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If you enjoy shooting, or have always wanted to learn, join us – new teams are forming every day. Call us at (203) 426-1320 or visit:

www.nssf.org/sctp



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VOLUME 4 FALL 2008

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ON THE COVER: JON MICHAEL McGRATH II - TAKEN AT THE US OLYMPIC TRAINING FACILITY IN COLORADO-SPRINGS, CO. PHOTOGRAPHY BY: STEVE WAGNER. COURTESY OF: NSSF JON MICHAEL PARTICIPATED IN THE SCHOLASTIC CLAY TARGET PROGRAM BEFORE HEADING ON TO INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION. LEARN MORE ABOUT JON MICHAEL McGRATH AT [HTTP://JONMICHAELMCGRATH.COM/](http://jonmichaelmcgrath.com/)

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Notes from the Top

By: Andy Fink

What are shooting sports? Many of us might feel that such a question has an obvious answer. However, when we really start thinking about it, the answer may not be so clear. Shooting sports normally are considered to include hunting, plinking, and all competitive shooting sports using a firearm. Do we cover all of these in **Junior Shooters**? You bet we do. If a junior can be involved in the sport then we want to make sure it is included. In fact, if for some reason we are missing a sport that you think should be included, let me know.

Now, are there other shooting sports that are not normally included in the general category of "shooting sports" but should be? This is a good question and I think there may be. One that immediately comes to mind is archery. A firearm isn't used and there are not any bullets shot, but arrows are. Yes, we plan on covering archery as well so if you have a junior archer that wants to tell their story we would love to have it. Ty Weaver, 13 years old, writes an article every issue and many of these articles will be about bow hunting as he has world record harvests with a bow.

Okay, so we have archery included. Are there any others? Well let me put some others out there so you can mull them over and then drop me a line and let me know what you think.

Paintball is a pretty darn competitive, there are team competitions with both adults and lots of kids involved. Should this be included in **Junior Shooters**? What about airsoft? There are actual airsoft competitions and they are starting to become more and more popular. How about laser tag?

As technology continues to advance I can see various sports having laser competitions. Are these viable shooting sports that should be addressed? Cowboy fast draw laser competition is available today. It is an excellent way to get kids started shooting and learning safe gun handling techniques. There are multi-thousand dollar systems available today where you shoot a rifle, pistol, or shotgun at targets or game animals projected on a screen. The system counts your hits, misses, and time. There may eventually be competitions held this way. Should these be covered?

What do you think? Give me your opinion. Send me an email at editor@juniorshooters.net

JUNIOR SHOOTERS MAKING A MARK

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FROM SCTP to the OLYMPIC

BY: BILL DUNN, NSSF

GAMES

OLYMPIC SKEET SHOOTER VINCENT HANCOCK HAS QUICKLY BECOME ONE OF THE TOP SHOOTERS IN THE WORLD. HE WON HIS FIRST WORLD CUP AT AGE 16. PHOTO CREDIT: CRAIG HANCOCK.

All sports legends have to start somewhere. Baseball legend Nolan Ryan started his pitching career in Little League. Randy Moss, one of football's all-time best wide receivers, started out playing Pop Warner youth football.

For two of the world's top shotgun shooters, Vincent Hancock and Corey Cogdell, it was the Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) that helped shape their Olympic futures.

SCTP, developed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), allows young shooters to compete as a team in trap, skeet, sporting clays, and the international versions of trap and skeet that are shot at the Olympics.

Hancock and Cogdell represented the United States this summer in Beijing at the 2008 Olympic Games - Hancock in men's skeet, Cogdell in women's trap. Both shooters have made quite a name for themselves in the international shooting world, but before that, they were standouts in the scholastic program.

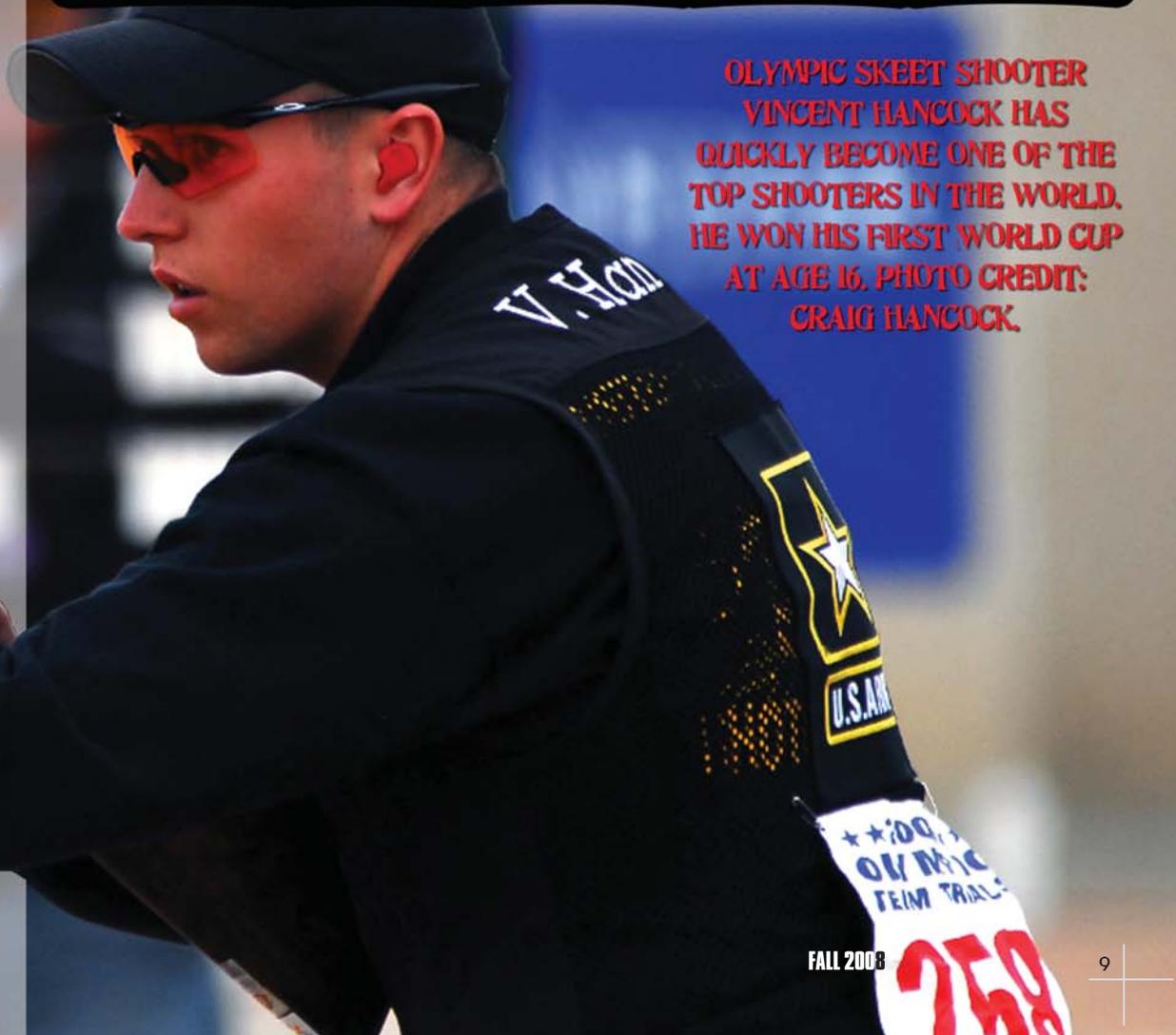
"SCTP introduced me to international shooting," said Cogdell, who grew up in Eagle River, Alaska. "Before that, I didn't even know that shooting was an Olympic sport."

Back in 2003, Cogdell was one of a select few that got picked for SCTP's annual Junior Olympic Development Camp. There, she met U.S. Olympic Shotgun Coach Lloyd Woodhouse and learned the basics of the international-style of shooting.

One of the big things she said she picked up through SCTP was the "team concept."

"SCTP brought a team philosophy and dynamic into my shooting. Shooting is an individual sport, but there's also a team aspect to it, and that team aspect really comes into play on the USA Shooting teams," she said.

Hancock, from Eatonton, Georgia, shot his first clay target at age five. By the time he was 16, he became the number one ranking international skeet shooter in the world.



Like Cogdell, he has also credited SCTP with helping him gain more shooting experience.

One of Hancock's many SCTP highlights came at the 2004 SCTP National Championships, where he missed just one of his 225 targets in the American skeet competition.

Hancock's advice to young shooters just starting out: "Go out and try it with an open mind," he said. "You'll fall in love with it. The thing is that you can't give up. Just keep going at it full blast. Always go for the gold."

A Pathway to the Olympics

Not only are more young people than ever before competing in trap, skeet, and sporting clays, but also record numbers are now taking up the international styles of trap and skeet. That's good news for the future of U.S. shooting teams and the future of the shooting sports.

In addition to state and national championships in American trap, American skeet, and sporting clays, SCTP has begun teaming up with USA Shooting - the governing body for the Olympic shooting sports - to offer state qualifiers and national championships in the international games.

Last year, young Olympic hopefuls came out in record numbers to compete at state Junior Olympic qualifying events and at the first-ever SCTP USA Shooting Junior Olympic National Championships in Colorado Springs.

SCTP and USA Shooting also team up each fall to give a group of young shooters a chance to work up-close with U.S. National Team coaches at the Junior Olympic Development Camp. The camp is held at the Olympic Training Facility in Colorado Springs.

Past attendees, like Cogdell, have gone on to become recognizable names at national and international competitions. SCTP shooters can apply for the Junior Olympic Development

Camp and learn more about national championships online at www.nssf.org/sctp.

Fueling the Future of U.S. Competition

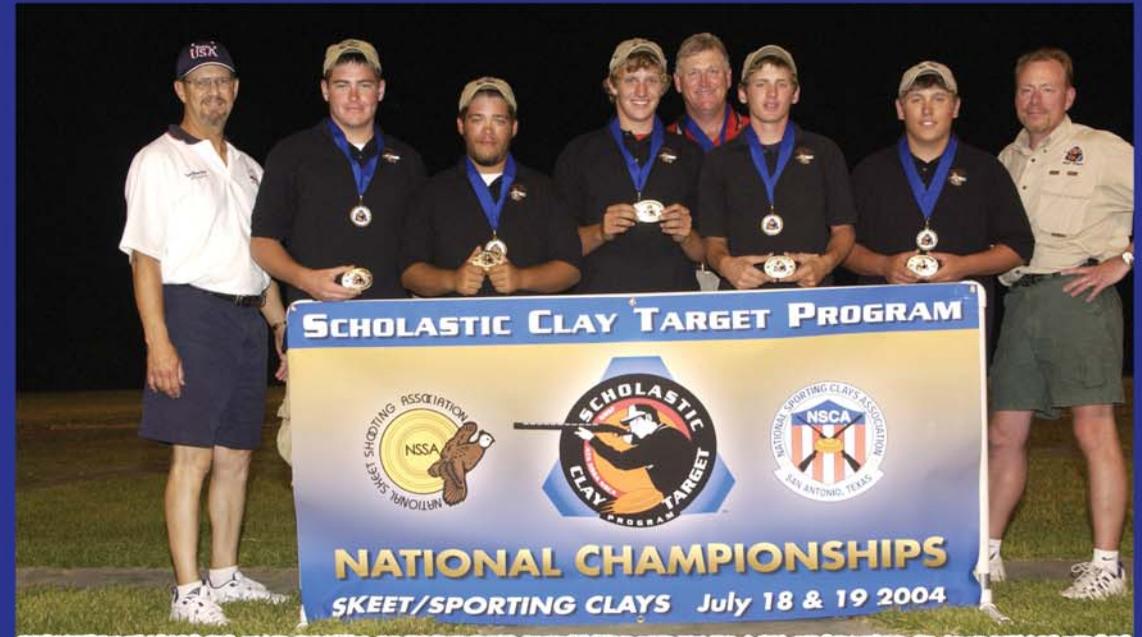
With 10,000 young shooters competing last year alone, SCTP has the potential to make a big impact on the United States' future in competitive clay target shooting.

Bob Foth, a three-time Olympic rifle shooter and USA Shooting's director of youth programs and coach development, said SCTP is a great place for young shooters with Olympic aspirations to get started. "It gives kids a chance to get a feel for the sports and decide how much they really want to commit themselves to going as far as they can, and that's what we're looking for at USA Shooting," Foth said.

No one could be happier about the surge in young people competing than longtime U.S. Olympic Coach Lloyd Woodhouse, who said he is delighted to see thousands of young people each year taking up the shotgun sports through SCTP. "I've not observed any other shooting sports program that touches so many young people in this country," Woodhouse said of SCTP. "I don't know of anything that even comes close. It's just incredible. It's the greatest program that I can think of in the shooting world."

Now active in 45 states, SCTP has been called "the Little League of shooting sports." The program is designed to instill in participants safe firearms handling, commitment, responsibility, leadership, and teamwork.

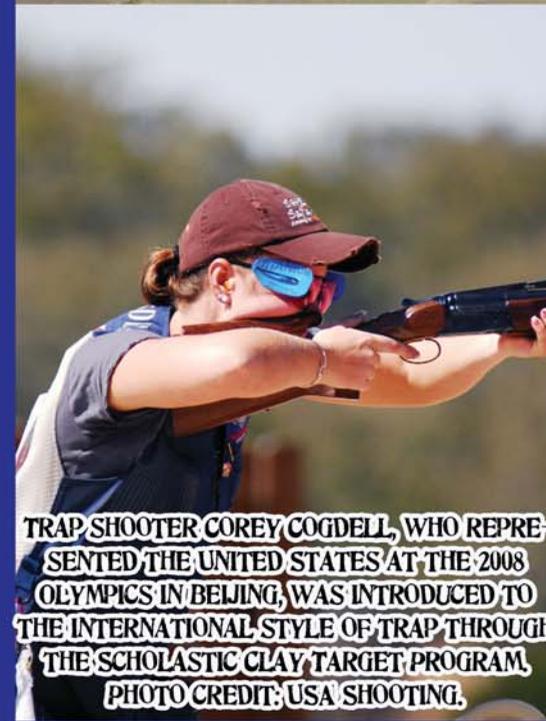
To learn more about forming a new or joining an existing SCTP team, contact Dianne Vrablic, NSSF's promotions and special events coordinator, at (203)426-1320, email dvrablic@nssf.org. You can also contact your state's SCTP director for information. A list of state directors is available at the SCTP website at www.nssf.org/sctp.



VINCENT HANCOCK, FAR RIGHT, IS PICTURED WITH HIS FIRST-PLACE SPORTING CLAYS TEAM FROM GEORGIA AT THE 2004 SCTP SKEET AND SPORTING CLAYS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS.



COREY COGDELL, FOURTH FROM RIGHT, IS PICTURED WITH HER TEAM FROM ALASKA AT THE 2004 SCTP NATIONAL TRAPSHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIPS.



TRAP SHOOTER COREY COGDELL, WHO REPRESENTED THE UNITED STATES AT THE 2008 OLYMPICS IN BEIJING, WAS INTRODUCED TO THE INTERNATIONAL STYLE OF TRAP THROUGH THE SCHOLASTIC CLAY TARGET PROGRAM. PHOTO CREDIT: USA SHOOTING.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE??

The international versions of skeet and trap (also called "bunker") are a bit different from American skeet and trap. What's the difference?

International Skeet vs. American Skeet

Compared to American skeet, targets in international skeet are thrown about 20 miles per hour faster, at 60 mph. After a shooter calls for a target, it can be released anywhere from immediately to three seconds later. In American skeet, there is no delay in the release.

Shooters are required to start with their gun down. The butt of the gun must remain below a line on the shooter's vest until a target is thrown. This differs from American skeet, where shooters can start with a pre-mounted gun.

Another difference is that three of the shooting stations throw two targets, compared to American skeet, where there are no doubles thrown. Targets are larger in diameter in international skeet at 110mm, compared to 108mm in American.

International Trap (or "Bunker") vs. American Trap

In international trap, the trap house (or bunker) is set underground, so that targets are thrown from ground level. There are five shooting stations set 15 meters from the edge of the bunker. Three groups of underground trap machines are set in front of each shooting station, for a total of 15 machines throwing targets at different angles, heights, and speeds. Targets are thrown at 45-degree angles-twice as wide as American trap-with an average speed of 65 miles per hour. The height of the targets also varies dramatically.

Because the targets are much more difficult, shooters are allowed two shots per target thrown, compared to one shot in American trap.

GUNSMITHING

THE RUGER MINI-14 TUNE UP

BY: ROBERT "DOC" KRONE

So, you've got a Mini-14.

Okay, okay I know, all your friends say "Can't hit the broad side of a barn," "Nice doorstep," "Looks good in the safe," but I'm here to tell you they can shoot and are accurate - with a little help.

First, as always, unload and show clear, give it a good cleaning and here's where I come in.

Some of these things the general shooter can do, some are just gunsmith specific and even Mom and Pop shouldn't tackle.

As with all rifles there are several constants that need to be addressed to acquire top performance. These include the barrel crown, the chamber, the operating system (in this case the gas system), and the trigger.

The crown is the very end of the barrel where the bullet exits...duh, and must be completely concentric so the bullet leaves the barrel at the exact same place all around the hole. Into the metal lathe goes the barrel. There are hand-tools sold for this purpose but...locked tight in a mechanical device designed to make round things rounder sounds better. It doesn't matter the type of crown as long as it is even. I like an 11 to 15 degree crown because, yeah just because. I then open the gas port on the barrel just about two thousandths of an inch, its minor but ensures the smooth gas flow from the barrel to the action. The chamber is next.

I take a .223 finish reamer, don't panic, and just very gently with really no pressure just polish the chamber making sure the headspace and shoulder angle are clean and smooth. Nothing does that better than a one hundred dollar cutting tool.

Last is the trigger. The hammer, sear, and trigger springs are replaced with lighter gauge springs, all metal to metal surfaces are polished and the hammer and sear hooks are gently taken down to about 35 thousandths of an inch, about that much. I've done so many of these it has become a feel thing. Wait for the video, sometime I'll show you.

One of the big things that you should NOT do is cut springs. A 25-lb. spring that is cut down is a shorter 25-lb. spring. If you want lighter operation you need thinner gauge wire. How thin, again after 14 years it's a feel thing, too light and you get malfunctions and light primer strikes so there may be some trial and error. Oh yeah, you must NEVER attempt any full auto type modification. Federal prison for young folks is just as bad as it is for old farts like me. Fight the urge. Youth and quick twitch muscles are a better combo.

As with all guns, the Mini-14 can be somewhat finicky as to the .223 load it likes the best. Have the over 18-year-old in the family pony up and buy a few different loads. You'll find one that's accurate and reliable. After doing these mods to many Mini's, I have seen them shoot to minute of angle on a regular basis. Oh sorry...minute of angle or MOA is 1 inch at 100 yards, 2 inches at 200 yards and so on.

Some good lube to top it off and out to the range.

Shoot safe and we'll talk soon.

Doc - www.rkgunsmithing.com, rkroner7514@aol.com, (208) 467-3075



The Mini-14 with TAPCO after market stocks and a Leupold Vari-X II 2-7scope.

The following is a comparison of loads shot through a Ruger Mini-14 before and after Robert performed the gunsmithing steps outlined in the article.

Load	Pre RK Group Size	Post RK Group Size #1 - #2
Black Hills 55-gr. Factory	2.5"	.75" - 1.25"
62-gr. Sierra SP - 25-gr. Varget	3"	1.4" - 2.5"
55-gr. Win. SP - 24-gr. RS Extreme	1.5"	2.5" - 2"
55-gr. Win. SP - 23-gr. H-322	1.75"	2.5" - 2.5"
55-gr. Hor. SPFB - 24-gr. Vith N-133	3.6"	.75" - 1.6"
53-gr. Barnes TSXFB - 26-gr. RS TAC	2.6"	1.25" - 1.75"
52-gr. V-Max - 24-gr. RS TAC	4"	1.6" - 1.75"

Key - RK: Robert Krone Gunsmithing - Varget: Hodgdon Varget Powder - RS: RamShot Powder - Win.: Winchester Bullet - Vith.: Vihta Vuori Powder - Hor.: Hornady Bullet - SPFB: Soft Point Flat Base - TSXFB - Barnes Coded Bullet Designation

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you see?
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For Kids
By Kids

TY'S TIDBITS ON SAFARI WITH Limcroma Safaries

By: Ty Weaver

I was twelve years old when I went on this safari, my second. The day before Dad and I left for my 2006 safari, I came down with a 101 degree fever. Mom took me to the doctor and he gave me a shot and some medicine. I was feeling very bad, but I was looking forward to my trip to South Africa.

We landed in Johannesburg and headed to camp. We met my best buddy, Hannes Els, with Limcroma Safaris. Dad wanted me to sleep in the first morning to try and get rid of the fever, but I wanted to sit in a bow blind and start hunting. I love hunting. I could do it every day, feeling good or not, I can hunt! I drank some hot tea for breakfast and headed to the bow blind with Dad and our professional hunter (PH) Johan. In a matter of minutes, several wart hogs came in. One was a shooter. I grabbed my bow and got ready to try a shot. My heart was beating very fast and I started to shake because I was nervous. I was a little weak from being sick and it took all my strength to draw my Mathews bow. I remember putting my pin on the crease of the wart hogs shoulder and I sent a Beman Carbon arrow into the big wart hog and he bolted. After the shot, I started coughing hard, but it felt good because I was holding my cough back a long time. Hamilton, our tracker, followed the blood trail to my

wart hog. I was so excited when I placed my hand on the wart hog's gristly hair. I thought he looked beautiful.

We took some pictures and jumped back into the blind. I ate an orange and drank a Fanta to try to get my energy up. I was very excited, but still had a fever. I thought my excitement would help me feel better, but I was starting to feel very sick. Out of nowhere, a huge blesbok stepped out into the water. I had a tough time drawing my bow again but I managed to send an arrow into the blesbok. My heart was beating fast again, but I was sweating a lot and my head was pounding. Dad and Johan took me back to camp to lie down and rest. I was very sick and needed rest. Eric, the head PH, went with the trackers and found my blesbok! It was huge! The biggest one taken with the bow! I was so relieved when they brought him to camp. I slept like a rock that night.

The next morning my fever was down and I was feeling a lot better. I took a few practice shots with my bow. I was right on the money! I was feeling like my old self again. We sat in the river blind later that morning and had a ton of critters come to water. When a huge waterbuck came in, Johan said to me, "Ty, I want you to shoot him when he is quartering away." Dad gets hunting credits for booking safaris and I am very fortunate to be able to hunt trophy animals like this. I was pumped! Dad was excited too because I saw him trying to turn on the video camera and he was shaking. I drew my bow with ease and put my red pin on the crease of the shoulder for a quartering away shot and touched my release. I watched my Beman arrow zip into the

Left: I hunted for a monster bushbuck for ten days. I had to make a quick shot with my .308 Remington Model Seven. The Barnes Bullet dropped the critter in his tracks completing my spiral horn slam! He scored as the new world record Limpopo Bushbuck as measured in the Trophy Game Records of the World System!



I stuck this warthog on the first day of my bow safari with Limcroma Safaris. I was very sick with a high fever but that did not stop my excitement! I used a Mathews Mustang bow, Beman carbon arrows, and 100-grain Magnus Stinger Broadheads.



crease. The huge bull kicked and ran 40 yards, stopped, and fell down. Dad slapped me on the shoulder and almost knocked me over! Johan was excited too and told me that I just shot one of the largest waterbuck he had ever hunted! We took some awesome photos and went back to the camp.

The next morning Johan said, "Ty, let's go hunt a monster eland." We went to the river blind and in minutes some waterbucks, wart hogs, and kudus came in. I was watching a big kudu when Johan bumped me and pointed to my bow and then pointed to the side window of the blind. I grabbed my bow and looked out the side window to see this huge eland bull coming in. Dad got the video camera ready and when the bull stretched out his leg I drew my bow. The eland picked up his head and looked my way. He stared for a minute and put his head back down. It felt like he was staring right through me. That stare made me super nervous. I concentrated on the heart and touched the release. A bow shot on an animal this size had to be perfect. I heard the Magnus Stinger broadhead hit and the bull kicked and ran. He stopped at 50 yards, started swaying and fell over. I was so excited that I can't remember what happened next. I really can't. We waited a few minutes and walked up to the bull. I could not believe how big he was. Johan said he was close to 2,000 pounds! We took some cool pictures. When we got to camp, the skinners and trackers could not believe I shot that big eland with the bow. Hannes was excited and said, "Little Weaver, you are amazing!"

The next morning Dad and I hunted the river blind by ourselves because Johan had to go back to his full-time job. He is a poaching policeman. It was cool being in the wilds of Africa. Just my dad and me! In a matter of minutes, a big impala came to water. He was huge! He was walking right towards us, at ten yards he turned and presented me with a great shot. The closer he came the faster my heart beat. I drew my bow, found the spot, and released the arrow. My arrow zipped through the impala and he jumped straight up in the air. Dad kept saying to me, "What an animal Ty, what an animal." I didn't realize how big he was until we walked up to him. Hannes said, "This impala is one of the biggest ever taken with the bow!" Hannes turned to me and said "Ty, my boy, you need to finish your Africa spiral horn slam and that includes a nyala and a bushbuck."

It was hard to sleep that night. I kept thinking about that nyala. A nyala is one of the most beautiful and shyest animals in Africa. We sat in the blind until after lunch waiting for the nyala to return. My stomach was filled with butterflies the entire time that we sat in the blind. We saw everything but a nyala. We went back to camp for a bite to eat. We were sitting at the table and Hannes asked my Dad, "What should we do this afternoon?" Dad said, "I think we should try for that nyala again." Dad didn't know it, but Hannes and I worked out a plan. Hannes turned to me and said, "Ty, what do you think we should do this afternoon?" I said, "I think we should set up at the north water hole and video my Dad shooting a blue wildebeest with his bow." Dad

was very surprised and was smiling. Dad has never shot an African animal because he always said he likes to watch me more than himself hunting. Hannes, Dad, and I headed for the blind. Within minutes animals were coming to water, including a monster blue wildebeest. Hannes grabbed the video camera and whispered to Dad, "He is a monster." My heart was beating fast. I looked at Dad and could see the arrow shaking in his Whisker Biscuit rest! He came to full draw and released the Gold Tip carbon arrow tipped with a Magnus Stinger. The wildebeest was hit in the heart and only the fletching was sticking out. The wildebeest went crazy and jumped into the water. I was excited for Dad and he was pumped. His first African animal was a huge poor mans buffalo! Back at camp we set out a plan to head back to the river blind to try for my nyala.

We got in the blind early. Animals were everywhere and the butterflies were back in my stomach! We sat until 1:00 p.m., but no sign of the nyala. We started to pack up and Dad's eyes got big and said, "Grab your bow, nyala!" He was at 25 yards. Dad looked at me and said, "Can you make that shot?" I nodded my head yes and drew my bow and released an arrow. My arrow

found its mark! Dad said, "He's going down, he's down!" I was pumped and relieved when the nyala went down because 25 yards is a long shot for me. Dad gave me a high five. When we walked up to the nyala, we could not believe how big he was. His hide was as soft as silk and his horn tips were polished white. Hannes grabbed the horns and said, "Unbelievable little Weaver! Now we must get that bushbuck for sure!"

We hunted bushbuck hard for ten days. We saw several, but not a monster. I was hunting with my Remington Model Seven rifle in .308 caliber on the tenth day. We were stalking along the Limpopo River and it was getting late. I finally got my chance when Hannes spotted a monster bushbuck. I had to make the shot count. My Leupold scope's crosshairs settled on the vitals. With my heart pounding, I somehow found a way to concentrate long enough to place a 168-grain Barnes Triple Shock bullet through the vitals. The bushbuck dropped like a ton of bricks. Soon after the shot, I was standing over my monster bushbuck with Hannes and my Dad. Hannes shook my hand and said, "Congratulations Ty, you have just completed your South Africa spiral horn slam!" "Unbelievable!" I was so proud

because a big bushbuck is hard to hunt. We hunted for a monster for ten days. We walked many miles along the rivers looking for that bushbuck.

On the last day of our safari Dad and I decided to sit in a blind a short way from camp and shoot some guinea with the bow. They are a blast to hunt with archery gear. They are everywhere in South Africa. I shot several guinea and we were eating lunch in the blind when Dad looked over at me and said, "Ty, grab your bow." He pointed to the far end of the water hole at a monster, monster warthog. It was the biggest one I have ever seen! I quickly came to full draw and sent an arrow through pumba at 25 yards. I was pumped! It all happened so fast! My Beman arrow flew perfectly and zipped through the warthog. He ran a short distance and crashed. I was so excited that I was jumping up and down in the blind!

I had the best time of my life during the safari. The best part was hunting with my Dad. It was like a dream come true! I didn't want to leave. I am working hard at helping Dad sell more safaris so we can return to Africa. I can't thank my buddy Hannes enough!

Not an ounce of meat is wasted from the animals taken on a safari. Our gourmet chef prepared some wonderful dishes for us. The remainder of the meat was donated to the local school and villages. The local people were very grateful for the meat.

Four of my animals score as new Diamond World Records with Trophy Game Records of The World. The records with the bow are: Common Waterbuck, Blesbok, and Nyala. The Limpopo Bushbuck is a record in the Modern Arms category.

To enquire or book a safari with Limcroma contact Al or Ty Weaver at aweaver1@gt.rr.com or call (409) 223-2260. Every kid is waiting to be invited outdoors, ask them!

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www.bigcountryoutdoors.com

Barnes Bullets Advisory Staff - www.barnesbullets.com

Jr Writer The Lakecaster - www.thelakecaster.com

Limcroma Safaris Pro Staff - www.limcroma.com

This big monster had me shaking. It had Dad and my PH Johan shaking! Right before I touched my release, I calmed down enough to place a Stinger smack in the heart. The eland went down on video at 40 yards! This was the largest animal that I ever shot with a bow.



On my last day, Dad and I were hunting guinea fowl with the bow when this monster "pumba" came to the waterhole. I was so excited when I saw his tusks that I started shaking. I placed the arrow perfect and the warthog ran, made two jumps, and crashed! I think he is beautiful. Dad says he has a face only a mother can love!



This is my dream animal! He showed up out of nowhere while we were getting ready to leave the blind. I could feel my heart beating in my head when I released the arrow! He scored as the new world record bow kill as measured in the Trophy Game Records of the World System!



This big impala showed up at the waterhole in a blink of an eye. My Mathews Mustang sent the arrow right through the vitals. He took one hop and slowly sank to the ground. I nearly fell over!



I stuck this monster blesbok 20 minutes after my warthog! Still had my fever but my heart was beating fast with excitement. I used a Mathews Mustang bow, Beman carbon arrows and 100-grain Magnus Stinger Broadheads. The blesbok scored as the new world record bow kill as measured in the Trophy Game Records of the World System!



I touched my release as my heart was in my throat and sent a Magnus Stinger into this waterbuck's vitals at 18 yards! He scored as the new world record bow kill as measured in the Trophy Game Records of the World System!



BECOMING THE BEST SHOOTER YOU CAN BE

TIPS & HINTS FOR AIRGUN AND SMALLBORE COMPETITION

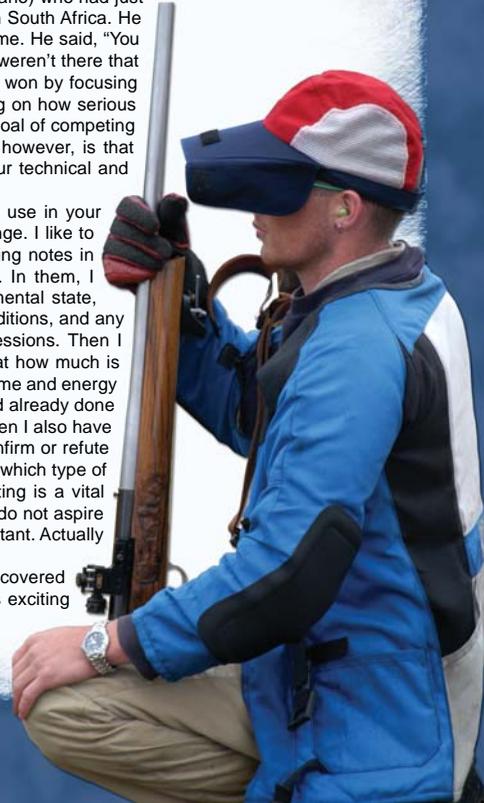
BY- BOB BENBOUGH - COACH BOB

In our last issue of **JUNIOR SHOOTERS** I mentioned the importance of concentrating on the basics in our attempts to become accomplished competitive shooters, whether it be with air guns, smallbore rifles, or whatever shooting sport we are engaged in. But before we get into the basics of the mechanics of shooting, I want to cover what I consider to be far more important if you truly want to excel in your sport. That has to do with the approach you use, in your mind, as you get started and then progress up the ladder of successful competition. At the very beginning of your quest for excellence, you will greatly enhance your chances for that success if you set some goals for yourself. I'm talking here about both short and long term goals. Let me give some examples of both. An appropriate short term goal (if, lets say, you are shooting 65 to 70 points out of a 100 possible in a given position) would be to set a goal for your next practice of shooting at 75. Don't "shoot for the moon" and set a goal too high or you will more than likely fail to reach it and then become discouraged. When you can consistently shoot 75s or above, then raise the bar and make your new goal an 80 for the next practice. An example of a longer term goal might be to shoot a 450 out of a possible 600 in your next match and then another goal for down the road might be to shoot a qualifying score that would garner you an invitation to a national level competition. One point that I'd like to make here, is that your goal setting should always be in relation to your own personal performance, never with the idea of trying to beat someone else. There is absolutely nothing that you can do to affect someone else's performance. Focus only on what you are doing. Some days, you'll have an awesome day at the range and others you won't. That's the day that you win. A few months ago, I was congratulating my friend, Dave Gullo (owner of Buffalo Arms in Ponderay, Idaho) who had just won the World Long Range Black Powder Cartridge Rifle Championships in South Africa. He thanked me for the "congrats" and then said something that really struck home. He said, "You know, there are probably better shooters in the world than me, but they just weren't there that day." That to me was a rather humble way of accepting the fact that he had won by focusing only on his own shooting and not worrying about "the other guy". Depending on how serious and truly dedicated you are to your sport, you may want to set the ultimate goal of competing (and winning) at the Olympics. The reason that few ever accomplish this, however, is that most of us don't dedicate enough attention, time, and practice to honing our technical and mental skills needed to win at that level.

One of the most valuable (and I consider absolutely essential) tools to use in your goal setting is to use a "shooter's diary" every time you put a shot down range. I like to compete in several different shooting games and I now maintain my shooting notes in three separate three-ring binders to keep track of my shooting activities. In them, I always record the date, location, firearm, and ammunition I'm using, my mental state, how I am feeling physically, the weather, if I'm shooting outdoors, range conditions, and any other information that might be helpful when I review my past shooting sessions. Then I write down my short term goals for the next event. You would be amazed at how much is forgotten if it's not written down. I know that over the years I've saved much time and energy (and ammunition) by reviewing my past shooting and rediscovering that I had already done what I was about to try again. I may go ahead and try it again anyway, but then I also have past history to compare the present results to and then I'm able to either confirm or refute the assumption I'd started with. An example of that might be trying to decide which type of ammunition shoots best in a particular air rifle or smallbore rifle. Goal setting is a vital step in progressing toward excellence as a competitor. For those of us who do not aspire to become champions, which is perfectly OK, setting goals is still most important. Actually it's important in living a happy, successful, and meaningful life as well.

I'll encourage you once again to send in any topics that you'd like to have covered in this column. We want **JUNIOR SHOOTERS** to answer your questions about this exciting and challenging sport, so don't be bashful.

Until next time: Be safe, shoot straight, and have a great time! Contact me at bbenbough@juniorshooters.net.



GLOCK

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By: Hannah Bowers

The SP22 & Shooting Steel

The bolt in the closed position and the slide handles forward.

Have you ever shot in a Steel Challenge Match? A Steel Challenge Match consists of shooting at five steel targets at each of eight stages, with speed and accuracy as the goal. You can shoot rimfire or centerfire and limited or open categories. The open category means that a scope and/or compensator may be used on the pistol. You normally shoot Steel Challenge competitions with pistols, either semi-autos, or revolvers, though I haven't seen many people using a revolver.

My name is Hannah Bowers and I am 12 years old. My dad was talking to Andy, the Editor of **Junior Shooters** magazine, and he asked if my sister Sarah and I wanted to get involved in shooting guns, competitions, and writing articles, and we said, "We'd like to." We were already shooting air rifle, small bore, and high power with AR-15s, and this was a great opportunity to get involved in pistol shooting and new shooting sports. One of my first times shooting a Steel Challenge Match was with a Walther SP22. The Walther SP22 semi-automatic pistol looks cool, with a sleek silver barrel, comfortable black grips that fit my hand, and post sights. The pistol I shot was a basic version with a 4" standard barrel, a "Hi-Grip" polymer grip of medium size, adjustable steel sights with a triangular front sight and a two stage trigger with an adjustable trigger stop. At first it was a little difficult to get the magazine in because I wasn't used to the straight angle grip in comparison to that of the last pistol I had shot, but after a while I got the hang of it and started having fun. I liked the design of the slide grp, which is on the muzzle end of the barrel and seems to be a good design for someone with a small hand. My mom thought this was great, because she has always had trouble operating the slide on most semi-automatic pistols. I shot several steel target stages at my second steel match, getting better and faster as I got more acquainted with the operation of the Walther.

The sights were easy to see and I could see the target well, as there was a pretty large space on either side of the post allowing me to get an accurate sight picture. This helped me to have pretty good accuracy and I hit most of my targets with the first shot. The trigger pull seemed good. It wasn't too hard even though the pistol was right out of the box and we hadn't had any gunsmithing done on it prior to shooting. The curve of the trigger fit my finger comfortably.

TECHNICAL DATA
Bullet weight: 35 grains
Bullet style: Lead, round nose
Ballow point

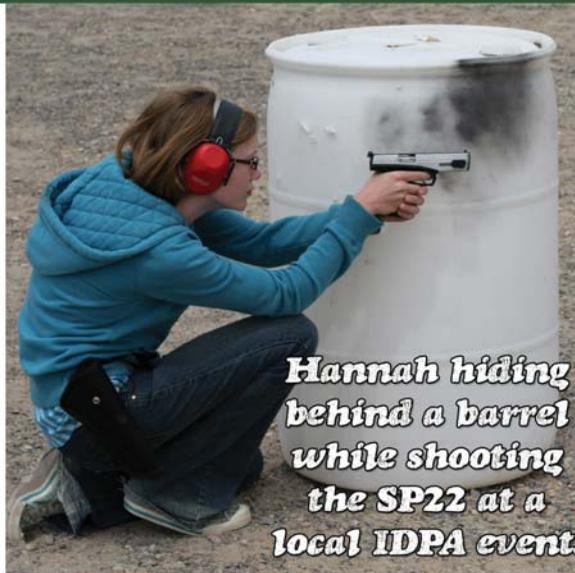
Andy looked all over for a holster to fit the Walther. He couldn't find anything that fit because the slide handles on the pistol stick out hence, catching on the holster, so I'd have to work on finding the right holster for this pistol.

All in all, I'd say the Walther P-22 is a good small bore pistol for juniors and adults. I'd like to try it on paper targets at an indoor range sometime soon, because I think it would make a great gallery pistol. Once we do that, and I can get group sizes with various types of ammunition, maybe I can follow up on this article.

By the way, I really have fun shooting steel. I enjoy it because I get better each time I shoot and my time gets better and better and I miss fewer targets. I like the immediate feedback of hitting the steel target and hearing it ring instead of just shooting paper. I also shot the Walther at a local International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA) match. It was fun but not quite as much fun as shooting steel. Steel Challenge is owned and managed by the United States Practical Shooting Association. You can find out more information about Steel Challenge at www.steelchallenge.com.

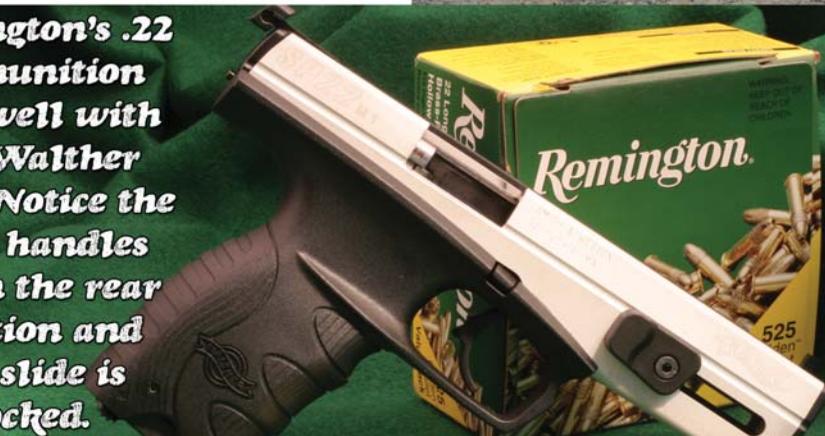
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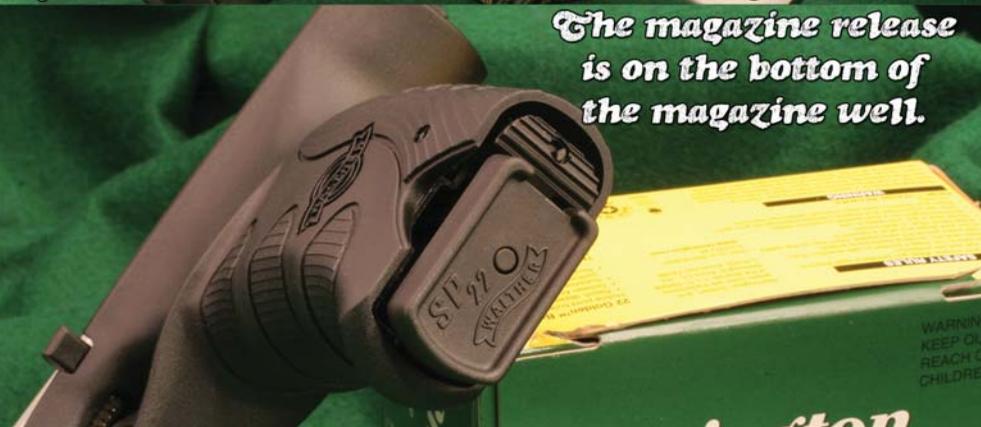


Hannah hiding behind a barrel while shooting the SP22 at a local IDPA event.

Remington's .22 ammunition goes well with the Walther SP22. Notice the slide handles are in the rear position and the slide is locked.



The magazine release is on the bottom of the magazine well.



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	CA1T02LEG019	F2 LEGEND	12	70	2 3/4	P	28T	1	7.5	1230	250	\$85.06
	CA1T03SPR045	SPORTING CLAY	12	70	2 3/4	PF	28T	1	7.5	1260	250	\$81.03
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Step Up

to an Air Rifle - part 2

By: Chip Lohman - NRA

Part I of this series introduced the sport of Air Rifle, explained how to get started, and provided information sources on where to find a club, tournament, etc. So... If you've been anxiously waiting for Part II of this series, then we can assume that you're interested in having an airgun range in your backyard or basement, that you may want to join a team and compete, and that you already have your sights on the 2012 Olympics in London.

What equipment will I need?

The answer to this question lies in another question – What sport or type of shooting do you intend to pursue? If you want to begin with “plinking” (having fun) in your backyard or your basement airgun range, a \$50 BB gun from a reputable manufacturer will work well, out to about 15 feet. You'll need a pair of safety glasses and a safe target that we'll discuss under Safety Tips. For better accuracy or competition, you'll want a pellet gun since they use a rifled barrel. Rifling spins the pellet like a football so it shoots straight over a longer distance than a BB. A BB gun's smooth bore (no rifling) doesn't spin the BB. After about 15 feet, the BB tends to float, just like a knuckle ball pitch. For competition, you'll want better sights and a good sling. For high-end (precision) events, the canvas & leather shooting jackets, pants, gloves, and boots are designed to help stabilize your position. A spotting scope will help you see where your pellets are striking the target. A shooting mat will provide a comfortable place to shoot the prone position.

But don't run off to the shooting store just yet.

There are rules about what equipment you're allowed to use during competition. Depending on the sport you choose, your great-looking shooting jacket may or may not be allowed (adjustable straps instead of buttons); the good-looking shoulder hook on the butt plate of your air rifle will disqualify you from a sporter event; and those high-top boots that help you stand still may be illegal. Depending on the event, even the size of “blinders” for your glasses is regulated. Using resource #1 at the end of this article, I recommend attending a local tournament before buying anything. You'll learn a lot, probably have some fun, and you will definitely save some money by avoiding unnecessary purchases.

Which Rifle? Which Sport?

I've included a few sample photos that represent both sporter and precision rifles. There are many more models to choose from. Check with your coach or club before buying a rifle. They may already have “club” guns for you to use for free. (See resource #3 at the end of this article for a great book – *NRA Neighborhood Airgun Program*. On page 22 of this book you'll find a list of several popular airgun suppliers.)

The two general categories of airguns are 1) Pneumatic or Spring-Piston and 2) Pre-charged gas. The first category includes guns that you hand pump to produce the pressure needed to fire the gun. These are simple to operate and less expensive. Note, however, that pumping your rifle each time you shoot increases your heart rate, which affects how steady you can aim the gun during competition. If you think you want to compete, the “pump” gun may be a handicap if your fellow



The Crosman Challenger 2000 is also a 'Sporter' class rifle, but uses a standard 12-gram CO2 cartridge so you do not have to pump the rifle each time you shoot or purchase an air (SCUBA) tank. Pistol grip and trigger over-travel screw are additional features that come with this rifle. This model has both an adjustable butt plate and cheek piece to ensure that your head is vertical when shooting. This rifle also has an ambidextrous bolt.

The street price is about \$350. Club pricing for less is available.

competitors don't have to pump their rifles after each shot. Pumping also takes you out of position for prone, kneeling, or sitting and you may become tired after pumping the gun 60 times in a match. But – what the heck – we're doing this for fun, so don't spend too much time worrying about the competitive aspect right now.

The second category - pre-charged gas - allows you to refill your rifle's air reservoir by connecting it to an air or CO² tank. Once you get a refill (like pumping-up a car tire at the gas station), you're good for many shots before you'll need another trip to the tank. If you can make friends at a local dive shop or fire station, perhaps you can start out by taking your pre-charged air rifle and adaptor to them for a refill every couple of months, rather than buying your own tank. Otherwise, the cost of your own “pre-charged gear,” (tank and adaptor) will run about \$250. It will also cost about \$20 to refill the SCUBA tank once or twice a year, plus an inspection of the tank every five years.

Safety Tips

In addition to the NRA's three gun safety rules: Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction, always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot, always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use, there are some unique rules for airguns that will be covered in your owner's manual. Please also read the NRA's Airgun Shooting Sports Safety Guide at resource #5 listed at the end of this

article.

Dry Firing: Firing the gun without a pellet or BB is called dry firing, used when practicing your position and integrated shot-sequence. Some airguns are not designed to be dry fired which could rupture their seals, so read the directions before firing and be sure to use a safe area.

Pumping: For pump guns, the owner's manual will provide specific directions on the number of times you can pump the gun before firing. Over-pumping the gun not only risks breaking it, but the pellet or BB may penetrate the target backstop and injure you and others. A pellet can easily penetrate a ¼” plywood board.

Pre-charged Gas: SCUBA tanks are convenient but need to be handled with care. Proper storage is important to prevent the tank from falling over and breaking the nozzle, instantly releasing highly compressed air. For the same reason, stand to one side of the tank when refilling your gun. There are different size standards (European and American) for the yoke adaptor that connects to the tank. Using the wrong one could – you guessed it – ruin the connection or hurt you.

Target Back Stops: Because BBs are made of steel, they require a different backstop than that used for a lead pellet. Use a backstop designed for your gun. If you are good with tools, you can make your own backstop with directions found on page 44 of the Airgun Safety Guide (resource #5).

Cleaning: Unlike firearms that use primers, powder charges, and higher velocity bullets, airguns have neoprene and rubber seals to compress and control the air. Using petroleum-based cleaners that are suitable for a firearm can



The AirForce Edge model is yet another example of a 'Sporter' class rifle but uses an Olympic-style pre-charged air system, precision rear sight and Walther rifled barrel. Not a new concept, AirForce has been using this design in their popular utility rifle systems for years. This model has been approved for 3-position competition (prone, kneeling and standing) but, at the time this article was written, is not yet in stores. Street price is expected to be under \$600.

ruin an airgun's seals. Once again, you'll need to read the cleaning directions for your air rifle so you don't ruin it before firing the first shot. How often should you clean the gun? Subject to the directions that came with your airgun, you'll probably only clean the bore once or twice a year since the velocity of the pellet is much lower than a firearm bullet, resulting in less lead residue in the bore.

Clear Bore Indicator (CBI): Using a piece of brightly colored weed eater line, you should keep this line in the barrel with an end protruding from the breach and the muzzle so that everyone can tell that it's not loaded. Remove the CBI only when ready to fire and keep it clean to avoid bringing dirt into the barrel.

Well – if you've been with us for both Part I and Part II, you now know enough to find a team or a tournament and ask some intelligent questions based on your interests – plinking, sporter, or precision. Whatever path you take, you're going to have a lot of fun. You'll be able to shoot your airgun more often

than your friends who have to stand in line for their turn at the firearms range. And you're going to be able to afford to shoot (i.e. practice) a lot more for less money. Be safe, and have fun.

Helpful Resources:

1. *Find a tournament and/or team* - <http://www.nra.org/nralocal.aspx>
2. *Find the rule book(s)* - <http://www.nrahq.org/compete/nrule-books.asp>
3. *Books About Airguns* - <http://materials.nrahq.org/products.aspx?cat=G-Books>
4. *Safety* - <http://www.nra.org/Article.aspx?id=1566>
5. *Airgun Safety Guide* - http://www.nrahq.org/education/airgun_safetyguide.pdf



Above: The Daisy 853CM-Avanti sporter model was co-developed with the Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) for their high school air rifle program. It is an excellent example of a single-stroke pneumatic (SSP) model that never needs a replacement air cylinder or expensive SCUBA tank for a refill. This rifle qualifies for the entry level 'Sporter' category for 10-meter (32.8 feet) competition and will last a long time on a budget. It has an accurate Walther rifled barrel, adjustable butt plate, right-hand bolt, and excellent sights. Like other companies, Daisy has several other models, including the Avanti Medallist model 888 and Gold Medallist model 887. They are both re-fillable CO2 systems, as seen in most matches. CO2-refillable guns have all of the same advantages of the pre-charged air guns but you don't have to own a tank. The street price for the 853CM is about \$350. Pricing through your local shooting club is much less.

Below: The author's precision Feinwerkbau model 601 is a blend of simple SSP technology and precision accuracy. This pump model fires as accurately and consistently as a pre-charged model, without the need for the SCUBA tank and adaptor. The heavier weight, better sights, adjustable trigger, and increased accuracy put this gun into the precision class. Street pricing for a new gun is about \$2,400, or \$700 used.



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Kids, & Hunting Pheasant

By: Dave Hamilton



Twenty-five junior hunters ages eight to 16 with some of the bagged birds.

A Junior Pheasant hunt was held on December 15, 2007 at Guns & Roosters Hunting Preserve in Visalia, California. This is the second annual event sponsored by the Visalia Sportsmen's Association, North American Gun Dog Association (NAGDA), and Guns & Roosters Hunting Preserve. A total of 30 kids from age eight to 16 participated in the hunt at no charge to them.

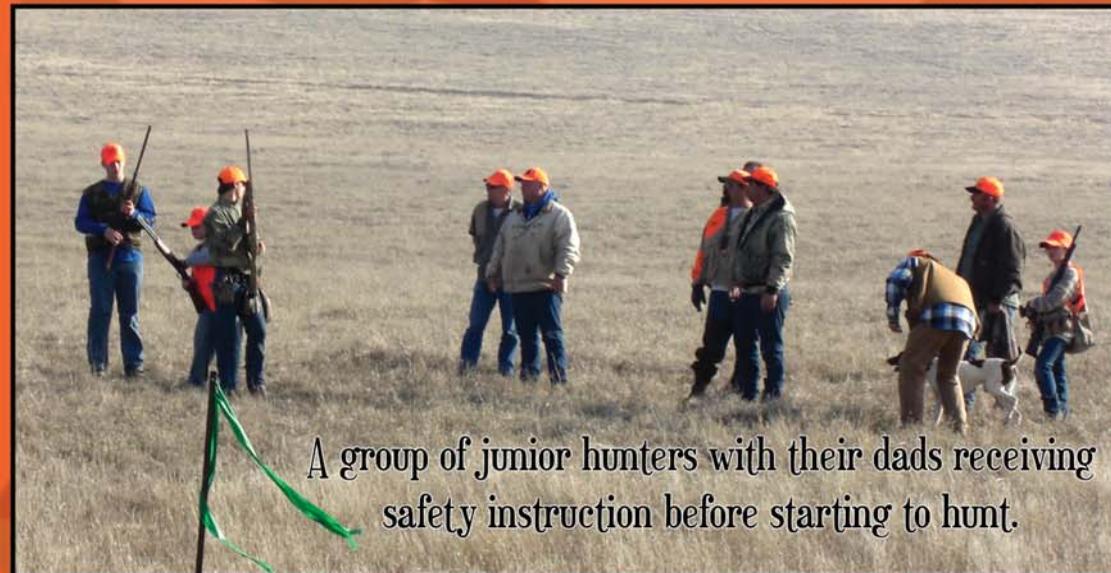
At 5:30 a.m., the day started out with breakfast being cooked for all the volunteers who donated their time to make this a memorable experience for the kids. After a short lesson on how to stock the bird fields. The work began about 6:15 a.m., with several vehicles and volunteers heading out to the fields with 100 pheasants to be released. Some of the first junior hunters began arriving about 6:30 a.m. Sign-up wasn't until 7:00 a.m., but who could blame the kids for wanting to get there early!

Registration began as scheduled. Each junior hunter had to show their hunting license and have their parents sign a release form. Every hunter received a blaze orange cap and t-shirt with the event logo and sponsors names on it, a pocket

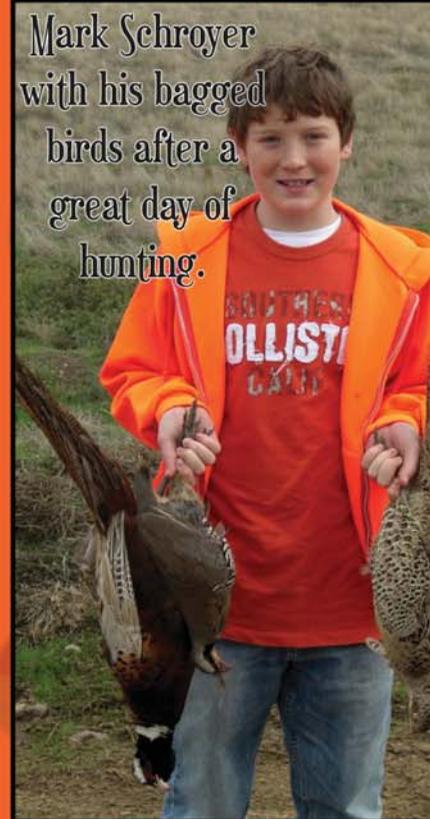
knife, gun lock, a cap or shirt from Bass Pro Shop, and a packet of materials about gun handling and safety.

Several volunteers with dogs donated their time to help the kids find the birds. Each dog handler was assigned up to four kids and a field. After a short talk on safety and ethics, the hunters were in the fields by 8:15 a.m. Shortly thereafter, the dogs were pointing, the birds were flying, and the sky was having holes shot in it. The hunting continued until around noon. At that time everyone was treated to a free lunch of hamburgers, hotdogs, chili, rolls, and a cola or water.

After everyone had finished lunch, a raffle was held for the kids and one lucky junior won a Charles Daly youth model 20-gauge shotgun. Another lucky junior won a pheasant hunt by having the longest tail feather nearing 25" long. Every hunter took home at least one pheasant, even if they missed all their shots. Everyone had a great and memorable time. Most of the young hunters already wanted to sign up for next season's hunt.



A group of junior hunters with their dads receiving safety instruction before starting to hunt.



Mark Schroyer with his bagged birds after a great day of hunting.

NAGDA Competitions Are another Way to Show off Your Dogs and Your Shooting

By: Sam Taylor

Everyone thinks their dog is special. Members of the North American Gun Dog Association (NAGDA) are no exception. The difference is that NAGDA allows its members the bragging right to the hunter who has the top dog.

NAGDA, a non-profit organization, is dedicated to promoting bird-hunting activities at host clubs and sponsors hunting competitions for pointers, flushers, seniors, women, youth, amateurs, and advanced dog-handlers. Attention is given to mentoring youth to enjoy upland bird hunting with dogs in a safe and caring environment. The goal is a national network of hunting dog enthusiasts participating in local, regional, and national events with host hunting clubs.

With host hunting clubs from California to Maryland, there are nine divisions of competition in NAGDA events: (1) youth division, (2) amateur flushing, (3) open pointing, (4) amateur pointing, (5) open flushing, (6) senior division, (7) women's division, (8) puppy division, and (9) doubles. In each event, five birds (pheasant or chukar) are released in a 14 to 15 acre field with good cover. The competition is a timed event and typically involves one hunter, one dog, two pheasant, two chukar, eight shells, and 20 minutes. When four birds are bagged, the competition is over and the hunter and dog are awarded points for birds found (pointed), flushed and retrieved as well as leftover shells and minutes. Events are held at private hunt clubs, beginning September and ending with a national championship in April in Stratton, Colorado.

NAGDA is also seeking hunting clubs to host competitions. NAGDA will train you and your staff to host competitions and supply all forms and ribbons for the event. For more information about these fun hunting tests, call Kim Hatfield, at (719) 348-5451 or send an email to: nagda@plains.net. For a brochure on "HOW NAGDA CAN MEAN GROWTH FOR YOUR HUNT CLUB," please contact NAGDA by phone or email.

NAGDA Headquarters: 13850 Co. Rd. 31 ~ Stratton, CO 80836 ~ Phone (719) 348-5451 Fax (719) 348-5999 ~ www.nagdog.com Office Hours M-F 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Mountain Time.

FIREARMS SAFETY AND YOU!!!

By: LARRY HALEY
PHOTO COURTESY
OF THE NWTFF

If you have read the previous articles on firearms safety you have seen the Ten Commandments of Firearms Safety twice now. However, just reading about safety is not enough – you have to practice it. If you have had the opportunity over the past few months to have some firearms time you have had the chance to practice. Did you? How safe do you think you have been? Hopefully, you have the safety rules burned into your brain so that safety comes naturally.

You have probably heard it said that to get good at something you have to practice, practice, practice. The reason this works is that your body, physically and mentally, learns to do what you want it to do naturally. If you learn good habits you will do them naturally. If you learn bad habits you will do them naturally. What type of habit do you want to do naturally?

So, let's talk about practice. I'm sure you understand that when you practice firing a firearm with live ammunition that the Ten Commandments apply. After all, the firearm is loaded.

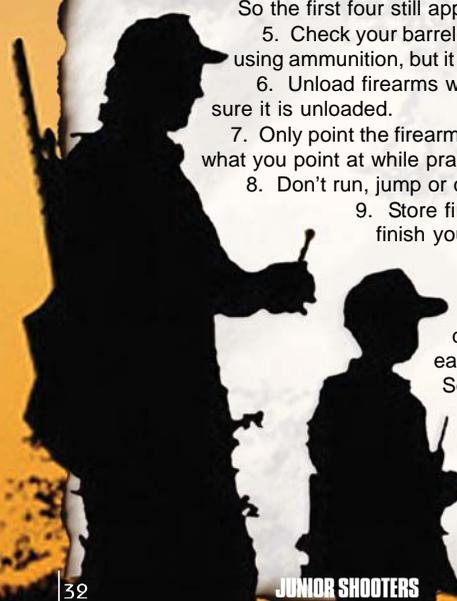
Do you know that for some types of shooting there is also benefit from practicing with an unloaded firearm? One type of practice is called "dry firing." It is called this because you will cock the firearm and pull the trigger, but with no round in the chamber. Dry firing is something you can do in a lot of places where you can't do live firing. For example, dry firing is good practice for shooting big game rifles as a way to learn to pull the trigger without flinching. Do you know of other benefits? Ask your mom or dad if they know others.

In this type of practice do you think the Ten Commandments still apply? Let's take a look.

1. Always point the muzzle in a safe direction – that one applies.
2. Treat every gun as if it is loaded – that one applies.
3. Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot – that one applies.
4. Know what is beyond your target – that one applies.
So the first four still apply just the same, let's look at the others.
5. Check your barrel for obstructions and that you have the right ammunition – well, you aren't using ammunition, but it would still be good practice to make sure there are no barrel obstructions.
6. Unload firearms when not in use – You are using the firearm, but you certainly want to be sure it is unloaded.
7. Only point the firearm at something you want to shoot – you won't be shooting a live round, but what you point at while practicing should be in a safe direction, again a good habit to practice.
8. Don't run, jump or climb with a loaded firearm – this one doesn't apply .
9. Store firearms and ammunition separately and safely – this will apply after you finish your practice.
10. Avoid alcohol and drugs before and during shooting – this should apply during practice also.

By my count there is only one commandment, number eight, that doesn't really apply to practice with an unloaded firearm. This makes it easy. There are NO instances when the Ten Commandments don't apply. So go out and practice, practice, practice and improve your shooting ability and at the same time learn good habits.

Note: some firearms can be damaged by dry firing. Find out if a firearm you are thinking of dry firing can be dry fired. Some firearms can be dry fired if you use a special dry fire cartridge (dummy cartridge that protects the firearm) during practice.



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