

The 2016 NCOWS Midwest Regionals

By Johnny McCrae

Twenty nine shooters participated in the fifth annual NCOWS Midwest Regionals. This great event was held on July 15, 2016 through July 17, 2016 and again hosted by the Wisconsin Old West Shootist's (WOWS). The WOWS range is located near Glenwood City, Wisconsin around a half hour from Menomonie, Wisconsin and an hour from the Twin cities in Minnesota. We had shooters from six states, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana and the great state of Texas.

I'd like to start by re-capping a few highlights from this and previous year's matches.

In 2014 Beartooth Billy shot a clean match using four Firearms that were all over one hundred years old

In 2014 Red Lodge Rambler shot one 1858 Remington Revolver in a two pistol class and loaded an extra cylinder on the clock.

In 2015 three of the original founders of NCOWS participated in this match, Dave Williams, Len Abels and Ron Belden.

At this year's match Bonnie Jackson (Lady Hoss Jack) drove up from around the St. Louis area to shoot this match. Her late husband Steve Jackson (Hoss Jack) was a founding member and the Deputy Marshall of the Berger Sharpshooters and a faithful attendee of NCOWS events. Bonnie used Steve's 1858 Remington Conversion Revolver. She shot clean with her Pistol and had only one Rifle miss. I'm sure Steve was looking down smiling and helping Bonnie. Joe Ray (Tascosa Joe), our NCOWS Banker, dove up from Texas to participate in this match.

As Grump and I were packing up getting ready to head home one of the Shooters walked by and mentioned what a pleasure it was to go to a match and not hear any complaining or whining, just being with a group of happy Shooters who had a great time..

Free camping was available for both primitive and modern campers. This year there were four modern campsites and one primitive campsite. The toilet facilities are first class and running water is available on the site. The "Out House" is designed like a Railroad Caboose. Many Shooters mentioned that it was the nicest "Outhouse" they had ever seen. Check out the slide show for a picture of this one of a kind "Out House". It is a genuine pleasure to camp in such a beautiful setting. On Friday night some thunder storms rolled through but otherwise the weather was very nice.

All of the side matches were held on Friday. The long range matches had targets set out to 270 yards. Long range shooters used single shot and repeating rifles both off of cross sticks and off hand. There were some very good shooters participating in the long range matches and a shoot-off was necessary to determine the winner in the Long Range Buffalo category. Six Shooters shot the Buffalo clean by hitting the Buffalo eight out of eight times at 270 yards For a tie breaker the Match Director painted a 7" diameter circle on the Buffalo. Each Shooter had one shot and the closest was the winner. Beartooth Billy won by putting his shot within 1" of dead center. Other side matches consisted of speed pistol, speed rifle and speed shotgun, pocket pistol, derringer, and a .22 rifle & pistol stage. Side matches are always a great way to warm up for the main match and loads of fun to boot.

On Friday night everyone was treated to a wonderful campfire supper. The evening was a great opportunity to meet old friends and get acquainted with new friends. The camaraderie was as good as it gets. The folks at WOWS are among the friendliest folks you could hope to find.

The WOWS Range is "U" shaped and in a clearing surrounded by woods. There are eleven permanent stages. Each of the stages has a very well built structure that lends to the atmosphere and fun of Cowboy Action Shooting. If you go next year you will shoot out of a saloon, church, apothecary, gun shop, jail and behind a horse drawn buggy.

After the safety meeting on Saturday morning due a prediction of rain on Sunday we shot seven stages. We had a break in between for a tasty lunch generously provided by our hosts. The stages were fun, well written and tied into a historical event in the best traditions of NCOWS. The stories for each stage were fun to listen to. Everyone pitched in with the Posse duties and everything went smooth.

Saturday evening a banquet was held in Menomonie, Wisconsin at a local Steakhouse. An excellent five course dinner was served. It is always a treat to see everyone dressed up in their fancy "go to meetin' duds". Doe C. Doe (Paula Guardin) took free portraits of everyone. Some very excellent door prizes were handed out.

On Sunday Mother Nature smiled on us and it did not rain. We shot the final three stages in some very pleasant weather. After another great home cooked meal the award ceremony and a raffle were held. Another NCOWS Midwest Regional's went into the history books.

If you enjoy the NCOWS Nationals in Evansville, you will definitely enjoy this great event. Everything about this event is first class especially the hospitality. Where could you see so many shooters shooting Black Powder in an authentic Old West atmosphere? This event is what NCOWS is all about. We have already put the 2017 NCOWS Midwest Regionals on our calendar for next year.

The planning and preparation for match of this caliber requires a lot of hard work and dedication. Our thanks go to the Wisconsin Old West Shootist's for all of their efforts and work in putting on another memorable event.

For a slide show of this event, please go to
<http://s278.photobucket.com/user/jvsaffran/slideshow/2016%20NCOWS%20Midwest%20Regionals>

For more information on this event and other Wows events please send an email to
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