



Practise time - Johan Kuhn ringing steel out to 2341 meters.

Send IT ELR Shooting Practice Day and World Record Attempt

By Charl Gous

Extreme Long Range (ELR) shooting enthusiasts will agree. In order to improve your hit rate, you need to spend time behind your rifle, but to do so you need access to suitable facilities. Setting-up an ELR range requires a considerable investment in equipment and a landowner supportive of sports-shooting events. It is thus not unusual for ELR shooters to struggle to find an appropriate venue to stretch the limits of their rifles.

Team Send IT is fortunate to have access to, and having built, at least four private ranges in the Western Cape. One of these facilities is in the Little Karoo between Montagu and Touws River, about 250 km from Cape Town. This was the perfect location to host Send IT's first practice session. The aim was to provide an occasion where fellow

shooters could verify their firing solutions and gain practical experience on targets set between 636 m and 2 341 m. But we had to add a twist, so a challenge was in order to keep the day interesting!

It was also decided to attempt an ELR Central™ World Record. This is based on a shooter achieving three hits in a row, from cold bore (the first shot of the day), on a target of pre-determined size placed at least 10 yards (9 m) further than the previous record in order to be verified as the new record holder. Shooters have unlimited time to prepare and set-up. Once the first shot is fired, the shooter has three minutes to fire the remaining two shots. In ELR terms, successful impact shots at ranges well beyond the ELR Central™ World Record are not uncommon. However, this format presents its own unique challenges that need to be appreciated.

Complexity

A cold-bore shot adds an additional level of complexity, as the muzzle

velocity and resultant effect on bullet trajectory are less predictable, the impact of which can vary greatly from one rifle to another. Furthermore, the shooter does not have the benefit of practice shots to assist with elevation and windage corrections. The first shot of the day needs to count, as do the following two.

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The ELR Central™ World Record attempt provides two formats, namely a .22LR class and a standard class, open to all calibres and equipment levels. The standard division uses a 36 inch by 36 inch square steel target, while the .22LR class uses a 12 inch by 12 inch square steel target, irrespective of the distance the target is placed at. At the time of writing, the standard class record is 2 158 yards (1 973 m), set by Randy Wise in August 2019 in the US.

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The .22LR record is currently held by Michael Chang at 440 yards (402 m). The Send IT Practice Day started to take shape. The first two hours of the day, when weather conditions are generally more favourable, was allocated to complete the record attempt. With a 07:00 start, 20 shooters would be able to complete the three-shot challenge by 09:00, leaving plenty of time to practice on the range afterwards. The number of participants was deliberately limited to 20 to ensure that all in attendance would have ample time on the range. We were delighted to welcome numerous visitors to observe the attempt.

All targets on the range were surveyed professionally, and a map illustrating each target and its range in meters and yards given to each shooter. The 36-inch by 36-inch square steel target for the Send IT ELR Central™ World Record attempt was placed at 2 212 yards (2 023 m), well ahead of the current record. Three electronic hit indicators were attached to the target, while a video-streaming device gave additional visual confirmation of impact shots.

The goal of the Send IT Practice Day was to promote ELR shooting

Beautiful morning

It was a beautiful morning on 8 February 2020, with a very modest four mile per hour wind from left to right. The sky was clear, and visibility was good. After a brief competitor meeting, the proceedings kicked off promptly. The shooting order was determined by random draw, and the first shooters were called out to take on the challenge.

Three shooters made successful impact shots within their allotted three shots. What was impressive was that all three shooters managed first-round hits. Pieter Eksteen got to within a whisker of breaking the record with a first- and third-round hit, while his second shot barely missed the target. He used a custom-built 300 Norma Improved, firing the newly-released 230 gr Hornady A-Tip bullet at 3 100 fps.



Kobus Beukes taking aim at the 2023 meter target using a .338 Lapua Magnum.



The 36-inch by 36-inch plate used for the record attempt. The shooters got revenge during the practise session.



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First-round hit

Danie du Preez achieved a first-round hit using a Tubb Adaptive Target Rifle, chambered in 37XC, firing a 361 gr Warner Flatline projectile, a wonderful ELR set-up. Charl Gous made impact with the first shot but failed to follow up with the second and third attempt. What was most impressive was how close most shooters got to hitting the target. With further testing and improved firing solutions, we can expect the next challenge to provide plenty more impact shots.

The goal of the Send IT Practice Day was to promote ELR shooting. Sports-shooting is competitive, but the social element should never be underestimated. Spending time with friends and fellow shooting fanatics is a great day out no matter the score on the board. We encourage those who have access to ELR facilities to make the time to expose fellow shooters to this fast-growing sport. We would like to thank Michael Meiring for making his range available to the Send IT team - we are grateful for your support. ☺



Alliwyn Oberholster from Peregrine Bullets taking a shot at the record using Pieter Eksteen's .375 Cheytac".



Barend Verster got close to making an impact shot using a 7mm300 Win Mag wildcat.



Eben Liebenberg with his beautiful Accuracy International chambered in .338 Lapua Magnum.



Below find the event dates for 2020.

2020 Send IT, ELR Shooting event dates:

4 April 2020

23 May 2020

3 October 2020

7 November 2020

For further information contact Charl Gous on 083 4696 181. Be sure to follow us on Facebook, and join our WhatsApp group. Corporates interested in sponsoring an event or equipment are welcome to contact me. We need your support to grow the sport.

Until next time, get ready to ... Send IT!