

## **Catch A Zombie Tiger By The Tail?**

### **Match Analysis**

Rain and the subsequent mud on the lower range complicated this match greatly for shooters and staff alike and ultimately caused us to abandon our truck mounted rolling shotgun stage after only two shooters. We delayed the shotgun stage until the afternoon hoping the field would dry out enough to drive on but it did not. The shooters agreed to shoot the shotgun stage on foot with the two lucky ZKs who got to shoot from the truck shooting again so we could score the match fairly. Unfortunately, the time lost in waiting was too great for a few competitors who had to leave before they could shoot and they couldn't be placed as a result of the missing stage.

Everyone who shot the match swept it, which always makes me wonder if I made it too easy. One factor that may have caused this unnatural perfection was the removal of the normal time limit on the stages. I did this because I didn't want shooters racing against the clock to finish the stage when the ground was muddy, and in some cases, actually under water from the on-and-off downpours during the morning. The pistol course especially was slick with mud and the shotgun course, even after a few hours of drying, had great muddy ruts in it from the patrol truck tires.

A great deal of credit goes to our volunteer staff Lonnie Leake, Dale Winchester, Spencer Singer, Mark Lenberger, Larry Datillo, Derek Shakabpa, and new comers Billy Thuman and his son Kaleb, Anthony Noce, and Devonte Boswell and his fiancé Angel. As always, our shooters also pitched in with the reset to keep the match moving along. Many hands make light work. We couldn't do it without you.

This was a memorable match in many ways, but particularly for Frank Thomas who finally won, despite being one our best and fabled marksman for years. He was the only ZK to spot the tiger hiding in the grass along the rifle course in time and earned the two mission points.

Second place went to Thomas Robertson who hasn't competed since our very first match back in 2012. I can't recall where he placed then, but he shot almost as well as Frank on Sunday and looks like he will be a force to be reckoned with if he doesn't wait another five years to return.

We also welcomed new shooter Forrest Early to our ZSU family who found us on the Knob Creek event calendar and came out unannounced. He showed good spirit as well as marksmanship and placed third overall.

The best perfect rifle stage went to Frank Thomas who swept all five targets in 110 seconds with 10 shots. He would have done it faster, but he was looking all around for the tiger every step of the way. That paid off because he was the only person who did and it won the match for him. The rifle course was fairly bright by the time he shot it in the early afternoon. Early shooters had to deal with rain and dim conditions along that wooded road that made sighting the targets harder.

The pistol stage was dense with green and undergrowth that was sometimes chest high. We used this cover to hide zombies in so that shooters came up on them unexpectedly. Some shots had to be taken from greater ranges because a closer firing point was obstructed. More than a few shooters had to back up the trail to get shots at zombies they bypassed. Most of the shooter had to deal with dim light in the forest due to the rain and overcast. Grant Wilson observed in frustration that a green dot sight was just about useless. Perhaps the best sight was Nasby Stroop's red laser which projected quite visibly on the target heads in those dim conditions. Forrest Early shot the best perfect pistol stage, clearing all 15 targets in 122 seconds with 29 rounds.

It's rare to see a revolver on the pistol course, but Doug Parrack brought out his Ruger GP 100 that he had modified to use full moon clips and shot an excellent pistol stage with it, clearing all 15 zombies in 176 seconds with only 23 shots. This was more remarkable because Doug only shot double action!

The shotgun stage was shot in the hot sunshine but in a muddy legacy of the morning's rain. The course was set up for truck, and in retrospect, I will never again allow that set-up to be substituted as a foot run course for a myriad of reasons. Thomas Robertson shot the best perfect shotgun stage clearing all 15 targets in 77 seconds with 18 shots.

We had quite a few no-shows, which was a disappointment, but those that attended enjoyed the match. After door prizes from our great sponsors (XS Sight Systems, Sierra Bullets, Hi-Point, Inland, Birchwood Casey, Duracoat, KaBar, and Brownells) were awarded, there was discussion about possibilities for the upcoming night shoot. I heard some great suggestions for a truck mounted night shotgun course and a "On-The-Wall" type rifle course illuminated by parachute flare. I will try to make this happen. .