

# BEST TARGETS

## ***BEST Targets Shooting Team After Action Report (AAR)***

**Event:** 2016 Woody's Bergara Precision Rifle Series Match

**Date:** April 9-10, 2016

**Location:** Woody's Hunting & Rifle Club, New Hill, NC

**Websites:** [www.precisionrifleseries.com](http://www.precisionrifleseries.com)  
[www.woodysmatch.com](http://www.woodysmatch.com)

**Shooter:** Scott Whitehead

**Rifle:** Stiller Action / Hawk Hill Barrel / KRG Chassis / Kahntrol Muzzle Brake in 6.5CM by Clowdis Precision

**Ammo:** 6.5 Creedmoor Handloads. Berger 140 Hybrids, 42.6gr H4350, Lot R9b

**Gear:** Vortex PST 6-24x, Vortex Precision Rings, Harris BiPod w/Kahntrol Pod-Mod Adapters, Wiebad Bags

### **Facility Notes**

Woody's is always one of our favorite facilities to visit and they do a great job hosting Precision Rifle Series (PRS) events. They are growing fast and every time we go we find new bays and facilities. This time we were happy to see our old friend John Boyette from Trace Armory Group teaching classes in another part of the facility. We highly recommend John's training – several of us on the BEST Targets team did our first long range shooting in one of John's classes.

### **Event Format**

As the match approached the weather forecast talked about severe winds in the area and it was the talk of everyone at the match. The ammo I brought to this match was R9b, a lot of ammo loaded with much newer brass (and brass that I know the entire history of) to prevent the case head separations I had seen at the Guardian match just a week before.

We started the first day in the house. Since the wind had yet to really pick up to it's most severe levels we were all happy to shoot this stage early in the day and get it done in reasonable winds. The first stage, Stage 7, HOUSE HIDE, started at the bottom of the steps in the house. The shooter had to advance up the stairs, build a prone position and engage three targets at 430, 603, and 1001 yards. After talking with some other shooters and judging a light right wind, I cleaned the stage while dialing 8.5 mils of elevation and holding a 0.5 mil right wind hold on the 1001 yard target.

Next we shot in the same house again for Stage 8, HOUSE INVASION. This stage started with the shooter standing with his rifle in hand and the first thing you had to do was draw a pistol and engage three close poppers out the first floor window. These were easy pistol shots and I chose to hold my rifle in my left hand and shoot the pistol shots strong side only to save time (most shooters put their rifles down, shot their pistol with both hands, then picked their rifle up). I went 3-for-3 on the pistol targets and moved upstairs quickly. Once upstairs we had to engage the last two targets in the previous array at 603 yards and 1001 yards. After shooting the closer target easily with about 0.75 mils of right wind, I thought about wind, watched a few wind signs, decided on 1.5 mils of wind and engaged the 1001yd target. Nothing. I changed the wind call a bit and tried again. Nothing. I didn't see a miss. I tried three more times and on my fifth shot I saw my mistake – a puff of dirt several hundred yards short of the target. I quickly realized I had not changed my elevation, made the adjustment, and connected with my original 1.5 mil wind hold within 0.10 sec of the par time buzzer. I had just barely made the time limit - Whew! The time my strong-hand pistol shooting saved me earned me 20 points on the far target.

Stage 9, THE SHORT BUS, introduced a new prop for Woody's - an old shorty school bus. Shooters had to move into the bus, draw a handgun, engage three IPSC torso targets through open windows, then engage two targets out the bus side windows and finally lay down in the far back of the bus and engage 3 more targets in a Know-Your-Limits type array (but scored normally). This stage went very smooth for me and I ran it clean. On the KYL rack at 577 yards I held right edge on the 10" and held about the same wind on the 8" and 6" targets.

Stage 10, FENCE LINE, used the same 5 targets as Stage 9 but your only front support came from a very unstable chain about 14" off the ground. I dialed for the 577 yard targets and held UNDER for the two close targets. I missed the first target because I accidentally held OVER the 3.5 mils rather than under - OOPS! I knew I had seen a clean break through my scope and immediately knew I must have done something wrong so it was a quick and easy fix. I cleaned the three targets on the KYL rack holding about 0.5 mils right in the awkward high-prone position with a Wiebad bag under my chest and had my 4<sup>th</sup> clean stage in a row.

Stage 11 was our first PRS skills stage and the wind truly made it a challenge. PRS Skills stages are standardized stages that are run in approximately the same way all across the country allowing shooters to compare themselves to other shooters who they may not have ever shot a match with. VAN STANDARDS required jumping into a mini-van and shooting 6 large targets about 400 yards away out the back – and the targets were quite generous – 12" x 12" plates making a 3 minute target. This should be an easy and FAST stage but the conditions made it not so easy. First we fought a solid switching left wind. On my first run I shot the first target right off the target stand. As I moved to the second target my magazine (#4) locked up and would not feed. Luckily I called out the fallen target and the ROs stopped me and let me re-shoot the stage. (Upon investigation later, I found that enough dirt and sand from the strong blowing winds had gotten into the magazine and locked it up. More on this later). During my re-shoot I was able to clean the stage connecting on 6 of 8 shots. I hit with around 0.5 mils of wind and sometimes up to 0.75 mils. Many people commented that the left side targets had noticeably more wind drift than the ones closer to the right-side treeline.

Stage 12 was also a skills stage – the PRS barricade stage and it was appropriately called BARRICADE STANDARDS. During this stage we fought winds up to 30 mph with 20 mph sustained winds – mostly coming from behind us. The problem with this wind was not the way it pushed the bullet around – it was the way it pushed the barricade and the shooter around. It was nearly impossible to break a clean shot on this stage the way the wind was pushing me around. I used my rifle tether on this stage – a modified sling which attached to the buckle on my shooting belt, but I can't say for sure if it helped. I was hopelessly unstable and only connected with a few shots. I need to build a barricade like this and I need to practice with it... a LOT.

Next we returned to the Woody's main area to shoot Stage 1, UP AND DOWN THE HILL. In this stage the shooter had to climb a hill and build a position behind a wall to engage three flasher targets then move back down the hill to engage the same three targets from a wooden spool. I climbed up to the first position, shot the first two flashers quickly and moved to the third one. Unfortunately, I was not able to connect with the third shot and I could not make out exactly where the misses were impacting. I was using hold-overs on this stage and after I made the second shot I picked out the wrong hold-over from my card in the heat of the moment. I never figured out my mistake. I was holding  $\frac{3}{4}$  mil and I needed a full mil of holdover added to the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mil I had dialed. I had written it down correctly – I just read the wrong spot on my card.

Stage 2 was an iteration of the usual barrels stage we see at Woody's but with a twist. DOUBLE UP required shooting two targets at two different ranges from each barrel. In addition to the wind blowing hard, I struggled with the positions on the barrels – something I thought I had figured out but I took for granted. I connected with two hits out of the 8 hits needed to clean the stage. Only one person cleaned the stage, at a time in the weekend when the winds were much lighter, but I still need to practice the barrel positions.

HANGING ON THE ROOF, Stage 3, was our first stage of day 2 and a chance for me to face a stage that I have struggled with before. I actually welcomed the challenge. A rooftop simulator, complete with slippery shingles, was in front of us and 6 targets were available. Normally I would shoot this off one hip but this time I tried something new and shot this "turtled up" with both of my knees underneath me, my toes curled under, my large Wiebad bag on my right knee and under my right elbow and my hips square to the top of the roofline. I elected not to use my tether but I need to try using this as well in the future. I found this position VERY stable compared to my past attempts and I'll definitely do this again. I was able to clean this stage which was a very big win for me.

Stage 4, ON THE BOAT, is the Woody's classic boat stage but the chains have been adjusted since the last time I shot this stage. The boat was noticeably less stable than it has been in the past and I tried hard to be patient with my shots but I only connected with 3 of the 6 shots.

MOMS RIDE, Stage 5, required the shooter to climb into the back of a minivan and shoot out the rear window. Shooters could use other features inside the car to gain stability and I chose to try resting my right arm on the wheelwell. This position was not nearly as stable as I expected it to be and I struggled here far more than I expected to.





The final stage of the match for me was Stage 6, UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS. Shooting through a staircase shooters had to engage 7 targets changing position after each shot. I removed my bipod, used the Str8 Laced bag under the front of the stock and used the largest Wiebad bag under my pistol grip for rear support. This position was pretty stable but I still didn't do well struggling to find a good wind call.

### Things Done Well

I had a great time at this match fighting some of the toughest wind conditions I've ever shot in. I had some very good stages, including some good 1000yd hits thanks to my recent experience at FrontLine Defense and I developed some good shooting positions (like on the rooftop simulator.)

### Results & Lessons Learned

I definitely took away some good lessons from this match:

- I need work more on mental rehearsals of the stages. I think that will clean up errors like I had on UP AND DOWN HILL. I very much got away from my mental strategies at this match and it showed in my performance.
- After my reloading disaster using unknown-history brass at Frontline Defense one week earlier, I learned my lesson and loaded up some ammo for this match with known-history fresh brass and it worked flawlessly. That gave me some confidence that the issue from the previous week was indeed the brass and not some other aspect of my reloading procedures.
- Barricade practice is still something I need to concentrate on and my .22LR trainer will be great for this. Whether it's blue barrels, a PRS Standards barricade or any other obstacle, I need to work on my improvised shooting positions.
- I need to have a plan to keep my equipment clean. Dust and wind made for a bad combination of grime and debris in the air. My bolt was dangerously dirty even though I tried to clean it several times. The chamber flags kept the action open creating a debris problem and my magazines barely ran (and at times didn't run) because of the dirt.
- Wind calling is something that I need to practice.

### Summary

I really enjoyed this match, and can't wait to make it back for some of the one-day Woody's "Club Matches" in 2016.

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