**WSMA Formal Rifle Championships, 2014** by Mike Nesbitt

The doin’s at Tenino include the **WSMA Formal Rifle Championships**. This was the 37th year for the shoots at Tenino which is part of that city’s Oregon Trail Days and the shooting matches are held right in the city park. The “formal” part about these matches is based on the fact that this competition is all on paper targets for score and the rifle shooting done here is what makes up the WSMA Rifle Championships. There are some other shoots held along with the rifle competition, such as a trade gun match and a pistol match as well as some one-shot novelty rifle matches which are not part of the championships. There is also a Ladies’ Match which is not part of the main aggregate. Those other matches simply add to the fun.

When you read the names of the winners, the top three in each of the categories, you’ll see some new names along with the old. There were a couple of first-time shooters on the firing line this year and that is always good to see. Of course, you’ll recognize some of the old names too such as Tom Brown who returned to be the Range Safety Officer again this year. Many of the names you’ll read in the list of winners will be familiar to you if you have shot at Tenino or simply read a report on such doin’s from a previous year.

Last year I mentioned how it is a tradition for the overall match winner to take the wooden chair that Will Ulry donates as a shooting prize. Now it is also becoming a tradition for Adam Sampson to win that chair. Adam was our top shooter again and this makes three years in a row that he has shot so well with his .54 caliber flintlock rifle and he has chairs marked with “T-9-0” plus “2012, 2013, and 2014.” More power to him and let’s hope his good shooting continues (while our own shooting gets even better!) Yes, Adam got the WSMA 1st place gold medal in addition to the chair.

This year there were no powder horns given away for the Trade Gun match but we still must thank Harold Moore for his generous donations of his handmade powder horns over the years. Steve Skillman, another horn-maker, or “horner” as they like to be called, has pledged to make buffalo horns for next year and that is something to look forward to.

This year the aggregate matches were reduced by one match which made room for the novelty matches to be shot on Saturday. This also reduces the aggregate “possible” by 50 points. There was certainly no lack in things to do this year and the only place where the change is really noticed is in the listing of the matches.

And, once again, very big, sincere and multiple notes of Thanks! go to both Will Ulry and Bob Gietz for being the ramrods running this shoot. Let’s also mention Jan Sampson and Scott Isom who ran the registration tent for these events. There are actually a lot more names who should be mentioned and thanked for their participation in helping with the set-up and operation of this event, in addition to those who have donated prizes for either the raffles or the shooting aggregate. Those aggregate prizes are the excellent and varied items that are “for grabs” by all shooters who shoot in the aggregate, are more than enough to be very good “bait” for bringing shooters back to these events in Tenino. Those prizes almost covered the prize blanket at the beginning of the awards ceremonies. Try to come and claim you prize next year!