

Britain's got talent

An outstanding performance...

Southern Counties Olympic Clay Target Shooting facility played host to the 2009 World Universal Trench Championship in July in record temperatures over three days of intense competition.

This was the first time Great Britain had been chosen to host the World Championships having previously held the European Championships at Beverley in 1995.

The GB Ladies team, anchored by Hykeham-based Olympic markswoman Lesley Goddard, was hotly favoured to take the team Gold and did not disappoint producing a solid performance in fine style.

The individual event however was closely fought between Lesley, the young rising British star, Abbey Burton and the experienced Spaniard Vanessa Majuelo, with

Goddard eventually taking Gold and the World Championship.

Shot in near perfect conditions, day one saw Goddard trailing 71 ex 75 targets to the Spaniard 74 ex 75, as both seasoned campaigners went head to head on adjacent layouts.

Drawing on all her experience, day two saw Lesley on fire, producing a creditable 74 ex 75 with Burton backing her up with 68 x 75 to the Spaniards 67 x 75.

Day three, shot over 50 targets, produced one of the best head to head battles for medal positions, with Lesley stamping her authority on proceedings, 48 ex 50 and

inspired Burton overhauling Majuelo for the Silver medal.

An outstanding performance for Great Britain by any standards echoed by the President of the International Shooting Federation during the medal ceremony.

"It has taken me a long time to reach my goal of World Champion," said Lesley. "I was just two targets short of equalling my World Record, set in 2004. I was standing on the podium, fighting back the emotion and tears, when I heard my mum's advice, 'sing loud and be proud', so I actually sang the National Anthem as loud and in tune as I was able (a moment well worth waiting for).

I wish to publicly thank all those who have supported me over the





LESLEY GODDARD

years, without your support, this would not have been possible. Unfortunately some were unable to be there and a special mention must go to the late and sadly missed Roger Peace, who was caretaker of our Shooting Federation. Funny as it may seem, I had the uncanny feeling he was watching."

Are you a gamekeeper...

with a story to tell, or an industry that relies on shooting to survive? Maybe you're putting on an event and you want to tell the county... contact us on gunroom@lincolnshirelife.co.uk



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All creatures great and small

We tend to take our countryside a bit for granted – it's there and although we see it, some of us, every day as we drive to work, we perhaps forget that it is largely a man-made environment. In Lincolnshire, farmers manage and maintain about 80% of the land area of the county.

Words: Alison Pratt, NFU East Midlands

At the same time as producing healthy, nutritious food, farmers take their roles as countryside managers very seriously. As you travel Lincolnshire's roads or take a weekend ramble through our delicious countryside (yes, it is good enough to eat), spare a thought for the wildlife inhabiting the woods, hedges and fields – where they live is cared for by our farmers and growers.

Britain has one of the most densely hedged landscapes in the world. Just think, when you were last on holiday in France or Spain, how many hedges were there? And contrary to modern media-hype, farmers are planting hedges, not ripping them out! In fact since the late 80s, more than 17,000 kilometres of hedgerows have been created. And that means that our hedge-dwelling bird species, like blackcap, whitethroat, chaffinch and goldfinch that have all shown population increases, have safe and well-managed nesting and feeding sites in which to thrive.

Talking of birds, there's no more lovely sight on a summer's evening than to see a barn owl hunting the hedgerows and fields at dusk. Although farm buildings were built to store crops and house animals, they also provide important nesting places for barn owls whose numbers have doubled over the past decade – another success story for our farmed environment.

Take the time to admire our landscape: look at the patterns of fields, woods, ditches, tracks, ponds and hedges and think of the thousands of years that farmers have moulded and melded the countryside to make it what it is today. Stunning.

