

WITH TWO TITLES UP FOR GRABS, THE WORLD SPORTING AND SPORTRAP CHAMPIONSHIPS WILL BE HELD AT LAKENHEATH CLAY TARGET CENTER IN ENGLAND – ARE YOU PLANNING TO ATTEND?

The World Sporting Championship, jointly organized by the NSCA and CPSA (English equivalent of the NSCA), alternates each year between America and England. This year the event is being held in the UK at Lakenheath Clay Target Center in Suffolk (some 80 miles north east of London) on 24th-29th June.

Back in 2006, when this Championship was last held in the UK, many American shooters rated it as disappointing. With the entry capped at some 600 shooters, the event was restricted solely to the 200 target Main Event, attended by few vendors and no supporting side events.

This time around things will be

very different! It's a six day extravaganza better matching the NSCA's efforts last year in San Antonio. Tuesday 24th-Wednesday 25th of June kicks off with a 150 target FITASC (6 Parcours) with a maximum entry of 420 shooters. Thursday 26th of June sees a 100 target Pre-lim sporting clays event over 14 stations with start times of 9.00am and 1.00pm. Maximum entry is 336 shooters. On the same day it is hoped that there will also be a Pro-Am event with all proceeds going to charity.

Thursday 26th-Saturday 28th of June are the allotted days given over to the World Sportrap Championship (5-Stand). Based on

100 targets, 5 man squads will shoot four separate layouts. Maximum entry is 360. The final shoot-offs will be held Saturday evening after shooting.

The 200 target World Sporting Championship will be held Friday 27th-Sunday 29th of June. Shot over three courses, the maximum entry is 972 in six man squads. Shoot-offs will be held Sunday evening.

With FITASC so popular in Europe, and two world titles to be won, there is likely to be a huge entry from individuals, as well as team participation from USA, South Africa, Sweden, Estonia, Russia, England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland – and probably more.



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MORE ABOUT LAKENHEATH

Formally Lakenheath Rod and Gun Club, Lakenheath Clay Target Center as it is now known, was taken over by Pete Usher back in December 1998. By March 1999 the four skeet ranges had been refurbished and they held their first NSSA Skeet competition under British ownership – with English Skeet following shortly afterwards.

Situated next door to the Lakenheath US Airbase, this facility, together with its restaurant, gun shop and reputation for the best Angus Beef Burgers, is as close to home as any American shooter can get while visiting from across the pond!

From 2001 onward, the club started hosting registered sporting clays events, quickly gaining a reputation for exclusive and demanding presentations. By 2003 they branched out further by introducing regular FITASC events. In 2004 and 2006 they hosted the Krieghoff FITASC Classic – both were top championship events attracting entries from all over Europe as well as several top US shots including Wendell Cherry, Will Fennell, Cory Kruse, Curt Mauldin, Steve Fischer and Bill McGuire.

The Mecca of NSSA and English Skeet, Lakenheath is now also widely recognized as



an international venue for sporting clays and FITASC and has earned its chance to host this year's two World Championships. The current sporting clays facility has 21 permanent sporting stations, four registered FITASC layouts, 4 Sportrap layouts and a trap layout. The ground also has two 120ft towers along with two 60ft towers, all sitting in 103 acres of Breckland countryside.

For the 2008 World event, Lord Iveagh and Michael Douglas of the Elveden Estate, have kindly made available another 50 acres of land allowing this event to gain even greater variation of targets in an area never previously shot over. There will be the additional use of four 60ft platforms to vary the targets that, coupled with the ingenuity of target setting, is going to make for a very interesting and exciting series of events for all levels of shooting capability.

Adding to the championship atmosphere will be a host of new and traditional sponsors, a vendors row, marquee food hall serving full English breakfasts and lunches, BBQ facilities, bar (after shooting), and the opportunity to browse the gun room – Lakenheath is a

Krieghoff main dealer. Gun smithing facilities, provided by Krieghoff, will also be on site.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Shooting trips to Europe are not cheap – especially with the current \$/£GB rate of exchange. But the chance to extend and improve ones skill development is well worth the investment. Talk to any shooter that has been to Europe, particularly the UK, and they will tell you just how different it is to “sporting clays back home.”

Most of the target distances are not that different, but target setters seem happy to mix in many more longer distance targets than would be seen at Big Blasts in the US. Combine that with various specialist targets (like upside down battues), many more crossers and overhead driven targets (that are rarely seen in America), and any course becomes tougher. These targets ‘ask’ more of your technical ability – foot movement, pick up points and break points become more critical.

Even when you've grasped these differences there are other things to note. Initially, you may



PETE USHER.

find the use of so many black (even pink, white or green) targets and many more on-report targets than true pairs to be off putting. Orange targets seem only to be used for presentations that could be tough to see – such as rabbits or targets in front of green trees. So many black targets may initially be a distraction, but you soon get used to it.

Of more concern with black targets is the light. England is further north than say Florida, and the sun is lower. It gives a different look to the target – unlike the high sun shining directly down onto the dome of a bright orange target. This takes a little time to get used to.

The cartridge rules are different. 1oz (28 gram) loads only for sporting clays. If you're used to the thump of a 1¹/₈oz load you'll notice the difference with 1oz to begin with – but trust them. They do the job just as well – it's where you put the load that counts in this game.

For those that want to compete on the world stage, at the top or in their class, a trip to this year's



World Championship is a not to be missed opportunity.

In previous years, trips to Europe to compete at major events has clashed with various Big Blasts – or indeed the US Open. This year, the World Sporting Championship stands out as the only 'one to attend' in late June. And there's more good news! The weekend before (June 21st-22nd) is the 150 target FITASC English Open being held at John Bidwell's High Lodge – just 30 miles or so from Lakenheath. It's a great two

day opportunity to meet some of Europe's top shots and get your eye in on European style targets before moving on to the Worlds.

Could this be your year? Whether you're a US National or US Open Champion or class winner, a World FITASC contender or 5-Stand National Champion, you can't afford to miss the opportunity of adding a World Sporting or Sportrap title or class win to your current achievements. Make the trip – it promises to be one of the highlights of the 2008 season. ■

MAKE IT EASY

For more information on the World Sporting week at Lakenheath, entry form details and gun permit requirements, contact:

The CPSA
Tel: 01144 – 1483 485400
E-mail: info@cpsa.co.uk
www.cpsa.co.uk

For more information on the FITASC English Open at High Lodge visit:
www.bictsf.com

For more general information on shooting in the UK, contact the Clay Shooting USA Office in Europe at e-mail: michael@brunton.co.uk

Other contacts
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