



Bottom: Left to right: Nico Louw; Nicolaas Louw; Cilliers Louw
 Middle: Left to right : Francois de Villiers; Kobus Beukes; Tony Ingram; Garth Terry; Martin le Roux; Schalk Jacobs; Erhard Lange; Izak Hanekom; Ludy Stark; Gareth Holtman; Ashuraf Moorad; Imraan Moorad

Top: Left to right
 Francois Vogel; Franscois Gous; Michael Hitchcock; Charl Gous; Pieter Eksteen; JP Lombard; Loutjie Hanekom; Greg Holtman

Ever heard of .22 Rimfire ELR?

By Charl Gous

Rimfire events are taking sports-shooting by storm – and pushing .22LR boundaries to previously unimaginable limits. Extreme long range (ELR) .22LR shooting is rising in popularity with shooters reaching ranges of 500 m and in some instances 1 000 m!

But why has this long-forgotten little cartridge been making inroads into the ELR world? In an environment of maximum velocity, high ballistic coefficient bullets and unrivalled attention to detail, coupled with the best equipment money can buy, the .22LR is a total misfit. The answer is simple: It is fun, huge fun! And, secondly, it is pushing the boundary, which is what ELR is all about!

In addition, it is financially accessible to most shooters, requiring only a basic rimfire rifle and budget-friendly optic with suitable elevation capability. In many instances the 'equipment race' can be frustrating for many competitors – a .22LR ELR match is the great equaliser!

Dust off grandpa's old .22 rimfire

If you have been shooting for a while, it is quite possible that you have most of the gear you will need. Dust off grandpa's old .22 rimfire and ask your gunsmith to fit a 30/40/50 MOA picatinny rail (depending on your choice of optics) to obtain the maximum elevation from your rifle scope. It is recommended to have

100 MOA or more available from a combination of dial (turrets) and holdover.

The choice of ammunition is critical

The choice of ammunition is critical, not just for accuracy but most importantly to reduce velocity variations. A shooter will be able to get away with average accuracy, but will benefit immensely from a low velocity spread. Velocity changes alone are enough to miss the target. This can be easily confirmed with

your ballistic solver by adjusting velocity up or down by 20 fps.

Good ammunition

As an example: A rifle firing Eley Sport .22LR ammunition at 1 045 fps will require about 85.0 MOA of vertical adjustment to hit a target at 400 m – at 1 025 fps it will be 87.6 MOA – enough to miss a 2 MOA target. Good ammunition tested over a chronograph is crucial!

The .22LR is an obvious choice when it comes to working on fundamentals such as trigger pull, breathing or positional shooting. Ballistic inputs like atmospheric conditions, ballistic coefficient, wind direction and speed and muzzle velocity become increasingly important when sending small 40 gr bullets out to 400 m. Inaccurate data and assumptions will have a profound impact on the predicted solution.

Exciting trend

This exciting trend is here to stay, and is the main reason that the Send IT team decided to develop and host the first (to our knowledge) .22LR ELR event in South Africa. Building on our experience with hosting ELR matches, the team set out to develop an appropriate match format and scoring system. Pieter Eksteen wasted no time to make the necessary improvements at PEKS Shooting Range. Platforms, backstops, flags and targets were added to create a purpose-built rimfire ELR course.

The last hurdle to clear was the sports-shooting limitations imposed by the Covid-19 regulations. In August, we were delighted to announce that Send IT, ELR Shooting – in association with a number of domestic ELR sports-shooting formats – could legally host

sports-shooting events under the umbrella of a SASCOC registered sport-shooting federation. We were ready to go and the first event was planned for 5 September.

Course of fire

The course of fire was made up of three ranges: A short, medium and long range covering 75 m to 431 m. The distances were selected to make it accessible with moderate equipment. Beyond 500 m, the additional elevation requirements necessitates more specialised optics that are not readily available and expensive. Targets on Range 2 and 3 were fitted with electronic hit indicators to confirm impacts.

		Range 1	Range 2	Range 3
Target 1	Distance (meters)	75	264	365
Target 1	Distance (meters)	154	300	411
Target 1	Distance (meters)	189	342	431



On match day, the shooters were divided into three groups, with each starting at a pre-allocated range. Each match participant took five shots at each target, with three targets per range, for a total round count of 45 on the day.

The scoring system favours hits made at the start of a string and further benefits those that make impact at further distances. Points were



PEKS Shooting Range
5 September 2020

.22LR ELR Event

Rank	Name	Surname	TOTAL	% of Top	Hits
1	Francois	Vogel	14011	100%	20
2	Izak	Hanekom	13231	94%	21
3	Charl	Gous	11050	79%	19
4	Michael	Hitchcock	9855	70%	15
5	Bernard	Eksteen	9472	68%	17
6	Mario	Gerber	9321	67%	14
7	Gareth	Holtman	8722	62%	16
8	Pieter	Eksteen	8665	62%	17
9	Garth	Terry	8603	61%	14
10	Francois	de Villiers	8241	59%	12



awarded on a multiplier basis, with five points times the distance for a first round hit and 4/3/2/1 multiplied by the range in meters for a second, third, fourth or fifth round impact.

Limitation on ammunition

There were no material equipment restrictions, with the most relevant being a limitation on ammunition. Only commercially-available mass-produced ammunition was permitted. Sharing of rifles was allowed to accommodate more shooters and juniors. The format was designed to be an individual competition, as the absolute distances were such that a shooter could comfortably spot their own hits/misses using their rifle's optic.

September saw the arrival of spring, but not so in the Cape of Storms! With a massive cold front

approaching the inaugural Send IT, ELR Shooting .22LR ELR event was under threat of being washed out. Match day saw a build-up of dark stormy rain clouds and strong winds. The morning started with a mild 5 to 7 mph wind from 9:00 that later changed to a 12 to 18 mph fish tail wind (11:00 to 13:00) in the afternoon. By rimfire standards this was extremely tricky conditions, especially as it was a first run at .22LR ELR for many shooters.

Francois Vogel on top

Of the 26 competitors, it was Francois Vogel who came out top, with a borrowed Anschütz rifle to boot. Francois was kept in check by Izak Hanekom, an all too familiar face in the local sports-shooting community, who finished second on the day. The balance of the top ten shooters all



recorded respectable scores, and with minor adjustments, or a bit of luck, will be ready to challenge the top of the field at the next event.

Analysing the data for Range 3: Across all match participants, there was a total of eight hits on Target 1 (365 m), nine hits on Target 2 (411 m) and a 12 hits on Target 3 (431 m). Given the challenging conditions, this



competitions, the .22LR is destined for more than plinking at 50 m. Rimfire ELR is a challenging platform that provides a stepping stone into more serious long-range shooting. It is the perfect occasion to expose juniors to long-range shooting. As an example, five father-and-son teams participated in this match, highlighting how accessible it is to young shooters.

Interest in Send IT, ELR shooting events has grown exponentially over the last two years. We would like to thank all those who participate in these events, and welcome anyone interested to attend, no matter your skill level. I would like to further thank the team of fine gentleman that help to make all of this possible - you know who you are. 🇿🇦

was very impressive and a clear indication of the ability of the shooters.

The quality of equipment that was on show at the match was surprising. Numerous target-style rimfire rifles equipped with high-end optics were on display, confirming the suspicion that there are plenty of shooters to be inducted into this new world of rimfire ELR. Eleven of the 26 competitors made use of Eley rimfire ammunition.

Rimfire ELR is a challenging platform

New emerging competitions

From shooting Coke cans on the farm to an array of new emerging



Our ability to host events during 2020 was restricted, but we are hopeful of a more accommodating environment during 2021. Anyone in need of additional information can contact myself, Charl Gous, on 083 4696 181. Be sure to follow us on Facebook and find the link on our page to join the Send IT Telegram group where all communications are posted.

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