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2011 Athletes of the Year
Celebrate the accomplishments of the Male and Female Athletes of the Year: Eric Uptagrafft & Kim Rhode

Pan American Games
Catch up on all the action from the 2011 Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico.

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USA Shooting
1 Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
Phone: 719-866-4670
Administration Fax: 719-866-2200
Competitions Fax: 719-866-4884

USAS Staff
Chief Executive Officer: Robert Mitchell
robert.mitchell@usashooting.org, ext. 4899
Executive Director of USAST Foundation: Buddy DuVall
buddy.duvall@usashooting.org, 719-866-4880
Director, Marketing & Communications: Corrie West
corrie.west@usashooting.org, ext. 4616
Director of Competitions: Nicole Levine
nicole.levine@usashooting.org, ext. 4682
Competitions Coordinator: Pete Carson
pete.carson@usashooting.org, ext. 4897
National Paralympic Coach: Bob Foth
bob.foth@usashooting.org, ext. 4881
National Pistol Coach: Sergey Luzov
sergey.luzov@usashooting.org, ext. 4615
National Rifle Coach: Dave Johnson
dave.johnson@usashooting.org, ext. 4630
National Shotgun Coach: Bret Erickson
bret.erickson@usashooting.org
Media & PR Manager: Katie Yergensen
katie.yergensen@usashooting.org, ext. 4896
Membership & Merchandise Manager: Nichole Rae
nichole.rae@usashooting.org, ext. 4743
Operations Manager: Lisa Erickson
lisa.erickson@usashooting.org, ext. 4682
Youth Programs & Athlete Development: Michael Theimer
michael.theimer@usashooting.org, ext. 4889
Controller: Karie Wright
karie.wright@usashooting.org, ext. 4887

Editor: Katie Yergensen
Design: Katie Yergensen
Printing: Spectrum Publishing
Cover Photo: Katie Yergensen

Contributors: Michael Theimer, Katie Yergensen, Major Dave Johnson, Sergeant George Norton, Robert Mitchell, Nancy Brantley, Dr. Cathy Amos, Nicole Levine, Pete Carson, Collin Wietfeldt, Michael A. Nowicki

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Looking Forward to 2012

By Robert Mitchell

A s the New Year begins we typically look back and ask ourselves “what happened to last year?” The time seems to have passed so quickly. However, we soon adapt to writing the correct year on checks and dated materials. We also begin looking ahead rather than behind as our calendars become filled with activities and obligations. But 2012 is a special year; it is the Olympic year! And we not only look ahead but we look forward with eager anticipation as the year unfolds.

It is an exciting year for all associated in any way with the Olympic Games. The training of athletes becomes more intense, and the approaching second half of the U.S. Olympic Team Trials brings some of the most interesting and exciting competitions of the quadrennial. The team selection process is an exciting time as athletes realize the fruits of their work or the shortcomings of their preparations.

Members of USA Shooting are fortunate in that everyone can participate in the U.S. Olympic Team Trials. Many Olympic sports do not offer that opportunity to their members, rather just the elite athletes. Additionally, if you are not a shooter, the experience is also rewarding for volunteers, coaches and supporters who follow the USA Shooting Team. I encourage everyone to be involved and enjoy the “Road to London.”

As you read this article, it will only be a short time until the final U.S. Olympic Team selection takes place at Camp Perry, Ohio for the air rifle and air pistol events Feb. 2-5. The event will take place at the outstanding Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) range on the grounds of Camp Perry near Port Clinton. The range is state-of-the-art with 80 electronic targets including spectator monitors so the results of each shooter can be viewed shot-by-shot with ongoing electronic ranking results on a master monitor.

The following month, USAS looks forward to hosting the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup for Shotgun in Tucson, Ariz., from March 23-31. This not only gives our Team home field advantage, but also saves money as opposed to traveling to Europe or Asia. Moreover, it’s an excellent opportunity to exhibit a USAS Certified Training Center, the Tucson Trap & Skeet Club. The facility consists of a beautiful clubhouse, five Olympic trap bunkers, 13 skeet fields along with a complement of 50 American trap fields, two sporting clays courses and a FITASC field, as well as a huge recreational vehicle complex. Tucson is also a wonderful city for tourism and recreation.

We will return to the Tucson Trap & Skeet Club on May 17-20 for the final Olympic Shotgun Team Selection. Due to changes in the ISSF schedule, this competition will be compressed into four days rather than the originally planned twelve days. Luckily, this isn’t an issue as the club has an adequate number of separate trap and skeet fields rather than overlaid fields as is common. All events—Men’s and Women’s Trap and Skeet and Men’s Double Trap—will take place concurrently providing plenty of action. Come shoot in the competition or cheer on your favorite athletes. It will be an enjoyable time as we select our shotgun athletes for London.

The U.S. Olympic Team Trials conclude at Fort Benning June 2-12 where the selection for the rifle and pistol events will run concurrently with the National Championships. This event is being held early due to the U.S. Olympic Team nomination deadlines as well as the final ISSF World Cup for Rifle and Pistol in Beijing.

The climax of 2012 is none other than the London Olympic Games that are held July 2–Aug. 6 for shooting events. While shooting will likely get limited prime-time television, our events can be followed by live Internet broadcast supplemented with some coverage on various NBC affiliate channels. Results will be live on the ISSF website as well. And for diehard shooting fans, parents and friends, it would be best to finalize your plans as soon as possible to attend the Olympic Games. Acquiring event tickets will be challenging and accommodations are expensive. However, it is most satisfying and worthwhile as the Olympic Games are indeed an extraordinary experience.

Our Team was very successful four years ago in Beijing winning a total of six medals. It’s amazing that four years have already passed by so quickly. With focus on the task ahead, we look forward to London with even more optimism. Our athletes are very talented and capable, our coaches will have our shooters prepared and all are confident of success in London. We indeed are eagerly, Looking Forward to 2012!
One of the constant challenges an athlete faces when evaluating his or her performance is determining if he or she is doing not only the right things, but enough of the right things.

We often only focus on the score to evaluate whether our technique is correct. Shooting is a game of score, no doubt, but realize that you are trying to build your skills to grow your score level and ability to compete in the long run. Today’s score is just a snapshot of how you executed your skills in today’s training.

When you are setting up training, keep in mind the desired result or “end state” that you want to achieve. If you are trying to get to a level above 395 points in air rifle, you have to master several skills along the way just to set up the opportunity to perform at that level. Great shooting really only requires doing very simple things consistently.

Here’s an example of some of the skills required to shoot above 395 points in air rifle:

• You must correctly and consistently set up your position on each shot
• You must execute a shot routine that allows you to focus on the task at hand
• You must have the endurance to hold and execute more than 40 shots plus sighters
• You must be able to evaluate the shot and then reset for the next shot

Many athletes get to a skill level by simply shooting a lot of shots in training. Whereas, elite athletes understand that there is more to mastering a skill level than simply shooting a lot of shots. In the above list, there are four things that you can train in blocks of time on the range. They are some of the skills you must master to set up consistent high-level airgun performance.

How much time do you need to put into mastering different skills? The answer really depends upon each individual’s ability and competence in the skills needed. For example, some athletes instantly learn natural point of aim and can sense in their inner position when they have it correct. Others have to spend specific time in drills learning to figure out where they are pointing and how to adjust it. If you are an athlete struggling with NPA, I would spend at least half of your available training time learning to master it.

A decent rule of thumb is to double the match time to estimate the training time required for an event. The training time block does not represent pure shooting time or quantity. Break the time into skill-building segments. If you will have finals as part of the match, keep in mind that you will have a break after qualification and then another block of intense work. If you only train a 40 shot course of fire, you are shortchanging your endurance level. Why expect to execute confidently and at full power in a match plus final if you only spend an hour training a 40 shot course?

Considering endurance, how long is the 40 shot match? Athletes often train just the course of fire for an upcoming competition. This is not a disaster, but you are missing out on really increasing your skill level. The endurance needed to perform at an elite level is both physical and mental. Athletes that see significantly different training and match score levels are showing symptoms of lack of endurance and skills that are simply not mastered.

Make sure you spend enough time and repetitions (correctly executed) on skills you have identified that you want to master. Skill building requires a systematic plan and consistent effort. First, spend time on figuring out the actual skill or skill set you want to improve. Second, evaluate what level you are at in the skill and compare that to the level you want to be. Next, detail a plan to improve the skill that includes a logical test of the level you achieve. The last step is evaluation. Good luck and straight shooting!
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This article will continue with the theme of trying to release the complication of this sport and finding ways to simplify it. This time we will concentrate on confidence and how it can help performance. When we mention confidence, many shooters might automatically think of having a strong mental confidence such as a positive outlook on their performance. I totally agree and will discuss said type of confidence, however I will also speak of other ways we can incorporate confidence in adjusting the rifle, having physical and mental awareness and how good training can help all these areas.

In shooting, there are numerous adjustments one can make to accomplish many different things. One of the few constants in our sport is that rifle adjustments will affect all shooters the same 99.9 percent of the time. For example, in the prone position, a shooter has a low natural point of aim. If he or she wanted to raise the point of aim higher, he or she could just raise the butt plate as one option.

There are several other options to remedy that situation. Now, how would I know to do that? The answer is that through years and years of training and coaching others I have developed a "playbook." This playbook has answers for many of the questions that come up for how to adjust a rifle to help a shooters position. The ability to know how to adjust my rifle correctly to fix a problem greatly increases my confidence while on the firing line. I know without question I am doing the right thing and will not let doubt enter my mind.

This area of rifle adjustment includes adjustment of the sights. I will not go into precise adjustments and what clicks move you how far; this is not what this article is about. Every shooter (not the coaches) needs to know how to adjust their own sights. More often than not you will find coaches adjusting the sights of their junior shooters during sighters in a high-school match. Not only is the junior not learning how to adjust the sights themselves, but without knowing it, the coach is questioning the competency of their shooter.

In our own junior program, many juniors ask how many click are needed to adjust their group. I ask them how many clicks they think they should move, and most of the time they are correct in their response. Their smile and subsequent confidence grows when they make the correct adjustment on their own and earn a ten on the next shot. The shooters can continue to fire and not doubt their adjustments, which translates to more confidence in their performance.

This is now the area that most people think of when asked about confidence: the ability to arrive at the firing line and know that they will perform well. Words like doubt, second guess and uncertainty do not enter the mind. Personally, this is an area that haunted me for quite some time. For the most part my technical skill was very high, but grossly unequal to my level of confidence in my performance. This means that in training I was able to perform very well, but I had doubt on the match day that led to poor shooting.

In these moments I was concentrating on all the wrong things such as what the match was worth, who I was up against and who I might have disappointed. I imagine that those thoughts have entered the minds of other shooters as well. I was once asked by a sport psychologist if I would go into my garage and grab a hammer to hit myself in the hand with it. My obvious answer was “no” and he asked, “Why would you do the exact same thing on the firing line with negative thoughts?”

After that, my performances started to improve. I started to concentrate on my executions and the only thoughts I would let enter my mind would be those of my past performances in training. It is easy for our confidence to slip, but we need to remain mentally and physically aware during a match and we can create great performances.

Along with confidence through our mental awareness, we must be cognizant of our physical abilities as well. In men’s air rifle, athletes have 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete 60 shots. In that time frame, even the most elite shooters experience fatigue. What separates them from others is they are confident in their physical awareness. They

When you have a question, be sure to write it down and record the answer too. The more knowledge you gain, the greater your confidence will be.
are able to know when it is time to take a break and confidently come back to the line to dry-fire and then execute a ten on their next record shot. Sometimes shooters push through the fatigue because they are afraid to break their position to take a break. When in reality, they may lack the physical awareness to know that their positions are breaking down. A shooter must be able to feel when things are starting to change and be confident enough to give themselves a breather and return to the line.

Throughout these paragraphs we have discussed areas that are affected by lack of confidence. The question now is: How can we improve all these areas? The answer was put into words perfectly by National and World Cup champion Sergeant Joe Hein, “awareness through good training.” Use your training to adjust the rifle to see what happens. Learn how moving a butt plate will adjust your point of aim. While in practice, see how many clicks will move your sights from one target ring to another and how long you are able to shoot before your performance is affected by physical fatigue. Finally, use the strong scores you shoot in training as a reminder of how great you actually are.

There are only so many things a shooter can learn from a coach, book, clinic or even an article in USAS Shooting News. A lot of elements of our sport need to be learned on the line. These elements lead to strong confidence, which in turn will lead to great performance. Being able to shoot without doubting your performance, ability to adjust your rifle or mental or physical awareness creates this confidence. Having said confidence will make you a champion, and don't forget to stay Army Strong!
The Future of Men’s Double Trap

By 2008 Olympic Gold Medalist Sergeant Glenn Eller

Double trap is one of the events that is rarely talked about. There are only a handful of shooters at most of the selection matches, but these handful of shooters account for more than their fair share of medals and records. If these shooters are so successful, then why is there such a lack of participation?

I think there are many factors that have contributed to the lack of participation in the U.S. The first one took place nine years ago when the ISSF chose to put a random delay into both Men’s and Women’s Double Trap. They did this in the middle of the quad in order to keep people from shooting into the ground and cited that it was a safety issue because at some of the ranges around the world, shot was bouncing back into the bunkers and hitting the people that were loading the traps.

Prior to this rule change, changing back and forth between events was much easier and at least half of the competitors shot both Trap and double trap and some even shot skeet and double trap. When the rule came into effect in 2003, a few trap shooters still saw success in double trap but after a few months it became evident that if shooters were to succeed, they would have to specialize in one or the other and since trap had been around the longest, most people chose to stick with that event. Prior to this point a typical selection match for double trap would have 8-10 squads and when you look at doubles now, we are lucky if we have

Canterbury Auto Trench

Canterbury Trap have developed another world first, a fully automated Bunker system that only requires one shooter to set up and operate.

The Canterbury Auto Trench replicates a traditional 15 trap ISSF layout with simple push button controls for set up and changing between ISSF programs.

The system comes complete with Voice release and control console.

Additional features include multi positional practice modes and ABT/Continental/Wobble trap facility.
Canterbury Trap have developed another world first, a fully automated Bunker system that only requires one shooter to set up and operate. The Canterbury Auto Trench replicates a traditional 15 trap ISSF layout with simple push button controls for set up and changing between ISSF programs. The system comes complete with Voice release and control console. Additional features include multi positional practice modes and ABT/Continental/Wobble trap facility.

Another contributing factor was the rumor mill that we are all susceptible to. After the 2004 Olympics, Women's Double Trap and Men's Running Target were removed from the Olympic program. Everyone assumed that since Women's Double Trap was going away and no Olympic shooting program would even be looked at again until after 2012. This has since turned itself into almost a self-fulfilling prophecy and the competition has all but ceased to exist here in the United States. Without going into the rest of the small contributing factors, let's look at where double trap is headed in the near future and what it will do to the shotgun sports.

Double trap is again being looked for another rule change after the 2012 Olympics. The leading idea for the rule change is a combination of all the schemes. There will be 4 rounds of 30 and a 30 target final with random pairs on all the stations. There would be one pair of each scheme A, B and C on each station randomly. The delay will also be taken out. What does this mean for the shooters?

Shooters will not know which targets they will be getting on the first pass. After the first pass they will know at least one target for sure is coming out on each station and the final pass they should know which pairs they are getting. In order to be successful at this version of the game, the athlete will have to be able to shoot every different style that is currently being used by top competitors today. They will have to be able to shoot the pairs forward and backward and also be able to make a move with the first target as well as spot shoot the first target as most of the world's best do now.

This will make double trap much more of a "gun pointers" game and trap shooters should be able to cross over without the need for a special double gun, as was previously needed. Hopefully this will begin to raise participation in the United States and throughout the world in the following quad.

Every time there is a major rule change, the playing field is leveled. With this change hopefully coming, the young shooters in the US have the opportunity to break into the sport and become successful on the international level well before the next Olympics. If a new shooter asks which sport to shoot if they want to make the 2016 Olympic games in Rio de Janeiro, Double Trap will be the obvious answer.

CONGRATS!

Jamie Beyerle (Lebanon, Pa.) and Hank Gray (Billings, Mont.) were married on Sept. 5, 2011, at the Uchee Creek MWR campground in Fort Mitchell, Ala. Beyerle, a member of the 2008 U.S. Olympic Team opted to change her name to Jamie Gray. Please take note of this as you'll see the transition in 2012.

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Rhode, a Women’s Skeet athlete, is the reigning Female Athlete of the Year and has held the prestigious title for the past four years. "I’m honored to be selected as Female Athlete of the Year. I’m training hard and looking forward to the 2012 Olympic Games," said an elated Rhode. She began the 2011 season with a fifth-place finish at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Chile. She continued on to Sydney where she won a gold medal with 97 targets, securing her U.S. Olympic Team nomination (pending approval by the USOC). Rhode’s winning ways kept ascending the podium with a medal from the ISSF World Cup in Beijing. She won the silver medal with 96 targets on the range where she won her 2008 Olympic silver medal.

Back stateside, Rhode etched her name yet again in the Sizemore Trophy with another National Championship title at 265 total targets. A few months later, Rhode won the bronze medal at the ISSF World Clay Target Championships in Belgrade, Serbia, with 97 targets overall. She concluded the year with her first ISSF World Cup Final gold medal in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. Battling 105-degree heat, Rhode put up 93 targets to rule the field. “This is an exciting time for me and I’m looking forward to the 2012 Olympic Games,” said Rhode. “I’m honored to receive this Athlete of the Year award and appreciate the support of my great sponsors who share in this honor with me.” National Shotgun Coach Bret Erickson called Rhode “a dominant force in the skeet world . . . not only the best in this country but she has emerged as the best in the world.”

USA Shooting is proud to announce Kim Rhode (El Monte, Calif.) and Eric Uptagrafft (Phenix City, Ala.) as the 2011 USAS Athletes of the Year. Both athletes have risen above the rest and have handfuls of hardware as a result of their impressive performances on the international and national scene in 2011. Moreover, Uptagrafft and Rhode are the male and female athletes of their respective disciplines.
is well on her way to achieving her next goal of accomplishing five individual Olympic medals in five consecutive Olympic Games. If she accomplishes that feat, she will add her name to the history books yet again.

Sergeant First Class Eric Uptagrafft of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU) has had the season of a lifetime, yet was humbled by the nod as he said, “There are so many athletes that shot great this year and to be counted among them is quite an honor.” Uptagrafft began his push for an Olympic berth in 2010 in Men’s 50m Rifle Prone and continued to charge ahead throughout the 2011 season. First, in Sydney, Uptagrafft started the year with an impressive 599 out of 600 match points. With a strong final of 104.2 points, he won his first ISSF World Cup medal of the year and an important Men’s 50m Rifle Prone quota for the USA. In Changwon, Uptagrafft won yet another medal with 596 match points and 103.6 points in the final for 699.6 total points and the silver medal. Changwon was extra-sweet for Uptagrafft as his silver medal propelled him above the point threshold to earn a nomination to the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team (pending approval by the USOC). At the ISSF World Cup USA, Uptagrafft finished fifth on his home range at the USAMU with 598 match points and 101.9 points in the final.

Back on his home range, Uptagrafft won the bronze medal at the 2011 USAS National Championships for Rifle and Pistol with 1297.5 total points. Just days after winning his bronze, Uptagrafft was deployed to Afghanistan to serve his country in his capacity as a soldier. Upon his return from service, Uptagrafft shipped off yet again, but this time to compete in the prestigious ISSF World Cup Final. In Wroclaw, Poland, Uptagrafft shined after over seven weeks off practice and one week to prepare. He fired 599 match points and 102.8 points in the final for the silver medal.

Despite his success, Uptagrafft wanted to recognize his supporters as he said, “Thanks to the U.S. Army, the USAMU, and USA Shooting for supporting me in my mission. I’d also like to thank my wife Sandra, my coaches Dave Johnson and Tom Tamas, and the thousands of supporters and sponsors of USA Shooting who make this all possible.”

In addition to the USAS Male and Female Athletes of the Year, USA Shooting also nominated athletes in each discipline that were top performers for the 2011 season. The Pistol Athlete of the Year is Emil Milev (Tampa, Fla.). Milev, an Olympic medalist and decorated international shooter in Men’s 25m Rapid Fire Pistol, competed for Bulgaria prior to the 2008 Olympic Games. He moved to the USA and as a result, was forced to sit out one Olympic Games per International Olympic Committee (IOC) regulations. Milev has since found his stride in the USA and rediscovered his championship form in the 2011 season. At the ISSF World Cup Sydney, Milev finished eighth overall with 581 match points. Milev added another National Championship title to his resume with 1196 match points in Fort Benning, Ga., in July 2011.

“Thanks to the U.S. Army, the USAMU, and USA Shooting . . . I’d also like to thank my wife Sandra, my coaches Dave Johnson and Tom Tamas, and the thousands of supporters and sponsors of USA Shooting who make this all possible.”

“National Shotgun Coach Bret Erickson called Rhode ‘a dominant force in the skeet world . . . not only the best in this country but she has emerged as the best in the world.’”
Milev, like all other Rapid Fire Pistol shooters, has had to adapt to the new finals format that will be used in the Olympic Games. His dedication to his finals training appeared at the ISSF World Cup Munich, where Milev won the bronze medal with 25 hits in the final. Not only was it his first ISSF World Cup medal of the season, but also the USA's second Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol quota. This is the first time in over two decades that the USA will be able to send two athletes to compete in this event in the Olympic Games. He continued to remain competitive internationally with a sixth place finish at the ISSF World Cup Final Wroclaw with 19 hits in the final. Not only was it his first ISSF World Cup medal of the season, but also Milev's win gave the USA its second Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol quota. This is the first time in over two decades that the USA will be able to send two athletes to compete in this event in the Olympic Games.

Milev commented on his Pistol Athlete of the Year award as he said, "It is definitely a nice surprise and an honor. I know there are many shooters out there that deserve recognition as well."

Richmond (Hillsgrove, Pa.), also a member of the USAMU. Richmond began 2011 at the ISSF World Cup Chile with 189 targets for the bronze medal. He continued to rack up the medals on the ISSF World Cup circuit as he won the silver medal in Sydney, shooting 186 total targets down under. At the 2011 USAS National Championships for Shotgun, he won the silver medal with 335 total targets. A month later he finished fourth at the ISSF World Cup in Slovenia with 192 total targets. Following Slovenia, USAS announced Richmond's nomination to the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team with a great performance.

The Female Rifle Athlete of the Year is Jamie (Beyerle) Gray (Lebanon, Pa.). Gray delivered a solid season by appearing in the finals of each ISSF World Cup that she attended. Moreover, two of those three performances were medal-worthy. Gray began the season in Sydney, Australia, with her first gold medal of the season in Women's 50m Rifle Three Position with 685.3 total points. Then, at her home range in Fort Benning, Ga., she executed an amazing come-from-behind victory with a 10.8 point tenth-shot to clinch the gold medal. She finished with 683.2 points winning by just one-tenth of a point. In early July, USAS announced Gray's nomination to the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team.
Team (pending approval by the USOC) for Women’s 50m Rifle Three Position.

In her next international appearance in Munich, Germany, Gray fired 682.2 total points to finish fourth. At the ISSF World Cup Final in Wroclaw, Poland, Gray shot 681.3 total points to for sixth place. “It is always a great honor to reach an achievement such as Women’s Rifle Athlete of the Year,” began Gray. “I had a great season and I could not have reached such a level without those who support me and USA Shooting including my new husband [fellow shooter Hank Gray], our families and friends, coach Dave Johnson, coach Tom Tamas, the USAMU, ELEY, Sauer and all the other organizations that believe in USA shooting and their athletes.”

Eric Hollen (Colorado Springs, Colo.), the Paralympic Athlete of the Year, was an addition to the U.S. Olympic Training Center Resident Athlete roster in 2011. His dedication and discipline are apparent in his success as of late. Hollen posted a score of 1118 points in P1 Men’s 10m Air Pistol SH1 at the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Approved Competition that was held alongside USAS National Championships for Rifle and Pistol in Fort Benning, Ga. At the IPC World Cup Sydney in late November, Hollen made USAS history. First, he won a bronze medal in P4 Men’s 50m Free Pistol. Then, in P1 Men’s 10m Air Pistol SH1, Hollen shot 557 match points to tie three shooters, but was confident in his finals ability as he fired 98.1 points in ten-shots to secure the silver medal. The historic part, however, came from the 2012 Paralympic quota that Hollen won along with the medal. This is the first-ever Paralympic quota won in USA Shooting’s history per IPC’s new quota distribution system.

“I am so thankful to be part of such an amazing program and to the people who have helped me reach the next step to my ultimate goal . . .”

“I am so proud of Eric and all he has accomplished. Despite a long, hard trip, short acclimation time and the pressure of knowing it was the final opportunity to win a quota, he got the job done in Sydney,” said National Paralympic Coach Bob Foth. “Eric is a disabled veteran who has taken advantage of the unique opportunities available as an OTC Resident Athlete—the amazing support and intangibles that come with being in a high-performance environment with focused athletes.”

An elated Hollen said, “I am so thankful to be part of such an amazing program and to the people who have helped me reach the next step to my ultimate goal—Coach Bob Foth, Coach Ray Arredondo, Sean McCann, Dave Johnson, Sergey Luzov and many more.”

USA Shooting would like to congratulate all Athletes of the Year on award-winning performances and wish them continued success in 2012. Follow members of the USA Shooting Team as the quest for the 2012 Olympic Games continues with the U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Airgun Feb. 24-26, 2011 in Anniston, Ala., the U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Shotgun May 17-20 in Tucson, Ariz., and finally the U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Smallbore June 1-2 in Fort Benning, Ga.
Vincent Hancock tied his Pan American Games record from 2007 with 147 total targets.

Sarah Beard thanks the crowd for their warm reception as she received her bronze medal.

Medalists L to R: Jason Parker, Kim Rhode and Matt Wallace are congratulated by USOC President Larry Probst after a successful day at the range.
In a press conference prior to the 2011 Pan American Games (PAG), correspondents accused the United States Olympic Committee of bringing their “B” team to compete against the best of the Americas. While a few other sports had international competition conflicts, such was not the case with the USA Shooting (USAS) Team.

Athletes earned a berth to the XVI Pan American Games through top spots at their respective USAS National Championships or via committee selection. The athletes had already proved their talent on the national stage and were ready to chase quotas and Pan American glory in Guadalajara, Mexico.

The event officially commenced on Oct. 14 with an opening ceremony comparable to that of an Olympic Games. The host country, Mexico, pulled out the stops with their top entertainment talent, a stunning light show that incorporated athletes and the audience, continuous fireworks, feisty mascots, aerial dancers and more. The shooting was divided into two venues—the Pan American Shooting Range and the Jalisco Hunting Club.

The USA Shooting Team exploded onto the PAG shooting scene with two medals and one quota the first day of the competition. Moreover, the Team secured a very important pistol quota that enables the USA Shooting Team to send two Men’s 10m Air Pistol athletes to London. Men’s 10m Air Pistol athletes Sergeant First Class Daryl Szarenski (Seale, Ala.) of the U.S. Army’s World Class Athlete Program and Olympic Training Center Resident Athlete Will Brown (Twins Falls, Idaho) represented the USA in the first event of the PAG.

Two-time Olympian Szarenski led the team to its first golden victory. Entering the final with 583 points in the first position, Szarenski bared his teeth in the final with 98.7 points to secure a nearly eight point victory. His world-class score set a PAG record for total of 681.7 points. Brown shot 575 qualification points and 97.4 points in the final to finish fifth overall.

Their female pistol counterparts—Women’s 10m Air Pistol athletes Sandra Uptagrafft (Phenix City, Ala.) and Teresa Meyer (Dearborn, Mich.) took the stage for the USA. Uptagrafft won the Women’s 10m Air Pistol competition with a total of 557 points, while Meyer took second with 547 points. In the 25m Sport Pistol event, Uptagrafft finished with two medals from the Pan American Games: a bronze in Women’s 10m Air Pistol and a silver in Women’s 25m Sport Pistol.

Matt Rawlings (L) and Jonathan Hall (R) battle it out for the gold and silver in Men’s 10m Air Rifle. Daryl Szarenski talks to ESPN Desportes following his gold medal and quota win in Men’s 10m Air Pistol.

Glenn Eller greets the crowd as he prepares for the Men’s Double Trap final. Sandra Uptagrafft finished with two medals from the Pan American Games: a bronze in Women’s 10m Air Pistol and a silver in Women’s 25m Sport Pistol.
10m Air Pistol bronze medal. She shot 379 match points and 97.3 points in the final for a total of 476.3 total points. Meyer narrowly missed the final with 371 match points.

The airgun action continued with Emily Caruso (Fairfield, Conn.) in Women's 10m Air Rifle. She broke away from the competition with 396 match points equaling a Pan American record. Teammate Meghann K. Morrill (Boerne, Texas) shot 391 points to enter the final in the fifth position.

Halfway through the final, Caruso fired a 9.6 point shot that drew a negative reaction from the crowd. "I was mad, I was the only person they booed—they cheered for other 9s and 8s. I think I proved them [the crowd] wrong on the next shot with a 10.9." She claimed the gold and second Women's 10m Air Rifle quota with 101.8 points in the final for a new final Pan American record. Morrill shot her way up one position in the final to finish fourth overall with 492.6 total points.

Matt Rawlings (Wharton, Texas) and Jonathan Hall (Carrollton, Ga.) saw the stars and stripes raised high not just once but twice in Men's 10m Air Rifle. Rawlings, a Corporal at the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU), won the gold medal and set a Pan American record with 595 match points and 101.7 points in the final for 696.7 total points. Rawlings had previously set the record at the 2007 PAG. Hall kept the pressure on Rawlings as he fired 594 match points with 102.6 points in the final for 696.6 total points for the silver medal.

The shooting then moved to the Jalisco Hunting Club on the outskirts of Guadalajara. In Men's 50m Free Pistol, Szarenski entered the final in third place with 548 qualification points. Teammate Nick Mowrer (Butte, Mont.) was just three points behind with 545 points in the fourth position. Szarenski nearly overcame an 11-point gap from Guatemala's Sergio Sanchez with 92 points in the final. He finished with 640 total points for the silver medal and his second medal. Mowrer finished in sixth overall with 89.4 points in the final for 634.4 total points.

Nestled in the Mexican countryside replete with agave, buzzards soaring overhead and rolling hills, the tan and green background provided an excellent backdrop for the shotgun events. The American Women's Trap athletes packed a one-two punch for the podium. Kayle Browning (Wooster, Ark.) led the way into the final with 68 targets for a new PAG record. Teammate Miranda Wilder (Diana, Texas) was three targets behind in the second position with 65 targets. With only four shooters remaining, the flash targets began acting up and breaking. Wilder buckled down and shot 21 targets in the final for the gold medal for 87 total targets and a new PAG total record. Browning fired 17
targets in the final for 85 total targets and the bronze medal.

The Americans continued to rack up the medals as Michael McPhail (Darlington, Wisc.), a soldier and member of the USAMU, weathered the strong wind in the final for 591 match points in Men's 50m Rifle Prone. He didn't let up in the final, firing 102.2 points for 693.2 total points and the gold medal. Teammate Jason Parker (Columbus, Ga.), also a member of the USAMU, shot his way up to the bronze medal with the highest final of 102.8 points for 690.8 total points.

Pistol athletes Meyer and Uptagrafft once again took the stage for the red, white and blue, but this time traded in their pellets for .22 caliber bullets. Meyer entered the final in the second position with 570 points. Uptagrafft was seeded two positions behind also with 570 match points. Uptagrafft surged ahead for her second PAG medal as she clinched the silver medal and quota for Team USA with 199.8 points in the final. “It’s a big relief to have finally won our quota. Though a gold medal would have been ideal, I’m elated to be on the medal stand again,” said Uptagrafft. Meyer finished fifth with 765.6 total points.

The shooting returned once again to the shotgun fields where American Matt Gossett (Springville, Ala.) finished fourth in Men's Trap with 142 total targets. Gossett nailed 121 out of 125 qualification targets and 21 targets in the final. “I was nervous during the final—especially since it was my first international final,” commented Gossett. Teammate Jake Turner (Richland, Wash.) shot 118 targets for eighth place.

With eleven medals won thus far, the USA Shooting Team continued to put space between itself and other delegations. Glenn Eller (Katy, Texas) began the day with 49 out of 50 targets in Men's Double Trap. Eller shot 147 targets—just one target shy of the world record for the gold medal for a new PAG match record. In the final, he experienced difficulty with a spring in his trigger—he had two malfunctions but didn't lose any targets as a result and brought home the gold medal. Eller's total score of 195 targets is a new PAG total record.

Four-time Olympic medalist Kim Rhode (El Monte, Calif.), a superstar on the PAG roster, added yet another gold star to her resume. Rhode shot 73 match targets to head into the final with a comfortable lead. Rhode set a new PAG qualification and final record with 98 total targets. Rhode's grandmother passed away while the team was en route to Guadalajara and Rhode said, “This Pan American Games had a lot of sentimental value for me because my grandmother passed away while I was flying down here. I'd like to dedicate this medal to my grandmother because she taught me to work hard and stick with it.”

In Men's 50m Rifle Three Position Parker won his second PAG medal in a very interesting match. Five shots into the kneeling position, Parker's target failed—it was not properly reporting his shots. After a protest, he was moved to another firing point while the jury deliberated at what point his original target failed. Parker was awarded two additional shots and ended up with 1155 qualification points. He pressed on for 94.1 points in the final for 1249.1 total points for the gold medal. Additionally, he secured the second Men's 50m Rifle Three Position quota for Team USA. Teammate Matt Wallace (Fairbanks, Alaska) entered the final in third place with 1150 points and shot his way up for the silver medal with 97 points in the final for 1247 total points.

The final day of shooting began with competition in Women's 50m Three Position Rifle. Sarah Beard (Danville, Ind.) emerged with the bronze medal after 571 match points and 96.4 points in the final for 677.4 total points. “It wasn't the result or performance that I wanted, but I learned a lot from this competition,” said Beard. Her bronze was also the first international medal to her name and she is “proud of it regardless.”

Emil Milev (Temple Terrace, Fla.) set a new PAG record and won the gold medal in Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol with 24 hits. He qualified for the first position in the final with 579 match points. This was the first time that the new finals format was implemented at the Pan American Games. In the final, another competitor received a two-point deduction for moving his arm prior to the green light. Despite being “extra cautious” after the first incident, Milev was also docked two points for moving his arm, yet prevailed with the gold.

Vincent Hancock (Eatonton, Ga.), the 2008 Olympic Games champion in Men's Skeet, was determined to win the final shooting medal. Hancock, a Sergeant in the USAMU, set the PAG record in 2007 and did so again with 147 total targets. “It was a great feeling to get back onto the podium,” said Hancock. Teammate Frank Thompson (Alliance, Neb.) shot 118 targets to qualify for a five-way shoot off for only one position in the final. After three targets, Thompson finished tenth overall.

Americans also participating in the PAG included the following: Bob Mitchell, a member of the classification jury; Gary Anderson, a member of the jury of appeal; Wanda Jewell, a member of the Equipment Control Jury; Susan Abbott, a member of the Pistol Jury and Tom Bardenwerper Jr., Chief Shotgun Referee.

The American shooting athletes left Guadalajara, Mexico, the most accomplished team with 18 total medals—10 gold, four silver and four bronze. The team also set six qualification records, equaled three qualification records, set eight new final records and equaled one final record for a very successful showing.
We are proud to announce the introduction of a new model gun for 2009, the TM9. There will be two versions available of this new, single-barrel gun. One version, the TM9, will have a fixed, ramped rib and a fixed comb stock. The second version, the TM9X, will have an adjustable rib and an adjustable comb stock.
CHASING OLYMPIC DREAMS
Opportunity is a word often used in the vocabulary of Eric Hollen. He is relentless in his pursuit of excellence, which includes taking advantage of every opportunity to be the best athlete, father, student and veteran he can be. So when offered the opportunity to chase his Paralympic dreams and move to the Olympic Training Center (OTC) Hollen began scraping up the funds for the move and uprooted from Tennessee in a few short weeks. On his journey out to Colorado, he reiterated a neat story about the generosity of a small town mechanic when his water pump failed.

Hollen, already strapped for cash, was hoping his older pick-up truck would last through 2012 and the drive out west. Luckily, as Hollen pulled off for fuel, he noticed that something wasn't right with the truck. The mechanic took a look and deduced that a faulty water pump was the cause of his issues. Dismayed by any repair—let alone one that would likely be hundreds of dollars—Hollen began talking with the mechanic about his trip. As fate would have it, the mechanic’s brother was a veteran-athlete also pursuing Paralympic sports. Needless to say, he cut Hollen a great deal on the repair. This small bump in the road turned out to be another source of inspiration for Hollen’s quest.

Coming to the OTC was an important move for Hollen because it not only afforded him the world-class training and support available only at the OTC, but daughter Payten elected to live with her father and experience Colorado together. While Payten is in school during the day, Hollen is on the range and in the gym—often executing two-a-day workouts. He picks 13-year-old Payten up from school and heads back to the OTC for yet another workout because this family doesn’t just have one athlete aspiring for the gold, but rather two. Payten is a junior ski racer who dreams of one day competing on the circuit with the likes of superstar Lindsay Vonn. Like Hollen, Payten trains six days a week—two hours a day with USA Weightlifting in the gym during the week. Come Friday, the duo packs up and heads for Breckenridge, Colo., where Payten spends time with the junior team on the slopes. Most nights, after the training is done, you’ll find both father and daughter with a nose in the books. Hollen is a distance learning student at the University of Southern California working towards his master’s degree.

It seems like the perfect arrangement for the perfect father-daughter pair. Hollen and Payten both share a unique dedication to excellence—one often found in elite athletes. Their passionate pursuit and like-minded interests challenge and encourage each other to press forward. During our interview, Hollen reminded Payten of a time when quitting for the day wasn’t an option. Payten had been knocked down by another skier and was shaken. Her coach inquired about her condition after the accident and offered her the opportunity to head into the clubhouse to warm-up and recover. I asked Payten what she did and she looked at me as though the answer should be obvious. She said she declined because “whether I was inside getting warm or outside continuing training, my injuries wouldn’t cease to ache and I might as well not lose precious training time on the mountain.” Hollen told me that one of his favorite quotes from Payten’s Facebook page is “Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard.” Her resilient attitude is reminiscent of her father’s resilience from his days as a Special Forces soldier. When I asked Payten if her father had discussed the stress or pressure prior to
the International Paralympic World Cup in Sydney, she said, “No, he doesn’t really talk about that.” That, of course, is the things that should worry Hollen as Sydney was the last opportunity to win a 2012 Paralympic quota. He, however, kept things calm and cool and didn’t let that pressure—or the other three shooters in the final aiming for a quota—deter his course. He brought home two medals and a Paralympic quota from Sydney and was just happy to get home to see Payten, who thinks her dad’s 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team nomination is “cool.”

After wrapping up the day’s photo shoot, Hollen and I brought Payten’s gear back to his car while Payten hit the gym. We crossed the threshold to the elevator and Hollen said, “You know, Katie, it’s about more than just this.” Thinking he was referring to all the hard work and training, I commented on what a neat kid Payten is and the fact that their arrangement here is unique and amazing. He shook his head as he said, “I’m trying to teach her to give an Olympic effort in life as well. Whether you are doing something you love or not, you shouldn’t give anything less than your best.” He continued hauling gear out the door as I was furiously attempting to memorize that line. But that’s the way life is for Hollen—he doesn’t realize that every other sentence he utters belongs in bronze over some prestigious archway. He takes life, sport and academics one day at a time and is thankful for every opportunity along the way.

The below is a retraction from the November/December edition of USA Shooting News. Both graphs featured in Assistant National Rifle Coach Marcus Raab’s article titled “Trigger Release Part I,” were identical. The below graph represents the 10m Air Rifle Standing Idealised Shot Process as discussed in the article.
GunBroker.com Named Official Internet Auction Site of USAS and USA Shooting Foundation

GunBroker.com, the world’s largest Internet auction site for firearms and accessories, has been named the Official Internet Auction Site of USA Shooting and the USA Shooting Foundation in a partnership that will feature a special edition of firearms that will be available exclusively on the popular auction site.

“USA Shooting has benefited from several special auctions on GunBroker.com in recent years and we are truly excited about the potential to expand our relationship as we prepare for the 2012 Olympics in London,” announced Buddy DuVall, Executive Director of the USA Shooting Foundation. “GunBroker.com has become an increasingly powerful marketing force in the shooting sports community and USA Shooting is excited about the potential of channeling GunBroker.com’s energy and creativity in support of our Olympic shooters,” DuVall said.

“GunBroker.com has been privileged to partner with USA Shooting on several projects in the past and we very much look forward to this new and expanded relationship,” commented Steve Urvan, GunBroker.com founder and CEO. “We know that USA Shooting has exciting fundraising and promotional plans in place as the team prepares for the 2012 Olympics in London and we are excited to be part of those plans.”

Among the new GunBroker.com-USA Shooting partnerships being planned is a special “Supporting Our Olympic Shooters in 2012” auction site on GunBroker.com where all the listed firearms will benefit USA Shooting. Plans call for a series of specially engraved guns produced in partnership with major firearms manufacturers. In addition, one special edition of 100 guns will be produced and made available exclusively on GunBroker.com.

GunBroker.com was also recently named as the official Internet auction site of the National Shooting Sports Foundation and has been the official Internet auction site of the Hunting Heritage Trust since 2008.

Paralympic Team Competed at IPC World Cup Sydney

Paralympic members of the USA Shooting Team traveled down under for the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) World Cup in Sydney, Australia. It was the last opportunity for athletes to earn quotas for the 2012 Paralympic Games. National Paralympic Coach Bob Foth led a team of four athletes to the shooting ranges of the 2004 Olympic Games. The first finals began on Nov. 14 and ended on the 18th. Olympic Training center Resident Athlete Eric Hollen (Colorado Springs, Colo.) was the star of the show with two medals. More importantly, Hollen won the USA’s first Paralympic quota for the London 2012 Paralympic Games. Two days prior, Hollen shined in Mixed 50m Free Pistol SH1, but his specialty was Men’s 10m Air Pistol SH1. He fired 557 match points to tie Cevat Karagol of Turkey, who was also eager for an air pistol quota. Hollen started the final with a strong 10.2 point shot and finished with 98.1 points for a total of 655.1 points. His stellar performance was worthy of the silver medal and the quota.

In Mixed 50m Rifle Prone SH1, Sergeant First Class Josh Olson (Spokane, Wash.) finished in 19th place with 577 match points. Teammate Danielle Fong (New York, N.Y.) shot 559 match points.

The Paralympic shooting athletes of the USA Shooting Team left the IPC World Cup Sydney with a total of two medals and three appearances in the finals. The Team is now working on preparations for the 2012 Paralympic Games in London, England.

Right: Paralympic National Team member Eric Hollen focuses on the match during Men’s 10m Air Pistol at the IPC World Cup in Sydney, Australia.
Elite shooting athletes recognize that in addition to sport-specific training, a certain level of physical training is required. Physical training for shooters optimally includes a mix of cardiovascular, strengthening, flexibility, coordination and proprioceptive (balance) exercises. The focus of this article will be on strength training. Specifically, is strength training important to shooting athletes and if so what is the optimum amount and type?

WHAT QUALIFIES AS STRENGTH TRAINING?

Strength training refers to the use of resistance to create muscular contraction for the purpose of improving muscular performance. Resistance can be provided through the use of machines, free weights, kettle bells, elastic bands or body weight. The two most common forms of strength training are isotonic exercise and isometric exercise. Isotonic exercises involve a body part moving against a force. Examples include most weight machines, free weights and elastic band exercises. An exercise is isometric if your body is holding still against a force. Examples include many bodyweight-resisted exercises such as the plank. A combination of isotonics and isometrics should be incorporated into individual training regimens as they each have slightly different benefits.

OVERALL BENEFITS OF STRENGTH TRAINING

The benefit of strength training for athletes and non-athletes has been well documented in scientific literature. Strength training results in benefits to many areas of the body to include:

- Muscle
- Connective tissue (tendon and ligament)
- Bone
- Potential for injury and recovery
- Blood lipids
- Metabolism
- Mood

The most obvious result of strength training is an increase in muscle strength, mass (hypertrophy due to sarcopenia), power and endurance. Tendons and ligaments have also been shown to increase in size and strength. Functionally this results in better postural control, greater joint stability and a decreased risk of injury results in improved sports performance. Bone responds positively to the effects of strength training by increasing in density, thereby lessening the risk for fracture, stress fracture and osteoporosis and decreasing healing time should a fracture occur.

Research has shown that strength training decreases the risk of lower back, shoulder, knee and ankle injuries. Many injuries occur as a result of muscular/ strength imbalances surrounding a joint. For example, an athlete that has weak external rotator muscles at the shoulder and strong internal rotators is more prone shoulder injuries (impingement syndrome, rotator cuff strains and tears). Another commonly seen example is an athlete with strong superficial back and abdominal muscles and weak core muscles (transversus abdominus, multifidus, etc.). Individuals that are fit tend to heal faster after injury as well.

Outside of the above orthopedic considerations regarding strength training, are blood chemistry and metabolic issues that I will briefly mention. One side effect of intense exercise is a change in blood chemistry. For example, after a workout, levels of dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine are elevated. These chemicals are associated with improved mood, improved sense of well-being and counter feelings of depression.

While cholesterol and LDL (bad cholesterol) are not affected by exercise, HDL (good cholesterol) has been shown to improve. Lastly, metabolic rate increases with strength training. There is a temporary increase during and for several hours after a workout. There is also an overall increase in resting metabolic rate as the ratio of muscle mass increases and fat decreases.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH STRENGTH TRAINING

By far the most common complication resulting from strength training is musculoskeletal injury. This can range from minor muscle soreness to more serious injuries that can impair athletic performance such as muscle strains and tendinitis. Many injuries occur from using improper form, progressing too quickly or overtraining.

Overtraining is a common problem for elite level athletes as they tend to believe that “more is better.” Lifting too much weight, too frequently without allowing for muscle recovery can lead to muscle/tendon injury, stress fracture, general fatigue and chronic muscle soreness. It is imperative to seek the help of one or more qualified individuals to design a safe and effective exercise program for you that meets your sport specific training goals.
TRAINING GOALS

Depending on your sport you will have different goals with respect to weight training. These goals will guide the amount of weight you choose to use, the number of repetitions and sets performed and the number of training sessions per week. A weight lifter will have a dramatically different strength training program than a shooter or swimmer. It is important to identify your goals prior to initiating a weight training program. Some of these goals can be mutually conflicting. Although the following guidelines have not been well researched they are generally used by the medical and fitness community as guidelines for strength training.

If your goal is to increase muscle size, use higher weights and low repetitions and sets. If your goal is to develop a balance of strength, endurance and muscle size use moderate weights and a higher number of repetitions and sets. To determine the amount of weight you should start with, consult with a professional, physical therapist or athletic trainer, to determine the maximum amount of weight that you can safely lift for a particular exercise. They can calculate how much weight you should lift to meet your training goals. Refer to Table 1.

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<td>Percent of 1RM</td>
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Table 1. Modified from Siff, 2003. 1RM= one repetition maximum lift.

IS STRENGTH TRAINING IMPORTANT TO SHOOTING ATHLETES?

Yes—very important. Rifle, pistol and shotgun athletes all benefit from strengthening, but they should have different training goals. Rifle athletes’ primary goal is stability of the rifle with minimal muscular tension during lengthy training sessions and competitions. In order to achieve this goal the athlete needs to have adequate flexibility to comfortably attain their prone, kneeling and standing positions and muscular endurance to sustain this position for up to five hours. Strength goals should be aimed at increasing core strength to maintain trunk, hip and upper extremity position and overall endurance strengthening of the upper and lower extremities. Training strictly for muscular size could be counterproductive for several reasons. The shooting suit is tight fitting and weight or size fluctuations would negatively impact the fit of the suit. Also, a larger muscle mass could interfere with the extreme positions required of the wrist and knee.

Pistol athletes do not have outside support for their gun therefore they need a greater degree of muscular strength combined with endurance to excel. Their training goals need to focus on the dominant upper extremity muscles (deltoid, rotator cuff, forearm and wrist muscles), core muscles of the trunk (transverse abdominus and multifidus), superficial trunk muscles (latissimus dorsi, quadratus lumborum, internal/external abdominal obliques) and general strengthening for the legs.

Similar to Pistol athletes, Shotgun athletes do not have outside support and require muscular strength to support their gun. Shotgunners should focus on bilateral shoulder and total body strengthening at moderate levels to develop the overall strength necessary to repeatedly lift and absorb the recoil from their gun. While greater strength is needed for this discipline, the emphasis should still not be training for size, or “bulking up.” This can lead to sacrificing agility and endurance for power.

Experts agree that strength training should be done off season so as not to incur excessive muscle soreness or injury while competing. During the shooting season focus on maintenance.

PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF STRENGTH TRAINING FROM SHOOTERS

All of the athletes and coaches I spoke with unanimously agreed that strength training was beneficial for performing at an elite level. All agreed that while there is a potential for harm with strength training that the benefits FAR outweigh the risks. Matt Emmons, two-time Olympic Medalist and member of the 2012 Olympic Team, shares his thoughts regarding strength training: “My first advice to anyone on strength training is this: first and foremost, you are a shooter. Do not sacrifice valuable range time to go work out in the gym every day. Sometimes it’s wise to sacrifice a little range time to work out, but you are first a shooter. When you get down to specific strength work, I can’t really think of anything that’s particularly bad except that people should use caution that they don’t grow too much.

You don’t need to be a bodybuilder to be a great shooter. Typically, quite the opposite. You need to be fit, in my opinion, but you don’t need to be able to bench 250, squat 300 or anything that tough. The reason I say people have to be careful not to grow too much is that you won’t fit in your shooting clothes and you’ll have all kind of problems if your jacket gets too tight (as I very well know!). Over the last several years, my shoulders have grown quite a bit and I’ve struggled to get a jacket to fit correctly, which has hampered my shooting.”

Two-time Olympic medalist Matt Emmons believes that valuable range time should be your training priority. Emmons invests in outdoor activities such as running, skiing and hiking to stay fit.

Jamie (Beyerle) Gray and Matt Rawlings feel that bodyweight-resisted exercises and elastic bands are a preferred method of strengthening because of travel interruptions. Frequent travel makes it difficult to be compliant with a gym-based exercise program. Keith Sanderson, rapid fire pistol shooter, states, “I personally think that my hold (free/air) is smaller...
and recoil recovery (rapid fire) is faster and more consistent when I’m working out consistently.” He also warns against the dangers of “overdoing it.” He also notes that if he “bulks up” his back muscles that it interferes with his position.

Daryl Szarenski, pistol shooter, feels that strength training improves his hold and endurance. He agrees that training for size is counterproductive as it interferes with his fine motor skills, specifically his ability to smoothly pull the trigger. Kim Rhode, 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008 Olympic medalist, feels that strength training is important to her performance and focuses on core and shoulder strength. She states that strengthening helps her stabilize her gun, improves reaction time, improves endurance and helps to prevent injury. She notes that it is critical to seek more than one opinion for your training regimen. Glen Eller, 2008 gold medalist, states that strength training is beneficial for stability and endurance. He focuses on higher repetitions for endurance than overall muscle mass.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Strength training is one component of an overall fitness regimen for shooting athletes. Cardiovascular, flexibility, coordination and proprioceptive (balance) exercises should also be included.

2. Strength training should focus on endurance versus power-based exercises.

3. Get the advice of at least one well-qualified fitness professional prior to beginning a strength training program and periodically afterwards to progress towards training goals.

4. Focus on strengthening primarily during your off season and work on maintenance during the shooting season.

5. Avoid strength training during a competition.

Jamie (Beyerle) Gray is an advocate of body weight-resistance exercises in order to accommodate her rigorous travel schedule.
According to many of the 150-plus coaches, instructors, presenters, officials and guests, the 2011 Coaches College and Conference was a success and the networking with other coaches across the country was a highly valuable side benefit. If you missed this one, don’t miss the next one in 2013.

The National Coach Development Staff kicked off the activities on Dec. 12. There were 23 coaches and instructors that learned how to be a certified coach course instructor. The newly minted instructors were then sent out to co-teach their respective discipline’s Level 1 coach course (rifle, pistol and shotgun). In the Level 1 Coach Courses, they trained 18 rifle, nine pistol and eight shotgun coaches over two days. A total of 35 new certified coaches! In the Level 3 Coach Courses we now have 17 new Level 3 rifle coaches and six new Level 3 pistol coaches after a three-day course of study. To facilitate the Level 2 requirements for those coming out of their Level 1 Coach Course, we held the ASEP (American Sports Education Program) in addition to a First Aid course. There were 27 who completed their Level 2 requirements during the college.

Over 100 coaches, guests, presenters and officials attended the Coach Conference. First, all coaches attended a meeting with their respective National or Assistant National Coaches. The shotgun coaches gathered at the International Shooting Park for their meeting and training program introduction by Bret Erikson, National Shotgun Coach and Tommy Browning, Assistant National Coach.

Then, coaches either attended the First Aid course, SCATT clinic, Orion clinic or listen to a presentation by Richard Hawkins on how to join the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit. There was a well-attended USAS athlete panel discussion where top athletes discussed what makes a good coach. With all the positive feedback, we will repeat this segment in 2013 at the general session.

The following evening there was a conference reception held in the upper range of the Shooting Center along with a silent auction that generated over $5,000 for the USA Shooting Team. Thanks to all who contributed.

The conference general sessions opened with welcoming remarks from Bob Mitchell, USAS Executive Director. The first presentation was a panel of coaches and club leaders who discussed what characteristics make a successful junior shooting program and club. The resounding factor was enthusiastic and dedicated coaches/club leaders. Without dedicated volunteers, nothing happens. Trained coaches, fundraising for equipment and good facilities were also mentioned.

The next presentation was from Malia Arrington, United States Olympic Committee (USOC) Director of Ethics and Safe Sport. Her presentation made a strong case for ensuring the safety of our junior athletes, the coaches and their clubs. The USOC is working on an online video course that will help educate coaches about how to keep athletes safe from sexual abuse, bullying and other high-risk behaviors. She pointed out the importance of doing background checks on all coaches who work with junior athletes. She stated that 95 percent of all sexual predators never come in contact with the legal system. We should have good procedures, policies and practices in place to prevent the opportunity for athlete abuse and to protect coaches from false accusations. It only takes one negative event to destroy a good program or club. Not to mention the financial impact from a lawsuit and criminal convictions.

Orest Michaels, Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) Chief Operating Officer gave an update on CMP operations, financials and programs. The CMP brought 33 State Directors and staff to the conference, which reinforced CMP’s commitment to coach education and development.

Mike Theimer, USAS Youth Programs and Athlete Development Manager delivered a presentation that covered accomplishments in 2011 and future plans. In 2012, Theimer wants to emphasize training more Level 3 coaches, creating ‘basic training’ videos for Olympic pistol and shotgun and developing Certified Training Centers as an extension of USAS Olympic athlete development.

Richard Gandolf, NRA Range Technical Team Advisor, gave a presentation on range development/construction with a discussion of lead remediation and management. Lead management issues are coming to the attention of many anti-gun government officials as a way to close down or prevent the development of shooting ranges (indoor and outdoor). Richard gave conference attendees some good research and resource information to help clubs be prepared for these ‘health’ inspections by various state, local and federal agencies.

Marcus Raab, NRA National Coach Trainer provided an update on current coach certification programs. We currently have over 4,400 Level 1 coaches, 300-plus Level 2 coaches yet only 93 Level 3 coaches. Marcus discussed the difference between a club that is participant-oriented and competition-oriented and what level of coaching falls in those two spectrums.

Rex Roberg, Arkansas 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator, gave a presentation.
on how the Arkansas 4-H Shooting Sports became a successful shooting sports program. Instructor/coach training is a key to the success. Shooting sports is an ongoing, year-round program, not just a '4-H project.' Their program has grown from less than 200 athletes in 1998 to over 700 athletes in 2011. 

Russ Arnold, representing ACUI (Association of College Unions International) ended the first day with a presentation on collegiate shotgun programs across the U.S. The 2011 ACUI Championships featured 439 students/athletes representing 50 schools. This is a 100 percent increase in the number of students who participated three years ago. They are expecting over 700 shooters to attend the 2012 ACUI Championships in San Antonio in March.

Valerie Boothe, Ole Miss Head Rifle Coach gave a presentation on how to apply for shooting scholarships at NCAA schools. She helped coaches understand the complexities of NCAA rules and eligibility, and what factors that coaches use for selecting collegiate athletes for their teams (scores from important competitions, equipment that the athlete use/own and academic achievements).

Lieutenant Colonel Richard Nesmith, Air Force Academy (AFA) Admissions Regional Director, gave a presentation on how to apply for an appointment to the AFA and military academies in general. There were 12,708 applicants for the 2015 Air Force Academy class. After all the complex review and assessment steps, only 1,342 students were accepted.

Roy McClain from the Ole Mill Shooting Range provided a lot of information on fundraising, grant writing and potential sources of funding for shooting programs. The bottom line is—it still takes work from dedicated volunteers to make things happen.

Chuck Woodson, Arkansas Fish & Game Youth Shooting Sports Coordinator gave another success story and what it takes to grow a program with 918 students in 2007 to over 5,460 students in 2011! They had 125 coaches in 2007 and now have over 689 coaches in their program today.

Will Hart, National Coach Development Staff and Certified Pistol Coach, gave a presentation on Paralympic shooting sports with information/slides provided by Tom Monto, a Paralympic competitor and coach. Will covered the history of the Paralympics, current Paralympic shooting activities in the states and resources for helping clubs get involved in promoting Paralympic shooting sports.

John Kessel, USA Volleyball Managing Director, gave a mind-opening presentation on "belief based vs. evidence based coaching," There are certain aspects of coaching that cross all sports and disciplines. John gave us new insights, examples, techniques for becoming a great coach.

Hawkins' second presentation was on various research projects regarding footwear for pistol shooters. His research highlighted things that you would expect and others you would not expect. Mitchell came back with an ISSF update. He named and pointed out the many U.S. representatives that are in key positions within the ISSF. The U.S. has significant influence within the ISSF like never before. The conference closed with Mitchell and Raab handing out Coach Conference Certificates to all the attendees.

As the conference manager, I want to thank all those who helped make this fantastic learning event happen. Thanks to Jim Shaver and Bud Kucera, every coach course was well-supplied with coffee and donut holes to start the day. Teresa Myer helped input all the paper registration forms/information into a spreadsheet. Frank Thompson gathered, inventoried, set up and managed the silent auction and Lisa Erikson set up the Friday night reception. Also, to the shooters that participated in the athlete panel—your insight was appreciated. Also, thank you to the presenters who took time out of their busy schedules to share their knowledge.

Last but not least, thank you to the coaches who came to the conference, networked with each other to leverage this bi-annual opportunity into an even greater learning experience for all, creating new friendships and renewing old ones. This is truly a gathering of the most dedicated and enthusiastic shooting coaches and leaders from around the country. It was a privilege to be a part of it.

My challenge to those that came to this conference is to recruit, train and mentor at least one new coach and bring them with you to the 2013 Coaches’ Conference. I look forward to seeing you all again and 100 more in 2013.
USA Shooting (USAS) competitions would not run successfully without the help of our outstanding volunteers. Complimented internationally by the pool of qualified individuals that generously donate their time to the sport, USAS is fortunate and grateful to work with wonderful peers. Over the last two years, USAS has been privileged to watch the transition of one of our colleagues to volunteer status. Wanda Jewell’s vast history in the sport widely contributes to the extensive knowledge and experience that she brings to the realm of volunteering—one that is worthy of recognition.

Jewell began shooting in high school in 1970 as a direct result of her parents’ involvement in the National Rifle Association (NRA). After she competed against a club run by Lones W. Wigger Sr., Jewell’s interest in shooting and in the United States Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU) was born. Rather than immediate enlistment, Jewell enrolled in Eastern Washington State University where she was a three-time All-American rifle shooter and, in 1974, made her first World Team. Jewell was a member of the first ROTC class to commission women into the Army. In 1976, she became an active-duty soldier and was later assigned to the USAMU where her shooting success soared for many years.

Jewell made her final World Team in 1999. To date, Jewell has won 13 gold, three silver and two bronze medals, for a total of 18 medals in international competition; most noteworthy is her 1984 Olympic bronze medal in Women’s Three Position Rifle.

In 2000, Jewell joined the USAS staff as the National Rifle Coach. After two years, she moved into the role of Director of Operations until she retired in 2008. However, her love for shooting and passion for promoting the sport did not cease. Rather, it flourished, and Jewell found a new outlet for her fervor in volunteering.

Jewell is now a certified official in all disciplines—offering a wealth of knowledge in rifle, pistol and shotgun. She has volunteered for every major USAS event in 2011 and served as the main point of contact for the first-ever International Paralympic Committee World Cup held on U.S. soil.

When asked of what it means to be a volunteer after years of shooting and employment at USAS, Jewell graciously remarks that she is “proud to be a member of such an educated and informed volunteer staff.” She notes that USAS has the “best trained range officers and enthusiastic workers worldwide” and she empathizes with how much the other volunteers “truly care about the competitions, shooters and organization’s success.”

Jewell’s appreciation for the time and dedication of the volunteer staff has flourished in each stage of her involvement in shooting, and now she shares firsthand the importance of the role of a volunteer and the commitment involved:

“I look at the other volunteers as true friends, and I am so appreciative of the way they have welcomed me into this new role. I am proud to contribute my experience and knowledge in another facet to USA Shooting,” says Jewell.

USA Shooting is thankful for Jewell’s contribution to the shooting sports, the organization and the Competition Division’s success. USA Shooting is proud to name Wanda Jewell as the 2011 Volunteer of the Year. Thank you, Wanda, and all volunteers, for your passionate service in 2011.
Senter Successfully Defends Senior Open for International Trap Title

By Maxey Brantley

But it’s a dry heat! Shooters from the four corners of the U.S. and Canada were in attendance at the Arizona Fish and Game’s Ben Avery Clay Target Center from Oct. 22-23 to contest the 2011 International Shooting Sports of Oregon’s (ISSO) Senior Open for International Trap. Originated in 2006, the Senior Open for International Trap is an annual USA Shooting (USAS) sanctioned event designed for USAS Senior Category shooters with the additional stipulation that they must attain the age of 45 or more during the calendar year of the event.

This year marked the fifth Annual Senior Open as it has moved around the country to various venues promoting the USA Shooting motto “Sport for Life.” Designed around the World Cup format, shooters fire 75 targets on Saturday, 50 targets on Sunday and then three finals are held for the top six shooters in each Euro A, B and C Classes to determine final awards. The Euro Class System classifies shooters based on their performances on Saturday’s score, being particularly important since non-USAS members from other countries participate in the event, who hold no USAS classification. Over $2000 in cash and trophies were presented at this year’s event.

The famous Black Canyon winds reared their heads early on Saturday morning presenting an exceptionally strong headwind for several hours. Positioned on the first squad, David Senter (Hillsboro, Ore.) posted an exceptionally strong round for the conditions and never looked back. Giving chase was the 2006-09 Senior Open Champion Guy Avedisian (Ocala, Fla.) and local shooter Mike McGuire (Scottsdale, Ariz.).

When the 125 targets were completed on Sunday, Senter was in a commanding eight-target lead. Breaking a solid score of 19 in the finals cemented his second Senior Open win, as well as High Intermediate Senior, with 136 out of 150 targets. High Veteran was Richard Lichtenberg (Bellevue, Wash.) with 103 out of 125 targets and the High Lady was Sandra Honour (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada) with 97 out of 125 targets.

New this year was the use of the White Flyer “Orange Crush” flash targets for all finals rounds thanks to a generous donation by White Flyer. They proved to be a popular and winning combination performing exceptionally well in the Promatic machines. All the competitors were very impressed with their flight characteristics while retaining the “breakability” factor needed for satisfactory performance.

ISSO extends its sincere gratitude to the Ben Avery Clay Target Center for their outstanding support for the event, Pat Laux and Joe Bernofo for assistance with additional range facility comforts, and Steve Lakatos and Stan Marubayashi, both USAS/ISSF Certified Referees, for volunteering their time to referee the match.

Discussions with multiple locations in the Midwest for the 2012 event as well as a possible inaugural Senior Open for International Skeet event are underway. Stay tuned for updates as locations and dates are finalized!

“The soft overcomes the hard, the slow overcomes the fast, let your workings remain a mystery, just show people the results.”

– Lao Tzu

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Most admired athlete outside of shooting?
Louis Zamperini was an Olympic long distance runner. Louis survived in the Pacific Ocean for 47 days afloat before being captured by the Japanese and spending nearly two years in a POW camp. They wrote a story on his life titled Unbroken. I think his life story is something you would see in the movies, simply amazing!

Favorite dish at the Olympic games?
Spaghetti.

Craziest Olympic memory?
My first Olympics in Atlanta: I almost overslept my official practice. Needless to say, on the day of my event, several people knocked on my door early in the morning to make sure I made the bus.

Most interested in solving which world issue?
I am a spokesperson for Kids and Clays. They raise money for Ronald McDonald Houses all around the world to help families of severely ill children.

How would you characterize your shooting style?
My style is much like everyone else; however, I train differently than most with a lot of repetition and I shoot only a few regular rounds.

What advice do you have for aspiring junior shooters?
“Never give up” is the one you always hear, but I would also add resilience. You don’t win every time, but it’s what you learn from your mistakes and how you turn a negative into a positive that truly makes a champion.
WHAT KEEPS YOU MOTIVATED TO TRAIN, WIN AND SUCCEED?
Some people get nervous and upset when the pressure is on, but I get really motivated and enjoy the competition.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES?
I love to scrapbook, rebuild old cars and lately I’ve been getting into canning.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK?
That’s a tough one because I collect first edition children’s books, so I have a lot of favorites. I would say “The Wizard of Oz” because it was the first in my collection.

DO YOU HAVE ANY NON-SHOOTING ACCOMPLISHMENTS THAT MAY SURPRISE YOUR FANS?
I interned at the City of Hope in Durate, Calif., for school.

DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS?
I think, like most people, my resolution is to be healthier.

WHAT ARE YOUR 2012 GOALS?
Of course, to do my best at the upcoming World Cups and Olympic Games.

Members of the 2011 Pan American Games Team (L to R): Matt Gossett, Jake Turner, Kayle Browning and Miranda Wilder couldn’t help but goof-off during practice. Submit a funny caption for the photo. Winners will be published in a future issue of USA Shooting News. Please send your caption via email to katie.yergensen@usashooting.org.

WIG’S WISE WORDS
Lones Wigger is often considered the best shooter the USA has ever produced. His shooting career included 112 international medals, three Olympic medals and the honor of the only shooter inducted into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame. When Wig speaks, it’s time to listen . . .

“Winning is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.”
dedicated, hard working and intelligent are just a few of the words that can describe Square Circle’s junior shooter, Sarah McCunney.

Sarah’s interest in the sport of shooting was sparked in early 2008 when her father, who recently returned from a meeting at Square Circle, asked if she had any desire to shoot. Pondering the thought for a bit, Sarah thought she would give it a ‘shot’. Fast forward to present time; Sarah has multiple matches under her belt, including two visits to the National Junior Olympic Championships (NJOSC) out in Colorado Springs.

Sarah doesn’t take shooting lightly, recently shooting a 1073 in Square Circle’s 3p English Prone match this past September, giving her a first place for the state of New Jersey! Alone, Sarah shot a 373 in kneeling, aiding in her first place position. Last December, at the 2011 State Junior Olympic match, she shot 385 points in Air Rifle and received an automatic invite out to Colorado for the National Junior Olympic Shooting Championships.

Sarah’s outstanding performance doesn’t stop on the range either. Currently a sophomore at Sterling High School in Somerdale, New Jersey, Sarah is dedicated to her academic performance. Recently just wrapping up her quarter as a straight A student, currently standing at a 96.75 percentage! When not on the range or hitting the books, she can be found spending time with friends and family.

With plans to continue shooting well throughout high school and into college, Sarah would like to ultimately return the coaching from Mike Bauer and Lou Kershaw. Sarah plans on coaching other junior shooters, helping them achieve their shooting goals like she is currently doing. Sarah recognizes the importance of development at a young age, especially in shooting, as she is a result of it.

Sarah also realizes that her hard work and dedication to the sport comes with its tribulations. When asked what she felt was a recent challenge, Sarah explained that the acceptance of her scores is a constant battle. Continuously wanting to improve, Sarah realizes that not every match will be her best, resulting in some lower scores than desired. With her positive attitude, Sarah explains that this is what keeps her interest and pushes her stating, “I guess that’s what has kept me so interested in shooting for so long; there’s always something to improve on.” Her coach, Mike Bauer, agrees and adds that Sarah is always willing to listen and gives every effort into shooting. He states, “She continuously is looking for ways to improve her scores and takes every critique and coaching lesson into account.”

USA Shooting wishes Sarah continued success and hopes to see her out here in April for the 2012 National Junior Olympic Championships.

Sarah dreams of being a rifle coach in the future.
handle day-to-day operations while managing the club's finances. Appointed Committee Chairmen run the club's events, most recently focusing on the club's State Junior Olympic match held this past December. Regardless of the task at hand, everyone involved with Square Circle works together, aiding in the club's success.

With a member base of over eight hundred, Square Circle's members also have a hand in the pot, continuously performing club upkeep and implementing improvements to the grounds and shooting ranges. Members provide hundreds of working hours, hosting club functions, fundraisers and other activities, all of which are critical to Square Circle's success and survival. Two members, Lou Kershaw and Ann Marie O'Brien continuously go above and beyond. Lou has been around Square Circle for over seventy years. As an active shooter, still shooting four to five times a week, Lou also helps Mike with coaching and enjoys every minute of it. Ann has been with the club for over five years, assisting Mike with registrations, answering emails and many other daily tasks. Mike stresses that the club's junior program would be lost without these two individuals and recognizes their hard work, dedication and efforts to Square Circle.

To learn more about Square Circle, please contact Ann Marie O'Brien by email at reg4squarecircle@verizon.net.
Kelsey started shooting because of her family. At first it was nothing but something fun to do on Wednesday nights. However, it quickly became so much more. Kelsey is following in the footsteps of her sisters who were all accomplished shooters—and she has massive shoes to fill. Her fun quickly turned into something a lot deeper. “I am drawn to the competition. I don’t want to be the best in the world, I want to be the best shooter and person that I can be,” states Kelsey.

Peter Dorn, the head rifle coach at the Arlington International Air Gun Club and Kelsey’s main coach has roughly the same mentality, “It’s not about score, it’s about growth.” Kelsey’s skill cannot be pulled out of a casual shooter. To be as good as she is you have to want it and be willing to work for it. Kelsey generally does better in competition than in practice, but practice and the club are important to her. “The club is like a family,” Kelsey says. The club is not just a place to shoot—it is a place to find yourself. Dorn stresses that shooting should be fun and he tries to teach through humor in addition to respect, honor, and commitment. He coaches in a way that builds people up, and he tries to abolish the fear of failure. When such fear is eliminated, people are free to pursue their passion without reservation and

The gym-converted-range is the home of the Arlington International Air Gun Club.
Irina Adrianova is aiming at not only more tens, but the number one position in the world. Right: Joel is a passionate shooter that is working towards his Olympic dreams.

Passion requires you to turn your life over to it and let it shape you for glory. However, if you hold anything back you will never reach your potential.
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ISSF European Championships 2011

- 50m Men’s 3 x 40 Rifle
- 50m Women’s 3 x 20 Rifle
- 25m Sport Pistol
- 50m Free Pistol
- 50m Men’s Prone
- 25m Rapid-Fire Men’s Pistol

ISSF World Cup Final 2011

- 50m Men’s 3 x 40 Rifle
- 25m Sport Pistol
- 50m Free Pistol
- 50m Men’s Prone
- 25m Rapid-Fire Men’s Pistol

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