

International Gallery Rifle Federation



Individual World Champions – What it takes!

Have you got what it takes to become a IGRF Individual World Champion?

As with any world champion title, it takes capability, consistency and commitment, achieved through determination, coaching, excellent equipment, practice, travel, funding, support and a sprinkling of luck. There is no doubt that you need to really want to do this, but don't despair. In countries that are members of the IGRF, there are local Clubs, National Teams and International Teams all looking to provide the support and encouragement you need. The purpose of this article is to explain what's involved and to introduce you to the opportunity and the potential.

Background

The IGRF introduced Individual World Champions in 2017 at the Irish IGRF International World Championships and they have since been held in South Africa 2019 and Great Britain 2022. This built on the previous Team World Championships that had been running since 2010 and added a new dimension to Gallery Rifle. The Individual World Championships are open to everybody that enters the relevant individual open events at the IGRF World Championships.

The IGRF World Championships are held every two years, although there was a year's delay in 2021 resulting from COVID. They cycle around the IGRF members that have the appropriate facilities, which currently includes Great Britain, Germany, Ireland and South Africa. In 2022, the IGRF World Championships were held at the Phoenix International in Great Britain. The next World Championships will be in 2024 in Germany and then 2026 in Ireland.

The Competition

The GR Individual World Championship competition is an aggregate made up of the 1500, 50m Precision, Timed & Precision 1 and Multi-target events and is shot in at least Small Bore and Centre Fire. It may also be offered in Centre Fire Classic and Centre Fire Open according to local conditions. This spread of events was chosen to demonstrate capability across a variety of GR skill sets including precision, rapid fire, positional and distance changes, shooting under time pressure, different target formats and stamina. You don't have to win every event, as it's the aggregate that counts, but a World Champion will lose relatively few points off the maximum available.

Event	Maximum Score
1500	1500.150
50m Precision	300.30
Timed & Precision 1	300.30
Multi-target	120.24
Aggregate:	2220.234

The History

There have been three World Championships to date with individual World Champion competitions.

- 2017 – Ireland
- 2019 – South Africa
- 2022 – Great Britain

1. 2017 IGRF World Championships - Ireland

The first IGRF Individual World Champions were Ray Holohan (Small Bore) and Jeff Kehoe (Centre Fire), both from Ireland. This looks like a home nation slam dunk, but was far from it.

The Small Bore results:

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	Ray Holohan	Ireland	2185.144	286.010	300.018	114.011	1485.105
2	Flippie van Tonder	South Africa	2185.138	286.006	298.010	112.013	1489.109
3	Jeff Kehoe	Ireland	2176.136	285.008	298.023	112.010	1481.095

Ray Holohan was victorious, but Flippie van Tonder was a very close challenger. They both scored 2185 points, but Ray had just 6 more X's! When you're looking at a total point availability of 2220 and 234 X's, that was incredibly close. The big surprise in these results is the low scores of the top three competitors in Multi-Target. It is possible that the conditions on the range impacted the scores, but it is certainly one to practice.

The Centre Fire Results:

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	Jeff Kehoe	Ireland	2193.166	281.007	300.027	120.022	1492.110
2	Gwyn Roberts	Great Britain	2189.173	277.007	300.028	119.016	1493.122
3	Phil Wood	Great Britain	2186.153	274.007	300.023	118.015	1494.108

In the Centre Fire, the challengers to Jeff Kehoe both came from Great Britain and it was again very close. It didn't go down to X's, but there was only 7 points separating first and third and Jeff's 50m Precision made the difference. 50m Precision is not a popular discipline, but it is well worth building it into your competition schedule if you aspire to be an IGRF Individual World Champion.

2. 2019 IGRF World Championships – South Africa

There were individual World Championship competitions not just for GRSB and GRFC, but also GRFC Classic and GRFC Open. This was a very challenging event, with soaring temperatures and logistic issues with ammunition. This didn't put people off though and it was still closely contested.

The Small Bore results (43 entrants):

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	Nico Roets	South Africa	2180.115	284.007	300.016	115.012	1481.080
2	Flippie van Tonder	South Africa	2176.133	284.006	300.018	114.013	1478.096
3	Deon de Villiers	South Africa	2172.107	286.006	298.019	112.005	1476.077

This truly was a slam dunk for the hosts South Africa, with Nico Roets taking the title. However, Dan O'Flaherty and Gary Bowden were very close behind with 2169.124 and 2169.121 respectively. The scores were a little down on those in Ireland, but given the conditions, they were remarkable.

The Centre Fire Results (35 entrants):

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	David McCarthy	Australia	2183.158	276.005	300.023	114.014	1493.116
2	Heinrich Straus	South Africa	2182.147	273.005	300.021	115.010	1494.111
3	Jeff Kehoe	Ireland	2180.158	276.001	300.027	113.018	1491.112

This was a closely fought competition, with David McCarthy from Australia just beating Heinrich Straus and Jeff Kehoe. However, Daniel Blagojevic and Hercules Louw were snapping at their heels, but just needed another 2 and 4 points respectively. The Centre Fire scores were also a little down on those in Ireland, but given the heat, that was not surprising.

The Centre Fire Classic Results (8 entrants):

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	David McCarthy	Australia	2170.133	282.004	299.022	106.005	1483.102
2	Jeff Kehoe	Ireland	2138.102	266.004	298.020	114.011	1460.067
3	Meik Waldvogt	Germany	2112.098	251.003	299.019	108.011	1454.065

This was the first time that an individual World Championship had been held for Centre Fire Classic (Iron sights) and there were some impressive scores. David McCarthy was again victorious with Jeff Kehoe hot far behind. Meik Waldvogt pipped Rob Wheeler to third by just 2 points, despite having 22 less X's! I expect Rob would be practising his 50m Precision for the next time around.

The Centre Fire Open Results (5 entrants):

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	Nico Roets	South Africa	2168.145	258.004	300.020	118.018	1492.103
2	Poena Meintjes	South Africa	2086.090	221.000	297.008	113.008	1455.074
3	Don Robinson	Australia	2032.069	234.002	298.012	104.007	1396.048

This was also a first time that an individual World Championship had been held for Centre Fire Open. Given the nature of this class, the scores were much more varied and Nico Roets showed off his prowess with a win by a significant margin.

3. 2022 IGRF World Championships – Great Britain

The most recent IGRF World Championships were held in Great Britain as part of the Phoenix Meeting in May 2022. This had been delayed by a year as a result of the pandemic and was particularly challenging for overseas competitors bringing their firearms and ammunition. The fact that international travel had been suspended meant that you had to be determined in order to meet all the requirements and get the appropriate paperwork completed. I'm pleased to say that Germany, Ireland and South Africa all fielded teams. Unfortunately, this was not possible for Australia and we're looking forward to welcoming them to the 2024 IGRF World Championships in Germany.

The Individual World Championships follow the standard aggregate of events, but each host nation adds a little of their own flavour. Great Britain offered GRSB, GRFB and GRFB Classic, with additional prizes for top lady finisher and top Under 25 finisher. The idea behind this is to encourage more lady and young shooters into the sport.

The Small Bore results (49 entrants):

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	Jake Mossom	Great Britain	2192.130	290.004	298.013	115.013	1489.100
2	Keith Kilvington	Great Britain	2178.133	288.007	298.021	115.015	1477.090
3	Gary Bowden	Great Britain	2171.121	280.004	299.014	115.013	1477.090

This was an incredible performance by Jake Mossom, smashing previous GRSB World Championship scores and romping to victory with a clear 14 point lead. Having said that Keith Kilvington was unlucky not to score more points, having finished second, but with the most X's. This was a clean sweep for Great Britain. The top lady finisher was Anna-Marie van Tonder (South Africa) with 2140.098 and the top Under 25 was Robert L Tonner (Great Britain) with 2160.114. A great performance by both.

The Centre Fire Results (38 entrants):

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	Jonny Cormie	Great Britain	2195.159	284.011	300.021	119.017	1492.110
2	Daniel Blagojevic	Germany	2188.162	276.005	300.025	118.018	1494.114
3	John Robinson	Great Britain	2188.154	272.000	300.023	118.014	1498.117

Jonny Cormie was victorious with the highest ever score in an IGRF Individual World Championship competition. A great performance. There was a real tussle for second place with Daniel Blagojevic beating John Robinson on X count.

The top lady finisher was Anna-Marie van Tonder with 2161.108, but there were no Under 25 entrants.

The Centre Fire Classic Results (9 entrants):

Pos.	Name	Country	Score	50mP	T&P1	MT	1500
1	Rob Wheeler	Great Britain	2171.141	267.004	300.020	111.10	1493.107
2	Keith Kilvington	Great Britain	2158.129	263.003	299.023	118.016	1478.087
3	John Robinson	Great Britain	2153.117	261.002	300.022	118.009	1474.084

The Classic event didn't have so many entrants, but it was still strongly contested with a stunning victory by Rob Wheeler. Shooting with iron sights across these disciplines and at these distances is quite something and these were great scores from all 3 shooters.

Looking Forward - So how about you?

So, if you aspire to become a Gallery Rifle World Champion, you now know the events and the scores you need to be achieving. However, if you're not shooting those consistently, don't let that put you off entering. If you have a really good shoot on the day, then that's what counts and you never know.

When and Where - 2022 was at the Phoenix in the UK and the venue now moves to:

- 2024 – Germany (usually November in Leitmar)
- 2026 – Ireland (usually July)

Preparation - In the meantime, it's a couple of years before the next IGRF World Championships, so there's lots of preparation time. Practice with your local club, get competition practice where you can and muscle memory exercises are free! Seek out good shooters to practice with and coaching where possible.

Make Contact - Register your interest with your International Team and, if you're in Great Britain, register with the appropriate National Team (England, Scotland, Wales).

Logistics - If the World Championships are being held outside your home country, then you will need to understand the firearms and ammunition carriage and licensing laws. Seek the advice of your International Team or other fellow shooters who've made the journey recently and be prepared. These processes can take a long time and need to be rigorously followed.

The most important thing is to continue enjoying the sport and participating where you can. Good luck!