

OFs whip the whippersnappers after triumphant 2018

By Bisley Correspondent Steve McBowell

The last time the Old Framlinghamian Rifle Club lifted the Podd Trophy the UK was gearing up for the Olympics, Facebook went public and Brexit was just a silly word.

But finally, in 2018, a seminal year for the veterans, the old crocks vanquished the young bucks and finally took home the silver in the annual .22 match at the college. Well, more left it in the range under the care of Roy Witham, but you take the point.

The OFs have now closed the book on the greatest year in the history of the club.

During 2018 we:

- Had two members, Jon Ford and James Mehta, representing the GB Veterans in South Africa.
- Took home two of the three trophies in the Old Boys' series, retaining the Q match from the grasping Bedfordians by a mere eight V-Bulls and snatching away the Long Range Cup from the same shameful herd by only ONE V-Bull. They were not happy about it and there were absolutely no ostentatious displays of schadenfreude from the OFs at all. No siree.
- Undertook a world first OFRC international tour where an eight strong team took on teams from the Army, the NRA, Jersey and Wales in the legendary Jersey Open. Not only did we acquit ourselves admirably but in the final match John 'Fivebellies' Halahan took all three ranges (300 yards, 500 and 600) to pieces, scoring what we believe to be a club record 150.20. You can read more about it here <http://www.oldframlinghamian.com/article.php?story=20181001030007464>.



- Came 4th in the Public Schools Veterans Match. With 49 veterans teams in the heady mix, this really is the big one and to win it against some of the feeder schools for international teams you really are on the shooting map. With our A team dropping a single point between them – no names – at 500 yards we missed out on the bronze medal by a single V-Bull. Kim “Bungler” Pope was not at all subjected to ostentatious rounds of abuse and further punitive rounds of drinks. A notable result and one which, as far as we are able to ascertain, is another OFRC record.
- Jonathan “Bafta” Thorpe, our newest member aged only 19 pulled his reputation, shattered by turning up at the Astor County Match late and hungover as a tramp in a brewery wheelie-bin, back from the brink by appearing on no fewer than 15 prize lists. In doing so securing himself selection as a reserve for the forthcoming GB under-21 tour to New Zealand. A bright future surely awaits him.
- Sandy “Walks on” Walker, continued his relentless rise to the very pinnacle of the sport by securing not only an individual medal in the International Championships in Australia, a superlative third place in the Grand Aggregate in July, but topping it all with a Commonwealth Games Bronze Medal in Brisbane representing Scotland in September.





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COMMONWEALTH GAMES

- Five OFs representing three of the home nations in the National Match, with James “Buzzcut” Mehta and Walker shooting for Scotland, John “Imam” Halahan and Kim “Still a bungler” Pope for Ireland and Steve “Plastic Taff” McDowell finally making it off the subs bench to shoot for Wales. Naturally, England won the match. There were many Celtic boos.
- Kim “OK, Enough now” Pope successfully pulling off her first year as Suffolk County Captain with a creditable 10th in the Intercounties Long Range.

But back to the OFs versus the College on Sunday, 10 October.

The College has endured a challenging year in shooting with many of its pool of shooters engaged with more mainstream sports which sadly clash with range days. As such the College was unable to raise a team for the Ashburton for the first time in many years. A situation which the OFRC is keen to assist with putting right for 2019.

With much enthusiasm and lacking some of the major players seven OFs – minus Halahan, Pope and Mehta all off shooting the European Long Range Championships, and Nigel “Single C” Burnip off somewhere sunny – gathered at the College Range. Many brownie points then to Luke “Cross-Country” Malcolm who drove to Salisbury and back to help bring home the bacon.

However, stand-in skipper McDowell brought an extra player for the College, the, ahem, completely unrelated Theo McDowell who has just begun in Year 9. This decision left the OFs down to seven so McDowell hurriedly recruited Katie Williams OF – otherwise known as the English-teaching housemistress of Pembroke.

We also welcomed into the fold a former Atheling (UK Cadet International) and Kim Pope apostle Michael Cherry-Downes. We say welcomed, more like hugged like a nearly-drowned kitten.

He is a fine shot and after blowing off some rust led the way with a crafty 185/200 though plaudits should go to the always gifted Jon “Six Million” Ford who having had the cataract in his right eye fixed smashed in a chart-topping 193. Anything about 190 is A-grade small-bore shooting.

But the story of the day belongs to the newcomers. Theo, at age 13 had apparently had considerable practice with the .177 target air rifle given to him for Christmas by his father (surely a smashing bloke, whomsoever he might be, ahem). His score (albeit off a rest) of 189 surprised the socks of everyone including himself. And, better yet, the visibly nervous novice Miss Williams, taking instruction like a champ, delivered two cards of 96 for a stonking 192.

Better yet, she was only there watching her two oldest sons Harvey and Ollie (both definitely talents for the future) and outscored both giving instant supper-table bragging rights. They were both awarded a well-deserved mention in school assembly the following day.

OF Rifle Club

| Name | 1 st Card | 2 nd Card | Total |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Michael CD | 90 | 95 | 185 |
| John Thorp | 89 | 92 | 181 |
| Jon Ford | 95 | 98 | 193 |
| Steve McDowell | 91 | 92 | 183 |
| Jim Overbury | 93 | 89 | 182 |
| Luke Macdonald | 90 | 96 | 186 |
| John Horton | 79 | 77 | 156 |
| Katie Williams | 96 | 96 | 192 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Grand Total | | | 1458 |

* Bench Rest

FC Rifle Club

| Name | 1 st Card | 2 nd Card | Total |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|
| George Wright | 86 | 76 | 162 |
| Freddie Fiske | 90 | 84 | 174 |
| Harvey Williams | 86 | 86 | 172 |
| Finlay Bloore | 85 | 82 | 167 |
| Jamie Brown | 94 | 91 | 185 |
| Oliver Williams | 92 | 93 | 185 |
| Archie Bloore | 86 | 87 | 173 |
| Ben McDowell | 97 | 92 | 189 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Grand Total | | | 1613 |

* Bench Rest

So there closes the best season the OFRC has ever had.

2019 is already looking promising, with Walker and Mehta travelling to New Zealand for the World Championships with the Great Britain teams in January.

We can't wait for 2019 and as ever there is an open invitation to any OF who wants to come and have a go. Just give us a shout: we'd love to have you join in the fun.