



2021 Browning-Briley

R. K. Sawyer

With two of the biggest names in the shooting industry— Browning and Briley – the title alone commanded attention. Then there was the venue host – Greater Houston Sports Club (GHSC). Together, it was a sure bet they’d create an event no serious shooter would want to miss. The 469 shooters who registered for the *2021 Browning-Briley* (B&B) seemed to agree! Held April 7 through 10, the four-day tournament was, once again, one for the record books.

The celebrated contest, now in its 22nd year, has always attracted the nation’s top shooting talent. Shooters who have followed the event remember when the *B&B*’s first years were dominated by Bobby Fowler and Linda Joy, then watched the rise of Anthony Matarese and Desirae Edmunds. Next came the chart-busting reign of Annabelle Ayres, who captured both the HOA and Lady Champion gold in 2017. Most recently, Cory Cruse and Haylyn Hanks placed at the top of the game. That was in 2019, and after a 2020 hiatus, the *2021 Browning-Briley* leaders were going to be anyone’s guess.

The *2021 B&B* offered payouts and trophies from HOA through Master E and Concurrent, with several Option offerings to spice up the purse. It also paid – literally – for shooters to select their shotgunning gear wisely. For the champ who shouldered their brand, Browning added \$5,000 to the \$2,000 HOA pot, and sub-gauge winners using those famous Briley choke tubes were rewarded with bonus gift cards. This year their gift certificates were particularly prized, as Briley outdid themselves – again – with the 2020 release of the 360-Click quick-change choke system. Three years in the making, it has to be the greatest technological leap at the end of the barrel since their introduction of the Helix target chokes, almost a decade ago now.



The first shooters took to the field Wednesday morning for the start of the FITASC – a little different this year with a two-rotation, 150-target format – the 5-Stand Main, White Flyer Prelim, Sub-gauge Sporting, Legacy Cup Super Sporting, and the Snooker fun event. Fingers were crossed that the weather, always a gamble during a Texas spring, would cooperate throughout the four-day schedule. The Wednesday opener was warm, but a gusty south wind provided for some tricky breakpoints, particularly for the already-a-little-testy sub-gauge course. Thursday was picture perfect, warm and sunny with light breezes. On Friday, day one of the Main, winds were again a challenge, but the weather held for the fourth and final day, the winds dropping and the temperature pleasant.

At the close of shooting business on Saturday, GHSC Junior shooter Dylan Anderson's incredible second-day Main Event performance and 97 score earned him the HOA spot with a 186 total, and a comfortable three target lead over RU Blake Bajjali (183). One target behind was third-place winner Trent Allen. In the Ladies, Champion Annabelle Ayres's 181 stole the show, her nearest competitors RU Chelsea Bajjali (152) and Dawn fields (151).

FITASC Main honors went to CH Paul Montealegre (86), RU Will Perry (84), and Annabelle Ayres (82). CH Chad Johnston (268) earned the Sub-gauge winner laurels, followed by RU Kirk Cleere (264), and R.J. Mehnert (261). In the Ladies, Dawn Fields crushed 231 targets, her performance 36 targets in front of RU Courtney Noppe. The Legacy Cup Super Sporting Event produced some remarkable scores, with Justin Napier's 98 taking the top spot. Bobby Fowler was next (96), followed by Paul Montealegre (93).



The 5-Stand Main and White Flyer Prelim were both nail-biting competitions. Only a single target separated the top 5-Stand shooters, with the HOA earned by Paul Montealegre (142), the RU going to Justin Napier (141), and Ronnie Lack in third (140). Yim Szeto took the Ladies Champion title, her 113 total five targets ahead of RU Leslie Goff. The White Flyer Prelim was an even tighter race. When the last target was pulled, Bobby Fowler's 95 bested Michael Maskell by only a single target, the second-place tie between Michael and Randy Barrington decided in the shoot-offs. Annabelle Ayres with a 90 took the Lady's top spot.

Instead of the customary Saturday to Sunday schedule, the *B&B* Main Event was run on Friday and Saturday. The change, according to GHSC COO Kevin Dougherty, "was well received. And because the award presentations were part of the evening banquet and Browning gun giveaway drawings, we had a great turnout. It was a heck of celebration as we called out the names for the winners in every class." The course remained open on Sunday, dubbed "Revenge Day," for contestants to practice on targets they might have missed.

GHSC is grateful to have been chosen to host the *2021 B&B*, the third time now for this prestigious event. We wish to extend our thanks to all who contributed to its success – the contestants, referees, and both returning and new sponsors. In addition to event sponsors Browning and Briley, Lincoln and Long Range were back for the 5-Stand, White Flyer was again patron of the Prelim, and our friends at Legacy Ford continued the tradition of hosting the popular Legacy Cup Super Sporting. We welcome new FITASC sponsors Pachuca Sporting Clays and Escopeta Shooting Academy!

GHSC anticipates another serious, yet fun-filled *Browning-Briley* in 2022. Follow the event schedule at www.greaterhoustonclub.com and be ready to register at www.winscoreonline.com!