



**ISSF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
RIFLE / PISTOL
CAIRO, EGY
6 NOV – 18 NOV 2025**

“Forward of the Line” Cairo 2025 Team NZ

Compiled by Rob Taylor



*Left to right
Pippa Taylor, Rob Taylor, Mark Baines, Bex Baines*

Introduction

November 2025, Four Wellington Shooters, Mark & Bex Baines, Rob & Pippa Taylor and one team manager Sarah Taylor, travelled to Cairo, Egypt to compete in the ISSF World Championship, below are some notes from our experiences.

Administration

Yes there is a lot of it...

There are two main aspects to the admin

ISSF Entry & the Competition

For us this was handled by Gavin Patton, Sport Development Manager, NZSF. You will be required to complete and sign a series of ISSF forms and application's to actually register as an athlete for the competition, Gavin will provide all the guidance you need for this. There were no surprises for us and everything panned out as expected, which was a great relief...

The Paperwork, Licenses, Permits etc

It feels like there is an (almost) endless array of permits and licenses required for travelling with Firearms and ammunition outside the NZ Border, some are obvious, others less so.

Here is a complete list with notes:

Passports – must be up-to-date and must have at least 6 months of validity at the end of the trip. It is really important to ensure the name in the passport is also correct especially if your name has changed, your name must match on all paperwork eg Firearms license, Passport etc...

ISSF Athlete Declaration – You must provide a signed declaration to the ISSF which basically covers their use of any images you may end up in and states you understand the rules, drug testing requirements etc etc.. Gavin & NZSF manage this declaration.

ISSF Athlete ID Application – You must have a ISSF ID issued number to register as a competitor in a specific competition. Gavin & NZSF manage this application.

Export License – you are required to advise the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) that you are intending to take your rifle “out of the country”. This is just an email notification and fairly simple to complete, although you may have to chase them up as they are not quick...

Import License – This is the big one and can feel like a drama.... The application can take weeks, even months, to complete. Seriously allow more time than you expect. Successful applications will also require you to register your firearm with the “MyFirearms Registry”. Be very careful to ensure the name of the rifle in the Registry matches exactly the name on your Import Application. Your Import Application is vetted by the police before it is allowed to be submitted for approval... This vetting process can be involved and just make sure *everything* matches prior to trying to submit your application, it will go much smoother. As part of your application you will be required to let the police know how much ammo you will be bringing back into the country, a bit difficult if you are not sure how much you will be shooting! But this is a “less than” number so if you state 1000 rounds and only bring back 500, no problem – just don't underestimate! Also after you arrive back in NZ it is a requirement to let the police know within 30 days that the import has occurred and they will “close off” the import permit so it can't be used again – it is a One-Off permit.

Egyptian Firearms License (temporary) – On arrival in Egypt you will be issued with a temporary Egyptian Firearms license. Check the Serial number and description match perfectly, without this license or if there is a difference in the Serial Number you will not be allowed to take the rifle out of Egypt. You must retain the License carefully do not lose it...! After we were issued with the license it wasn't required again until we left the country but if you have the rifle with you whilst travelling (eg driving to and from the Range) it's probably going to be a good idea to have it handy...

Egyptian Visas – To enter Egypt it is mandatory have an Egyptian Visa. You cannot apply for the travel visa until about 30 days prior to your visit and the visa is valid for 90 days, so just get the timing right. There didn't appear to be any complications with this, being New Zealand, everyone seems to like us.... It is also granted in about 24-48 hours so little stress.

Insurance (NZSF) – this is HIGHLY recommended for peace of mind and thanks to the NZSF it is easy to arrange and extremely comprehensive. The NZSF policy cover everything you need plus has the added advantage of covering your Rifle during the trip.... Talk with Gavin about the policy (if he hasn't already mentioned it).

Firearms Permit for Flights – to take firearms and ammunition on the airplane you need permission from the Airlines Operations Team. This applies to every flight travelling internationally (we didn't need it for domestic flights). They are particularly interested in the ammunition both quantity and weight. It is important to pack the ammunition and bolt in separate hold luggage for each traveler. I packed Pippa's and my ammunition in one case and although below the weight threshold they would not let us fly and called us back to the gate to repack our luggage before they would permit the bags on the airplane. This had an added complication because we had already passed through customs and security before the bag was rejected. If you are not familiar with airports then this is a big deal because passengers passing through customs have technically "left the country" and we could not return to the check-in desk without first finding our way to the arrivals lounge and "returning" to New Zealand – including completing the NZ Traveler declaration.... Where have you come from ? 😞 the Departures lounge.... How long have you been out of the country? about 1 hour 😞.... Yes, it was painful, no, I won't do it again...

The Trip

The journey consists of the Flights, the Hotel, Transport and the Tours

Flights – for us travelling as a group of five we coordinated with a travel agent recommended by Gavin as they had experience in bookings for travelers carrying Firearms. Like many people I don't usually use travel agents because it is so easy to make your own bookings online, especially if you are particular in your arrangements. However, for this trip we all agreed to coordinate though an agent, this was a good decision as there are a number of caveats to traveling with firearms internationally that will catch you out very quickly. Compared to the cost of the trip, the expense of the agent was worth the advice and guidance we received. There are no direct flights to Cairo, so the journey involves a domestic trip to Auckland, a 17 hour flight to Dubai and a 4 hour connecting flight to Cairo. We opted for Emirates as our international airline and we also opted for Premium Economy for the 17 hour flight to Dubai, it is slightly more expensive than basic economy but the

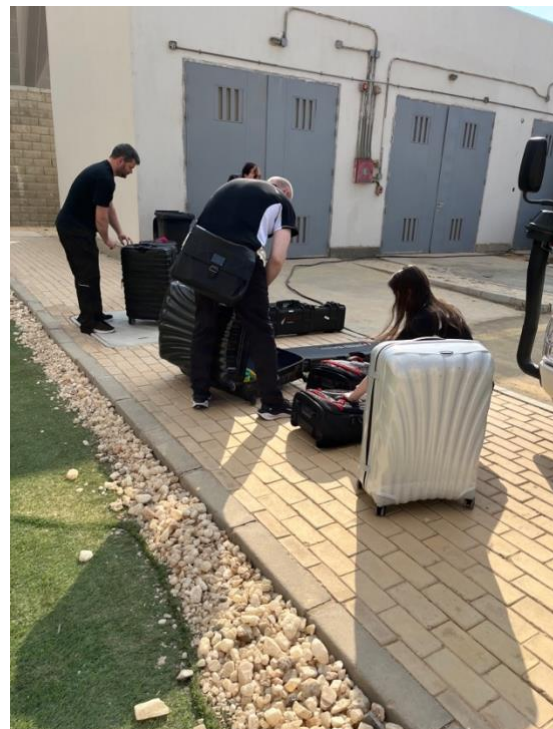


experience is significantly better, the seats are *far superior* with way more room and the airplanes have a dedicated cabin for premium economy. We also chose to pay extra to have completely flexible flight with changes possible, including cancellation, you never know what might happen on a complex trip....

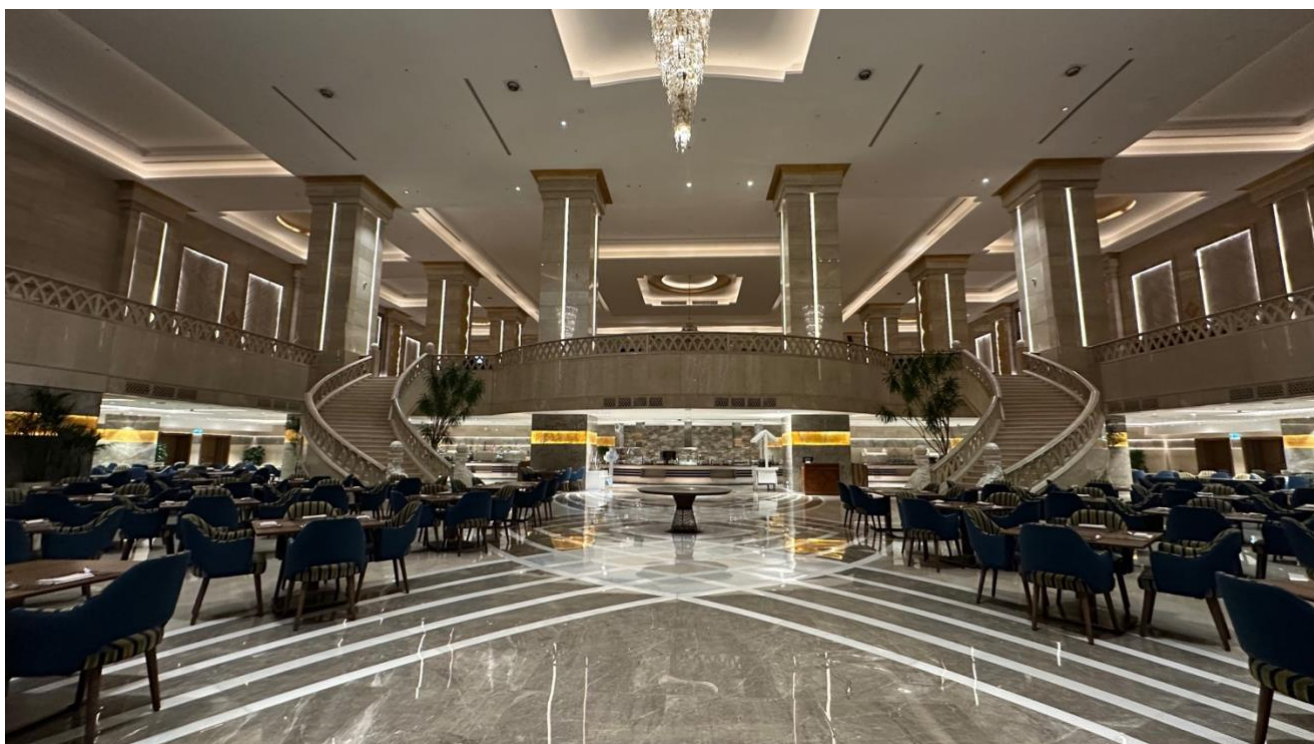
The consensus was that the flights were good, the connection times were about right, delays were nothing above what we expected and 17 hours on a plane is exactly what you think it will be like ... Board the plane, get to grips with inflight entertainment, watch a movie, munch through a nice meal, watch another movie, try to sleep, wake up and discover there still 10 hours to go....

* A note about Jetlag... yep, it can be a b*t*h, try anything you like, you will still be wide awake at 3am... Which actually kinda helps when you need to be up at 6am to get to the range!!

The Arrival & Egyptian Customs – we were met prior to customs by an ISSF representative who managed our transition through customs, baggage claim, equipment collection and then on to the authorities who issued our temporary Firearms licenses. It was time consuming but hassle free and well organized.



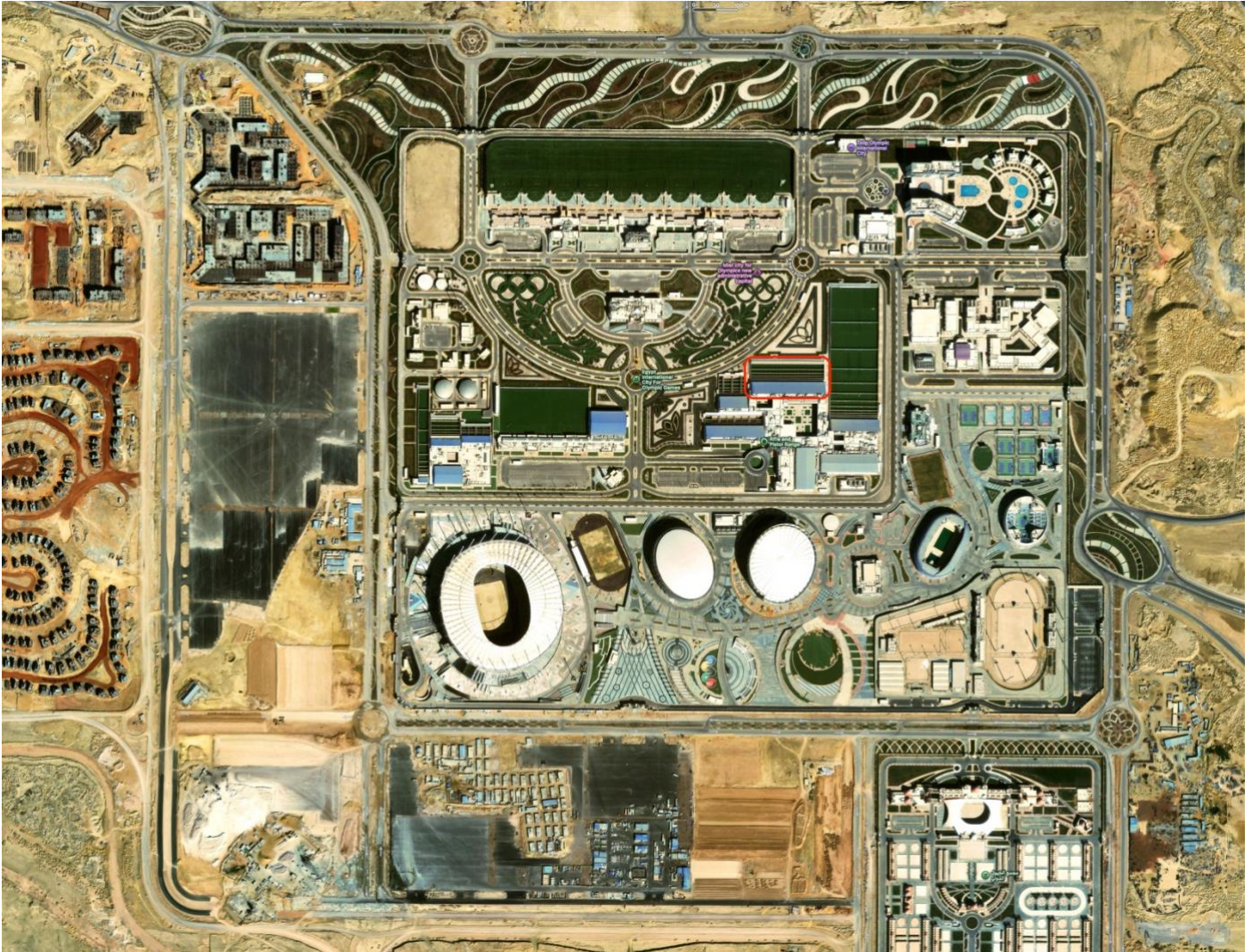
The Hotel – The ISSF makes arrangements with a number of Hotels to accommodate the athletes together, this is a great idea partly because it's nice to mix with the other teams and partly because of the transport arrangements (see below). The Hotel is not cheap, but the booking includes **unlimited** breakfast and buffet dinner 😊 so it works out about what you might expect. Plus, it looks like a palace and is in a secure walled facility guarded 24/7.



Transport – we took the easy option, by staying in a hotel that was managed by the ISSF transport was very easy and completely managed by the ISSF. We had a private shuttle from the airport to the range to deposit our equipment in the armory. Then each day there were multiple shuttles between the designated hotels and the range, all free of charge. At the end of the trip we then returned to the airport in a private shuttle via the armory to collect our equipment on the way. We could not recommend any other way as being better...

At the Range

The range is a dedicated facility within the New Capital Olympic City. It is managed by the military and you will see plenty of armed soldiers at checkpoints and elsewhere.



50m Range ringed in Red above with the 300m range next to it. The Olympic City is vast and still under construction (like many things in Egypt...!)

Note the horizontal lines over the range, more visible on the 300m range, these are important later...

The Armory - On arrival the range with your gear, you are dropped off and have to make your way to “The Armory”. This is a series of secure rooms that are supervised by ISSF representatives and guarded by the military 24/7. Each room is dedicated to a group of teams from multiple countries, we were sharing with 19 other countries.



Within the armory you place your gear on open racking designated for each team. Whilst the rooms are supervised it's good practice to secure your bags with padlocks etc.

After depositing your gear in the designated Armory secure room you are issued with a small plastic tag as shown, one for each rifle, and as you come and go the tag must be exchanged for the Rifle and vice-versa... don't lose it! We attached ours to our lanyards...



It's probably good to note that the Armory is 300m from the range, you have to carry your full kit through the large concourse lounge all the way to the range. It's a good idea to use roller bags for all your kit as it feels much further!

Competition Admin & Booking Unofficial Training – on day one you must attend the Competition Administration and obtain your Athlete Number Bibs and Identification Lanyards. These should be either affixed to your jacket or worn constantly whilst at the range. If you lose your bib, lanyard or athlete ID – they will issue a new one with little hassle if you have some ID.



You will also receive an invoice for what has been paid for by the NZSF, this will include one session of unofficial training each (if you have arranged for this in advance with Gavin).

As per the rules, every competitor is entitled to a free Pre-Event training session but we decided to purchase “extra” unofficial training sessions to become more familiar with the range. Each session lasts 50 minutes, runs on the hour, and must be booked and paid for in advance ... if you book 2 consecutive slots you get 110 minutes because it includes the 10 minute changeover time ... 😊

NB: You can only pay with 🇪🇺 EUROS ... there is NOWHERE you can obtain Euros at the facility or the Hotel, much better to obtain them in advance and don't get caught short, you have been warned...

A single competitor for a single 50-minute slot of unofficial training is €15. You are issued with “tokens” which are required by the range officers before they will allow you to commence shooting.

We didn't appear to have any restrictions on times, duration or frequency, we ended up arranging unofficial training on 3 separate days at various mounds on the range as well as the Pre-Event training. All times are coordinated by the competition administration and visible on Google Sheets.

The Concourse – Inside the range building there is a large air-conditioned space and an outside area with various food stalls, there is a variety of food available including a McDonalds but you will need Egyptian Pounds (or bank card) to pay for food / water etc.

Several equipment vendors will be set up for you to browse but it's probably not as many as you would expect. The vendors will sell you gear, depending on what they have brought, again it's in Euros but you can negotiate in Egyptian Pounds. The concourse connects all the ranges together and also even has some ping-pong tables to while away the time between squads!



The 50m Range – The range is “mostly” outdoors... there is a 5-7m overhang from the mound to the first set of flags then the targets themselves are also under a significant overhang. There are a series of five large overhead baffles to prevent shots accidentally leaving the range and these are supported by multiple large pillars over the full width of the range. See photos



Range from above on google maps showing baffles & supporting pillars – note the shadows

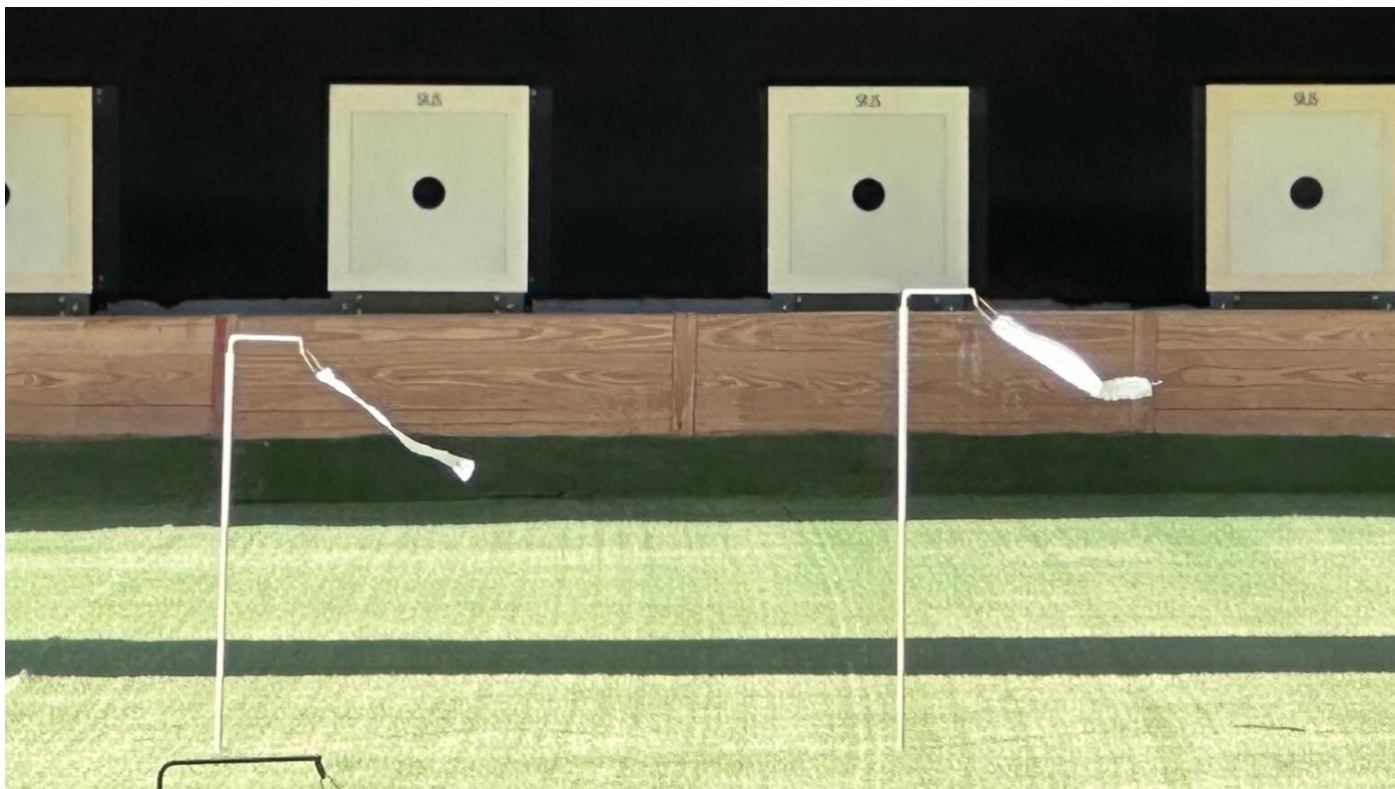


View from the line



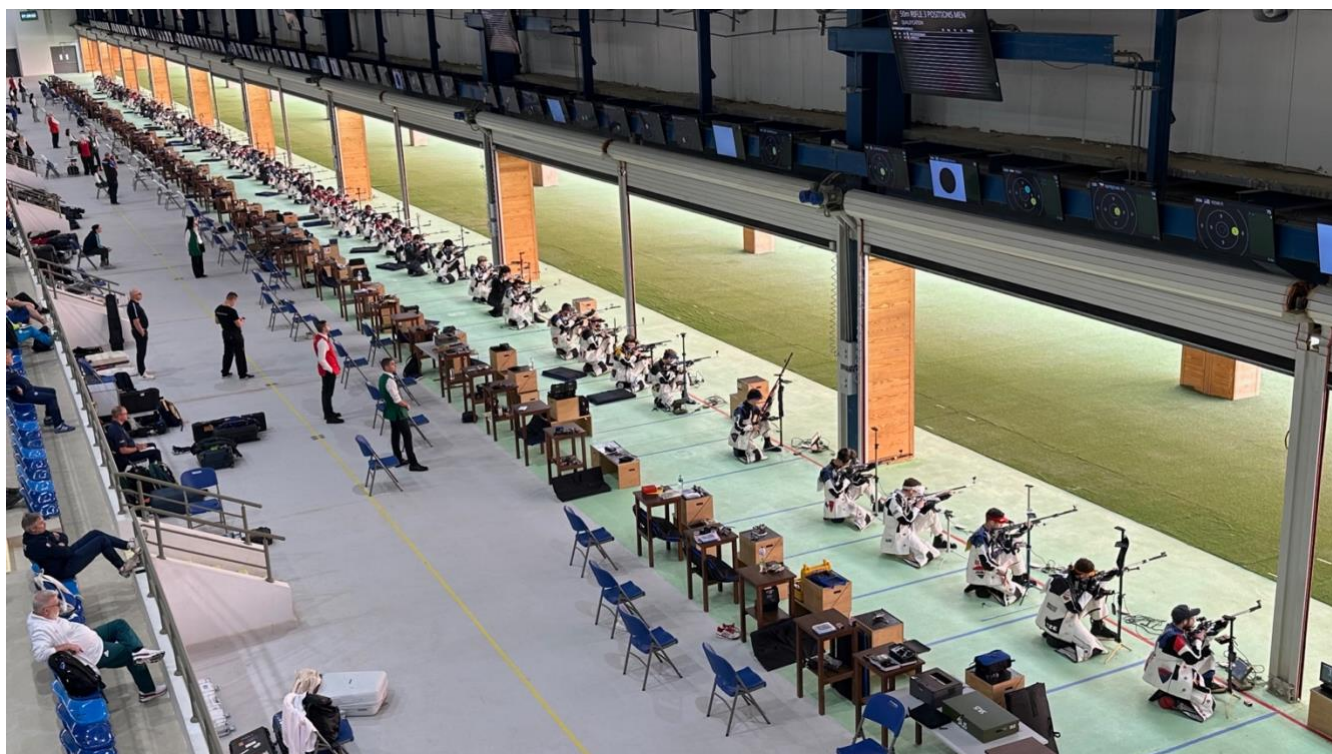
Shooters eye view, showing baffles, pillars, flags & SIUS digital scoring system, you do not need to take a scope unless you want to see the mirage and the shooting mats are provided and all identical.

The target brightness is very modest and never exposed to direct sunlight. There is a neutral black background behind the “white square” that each have the digital target “hole” that the shots pass through.

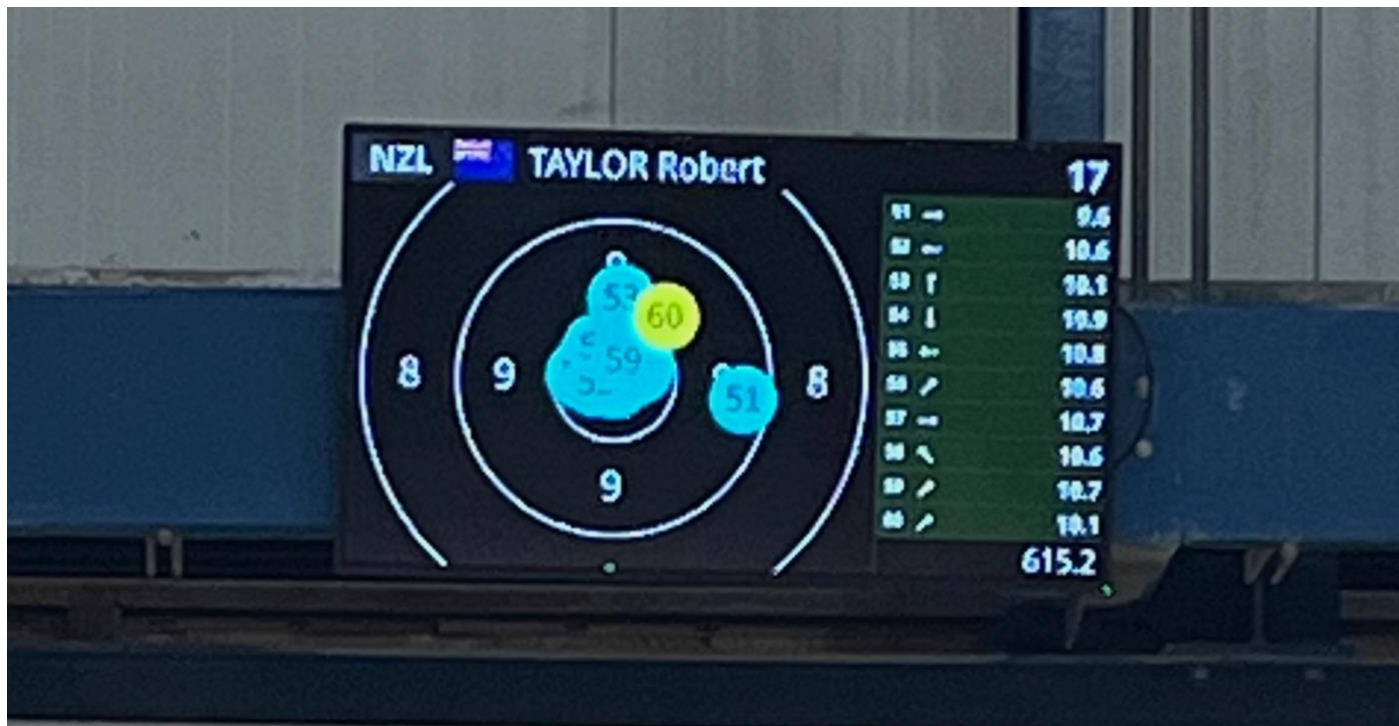


A note about the wind flags – Mark started talking with the Team Coach for Finland and he mentioned that because the near flags are “mostly undercover” they can be misleading and “erratic” because of the effects of the pillars & baffles. The far flags (shown above) were a much more accurate “tell” for the wind strength & direction because they are more in the open air space. Future delegates should probably take this guidance on board and experiment more ...

There are 80 firing points with 10 points per bay and then a spare bay at each end designated as cleaning areas. Behind the (yellow) line there is plenty of space to setup and store your equipment prior to being called to the line. Behind this there is several rows of audience seating.

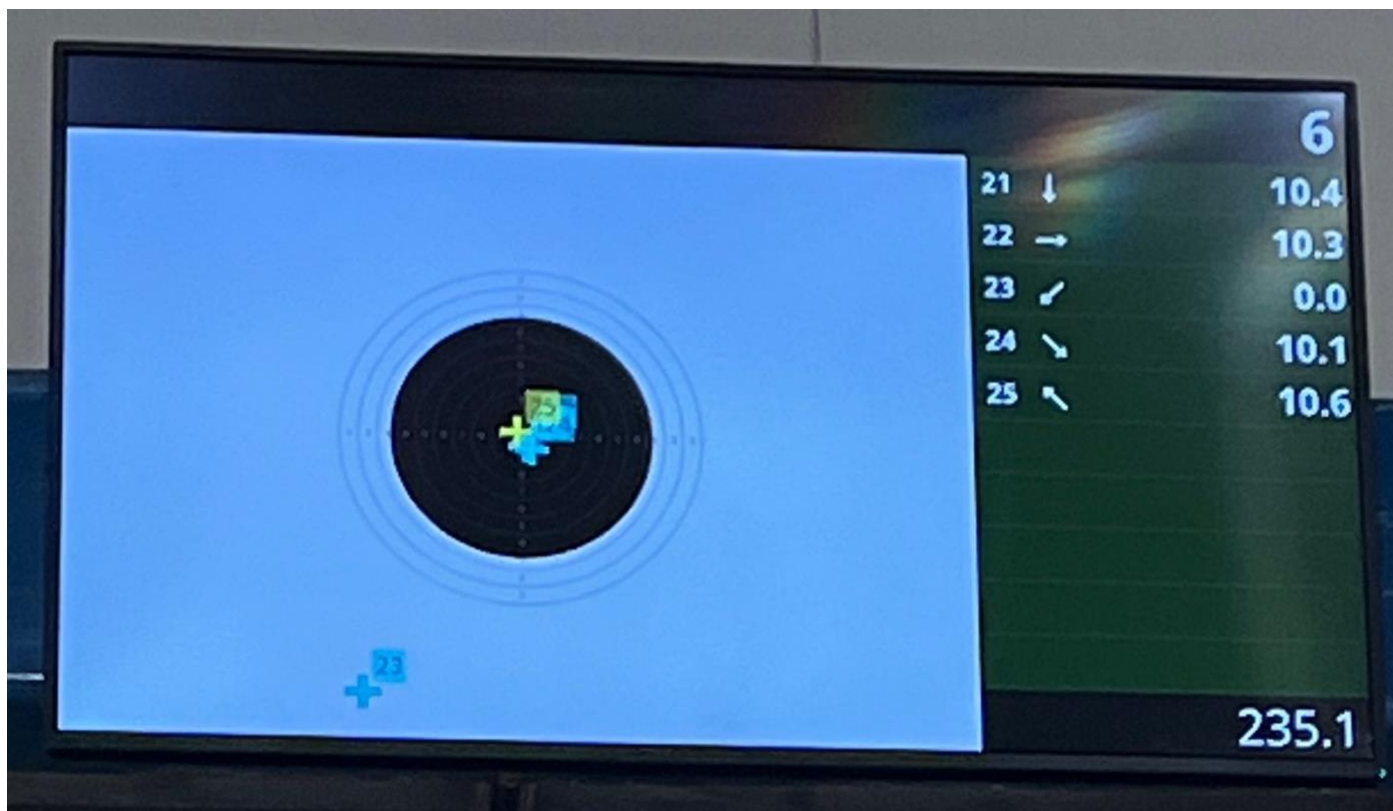


Above the mounds are the scoreboards that show the live scores in real-time for each competitor – yep, everyone is going to see that dodgy nine ... 🤖



A note about the SIUS system – we experienced a few “complications” with the digital scoring system. Like any good AI system, it appears to be subject to “hallucinations” and occasionally it “just made up” shots like this one shown here, shot 23, apparently was zero!?! even though no shot was fired... 🤖

We noted this especially in the unofficial training sessions and subsequently those particular mounds were then marked as “out of order” and not used in the competitions. If this happens be sure to get



the attention of the Range Officers (there are many) who will instruct you how to proceed. That aside, it is important to have someone show you how to use the screens...

Practice mode is basically free shooting without any “adding up” of scores.

Match mode groups shots into 10 shot strings and provides, additional information such as group centre point, small red square in photo, of the last 5x shots, vertical and horizontal offset distance in mm from centre of target labelled as Mean Point of Impact (MPI), Series Totals etc.



(yes, there is a clear plastic cover held in place by masking tape!)

Technical Meeting – On the afternoon of the first day there is a Technical Briefing where team managers (or shooter reps) all get together with the organisers, the Egyptian Shooting Federation, the ISSF Leadership and the ISSF Judges. All are introduced as part of the presentation. The schedule is discussed and any last-minute changes are communicated, this included the cancellation of some matches due to insufficient turnout... Questions can be asked by the various teams and this includes everything from rule changes, to timing of breakfast at the designated hotels and frequency of shuttle buses. The ISSF Admin answered every question in a “positive” way, it seemed nothing was too much trouble and everyone was given the possibility to speak up.

Somebody from the NZ Delegation should really attend this session, there is no other way the relevant information is communicated to the competitors, max time is about an hour, it's great to see the ISSF Leadership in action.

Opening Ceremony – on the evening of the first day there is the official Opening Ceremony, this is an occasion for the ISSF and the hosting association to celebrate the start of another competition and give awards and recognition to various people.

There are a lot of introductions.

The various statistics regarding Countries, athletes and competitions are all presented.

There was a slick presentation and film done by the Egyptian Shooting Federation

After the presentations and film there follows some “entertainment” ...

Attendance is optional.

The event is streamed on YouTube...



As a footnote: the ceremony is quite long, without breaks and without any guidance on timing... Almost all the athletes had left (including us) before the eventual ending...

Equipment Control – all competitors are required to go through Equipment Control (EC) as part of the competition process, you will not be permitted to shoot in the main competition if you don't. You are allowed to shoot in the unofficial training and even the pre-event training without passing through EC first but probably not advisable.

It is open from 8am and closes nearer 5pm each day.

There were around 600 competitors to get through but many were in multiple events with the same gear which does cut down the process considerably.

The process is simple, take a ticket & get in line.... The wait time varies but for us in Cairo it was FAST... The EC team set up multiple stations around the dedicated room with your time on each station of no more than a few minutes, which means a new competitor entered every couple of minutes to keep up the flow...

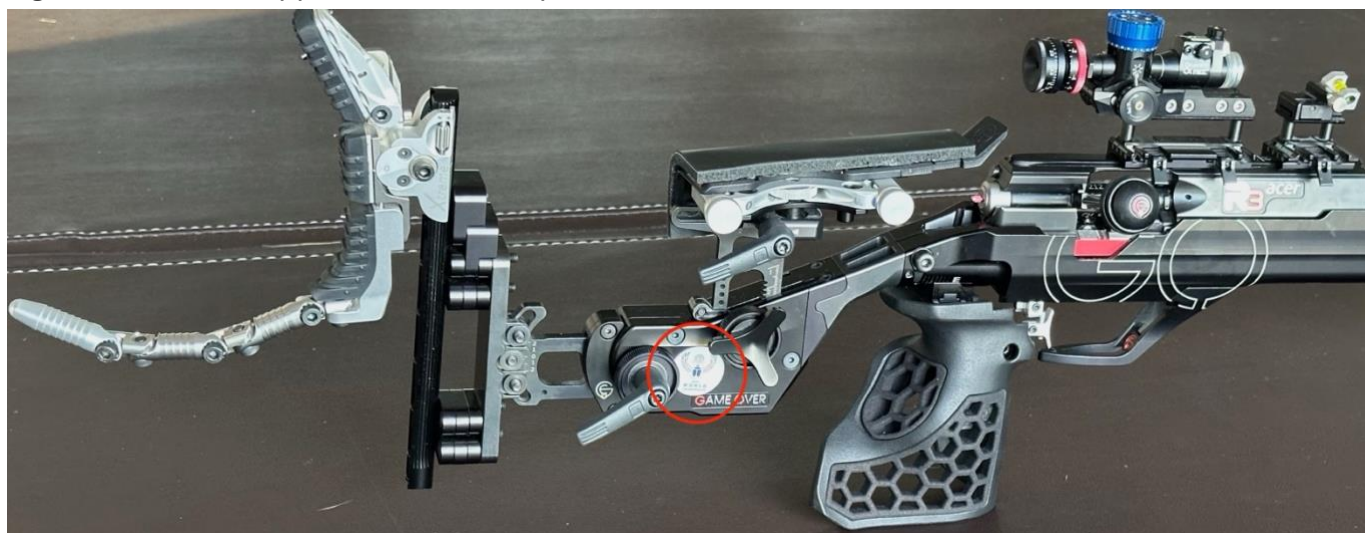
You are required to dress in full kit with your rifle fully assembled “ready to shoot”, there is a space available for you to get ready in advance of the checks.

You are issued with a pink form with carbon copies attached. It is your responsibility to visit each station (in any order) and each judge will sign off their “part” when everything is completed and checked there will be a final sign off and you're good to go...

Before leaving for Cairo we had our gear “proven” using the test equipment in NZ – this is critical... You must be confident of a pass and you must know the rules relevant to your discipline.

Jacket checking was as expected, thickness, stiffness, button overlap was all verified as expected. As a comment though, the button overlap was a very strong pull and they didn't seem to mind if your shoulders pulled together. The thickness should be easy to pass and the stiffness depends on your jacket but work on this and ensure your gear is flexible enough. None of us failed any of these checks... Jackets are normally tagged but with the imminent rule changes this was not required this time.


Rifle Checking was, at best, a cursory glance over your rifle and setup, they were obviously looking for particular criteria but I didn't see anyone take any actual measurements apart from the weight of the rifle. Perhaps if your setup was particularly different then they would measure something eg abnormal butthook length or something? I was called out for my foresight tunnel being “too long” but I asked which rule that was related to and after several judges scoured through the rule book they couldn't find anything ,so let me pass. (there is no rule for 50m rifle – only 300m and Air, I think they were just confused). Once your rifle has passed the various visual checks and the weight check it is signed off and an “approved sticker” is placed on the rifle




Egyptian Shooting Federation “Approved” sticker applied to the rifle – no sticker, no competition...

Accessory Checking – your sling, headwear, eyeshield, glove etc is all checked as well as the Rifle & Jacket. The experience here was definitely mixed... I had a very rudimentary check on my headwear/eyeshield with a ruler etc and was immediately signed off. Pippa on the other hand had a different person checking her gear and they rejected her eyeshield as “too wide” it should be no more than 30mm wide even though it was identical to mine. I gave her one of my other eyeshields I use outdoors to see flags better, it’s only about 15mm wide, this was rejected as being “to narrow” – which is quite surprising as there is no minimum measurement in the rulebook 🤔
 Anyway we made one on-the-spot that was 29mm wide and she got her pass...

It should be noted that a new ISSF Rulebook on equipment is imminent. We were invited to a workshop on the rule changes relating to clothing but they are as detailed in a separate ISSF document already circulated. The workshop was just to explain the reasoning as to why the changes are required.



Examination Of Firearms & Equipment



<i>Philippa Taylor</i>	<i>Philippa</i>		<i>NZL</i>	<i>1733</i>
Name	First Name	IDC-Code	Country	start / BIB No.

Firearms

Type	Serial No.	Manufacturer	Weight	Clothing & Accessories	Checked
<i>rifle</i>	<i>275144</i>	<i>Anschutz</i>	<i>6.566</i>	Jacket ✓	
				Trousers, Belt	
				Shoes	
				Gloves	✓
				Kneeling	
				Sling	✓
				Hat & Blinders	✓
				Additional Weights	
				Optical Sight – RT 10m	
				Marker Tape	

Duplicate remains with the shooter,
 It has to be shown on request

- *A50 m Pistol
- *B Rapid Fire Pistol
- *C 10 m Air Pistol
- *D 25m Pistol
- *E Shotgun
- *F 10m Running Target
- *G 50m Running Target

- *H 50m Rifle Men
- *I 50m Rifle Women
- *J 300m Rifle men
- *k 300m Rifle Women
- *L 300m Standard Rifle Men
- *M 10m Air Rifle

Examiner *[Signature]*

Location *Cairo*

Date *7/11/2015*

Shooter *[Signature]*

The signed completed pink slip

The Competition – the Men's competition was 8:50am call to the line, 9:00am sighting time, 9:15 start. The Women's competition was 10:20 call to the line, 10:30am sighting time, 10:45 start.

The actual competition goes off exactly as we have trained for:

- Mounds are assigned the day before for your Pre-Event Training (PET).
- The Pre-Event mound is your competition mound, so you get to practice 24 hours before the competition at the same time of day and in the same place...
- Turn up early & get your gear out of the armory and place against the back wall behind your designated mound.
- Get yourself setup in advance of the call to the line, but do not approach the mound until called to do so.
- When the call to the line is announced you may cross the line and setup on the firing point, you can get into position and you can dry-fire if you want.
- This is also the point at which the Range Officers, under the watchful eyes of the patrolling Judges, will ask you / your manager for your EC Pink Slip to make sure you have been through Equipment Control. They won't let you start without it – don't lose it...
- Sighting time starts – it feels very familiar ...
- The SIUS digital scoring start recording sighting shots as per training mode.
- Sighting time stops as expected.
- There is a one minute wait as the SIUS systems reset themselves to "Match Mode" automatically ... usually ! the RO's and the Judges check every single screen and monitor to ensure this has happened. The Prone competitions went off without a hitch however one of the 3P Women's Elimination matches had a 5 minute delay whilst one (of the 80) screens had to be restarted. I assume there is a permitted time to "fix" the offending screen before they would start anyway and the affected competitor is moved to a new location. Just wait patiently until you hear START...
- The Competition starts when all the RO's are happy ✓
- You start shooting – it still feels very familiar ...
 - o Usual rules apply – there should be no surprises.
 - o You cannot overload – but don't shoot more than 60 unless you're told to by an RO
 - o Crossfires are penalised, so watch out for those
 - o Keep calm – let your training do the work
 - o It still feels very familiar ...
 - o Watch the group centre stats and adjust...
 - o If you need to, just stop and watch the wind ->
 - o You have the full 50 minutes available
 - o Bang, last shot, it's all over...
 - o You can start breathing again...
- Chances are you won't be the last to finish (not even I was the last to finish in the Men's)
- You may leave the firing point with anything except the Rifle – do not attempt to move this until STOP has been called – you know the drill...
- STOP Firing is called at 50 minutes
- Remove your Rifle from the firing point (quickly!)
- You do not need to tidy up, they have a whole team sweeping brass etc...
- Pack-up fast as the next squad / competition will likely be waiting for you.
- It really does feel very familiar...





The End..



Unless you want to do some sightseeing and do Tours of Egypt ??

We extended our trip to take the opportunity to visit a few of the sights in Egypt, some of which are unforgettable. All of our Tours were booked in advance and we were provided with a knowledgeable guide and private transport – this is essential IMHO, Egypt is a strange country and as foreigners you really do stand out for attention from the locals...

