CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY RIFLE ASSOCIATION

(registered Charity 258396)

Autumn Newsletter



Dear Members, Alumni and friends of CURA and CUSBC,

With another season of fullbore drawing to an end and the evenings getting darker, we once again retreat to the comparative warmth of QEW to watch countless new faces turn to smallbore for the first time. Now, we take the opportunity to look back on the successes of last year, as well as forwards to the excitement of the season to come.

CURA Dinner

Firstly, we would like to warmly invite you to the Annual CURA Dinner which will be held on the **13th of March at Sidney Sussex College**. As ever, this promises to be a night to remember for shooters past and present.

Fullbore Season

This year's season will kick off with our Easter Bisley camp from the **21st of March to the 28th**, where we hope to see a great start to the new year of shooting. Last year saw one of the largest numbers of sign-ups in recent memory, and we were thrilled to have so many new members brave the freezing weather and learn both Target and Match Rifle. After strong recruitment from CUSBC we are hopeful to see another year of strong membership. With the unfortunately ever-reducing presence of schools and cadets at Bisley, it is even more vital for the club to remain open to as many potential shots as possible - something which your commitment continues to make possible. If you would like to help with the training of our members, through range time, talks, or just general advice, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Fundraising and Donations

As always, cost remains the primary barrier for prospective members. That being said, your support has made, and will continue to make, a significant difference for members of the club and to the equipment the members have access too.

Thank You

As ever the club is eternally grateful for the help and support of the Alumni to ensure that we can keep running and keep beating Oxford. We would especially like to thank our senior committee for their invaluable help, and the Lovell and Green Trust for their commitment to keeping the sport open to younger members. You are all indispensable to the club, and I speak for everyone when thank you for everything you do.

Staying Connected

As ever, if you know anyone who has not received this letter or whose contact details have changed, please do let us know so we can keep in touch with Alumni and friends of the club alike.

We wish you all the best both on the range and off, and look forward to seeing you at the CURA Dinner.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Bailey
CURA Captain 2026-2027

CUSBC Captain's update

CUSBC has enjoyed a highly successful 2025-26 season, particularly in the BUCS competitions. Our A team made history in the postal league; setting an all-time record, with our B team also secured a place in the national finals. Our C team put in a strong performance, narrowly missing the final eight as Oxford's A team took the last qualifying spot. At the finals, Joe Pattison competed in the men's final after achieving the second-highest postal league score nationally, while our A team fought their way to third place. Our novices were also successful, making up four of the six places in the novice finals, where Marlo Wilcox and Jemma Hayden secured second and third place respectively.



Firers & Adjutants after the Kensington

The Varsity matches brought both triumph and disappointment. After an extraordinary run of victories, we unfortunately lost the Heslop for the first time in twenty years and were unable to win back the Bentata. However, there was much to celebrate, with Cambridge retaining the Kensington, Ex-Captain's and Lerman trophies. The Kensington match was a particular highlight, with our team defeating Oxford 1532-1492, a score that also matched that of Oxford's Heslop team.

With membership now exceeding 160 and still growing, the club remains in a very healthy position. Many of our newer members are already competing in jackets and slings, and we are working hard to bring the Heslop and Bentata back to Cambridge.

Best wishes,
Jemma Hayden
CUSBC Captain 2026-2027

CURA Dinner

We hope to see many of you at the CURA Dinner on the 13th of March 2026 at Sidney Sussex College. As ever it promises to be an evening of enjoyment for both old friends and new faces alike. Please RSVP via the online form below, or return invitation forms to us via email to social@curifle.org.uk, or post to the address indicated on the invitation.

If you generously decide to include a donation with your dinner payment, either by BACS or cheque, please consider filling out the Gift Aid form to ensure your donations go as far as possible towards helping the club.



Last year's CURA Dinner

RSVP form: https://forms.gle/jVcKD8TRdPpt5QLH6

Donations & Fundraising

Our convincing success over Oxford in the past year is much thanks to the equipment and funds donated from a number of alumni, benefactors and friends of the club. We find ourselves in the best position we have been in nearly a decade, so what to do? With your help, we would like to secure the future of CURA (and our continued dominance over Oxford) for the next five years. Our major project this year is making CURA 2030-ready through a number of stages:

Coaching Headsets

Our existing set of older-make headsets has now become unserviceable, leaving us without convenient (or guaranteed) access to coaching headsets. This is a priority for the club as a set of new, wireless headsets would allow the following: seamless communication in

team matches, especially the Varsities; confidence and familiarity with our equipment, making malfunctions or errors less catastrophic; and finally, it would bring our capabilities level with the other clubs on Bisley, ensuring we remain competitive in the years to come.

£500 would pay for a headset, allowing us to be confident, prepared and focused on our shooting

A left-handed Match Rifle

Thanks entirely to donors' generosity, we are now in possession of a streamlined workflow allowing us to handload very large quantities of Match Rifle rounds; this, in addition to significant subsidy from the Lovell & Green Fund and other benefactors, is allowing more Match Rifle shooters than ever to find their footing within CURA. As the club flourishes, and our number of members grows, more and more left-handed shooters are joining us; we are proud to offer these members the option of a number of left-handed target rifles but find ourselves without a left-handed match rifle, limiting them to shooting only target rifle. This acquisition of a left-handed match rifle would allow us to open both halves of our club to all of our best shots, regardless of handedness.

£1500 would pay for one of our left-handed target rifles to be converted to a match rifle

Continued restoration of the EVIII CURA Gunroom

Two years ago, we began working on our restoration of the CURA gunroom in the EVIII clubhouse. We have managed to repair the historic gun lockers, allowing both their use as storage and the preservation of a part of our history for the generations of CURA yet to come. The workbench has been modified to allow us to store our equipment more effectively, and the side table has been revarnished, ensuring it will withstand more years of wear and tear. All of this has only been possible due to the help, both financial and physical, from various alumni and donors. This year, we are aiming to repaint the room in its original colours, to further preserve and remind the club of its past, especially at a time where we are focused on our future.

Other donations

Recurring donations set up by both Alumni and a number of current members are already making a significant difference to the club, so if you would like to contribute to the Ex-Captains' fund, or support the club more generally, please consider setting up a recurring donation through our donation portal at Rifle Association (CURA) | Support Cambridge. Additionally, if you would like to donate any equipment, please do not hesitate to get in touch via email to equipment@curifle.org.uk.

As ever, we are immensely grateful for any donations, regardless of size. Your support, in any form, goes a long way towards keeping us accessible and accurate. We thank you for your commitment to this club and to its members, both current and future.

If you are a UK taxpayer, you can boost your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you. Simply tick the Gift Aid box when donating so we can claim an additional 25p from HMRC for every £1 you give.

Imperial Meeting 2026

Chancellors': WON CURA 1132.97v — OURC 1085.70v
Humphry: WON CURA 832.68v — OURC 801.53v

MR Imperial

The annual Imperial Meeting, this year in its 157th iteration, kicked off on July 11th with the Hopton. Our club saw 12 members compete in part or all of the Hopton — a 33% increase, compared with last year — with 3 of them competing as novices. In what would become something of a theme for this year's Imperial, the weather was constantly unpleasantly warm, and those of us lucky enough to be squadded under the tree at 1200x earned the envy of everyone else.

Regardless, our shooters continued undeterred. We entered an unprecedented three teams in the FW Jones, and many of our shooters produced fantastic results, with four members placing within the top 10 Tyros in the Hopton. Luca Schwarz came top Tyro in the Weekend Aggregate, Ho Lam Yiu came top Tyro in the Armourers, and our MR Vice Captain Jacob-Jude Parsons formed half of the winning top Tyro pair in the Match Rifle Pairs.

After the Hopton came the Elcho, which came to us as both a much-needed day of rest as well as an inspiring glimpse into the highest levels of Match Rifle shooting. As always, CURA members helped out with various tasks on the day, gaining a front-row seat to the action.

On First Thursday came the Humphry. With Oxford experiencing an unfortunate rifle mishap at 1000x, leading to a miss or two to count, we started off with an early lead of 11 points, which we widened to 18 points by lunchtime. However, it was at 1200x that our team truly shone, further widening the gap to claim the Humphry by a convincing 31 point margin. Congratulations to Luca, our ex-Captain, for top-scoring with an impressive 216.26v, as well as to our new caps Bruno Iwanczyk and Ji Hyun Lee, the latter achieving her half blue in her first year of shooting.



Congratulations to our Humphry team for Good Win

Our thanks go to our adjutants Ashley Abrahams and Richard Vary, our coaches Nick Brasier, Alex Cargill-Thompson and Claire Halleran, our plotters Jono Brooking and Adam Leech, and our many members helping out both on and off the point. Finally, we'd like to thank Oxford for such an exciting match and for such strong opposition. It's great to see the Humphry back in Hawks again, and we look forward to next year.

TR Imperial

Not to be outdone, a sizable contingent of those more keen on Target Rifle set their sights on the newly created Youth Imperial, with 5 members competing. Running concurrently with the MR Imperial, it certainly made the English VIII clubhouse busier than it normally would be during the Hopton. The week started off with a few members trying out new disciplines, including Gallery Rifle and Precision Snapshooting, and progressed towards the more serious business of Target Rifle shooting. With two of us winning spoons, two making the final for the Duke's Prize, our team coming second in the Musketeers Cup and our TR Vice Captain Amy Xu winning the Meltis Cup in the regionals, it proved to be excellent practice for the upcoming TR Imperial, as well as a successful meeting for CURA in its own right.

Thursday evening was spent marking the end of the MR season with the Humphry Dinner, after which we moved swiftly (many would argue too swiftly) on to the Astor the next morning at 8 am. Despite being terrifically hung over from the previous evening, our Astor team shot uncharacteristically well, coming 10th, setting a trend of individual and team successes: CURA members appeared 33 times in individual squadded prize lists, with our Captain Ben Vary and Ho Lam winning the Tyro tankard in the Alexandra and the Prince of Wales respectively; four members qualified for St. George's II; six members made King's II — the highest number in recent years — with Will Bacon coming 59th in the final; Ho Lam additionally won the Peter-Hoblyn aggregate. We entered four (!) teams in the Universities Long Range match, with our B team coming third; CURA members made up half of the English team for the Universities National; and Will was selected as a reserve for the English team for the National.



Cambridge Shooters taking on Universities Long Range

But all would be for nothing, if we could not translate our successes into a strong Chancellors' team. Fortunately, with 20 members shooting part or all of the Grand, including 5 novices, we had no shortage of talent to choose from. With our kit and rifle checks having been completed the evening before, on Second Friday a well-rested CURA team faced off against OURC. With Oxford struggling to find their feet at 300x, we claimed an early 19 point lead. While Oxford pulled together and put up a series of respectable scores at 500x, our team scored no less than three possibles at this range, widening the lead to 33 points. A forward-sloping firing

point at 600x proved challenging for both teams, but thanks to some quick thinking and attention to detail from our team, we were able to cope better than our opponents to claim the Chancellors' by a decisive 47 point margin, completing our clean sweep of the fullbore Varsity trophies. Congratulations go to Jacob who top-scored with 148.18v, easily a full-blue score.



The Chancellors' comes home for a third year on the run

We would like to thank Richard Vary for once again serving as adjutant this year, as well as to our members for making sure everything behind the point was ready to ensure a smooth experience for the shooters. Thank you once again to Oxford for yet another well-fought match to round off another successful year.

Serenaded by Joe's wonderful poetry, we celebrated the successes of another fullbore season at Chancellors' Dinner on Saturday evening. With copious amounts of wine to wash down our meal with, we all had a very memorable King's night.

Easter Bisley

This year, CURA saw another successful start to the fullbore season with our annual Easter Bisley camp. We once again enjoyed healthy membership numbers, with almost 30 members in attendance, including 16 new and 15 returning. After arrival on Wednesday evening and a night of settling in for our newer members, we started the camp on Thursday with a day of talks, demonstrations and setting up novices with their first target rifles.

Friday kicked off, unusually, at 200 yards, allowing our new members to get used to their rifles at a slightly easier range, while seniors rotated between the firing points and butts. Under guidance from a number of our experienced coaches, groupings across the range rapidly tightened with a number of impressive scores being seen before the end of the morning. Despite a sunny start, the weather by midmorning had turned into what would become the standard for the next few days, and our novices quickly became familiar with wet weather procedures. The afternoon start at 600 proved no drier, although this did not stop many of our members from building on their morning successes.

Saturday morning saw first shots down at 900 yards, the first experience of long range shooting for many of our new members, and a reminder of Stickledown winds for our seniors. Despite the challenging conditions, our shooters and coaches fared well, returning promising scores despite wind brackets being frequently over six minutes across. At 600 yards that afternoon the conditions were barely easier, with sudden hailstorms adding to the already wet weather.

Sunday brought more shooting at 300 and 600, featuring our first highest possible score from a novice, with a number more impressive scores not far behind. Their first three full days of shooting completed, our members finished off the weekend with the inaugural CURA Easter Bisley dinner, featuring eight courses cooked by our very own members and representing a significant step up from our usual Bisley cuisine.

Monday, with the ranges closed, allowed for a day of talks and relaxation. Members enjoyed games of cricket and a demonstration of backgunning, as well as a number of presentations relating to Match Rifle and reading the wind. Monday evening also saw the return of the annual Captain's Curry, as well as the selection of teams for the all-important Captain vs Secretary match.

Tuesday saw one more return to Target Rifle for the annual Cap v Sec match. For the second year running, this match saw the inclusion of a third, Vice-Captain's, team, a testament to healthy membership numbers. As always, the match was highly competitive, shot across 300, 500 and 900 yards with the results decided very nearly by the final shoots. An early lead by the Vice Captain's team saw them ahead going into 900 yards, however they were passed by the Secretary's team who took the final victory with 1052.50v, followed by the Captain's team with 1044.59v and the Vice Captain's on 1042.70v. Special congratulations go to Will Bacon of

the Vice Captain's team for putting down the highest score of the match with 144.11v, as well as to Tom Bailey and Bruno Iwanczyk who top scored the Secretary's and Captain's teams with 141.11 and 141.12 respectively. Well done to all involved for a competitive and enjoyable match.

With target rifle concluded, Wednesday and Thursday saw our novices try their hands at Match Rifle, with most having the opportunity to try both backgunning and frontgunning. With the winds somewhat easier than earlier in the week, many novices also had the chance to experience coaching, with self-coached shoots also becoming common over the days as confidence increased. Under the guidance of our more experienced Match Rifle shots, the quality of both shooting and coaching showed a clear increase across the two days, a promising showing for the season to come.



We were ecstatic to see amazing numbers at Easter Bisley

Thanks must go to Chris Haley for his introductory talks, to Ashley Abrahams for his talks on Match Rifle and for his coaching on the point, and to Adam Leech for guidance on the range and for helping set up our many backgunners. Many thanks must also go to Alice Good for coaching and assistance on and off the range, and to Emily Wackan for her ongoing and invaluable help throughout the entire week.

Scottish Open

Last June, around nine members of CURA made the journey north to Blair Atholl in Scotland for the Scottish Open. With four cars setting off from Cambridge, it was quite an expedition, but well worth the drive!

We were lucky with the weather throughout the trip, enjoying some fantastic sunshine and, perhaps more importantly, some excellent shooting conditions. We stayed in two small Airbnb huts near Pitlochry, around 35 minutes from the range. Between the two places, we had a rather cosy base for the weekend. Evenings were spent relaxing together, with one night featuring pizza, another a pasta dinner expertly prepared by Ryszard, and the final evening bringing everyone together for a BBQ with the rest of the competition.

For three members of our group, this was their first experience of shooting in an individual competition, making it an especially exciting weekend. The Scottish Open also offered a slight change from our usual shooting routine. At Blair Atholl, the familiar 300-yard distance is replaced by 400 yards, alongside the opportunity to shoot at the longer distances of 900 and 1,000 yards.



CURA Members enjoying the great Scottish Weather

CURA members also helped out with the running of the Lawrence Match, the England versus Scotland match, lending a hand to help everything run smoothly. Will Bacon was selected as a reserve for the England team, who went on to win the match.

In the individual competitions, CURA had several members featuring in the Grand Aggregate. Ben Vary finished 45th overall, with the most V-Bulls in CURA, while Zedric Grosvenor and Ho Lam Yiu also made it into the top 60. It was great to see CURA represented across the competition, particularly with some members making their individual competition debuts.

All in all, the trip was a fantastic experience. Between the shooting, the scenery, the sunshine and the evenings spent together, it was a brilliant few days away and a great opportunity for CURA members to enjoy some shooting outside of Cambridge. We're already looking forward to the next trip north!

Alumni and Member News

The season began in Scotland, where CURA won the Schools and University Challenge Cup at the 2026 Scottish Open with a score of 830. The winning team was Ben Vary, Ho Lam Yiu, Will Bacon and Zedric Grosvenor. Will also had a good individual meeting, finishing fifth in the under-25 aggregate.

The Imperial Meeting at Bisley brought the club's best individual results. Rosanne Furniss took third place in the King's Prize, with Graham Atkinson just behind in fourth. Alice Good finished 18th, and the club had a deep field of finalists: Rupert Fitzsimmons (49th), Chris Haley (56th), Will Bacon (59th), Nick Brasier (75th) and Bruce Winney (85th). John Deane also shared first place in the Chairman's Prize, O Class.

Match Rifle was just as productive. Nick Tremlett won the Hopton Aggregate, with Rob Lygoe second and Julian Peck fourth, and John Lindsay III won the Victoria Aggregate. Ho Lam won the Peter-Hoblyn Aggregate, with Will second behind him.

At the NRA Inter-Counties, members were again prominent on winning teams. Zedric shot for the West of Scotland junior team, coached by Lindsay Peden, which won both the short-range match and the overall Junior Aggregate. Kelvin Ramsey captained Surrey to victory in the Senior Aggregate.

Further afield, Nick Brasier captained the GB Veterans team on its tour of Australia and was the top-scoring firer in the Southern Cross Veterans Match. Looking ahead, Amy Xu has been named as a reserve for the GB team to Canada in 2027. Ho Lam has been selected for the 2027 NRA Development Squad, alongside the Channel Islands tour.

In sadder news, I would like to take a moment to remember John de Havilland, who sadly passed away on the 8th of October. John first took up back-gunning in his time while at Cambridge and went on to do great things, including shooting for England in the Elcho; winning the Hopton; captaining the inaugural Woomera team; and going on to become the NRA chairman. He certainly will be missed by many on Bisley and around the world.