

SILLY VALLEY SAFETY COMMITTEE
RECORD

First of April, Nineteen Hundred Ninety and Seven

FIRST ROUND

By Henry Fardan, editor

Welcome to issue Number Two of the *Record* of the Silly Valley Safety Committee.

We've gotten our feet wet, so to speak, since the last issue, running two serious matches {see the *Preliminary Match* and *Inaugural Match* articles} with sixty shooters between them. With our steel targets finally in hand, we feel much more like a real cowboy action club now.

The real work, to gain new members, improve our stage designs while creating new ones with ever more realistic sets, and continue to run safe but challenging matches, now begins.

We need more folks, plain and simple. More shooters at our matches, though they will come as our stages continue to improve. More members, too. That's where you can help, pardner. If you haven't already, join. If you have, get a friend {or two} to join. The more people who are willing to contribute time, labor, and creative help, the better our shoots, and our club, will be.

Remember, great clubs are made, not born. Help make the SVSC a great cowboy action shooting club.

PRELIMINARY MATCH

Though it was intended to be a club shoot and Range Officer training, the event at the Richmond Rod & Gun Club on February 23rd turned into the club's first real match. It had thirty two shooters {including California Joe who, though gone to Boot Hill, did win the Frontier category}, eighteen of which weren't SVSC members, with some coming from as far as the Sacramento area. The club picked up three new members right at the match, and several more by mail.

With four stages, and without our {supposedly on their way} new steel targets, we had to be a touch creative with stage designs. The results {*Shootout at Desert Camp*, *Welcome to Helltown*, *Unexpected Withdrawal*, and *Billy's Predicament*} gave even the experienced shooters some fits, and had some novices biting their tongues. {The editor of this paper, for instance, displayed his usual form, tying with Coyote Creek Mike for a match-record *eight* misses on one stage.}

Max Sand {SASS 1674} won the match handily, followed by Diamond Dick, Dead Eye Dick, and Boss Hays, while the distaff side was represent-

ed by Josie Marcus in seventh place, Elegant Ella {SVSC 1} at twenty-first, and Bodacious Kate {SVSC 20} at thirty-first. Gila Bob {SVSC 14}, placing eighth, ranked highest among our members.

With compliments from long-time SASS shooters, both at the match and later by e-mail, we resolved to do even better with our shoot in March.

INAUGURAL MATCH

The first official public match of the Silly Valley Safety Committee was held at the Richmond Rod & Gun Club on March 23rd. Though we had a few less shooters than last time, twenty seven including California Joe, there were a lot of folks new to cowboy action shooting, so we had our hands full anyway.

There were five stages, all carrying steel targets, with a rip-snorting *San Patricio Battalion* stage {using 35 rounds} added to the four {*Shootout at Desert Camp*, *Welcome to Helltown*, *Unexpected Withdrawal*, and *Billy's Predicament*} we'd fine-tuned since the February match.

Buck Rue {SASS 2686} took top honors, followed by new SVSC members Red Blaze and El Rod, with Dead Eye Dick

and the Tea Pot Kid rounding out the top five. Josie Marcus led the ladies again, in ninth overall, with our own Elegant Ella {SVSC 1} at fifteenth.

All who attended seemed well pleased with the new steel targets, and our improved stages, and looked forward to our next match on May 25th.

RANGE OFFICERS

Our posse of Range Officers, led by the Range Master, Coyote Creek Mike, is there to ensure that shooting at all SVSC matches is both safe *and* fun. You'll recognize them by their ribbon-yellow neckerchiefs. If you're new to Cowboy Action Shooting, or gun sports in general, be sure to introduce yourself and ask for advice; they'll be happy to help.

MATCH SCHEDULES

There are two types of events set up by the Committee: club shoots and public matches.

Club shoots are exactly that; practice for members of the club. Thus they are open to members {or those who become members by paying their dues prior to the match} and invited guests only. Range fees for club shoots are \$12 for members and \$36 for those who join at the shoot {including annual fee}.

Club shoots are scheduled at Sunnyvale Rod & Gun Club

on the following Sundays: June 15th, August 17th, October 19th, and December 21st of this year; Feb. 15th in 1998.

Public matches are open to all club members, members of other SASS-affiliated clubs, and the public, including spectators. {Those not able to meet certain criteria may be asked to prove their shooting capabilities prior to shooting an SVSC match.} Range fees for public matches are \$12 for members {\$36 if they join at the match}; \$15 for all SASS members and members of the Sunnyvale or Richmond clubs or the National Shooting Club; and \$20 for all others.

Public matches are scheduled at Richmond Rod & Gun Club on the following Sundays: May 25th, July 27th, September 28th, and November 23rd of this year; January 25th and March 22nd in 1998.

SURFING COWBOYS

The SVSC has put up its own web site [see our URL at the bottom of the page]. It contains club history, all meeting and match schedules {with directions}, match scores, frequently asked questions about the SVSC, our range rules, a list of member's aliases, a map of Silly Valley with the story of the town and its citizens, and back issues of the *Record*, plus links to the SASS

home page as well as other web sites of interest. Have a gander, and let us know what you think.

SVSC ATTENDS END OF TRAIL '97

By Gila Bob, Territorial Governor for the SVSC

Leading the SVSC contingent {with me was Bodacious Kate while Gunny was a range officer} at the 1997 *End of Trail* in Norco, California, I looked forward to the year's premier cowboy action shooting event.

Thursday, April 24th, opened with the Shooter's Meeting, where the emphasis was on the sweep rule: it's 170°, not 180°. Sweeping once gets you a DQ from the stage, while doing it again is a match DQ. Following lunch, we observed the side matches and photographed the stages and props; last year's props seemed, in retrospect, to have been more elaborate than this year.

After attending Mike Venturino's reloading clinic, we then headed for the evening's Territorial Governor's meeting in the Belle Union Saloon. It was hosted by Tex and had Judge Roy Bean in attendance. The Judge noted that cross-draw holsters were in no danger of being banned, but we should emphasize safe handling and proper cross-draw procedures. The Judge also noted his con-

SVSC web site address: <http://128.125.109.137/SASSNet/Clubs/USA/SVSC/SVSC.html>

cern with the excessive rule-making within the sport; he'll address this in future editorials in the *Cowboy Chronicles*.

Tex brought up the notion of more regional shoots; I spoke with him afterwards about having one in Northern California, with the SVSC obviously in the center of things. All this, of course, will require long-term planning.

At the chuck wagon barbecue that evening, we got a chance to talk with R.J. Poteet and his wife Sarasota, both delightful people, as well as U.S. Grant.

The next morning saw us parading down Sutler's Row, and visiting with Allen Wah of Wah Makers; contrary to the rumors, he says Wah is definitely *not* for sale. The afternoon consisted of a windy Main Match and then the Wild West Show, which displayed excellent horsemanship. After his shooting demonstration, I spent time with Bill Oglesby; our conversation got the club an offer of sponsorship of our regional match by Oglesby & Oglesby. I then got to shoot ten rounds out of the Gatling set up by the Highland reenactors: that was the fastest ten bucks I ever spent!

Supper time again, and we got to see the Cowboy Star impersonators: John Wayne, Hop-along Cassidy, the Lone Ranger and Tonto, Gabby Hayes, Paladin, and Gary Cooper. In

the main tent for the evening's entertainment, we made new friends with May Lillie, Montana Ray, and Ol' Law Dog. The show included music by *Dusty Rogers and The Highriders*, and a junior's costume and Trashy Lady contests.

Saturday was Joe Bowman's fancy gunhandling show, a historical reenactment by the High Mountain Gunfighters, and live ammo trick shooting by Bill Oglesby and Joe Bowman, during which Joe shot out four balloons and put six rounds through a paper plate—*all held in my hands*. Whew! After getting gussied up, we went back into town for yet another big supper and the cowboy ball. We made yet more new friends with Mama Bear, and husband the Lone Rider, both from upstate New York {who Henry Fardan met at *last year's EOT*}, and Gila Monster. Later we ambled to the Belle Union Saloon to see a little gambling {squinting just a bit, you'd have sworn you were back in the 1800's}; we closed the place down.

Sunday brought the Conventioneer's Shoot. It used SASS guns and ammo {a 7.5" Colt, a Rossi clone of a Yellow Boy, both in .45, and an IGA coach gun in 12 gauge}. Your governor shot the stage {six rifle, five pistol, and two shotgun targets} in 31.52, missing 2. During a subsequent stroll by Sutler's Row, a Town Consta-

ble presents a warrant for my arrest. The charge: 'telling lies and spreading untruths and bein' a low-down snake in the grass'. After I was manacled and hauled off to the City Jail at the other end of town, I found out my new 'friend' Gila Monster put up 5 bucks to get me into jail, plus it cost me two to get out. But the proceeds go to support the Happy Trails Children's Foundation for abused children, so it's all for a good cause.

During the awards ceremony and raffle drawing {in which I did *not* win the Sharps, damn it}, we shared a table with Tequila, who won so many awards we were lookin' for a rock to keep our side of the table weighted down.

End of Trail 1997 was one of the best cowboy shooting experiences we've had so far. No matter where you're from, or who you are, everyone is treated as an equal there. We look forward to going back next year— as shooters!

THE DIAMOND DICK LIBRARY SHELF

Book review by Ned Buntline

Having finally broken down and paid out a month's wages {in 1873 currency} for it, your reviewer is the proud owner of *Packing Iron; Gunleather of the Frontier West*, by Richard Rattenbury. While not saying it's an indispensable item for a self-respecting cowboy action

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shooter {quoting John Wayne: *the hell I ain't*}, you are doing yourself a disservice if'n you don't own this book.

Rattenbury {now curator of history at the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and before that at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center} really knows his stuff, and it's displayed beautifully in this well-designed and -printed book. {Your Ned knows his printing, too.}

Whether you're looking for a pattern for your own leather, or just learning what it really looked like in the Old West, this book will provide. Enjoy.

Packing Iron, Richard Rattenbury, 1993, Zon International Publishing. \$45.00

Also noted:

Peckinpah: The Western Films—A Reconsideration, Paul Seydor, 1996, University of Illinois Press. \$29.95

NOW IN THE OLD WEST

1866: April 11; Butch Cassidy is born in Beaver, Utah. April

21; New York City paper uses 'cowboy'—first time in print.

1868: April 26; work begins on Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad.

1870: April 4; Wyatt Earp is elected constable of Lamar, Missouri.

1871: April 15; 'Wild Bill' Hickok is offered the job as marshal of Abilene, Kansas for \$150 a month.

1881: April 9; Billy the Kid convicted of murder in Mesilla, New Mexico. April 21; Pat Garrett takes Billy the Kid to Lincoln, New Mexico, for hanging. April 28; Billy the Kid kills J.W. Bell and Bob Olinger and escapes jail.

1882: April 3; Jesse James is killed by Bob Ford in Saint Joseph, Missouri. April 12; in Denver, Oscar Wilde lectures on æsthetics at Opera House; admission is \$1.50.

1892: April 1; beginning of Johnson County War.

1895: April 13; Cherokee Bill is sentenced to hang in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

1898: April 25; the United States declares war on Spain.

BADGEWEARERS

Current members of the town council of Silly Valley are:

President: *Elegant Ella*
aka Debra LaVergne @
{408} 463-2428

Vice President: *Cheapshot*
aka Cliff Cook @
{408} 742-8653

Secretary: *Major Slinger*
aka Rhea Davis @
{408} 742-4053

Treasurer: *Tennessee Jed*
aka Dean Rogers @
{408} 653-1052

Range Master: *Coyote Creek*
Mike, aka Mike Sloan @
{408} 365-8266

Members may contact them about membership or other issues, as appropriate.

Meetings of the Silly Valley Safety Committee are held at 7 pm, the third Monday evening of each month, at the National Shooting Club, 1100 Duane Avenue, Santa Clara.

Silly Valley Safety Committee

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