

TOP SHOTS 2017

The thumb-screws have been tightened, honey traps triggered and dark conversations held in dingy bars. Finally, after months of covert intel operations, we can announce those who will take the purple in 2017 and be crowned *The Field's* Top Shots. To those who are successful, we offer our congratulations. To the lesser stellar, we hope to buy you a warmish instant coffee at your local clay shoot.

COMPILED BY JONATHAN YOUNG

ALL-ROUNDERS

JAMES ADEANE "Suffolk-based harvester of everything."

NICK BAIKIE "The maestro on grouse and equally deadly on the longtails. People remark when he misses." Another admirer adds, "He shot some grouse last year up in the Highlands that had to be seen to be believed - simply clinical."



PHIL BURTT Belvoir's estate manager remains "charming and deadly".

ROBBIE BUXTON "A natural shot who delights in the sport, be it pigeon, grouse, teal or January ditch parrots. Also fits effortlessly into the 'Party Animal' category."



GERWYN JONES

"Passionate about grouse but also a high-pheasant fiend. Otherwise known as Ballistic Bob due to his obsession with finding the best cartridge."

SIR EDWARD DASHWOOD "Loves anything wild and still up there with the best."

ALEJANDRO SANTO DOMINGO "Elegant, accurate, generous, charming and lethal. Kind of makes you sick."

RICHARD FAULDS The gold medal Olympian is still a stellar performer but isn't too proud to fill the clay traps at his shooting ground.

ROB FENWICK "The MD of EJ Churchill is a conundrum. On the one hand he's always working; on the other, he's always shooting. We suspect a doppelganger."

DAVID FLUX "Probably the best all-rounder I have ever seen and someone who does plenty of it yet never has an off day. Has the rare ability to switch successfully from 28-bores one day on grouse to 12s for the next on high pheasants yet is always incredibly modest."

ANDREW HUDSON "Shoots grouse and low-ground game beautifully. Also a Master of Foxhounds. Accurate, and modest."

DUNCAN LAWTON "The most understated man in shooting, just quietly gets on with it."

OLIVER MOORE "Shoots with a 28-bore in the most majestic form; smooth, unhurried and deadly accurate to boot. He is the most gentlemanly and considerate person on the shooting field bar none. Also good with grouse and pigeon. Charming personality, understated and someone you'd want in a shooting party."

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND "Still stunning to watch."

NICK PETO "He makes it all look so easy and effortless as the greats invariably do with the highest and most challenging birds - be they grouse, partridges or pheasants."

STEVE SMITH "A true sporting gentleman with impeccable manners and matching ability with a gun."

LORD FRANCIS STAFFORD If you wanted to wager a month's salary on someone connecting with a bird - any gamebird - the 15th Baron Stafford would be an odds-on favourite.

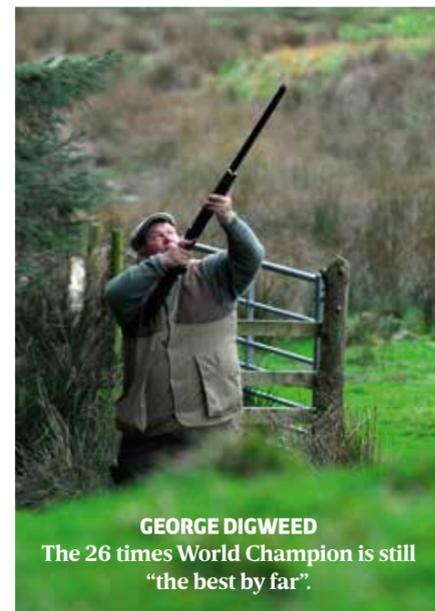
TOM VAN STRAUBENZEE "A lovely shot and still in the traditional way with a side-by-side. I reckon he is one of the best shots with a side-by-side I have ever seen."

SIMON WARD "Anyone who could shoot as consistently as him would be very happy."

GEORGE WINN-DARLEY "Walking up woodcock in Wales, grouse in Yorkshire or hedging and ditching at home at Aldby, George is the ultimate sportsman. He goes nowhere without his adored labradors, who also share his bed. Probably loves a day's ridding or ferreting as much as a day's pheasant shooting."

MARK WINSER "Top game-shot and field instructor who spends his summer months competing and coaching on the world competitive shooting stage - and does both at the highest level." Walks out with Miss Rachel Carrie.

NICK ZOLL "A fiend on all game, he's the man you need to create a bag on a species day."



GEORGE DIGWEED
The 26 times World Champion is still "the best by far".



JOHNNY GOODHART

GROUSE

DUKE OF BEDFORD "Quick reactions, very effective and always taking great and genuine pleasure in seeing his neighbours shoot well."

VISCOUNT BOYNE "Understated, modest and unflappable, he excels at grouse, particularly walked-up on his moor, Baysdale."

JEREMY CLAYTON "Always seems to shoot more than anybody else."

FRANCIS FRANCO "In a different league to most of those with a grouse reputation. He still misses a few but the speed of the guy is amazing and with his loader sat in front of



DOMINIC HOLLAMBY

him, Spanish style, he takes some beating and builds a bag from nothing."

JONATHAN GOODHART The MD of CCI International quietly bops away with his Aya side-by-sides and fills the bag. Maximises



JONATHAN KENNEDY

"The fact that he is so nice and such a lovely shot is really annoying," commented one seasoned campaigner.

PHEASANT

JON BALL "A consistent performer regardless of location or conditions."

ANGUS BARNES "The owner of the Loyton shoots portfolio can show his clients how it's done. High pheasants are his speciality and he seldom misses even after a late party."

PHIL BLAKEWAY "Former Gloucester rugby player who toured with the British Lions, he is a quietly spoken, smiling, lethal shot."

PETER BROWN "A whizz on tall birds with his pair of Kemens (and pretty sharp on the grouse, too). Sports a brown bowler hat unless it's particularly wet, when he sports a yellow southwester."

JAMES BUTLER "When not hosting days on his own shoot, his extraordinary hand-to-eye coordination means 'Foz' is always mentioned in

dispatches when it comes to high birds."

RICHARD CARING "Well dressed, the most amazing host and a top shot on high birds using his titanium guns."

SIMON FORD "As good a high-pheasant shot as I've seen. He does miss - but not much." His 4WD transforms into a mobile champagne bar.

CHARLES FUSSELL "Consistent high-bird shot, which is truly remarkable given how long he stays up the night before if there's a sniff of a party."

HENRY GRESWELL
JULIAN HUNNABLE
PATRICK JAMES "Charms the ladies and the birds from the sky with equal panache."

ALLAN JENKINSON "A lovely, consistent shot at high pheasants but tries to pass the limelight onto others. I saw him shoot 14 birds on the trot with ease and all were right up there."

BILL JOYCE

DAVE KEMPLEY "Can still hold it with anyone in the country on the really high stuff. Shot some crackers at Brigands and Sweet Lamb this year. Modest and always having a laugh."

JONO MILLS "Annoyingly good despite spending less days in



DAVE CARRIE

"Well tooled up with big bombs and long barrels. If you want to see how big artillery brings down the highest birds, he is the man to watch."

his chances wherever he is on the moor but is never greedy.

JEREMY HERRMANN "Deserves the nomination both for volume and enthusiasm. He can only be described as 'deadly'; last season I witnessed him shoot all five grouse in a covey with five shots."

DOMINIC HOLLAMBY "London-based banker, enthusiastic and deadly; can hold forth on particle physics while taking two out front and two out back."

RUPERT KNAUF "Softly spoken German Anglophile who has quietly become one of the best grouse shots of his generation."

LORD JAMES PERCY "I loaded for him on the grouse sequence at The Game Fair and he has such a smooth style and deadly aim," cooed one female admirer.

VISCOUNT ROTHERMERE "Frequently goes head to head with Jeremy Herrmann, which is a bit like battle of the Titans," said our source. Though we think he meant Titans.

REUBEN STRAKER "Still shows the younger generation of grouse shots how it should be done."

MICKY TYLER "The Cornish killer shoots with horrendous-looking over-and-unders that really ought not to be allowed in a grouse butt. Lord Ripon would be spinning. But Micky seldom misses."

the field. The jury is still out on his latest gundog - a whippet."

DAVID MORRIS "A rare animal: a high-bird specialist who uses side-by sides."

NIGEL MUSTILL
DAN REYNOLDS "Sees the best shots in action on the Exmoor shoots and obviously learns a thing or two as he's a master of the tall pheasant."

JACK SADLER Prefers to be working his dog but when he is in the line it doesn't matter the direction, speed or height of the bird - he's on it. Got the shot of the day on a shoot in the middle of the season on some stratospheric pheasants.

ALAN SMITH
JOHN WARD "A genius shot and a great coach."

KEVIN WISSETT-WARNER "Has shot out of his skin all season with his Big Bertha. Has a penchant for pigeon and shoots some outrageous ones on game days."



TOM PAYNE

**HEDGEROW-MOOCHERS/
BAG FILLERS**

RICKY MOLONEY

“Deadly when kicking up a hedgerow, especially when he needs a retrieve for one of his dogs.”

JOHN PLUMPTRE

“Adores wildfowling and is extremely knowledgeable but is as happy shooting vermin as he is driven grouse.”

FRANK SPEIR

“He’s not called ‘Ferret’ for nothing...”



WILL GARFIT

PIGEON

ANDY CROW “Without doubt the pigeon commander.”

WILL GARFIT “No pigeon in Norfolk is safe.”

RUPERT GODFREY “Always at it!”

JEFF HOLLIS “Kent boy who excels in the hide.”

IAN PARKIN “Just quietly goes about his business.”

TOM PAYNE “Local birds enjoyed a brief respite while he was in New Zealand but he’s now back in action.”

ANTHONY POOLMAN “Berkshire-based pigeon addict who shot nearly 10,000 last year. He only shot competitive clays once, years ago, and ended up beating an Olympic gold medallist in the final to win a L200 truck.”

PETER SCHWERDT “He won’t hesitate to tell you how good he is. But, unfortunately, he is.”

DAN TESTER “All the gear but has some idea.”

PHILLIP THORROLD “The multiple clay-pigeon champion is as deadly on the feathered ones as he is on their chalk-and-pitch counterparts.”

PARTY ANIMALS

ISOBEL BARNES Sister of Angus, of Sporting at Loyton. “Never try and out-party Isobel. It will end in tears.”

PAUL CADDICK No-one loves a party more.

JAMES CAMPBELL-GRAY “Always up for it.”

PAUL CARLBOM “Livens up any party with his mad stories of latest escapades and his diamanté-studded barrels; always the last to go to bed.”

NICK FORTESQUE “Can party better than most, even at 60. Even more annoying, will be the first up the next day and as bright as a button.”

PAUL GILLETT “Must be a great party animal as every time I have shot with him and stayed the evening I can’t remember anything the next day.”

NEIL KENNEDY “Hilarious raconteur – no party is complete without him.”

CARL POINTON “Always on fine form and a brilliant host.”

CLAIRE SADLER AND VICTORIA KNOWLES-LACKS “The Shotgun & Chelsea Bun Club

ladies always know how to have a good time.”

IVAN SHENKMAN “Probably the loudest person on the field, in terms of both clothing and personality.”

ROBERT SMITH “With a loud and infectious laugh, he’s a good man to invite if you have a quiet and serious team.”

ANDY WHITMORE “Loves a party, especially if it’s free.”

“Every time I have shot with him and stayed I can’t remember anything the next day”



CLAIRE ZAMBUNI

SUNA YUN-FARBROUGH “Bright, fun and sparky – the best guest and loader.”
CLAIRE ZAMBUNI AND IAN HARFORD “Both have been responsible for giving fellow guests mortal hangovers.”



RACHEL CARRIE



THE COUNTESS OF LUCAN



SERENA WILLIAMS

LADY SHOTS

SONIA BRIAN “Now using a 12-bore to deadly effect, pulling down the very best at Brigands and Drumlanrig this year.”

RACHEL CARRIE “Shoots game beautifully with a Krieghoff



VANESSA BLACKMORE “Lawyer now taking the shooting world by storm. Future PM.”

K80; keeps a ratting terrier and campaigns hard for hunters’ rights. Respect.”

HANNAH GIBSON “The 24-year-old British Open Sporting Champion lives for shooting and it shows when she’s in action with her Krieghoff Parcours.”

CHERYL HALL “The multi-clay-shooting World Champion is the finest lady shot in the country – full stop.”

NICOLA HERON Recently elected National Director of the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association, “Nicola is as proficient on game as she is on clays.”

CRISTINA LOPEZ “Beauty, top shot and owner of Madrid gun shop.”

YEN LLOYD “She seems incapable of missing.”

THE COUNTESS OF LUCAN “Fie is a fine example of how women



PIPPA MIDDLETON “Been shooting for three years now and handles partridge days with ease, her husband’s black cocker by her side.”

can multi-task: manages to yell encouragement to her guests while somehow pulling down the tallest birds at Spott estate.”

LADY MELISSA PERCY “A fabulous shot on driven grouse,” is the verdict of a Yorkshire headkeeper.

SALLY PRENDERGAST “Not fazed by spectacularly high pheasants, practises out of season and takes it very seriously, though always smiling. Was taught by David Olive and the tuition continues under her farmer husband, Chris, a highly proficient shot.”

ANNE SCHREIBER “Very elegant shot, wonderful hostess and extremely accurate. On sunnier days she dons her leather midi skirt, the better to show off her enviable pins.”

NICKY WAKEFORD “Former England Olympic skeet team member, now coaching, and deadly on game.”

SERENA WILLIAMS “Passionate hunting goddess. Asks no quarter and takes no prisoners. You have been warned. Yet all done with elegance and style.”

SPORTING COUPLES

ALISON & OLLY ALSTON “Live on Lewis and are passionate fieldsports folk, with a particular emphasis on wild sport. They shoot everything from foreshore to grouse and she still holds the record for the largest sea-trout ever caught in the Falklands.”

LOUISE & JONATHAN BALTESZ “Just brilliant people. Wonderful shots and such

good ambassadors for our sport.”
JULIE DEDMAN & JAMES DEDMAN “Mother and son combo. She is elegant and the highly entertaining hostess of Mulgrave. He is a lethal and serious up-and-coming Olympic clay shot.”

ANDY & ALLIE HULME “Love to shoot together but there is no fiercer competition than when

they are pegged next to each other.”

SALLY & MICHAEL CANNON “Fabulous hosts, accurate and generous shots and two of the keenest sportsmen on the planet. They will always try and make a day work, whatever the weather, and their shoot lunches and dinners are legendary.”
CAROL & JAMES HALL “Passionate sportsmen and fabulous hosts with

some of the best-trained flatcoats in Staffordshire. Always armed with half a sweet shop in the Landie.”
FITRIANI & DR JAMES HAY “Fitriani has become an extremely accomplished shot in a very short time. Petite and impeccably groomed, she shoots beautifully with her pair of 28-bores. James is unusually both an outstanding shot on small and big game, with some serious buffalo taken on safari in Tanzania.”



MR & MRS CANNON



DR & MRS HAY



ROBERT CUTHBERT



DAVID FLUX

BEST DRESSED

WILLIAM CHARNLEY

“The hot-shot city lawyer could easily be in any of the hot-shot categories but his style makes him a cert for best turned out.”

ROBERT CUTHBERT “Sharp wit matched

only by sharp style. Rumoured to be staging a cravat revival.”

SOL DAURELLA & CARLES VILARRUBI

“Have never seen anyone so beautifully attired with a different outfit each day. The Spanish have the edge on style.”

THE FLUX FAMILY “Impressive en masse in their new estate blue tweed.”

ROCCO FORTE

NICK FOULKES “Always impeccably dressed with matching stealth laser-vision glasses.”

LORD MAGAN “If only his shooting were as good as his attire.”

ROSS NEVILLE “Few men would wear so much pink.”

BEST SCOFF

BENHAM, BERKSHIRE

Lunch is always delicious at Sir Richard Sutton’s estate near Newbury.

BETTWS HALL, POWYS

“Always outstanding. Managed by Gwyn and Ann Evans, ably helped by their son and daughter; together they run eight different shoots yet on every one they serve succulent nibbles, including foie gras, and the champagne flows.”

BIDDICK HALL, CO DURHAM

“It has the best food and service throughout the whole day. A stunning treat.”

CONSTABLE BURTON,

NORTH YORKSHIRE

Stunning food, *chez* Wyvill.

EAST ALLENHEADS, NORTHUMBERLAND, AND HOLWICK, CO DURHAM

“Usually lobster at Holwick and pan-fried grouse breasts at East Allenheads for elevenses, taken from birds shot that morning.

GOODWOOD, WEST SUSSEX

“Best shoot lunch ever, ever, ever. Partridge en crouete with a truffle sauce? Perfection.”

GUNNERSIDE, NORTH YORKS

“There are many special shooting lodges but Gunnerside really is exceptional for its quality of food and service.”



LOBSTER HAS BEEN ENJOYED AT HOLWICK AND LOYTON LODGE



BETTWS HALL: BRIGANDS

THE LAKES, SOMERSET

“Sumptuous feast with finest wines. Lunch is prepared in front of you. Amazing.”

LOYTON LODGE, DEVON

“For the shoot dinner, the chef served exquisite venison with lobster to start. Fabulous.”

MULGRAVE, NORTH YORKSHIRE

“Best shoot hut and elevenses.”

WEMMERGILL, CO DURHAM

“Michael Cannon’s knowledge of food is obvious. Everything is first class, especially the ‘bits’ he cooks in his mobile gun-wagon cum kitchen/dining-room.”

WESTERDALE, NORTH YORKS

Fantastic scoff and lovely table setting, china and an incredible lodge.