or cut off due to the flooding and continual rain. Standing under the shelter at the Briggsdale County Cowboy range, Kid Bucklin, Territorial Governor and SASS Life/Regulator #78261, and Sixty-nine cent Wizard, SASS Regulator #72259, the organizers of the shoot, along with other early arrivals even though they saw a large wooden ship filled with animals float by in the steady downpour.

The last year had been a busy one for the Briggsdale County Shootists (BCS) in planning for their 1st multiday Annual Shoot. Previous annual shoots had been called “Almost an Annual Shoots” and were one day in length. September 13th-15th, 2013 were going to be the dates for their 1st annual “Return of the Buffalo to the Plains” Cowboy Action shoot. Stages were written, ranges and targets were set, camping areas were arranged, trophies and name tags were made, the caterer was contracted and extra toilets were ordered. A cowboy preacher was found for Sunday’s service, entry forms printed and distributed, and all the other hundreds of little things that must be done to put on a great SASS Annual Shoot were

accomplished. Everything and everyone was ready to go except for the weather!

Standing under the range shelter, out of the relentless rain, Kid and Wizard said a few prayers that the rain would let up and our Cowboy friends could join us for a great shooting experience. The rain began to lessen and finally stopped just as some of the early arrivals began to show up in their motorhomes and campers. Even though the muddy ground was saturated with water, they got the campers parked, set up and old friends began to gather and discuss the weather and the upcoming shoot.

Friday morning started out clearer than it had been for days, so club members and shooters alike pitched in to drain out the puddles of water all over the range and help out where they could. Later that morning the clouds rolled back in and rain began to fall. This didn’t stop shooter registrations and the RO1 class from being given indoors but all outdoor activities outside the shelter came to a halt. The decision was made to cancel the warm-up shoot and move the novelty shoots to Saturday afternoon after the first six stages of the main match were over.

Adapt and overcome seemed to be the theme of this year’s shoot. Cowboy action shooters are an amazing group of folks as they just roll with the punches and deal with the circumstances with no whining or complaining. They just asked what they could do to make things better including praying for Sunshine for the next two days of main match shooting.

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As evening approached, many of the shooters gathered under the range shelter for the scheduled pot-luck dinner and some enthusiastic conversations. The evening was topped off with some great music provided by Ric-A-D-Split, SASS# 62071, with his magic guitar. And yes, it rained all night long.

Saturday morning our prayers were answered as the rain had finally stopped. The clouds began to lift and a strange yellow light appeared in the eastern sky. The sun began to track higher in the sky and with it came warmth that felt so good after days of cold rain. Mud puddles began to disappear, dry carpets and rugs were laid down over wet tables and cowboy shooters began to flock into the range to register and get ready to shoot.



It was a beautiful sight to see some blue sky after days of pouring rain.

At the opening ceremonies, Kid Bucklin and Sixty-nine cent Wizard couldn't thank the shooters enough for braving the weather and road conditions to make it out to the shoot. So many roads and bridges had been closed, flooded or washed out that planning and executing the trip

made it a very difficult task. Many of the folks in attendance had to drive a lot of extra miles out of their way to be able to make it out to the range. There were some folks they knew who couldn't even leave their homes due to the flooding.

Saturday morning's 6 main match stages went off without a hitch and were enjoyed by all. A scrumptious BBQ lunch, prepared by Hog Wild caterers, was served and enjoyed by all. Since the good weather continued, the novelty shoots were manned and ready to begin.

The first novelty shoot was a chance to shoot the all shotgun Medusa, poppers and flying clay birds' course. What's a Medusa you might be wondering? It is an evil device that has a large metal plate on one end and a garage door spring with an attached clay bird holder mounted on the other. It is attached in the middle to a stand and acts as a pendulum after the first shot knocks the steel plate off its base. The Medusa arm begins to swing on its pendulum arc while the garage door spring wildly moves the clay pigeon back and forth. You have to be really lucky or good to get the bird with only one more shot. Many shooters take multiple shots to down the Medusa clay bird. Other novelty shoots included the derringer and pocket pistol targets and a timed tombstone and bottle rack knockdown stage. An old time moving .22 shooting gallery was enjoyed by many shooters.

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One of the many brave shooters draws a crowd of spectators as she gets set to send lead down range at the Annie Oakley side match contest.

The most popular novelty, judging by the hoots and hollers was the “Annie Oakley” shoot. Shooters faced away from the target with their rifle over their shoulder and used a mirror to align the sights just like the famous trick shooter from Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show used to do. The shooters had a hard enough time using the mirror to see their sights but then they had to stay perfectly still while using their thumb to pull the trigger. Amazingly, many of the shooters did very well hitting the target and several shot the bull’s-eye. Two shots were so close that the distance between the shots and the dead center of the target had to be measured to determine the winner.

At 5:00 the range was closed down so the targets could be reset and painted. At the same time the clouds moved back in and the thunder, lightning and rain began in earnest. All of the shooters headed for the shelter of their vehicles or campers to avoid the storm. If you have ever

tried to paint metal targets in a thunderstorm you will know just how dangerous and foolish a task it was for several of the workers who remained.

The rain continued on and off all the rest of Saturday night creating several lakes and huge mud puddles in the camping and shooting areas. Yet, come Sunday morning, the clouds had lifted some and the range was made ready to shoot again. Cowboys and Cowgirls began arriving and even several folks who had been unable to reach us on Saturday figured out ways to drive to join us on Sunday.

After the Cowboy church service concluded, the range and safety talk was begun. The Kid and Wizard profusely thanked all of the shooters for again braving the poor weather conditions. They promised us that the rain would stay away while we finished the last six stages of the day and they were right. The shooters had a great time shooting while staying out of the few water and mud puddles which dotted the range. Thankfully, the actually shooting areas remained in good condition. After all of the lead had been sent downrange and the guns put away, another great BBQ lunch was served and devoured by the hungry guests. And you guessed it; the rain began to fall once again. Everyone crowded under the range shelter for the award ceremonies and door prizes. All were impressed by the beautiful buffalo silhouette shooting trophies. It was only fitting that the name of the shoot and the trophies paid homage to the American bison who had roamed the very ground we stood on for hundreds of years. All shooters anxiously hoped to take home one of these unique trophies. The top three shooters in

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each class and top overall shooters, male and female, got to actually take one of these trophies home. Buffalos were also awarded to the winners of the novelty shoots as well. The 'regular' BCS clean match pins are a coveted reward for monthly matches and the Special Golden Buffalo pins, given to those shooters who managed to make every bullet hit steel and steered clear of any other mishaps for the 12 annual match stages, were awarded to 4 skillful shooters.



Buffalo trophies await their new homes just before the awards ceremony begins.

Kid Bucklin and the Wizard thanked everyone for coming and promised all a bigger and better shoot for next year and said the rain would not be a factor like it was this year. Cowboys and Cowgirls loaded up in their vehicles, said their goodbyes and scattered in all directions to try and find their way home. Thanks go out to the 65 hardy cowpokes who overcame all the obstacles to join us for our Annual shoot.

The BCS range is located on the Pawnee Sportsman's Center near Briggsdale, Colorado in the northeastern part of the state. The range is surrounded by working cattle ranches and was home to Buffalo, Indians and cowboys and still maintains that old west feel. Regular SASS matches are held every 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Kid Bucklin and Sixty-nine cent Wizard have worked very hard on the ranges and props and provide close, clean, fast and fun stages for every shoot.



Everyone young or old enjoyed the sun, competition and camaraderie.

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The second annual “Return of the Buffalo to the Plains” shoot will be held September 12-14th 2014. Plan on joining us for an even better and dryer shoot next year. This is an Annual not to be missed!! These guys "Do It Right" for their shooters. Check out the BCS website at BriggsdaleCountyShootists.com for more information.



Kid Bucklin SASS Life/Regulator /TG #78261 (left) and Sixty-nine Cent Wizard SASS Regulator#72259 take a moment out of their busy day to pose for a photo.

OVERALL

Mens Cobra Cat 19275 CO
Ladies Kitty Carbine 9625 CO

Young Guns Girls (14-16)

Diamond Blaze 97568 Colorado

Elder Statesman

Granpu 95167 Colorado

Senior

Cat Tracker 9624 Colorado

Ladies Silver Senior

Black Mountain Cat 14609 Colorado

Silver Senior

Sheriff Leming 51641 Colorado

B Western Ladies

Sonora Blaze 69510 Colorado

B Western

Pawnee Drifter 68380 Colorado

Senior Duelist

Dutch Dave Holland 13585 Wyoming

Ladies F Cartridge

Burgandy Ballou 62072 Colorado

Frontier Cartridge

Onray 66217 Colorado

Frontier Cartridge Duelist

Bydoggie 7533 Wyoming

Frontiersman

Amarillo Slim 19182 Colorado

Classic Cowboy

Spades 31383 Colorado

Ladies Gun Fighter

Miss BJ 43260 Colorado

Gun Fighter

Shalako Wray 44625 Colorado

Gun Fighter Senior

Marshal Jack Murphy 32018 Colorado

Frontier Cartridge Gunfighter

Nolan Sackett 65051 Wyoming

Ladies Duelist

Ciss Me Cat 9824 Colorado

Duelist

Scary Indian Dude 79500 Colorado

Ladies 49'r

Kitty Carbine 9625 Colorado

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49'r

Assassin 9836 Wyoming

Wrangler

Knight Creek Ranger 64668 Wyoming

Cowboy

Cobra Cat 19275

Cowgirl

Lady Justice 5310 Colorado

Ladies Wrangler

Scarlet Rebel 38694 Colorado

SIDE MATCHES

Pocket Pistol

Mens Sixty Nine Cent Wizard 72259 CO

Ladies Sonora Blaze

Derringer

Slippery Rock Bass 59833 CO

Riverboat Annie 60914 CO

Shooting Gallery

Mens Onray

Ladies Turquoise Queen 64719 CO

Annie Oakley

Mens Cool Hand Cos 43259 CO

Ladies Miss BJ

Speed Pistol

Mens Cat Tracker

Ladies Turquoise Queen

Speed Rifle

Mens Cat Tracker

Ladies Lady Justice

Speed Shotgun 87/97

Mens Cool Hand Cos

Ladies Miss BJ

Speed Shotgun SxS

Mens Onray

Medusa Champions 2014

Mens Onray

Ladies Riverboat Annie 60914 CO