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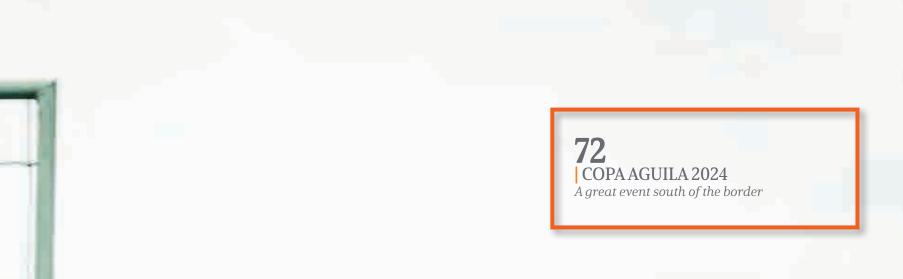
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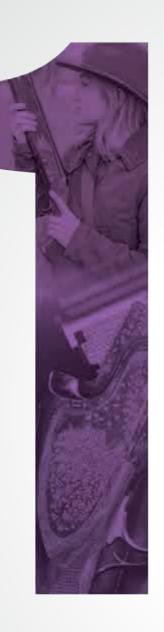
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CELEBRATING





YEARS OF SHOTGUNS FOR WOMEN



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South Central Regional DEFENDER OUTDOORS

//// by matthew gay



//// photos by lil trapper inc & cyle foley

efender Outdoors Clay Sports
Ranch held the South Central
Regional and FITASC slam in the
beginning of September. 671 shooters
entered the main event and were
treated to wonderful targets over a large
spread of terrain. Everything from high
targets from monster towers to reported
sasquatch sightings were on the docket
for this event.

Side Events

900 targets were available for shooters to attempt with all variations of the discipline on the menu. Many shooters excelled with great scores on the side





events. Craig Lott took the 20-gauge sporting event with a 98x100 while Lester Pride dropped only one target to earn the top spot in the 28-gauge. Brett Buehler took home first place with his .410 bore while Justin Napier's 99x100 on the side-by-side earned him a nice trophy. James Killingworth shucked his way to a perfect round 100x100 in the pump event, edging out Dan Callahan by a single target.

The Fort Worth Cup would be decided by shoot-off after six 92s were posted by some great shooters. Thomas Caskey outlasted the rest of the pack and took home the coveted trophy. Derrick Mein dropped just one target in the true pair event to outlast Braxton Oliver by one to wrap up another great weekend of shooting.







Miles and Kiersten Sales went 1,2,3 only separated by a single target each on the lady's side of things.

FITASC

Multiple FITASC events were held at this event including the 200 target FITASC slam. Three 50-target events were held to include 28-gauge, 20-gauge and a special Sunday event across two

Super Sporting and 5-Stand

In no real surprise to anyone, Brandon Powell showed up to the Defender Ranch ready to work. His domination of courses nationwide continued on in Fort Worth as he posted a perfect 100x100 on the Super Sporting course to take champion honors, just ahead of three 99s put up by Cameron Hicks, Connor Daniel and Trevor Jensen. As the event continued, it became clear he

was just hitting his stride. In the ladies concurrent, Kayla Wilgus posted a 96x100 to take the top spot, three targets ahead of Desi Edmunds.

On the 5-Stand, Brandon Powell ran the first three layouts and dropped a single target on the fourth to claim the champion spot ahead of Zachary Kienbaum and Connor Daniel. Madison Sharpe, Karen



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also earned the Winchester Ladies
Cup with a total score of 444 out of
500 targets attempted across the main
event, FITASC Slam and 5-Stand.
Congratulations to Karen and Brandon
for some excellent shooting.



parcours. In the 28-gauge, Kyle Graves posted the lone 48 to take the top trophy ahead of Leif French, Bruce Hoger and Daniel Bailey. Lady honors were earned by Tricia Kocurek for her pair of 23s on these layouts. With the 20-gauge, Ron Mericle, Christina Loudenslager, Jerry Rackley, Steven White and John Knoll each ended their outing with 45s. After a shootoff Mericle took the top spot with Loudenslager earning runner-up honors and the lady champion trophy. Owen Haas stuck around with 50 other shooters to participate in the Sunday 50-target FITASC. Haas ran parcour 1 and only dropped a single target on parcour 2 to finish with the lone 49x50, earning him the champion trophy for his efforts.

Eight sporty parcours were set for the FITASC Slam main event offering unlimited presentations to test the move, mount, shoot prowess of each entrant. Gebben Miles' consistency earned him the designation of champion after his lone 179x200 proved impossible to catch. Just one back from Miles was Bill McGuire who earned the runner-up spot after a shoot-off with

14

Trevor Jensen. Karen Miles dominated the ladies' division, outpacing the closest competitor by 18 targets to take the championship trophy.

South Central Championship

The main event was set across three courses, the Caesar Guerini, the Fabarm and the Syren, each having 10 stations. In another epic performance, Brandon Powell bested the other 670 shooters by dropping only four targets across all layouts. His lone 196x200 stood atop the leaderboard at the conclusion of the main event and earned him the title of South-Central Champion. Back only two targets from Powell was Turner Parcell earning runner-up honors, three ahead of Tom Seay and Todd Hitch.

It was a tight race in the ladies concurrent with only two targets separating the top five shooters. At the end of the day, Karen Miles emerged as the lady champion posting a 182x200, one target ahead of runner-up Savanna Barks and two ahead of Ashley Little (LY3), Colette Owen and Haylyn Hanks. For her consistent shooting throughout the weekend, Karen Miles

















The 2024 Coon Pecker Open (CPO) and All-Around

//// by matthew gay

or another year, the shoot that "wouldn't amount to much" has concluded with another sold out crowd of shooters. In fact, this event had a waiting list for both the CPO and the All-Around events. Having been to shoots all over the United States, the CPO/All-Around is in this writer's favorite. For those who do not know, the CPO is a sporting tournament with multiple side-events. The All-Around runs concurrently with the CPO but has more disciplines, designed to test the "All-Around" skill of the shooter.

Opening Ceremonies

While there is no formal opening ceremonies where we march around the pigeon rings wearing sportscoats and carrying banners, we do celebrate the commencement of this event every year with a great evening of catching up, random folly and the occasional gentleman's wager on various things. While the staff is occupied getting ready for a busy weekend, they take time to welcome back guests and new participants to perhaps the greatest test of shotgun skill on the continent.

FLC is known for astounding cuisine and unmatched hospitality. Its like visiting the home of an old school Italian, you eat, and you eat well. It's not only suggested, its mandatory that you enjoy yourself when visiting FLC. The culture of the club and its events is such that accommodations, the targets, camaraderie and food is so well delivered, whining about anything would be laughable. These folks know how to put on a show.

Friday Night Helice

We finish the opening day of the event with a Friday Night Helice event under the lights on Lord Rhomberg's ring. This event is sponsored by Nu Way Construction compliments of Lord Rhomberg. The Friday night Helice event is capped at 30 entrants and is full every year with a waiting list. This 15-bird race is shot with a great crowd of spectators enjoying the evening with friends and fellow CPO shooters. The competition was pretty hot this year and came down to the final rotation. Thomas Jacobs, Greyson Ponder, and this writer were tied going into the last crank. While Jacobs and Ponder finished out perfectly, I dropped a single target to end with a 14x15. While being one short of a perfect round, my lone





The CPO

The CPO this year was a 120-target marathon shot over 15 stations and offered some phenomenal targets. The course was set on the scenic course circling around and coming out on Model 12 Way. The terrain and flora made for nice presentations by the head target tweaker Gary Fitzjarrell. He has no problem challenging a shooter, but targets were all visible and fair with ample time to engage and break. This was a truly well thought out championship course.

This event was open to all shooters but was also a part of the All-Around event. With that comes some of the best utility shooters in the country. Over the

14x15 didn't have to splint any winnings with anyone. Was it luck or math? Who knows but it worked out pretty well for all three of us.

Side Events

A side event is available for just about every pleasure. At FLC the term "maximum allowed" is ignored. Arbitrary rules are for peasants. In the Extreme Target challenge, 50 targets are set to stretch the capabilities of a 12-gauge shotgun past the point of any registered target you've ever seen. This event is not just about stepping outside your comfort zone, it's about obliterating it. Big targets, insane leads and a lot of fun. On this 50-target event, the top shooter was Carter Burkholder with a 27x50. He outpaced John Francis and Thomas Jacobs by four to take top honors.

Brett Buehler's 44x50 was just one ahead of my fellow Michigander, Matt Hayes in the true pair event. Stephen Odum dominated the King Pump event to take the top spot. Lucas Corselli outpaced Chris Elliot by a single target to take the Super Sporting crown with a 46x50. The FLC take on side events made for fun and challenging additions to the event for all who participated.





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grueling course of three hours, Derrick Mein led the pack of shooters, only dropping 10 targets throughout. Griffin Howe took the second-place spot just three targets behind Derrick and one ahead of another great shooter with the last name of Mein, Mr. Rick. Grace Corselli put up a 99x120 to take the ladies champion spot ahead of Vanessa Donato.

The All-Around

This event is the "mac-daddy" of shot-gun shooting challenges. I would argue that there is no other event structured which tests a shooter more than this one. The event starts with a 30-bird flyer event then moves on to modified wobble trap, trap doubles, a 50-target FITASC, the 120-target CPO sporting event and concludes with a 30-bird Helice race. After the scores are tallied from this three-day marathon, a super-final is set for the top six shooters to determine the All-Around Champion.

When it was all said and done,
Derrick Mein, Rick Mein, Pete Melloy,
Joe Humphrey, Jacob Diller and Konnor
Vohs earned their way into the superfinal event. This event brings shooters
back to Lord Rhomberg's Helice ring.
In the ultimate test, the shooter must
first hit a Helice target for a single point
then engage a second target of their
choice from various machines placed
well outside of the ring. It's a points









game with various twists. The shooters all went through two full rounds, after which the shooter with the lowest score was eliminated. This event went on for awhile and the competition was fierce. Although the top three duked it out to the very end, Derrick Mein ended his weekend as the All-Around Champion. As a wonderful conclusion to a great weekend, his father Mr. Rick Mein earned the runner-up spot just a few points back from Derrick. Our good friend and proprietor of Game Unlimited in Hudson, Wisconsin, Pete Melloy earned the third-place spot.

To all the shooters who had the fortitude to enter this event with me and with some of the best shooters in the industry, I commend you. I'll leave you with a quote from Henry the Fifth: "We few, we happy, we band of brothers. For he today that sheds his blood with me, shall be my brother." Although we did not shed blood, we trudged through and completed the challenge. Congratulations to all who participated.

FLC, CPO and the All-Around

Just before the printing of this article, management at FLC announced the



dates for the 2025 CPO and All-Around (September 26th, 27th and 28th). They also announced that the event will be an invitational for those who have supported them throughout the years of this event. This will be the last year of the CPO which will go down in shooting sports history as one of the greatest. If you have been coming to this event in past years you should look forward to the 2025 shoot. If you are somehow

lucky enough to get an invite, you better make sure you get registered. This event was conceived to foster the social aspect of the shooting sport that used to drive participation and enjoyment for shooters. It is a challenge to experience this with some of the modern shoots based on their structure and timelines. At FLC, this camaraderie and fellowship is a priority. If it's viewed as more of a social club with a shooting problem, so be it. We do this for enjoyment and time spent with likeminded individuals who share our passions.

A big thank you goes out to the staff and members of the FLC family who made this event successful and possible. The food, the beverages, the ad-hoc games and great friends I have met at this event are worth more than any recognition or trophy money can buy. If you are in the know, I'll see you there in September of 2025.

Complete results of the 2024 CPO – All-Around are available on ScoreChaser by scanning the QR code below. ■







The Story of Man's RELATIONSHIP

with Migratory Birds, Part II

//// by mark fitzpatrick





ritings dating back to the 14th century document spaniels for their instinctive talents to find, flush and retrieve woodcock. Enter in the 1870s, the founding sires of both modern breeds of cocker spaniels, the American cocker spaniel and the English cocker spaniel. For 32 years, the American cocker spaniel was the number one most popular dog in America and the English cocker remains throughout history one of the United Kingdom's preferred sporting breeds.

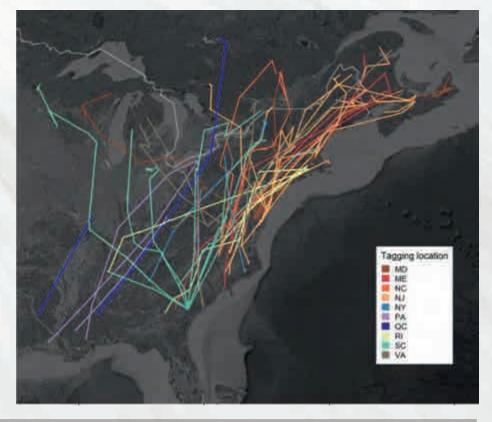
You might ask, why discuss Cocker spaniels in an article about man's relationship with migratory birds... specifically the woodcock? My answer is simple. What other AKC breed is specifically bred and intentionally named for the species it hunts? Clearly, we cannot underestimate man's historical and current global relationship with the woodcock.

Welcome to our three-part series exploring doves, woodcock, and various species of waterfowl as we explore Man's Relationship with Migratory Birds.

Migratory birds are a testament to the interconnectedness of our world, and understanding our relationship with them can help us better protect these incredible travelers. Humans enjoy a long and multifaceted relationship with migratory birds. Embarking on epic journeys spanning continents and defying geographical barriers, bird migration is one of nature's most captivating natural phenomenon demonstrating unparalleled feats of endurance and adaptability.

Our friend the American woodcock breeds across eastern North America from Atlantic Canada to the Great Lakes Region. The American woodcock has two primary flyways: the Central flyway, which is essentially from Ontario to northern Louisiana, and eastern Texas; and the Eastern Atlantic flyway which is from Quebec to northern Florida. Wintering in the worm laden lowlands of the Gulf coast states and Florida is good living for the American woodcock until they return to their breeding grounds in the north. Specifically, American woodcock winter homes include a vast geographic range including Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and East Texas.

The American woodcock's migratory nature means a Northern hunter from the Great Lakes region or the New England states, in addition to finding native birds, can depend on flights heading south out of Canada



to provide enough woodcock to keep things interesting. In these areas, coverts nearly empty the day previous can fill up overnight and provide great shooting opportunities. Usually as the heat and humidity of summer mornings is replaced by crisp refreshing mornings, heavy dew, light frost, brilliant fall colors, and falling leaves, we enjoy the magical month of October, an opportunity for Man to bond with his gun dog in fair pursuit of the great American woodcock and a lifetime of memories.

Woodcock have been celebrated and chronicled since medieval times when the Eurasian woodcock would be cooked in court. In the Americas, they are known for the poetic culture that surrounds them, which has been explored and captured in the pages of letters, journals, books, newspapers and magazines since the 1700s. America's earliest Atlantic coast revolutionary settlers where fascinated by the arrivals and departures of the American woodcock as the barometer of seasonal change as the majority of American woodcock migration routes follow a north-south migration paralleling the Atlantic coast through the primitive encampments and early villages of this



then emerging nation.

The American woodcock, known to many as the timberdoodle, has a lush longstanding history believed to have been first recorded in the American Turf Registry and Sporting Magazine in 1839, and it continues to be a beloved part of upland bird hunting culture. Each fall the memories of past hunts fill my mind, placing a smile on my face as

I drift into sound sleep. I have enjoyed the good fortune to hunt the American woodcock on private preserves ranging from 12,000-acres to 26,000-acres nestled in the timberdoodle's Great Lakes flyway with only my closest hunting comrades sharing the experience. I have also navigated the millions of acres of public lands rich in prime timberdoodle habitat and benefiting from the flyway and tireless conservation efforts and philanthropy. We are fortunate America provides so many varied opportunities for the American sportsman.

Earlier in life, an English setter named Deacon, and before him an English setter named Jock, showed us the way. Of late, an English cocker with the heart of a lion, named Sky; bred, developed and trained to navigate the incredibly dense, wet cover woodcock prefer...cover which posed considerable difficulty for hunters prior to the consistent and prescribed breeding the American cocker and English cocker in the 1870s.

Timberdoodles tend to hold tight to cover, only flushing if you are close to stepping on them. This makes them





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great for training young dogs, but can make them challenging to find if hunting without a dog. A woodcock flush is exhilarating, as they rise briskly like a helicopter lifting off, air passing through their rapidly beating wings and producing a whistling sound. Their flight is often like a fluttering, unpredictable dance or zig-zag to the top of the canopy. Once clear of the canopy they take off like rocket ships, giving them the handle, "timber rockets".

Estimates from the Harvest Information Program indicate U.S. woodcock hunters in the Eastern region spent 99,200 days afield and harvested 49,600 woodcock during the 2018–19 season, while in the Central region hunters spent 246,000 days afield and harvested 130,600 woodcock. These numbers are a significant reduction from the approximately 1.5 million

woodcocks bagged annually during the 1970's. Today, the woodcock population is estimated at 5,000,000 with a 1.1% annual decline due to losses of young forest, and wet-dense-alder-choked-habitat ideal for the timberdoodle.

As we mentioned earlier, one of the American Woodcock's more colorful and time-honored folk names is "timberdoodle" ... probably for the bird's forest-edge haunts, erratic flight, and twittering call notes. First and foremost, the woodcock presents true opportunities for a robust hunt requiring all the skills, experience and luck of the best wingshooting adventure.

A vigorous flyer traveling at night, the timberdoodle, travels between 100 and 200 miles per migratory leg of their nocturnal flight at altitudes 5-stories above the forest floor, to destinations on average 1,000 miles from their home breeding grounds. The birds travel

alone or in loose flocks called "flights." Migration usually peaks in late October and early November in more northern areas, but the process sometimes starts as early as September and lasts until the end of November.

Today, sophisticated technology, committed biologists and conservationists no longer need to guess about the migratory life of the timberdoodle. Technology doesn't lie. Recently, a male woodcock from eastern Maine migrated more than 1,500 miles to winter in southern Alabama and another woodcock from Maine migrated more than 1,100 miles in a mere six days...over 180 miles per day. However, the single evening travel record for the timberdoodle to date is 498 miles according to GPS tracking.

Today, conservation groups like the Ruffed Grouse Society, the American Woodcock Society,





occur over and around the shores of the Great Lakes Megalopolis which includes the areas bordering woodcock breeding grounds in Canada's Ontario Province and all breeding grounds associated with the United States Great Lakes Region and its associated waterways. At over 60 million human inhabitants, the Great Lakes Megalopolis is the largest megalopolis in North America, and second largest in the world, only bested by Europe's excessive density in Western and Central Europe from Great Britain to Italy known to Europeans as the Blue Banna: the world's largest megalopolis.

That's the reality of our world. Human beings and the Timberdoodle have been attracted to the same real

the Eastern Woodcock Migration Research Cooperative, Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative, Wildlife Management Institute, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Woodcock Task Force and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife spend countless hours and millions of dollars studying and banding the American woodcock with GPS monitors, studying and improving their courting, breeding and nesting grounds and understanding their migration paths and their layover grounds. Previous to this scientific study by the American Woodcock Society and other biologists and naturalists, much of what we know today about improving American woodcock habitat in the right places was a relative mystery.

This newfound knowledge is critical to reversing the trend discovered in the 1960s, American woodcock populations are on a steady and predictable decline due to man's development of their previously natural habitats. If you look at any photo of any area in the United States dated in the 1960s and hold it side-by-side to a current photo of the same area dated 2024, the contrast is stark and needs no further explanation. Since, the majority of the eastern region's American woodcock migration paths follow the longest north-south



interstate in America. Interstate 95 connecting the northern tip of Maine at the Canadian border to Miami, Florida, it is easy to understand man and timberdoodle share the same real estate. Thanks to I-95, the eastern seaboard's spinal column, nearly 2,000 miles of travel corridor connect some of the largest and most important cities in America. Today, this area housing over 50 million Americans has been termed the North East Corridor Megalopolis and starts in Boston and travels south to include Albany, New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington D.C.

Unfortunately, the second most active American woodcock migratory paths

estate. Man, since the age of the greatest generation and the baby boomers, has worked tirelessly to make the United States the greatest superpower in the history of civilization. These two megalopolises; the Great Lakes Region Megalopolis and the Northeast Corridor Megalopolis, are the largest and most important foundations of this country's continuing superpower status.

The good news is man is now better in-touch with the plight of the Timberdoodle and its need for fresh young forests and pristine-wet-alderthickets. Although we cannot turn back the clock to the 1940s when agriculture was king and when the Timberdoodle enjoyed free reign of vast habitats, we



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paths, its habitat and man's relationship to it.

As for the status of today's timberdoodle, the American woodcock is currently an internet phenom reaching viral status as it showcases its instinctive rocking behavior to jazz, blues and rock and roll. Tik Tok, Instagram, Facebook and others are featuring nature's newest celebrity... the timberdoodle. It really is quite entertaining and I encourage you to take a peek at the timberdoodle's impressive dance moves. Like a survivor, it appears

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The timberdoodle has a rich tradition in hunting culture, often regarded with affection for its unique behaviors and the minimal gear required for its pursuit. This bird, with its distinctive mating dance and ability to sit tight for gun dogs, offers a different kind of hunting experience, both challenging and rewarding. Hunting traditions for the timberdoodle are diverse, ranging from the grouse camps of the north to the gumbo of the south, often involving more pointers than retrievers. These

of conservation and the appreciation of the timberdoodle's role in the ecosystem.

The American Woodcock Society is keenly focused on woodcock habit management of aging forests requiring restoration to young and even-aged habitats suitable for breeding. These large areas of shrubland and young forest, are necessary to prevent further woodcock population declines. Just as the woodcock has adapted to the internet, the Timberdoodle appears to be extending their range northward and ZOLI INTERNATIONAL LLC

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westward, as they seek new areas opened by man's large-scale harvesting.

First and foremost, just as the world understands Abbott and Costello, Penn and Teller, and Tom and Jerry, we must understand in most areas of the Great Lakes Region and the Atlantic Coast Region, hunters pursue Ruffed Grouse and American woodcock simultaneously because they inhabit very similar habitats during the Fall hunting season. Some hunters prefer pursuing the wily Ruffed grouse and some prefer the stealthy and hard to hit Timberdoodle.

The hunting of both is enhanced by a good bird dog and the stimulation of flighting grouse and woodcock simultaneously. This keeps hunters returning for the unparalleled thrill of this perennial fair chase pursuit.

Each state has different regulations as it pertains to hunting woodcock. In Michigan, a state issued woodcock stamp is required to legally hunt them. Although classified as migratory and enjoying some benefit under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, a federal duck stamp is not required, but the purchase of one certainly helps establish, grow and protect their habitat...so make sure you get one. Hunters must ensure they are familiar with the federal laws and adhere to state regulations, which can detail specific hunting seasons and bag limits.

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The brain of an American woodcock is unique among birds as you might expect from a Tik Tok celebrity. The cerebellum, which controls muscle coordination and body balance and his dance moves, is below the rest of the brain and above the spinal column. In short, the timberdoodle's brain is upside-down compared to other birds. Fans of Tik Tok believe this upside-down brain is the origin of its cool-dance-moves. Biologists suggest another theory which holds...the woodcock evolved: the eyes moved back in the skull, the

bill lengthened, and the nostrils approached the base of the bill, allowing for enhanced ground-probing abilities. As a result, the brain was rearranged. and the modern bird, in essence. has an upsidedown brain and dance moves Michael Jackson envies.

The timberdoodle's eyes can see 360 degrees horizontal and 180 degrees vertical, a huge asset to a grounddwelling bird which wants to see predators coming from any angle. The timberdoodle fuels its long migration flights and cool dance moves on a high fat and protein diet of 60% worms and 40% insects such as ants, flies, beetles, crickets, caterpillars, grasshoppers, millipedes, centipedes, spiders and various larvae. The timberdoodle eats twice a day, early evening and just before dawn, consuming amounts equal to its body weight. Imagine if you had a high metabolism which allowed you to consume food equal to your body weight every day. The grocery bill would bankrupt you.

Although you may find the timberdoodle in a few different spots, the boggy lowlands of an alder swamp with its wide range of flora are a guaranteed habitat for the timberdoodle. The alders grow so thick, and the soil is so wet and spongy, it is nearly impenetrable and perfect habitat and safe harbor for our little friend the timberdoodle.

Some enthusiastic hunters follow the timberdoodle migration from north to

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south chasing the flight from stateto-state. As someone who has chased many passions from state-to-state, the timberdoodle box remains unchecked for this hunter.

Life in the Great Lakes region offers ample Timberdoodle adventures to provide a lifetime of memories. One of my favorite memories is life in Dan Lorimer's rustic Woodcock camp because it was simple and meaningful; dogs eat first, then the cook fire is built, sparked and stoked, adult beverages are passed about, sweaty clothes from a rigorous day of hunting are discarded in exchange for dry, hands are washed, and kitchen prep begins with everyone manning their prescribed assignment to completion.

Dan Lorimer's Woodcock camp is a rite-of-passage nourished with stories embellished by years of remembrances and fondness for the fair pursuit of Timberdoodle by dog and man. Wonderful stories and good food prepared over a campfire are hallmarks of a great rustic Woodcock hunt. After all, as Napoleon said, "An army marches

on its stomach"...and so do hunting dogs and Woodcock hunters.

Dan Lorimer's well-seasoned castiron skillet was as important to a good rustic Woodcock hunt as his trusted dogs. Daunting in its size and weight, this cast-iron skillet needed the forearms of a blacksmith to muscle this old and trusted culinary friend through its various routines around the campfire. Given a hearty campfire

and his cast-iron skillet. Dan Lorimer. and his close friend Rusty, could cook anything freshly harvested from nature to its intended perfection.

The first course; Woodcock breasts generously marinated in Jack Daniels, seared in the piping hot cast-iron skillet, flavored with campfire smoke, drizzled with soy sauce, balsamic glaze and topped with fresh orange zest. Served in bite-sized portions, the

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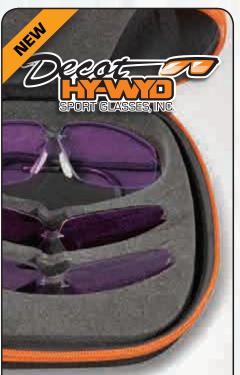


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Woodcock breasts melt in your mouth and catalyze a broad gastronomic smile felt all from your tongue to your tummy.

Still relying on the bounty from the day's hunt, the evening progressed to the main entrée, American Woodcock Guinness stew with bacon, dumplings, and blackberries. A perfect dish to celebrate the Irish history of so many of our hunting brethren.

Upon tasting...this rustic celebration of our well-earned American woodcock proved to be a delightful, earthy, dark and welcoming concoction filled with nature's bounty of vegetables, onions and treasured mushrooms discovered during the hunt on the forest floor. At serving, Dan Lorimer and Rusty drizzled Jameson Irish Whiskey over top, just as sherry is drizzled on lobster bisque...it was perfect in every way imaginable.

The conversation, sometimes bawdy, was lubricated by campfire spirits and euphoria from the day's hunt. I would later learn; rustic woodcock hunts like this are few and far between, as they are reserved only for those who follow Dan Lorimer into the most remote, hard to hunt and productive woodcock habitats in the Great Lakes region.









Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Ohio

21ST ANNUAL CHARITY SPORTING CLAYS SHOOT ///// by mark allard

eptember 20, 2024, marked the 21st Annual Charity Sporting Clays Shoot, benefiting the Ronald McDonald House of Central Ohio (Columbus). After undergoing a recent expansion and ribbon-cutting ceremony in December 2023, the Columbus House is now the world's largest with the addition of 84 guest rooms. Over the course of the past year, 4294 families were served at House.

This year's sporting clays event was held for the first time at Eagle's Nest Sporting Grounds near Mt. Gilead, Ohio. Owner Dan Bailey and his staff did an excellent job of setting up two courses to accommodate the 300 participants for this one-day event. Special stations included an "arches" station, a true pair thrown as the McDonald's Arches and a "Long Shot" station. The Long Shot station was one longer distance target that allowed for two shots. Participants

who broke the target won a prize as did participants on the Arches station after breaking a true pair.

As in past years, each squad was accompanied by a pro shooter to provide helpful hints and ensure the safety of all. Each participant received 100 targets, four boxes of ammunition, breakfast, lunch, use of a golf cart and a shooter's gift. Participants also had the chance to win a Fabarm L4S sporting clays shotgun as well as other firearms. The event also included a silent auction of shooting-related gear and a "shell pull" game to win premium liquors and wine.

After the last clay target was crushed, \$208,888 was netted for the Columbus House. Committee co-chairs Charles Wharton, Mark Allard and Co-Chair Emeritus Dr. Phil Taylor all expressed their pleasure with the outcome and the venue.

The committee would like to thank Everhart Advisors, the naming sponsor, along with our other sponsors, Hugh White Honda, Kokosing Construction, Gilbane, Telhio Credit Union, Fifth Third Bank, Crown Mercedes Benz, Look Communications, ASI Commercial Roofing and Maintenance and Martin Brower. A special thanks to City BBQ for their generous donation of lunch for the participants, volunteers and staff.

Make plans to attend next year's event, scheduled for Friday, September 26, 2025, at Eagle's Nest Sporting Grounds. For additional info, contact Jacob Welter at the Ronald McDonald House at

jacob.welter@rmhc-centralohio.org

To learn more about the Central Ohio Ronald McDonald House Charities visit their website at

rmhc-centralohio.org ■











Rizzini BR240 Cole Special

he BR 240 Cole Special comes shipped in a high-quality breakdown ABS case marked with the Rizzini logo and well protected for transport. The receiver and barrel set are further housed in their own Rizzini socks and secured in place. This shotgun is the culmination of much research and development in association with Rich Cole of Cole's Gunsmithing. The stock geometry is per Rich's specifications and uniquely tailored to the modern American shotgunner.

After relieving the receiver from its sock, the engraving in gold stands out prominently in contrast to the high gloss blackened base of the receiver. The Turkish walnut stock was well figured and very well done with wonderful checkering and clean lines. The accessories compartment held the five extended choke tubes, a choke tube wrench, and a manual with a warranty card.

The Stock

As noted on the initial impression, the stock on the BR240 is specifically designed with modern measurements for the American shooter. It features a longer length of pull, slightly increased pitch, a very comfortable right-handed palm swell (left-handed stocks available) and a solid adjustable comb (as an option). The checkering is cut at 20 lines per inch and well proportioned, offering a secure and comfortable grip. The buttstock comes supplied with a sporting style recoil pad.

The Turkish walnut on this sample has very handsome marbling accentuated by an elegant glossy oil finish. The sporting style forearm is wellcovered in proper checkering, giving the

shooter excellent control and security. It locks solidly in place employing the Rizzini Anson style push button mechanism which latches securely to the barrel lug.

The Receiver

The receiver on this model is designed for both beauty and durability. Built on the boxlock action originally conceived by the brilliant mind of John Moses Browning, this underlug design is capable of round counts well into the six digits. The embellishments on the receiver can be most accurately described as simply elegant. The semigloss black Ceracote[™] receiver is sharply contrasted by profiled borders inlayed with gold. The side of the receiver bears this model's designation in brilliant script while the bottom of the receiver is decorated with the Rizzini crest and "Cole Special." The receiver coating provides maximum resistance to corrosion while maintaining a handsome finish.

The barrels pivot on trunnions installed in the ears of the receiver and lock solidly into battery engaging the monoblock at multiple points within the receiver. The BR240 receiver has some additional width to it, adding strength and durability to all stress points. The single selective inertia trigger had nearly zero creep and broke at just over three pounds on both the upper and lower barrel. Reset of the well radiused trigger blade was quick with very little return necessary to engage the second sear. The trigger blade on this model is adjustable to perfect grip length, a measurement which is often overlooked by some. The safety and barrel selector is done in the traditional

Italian style, located on top of the manual safety switch. Once the safety is moved to the fire position, the barrel selector locked securely into place.

The Barrels

When it comes to any sporting gun, barrel construction and design is absolutely critical to a model's performance and reputation. Regulation is the test performed to determine that both barrels effectively and evenly distribute the shot in the correct place. Think of it as the geometry that ensures both barrels are not only symmetrically built to deliver the payload to the same place down range, but also the element of putting the patterns consistently where the shooter is looking. The BR240 had excellent barrel regulation and when in a vice demonstrated a 50/50 point of impact (POI). For shooters who prefer a higher POI, the adjustable comb option will give the shooter full versatility to customize POI to their specific requirements.

The chrome lined barrels on this sample measured 32 inches and were well constructed with a gloss blue finish. Various rib options are available depending on the model chosen. The standard models are provided with a 10mm-8mm tapered vent rib. The "X" models come with a 4mm ramped vent rib. This rib is well executed and outfitted with a white Bradley style front bead and a small silver mid-bead.





wrench. These choke tubes delivered great pattern density and uniform distribution.

Shooting the BR240

A shotgun that does not shoot where you look is problematic, so the first thing necessary with any new gun is to conduct a test fitting on the pattern plate. The adjustable comb was simple to move and locked tight into place when adjusted. This test sample was set up with a 60-40 point of impact, which is this writer's desired configuration. This step is vital to building confidence when shooting a new gun.

The test range for this excursion was the Michigan Trapshooting Association home grounds where they now have not only multiple skeet fields, but also a 5-stand and 16-station sporting clays course. The BR240 performed well with one ounce, 1250 feet per second loads. Recoil was quite manageable with the Cole Special's stock measurements. The operation was flawless, and the gun balanced about an inch in front of the trunnions. This model is supplied with ejectors which are well timed, and the controls all function perfectly.

The weight of this model, at 8 lbs. 11 oz, is right in the sweet spot. It's just enough to mitigate the recoil of heavy sporting loads without making the gun move sluggishly. The trigger pull was crisp and just over three pounds when measured on both barrels. This is a nice shooter and looks at home on any gun rack. The BR240 comes in at the mid-range level and offers a refined look and exceptional functionality at its price point. For anyone looking for a purpose-built sporter with American design characteristics, legendary Rizzini reliability and blessed with Rich Cole's expertise, visit Cole Fine Guns and Gunsmithing at *colegun.com* ■







| Specifications: | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| | | |
| Model: | Rizzini BR240 Cole Special | |
| Gauge: | 12 Gauge (20-gauge and two-barrel set available) | |
| Barrels: | 32" (tested) (30" available) | |
| LOP: | 14 ¾" (trigger blade adjustable for grip length) | |
| DAC: | 1½" (as tested) (Adjustable) | |
| DAH: | 2¼" (as tested) | |
| Weight: | 8 lbs. 11oz | |
| Chokes: | 5 - Cole Precision XL Bore extended (CYL, IC, M, IM, F) | |
| Suggested Retail: | Starting at \$5100 | |

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The Annual Hosford Cup

//// by matthew gay, photos by jim kralik

his marks the sixth year of the Hosford Cup hosted by the Ann ▲ Arbor Moose Sportsman's League. This event continues to draw some of the best side-by-side shooters in the region. Paying homage to a great craftsman with a love for everything side-byside, Jon Hosford, participants gather to celebrate the tradition and history of the gilded age of scatter-gunning. This year's menu had shooters engage 100 total targets on both the 5-stand and wobble trap layouts. The targets are set to challenge shooters while also offering year. presentations perfectly suited for classic side by sides.

The weather was decent this year, the intermittent sputtering of rain

was not going to hamper this event. These gentlemen and gentleladies pride themselves on doing the more challenging things, in the traditional way. Perhaps it is for that reason they gravitate to the side-by-side shotgun sports. Either way, with some dressed the part and others in modern garb, this event offers genre specific vendors to a swap meet with their wares for event participants and attendees. Some wonderful kit and classic side-by-sides graced the tables under the pavilion this year.

Two side events were quite popular this year. The ever-exciting tiny gun event consisted of three attempts at a target with a very small .410 hammer gun. These were often built for the children of the upper class and nobility in the gilded era. To say this is a challenge is an understatement. Imagine hacking a couple inches off the stock of a Red Ryder BB gun and trying to hit a moving clay with that, only with tiny two-inch extra light .410 loads. It's just great fun.

The other event was unique and quite enjoyable, "don't shoot the hen." In this event targets were thrown as random pairs from various trap machines located left, right and center of the shooting position. With no particular sequence, one of the birds thrown would be a white target, a hen. Sometimes the pair of targets flew and

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all 100 targets. After a spectacular 49x50 on the wobble trap, paired up with a high 40s score on the 5-stand, this year's champion cup went to David Olshansky. Olshansky is a well known and prominent member of the side-byside shooting community. His work to further the sport as one of the founding members of the Society of the American Side by Side Shotgun Organization has elevated the visibility of the sport and has brought many new shooters into the fold. While this shooter fell a couple targets short of a third Hosford Cup, I couldn't think of a better competitor and ambassador to join the ranks of Hosford Cup winners. Congratulations David, you and I will battle it out again next year.

tracked close together, but no matter what, the objective was to "not shoot the hen." Shooters enjoyed the challenge of picking their shot, some of which required great patience to allow time for the orange bird to separate from the hen. This was a great twist on a fun game of randomly thrown targets testing the precision of each shooter.

The main event commenced as shooters rotated from wobble to 5-Stand and vice versa, until they had attempted







The Ann Arbor Moose Sportsman's League again did a wonderful job hosting this event. The volunteer staff is always welcoming and enthusiastic about this shoot, rolling out the red carpet and making their club our home for a day. A great lunch, complete with some wonderful corn on the cob welcomed shooters in the middle of the day, as well as other refreshments

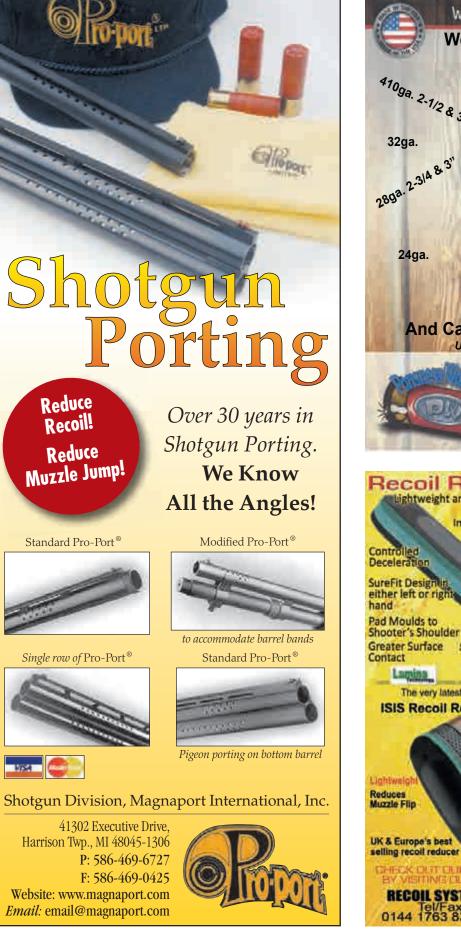
and great camaraderie. Nice targets and a group of hard-working volunteers is what makes this shoot one of the most enjoyable in the region. Bravo, and thank you to the members of the Ann Arbor Moose for recognizing the importance of events like this in our sport.



For Information on the 2024 Hosford Cup and notifications on next year's event—visit, like and follow the Ann Arbor Moose Sportsman's League Facebook page.

If you want to join a great group, visit the Society of American Side by Side Shotgun on Facebook and join one of the best groups of side-by-side aficionados on the web.







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CZ-USA 712 G3 Target

//// by matthew gay



big thanks goes out to the folks at CZ USA for making a sample of this new target breaking machine available to Clay Shooting USA for a review. The 712 G3 came packaged in a heavy-duty ABS break-down case branded with the maker's name. Each section was safely

54

packaged and fit well into the case. The stock was quite well figured for a gun at this price point, with an adjustable comb...meaning it has been purpose built for sporting shooters. The accessories case held three additional extended choke tubes and tools for the adjustable comb. A manual, warranty card, stock

shims and a second piston for field loads were also contained within the case.

The Stock

The Turkish walnut on this sample sported an elegant oil finished satin

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and easily confirmed on a pattern plate. The importance of this cannot be overstated. When a shooter knows exactly where their shotgun is shooting, confidence follows. The factory installed sporting style rubber butt-plate is well fit and measured about 7/8 of an inch thick.

The Receiver

The 712 G3 receiver has modern styling and has been updated from the G2 model to cradle the forearm more securely. The aluminum receiver is finished in a matte black with a series of grooves on the top for glare reduction. The trigger had a slight amount of play and broke at just over five pounds. Reset was quick with no overtravel and could be felt clearly when shooting this model. The trigger assembly is secured with a single pin and features an oversized triangle shaped crossbolt safety button placed at the front of the trigger guard. Specifically designed for the sporting shooter, the bolt release, magazine lever operation.

It should be noted that the G3 is chambered for three-inch shells and provided with a second piston that can be easily swapped out for ammunition stouter than typical target loads. This model has been designed as a sporter with utilitarian capabilities.

The Barrel

The barrel on this sample measured thirty inches and were well constructed with a matte black finish. The ventilated rib was well installed to the barrel, providing great capacity to dissipate the heat of those high-volume shooting days. The seven-millimeter ventilated top rib on this model is best described as flat in orientation. The barrels are finished with a white Bradlev style front bead and a small silver mid-bead. The G3 is provided with five extended choke tubes (CYL, IC, M, IM and Full). The chokes are threaded using the CZ Active-Choke system which is optimized model. The bores are chrome lined and shooter and hunter.







Shooting the SCTP Sterling

I took this shotgun through its paces at the Michigan Trap Shooting Association's home grounds on their new 5-Stand layout. With the target piston in place, ejection and function of this model was flawless with 1250 feet per second one-ounce loads. The oversized controls were wonderful to operate, and the gun functioned flawlessly. Although a little lighter than my standard over/under sporter, this shotgun pointed and moved very well. The 30-inch barrel offered an excellent sight plane.

In order to fit the gun correctly, additional comb height was required. With the tools supplied in the case, about a half inch was all that was necessary to get perfect eye alignment and put the shot where I was looking. The comb locked securely into place and did not move after it had been set. Recoil was extremely manageable, particularly when running a couple of 32-gram 1250 feet per second rounds through it. The gas system efficiently mitigated recoil and made this model pleasant to shoot.

As we continuously seek to increase the ranks of the shooting sports, cost to enter the sport is always a concern. CZ USA did their homework and created an excellent option at a perfect price point for both the new shooter just getting into the sporting disciplines and the seasoned shooter who may want a backup for those miserable weather days where one may not want to take their prized sporter out in the rain. Additionally, the ability to simply swap out a piston and take the G3 into the goose blind offers another dimension of utility to this model. For shooters looking for an excellent option for

everything from clay targets to waterfowl, the CZ-USA 712 G3 Target must be a consideration.

For additional information or to find a dealer near you visit CZ-USA at cz-usa.com



| Specifications: | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| | |
| Model: | CZ-USA 712 G3 Target |
| Gauge: | 12 Gauge |
| Barrels: | 30" |
| LOP: | 14 ½" |
| DAC: | 1½" (as tested) (Adjustable) |
| DAH: | 2¼" (as tested) |
| Pitch: | 7 degrees |
| Weight: | 7lbs 5 oz |
| Chokes: | 5 extended (CYL, IC, M, IM, F) |
| Suggested Retail: | \$799 |





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s the wing shooting season arrives the skeet and trap fields are full of regulars and seasonal wing shooters tuning up and dusting off for the birds yet to come. Everyone knows that skeet and trap are derived from the sport of live pigeon shooting, which dates back to England in 1792. Back then live pigeons were released from various enclosers in front of the shooter for both sport and competition. For the shooters who are looking for a more challenging shooting experience then the predictability of the skeet and trap fields, one of the fastest growing shooting sports across the United States now is Helice, sometimes referred to as ZZ bird.

Helice was first developed in Europe in 1950 as a substitute, when live pigeon shooting was banned in many countries. Belgian live pigeon trap champion Chevalier David de lossy and expert mechanic Fernand Moinil made the first Helice machines powered by an electric motor. As the sport was introduced in the United States in 1960, its popularity grew. Helice is often referred to as the



closest thing to live bird shooting, without the bird.

The Helice target looks like a child's toy with its bright orange plastic propellers and a white plastic center cap, which is about the same size as a 90-millimeter midi. It is anything but a child's toy and more of a shooter's humbling device, able to spring, dive and dart to avoid the shot as if it has a mind of its own. The terms "electrocibles," or "ZZ birds" is believed to refer to the zig zag pattern it often makes in flight. Some believe the name is derived from when it was first introduced in America, when the targets were made of zinc and referenced a common pigeon used in competition called a zurito, hence "zinc zuritos" or ZZ. The sport is now referred to more universally as Helice.

The Field

The Helice field looks like an inverted trap field. With a single shooting station 26 meters (85.3 feet) behind five throwing machines positioned five





meters apart (there is a variation that uses 7 throwers, but most are 5). Each Helice machine is equipped with one or two launchers, making for ten possible presentations from five launching locations. To his or her series of targets the shooter presses an activation button on the microphone, which starts all five Helice machines. A voice activated call will throw at random a bird from one of the five machines, with no known sequence, so the shooter must react instinctively to the randomly launched target.

A round of five is called a crank with a break after the first 15 birds. A complete game of 30 birds is called a race. The object of a race is to hit as many Helice targets as possible, by separating the white witness cap from the wings. To be scored, the white witness cap must fall within a twenty-four-inch-high fenced semi-circle field twenty-one-meters (68.9 feet) past the launchers.

Sounds easy right? Not so much... the wings respond to every breeze moving the target left to right up down (remember zig zag). The machine also will randomly choose if the bird will be thrown from the top or the lower launcher so the bird could be high or ground level. Unlike American skeet or trap, a perfect score is rare.

Helice Rules

As in clay shooting, the shooter calls pull to release the bird. In Helice, the shooter is permitted to take two shots at the target in an attempt to dislodge the witness cap.

- Only gauges 12 and smaller may be used
- Maximum loads for 12 gauges remain 1oz 7 ½ (Euro 28 gr. 2.7mm)
- Kills are recorded when the witness cap separates completely from the orange wing and falls within the fenced perimeter
- It is the shooters responsibility to remain safe at all times. Shooters can shoot from the shooting stand only. The gun must have an action visibly open and clear before the shooter leaves if the shooter turns around on the last bird without a clear gun the bird will be called a miss.
- All starting positions- gun down or fully mounted are allowed as long as deemed safe by the referee
- Shooters can only load when in the shooting stand and the ring has been

declared clear of personal by the referee

Helice in the United States is governed by the United States Helice association. Their goal is to promote the growth of Helice in the US and to choose a US team that will represent the United States internationally. Selection matches are held yearly for this purpose

Currently the cost for participation in the game of Helice is more expensive (per target) than any of the other shooting sports, with an average cost of \$3 per target or more, depending on the club. It is, however, a different game where a full day of competition consists of 30 targets, as opposed to 200 or more.

For those interested in giving Helice a try, visit *ushelice.com* and see the list of clubs that offer this discipline. At a number of major shoots, they offer the chance to give it a try. Keep in mind that Helice should come with a warning label, "THIS SPORT CAN BE ADDICTIVE."









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YOUTH SHOOTING TEAMS AWARDED CASH GRANTS

Youth shooting team across the nation have received cash grants to assist with critical expenses through our Team Endowment Program. The most recent grant cycle awarded 559 youth shooting teams. The team grant funds, which totaled \$2,610,523, assist

with ammunition, targets, entry fees, travel, gear, and more. Cash grants paid in 2024 now total \$11,316,527. This year, the average grant payout per team is \$4,535. Every dollar donated allows more of our youth to be part of a shooting team. Supporting these high school

and college athletes is an investment in the future of shooting sports, the outdoors, and even conservation. We want to thank all our supporters, sponsors, and partners. These funds wouldn't be available to the youth shooting community without you!



"The Shanksville-Stonycreek High School varsity rifle team has reached a point that we couldn't even imagine twenty years ago. Team core operations are fully funded by annual MidwayUSA Foundation grants."

– Jay McClatchey, Co-founder and Volunteer Coach

YOUTH SHOOTING ORGANIZATIONS ALSO RECEIVE CASH GRANTS

Just like teams, agency and donordesignated endowments now apply for their grants during the spring and fall grant cycles. These organizations have a mission or program focused on youth







shooting sports. They are vital partners in growing youth shooting sports, hosting youth shooting events, providing resources and training coaches, and offering additional support critical to our youth shooting teams. In our most recent grant cycle, we awarded over \$710,221 to 24 organizations and three donor-advised funds. The next cash grant cycle opened on October 15.



64 MIDWAYUSA FOUNDATION 65

HOMETOWN CHALLENGE

2024 Winners

We are happy to announce the winners of this year's Hometown Challenge Sweepstakes! This was our most successful Hometown Challenge, raising more money for youth shooting sports than in previous years. Nearly 500 youth shooting teams received an endowment donation in September, which we matched! Those donations totaled \$596.626.59! After our 1:1 match, that's over one million dollars for youth shooting teams in just one month! In addition, youth shooting sports organizations also received





donations to support their mission. In total, \$639.810.59 was donated to make our Hometown Challenge a huge success! Along with matching dollars, we provided \$80,000 in endowment incentive dollars to

drew another thirty (30) teams to win \$1,000 each, Congratulations to Peoria Skeet and Trap Youth from Illinois for their first-place victory! This team received \$104,218.74 in donations, and we awarded this team another \$15,000! Additional winning teams were from a variety of states.

\$27,000

vouth target S. aged 6-18 \$1.8 BILLION spent by youth target shooters per year on

MIDWAYUSAFOUNDATION.ORG

Hometown Challenge & Sweepstakes Over \$596,000 Raised 1st - Peoria Skeet and Trap Youth \$104,218 2nd - Lawrence County Young Guns \$50,300 3rd - Rio Salado Target Terminators \$29,001 \$28,276 4th - Bismarck/Mandan Rifle & Pistol **Junior Team**

Thanks to our committed industry sponsors, we awarded 103 prizes, as well. We are proud to announce those winners and hope you enjoy your prize. If you are a winner and have not received an email, please get in touch with us at info@midwayusafoundation.org. MidwayUSA Foundation and the thousands of youth shooting teams we support thank you for your generosity throughout September to make our Hometown Challenge another victory in our mission to change the future of youth shooting sports.

5th - Buckeye Outdoor Youth Education

& Shooting Center





TAKE AIM TECHNOLOGIES SUPPORTS THE MIDWAYUSA FOUNDATION

to Benefit Youth Shooting Sports

Columbia, MO - Take Aim Technologies (Take Aim) brings high tech to clay sports shooting. Thousands of youth shooting programs, including a team in your small town and national organizations, rely on their MidwayUSA Foundation endowment funds. Annual cash grants from those endowments assist with purchasing ammo, targets, entry fees, and safety equipment, plus additional expenses critical in running each program. As the endowment grows, the cash grant grows. Much like teams and organizations rely on their endowment, MidwayUSA Foundation relies on industry sponsors to assist in offsetting costs, allowing more dollars to benefit endowments. Take Aim steps up big by supporting the product grant program with donations of their ShotTracker instructional

Take Aim is proud to be a sponsor of MidwayUSA Foundation's upcoming Day of Clays Iowa on September 7, 2024, in Oskaloosa, Iowa. Day of Clays is a 100-target sporting clays fundraiser for all ages and skill levels that allows registrants to choose the youth shooting program that will benefit from their registration. Every squad or shooter registration is a tax-deductible donation to an endowment that is matched by MidwayUSA Foundation. Registration is now open and squads or single shooters can register at midwayusafoundation.org/docia

Take Aim Technologies, the creator of the patented SmartShot® Software Technology, has a passion for helping clay target shooters improve their shooting performance. This software technology is at the heart of a product line of instructional shooting tools which includes ShotTracker, the ClayTracker Pro app, and the ClayTracker Cloud portal. This product suite focuses on helping clay target shooters put the center of their shot pattern onto the center of the clay target on every shot.

The ShotTracker mounts to the barrel of your shotgun and provides immediate feedback via the ClayTracker Pro app on shot pattern placement, range to the clay, probability of breakage and many other shot details. The ClayTracker Cloud portal enables coaches and shooters to review the ShotTracker data including Panoramic Videos, Shot Results, and Shot Details from any Internet-connected computer or tablet.

We are thrilled to partner with the MidwayUSA Foundation by donating





About Take Aim-Take Aim brings technology to the shotgun shooting sports via instructional products and tools including the ShotTracker and ClayTracker applications. These tools help youth shooters gain additional shooting prowess and enable coaches to identify areas of to work on and track a shooter's improvement. Take Aim is a Texas based company with all manufacturing operations in the U.S.A. To find out more about Take Aim visit our website *TakeAimTech.com* or call 469-489-1999.











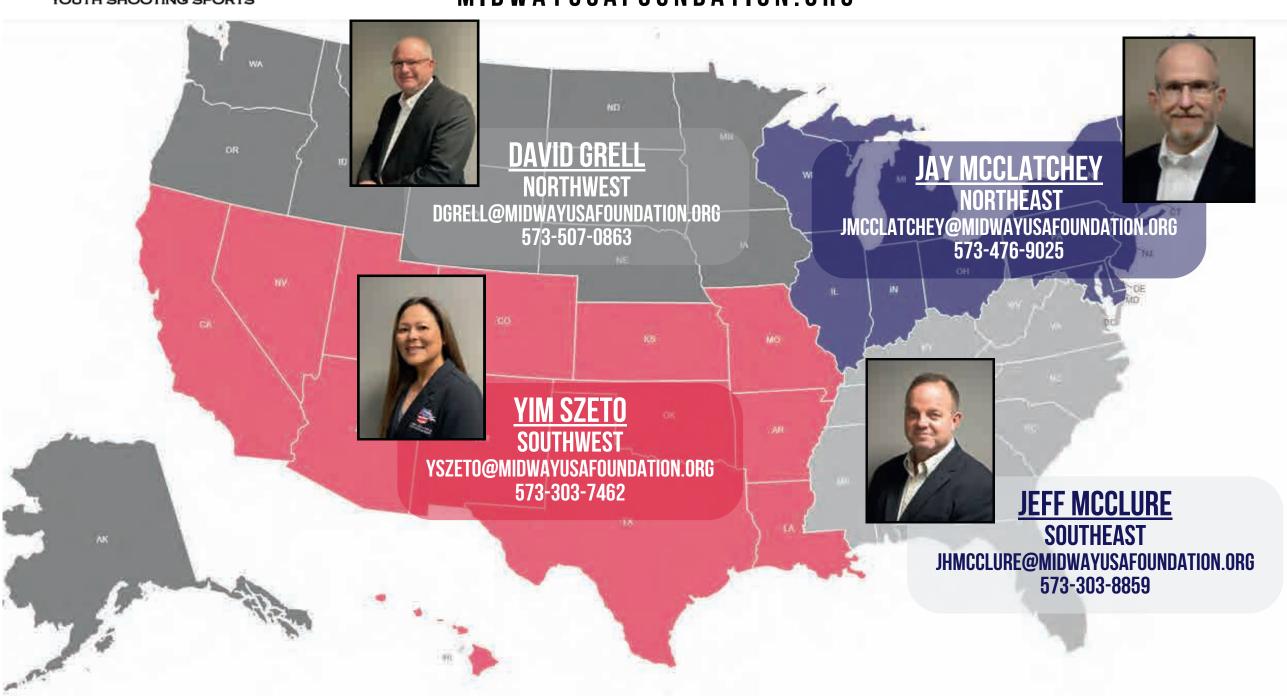




MIDWAYUSA FOUNDATION

PROGRAM MANAGERS

MIDWAYUSAFOUNDATION.ORG



Your program manager can help your shooting team...

- Start a Team Endowment
- Grow your Team Endowment
- Sign up for FREE fundraising product(s)
- Apply for your annual cash grant

 Answer all your questions about MidwayUSA Foundation





The 2024 Copa Aguila highlighted a standout performance by Jonathan Prince, who claimed the overall grand prize with the highest score across the entire competition. His skill, precision, and dedication earned him top honors, solidifying his place among the best

shooters in the tournament's history.

"We are thrilled with the success of this year's Copa Aguila," said Joey Zoubi, Aguila Ammunition Marketing Director. "The passion, camaraderie, and sportsmanship displayed throughout the event were truly inspiring. It's an honor to bring together such a talented group of individuals from different corners of the world to celebrate the art and sport of competitive shooting."

This year's tournament, which returned after a pandemic hiatus, was a collaborative effort with Safari Saltillo Club and Club Escopeteros del Norte, bringing excitement to a wide audience of competitors, families, and spectators alike at the two top-notch facilities.

With over 50,000 USD in prizes, the 2024 Copa Aguila reinforced its standing as a marquee event in the shooting sports world. As Aguila Ammunition looks ahead to future editions, the bar has been set high, promising more thrilling competitions, larger turnouts, and unforgettable experiences for participants and attendees alike.



GUN OWNERS CARE

Gun owners care about the safety, preventing unauthorized access to firearms, bettering communities, helping those in need and conserving wildlife and wild places for generations to come.

You won't hear these positive stories about real gun owners and pro-gun advocates in the mainstream media. In fact, you're more likely to see insulting messages that try to shun or even shame gun owners due to some heinous acts of criminals. It's time for gun owners to tell their stories, to show how we're making a difference, to show that we don't fit under one identity and to keep others accountable for trying to villainize lawful gun owners.

We're calling on all gun owners to join us.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN DO THIS — TOGETHER.

GunOwnersCare.org







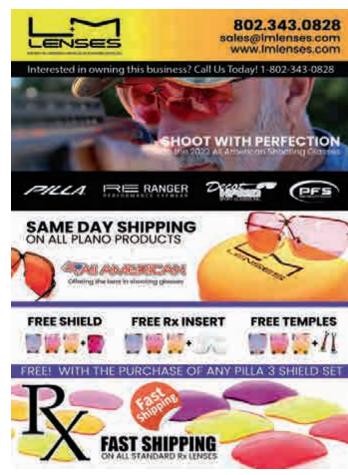
Aguila Ammunition is one of the largest rimfire manufacturers in the world, providing high-quality ammunition for both recreational and professional shooters. With over 60 years of experience, Aguila is dedicated to offering products that meet the highest standards of performance and reliability.

For more information about future events and registration details, please visit *aguilaammo.com*













ne of the great things about this job is that I get to shoot at some of the nicest gun clubs across the country. Sometimes I try to sneak in a round or two while the rest in my group shops. If you are looking to do the same then you need to set your sights on Kodak, Tennessee, just minutes away from Pigeon Forge, Dollywood and Gatlinburg. If you are looking for a shooting experience you will remember then you need to check out Iron Mountain Sporting Clays. Their website artiuculates it well when it says "we will be the premier destination for sporting clays and super sporting in East Tennessee." That's a lofty to claim but after a visit, you'll understand that they easily deliver on that promise.

The Course

Iron Mountain Sporting Clays got the name from its beginnings in 1850 as an iron mine. As you progress through the course you'll see evidence of it's mining and iron ore heritage. As the course was being built and the trees cleared, the wood from the red and white oaks, and hickory trees was milled into the lumber used to make the spacious shooting stands around the course. The rock from the mountain was cleared for the cart paths and was used to form the retaining walls around the shooting stands as well as the cart paths and flower beds along the way. Be sure to look for Tyrannosaurus Jim. I have to compliment the owners and builders of the course. Jim Deanda. Chad Dixon and Kirk Eastin, at Iron Mountain; this is the most aesthetically pleasing course I have ever shot.

The entire course has paved driveways and cart paths with parking for 300 cars. A number of the shooting stations are decorated with seasonal flower beds. It is, by definition, a Guntry Club and what is needed in this sport to help increase participation.

Iron Mountain has two courses with features that include restroom

facilities, 30 golf carts and are designed for accessibility by disabled shooters. The targets are set to accommodate any skill level of shooter, from beginner and intermediate, to someone looking to challenge themselves. The Blue course has 15 stations with two traps per station. The targets are set to accommodate the skill level of beginner to the intermediate shooter.

The Red course has 15 stations with four traps per station. The A and B traps are set for the intermediate shooter, while traps C and D are more challenging for the advanced shooter. Iron Mountain also offers super sporting.

After a day on either course, if you feel you need a tune up on your shooting skills, instruction is available by appointment with Shady Cove Shooting School, founded by Jon Parrish a NSCA level III instructor and Master Class competitor, or with Todd Hitch an experienced competitor with many National and Regional titles. Dale Howard who is also an NSCA instructor offers lessons at Iron Mountain. Information can be found on their website. The staff and instructors will make your day on the range a pleasant learning experience.

Club House

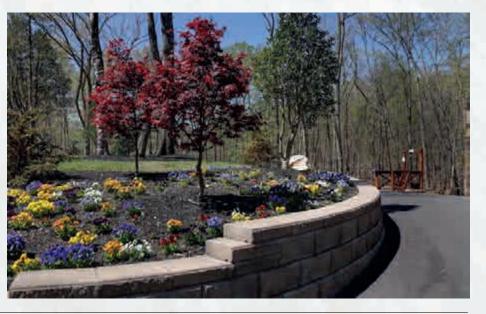
If you're visiting the area and didn't bring your kit don't worry, everything you need is available in the 3,600 square foot club house. From ammunition and ear and eye protection to shirts, hats, golf carts and gun rental...whatever you need to get out and start breaking targets is available.

Iron Mountain has a 45 X 80 covered open-air pavilion with a large fireplace, sound system, Wi-Fi and enough room to seat 300 people comfortably. This venue is perfect for special events.

For corporate events, entertaining customers or business meetings after a day on the range, make arrangements to use their corporate room where









you can gather around the conference table that seats 12. A large screen, video capabilities, computer work station and coffee/soft drink service are available on site.

Lodging

The Gatlinburg/Sevierville area has all the major hotel chains to choose from. The one I stayed in, and closest to Iron Mountain Sporting Clays, was Hampton Inn & Suites Sevierville at 105 Stadium Drive, Kodak TN. This was a great location and quite comfortable with an accommodating management and staff that welcome shooters. For more information visit their website at *ironmtnclays.com*

Iron Mountain Sporting Clays 410 Hardin Rd Kodak, TN 37764















The Transition from Prey to Predator

//// by john shima

Predator-Prey is a game concept that some kindergarten teachers use to introduce their students to the basic differences that exist within animal kingdom. The purpose of the game is to help youngsters understand the difference between carnivores, omnivores, and herbivores. More importantly, the students come to realize how predator and prey animals develop different behaviors to survive in their environment.

I introduced the concept of a shooting identity in my first book, and addressed the role a shooters' identity plays in the way they participate in the clay target sports. Therefore, I believe the predator-prey metaphor could be a simple approach to help many clay target shooters discover their shooting identity, and whether they should consider a change.

Shooting Identity

Humans are omnivores based upon dietary classification. In the context of physical strength, speed and self-defense, humans occupy the middle of the food chain. Humans only become apex predators when they possess an appropriate weapon and the skill to use it effectively. So, it is rational to assume that any proficient clay target shooter who is holding a loaded shotgun would be classified as an apex predator under most circumstances.

During the past fifty years I've transitioned from a competitive clay target shooter to becoming a full-time shooting instructor. As an instructor I came to view some shotgun shooters as more visual (seeing) and others as more visceral (feeling), I observed some shooters who approach the sport as

aggressively (predators) and others who view themselves as victims (prey) to the

During my career, I would admit that there were times when I felt more like an aggressor, and other times I felt somewhat like a victim of circumstances. However, I never entered competitions with an aggressor mindset because I just liked shooting clay targets. Some days I won and other days I didn't. However, I do remember the first time when I entered the .410 event with a 300 straight. That day I struggled through four boxes just trying to knock something off every target to run my first 400 x 400 in competition.

Confidence and Discipline

During my 20s and 30s I was very confident in my shooting ability. In

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to how they achieved success in lives. Therefore, when I work with shooters to adopt shooting later in life, I emphasize discipline and confidence.

Confidence and trust are not emotions that shooters can control. Discipline is something a shooter can control. This is why I emphasize the importance of disciplined pre-station and pre-shot routines that prepare the shooter to embrace a state of awareness proper to calling for every target.

Consistent pre-station and preshot routines foster good shooting habits. The purpose of the pre-station routine is to rehearse the shooting reflex. The purpose of the pre-shot routine is to activate the watching reflex. When shooters consistently discipline themselves to repeat the pre-station and pre-shot routines at every station, they

fact, I loved the little gun and carried very high averages shooting a barrel set during that stage of my career. Yet, shooting defensively like I did that day made me feel like a victim the entire time! If I had to pick one thing that determines whether a clay target shooter feels like an aggressor or a victim it would be applied confidence. By this I mean acting confident in a process you know that you can accomplish rather than feeling confident about the outcome.

I always felt very confident when I focused on just breaking the next target. In fact, the worse the weather conditions, the more confident I became because I had to concentrate harder on the process of watching the target and firing at my break point. In other words, I approached each target with an awareness mindset—to just watch the target, react to it, and commit to my break point no matter what!

Whenever I used applied confidence in my pre-planned move to break the next target it always seemed to break. I had complete control of the process of watching the target and firing at the break point. It was only when I allowed

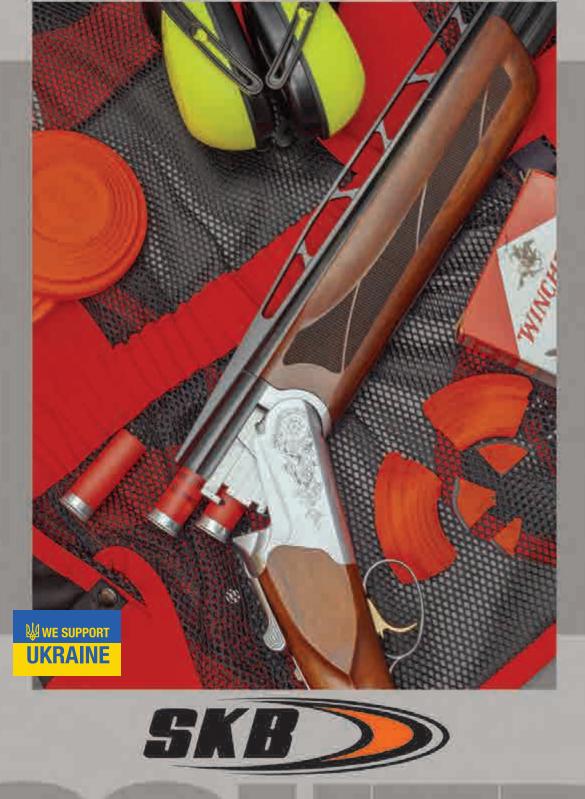


myself to think about something else that I misapplied my confidence to shooting rather than watching.

For years I have emphasized the need to shoot clay targets with unconditional trust in their pre-planned moves.

Recently I came to understand that it is very difficult for mature shooters to develop unconditional trust in their pre-planned moves. It is counter-intuitive







will begin to develop confidence in their shooting reflex.

Power of Intention

Performance Counselor Ryan Defibaugh encourages athletes to "pay attention to your intention." Intention is powerful because it determines when and how shooters employ a prey and/or predator mindset.

In the clay target sports the outcome of most shots is determined by the intention of the shooter when he or she steps onto the station to initiate the pre-shot routine. If a shooter is worried about shooting tactics or the possibility of missing a problematic target the mis-guided intention "to do something extra" will activate a predator mindset. The intention of a predator mindset is usually directed toward the future - breaking the target. Conversely, a prey mindset directs intention on the present - seeing the target.

When shooters discipline themselves to simply settle their eyes in expanded soft focus at the eye hold to adopt a state of awareness it promotes a prey mindset. Beginning every shot in a prey mindset optimizes target detection



and acquisition, which enhances the shooter's reaction and response to the target.

Prey and Predator Modes

Prey and predator modes relate to how shooters use their watching reflex. Ideally, the shooter has control of the watching reflex by employing monotonous mental and visual discipline. When the shooter's intention is concen-

trating exclusively on controlling his or her watching reflex it allows the shooting reflex to react and respond automatically when the target emerges into the shooter's peripheral visual field.

Prey mode is a state of awareness during which the eyes are ready to detect movement of the target with the peripheral vision, and then acquire the target with central vision. I refer to the acquisition zone as the soft focusing zone. Likewise, I refer to the break zone as the hard focusing zone.

Prey mode is highly sensitive to the startle reaction and response. Shooters embrace prey mode by settling their eyes in expanded soft focus at the eye hold. This quiets the mind and heights the senses. Shooters who do not use a consistent pre-station and pre-shot routines will be startled by the emergence of the target and attempt to focus too hard, too soon. This compromises the ability of the peripheral vison to transmit the distance, direction, and speed of the target

Shooters must transition into predator mode after the eyes acquire the target and begin to track it. Predator mode is the response to the startle reaction. Increasing the intensity of hard focus on the target is a conscious





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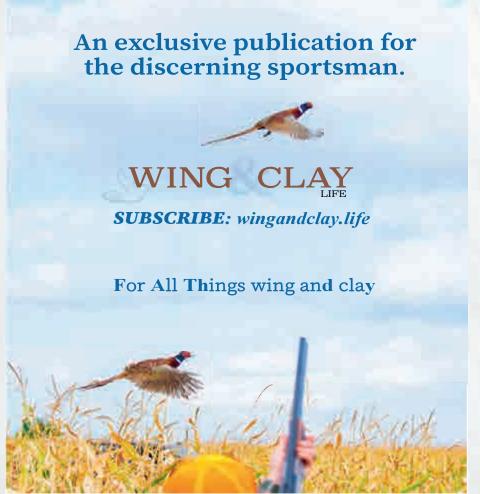
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process. As the target approaches the break zone the shooter must consciously hyper-focus on a specific part of the target, and fire the shotgun. The focusfire gap is the interval between the act of hyper-focusing and firing the shotgun.

Hyper-focus is an instantaneous phenomenon. It is like a flash bulb on a camera. When shooters lack focus-fire discipline the gap increases. When the focus-fire gap increases the eyes shift out of hyper-focus and the point of focus shifts to the space between the target and the muzzle. This instantly decreases muzzle speed and causes the shot to miss behind, activates a flinch, or forces the shooter to make a second move to break the target.



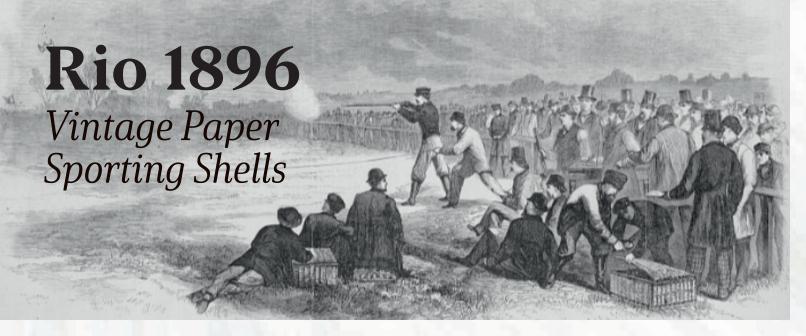


The purpose of this article was to emphasize the need for shooters to manage their intention before each shot. I used the metaphor of prey and predator to help shooters guide their intention so they can optimize control of their watching reflex. Therefore, every shooter must use discipline to begin every shot in prey mode to detect and acquire the target, and then transition to predator mode to track the target and hyper-focus-fire in the break zone.

John Shima is a former five-time World Skeet Champion and was high average in 12 gauge for two years. John is the leading authority on detection of visual deceptions and prescribing appropriate visual training to unleash the power of reality for clay target shooters. For more information about the Shima Shooting MethodSM, the Clinic Schedule, his new Shima Shooting ExperienceSM, or to arrange a Private Consultation, contact John via email at john@johnshima.com

To view previous articles go to johnshima.com/publications





Celebrating 125 Years

he folks at Rio Ammunition have been supplying shooters and hunters with ammunition for more than 125 years. From the glory days of widespread pigeon shoots throughout the United States and abroad, to modern day sporting, FITASC and Helice tournaments, Rio has been recognized as a leader in premium ammunition for the serious shotgun competitor and hunter. They offer a full line of ammunition for any pursuit from hunting to the sport shooting disciplines. The company maintains an ethos of responsible manufacturing, employing water-soluble and recyclable materials. Their full line

SUN

of shotgun ammunition includes sport, hunting and non-toxic loads.

The new line pays homage to their legacy in the shooting sports world with the launch of the 1896 Vintage Paper line of shotgun shells for the American market. The United States division, Rio Outdoors Corporation is based in McKinney, Texas, offers this line in various configurations, a perfect load for every discipline is now available in the Vintage 1896 line. The 1250 and 1300 feet per second recipes are available in both 8s and 7.5s, with choices of either 28 or 36 gram shot charges. In the 32-gram realm, 7.5s and 8s are available in

the light configuration at 1150 feet per second, or at 1235 feet per second.

This shell is quite clean burning with exceptionally manageable recoil, employing a single base propellant. When cutting open a shell, the shot contained within was very uniform and hard. The shells are well manufactured and functioned flawlessly in my over/under. The load tested was the Vintage 1896 Paper Sporting 28 load. This one-ounce, 1250 feet per second load managed long targets with ease, making for a perfect FITASC or sporting shell. One of the most amazing things was how clean the bores were after shooting. Barely a hint of residue was present.

For the adventurous shooters, the Helice and Flyer loads are optimized for the respective disciplines. Appropriate wad, velocity and shot size variety offers maximum effectiveness for the various ring games. When greatness is on the line, only a premium shell will do.

For more information on the Rio Vintage 1896 line of premium ammunition, or to peruse their other offerings, visit their website at rioammo.com





WE NEED YOUR HELP TO GROW THE SHOOTING SPORTS.

If just 1 in 3 hunters and target shooters introduce one new person to the shooting sports, we'll secure a strong future for generations to come. The +ONESM Movement is a mission to do exactly that. We need your help to spread the word about the single most unifying force in the shooting sports today. Together we'll ignite the passion of millions of new hunters and recreational shooters. And build the future of the way of life we love.

Be the one. Join the +ONE Movement. Visit nssf.org/plusone.







//// by kipling loree

hroughout time different individuals in political positions ▲ have demonstrated how disconnected they are from the people they serve. For example, the idea that millionaires and billionaires try to articulate their "understanding" of the average Joe, having been reared and raised with a silver spoon in their mouth...is just disingenuous and insulting. Some of the greatest miscalculations in political history have demonstrated this, many in recent cycles. It's amazing how we see so many of these clowns dress up in hunting attire, grab a gun (one they have no idea how to use) and head out into a field for a photo-op while regurgitating the

old "I was raised middle class" mantra. The harder they try to connect with folks they don't understand, the more cringeworthy they portray themselves. The same thing happens with organizations.

In a letter dated September 4th, 2024, the FITASC Management Committee decided they were going to attack a discipline with some arbitrary ruling which seemingly made no sense. There are significant differences between Super Sporting and Parcours de chasse. Nice try but It's not even close guys. One could speculate that the popularity of Super Sporting, particularly in the United States where it was conceived, was viewed as

threatening towards FITASC. Not sure how one arrives at such a conclusion, but perhaps I lack perspective considering I don't consume snails and





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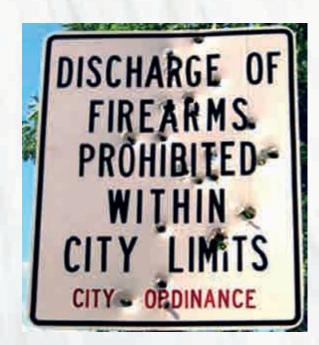
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October 1-5
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL

Back Woods Quail Club *Georgetown, South Carolina*

October 18-26
NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIP
National Shooting Complex

San Antonio, Texas



have usually completed 35 hours of work by close of business Wednesday.

The disconnect here is astounding and telling. Of course, the powers that be would assert that they are taking this action to protect the integrity of the shooting sports. While that seems like a noble endeavor, considering the facts of this issue and the arbitrary and unwarranted attack, I would assert those supporting such a position are no

different than the crazy anti-gun whack-jobs who think criminals would somehow magically follow some new gun law. It's just plain dumb.

Americans have enjoyed a significant level of participation in Super Sporting, now even seeing sub-gauge super sporting events at many major shoots. In the United States this has done nothing to impede participation in FITASC events. In fact, many of those events are full, with lengthy waiting lists months prior to the first shot of the event

being fired. These additional Super Sporting targets being thrown benefit the clubs and the shooters, as well as the state and National governing bodies. They in no way infringe upon the discipline of Parcours de chasse.

Theories about the motivation for this action have been articulated, some of which are absolutely deplorable, petty and childish. The "Envie de bite" theory actually seems to have been confirmed by a subsequent memorandum issued by FITASC. This royal decree gives permission for shooters world-wide to

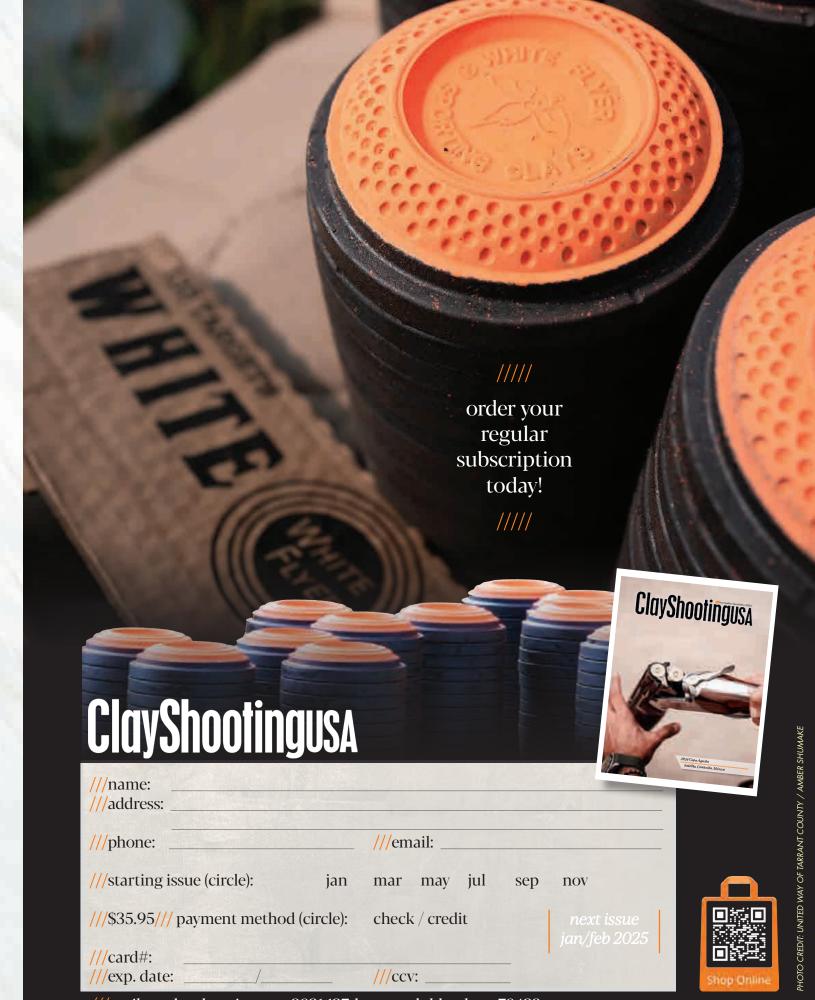
participate in the Fujairah Mountain Shooting Championship without worry of excommunication from "dirigeants présomptueux" residing on the shooting sports throne in Paris.

Either way and whatever the motivation, the facts are clear. Super Sporting and Parcours de chasse are two completely different disciplines and in no way detract from each other from either a prestige, or revenue

standpoint. To rise to the draconian level of threatening individual participants, referees and target setters with expulsion, under the false flag of "integrity" is tyrannical and reminiscent of a short one-nutted Austrian politician with a stupid looking mustache. Mind your history folks. We aren't interested in eating your cake, we will shoot the disciplines we want here in the United States. Remember, our great heritage is rooted in rebellion and resistance of tyrannical pricks. I know there's a history of French elites completely losing their heads...but this is ridiculous.









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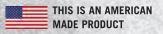
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