

These Czech shooters were close on our heels all the way - all credit to them.



"There was my pellet, all on its own and I couldn't believe I'd missed it, and by that much"

because we needed every point to count, plus no one else had missed it. There was my pellet, all on its own and I couldn't believe I'd missed it, and by that much. Lucky, of course, was on hand to laugh in my face after he'd taken the shot standing, and that made me feel better.

MIXED FORTUNES

So, on we went. Simon Vant - I mean Rant - had scored a clear, the day before; 60 out of 60 -

amazing stuff! Could he do the same the next day? Had the night before, chasing a particularly tricky Blastoise (I didn't know what he was talking about either, but it turned out to be a Pokemon character), got into his head? Well, yes, that and many other excuses. Poor old thing was having a nightmare.

Gav Jones looked happy with himself. We had a quick chat, he told me what he had missed - and it wasn't much. He was on form,

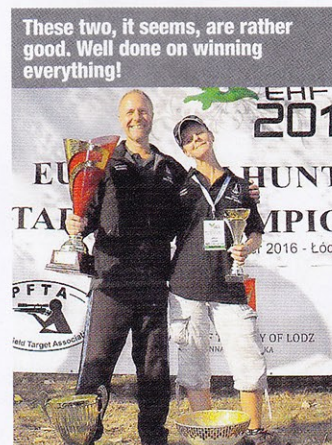
whilst Mr Rant was having a 'mare. What about Dop (Richard Woods) and Mad Jen? How would they be doing on this course? I was praying that they were having a good one. We only had a small lead and every single point was so important.

WATCHFUL EYE

One of the top Czech guys was in the group behind me and I kept a watchful eye on him. Sadly, he was not missing anything. I

overheard him telling one of his buddies that someone had missed the 'very, close kneeler, and look by how much they'd missed!'

Anyway, I digress. I ran into Jen and she didn't look too happy, to say the least. I asked how she was doing, and after 10 mins of why she missed the target, it turned out she was only one down! I love Jen - she's the only lady shooter who can look so unhappy about shooting that well. Jenny Moan (Stone) was in great shape, and



Everyone was a winner at the European championships!



HFT MASTERS

It's day two of the HFT Masters European championships in Poland - and the heat is on

We left off last month with a six-point lead in the European championships. Was that to be enough? Was there enough beer in Lodz after day one? The right thing to do would have been to go and shower, have a nice meal and an early night, but trouble seems to find me - and not just me, but the whole England team. Luckily, there was enough beer to go around - just, so that night we had a debrief, and it was short to say the least.

"Do the same as you did today, but better!" I am quite the motivational speaker, it seems.

The England team responded with a resounding, "Shut up, it's your round."

As I said, I run a tight ship.

DAY TWO

Safety brief done - in English and Polish - out on to the course we went. Did I mention that it was hotter than the sun there? If I didn't, it was hotter than the sun, despite a light breeze. This course

was far more suitable for shooting in 35 degrees, let me tell you, not

so sandy and with a light breeze. I pitied the poor people who shot the sandy course because that was even hotter, and carrying a gun around all day in that heat can really make things difficult.

The whistle blew to tell us to start shooting, and Lucky and I got

to shoot with a lovely chap and his son, who was the translator for the day - the father did the shooting, and very well, I must say. Lucky and I needed to learn a few words in Polish, and the son was only to happy to help, but none of the words we learned can be printed, but if you're going to Poland, drop me a line. I might be more helpful than you'd think.

THE COURSE

The course looked easy, but clearly wasn't. It was longer than on the first day, in woodland, and there was a slight breeze. Well, it was easy for some, but we'll come on to that later on. I knew that I had to keep my head and not make any silly mistakes like I had on the day before, so drinking plenty of water and taking the time to concentrate was what it was all about; nail the standers, and don't rush the kneelers.

Luckily for me, I don't take my own advice and rushed the first kneeler. It was like a dustbin lid. I got every single aim point in it, and still, instead of taking the shot slowly because it was so close, I pulled the trigger harder than I ever had before and missed it by a mile. Now, this was bad, very bad, »

