

Regional Tournaments



By Brad Glustoff

2006 Zone 7 Championship

Challenging targets, stunning beauty, and lots to do and see rewarded shotgunners making the pilgrimage to Alaska's Grouse Ridge.

The announcement that this year's Zone 7 Championship was going to be held July 13-16 at Grouse Ridge Shooting Grounds in Wasilla, Alaska, was met with mixed reactions. Harry Brunnhoelzl, owner of Grouse Ridge, knew he would have a hard time convincing shooters from the lower 48 states to make the trip just to shoot in one tournament. So he and the Alaska State Sporting Clays Association decided to hold the Alaska State Championship the week before the Zone 7 Championship. This gave competitors the option of shooting in two separate tournaments, with time in between to fish, sight see, or just explore the stunning surroundings. Located in the Mat-Su Valley one hour north of Anchorage, the area offered many opportunities to do just that.

Brunnhoelzl told me, "We started



HOA Albert Bogetti Jr. was hot in Alaska at the Zone 7 Championship.

planning this a year ago. We've cleared meadows and cut in paths, all in preparation for the Zone 7 Championship." It showed; everything was green, lush, and in top-notch condition.

The FITASC parcours had been cut into a remote area that had previously been inaccessible. Pegs with elevation changes as much as 75 feet highlighted the parcours. Nathan Pakish, who took FITASC HOA with 95x100, told me, "It was a beautiful course, and they utilized the amazing terrain well."

The main course is located on a ridge that bisects the Grouse Ridge property. The north-facing stations alternated between meadows surrounded by birch trees and valleys that lie beneath your feet, all with the imposing Tarketna Mountains in the distance. South-facing stations featured endless valleys with evergreen and spruce trees. In the distance could be seen the Chugach Mountains as well as Knik Glacier.

The preliminary used 14 stations on the main course. Albert Bogetti Jr. posted 93x100 to take HOA, with Pakish one bird behind for runner-up. The prelim was a nice warm-up and gave shooters a chance to get acclimated to the terrain and target presentations.

The three-day, 200-bird main event began on Friday with the red course. With only eight stations being shot each day, there was plenty of time to shoot FITASC, 5-Stand, or go fishing. I went fishing. That was the beauty of holding the Zone 7 in Alaska. At the end of day one, Bogetti was leading with 55, while Mike Wilgus and Pakish were one and two birds behind, respectively.

Saturday began under Alaska's famous "liquid sunshine," and it rained while the sun shone brightly. Today's blue course offered more challenging targets and more beautiful vistas. At day's end, Bogetti was still leading, with Wilgus and Pakish both one bird behind.

It all came down to Sunday and the green course located at the bottom of the ridge. Targets that were previously shot as outgoing were now tower shots. Birds that previously screamed down the mountain now came right at you.

Everyone agreed that this course was the most challenging of the three, and the scores reflected it. When the final tabulations were done, Bogetti had indeed held on to his lead, earning HOA with 183x200. Pakish had slipped to four birds behind to claim runner-up with 179.

If you missed this year's tournament, you have another chance to sample Grouse Ridge's challenging targets and stunning beauty. Next year's Alaska State Championship is scheduled for the first week in August, coincidentally when silver salmon are running in the Little Su River. For complete scores and more information on Grouse Ridge, contact (907) 376-2473; www.grouseridge.com.

2006 Zone 7 Championship Grouse Ridge Shooting Grounds Wasilla, Alaska July 13-16, 2006

Main Event

HOA	Albert Bogetti Jr.	183
RU	Nathan Pakish	179
M1	Justin Fox	175
M2	Mike Wilgus	171
M3	Todd Pulis	164
AA1	Rick Moore	158
AA2	Ron Shults	157
AA3	Aaron Howard	155
A1	Lee Welch	146
A2	Douglas Smith	145
A3	Rod Maeda	141
B1	Ronald Lindsey	145
B2	Sarah Hughes	142
B3	Kevin Driggers	141
C1	Julian Huerta	144
C2	William Nielsen	131
C3	Robert Rooks	128
D1	Lenny Poore	129
D2	Randal Allender	123
D3	Neil Moss	122
E1	Jay Quakenbush	121
E2	Brad Glustoff	114
E3	Frank Medicott	113
SJCH	Justin Fox	175
JRCH	Todd Pulis	164
LYCH	Sarah Hughes	142
VTCH	Ron Shults	157
SVCH	Curt Cowgill	148