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The largest Olympic-style shooting event held on American soil, the ISSF World Cup USA drew over 800 athletes and coaches. With the best of the best on the line, the USA Shooting Team performed to the tune of two medals.

Jamie Beyerle and Sarah Scherer have both had fantastic spring seasons. Scherer pulled in the first Women’s 10m Air Rifle quota and Beyerle made an astounding come-from-behind 10.8 shot for victory in Women’s 50m Rifle Three Position. Keep an eye on these two ladies as the competition heats up for London 2012.

The USA Shooting Team’s Kim Rhode and Rachael Heiden set the standard for performance in Beijing. Both ladies posted medal-winning performances despite the high winds and difficult conditions.

Talented young men and women from around the country were invited to stay at the Olympic Training Center and compete in the 2011 National Junior Olympic Shooting Championships for Rifle and Pistol in April. Fear not, if these high scores are any indication, the future of the shooting sports is in very capable hands.
The spring meeting of the USAS Board of Directors was held April 16 at the Olympic Complex in Colorado Springs. President Gary Anderson presided over the meeting.

The following new directors (elected in 2010) were seated for their first official meeting: Janet Raab, the Rifle Representative; Joshua Richmond, the Shotgun Representative; Dr. Jim Lally (former USAS Team physician and current chair of the ISSF Medical Committee), At-Large Director; Kinsey Robinson (President of the Roofers and Waterproofers Union), At-Large Director and Cris Stone, a current director on the Civilian Marksmanship Program board was seated as an At-Large Director. Chris recently retired as Chief Credit Officer for Regions Financial Corporation.

The Nominating Committee recognized that both President Gary Anderson and Vice President Allen Harry have served the organization well. Both are eligible and expressed desire to continue in their current roles. Director Butch Eller has reached his term limits and will continue serving on the Endowment Committee and as a director of the USA Shooting Team Foundation. Butch’s replacement as the Financial Director will be Cris Stone. Additionally, Robinson will serve in the officer position of Secretary. The Nominating Committee’s recommendations were accepted and elected by acclamation.

During the meeting, Anderson reported on Executive Committee actions taken since the last directors’ meeting that included: a monthly review of financial results; approval of a memorandum of understanding with SSSF for SCTP creating a shotgun sport developmental relationship; approval of an updated athlete Code of Conduct; amended selection procedures for Olympic and Pan Am Team Leader and adopted separate codes of conduct for staff and volunteers and directors.

Anderson provided a detailed overview of ISSF, our relationship with the international federation and important developments and issues that impact USAS. Moreover, task managers reported on the following strategic planning projects: building the USAS fan base, growth of Olympic-style shooting facilities and making available web-based instructional materials. A new website will be launched this summer which will provide additional flexibility and the capability to effectively communicate with shooting fans. The new website will also contain a library of various technical and coaching articles. Additionally, another trap bunker will be constructed this year at the International Shooting Park to better accommodate the increasing number of competitors.

Buddy DuVall and Tom Harris discussed details of the Foundation’s fundraising and major gifts program. The new website will have an expanded and detailed area for gifts and planned giving materials. The next meeting of the USAS Board of Directors will be in Colorado Springs on October 29.

Also, I would like to remind our members that shooting events are spectator friendly—come watch the USA Rifle and Pistol Nationals July 2 to 8 in Fort Benning, Ga., the National Junior Olympic Championships for Shotgun July 23 to 29 in Colorado Springs or the first leg of the U.S. Olympic Trials for Shotgun September 22 to October 2 in Kerrville, Texas. Wishing everyone an enjoyable summer!

USA Shooting News is published six times a year. USA Shooting is the national governing body for Olympic Shooting sports in the United States. USA Shooting News is produced as a service to international shooters, coaches, officials and media who cover Olympic-style shooting. Shooters featured in USA Shooting News magazine may be photographed without eye protection. These are posed photographs using unloaded guns and do not represent actual competition. USA Shooting encourages all shooters to use proper eye and ear protection when shooting. Inclusion of advertisements in USA Shooting does not constitute endorsement of advertised products or services by USA Shooting, its staff or its sponsors.
Easy Points: The Mental Game

By Sergeant George Norton

There are not many other sports where the mind is able to control the outcome of the event. That is what makes competitive shooting so much harder than many other athletic events. Not only do we need to have a strong technical game, but we must have a peak mental game as well. Anyone that has attended a United States Army Marksmanship (USAMU) clinic knows one of the classes we teach is our “Easy Points” class. This class helps beginning shooters correct mistakes and not lose easy points in competition.

Some of these include cross firing, shooting too many shots and correcting a rifle zero. Another category where many easy points are lost is from a poor mental game. It is important to remember that the mental game is not something you have to wait to acquire until you are a collegiate shooter or a member of the USA Shooting National Development Team or even the USA Shooting (USAS) National Team.

As a junior or beginning shooter, it is imperative that you start to solidify a strong mental game because it will be a tremendous asset later on in your shooting career. In this article, I will discuss three major areas of mental training to focus on. By beginning with these quick easy points you can create a strong foundation for your mental game. These areas include the match button blues where I will talk about the rush of anxiety that comes when you are done with sighters and starting a match. Next, I will discuss reaction and reset, where you might have a bad shot and need to settle back down. Finally, we will cover the use of safe words to help you concentrate.

Let’s begin with the match button blues where we push the match button or move from the sighter bull to our first match target. All of a sudden something changes. We have a pulse beat, maybe our positions don’t feel as solid, and we are not able to take a shot as quickly as when we were shooting sighters. Welcome to the match button blues, which is as easy to describe as just getting nervous. Sometimes this nervousness results in our first shot not being as confident; and if it was a ten, then we reluctantly call it luck.

An easy way to earn a ten on the first record shot is to treat the last couple of sighters as match shots. While finishing sighting in, but before moving to the first match bull, put yourself in the mindset that this next sighter shot is a match shot. There will probably be nerves creeping in, but that is when you will start to control it by using safe words that we will talk about later in the article. You can calm down, settle and move confidently to your first match bull and shoot a perfect ten. Now as we continue through our match, we might have some poor shots, but we can react properly by going over the next step of react and reset.

Everyone has been there—your shooting is going great and all of a sudden there is a poor shot. Generally, you react with a big loud “darn it” in your mind, become very frustrated, slam the rifle bolt back and finish by going straight into the next shot.

This process usually results with another poor shot. Let’s face it, no matter if you are a beginning shooter or nationally ranked, there will always be sub-par shots. Many things happen physically in our bodies when we overreact to a poor shot.

Once upset, it increases adrenaline output, which in turn increases the heartbeat and eventually the blood flow as well. Because of this increased blood flow our muscles are now tense,
our pulse is high and our hold is awful. This is where that second poor shot comes from. An easy point that a shooter can earn is having the ability to reset the process. A shooter can reset by dry firing one or two shots after a poor shot. An important thing to remember while taking these dry fire shots is to keep your proper execution just like there is a round in the chamber. These dry fire shots allow our bodies to relax, slow the heart beat and reset back to our competitive form. Along with resetting our body, we can also reset our mind by using safe words.

Safe words are an amazing tool for any shooter to have in their competitive toolbox. Safe words are anything that can be said to get your mind back “in the game.” A great example of using a safe word is from the movie For the Love of the Game. Kevin Costner plays a Major League Baseball pitcher who attempts to pitch a perfect game. With everyone in the stands yelling and his mind wandering, he pauses and says, “Clear the mechanism.” These safe words silence the crowd and empty the stadium in Costner’s mind.

All that is left is the catcher, himself and the silence so Costner can throw an amazing pitch. There is a lot of time in competitive shooting matches where our mind can wander and not focus on the shot at that moment. By using a safe word (or phrase), like Kevin Costner’s character, we can get our mind back on track. Other examples include words and phrases such as relax, focus, take it easy, etc. Using these words (in addition to a focused mind) will help you stay on track and keep mental stability while in competition.

We have discussed three specific areas where shooters can save points in the mental game and increase their overall scores. Again these areas include preparing yourself for the first match shot after sighters, resetting after a poor shot and using safe words or phrases to stay concentrated. We could go more in depth on each of these topics, but by starting here, any beginning shooter will have a great foundation for their mental game. So keep shooting tens, keep your mind in the match and stay ARMY Strong.

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Simple Diagnostics

By Bob Foth, National Paralympic Coach

Several great tools exist to help coaches and athletes diagnose shooting problems. The Scatt system and other similar products are fairly popular for those that can afford them, but may be too expensive for many. These tools provide a wealth of information in various formats and may also speed up analysis and problem solving. However, I think many coaches and athletes overlook the tools they have readily available.

I would advise coaches to pay attention to the right things at the right times. I often see coaches looking through a telescope waiting for a hole to appear in the target. While it will eventually be helpful to know where the shot hit, the timing is wrong to have the focus on the target. Instead, the coach should be watching the athlete—study how the position is set up, how the natural point of aim (NPA) is checked, how the gun is mounted or raised, where it settles, how consistent the pattern is, etc. You might create references on the shooter also. For example, you could put a piece of tape on the stock for hand placement or on the jacket of a standing shooter to see if the front elbow placement is consistent. If these items are not consistent, the athlete may have problems with his or her shot plan or process or use a position that is not easily replicated. It may also be useful to start counting the seconds to determine the moment the gun is mounted in order to help establish patterns in timing.

After the gun is in position, look for the athlete’s breathing pattern. Is it the same for every shot in that position? Do the breaths appear to be deep relaxing belly breaths? Be sure to read Marcus Raab’s “Breath Control” in the May/June 2011 issue for an in depth understanding of this critical process.

Depending on the questions you have about the athlete’s performance, you might pick different vantage points for different things. For example, move to the side to get a clearer view of the trigger finger or the eyes or get behind the shooter to watch body sway or other large movements. I find that a digital camera can be a great tool to help the athlete see his/her own position and start to self-coach. Take shots from behind and both sides. If possible, stand on a stable chair and take photos from above the athlete to view the orientation of the position. Sometimes close-up pictures of a specific spot, like the contact patch between the butt-plate and shoulder or the hand and the grip can help the athlete get a visual image to match what is felt.

One of my favorite strategies is to find a way to get really still and watch the front sight with a clear visual reference behind it. That reference might be a spot on the wall, or occasionally even a target. I often find a way to support my head so that I am sure I can pick out small movements of the gun. I’ll rest my chin on my hands or lean my head against a wall; anything to be sure I am not moving much at all. Once you get good at this, I think you will be amazed at how much you can see, even without the fancy tools. Details like size, shape and timing of the hold start to become relatively obvious. You may be able to determine the “sweet spot” in the hold pattern, the time period when it seems most steady and usually when the best shots are produced. Keep watching intently and details of the recoil and follow through will become apparent. Did the shot seem to break cleanly? Is the recoil large or small? Is it vertical or does it have a different shape. Does it seem to settle back in the same place? Does it stay constant over a long course of fire? AFTER watching all of this, then you can look through the scope or at the monitor to see where the shot hit.

Now start interacting with the shooter. What was the shot call? Does the athlete have an estimation of the scoring ring and direction? Any other information about how that shot felt or what it looked like? Does the athlete's perception match yours? If not, work together to try to find out was missed. Get the athlete to grade various specific aspects of the shot execution. This usually works best with just one or two specific topics. Help your athletes to become more self-aware and more analytical so they can coach themselves and become more self reliant. They will have to do this on match day!

If you don’t have a coach, find other ways to coach yourself. Use more than score to evaluate your performance. Focus on one thing at a time. Honestly call shots BEFORE looking at the scope or monitor. You can also find appropriate ways to use score as a tool to evaluate performance. Track things like center shots or maybe 9.5s and better. Analyze targets after the shooting session. Were you zeroed in consistently? Were there patterns or shapes to the groups? What else can you learn from them?

Try applying these tips to your athletes or your own shooting and get on a training path of improvement, not just practicing the status quo.
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Every athlete has a story; Paralympic athletes often have two, one concerning his or her disability itself, and a second concerning how he or she came to the selected sport. The Paralympics is an elite athletic event for athletes with a physical disability. The Paralympic Games follow the same pattern as the Olympic Games: Opening Ceremonies, two weeks of amazing competition in various sports, and a Closing Ceremony. What's more, they are also held every four years just like the Olympic Games in the same city and arenas, albeit two weeks later.

The Paralympic movement strives to emphasize the continued excellence of the athletes’ abilities in their respective sports instead of their disabilities. Perhaps no symbol is more apt in showing that continued excellence than the Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Paralympics where the torch was lit by Hou Bin pulling himself hand over hand, while amazingly still sitting in his wheelchair, up a rope to the roof of the “Bird’s Nest Stadium” to light the torch.

Among the sports contested at the Paralympic Games is shooting. Paralympic shooting has five disciplines: air rifle, smallbore rifle, air pistol, sport pistol, and free pistol. Events are held for both men and women individually and in many events the two genders compete together. The course of fire and positions are the same between able body shooting and Paralympic shooting, but the manner in which the positions are implemented vary. All Paralympic shooting events follow the same rules as able body shooting, but with added rules to allow for modifications within the positions to reflect the differences in the athletes.

To understand the modifications made to the positions one must first understand the categories into which the athletes are separated. The categories are based on the ability to hold the rifle and pull the trigger mechanism. Within those two categories the athletes are further divided based on an athlete's strength and balance. As a result there are four pistol events and eight rifle events across the categories contested at the Paralympic Games. For example an athlete who cannot stand unaided, but has complete use of his or her upper body would be classified as an SH1. In contrast an athlete whose hands were less functional would be classified as an SH2 and would have additional equipment available, even if he or she is able to stand unaided.

For seated shooters, the three positions are distinguished as in able body shooting by the number of balance points allowed to the shooter. In prone an athlete may place both elbows on the table or mat while using a sling. In kneeling an athlete may only have one elbow resting while using a sling. In standing (while many athletes are in fact seated) an athlete must support the weight of the rifle with his or her upper body, thus without any elbows resting on any surfaces. The seated shooters can fire from wheelchairs, or from stools, or resting against higher platforms. Shooters who can stand without aid often shoot from stools, but can shoot able body
Paralympic shooting allows men and women to shoot head to head in several events, including smallbore prone and an event unique to the Paralympic movement, air rifle prone. In smallbore, prone shooters are allowed to shoot in the able body position on mats on the floor with or without their prosthesis or out of a chair off a table. In air rifle prone, because it is an event solely in the Paralympic movement, every athlete must shoot from a stool or chair off a table. The level of performance in air rifle prone is so high that to make a final at the Spain World Cup, a 599 out of 600 was needed and three athletes shot perfect 600. Paralympic shooters compete locally against each other and against able body athletes. Internationally, in addition to the Paralympic Games, there are many matches, world cups, and once every four years World Championships. The table is a list of events contested at the Paralympic Games.

October 5th to October 9th the first Paralympic international shooting match to be held in the United States or even in the North or South America will be shot at Fort Benning. This match will be ground breaking because it brings Paralympic shooters from all around the world to Georgia to try to win the one quota spot for the Paralympics given out in each event. The entire Paralympic shooting community is very excited to bring this important international Paralympic shooting match to the United States.

But not just the Paralympic community should be excited about bringing this international match to the United States. The entire shooting community should be excited because this match demonstrates how far United States Paralympic Shooting has moved forward in the last eight years from being a country with only two national team members before Athens with a part time Coach, to a country with a growing national team and a full time coach, Bob Foth, who is both dedicated and driven. Everyone tries to find a niche in life, and Paralympic shooting has become that niche for numerous Paralympic athletes as you will see in their bio articles in the future.

Paralympic Shooting Events

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USAS’ Tom Monto shoots the R4 Men’s 10m Air Rifle Standing SH2 event. The main difference between SH1 and SH2 athletes is the level of support and adaptations. Monto’s spring stand featured in the middle of his rifle enables him to fire tens.

Right: 2008 Paralympian Mike Dickey demonstrates the position for R3 Mixed 10m Air Rifle Prone. Notice how both of Dickey’s elbows are resting on his shooting table (just like both elbows rest on the floor in able-body prone).
Lift, Aiming and Trigger Pull

By Vladimir Chichkov, Assistant National Pistol Coach

It is hard to set an order of importance for the elements ensuring great shooting. Yet, it is safe to say that in the dynamic 25m pistol disciplines, the following is a recipe for success: Lift, Aiming and Trigger pull. The synchronization of these three elements and the quality of their execution forms the foundation of successful shooting. To better understand this symbiotic conglomerate, let us simplify and discuss the separated elements in their chronology.

With the exception of the Precision stage in Sport and Center Fire Pistol events, the “Ready” position requires the hand with the pistol to be raised no more than 45 degrees. Before we aim and shoot, we have to lift our hand and put it in the aiming zone. Since we have very limited time for the shot (usually the first shot is done 1.40-2.70 seconds depending of the event) it is crucial to determine the goal and techniques necessary. We start with checking our position. In Men’s Rapid Fire Pistol, the goal is to immediately align the pistol with the (first) target when the hand is raised. It is important to find the proper positioning to avoid major horizontal adjustments after the hand is raised. After the position is found, mark it on the floor for a reference points for training/competition. If there is need, small adjustments can be done later.

Now we are ready to execute the lift. Every lift starts with aiming at the target. The idea is to let the brain know what the goal is—alignment of the sights, position on the target and situate the system “sights-target” in the surrounding. Having a clear picture of the goal makes the lift easier and faster. Next, lock the wrist and the elbow, lower your hand and assume the ready position and wait for the command. When lowering the hand, the vertical alignment of the sights will change; however, because the hand is “locked” when we lift it back to the shooting position, the alignment will be proper again. Do not try to adjust the sight in the ready position since it will change the system and you will have to readjust the aiming in the process of lifting.

The lift itself is divided in two phases: reaction and aiming. The reaction phase starts with the green light (opening the target if mechanical) and the goal is to raise the gun as fast as possible. The aiming phase is when we align the sights and position them in the desired aiming area. There are two techniques that are used. The first involves quickly raising the gun to the center of the target, then making small aiming adjustments prior to the shot. I am not a fan of this technique because if your hand moves very fast it is difficult to stop at the desired point—the hand will bounce up and down and prolong the reaction phase. When you aim you will have to overcome these bouncing movements. As a result, the aiming phase is drawn out as well. These delays cause unsatisfactory shots as the athlete grows impatient and often jerks the trigger because he or she was preoccupied with the time limit.

In my practice, I prefer a shorter reaction phase that slows down and smoothly transition into the aiming phase. The aiming phase is actually performed on the go. For example, picture that the reaction phase starts between 45 degrees to 75 degree and then the aiming phase occurs from the previous point to 90 degrees as illustrated in Figure 1.

How is it done in practice? The hand is lowered in ready position and locked. The focus is on the green light (or on

Figure 1: Alex Chichkov demonstrates the phases & focus for a pistol lift in a dynamic event.
the target if mechanical). When the green light illuminates, the hand is quickly raised and the focus moves to the sights when the hand is at approximately 75 degrees. At this moment, the movement of the hand is slowed and the shooter begins observation of the vertical alignment of the sights. As the hand approaches the center of the target, the hand continues to slow down. The goal is that when the sight line reaches the center of the target, the sights will be perfectly aligned. This is the exact moment when the shot breaks.

Often, I am asked if the gun actually stops in aiming position. It does not because the movement is extremely slow at the end and the shot itself “cuts” the movement. However there are shooters who stop and aim for the “duel” part of the Sport and Center Fire Pistol disciplines. Some shooters even pause and aim during the six and eight second series in the Rapid Fire event. I recommend to train without stopping and strive for building a good coordination between, lift, aiming and pulling the trigger. When shooting the Sport and Center Fire Pistol duel, after the shot is completed, follow through and readjust aiming to prepare for the next shot. If the athlete is shooting Rapid Fire or Standard Pistol, then continue with the four additional shots for that series.

When executing the lift, remember that the movement is from the shoulder only. The torso is moving as is necessary to compensate for the change in the center of gravity from the lifted hand with the gun. The horizontal transition between the targets in the Rapid Fire event is a result of rotation from the hips, and does not involve movement from the shoulder. Remember that for Rapid Fire and the Duel events, shooters should aim at the center of the target; whereas, in precision events the aiming point is sub-six o’clock. This change requires adjustments between the precision and Rapid Fire stage in Sport and Center Fire Pistol events.

The aiming starts during the second phase of the lift. Pay attention to the horizontal alignment in the beginning, and if your hand is locked the horizontal alignment will be accurate when you are really close to the aiming point. When the green light turns on, quickly transfer your focus from the light to the sights of the pistol. The goal is to keep a clear picture of the sights so your brain can subconsciously make the adjustments for the position of the sights.

A reaction cycle includes seeing, analyzing, making a decision for muscle movement, executing the movement and the final result. The entire process takes approximately .02-.25 seconds. If we try to consciously control of all of our movements (balance, hand lift, aiming etc.) we are only able to accomplish four to five reactions in a second. Whereas subconsciously, the brain and body can perform four to five times more tasks in the same amount of time. In order to be successful, the best option is to continuously provide the brain with a clear picture of our sights.

Another important aspect to understand is the role of the peripheral vision. While the central vision is occupied with the sights, the peripheral is accounting for the surrounding and the position of the targets. The more obstructed the peripheral vision is, the less able the central vision is to stay focused on the sights. To increase the peripheral vision, I recommend a smaller screen for covering the central vision of the non-dominant eye. For the same reason I would avoid the use of aperture installed on the shooting glasses when practicing any of the dynamic 25m pistol events. I recommend the use of visors and other allowable devises to reduce the amount of direct light entering the eyes so the pupils are as open as possible.

The third element to consider is the trigger work. It is possible to write a book on how to pull the trigger correctly, but the abbreviated version is that any trigger pull that does not affect the alignment of the sights and delivers the shot as close as possible to the perfect moment, is considered the correct trigger pull. In this era, shooters can experiment with both mechanical and electronic triggers and single and two stage triggers. A shooter can adjust the length of the trigger, the weight of the stages, their travel, reset properties and shoe position. I understand the difficulties coming out of having too many choices, but I do not have a “golden” trigger set recipe. One has to experiment and find his or her own preference. Just make sure to abide by the limits of the specific equipment you are using and competition regulations. Also, don’t forget to periodically check your trigger weight—especially prior to a competition. The temperature and the weather can affect the physical qualities of the trigger mechanism. Also travel, the vibrations can cause the screws to move and change the tension.

Developing proper techniques and habits in executing the lift, the aiming and pull of the trigger will make it easier to train and develop solid coordination between these elements. Once mastered these fundamentals can help lead to a successful shooting career. Good luck and shoot straight.
Hold & Hold Control

By Marcus Raab, Assistant National Rifle Coach

Hold is a deceptively simple fundamental to describe. It is easy to say a good hold is one that has a small movement area oriented at the reference point (i.e., center of the target) and is stable and durable enough to allow smooth trigger control. It is much more difficult to fully define hold since it is so interrelated to all the other fundamentals and aspects of position, physical conditioning and mental skills. And it is even more challenging to actually develop and maintain a high quality hold for the shooter to execute the shot.

Shown below in Figure 1 are hypothetical holds for prone and standing. While some people can hold a sight picture that appears motionless, there is always some movement even in the prone position. It is often quite difficult to see this movement without some kind of aid. A telescopic sight which magnifies the target, for example, can show how much movement there really is in the shooters position. Athletes must learn to accept this movement and execute correct trigger control without disturbing or negatively influencing the sight picture. Even the shooter has trouble seeing the entirety of the movements, perhaps remembering only the last few instants before the shot is fired. This, of course, is enough to know where the shot should have hit the target, but insufficient to really analyze the holding ability.

Previously the only tool the coach had to evaluate the holding ability of shooters was his or her own eyes. You can still do that by standing behind the athlete and lining up the edge of the barrel or front sight tunnel with an object (e.g., another target) downrange. The challenging part is for the observer to stay still enough so that the only movement seen is that of the rifle muzzle. Recoil of the rifle also masks some aspects of the hold, especially follow-through.

Though expensive, computer training systems are available on the market; notably the Scatt, Rika, Noptel and others that can record the precise orientation of the rifle in relation to the target. What is so eye opening about these systems is that they allow the coach (and shooter) to actually see what is happening throughout the whole shot process. You can not only see the result of a shot after it has been taken but also what happened while aiming at the target, both before and after. Graphs produced from the mathematical analysis of the series of shots can help identify problems and lead to the best course of action to take regarding improvement. These systems work in either a dry fire mode or may be used live fire with pellets at 10 meters and even longer ranges depending on features.

The use of these training systems is almost essential for top-level performance as they can show such fine detail and the tiny mistakes that elude detection other than showing up as nines on the target. Even for the developing shooter, a visual depiction of how it should be done (with the opportunity to emulate the top shooters around the world) can significantly shorten the learning curve.

On the next page, there are Scatt traces (Figures 2, 3 and 4) of three different air rifle shooters showing the approach and hold up to the moment of the shot. The intermediate-level shooter has little control of his or her alignment with the target, forcing the rifle toward the center as well as a larger hold area. The advanced athlete shows better control over alignment and a smaller hold area, but the trace also indicates...
the possibility of tensed muscles. Notice the sharp changes in direction that overcompensate to the other side—this occurs when the shooter sees that the sights are not quite centered and nudges the rifle toward the center. Results: Intermediate = 8; Advanced = 9.

As a comparison, this Scatt trace shows the hold of an elite air rifle shooter up to the moment of the shot. This athlete has excellent control of his or her positional alignment, which allows the hold to settle directly into the center and stop in the middle of the target. The small hold area illustrates relaxed muscles with no need to force the rifle toward the center (it is already there!). This hold looks almost motionless to the shooter. The result? A deep 10! This is what we all would love to see, but again it requires lots of training and practice.

What factors contribute to hold?

So how does a shooter progress to an elite quality hold; one that is small, centered, stable and durable? The most critical component of holding ability is a biomechanically sound position. The movement will vary in size and predominant movement pattern with each position, with supported or sling positions being relatively stable and durable, while standing is less stable. Each position presents its own challenges. Nevertheless, there are some principles that apply to all positions. It is how well these principles are applied that determines success in each position. The elements of a sound position and its development are:

- Bone Support
- Balance
- Natural Point of Aim & Alignment
- Comfort
- Consistency
- Legality

Skeletal Structure and Bone Support

The human skeleton consists of both fused and individual bones connected, supported and supplemented by ligaments, tendons, muscles and cartilage. It serves as the framework that supports organs, anchors muscles and protects critical organs such as the brain, lungs and heart. An array of differing joint types allows the muscles to move the body to perform tasks.

You have, no doubt, tried to hold something still at arms length. You were probably successful at first, but at some point you could no longer hold the object still and eventually your arm would finally reach the point where it could not remain in position no matter how hard you tried. Muscles, even strong muscles, will fatigue and not respond in the predictable way needed for the ultra-fine motor control necessary to execute the shot precisely. Whereas the bones of the skeleton do not suffer the same problem of fatigue and may be used almost indefinitely as the structural elements of the shooting position. In rifle shooting, with heavy guns and long courses of fire, maximizing bone support is an important aspect of developing a good position and hold. Without some minimal amount of muscle tension, however, we would be unable to maintain the skeleton in the same orientation.

Statics and Stability

When building a shooting position coaches must take into consideration the bones, muscles and other body structures and organs. Additionally, the proportions of the shooter’s body, long or short arms, long or short legs, long or short torso and neck and the flexibility of the joints play a role in determining the best position for a specific shooter.

We seek to position the body to maximize the support of the bone structure while also minimizing the use of muscle force. This is best accomplished by placing the body parts that support the rifle position into vertical planes. For example, when a carpenter is creating a strong structure, he or she installs the walls in a vertical fashion to best resist the forces.
of gravity. If the walls were built at an angle and there is a large snowfall that weighs down the roof, it is likely that the building would either collapse or require additional support (the use of muscles) to remain standing.

The same is true for shooting positions. For the body to remain stable in the shooting position, the legs and arms that support the rifle must form vertical planes. This transmits the weight of both the rifle and body directly into the ground without the need to use muscle. While the sling plays a major structural role in helping support the prone and kneeling positions, shooters still need the bones in the proper orientation to maximize support. A coach must thoroughly understand this concept and be able to identify and correct positional errors when observed. The areas that you need to pay attention to are specific for each of the positions.

**Balance**

From a biomechanics perspective, human balance refers to the body’s ability to maintain an upright posture by keeping the center of mass (gravity) positioned over the base of support with minimal postural sway. This may involve a fixed base (for standing) or a moving base of support (for walking or regaining balance after a slip). Balancing ability can be studied using ground reactions (force patterns at the foot-floor interface), body segment kinematics (motion of upper/lower extremities) and electromyography (electrical signature of muscles when contracting).

When discussing balance, we will only address a fixed base (in addition to the weight of the rifle and accessories) of support since shooting is a static sport.

Standing, for example, is a human position in which the body is held upright and supported only by the feet, referred to as an orthostatic state as shown in Figure 5. In the case of an individual standing upright quietly, the limit of stability is defined as the amount of postural sway when balance is lost and corrective action is required. The limit of stability may be described by an irregular conical envelope above the support base. This limit of stability far exceeds what is acceptable balance for the shooting position.

Although standing per se is not dangerous, there are a few pathologies associated with it. One short-term condition is orthostatic hypotension, or low blood pressure when standing, which is caused by gravity pulling the blood into the lower part of the body. Because the brain does not get sufficient blood supply, it can result in dizziness, lightheadedness, headache, blurred or dimmed vision and even fainting. Longer-term conditions are sore feet, stiff legs and low back pain.

While we have been focusing on standing, both kneeling and prone require balancing as well. Kneeling has a larger base of support than standing but less than prone. Even then, the kneeling position is balanced between the right foot, the kneeling roll and left foot. In prone the rifle is balanced on the left arm.

**Nervous system**

The human center of mass is in front of the ankle, with a narrow base of support, consisting of only two feet. A truly static pose would cause a human to fall forward onto his or her face. In addition, there are constant external stresses (such as breezes) and internal stresses (respiration, digestion, excess water temporarily stored in the bladder, etc.).

Maintaining an erect posture relies on dynamic rather than static balance, which requires constant adjustment and correction. The nervous system continually and unconsciously monitors our movement direction and velocity as the body’s vertical axis alternates between tilting forward and backward and side to side. Before each tilt reaches the tip-over point, the nervous system counters the imbalance with a signal to reverse direction. The muscle exertion required to maintain an aligned standing posture is generally minimal but crucial, with the muscles of the feet and ankles are intimately involved in balancing. The muscles of the calves, hips and low back also play a small role. However, recent attention has been devoted to the core muscles, as they are critical in maintaining stability. The transverse abdominals, or the internal core muscles that lie close to the spine, function as a compression corset and provide structural support and control. Dysfunction or imbalance of the core muscles is also associated with back pain. With rifle shooting positions being one-sided, the risk of developing an imbalance in strength and/or flexibility is increased. It makes sense, therefore, to improve overall core muscular strength, along with the legs, to help stabilize the standing and kneeling positions.

**Balance control**

Controlling this dynamic balancing process requires simultaneous processing of inputs from multiple
This includes equilibrioception (from the vestibular system located in the inner ear), vision and proprioception (the body's sense of where it is in space). The senses detect changes of body position with respect to the base while the motor system controls muscle actions to maintain balance.

The vestibule is the region of the inner ear where the semicircular canals converge, close to the cochlea (the hearing organ). Each semicircular canal has a bulbed end, or enlarged portion, that contains hair cells. Rotation or tilting of the head causes a flow of fluid, which in turn causes displacement of the top portion of the hair cells that are embedded in the jellylike cupula. Two other organs that are part of the vestibular system are the utricle and saccule. These are called the otolithic organs and are responsible for detecting movement in a straight line.

The hair cells of the otolithic organs are blanketed with a jellylike layer studded with tiny calcium stones called otoconia. When the head is tilted or the body position is changed with respect to gravity, the displacement of the stones causes the hair cells to bend, which in turn sends signals to the brain.

The balance control system also utilizes visual input to maintain orientation and balance. For example, visual signals are sent to the brain about the body's position in relation to its surroundings. These signals are processed by the brain and the information is compared to reports from the vestibular and the skeletal systems. An erect head position is the key to maintaining balance. Not just for the balance apparatus in the inner ear, but also for the eyes and vision. The importance of visual input for balance is illustrated by the fact that it is harder to stand on one foot with eyes closed rather than eyes open. Another example is a swaying spotting scope or rifle rest stand, seen in a shooter's peripheral vision, creating rhythmic swaying of the shooter.

The third component of balance control is proprioception. It is the third distinct sensory mode that provides feedback and indicates whether the body is moving with the required effort. Additionally, proprioception detects where the various parts of the body are located in relation to each other. Proprioceptors on the bottom of the feet, for example, sense the pressure as it changes from the shift in the center of gravity.

Figure 6 illustrates the inner elements of the ear that contribute to balance.

The sense of balance usually deteriorates in the aging process. However, it can be improved considerably with the help of specialized training.

Natural Point of Aim and Alignment

Often a confusing point for beginners and experienced shooters alike, Natural Point of Aim (NPA) has nothing to do with the target. It is where the rifle naturally points when the body is relaxed. The objective is to adjust the position so that the rifle points naturally at the target center when the body is relaxed. Alignment to the target is correct when the body is in a relaxed position supported by bone structure (with minimal muscle tension) and the rifle naturally points exactly at the center of the specific target. Alignment is not just left and right, but up and down as well.

“How do we check NPA?” (Note: There are several methods to check NPA. The suggestion below is only one such method.)

- Relax with head on the stock
- Close the eyes or glance away
- Check balance & muscle tension
- Open eyes & see where rifle is pointing
- Make needed adjustments & test again

Check-adjust, Check-adjust, Check-adjust, Check until it is perfect. Adjustment mechanics are different for each position but the goal is the same.

NPA should be checked every shot as an integral part of the whole shot process. If the NPA is aligned correctly, the shooter will see the rifle sights approach the target from exactly the same direction, and then slow and stop exactly on the center of the target. The shot can then be fired with confidence.

When alignment is not correct, the temptation is to engage the muscles to push the sights to the center. This results in poor shots as the rifle will move away from the center as the shot is fired. Consider, for a moment, if the NPA is exactly centered and the shot is released on the outside of the hold area, the rifle will tend to move toward the center. A better shot is the result. This is the reason for checking alignment until it is perfect.

Comfort

All shooting positions should be reasonably comfortable. Some discomfort is inevitable, especially during beginner training or after a long layoff from shooting, but within a few minutes of getting out of position the discomfort should disappear. Early
training sessions should be intentionally short so that the shooter can build up a tolerance to the pressures of the sling and kneeling roll. Pain, however, is never a good sign and may indicate an injury or other problem. If the shooter is in pain, stop immediately and apply appropriate first-aid. Before allowing the shooter to continue, make certain that any issue has been resolved.

A good position allows normal flow of blood between the heart, head, arms and legs while shooting. Some restriction of blood flow and impinging on the nerves of the arm may occur when using a sling, but that can be somewhat alleviated by wearing thick sweatshirts or undergarments and a shooting jacket with a properly adjusted sling.

The kneeling position can also restrict blood flow to the leg and also impinge on the nerves that pass behind the knee. Comfort can be improved in the kneeling position by spending time in position on the kneeling roll while engaged in some other activity like reading or watching television. Building up the time that the shooter can comfortably stay in position will make it easier to stay focused on shooting instead of thinking how bad their foot and ankle feels. Stretching and flexibility exercises can also help improve overall comfort.

Consistency

In rifle shooting, we are trying to place one shot on top of the other in the center of the target. The only way to accomplish that task is by having a solid position that allows the shooter to continually reproduce the same shot process. Without being consistent, the chances of performing successfully are low.

Consistency is not just shot-to-shot, or even series-to-series, but also day-to-day. After the basics are learned, next to come is the introduction and development of the shot process or routine. As the athlete enters competitions, a setup routine is also needed. It all boils down to repetition in thought and action as trained.

Legality

Of course any position used in competition must comply with the rules. Rulebooks are generally quite consistent on what constitutes a legal shooting position, but it never hurts to keep up to date on with the fine points of the various rules. It would make no sense to develop and learn a position that would be in violation of the rules. Yet we see these violations too frequently.

For example, in the prone position, the left arm must form a 30 degree angle with the supporting surface and the sling may not touch the gun or shooter except at the attachment points. In standing, the rifle may touch the upper chest and shoulder area only on the dominant side of the body. And in kneeling, the roll may not be used if the dominant foot is at more than a 45 degree angle and the point of the elbow must not be more than 10 cm over or 15 cm behind the point of the other.

Coaches must be ever vigilant that changes to a shooter’s position do not violate the competition rules. In many cases, subtle adjustments made over time can suddenly result in a position that is no longer legal. Don’t let this happen to you.

Psychological Interconnectedness

Holding still or hold control is as much about the mental efforts used to reduce or control body movement as it is the physical positioning. Conscious thought about correcting the aim almost always results in over-correction of the error and a jerky response. Movement of the rifle can be somewhat controlled by turning one’s attention inside the body through the inner position. Ask yourself questions such as: “Muscle tension, is it correct? Where is it too much?” Breathing, as we discussed earlier, helps control emotions, relaxing both the body and mind and reduces unneeded muscle tension. A small change will stand out if the background tension is low.

The mental control of the hold, however, is more about the focused thought or intention of “smaller,” “slower” or “center” and will likely be more productive than consciously trying to correct or adjust the hold while aiming.

Top-level shooters from around the world describe this mental control of their position, and thus their hold, in a wide variety of ways. From that of being a granite statue or leaning up against an imaginary wall to resting their elbows on imaginary tables at just the perfect height or holding themselves in the perfect position with an imaginary corset; whatever the mental key, these shooters exert their will to hold still. Essentially it is mind over matter.

All of these images, and more, have been used successfully. It is, of course, a very personal choice and no one should be forced into any specific trick described here, but rather given the idea and the freedom to test and develop their own best solution to holding still.

Of all the fundamentals, holding the rifle confidently on the center of the target is the most critical for shooting success. Everything else follows from that. But without being able to execute the shot, the best hold in the world is useless.

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Outter Position

The position of the body and all of its parts along with the shooters clothing and accessories constitute the outer position. For example, in the standing position, the coach can observe the orientation of the hips in relation to the feet and legs, the angle of the arms, back and torso, and how the shifting of weight toward the target tilts the pelvis and provides a shelf to rest the elbow. The coach can also see how the clothing fits and whether it helps or hinders the shooter in obtaining the correct body position. Essentially, it is anything and everything an observer can see.

Inner Position

While the outer position is what the position looks like from the outside, the inner position, is fairly invisible to the observer. Even the shooter is not necessarily aware of what the right feeling should be. What the coach cannot see is the feeling, the muscle tension and the discomfort. A biomechanically sound position, practiced consistently, provides feedback to the brain of the correct feeling of a solid position. Ultimately, however, the ability to precisely replicate the exact same position shot-to-shot and day-to-day is gained over several years of training.
The position of the body and all of its parts along with the shooter’s clothing and accessories constitute the outer position. For example, in the standing position, the coach can observe the orientation of the hips in relation to the feet and legs, the angle of the arms, back, and torso, and how the shifting of weight toward the target tilts the pelvis and provides a shelf to rest the elbow. The coach can also see how the clothing fits and whether it helps or hinders the shooter in obtaining the correct body position. Essentially, it is anything and everything an athlete needs to achieve the inner position.

While the outer position is what the position looks like from the outside, the inner position is fairly invisible to the observer. Even the shooter is not necessarily aware of what the right feeling should be. What the coach cannot see is the feeling, the muscle tension, and the discomfort. A biomechanically sound position, practiced consistently, provides feedback to the brain of the correct feeling of a solid position. Ultimately, however, the ability to precisely replicate the exact same position shot-to-shot and day-to-day is gained over several.
Why Shoot Skeet?

By Jaiden Grinnell

My name is Jaiden Grinnell and I'm a skeet shooter on the Women's National Shotgun Team. My job here is to tell you why you should shoot skeet too.

In order to tell you that, let me tell you why I shoot.

I have been shooting skeet on either a USA Shooting Development Team or USAS National Team for about six years now, so my career is fairly young in comparison to some of the other shooters on the world stage. By the time I made my first team I was just starting high school and not quite 14 years old. I had tried several school sports in the past and found that shooting was my true calling. I will be the first to tell you that there were many sacrifices along my journey. Every day after school, I went to the shooting range to practice. Although I was on my school dive team during the winter season, too much time was taken from shooting practice and I eventually gave up school sports to focus on shooting. In order to go to matches, I missed school functions and time with friends. That doesn't make shooting sound like too much fun but don't give up on me yet! Yes, sacrifice is a requirement of being a successful shooter, but sacrifice is a requirement of being successful in anything you set your sights on. Before you say that you're not willing to give up prom or that football game, let's delve into what has kept me going.

The hard work and sacrifice that I put into shooting has helped me develop strength of character and life experience than cannot be measured. Traveling overseas with my teammates taught me responsibility, time management and self-discipline. It was up to me to be awake and ready on time because Grinnell's love of the game and dedication to her training propelled her to the USA Shooting National Shotgun Team at only 19 years old.
sometimes you and the National Coach have to be on the range at different times while overseas. There was a lot of growth even after my first trip overseas, where all of these life skills came into play.

Talking to people from different states and countries is another aspect of shooting that I would never trade. Some of my close friends come from the shooting world, and even before I moved out of my parents’ house, I kept in better touch with shooters than I did with friends at home. The people I have had the amazing opportunity to meet have turned out to be my best friends and the best part is that we all have a common love for the best sport on earth.

Now, I don’t know about you, but I’m all for instant gratification. What could be better than seeing that puff of smoke as the target shatters? How about the pride of hearing your national anthem play and your flag raised as you win the gold? Or the joy of walking onto the field with USA on your back? That’s the real kicker. You represent the talent of your country. Seeing as we happen to live in the best country ever, I must say, that’s a pretty cool feeling.

So why do I shoot skeet? Seems pretty boring that the targets fly in the same place every time, right? Wrong. Yes, the targets fly in about the same place everywhere in the world you go, with the exception of a stiff wind. However, this makes the game quite a challenge because high and consistent scores are the scores that win. A strong mind and quick eyes are necessary to shoot those kinds of scores. A strong mind is a disciplined mind, and a disciplined mind comes with practice, coaching, and the conscious decision to make it that way. The intensity of the game drew me to skeet because of the scores necessary to win. I like a challenge and, for me, skeet was the way to go.

This is not to say trap or double trap will not gain you the strength of character and life experience discussed above. My journey has been in skeet and so that is simply what I know best. Specialists in your favorite event can tell you what they gained from it and why they chose the event they did. As for me, I chose skeet. The life skills and experience I have gained from shooting sports completely and totally vanquish any regret for the hard work and sacrifice I have put in to my career. It can be summed up like this: Shooting is what I do, it’s who I am, and it’s what I love. My job was to tell you why you should shoot skeet. All I can say is as long as you're still pulling the trigger I’ll be happy, but I’d love to see more people be as happy as I am in the sport I love.

Grinnell on the podium at the 2010 World Shooting Championships where she won the bronze medal for Junior Women’s Skeet.
For the second time in two years, an International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup made a stop on U.S. soil. In the largest ever Olympic shooting event in the United States, USA Shooting was the proud host to the 2011 ISSF Rifle and Pistol World Cup USA from May 15 to 22. The event was held at the Phillips, Pool and Parks Ranges of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit in Fort Benning, Ga. With over 800 athletes and coaches in attendance from over 70 international federations, culture and language barriers were challenged in pursuit of not only an ISSF World Cup medal, but 2012 Olympic quotas as well.

The first contested event was Men's 10m Air Rifle. The USA Shooting Team's Bryant Wallizer (Little Orleans, Md.) fired 596 qualification points to tie with seven other shooters. Wallizer entered a shoot-off for only three spots in the final. As the fourth place finisher in the shoot-off with 51.1 points, Wallizer narrowly missed the opportunity to compete in the final. Corporal Matt Rawlings (Wharton, Texas) and Jonathan Hall (Carrollton, Ga.) both finished with 594 qualification points. In Women's 10m Air Pistol, Teresa Meyer (Dearborn, Mich.) was the highest placing American in twenty-second place with 381 points.

Petty Officer First Class Sandra Uptagraff (Los Angeles, Calif.) finished with 377 qualification points and teammate Brenda Silva (Riverside, Calif.) shot 374 points.

The highlight of the event was the USA Shooting Team's Jamie Beyerle (Lebanon, Pa.) and her performance in Women's 50m Rifle Three Position. Situated in the middle of the final with 585 qualification points, Beyerle refused to accept defeat. She beat Eva Friedel of Germany and Li Peijing of China in an outstanding come-from-behind victory. Despite a three point gap from the leader (Annik Marguet of Switzerland), Beyerle forged ahead in the final to bury a deep ten—10.8 to be exact—for the win by just one-tenth of a point. National Rifle Coach Major Dave Johnson said, “Jamie has continued to build her resume and experience. She was patient in what could have been a very frustrating day in challenging wind and that discipline paid off on the last shot for a dramatic gold medal.” Beyerle finished with 98.2 points in the final for 683.2 total points. This win makes it her second ISSF World Cup medal in Women's 50m Rifle Three Position this year. Teammates Amanda Furrer (Spokane, Wash.) finished in seventeenth place with 580 qualification points and Sarah Beard (Danville, Ind.) shot 571 points.

Following Beyerle’s gold, Brian Beaman (Selby, S.D.) climbed the podium for the USA in Men's 10m Air Pistol. Beaman, the 2010 Championship of the Americas gold medalist (and quota winner) in this event, entered the final with 586 qualification points and shot 100.6 points in the final for 686.6 total points and the bronze medal. When asked about his victory, Beaman said, “I feel like I was finally able to overcome a lot of the adversity in this sport and I now have a solid inner confidence that allowed me to excel today.” Teammate
Anthony Lutz (Tonganoxie, Kan.) finished with 571 points and teammate Sergeant First Class Thomas Rose shot 570 points.

In Women's 25m Sport Pistol, Petty Officer First Class Sandra Uptagrafft (Los Angeles, Calif.) was the highest placing American in thirty-eighth place with 573 points. Teammate Brenda Silva (Riverside, Calif.) finished with 290 points and Teresa Meyer (Dearborn, Mich.) shot for 289 points.

In Women's 25m Sport Pistol, Petty Officer First Class Sandra Uptagrafft (Los Angeles, Calif.) was the highest placing American in thirty-eighth place with 573 points. Teammate Brenda Silva (Riverside, Calif.) finished with 290 points and Teresa Meyer (Dearborn, Mich.) shot for 289 points.

The Men's 50m Rifle Three Position event produced some of the highest scores of the competition. After 1172 qualification points, Matt Emmons (Browns Mills, N.J.) shot 50.7 points in a shoot-off to earn the seventh position in the final. Emmons shot the highest final of the match with 101.2 points to finish in fifth place with a total of 1273.2 points. Teammate Sergeant Joe Hein (Mason, Mich., pictured) fired 1175 qualification points and 96.4 points in the final to finish seventh with 1271.4 total points. Sergeant First Class Jason Parker (Columbus, Ga.) finished with 1170 points.

The USA Shooting Team's Sarah Scherer (Fort Worth, Texas) narrowly missed the finals with 396 qualification points. Scherer, who was the gold medalist (and quota winner) at the last ISSF World Cup in Changwon, finished in ninth place. Teammate Meghann K. Morrill (Boerne, Texas) finished in twelfth place with 396 points and Amy Sowash (Richmond, Ky.) shot 394 qualification points.

The action continued as the Men's Rapid Fire Pistol final continued to excite the crowd on the ISSF World Cup circuit. The USA Shooting Team's Sergeant First Class Keith Sanderson (Colorado Springs, Colo.) of the U.S. Army's World Class Athlete Program finished in fourteenth place with 578 points. Teammate Emil Milev (Tampa, Fla.) finished with 573 points and Sergeant Brad Balsley (Uniontown, Pa.) finished with 569 points.

In the Men's 50m Rifle Prone, the USA Shooting Team's Sergeant First Class Eric Uptagrafft (Phenix City, Ala., pictured) shot 598 qualification points and 101.9 points in the final for 699.9 total points. Uptagrafft finished in fifth place overall. Teammate Sergeant Michael McPhail (Darlington, Wisc.) shot 596 qualification points but missed the final by four-tenths of a point in a four person shoot-off. He fired 51.4 points in the shoot-off. Matt Emmons (Browns Mills, N.J.) shot 594 points to finish in twentieth place.

The ISSF World Cup USA wrapped up with the Men's 50m Free Pistol final. Sergeant First Class Daryl Szarenski (Saginaw, Mich.) finished in ninth place with 559 points. Szarenski narrowly missed a shot at the final with 44.8 points in the shoot-off. Teammate Jason Turner (Rochester, N.Y.) shot for 549 points. The USA Shooting Team finished this third leg of Rifle and Pistol ISSF World Cup competition with appearances in four finals and two medals. Several of the National Development and National Junior...
Members of the USA Shooting Team took the stage at this year’s third International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup in Beijing, China. The USA’s Kim Rhode (El Monte, Calif.) set the tone of the event with a breakout silver medal. Rhode, who had finished with the gold medal at the prior ISSF World Cup in Sydney, didn’t let the wind alter her course for the podium. At the site of her 2008 Olympic Games silver medal victory, Rhode nailed 72 targets in the qualification match. In the final, she only dropped the high house target of the final pair on station four to score 96 total targets.

The USA’s Caitlin Connor (Winnfield, La.) finished in sixth place with 89 total targets. Connor shot 72 qualification targets, yet had difficulty with 17 targets in the final. USA Shooting (USAS) National Shotgun Teammate Jaiden Grinnell (Port Angeles, Wash.) finished with 69 total targets.

Above: Heiden sets her aim on accomplishing a new junior qualification world record in Women’s Trap. She finished with 73 out of 75 targets after three rounds of shooting.

Athletes Frank Thompson (Alliance, Neb.), BJ Blanchard (Vidor, Texas) and Mark Weeks (Phenix City, Ala.) represented the stars and stripes in the Men’s Skeet event. With tough competition, the men didn’t qualify for a spot in the finals. Thompson finished in the middle of the field with 119 targets in qualification. Blanchard and Weeks both shot 117 targets overall.

In Men’s Double Trap, 18-year-old Billy Crawford (Johnstown, Ohio) was the highest placing USA Shooting Team member in sixteenth place. Crawford qualified for the ISSF World Cup Beijing with a terrific performance at the 2011 USAS Spring Selection match. He finished with 135 out of 150 targets in qualification. Teammates Sergeant Glenn Eller (Katy, Texas) of the U.S. Army
Unit shot 133 targets and Brian Maher (San Antonio, Texas) shot 113 targets.

Rachael Heiden (Clinton, Mich.) put another medal on the board for the USA in the Women’s Trap competition. Heiden started things off by equaling the junior world record in qualification with 73 out of 75 targets. After three rounds of shooting in strong winds, she shot 16 out of 25 targets for a total score of 89 targets. Heiden was tied with Italy’s Jessica Rossi at 89 targets, which put the two in a sudden-death duel for the gold medal. Rossi topped Heiden after two targets to win the gold medal. “It feels great to win a medal, and to shoot a world record,” said Heiden in an interview with the ISSF. Teammates Janessa Beaman (Colorado Springs, Colo.) finished sixteenth with 63 targets and Corey Cogdell (Eagle River, Ala.) shot 60 targets.

The competition wrapped up with Collin Wietfeldt (Hemlock, Mich.) ready for another shot at ISSF World Cup glory in Men’s Trap. Wietfeldt finished just one target shy of the podium at the first ISSF World Cup in Chile, and he was hungry for success. In a tough field, he shot 118 targets—just one target shy of entering a shoot-off for the finals. He finished twelfth overall with his sights set on the next ISSF World Cup. Staff Sergeant Ryan Hadden (Pendleton, Ore.) shot 113 targets to finish in the middle of the field. Teammate Lance Bade (Vancouver, Wash.) finished with 106 targets.

The USA Shooting Team left Beijing with a total of two medals and three appearances in the finals. The last ISSF World Cup of the season will be held in Maribor, Slovenia from July 7 to 17. The team will also be traveling to Belgrade, Serbia for the 2011 ISSF World Clay Target Championships. Don’t miss the action as your USA Shooting Team shotgun athletes fight for Olympic quota places and glory on the international stage.

“The USA Shooting Team left Beijing with a total of two medals and three appearances in the finals.”

Right: Rhode graciously accepts her silver medal and a handshake from the ISSF’s Secretary General, Franz Schreiber.

Below: Rhode finished with a total of 96 out of 100 targets.
The USA Shooting Team’s brought both youth and experience to the firing lines in Changwon, Korea, for the second International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup of the season. The event began with the Men’s 10m Air Rifle final. The Americans just missed a shot—or ten shots—in the finals by only one point. Corporal Matt Rawlings (Wharton, Texas) finished with 594 qualification points. Teammates Bryant Wallizer (Little Orleans, Md.) shot 593 points and Matt Wallace (Fairbanks, Alaska) scored 586 points.

After wrapping up her sophomore year at Texas Christian University (TCU) in May, 20-year-old Sarah Scherer (Fort Worth, Texas) won the first Women’s 10m Air Rifle quota for the USA. In a near-perfect performance, Scherer shot 398 qualification points. Teammates Bryant Wallizer (Little Orleans, Md.) shot 593 points and Matt Wallace (Fairbanks, Alaska) scored 586 points.

Sergeant First Class Eric Uptagrafft (Phenix City, Ala.) won his second ISSF World Cup medal of the season in Men’s 50m Rifle Prone. Earlier this year, he secured an Olympic quota for the USA at the first ISSF World Cup leg in Sydney in late March with

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his first silver of the season. Firing a solid 596 points in qualification in Changwon, Uptagrafft entered the final in second place and didn’t give an inch as he shot 103.6 points in the final for another silver medal. As the number two ranked Men’s 50m Rifle Prone shooter in the world, Uptagrafft delivered a terrific performance in Changwon. Teammate Sergeant Joseph Hein (Mason, Mich.) finished with 592 qualification points and missed the final by one point. Sergeant Michael McPhail (Darlington, Wisc.) also shot for 592 points.

Sergeant First Class Keith Sanderson (Colorado Springs, Colo.) of the U.S. Army’s World Class Athlete Program continued to add to the medal count for the USA with a silver medal in Men’s Rapid Fire Pistol. Sanderson shot 581 qualification points to earn a spot in the final. Outlasting the competition, Sanderson and the Czech Republic’s Martin Podhrasky were left in a duel for the gold medal in the new Men’s Rapid Fire Pistol final format. Athletes qualify for the final, and then enter the final with zero points. They earn points through a series of hit—shots that score 9.7 points or better—and advance with the highest number of hits. Podhrasky scored 32 hits to Sanderson’s 28 hits for the gold. Sanderson, however, not only won the silver medal but the first Men’s Rapid Fire Pistol quota for the USA. Teammate Emil Milev (Temple Terrace, Fla.) finished in eighteenth place with 575 qualification points.

In Women’s 50m Rifle Three Position, Sandy Fong (New York, N.Y.) finished in twenty-first place with a qualification score of 574 points. Olympic Training Center Resident Athlete, Amy Sowash (Richmond, Ky.) shot 572 qualification points. In Men’s 50m Rifle Three Position, Sergeant Joseph Hein (Mason, Mich.) entered the final with 1168 qualification points and shot for 98.2 points in the final for seventh place at 1266.2 total points. Fellow American Matt Wallace (Fairbanks, Alaska) finished in the middle of the field with 1153 qualification points.

With over 500 athletes from 58 different federations, the ISSF World Cup Changwon provided stiff competition from powerhouses such as China and Serbia. At the second leg of international rifle/pistol competition, the USA Shooting Athletes performed to pick up two very important quotas—Women’s 10m Air Rifle and Men’s Rapid Fire Pistol. The Team finished second in overall medal standings, behind China, with two silver medals and one gold medal.
Hundreds of junior shooters flocked to the U.S. Olympic Training Center from March 30 to April 16 for the National Junior Olympic Shooting Championships (NJOSC). Athletes were invited to participate based on performance at State Junior Olympic events. All Olympic rifle and pistol events were contested over three separate week-long phases of men's rifle, women's rifle and pistol competition. USA Shooting's National Junior Olympic Program Coordinator, Nicole Levine, said, “It is nice to see the level of competition increase year after year. Our young shooters' talent continuously amazes me every Junior Olympic match we run. With each new national junior record shot, the outstanding achievements and the growth of our sport are exciting and impressive.” The event was held at the famed Olympic Shooting Center located on the Olympic Training Complex—the home of many rifle and pistol champions.

The match kicked off with stiff competition in Women's 10m Air Rifle and Women's 50m Rifle Three Position. University of Kentucky freshman Emily Holsopple (Wilcox, Pa.) took home top honors with national titles in both events. In Women's 10m Air Rifle, Holsopple entered the final with 791 qualification points after the two day competition. She shot 103.1 points in the final for a total of 894.1 points to win by five-tenths of a point. The silver medalist was Texas Christian University's (TCU) Sarah Beard (Danville, Ind.) with 789 qualification points. Beard shot the highest final—an impressive 104.6 points—for a total of 893.6 points. Beard's TCU teammate Sarah Scherer (Fort Worth, Texas) brought home the bronze medal with 790 qualification points and 103 points in the final for 893 total points. Both Holsopple and Beard reaffirmed their positions on the National Junior Rifle Team (Scherer is a member of the National Rifle Team).

Holsopple continued her terrific performance in the Women's 50m Rifle Three Position event. She entered the final with a two point lead at 1170 points and sealed the deal with 98.5 points in the final. She finished with 1268.5 total points and the gold medal. Scherer scored the silver medal with 1168 qualification points and 99.7 points in the final for 1267.7 total points. She edged out bronze medalist Libby Tallberg (Stratford, Conn.) by just eight-tenths of...
a point. Tallberg, a J2 competitor, shot an outstanding 1167 points in qualification and the highest final of 99.9 points for a total of 1266.9 points.

In Men’s 10m Air Rifle, Samuel Muegge (Boling, Texas) entered his first air rifle final ever and earned the gold medal. Muegge, a freshman at Jacksonville State University, fired 1180 match points and 100 points in the final for the win by two-tenths of a point. Hot on his heels was Micahel Matthews (Atlanta, Ga.) with 1279.8 total points. Matthews, a freshman at the United States Military Academy, shot for the silver with 1178 points and a solid final of 101.8 points. Max Burkhardt, a senior at Denver East High School, finished with the bronze medal and 1274.8 total points (1173+101.8).

Assistant National Rifle Coach Marcus Raab awarded Muegge and Matthews spots on the National Junior Rifle Team.

Connor Davis (Shelbyville, Ky.) took a six point lead headed into Men’s 50m Rifle Three Position. He followed it up with 99.8 points in the final for the gold medal and national title with 2428.8 points. Davis, a junior at Shelby County High School, was also named to the National Junior Rifle Team. The silver medalist was the Men’s 10m Air Rifle Champion, Samuel Muegge, with 2422 total points (2323+99). Cody Enders (Dauphin, Pa.) shot up two points in the final to claim the bronze medal with 2311 qualification points and 96.5 points in the final for 2407.5 total points.

Muegge also shot his way into the Men’s 50m Rifle Prone final. Not only did he bring home the gold medal, but a new national junior record as well. Muegge shot an impressive 1191 qualification points and 104.2 points in the final for 1295.2 points. Alexander Rivera (Kendall Park, N.J.) was the silver medalist with 1193 qualification points and 101.3 points in the final for a total of 1294.3 points. The bronze medalist was Brad Driscoll (Hudson, N.H.), a sophomore at the University of the Science in Philadelphia, Pa. Driscoll fired 1188 qualification points and 101 points in the final for a total of 1289 points.

The high-scores continued as Olympic Training Center Resident Athlete Will Brown (Twins Falls, Idaho) created some separation in the field. Brown shot 1149 qualification points and 100.4 points in the final to win the Men’s 10m Air Pistol event with 1249.4 points. Marshall Matters of Rapid City, S.D., made his first NJOSC performance a medal-worthy one with the silver medal. Matters shot 1110 qualification points and 96.4 points in the final for 1206.4 points. Matters was named to the National Junior Pistol Team for his terrific performance. The bronze medalist was Grant Adams of Manhattan, Kan., with an even 1200 total points (1109+91).

In an exciting finish, Shelby Cammack (Sturgis, S.D.) overtook Kylie Gagnon (Bozeman,
Mont.) for the gold medal. Gagnon entered the final with a six point lead, but Cammack shot an outstanding 96.7 point final to tie Gagnon with 827.7 points. Cammack sealed the victory with a 9.6 point shot in the sudden death shoot-off. Gagnon finished with the silver medal and 827.7+8.2 points. Cammack was awarded a USA Shooting Team jacket and named to the National Junior Pistol Team. Taylor Gallegos (Prosper, Texas) finished with 822.5 points (730+92.5) for the bronze medal.

The 2011 NJOSC concluded with men’s and women’s .22 caliber pistol competition. In Junior Men’s Sport Pistol, Joseph Totts of Randolph, Ohio, won the gold medal with 755.3 total points. Totts, a freshman at Ohio State University, shot 560 match points and the highest final of 195.3 points. The silver medalist was Matters, who fired 749 total points (558+191). Alexander Chichkov (Temple Terrace, Fla.), son of Assistant National Pistol Coach Vladimir Chichkov, won the bronze medal with 746.3 total points (557+189.3). In the Women’s Sport Pistol event, Starlin Shi (Potomac, Md.) won top honors with 551 qualification points and the highest final of 194.5 points for a total of 745.5 points. The silver medalist was Kimberly Hullings of Matawan, N.J. with 545 qualification points and 193.6 points in the final for 738.6 total points. Both Shi and Hullings were named to the National Junior Pistol Team as a result of their top performances. Cammack, the Women’s 10m Air Pistol Champion, took the bronze medal in Women’s Sport Pistol with 721 total points (541+180).

Above: (L) Kylie Gagnon, (C) Shelby Cammack and (R) Taylor Gallegos celebrate their excellent matches in Women’s 10m Air Pistol. Below: (L) Samuel Muegge, (C) Connor Davis and (R) Cody Enders treated the crowd to an exciting Men’s 50m Rifle Three Position final.
May: Sarah Scherer

USA Shooting would like to recognize Sarah Scherer (Fort Worth, Texas) as the ELEY Athlete of the Month. Scherer recently topped the podium at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup in Changwon, Korea. She shot an outstanding 398 points in her first international ISSF World Cup and followed it up with a strong 103.5 final. In addition to her gold medal performance, Scherer also won a 2012 Olympic quota spot in Women's 10m Air Rifle for the USA. Prior to Korea, Scherer competed at the National Junior Olympic Championships in Colorado Springs where she finished with two silver medals in Women's 10m Air Rifle and Women's 50m Rifle Three Position. She flew back to Fort Worth, Texas, for one day to take a history exam (which she passed with flying colors) and then departed for Korea. “Winning a quota for our country is the greatest honor. I am thankful to God for giving me that performance and my families, coaches and friends for supporting me. What a fun experience!” said Scherer when asked about the ISSF World Cup in Korea. Scherer is a member of the National Rifle Team and the Texas Christian University (TCU) Horned Frogs Rifle Team and also recently completed her sophomore year at TCU. USAS congratulates Scherer on a terrific April.

June: Jamie Beyerle

It should come as no surprise that the ELEY Athlete of the Month for June is recent International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup USA gold medalist Jamie Beyerle (Lebanon, Pa.). As the top ranked Women's 50m Rifle Three Position shooter in the world, Beyerle took the lead with an astounding 10.8 final shot that put her on top of the podium in Georgia. When asked about her ELEY Athlete of the Month nod, Beyerle said, “The ISSF World Cup in Fort Benning is always an exciting one since it is home to me and nothing is better than winning on your home soil.” Beyerle shot 585 qualification points to enter the final as the fourth ranked shooter. Beyerle surged ahead of the competition with a strong final of 98.2 points. National Rifle Coach Major Dave Johnson said, “Jamie has been putting the world on notice that she will be a top contender in London. She has won the gold in four out of the last five ISSF World Cups and World Cup Finals; her long term hard work and perseverance continues to pay off.” USA Shooting would like to congratulate Jamie Beyerle for her hard work and wish her continued success. Beyerle is pictured above with ELEY's Dan Olley.
How about 18 holes with the reigning Masters champion? A tennis match against the Wimbledon winner? Or a round of clays with World Cup-medalist shotgun shooters? Some might consider it futile. But Wendel Crowe thought it sounded like fun. Crowe, a Wild Sheep Foundation member from Covington, Ga., purchased the unusual opportunity at a Wild Sheep Show auction. A three-day hunting and shooting outing was fully donated by The Bluffs, a premier wing-shooting club near Byers, Colo. The Bluffs offers pheasant and upland game hunting as well as five-stand clay shooting. The USA Shooting Team sweetened the pot by offering the winning bidder a chance to shoot with some of the best international shotgunners in the U.S. In April, Mr. and Mrs. Crowe, along with their son and grandson, joined World Cup medalists and USA Shooting Team members Caitlin Connor, Jaiden Grinnell and Frank Thompson. The elite shooters are Resident Athletes at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in nearby Colorado Springs. Were the Crowes hopelessly overmatched? Delightfully, no. Competitiveness aside, the Crowe family—especially grandson Brelan—and the Team members shared an unforgettable day of clay shooting, hunting and instruction.

USA Shooting would like to thank the Wendel Crowe family and The Bluffs for being part of an enjoyable event.

Above: Resident Athletes Jaiden Grinnell, Caitlin Connor and Frank Thompson offer shooting tips to young Brelan Crowe. 
Below: After a fun day hunting, the USAS, Bluffs and Crowe group poses for a commemorative shot.
USA Shooting is pleased to announce the new Assistant National Coaches. The Assistant National Coaches work alongside the National Coaches to help develop junior talent, support National Team members and promote the shooting sports.

The Assistant National Shotgun Coaches are Joe Bernolfo, Tommy Browning, Todd Graves and Dwayne Weger. Bernolfo was the first Level 4 Certified Coach in the nation and is a long-time established coach. He primarily works with the Resident Athletes at the Olympic Training Center. Tommy Browning is a National Sporting Clays champion. He has been instructing sporting clays and international events for over 10 years. Todd Graves is a four-time Olympian and the 2000 Olympic bronze medalist in Men’s Skeet. He has won world cup medals in all Men’s shotgun events—trap, double trap and skeet. Graves is a retired Sergeant First Class from the U.S. Army and is now coaching full-time. Dwayne Weger was a competitive shooter for many years and was the 2008 U.S. Olympic Team Leader. Weger coaches shooting at USAS Certified Training Center Willawalla Creek Shooting Center.

The Assistant National Pistol Coaches are Ray Arrendondo and Vladimir Chichkov. Arrendondo was an 1988 Olympian in Men’s Rapid Fire Pistol and is currently the head Pistol Coach at the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit in Fort Benning, Ga. Arredondo is very responsible and organized—he helps with training, planning and coordination for the elite USAMU athletes. Chichkov is very passionate about the shooting sports. He is a long-time pistol coach and gifted in the technical aspects of training. Chichkov is currently working to enhance the USA’s sport pistol and rapid fire pistol events. He also helps supervise the National Junior Assistant Coaches—Russ Doucette, Steve Faught and Eric Pueppke, a trio of hard-workers from North Dakota. They are working to establish the pipeline of junior shooters.

The Assistant National Rifle Coaches are Marcus Raab, Thomas Tamas and Ernie Vande Zande. Raab, the National Coach Training for Rifle and Pistol for the National Rifle Association, has been a key developer and instructor in the National Coach Development Staff program that has led to a tremendous increase in coaching knowledge and skills from the grass roots level on up. Raab also has a long competitive background in multiple events. National Rifle Coach Major Dave Johnson credits Raab for much of the junior team's success over several years, which culminated in the 2010 gold medal World Championship performance by the junior women’s smallbore team. Tamas was one of the top rifle shooters in the USA in Men’s Prone. He was a world champion, world cup medalist and multiple-time world record holder. He is a tireless teacher and mentor for the USAMU International Rifle Team. Vande Zande has been a long time coach, competitor, manager and promoter of Olympic style shooting sports. He challenges athletes to think and learn, and most importantly, follow through on tasks and skills. Vande Zande was also a world record holder in men’s prone.

The Assistant National Paralympic Coach is Tom Monto, a Level 4 Certified Coach for both rifle and pistol. Monto has been the head coach at Riverside Shooting Club for 25 years where he has helped develop some of the top juniors in the country. He has been involved in shooting for over 50 years and with disabled shooting for the last seven years where he still competes at a high level.
USA Shooting would like to thank Lindsay Brooke for her many years of service to the shooting sports. Brooke has been with USA Shooting since 2005, first as an intern, then Competitions Assistant and currently as the Competitions Manager. She will be moving on to pursue higher education with a specialization in Sports Administration. Brooke oversaw the coordination and execution of countless events—including two ISSF Rifle and Pistol World Cups, U.S. Olympic Trials, National Championships, Winter Airgun Championships and Selection Matches. USA Shooting would like to wish Lindsay continued success for the future. Nicole Levine, current Junior Olympic Program Coordinator, will assume duties as Competitions Director upon Lindsay’s August departure.

Ruger Continues to Support the USA Shooting Team
An online auction of nine collectible Ruger firearms has netted an $18,250 gift from the firearm company to the USA Shooting Team. Ruger execs presented a check to the team during the recent NRA Annual Meeting in Pittsburgh. “Some of the firearms were consecutively numbered pairs leftover from government contracts and stored in foil wrap for more than 30 years. Others were low serial number guns from popular Ruger lines. All were rare enough to generate considerable interest from buyers,” said Buddy DuVall, executive director of the USA Shooting Team Foundation. The guns were auctioned at GunBroker.com. DuVall said Ruger is a longtime and generous supporter of the USA Shooting Team. Pictured from L to R: Ruger’s Vice President of Sales & Marketing Chris Killoy, BJ Blanchard, Kelsey Zauhar, Caitlin Connor, Garrett Walters, Jaiden Grinnell, Jake Turner and Ruger’s CEO Michael Fifer.

The USA Shooting Team wrapped up the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Shooting World Cup in Alicante, Spain, with an appearance in the finals and multiple athletes achieving a minimum qualifying score (MQS). Sergeant First Class Josh Olson (Spokane, Wash.) finished in seventh place in R6 Mixed 50m Rifle Prone. Olson shot 586 qualifying points and 100.1 points in the final for 686.1 total points. Olson also captured a MQS for the R6 event. Teammate Kisha Makerney (Fort Townson, Okla.) scored 583 points in qualification and accomplished her first MQS for the R6 event. Mike Dickey (Trafal, Ala.) shot 570 points to achieve his second R6 MQS, which makes Dickey eligible for the London 2012 Paralympic Games if a quota is won or awarded. USA Shooting Nationals and the IPC Shooting World Cup USA (October 3 to 9) are both IPC sanctioned events. Eric Hollen (Colorado Springs, Colo.) finished in twenty-fourth place in the P1 Men’s 10m Air Pistol event with 552 points.

At last February’s PTO Match, the Sill Lyra Air Pistol Shooting Academy located in Boise Idaho, had the privilege to receive a unique family, totally dedicated to the shooting sports: the Brown family. Coach Dan Brown, his wife and amazing shooter Susan, the skilled Wyatt, medalist at the Junior Olympics, and Will Brown, member of the USAS Development Team all came to compete. Driving a round trip distance of 300 miles, this dedicated family demonstrated that they have no limits to succeed and improve in our sport. Traveling to Boise, Blackfoot (Idaho), Salt Lake City, Colorado Springs and very soon to the Nationals in Fort Benning, this family is a shining example of dedication and participation to all our community of shooters. It was an honor to have them here at the Academy.”
USA Shooting (USAS) has established a program that identifies clubs with excellent facilities, coaches and training programs for both the training of aspiring Olympic athletes and development of certified coaches.

We have designated these special clubs as Certified Training Centers (CTC). Originally we called them Regional Training Centers (RTC), but we want to expand these CTCs across the country and not just limit them to arbitrary regions. The CTCs receive various benefits from USA Shooting to include grants to help train Olympic athletes and coaches.

Currently, we have ten CTCs across the country; there are three that are focused on rifle and pistol and seven that are focused on the shotgun sports. Though we don't have a CTC in every state or multiple locations in the larger states, we are working toward identifying more CTCs that will support aspiring Olympic athletes across the country.

Our CTCs not only provide training for athletes and run sanctioned competitions to test their learning and skills, but they are also committed to developing coaches for our Olympic level athletes. For parents and volunteers who want to learn more about the Olympic shooting sports and/or elevate their coaching skills, please contact one of the CTCs to learn more about a coach certification course. You can also go to the National Rifle Association (NRA) Training & Education web site (http://www.nrahq.org/education/training/coaching/coach_training_schools.asp) to find other locations around the country that host coach certification courses.

The CTCs are good for beginners, too. The CTCs run various programs that help introduce Olympic and non-Olympic shooting sports. Not all junior shooters want to commit to an Olympic dream. We want all junior shooters to learn gun safety and enjoy the shooting sport of their choice—whether it is for recreation or competition.

CTCs have access to grants from USA Shooting that support Olympic athlete and coach development. This is a new opportunity for our CTCs that began in 2011. We encourage our CTCs to host Junior Olympic Development Camps (JODCs), coach certification courses, assist with travel for selected high potential Olympic athletes to competitions and JODCs, assist with coach travel to competitions and our bi-annual Coach Conference here at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs.

Because of where you reside, you may not be able to train at one of our CTCs every day, but you should consider traveling to a CTC for access to one of their certified coaches, training camps or USA Sanctioned matches. This will keep your travel expenses down and begin to give you visibility with the CTC coaches and USA Shooting. As your skills and success increase, you may be invited to JODCs and national competitions at the Olympic Training Center.

If you are one of the few that want to pursue the Olympic dream, and are willing to work hard, train hard and compete with the best, the CTCs can help you get there.

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**What is a CTC?**

*By Michael Theimer*

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**Visit your local CTC for Elite facilities, coaching and more!**

**SHOTGUN**

**Willawalla Creek Shooting Center**
Saint Jo, Texas  
Email: dweger@coppellconst.com

**Ben Avery Shooting Facility/Clay Target Ctr.**
Phoenix, Ariz.  
Website: http://www.azgfd.gov/outdoor_recreation/beaver_avery.shtml

**Youth Int’l Shotgun Training Coalition, Inc.,**
Muncy Valley, Pa.  
Contact Les Greey at les@greevy.com

**Buckeye International Junior Shooting Sports, Inc.,**
Cardinal Shooting Center  
Marengo, Ohio  
Website: www.buckeyeinternational.org

**Gator Trap and Skeet Club**
Gainsville, Fla.  
Website: www.gatorskeetandtrap.com

**South Georgia Youth Shooting and Bridge Creek Clays**
Hartsfield, Ga.  
Email: ermasmom@yahoo.com

**Tucson Trap and Skeet Club**
Tucson, Ariz.  
Website: www.tucsontrapandskeet.com

**RIFLE/PISTOL**

**Los Angeles Rifle & Revolver Club**
Anaheim, Calif.  
Website: www.larrclub.org

**Palmyra Sportsmen’s Association**
Palmyra, Pa.  
Website: www.palmyrasportsmens.com

**Ole Mill Range Complex**
Griffin, Ga.  
Website: wwwolemillrangectc.com
**Schedule of Events**

**Presented By:**

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<td>2011 USA Shooting Northwest Regional</td>
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<td>Randy Shikashio</td>
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<td>Coyote Point</td>
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<td>Air &amp; Free Pistol</td>
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<td>Purple Heart 100- Buckeye International</td>
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<td>Hal Hare</td>
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<td>August 600/400 PTO AR/AP</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, Okla.</td>
<td>Air Pistol, Air Rifle</td>
<td>Charles Meloy</td>
<td>405.834.3020</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/16/2011-08/18/2011</td>
<td>Sill Lyra Shooting Academy September PTO</td>
<td>Boise, Idaho</td>
<td>Air Pistol, PPP</td>
<td>Silvino Lyra</td>
<td>719.440.6159</td>
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<td>08/19/2011-08/21/2011</td>
<td>Sill Lyra Shooting Academy August PTO</td>
<td>Boise, Idaho</td>
<td>Air Pistol, PPP</td>
<td>Silvino Lyra</td>
<td>719.440.6159</td>
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<td>08/20/2011-08/20/2011</td>
<td>August Machias International Air Pistol Indoor PTO</td>
<td>Machias, Maine</td>
<td>Air Pistol</td>
<td>Margaret Slack</td>
<td>207.255.0701</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Competitions are listed in order by date. For specific information on a particular event, please visit [www.usashooting.org](http://www.usashooting.org) >>competitions>>interactive calendar and browse our upcoming events or call the event organizer listed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/09/2011</td>
<td>Ohio State International Trap Championships</td>
<td>Fair/field Sportsmen's Association</td>
<td>Trap</td>
<td>Russ Verkamp</td>
<td>513.738.8020</td>
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<td>09/17/2011</td>
<td>September International Pistol Match</td>
<td>Phoenix, Ariz.</td>
<td>Pistol</td>
<td>Donald Plante</td>
<td>480.855.0002</td>
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<td>09/17/2011</td>
<td>PTO Registered Outdoor International Match</td>
<td>Wappingers Falls, N.Y.</td>
<td>Pistol</td>
<td>Patricia Zidek</td>
<td>845.226.8823</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/17/2011</td>
<td>September Machias International Air Pistol Indoor PTO</td>
<td>Machias, Maine</td>
<td>Air Pistol</td>
<td>Margaret Slack</td>
<td>207.255.0701</td>
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<td>09/18/2011</td>
<td>September International Pistol Match</td>
<td>Arcadia, Okla.</td>
<td>Free Pistol</td>
<td>Charles Meloy</td>
<td>405.834.3020</td>
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<td>09/20/2011</td>
<td>September 600/400 PTO AR/AP</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, Okla.</td>
<td>Air Pistol, Air Rifle</td>
<td>Charles Meloy</td>
<td>405.834.3020</td>
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<td>09/22/2011</td>
<td>USA Shooting Shotgun Fall Selection Match: First Leg of the U.S. Olympic Trials</td>
<td>Kerrville, Texas</td>
<td>Shotgun</td>
<td>Jack Burch II</td>
<td>830.995.5118</td>
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<td>09/23/2011</td>
<td>UPMS September Pistol and Rifle PTO</td>
<td>Salt Lake City, Utah</td>
<td>Pistol</td>
<td>Brian Obert</td>
<td>801.867.8158</td>
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<td>09/24/2011</td>
<td>Champion of Champions</td>
<td>Fort Benning, Ga.</td>
<td>Pistol and Rifle</td>
<td>Nicole Allaire</td>
<td>706.545.2343</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/24/2011</td>
<td>Oktoberfest Classic &amp; Donald S. Haldeman Memorial</td>
<td>Keystone Shooting Park</td>
<td>Trap</td>
<td>Allen Chubb, Jr.</td>
<td>717.903.9009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IT TAKES YOU**

Hundreds of Olympic and Paralympic Hopefuls are training to represent the United States on the world stage at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. These athletes are focused on reaching their highest potential. And they need YOUR support to get there.

Simply join the U.S. Olympic Team on Facebook. You can donate to Team USA directly on Facebook, chat with elite athletes, learn about Olympic Sports and more.

Like USA Shooting on Facebook or visit usashooting.org to learn more about the USA Shooting athletes training for London 2012. (from left to right: Jamie Beyerle, Matt Emmons, Kim Rhode and the 2010 World Champion Men’s Prone Rifle Team)
“Oh my gosh . . . I’m going to the Olympic Training Center (OTC) in Colorado Springs!” Those were the words spoken by 22 of the Scholastic Clay Target Program’s (SCTP) top trap and skeet shooters from around the country.

Those athletes consisted of: Logan Voyles (Coffeen, Ill.), Hunter Rich (Dandridge, Tenn.), Ryan Gallagher (Lamoille, Nev.), Grant Baldwin (Simi Valley, Calif.), Luke Beardsley (Glen Rock, Pa.), Logan Napoli (House Springs, Mo.), Andrew Simpson (Piasa, Ill.), Andrew Schwab (Carlinville, Ill.), Jared James (Elko, Nev.), Ethan Kerr (Burlington, Wisc.), Jon Difilippo (California, Pa.), Hughston Hodges (Hamilton, Ga.), Ryan Smithart (Oskaloosa, Ia.), Cody Bentley (Hamilton, Ga.), Holden Huff (Scottsdale, Ariz.), Robert King (Brownsville, Tenn.), Joshua Crankshaw (North Platte, Neb.), Print Zutavern (Broken Bow, Neb.), Steven Grant (Ansley, Neb.), Robert Kline (Edinburg, Va.), William Thomas (West Des Moines, Ia.) and James Barnard (Ballwin, Mo.).

These athletes were chosen from the SCTP’s National Championships held July 2010 at the World Recreation & Shooting Facility in Sparta, Ill. They were the top athletes in their respective disciplines.

The Junior Olympic Development Camp (JODC) was put together by the SCTP national training team’s leader, Chuck Peterson. Attending and leading the coaching and training clinics were Craig Hancock, Tom Wondrash and Mike Borg. Also assisting in the training was Jim Dickerson and John Oglivy. All attendees stayed at the residence halls at the OTC. They also had the opportunity to meet Resident Athletes and members of the USA Shooting Team Corey Cogdell, Collin Wietfeldt and Jon Michael McGrath. The JODC was a great weekend. The kids shot well and learned about the path to become an Olympic athlete. The athletes will be talking about this opportunity until the JODC next year. Thanks to all who made this a memorable and successful event. The SCTP is a national youth development program and the official Youth Clay target Shooting and Development Program of USA Shooting. To learn more about youth clay target shooting you can visit the SCTP website at www.sssfonline.org.

The SCTP JODC group poses in front of the Olympic rings at the U.S. Olympic Training Center (OTC). The aspiring Olympians experienced the life of a Resident Athlete at the OTC.
The Choice of Champions.

From trap and skeet, to sporting clays – nothing compares to the clay-pounding performance of Winchester® AA® Target Loads.

Proven time and time again in world class competition.

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