

## Me and the R.A.T.



Or should that be the R.A.T. and I? No, this has nothing to do with mice, rats or other rodents. R.A.T in this case stands for ‘Roma Archery Trophy’.

In spite of just having started a new job, I found myself having to take a few days leave before the year end. So what to do?

Well the Roma Archer Trophy was on. With a quick look around the web, I discovered that the entry fee was only €100 and airline tickets were £45 and £55. Wow I can have a weekend in Rome and some archery for a few hundred pounds.

So I found myself on a plane from Gatwich to Rome. There was transport organized from the airport to the hotel. I was very late in booking the airport transport. The archery transportation people at the airport did not know

anything about me. But it is Italy, everyone is cool and I still got a free minibus ride to the hotel.

Next morning I was up bright and early so I could catch the bus to the practise session. On the bus, I teamed up with Stephen Olah. Steve came all the way from Australia especially to do this tournament. It is one of the few World Archery events to have a longbow category. Longbow in this context means AFB in English terms. Steve reckoned that on a good day, he could shoot 500 with a wooden bow and wooden arrows on a 40cm face at 18 Metres. Watching him in practise, I can well believe it. He was scoring better than me. :-)



*The hall is a bit bigger than the JMS*

The next day was the competition proper.

I was booked to do the red session, ie. the second session. I went along to the first session just to have a look. Crispin Duenas was shooting and shooting very well. The Ellisons were there, Toja and Brady. I didn't pay much attention to Brady, but Toja was shooting lots of inside out 10s.

The second session soon rolled around. Strange as it may seem there were some people there whom I know. Former target partners like Julia Larkins and Phil Hinckley were there. Anthony Wood was shooting a few targets down the hall from me. Phil was on the target beside me – just like at Hillingdon. But unlike at Hillingdon, Michele Frangilli was also on Phil's target. Frangilli is a living legend in the archery world. He has lots of medals, Olympic and WA. He still holds the indoor 25 Metre world record.

Phil may have been out of his class. :-)

On my target, there were just 3 of us. My partners were Paolo Ralli and Francesco Di Giuseppe.



*Partners in crime*

Paolo was very good, he shot 582 for the WA18. He did say that Mauro Nespoli is a club mate of his. So maybe 580+ is what you shoot when practising with Mr. Nespoli.

I shot well. I put 20 points on my personal best. I didn't shoot enough to make the cut but I was happy with how I did. You can find all the results on [ianseo](https://www.ianseo.com).

The next day (Sunday) was finals day. There was a secondary tournament in the morning but I slept in and was too late for the bus to the venue.

But I did go to watch the shoot-offs and the finals. I was torn between trying to watch Julia Larkins and Sarah Priels on one hand and then trying to keep an eye on the Korean girls on the other. Some of you may have noticed that I am a big fan of the Korean girls. :-).

Eventually we came to the finals. They are on [youtube](#). In my opinion the best head to head matches were the longbow finals. It was amazing watching people, both men and women shooting tens with wooden arrows from an AFB. A Russian, Mikhail Poddevalin won the men's event. My new found Aussie friend, Stephen Olah got as far as the ¼ finals but was beaten in a one arrow shoot-off by the eventual winner.

The ladies longbow was won by Iuana Bassi of Italy. The score was 6-0, but all the ends were very close. It certainly wasn't the whitewash the score implies.



*More Bruce Forsyth than Brady Ellison*

There was a hundred bosses in the hall, each boss with 4 archers and there were 3 sessions. So my maths make that space for 1200 archers. The tournament organisers were trying to get as many 'ordinary' archers to attend as possible. There were lots of longbows (AFBs) and barebows, so all are welcome. And even with this, there were still spaces available so if you fancy a trip to Rome next year ...

All in all it was a good weekend. I did not have time to see much of Rome. In fact I saw none of Rome. But I guess that means I can go back next year and this time I may take some time to check out the 'Eternal City'.