

**NEW ZEALAND CLAY TARGET
ASSOCIATION INC**

BASIC COACHING MANUAL



INTRODUCTION

This Coaching and Training Manual has been designed to provide Shooters with a standard format for learning the art of Clay Target Shooting at novice and Club level competition.

Its basis is formulated using basic information relating to stance, vision and mental approach.

This Basic Coaching manual is not intended for the Elite performer, but is sound in knowledge and continually refers to basics. It is from these basics that our future Club, Province and National Champions will be born.

This Manual is printed in the best interests of Clay Target Shooting by the New Zealand Clay Target Association Inc.

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SAFETY

Safety can never be over emphasized and within the New Zealand Clay Target Association, a firearm should always be treated as loaded.

The individual becomes the Safety Coach for the firearm. The firearm itself is only a mechanical device. It is therefore essential that safe firearm handling be mandatory for all participants.

1. Treat any firearm with respect due a loaded gun.
2. Never point a firearm in fun or jest.
3. Carry any firearm so that you can control the barrel, even if you stumble.
4. Become the safety catch of the firearm.
5. Load the firearm only when it's your turn to shoot.
6. Always unload, when the red flag is shown or at the Referees command.
7. If a firearm misfires, keep the barrels to the front and wait for the Referee.
8. Always use hearing and eye protection.
9. Ensure you have the correct caliber cartridges for the gun in use.
10. Only let a qualified gunsmith modify firearm mechanisms.
11. **Firearms and alcohol do not, and never will mix.**

SAFETY ISSUES AT A GUN CLUB

1. Treat every gun as if it were loaded until you personally ascertain that it isn't. This includes when you are handed a gun, or when you take one from storage or from your car. Never assume that it's empty, no matter how safe that assumption may seem. Always check to be sure.
2. Always keep your gun pointed in a safe direction. This includes even when it is unloaded and/or the action is open. A safe direction is one where, even if it were to go off, it would not cause injury or damage. Common sense dictates what is the safest direction depending on different circumstances.
3. Keep the action of your gun open at all times except when standing on the shooting station ready to shoot. The only allowable exception to this rule is for under and overs when they are about to be temporarily stored in your car -but close it only as you place it in the car and re-open it immediately as you lift it out again.
4. Never load your gun except when standing on the shooting station ready to shoot. Always unload your gun completely of both live and fired shells before turning around and walking off the shooting station. A gun is deemed to be loaded when it contains one or more shells in any part of the mechanism, including the breech and/or the magazine.
5. Never fire your gun anywhere other than down the shooting range, or at a pattern plate, if the club provides one. When firing at a pattern plate, exercise great caution and remember that shotgun pellets are among the most prone to ricocheting of any firearm projectile.
6. Never load more than two shells in your gun at anyone time. Two shells may be loaded for shooting singles in most Trap events and on most Skeet stations, however more than two is never allowable under any circumstances. With magazine type guns, such as pump-actions and semi-automatics, some method of restricting the magazine capacity to one shell, such as a magazine plug, is a wise precaution.
7. Never load or fire a gun if there is any doubt about its ability to operate safely and/or reliably. A gun, like any other tool, requires regular cleaning and maintenance and occasional repair or readjustment. Always ensure that it receives maintenance or repairs immediately if there is any question concerning its ability to function correctly.
8. Never attempt to load or fire any gun unless you are familiar with its operation. With any new or strange gun you should acquaint yourself with how it works and how to load and unload it safely before proceeding to use it on the shooting range with live ammo.
9. Never use a shot size larger than that specified in the rulebook or restricted by local club rules. This generally means no shot with a pellet diameter larger than (or with a numerical value smaller than) #8 (2.2mm) for Skeet and #7 (2.5mm) for Trap. Safe shot fall zones are calculated by this criteria, and non-observance could cause injury to people or property that theoretically should not be in danger.
10. Never mix the gauges of your ammunition. As the Rules prohibit configuring your gun to use two different gauges of shells at the same time, there is no reason to

ever carry more than one gauge of shells. Both 20ga and 28ga shells will lodge into a chamber that is one size bigger, in such a way as to obstruct it and yet allow the correct size shell to be loaded after it. This will effectively convert your gun into a hand grenade.

11. Never rely on a safety catch. Safety catches are designed for hunting and defence weapons and have no practical use on a target gun. If the gun is loaded and closed it should be considered ready to use and inherently dangerous if misused. Many target shooters have the safety catches removed or locked off to prevent misuse.

12. Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting. This applies equally to medicinal drugs, which may also impair your reflexes or judgment. If in doubt seek medical advice. If you have consumed alcohol or drugs, as with driving your car, do not handle your gun until the effects of these substances have diminished to an acceptable level.

13. Always check your bore for obstructions. This mainly applies after you fire a shell with an abnormal report, or after you trip or fall while carrying your gun, or after your gun may have fallen. It is also a good idea to get into the habit of doing it every time you load your gun, if you haven't just fired it. This includes after you have just taken it from the car and after you have just assembled it, or taken it from its case.

14. Always keep your muzzle pointed towards the center stake if you have a misfire or malfunction. This allows the referee to examine and adjudicate safely, and then allows you to rectify the problem while the gun is still pointed in a safe direction. Never turn around until the gun has been opened and unloaded.

15. Always unload your gun immediately if there is any hold-up while shooting. If the interruption is going to be a long one, it is best to unload your gun and step off the station until the referee indicates that shooting can be resumed. Even if the hold-up appears to be a short one, and you do not intend to step off the station, always unload your gun until either common sense or the referee indicates that it is safe to continue.

16. Always store guns and ammunition separately, even when they are only left unattended for short periods. At a Gun Club, between events, always lock your gun and your ammunition in the boot.

17. Be careful with release trigger guns. They should be looked upon as a necessary evil and an inherently unsafe proposition in unfamiliar hands. If you use one, do not leave it where anyone could inadvertently pick it up by mistake. Always lock it away in your car immediately after you finish using it. When shooting one on the fields, always notify the referee and the other squad members. If you do not use one, try to resist the temptation of playing around with someone else's.

18. Never enter a traphouse unless officially authorized. A target-throwing machine, like many other mechanical devices, is an inherently dangerous piece of machinery, which could cause grievous bodily harm to an inexperienced operator. Trap mechanics and loaders are trained in the safe operation of these machines, and are the only people allowed in the traphouses.

19. Never absent-mindedly walk in front of a Clay Target Throwing Machine. This includes the area in front of a DTL Traphouse, as well as the area in front of the low house window on a Skeet Field. If the machine happened to be cocked and loaded, and someone were to inadvertently push, bump or drop the release button, a

severe injury could result. Even if the button is visibly safe, someone in the house could manually trip the machine in the process of loading or finalising it. With the widespread use of Phono-pull equipment, this danger is now even greater, as accidental failure to switch the equipment off, could result in an idle conversation seriously harming someone.

20. Always wear eye and ear protection while on the shooting range. This applies equally to shooters, referees, scorers and trap personnel. Ear plugs are necessary to prevent long term hearing loss, and safety glasses are required, even when you are near a field, to prevent serious eye damage from wayward target pieces or ricocheting shot pellets.

REMEMBER

- ◆ Firearm safety is no accident.
- ◆ Most accidental shootings occur with "unloaded" guns.
- ◆ You may know that your closed gun is unloaded, but how can others be sure of that.

SHOOTING ETIQUETTE

- ◆ Club, Presidents and Committees are usually honorary, they respect your constructive criticism, but also expect your assistance and co-operation.
- ◆ It is your responsibility to ascertain your squad and layout and to be on time.
- ◆ While on the shooting layouts, respect other shooters rights to participate without interference.
- ◆ In the Trap disciplines, do not move from your lane until the shooter on your right has shot or a vacant one exists.
- ◆ In the Trap disciplines, unload and remove all cartridges from the gun, before leaving Lane 5 to proceed around to Lane 1.
- ◆ In the Skeet disciplines, always open the action of your firearm, unload, before moving off the lane or station.
- ◆ Dress in a clean, neat and tidy manner with suitable footwear.
- ◆ Respect a Referee's decision and do not obstruct their field of view.

CARTRIDGES

With the ever-increasing number of cartridge manufacturers, the choice of cartridges in New Zealand today is large. This large range offers competitors an infinite choice in quality, speed and shot size.

A cartridge can be selected to meet individual needs, both for the discipline and the physical stature of the person.

All too often a cartridge is selected for the wrong reasons and without thought being given to the best cartridge for that particular purpose.

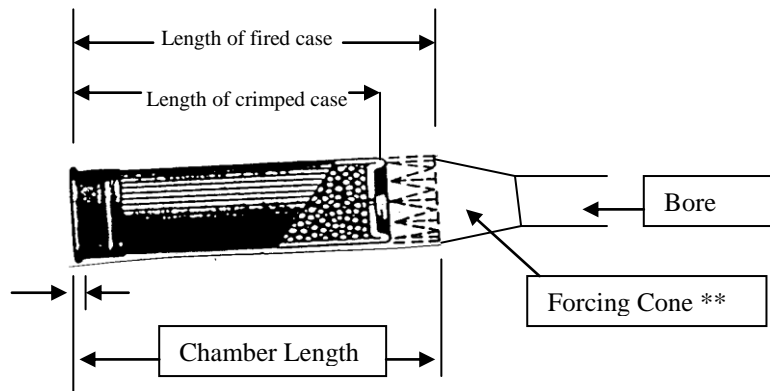
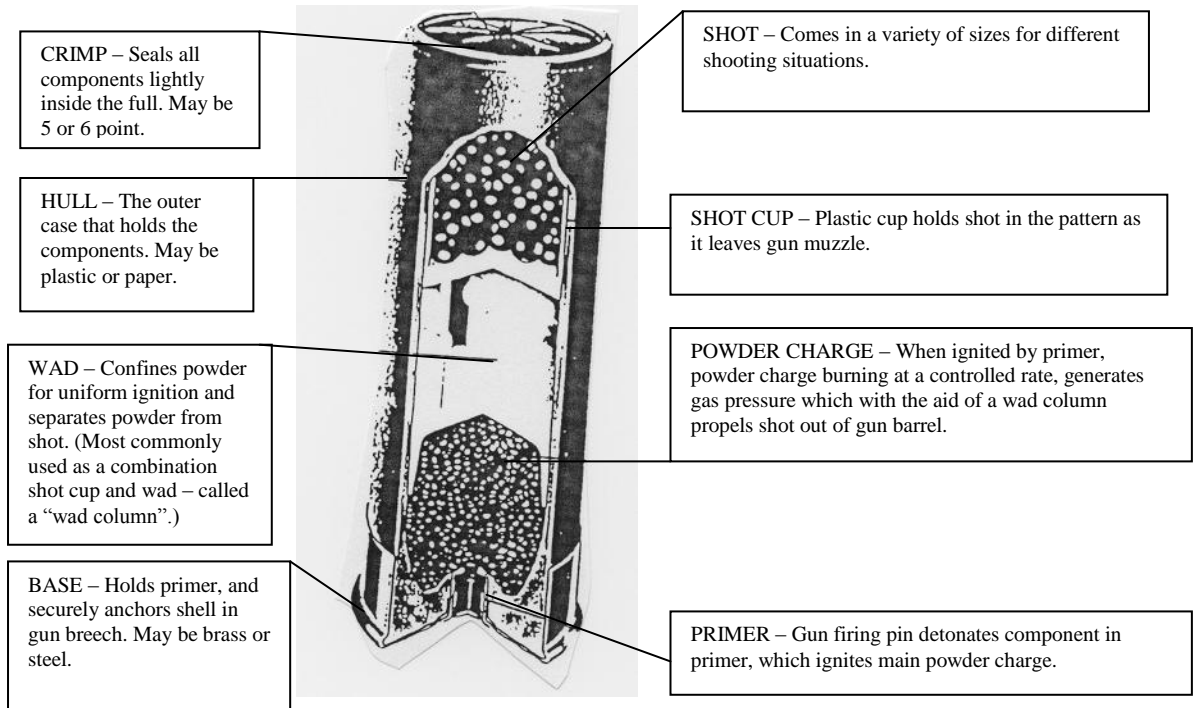
These purposes could be:

1. Discipline being shot i.e. Standard Skeet as against ISSF Skeet
2. Physical stature of a competitor
3. Style of shotgun being used
4. Experience and ability of the individual.

For the novice shooter, care should be taken to select a cartridge with minimal recoil so as not to create ongoing problems, which excessive recoil can cause. It is a fact in our sport, that the slowest competition cartridge available will break clay targets, if the shotgun is pointed and controlled correctly.

Down the Line	28 gram (1oz)	7, 7½, 8
Skeet	28 gram (1oz)	8, 9
ISSF Trap	24 gram (7/8oz)	7, 7½, 8
ISSF Skeet	24 gram (7/8oz)	9

12 Gauge is the most commonly used shotgun gauge in New Zealand, followed by the 20 gauge in small numbers.

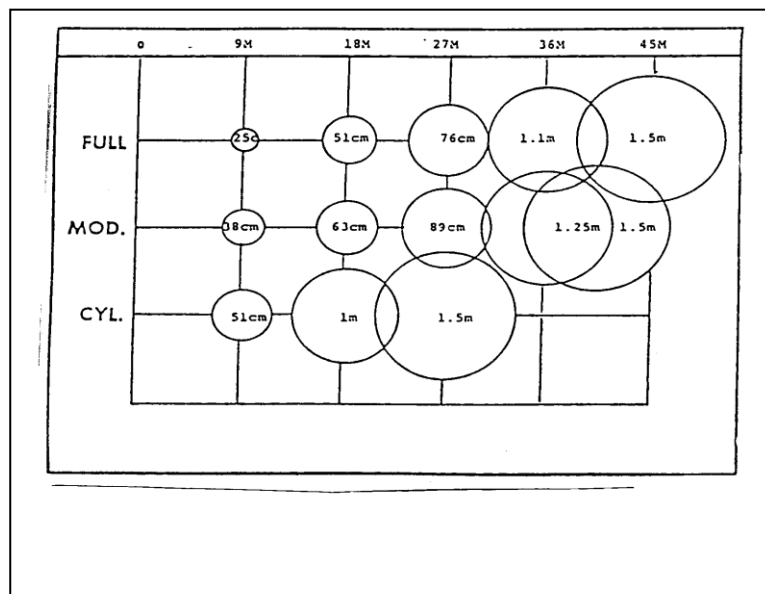


** A tapered section of the barrel, forward of the chamber, which eases the passage of shot from case mouth to the bore.

This illustration shows the chamber, forcing cone and bore of a shotgun. Pictured is a cartridge case as it might appear in the crimped stage. While it is quite permissible to use a short shell in a long chamber, the reverse is never true.

The Chart shows approximate pellet spread from three different chokes at various ranges.

Note how impractical
The full choke appears at the shorter ranges while the patterns from the cylinder bore become extremely sparse after 27 metres.



CHARACTERISTICS OF SHOTGUNS

As with cartridges, the range of shotguns available to the competitive shooter is both large and varied.

When choosing a shotgun, careful attention should be made to one's physical makeup pupil and directly relate it to the firearm. Items such as left or right handed, height, weight, neck and arm lengths should be noted.

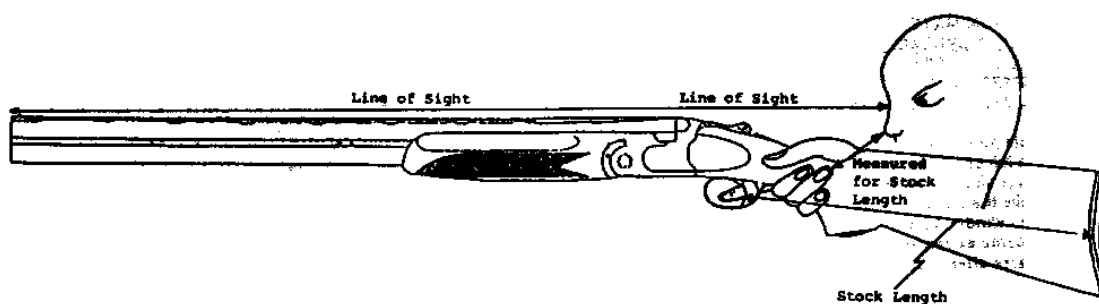
These individual characteristics should mate to the firearms dimensions, i.e. Monte Carlo, flat trap or skeet stock as well as barrel length, chokes and overall weight.

A wrong choice can make the process of learning the sport of Clay Target Shooting difficult.

STOCK LENGTH

Stock length is given as the length of pull measured from the face of the trigger to the center of the butt. This measured length varies according to individual characteristics and may be calculated using various methods.

One method is to measure the distance between the leading finger (of the hand holding the pistol grip) and the nose. Average measurement will be 30mm to 40mm. Another is by measuring the distance between the rollover of the thumb (of the pistol gripped hand) and the nose. Average measurement will be 25mm to 40mm. Measurements are taken with the shotgun in the mounted position.



BUTT

This is the flat end of the stock to which the recoil pad is fitted. The upper point is called the heel and the lower point is called the toe. It is by altering the angle between the two, that the required barrel pitch is obtained when the gun is shouldered.

FOREND

The forend is the under barrel handgrip of the action that enables the user to grip, balance and direct the shotgun. The shape and size of forends are varied and the individual's hand will dictate the choice.

GRIP

The grip is the section of the stock held with the rear hand. This grip hand is used to bring the stock to the face and hold the firearm to the shoulder.

A semi pistol grip style is generally designed into Skeet and Trap shotguns. As with the forend, the individual's hand will dictate the size and shape.

BALANCE

Most of the "off the shelf" over and under shotguns have a balance point at or around the barrel/action hinge pin.

BARRELS

Depending on the discipline being shot, barrel dimensions are reasonably static.

Skeet 70 cm choked, Skeet and Skeet

Trap 76cm choked, Modified (1/2 choke) & Full

Barrel weights are becoming increasingly important in the choice of shotgun. Individual characteristics, styles and discipline being shot will dictate the required weight.

CHOKES

The easiest way to describe the variation of choke bores is: as the inside diameter or bore is decreased at the muzzle, the shot charge is held more tightly together over a longer distance. Conversely, the more open the bore is at the muzzle, the more spread the shot charge will be at a similar distance.

PITCH

Pitch is the relationship between the flat line of the barrel rib and the heel and toe of the butt. The measurement is obtained by placing the gun against a 90-degree upright with the butt/recoil pad flat on its base. When the area of the top lever touches the upright, the gap between the rib at the muzzle and the upright is the PITCH.

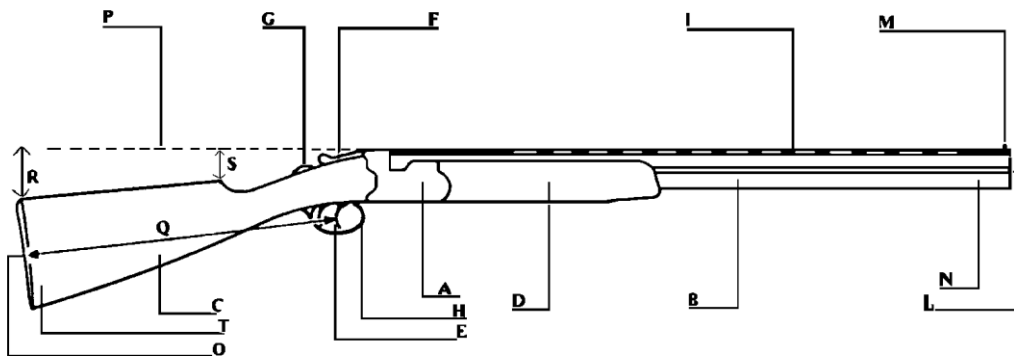
Trap 40mm

Skeet 60mm

The amount of pitch required is dependant on the individuals physical proportions i.e. shoulder, neck and chest.

Too much toe may cause the muzzle to rise.

Too much heel may cause the muzzle to drop.



A	action	L	side rib
B	barrel	M	front sight
C	stock	N	muzzle
D	fore-end	O	but plate
E	trigger	P	line of sight
F	top lever	Q	stock length
G	safety	R	drop at heel
H	trigger guard	S	drop at comb
I	ventilated rib	T	toe

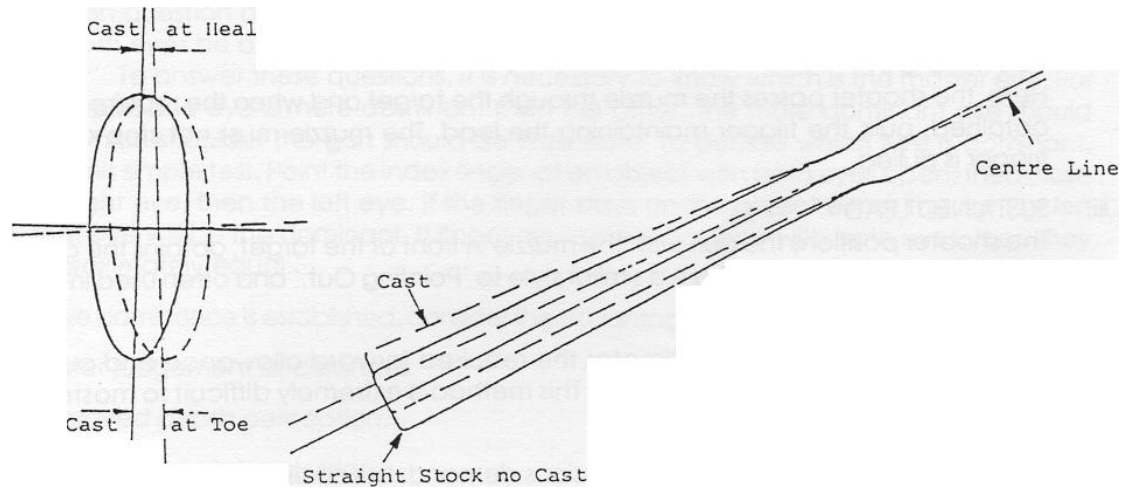
CAST

Cast is the term used to describe the deviation of the buttstock from the centerline in either the vertical or horizontal plane.

This is termed “*Cast at the heel or cast at the toe*”.

Individual with wide shoulders may require more cast than a person of average build. This may average out to 5 degree at heel and 10 degree at toe.

“*Cast can become technical and should be discussed with an expert.*”



SHOOTING METHODS

The shotgun as distinct from a rifle is a smooth bore pointing firearm, used for shooting moving targets. Shotguns fire a cartridge containing a quantity of lead shot, unlike a rifle which fires one projectile. Because of the time lapse between the pulling of the trigger and breaking the moving target, a different style of shooting is required. This style has become known as Lead, Swing or Forward Allowance.

1. SWING – THROUGH.

This method possible given the best results. The gun muzzle starts from behind the target and is swung through the target. The trigger is pulled as the muzzle passes the target, the momentum carries the muzzle through to obtain lead. Care must be taken not to stop the swing as the trigger is pulled.

2. POINTING OUT

Here, the shooter passes the muzzle through the target and when the required lead is obtained, pulls the trigger maintaining the lead. The muzzle must not stop after the trigger is pulled.

3. SUSTAINED LEAD

The shooter positions the gun with the muzzle in front of the target, obtains the correct lead and pulls the trigger. This is a similar style to “Pointing OUT” and often is used in Skeet.

4. SPOT SHOOTING

With this style, the shooter estimates the required forward allowance and pulls the trigger while the muzzle is stationary. This method is extremely difficulty to master and is least used.

All four methods may be used as occasions demand, but as experienced is gained, the Swing Through method will generally offer more consistent results.

To assist in understanding swing and follow through, complete this simple task.

Place 2 easily seen pegs approximately 20 metres away from you and 10 metres apart. At the midway point between the pegs, place another clearly visible object (this represents the target). Start from one peg and swing the mounted gun through to the other peg. As the muzzle passes through the central object, pull the trigger and without stopping the gun, complete the follow through to the second peg.

This demonstration should enable you to see and understand the gun swing and follow through required to break targets.

VISION

The most aspect missed, in learning to be a competent shot, is the training of the “eyes”. Obviously seeing the target is of paramount importance, but the speed in being able to ascertain target flight and the correct sight picture will enable the shooter to improve their shooting and maintain consistent high scores.

A shotgun is pointed, not aimed as a rifle. When shooting a shotgun, the focus should entirely be on the target. The sights or beads are only used as a reference for mounting the gun correctly. Pointing a shotgun is similar to pointing to an object with a finger. Normally the focus is on the object not the finger.

A common question asked by novice shotgun shooters is “should one eye be closed or should both eyes be open”. In reality, the shooter should be asking, “Which eye should I be using?” To answer these questions, it is necessary to know which is the master eye. For most people, one eye is more dominant than the other. The more dominant eye should dictate which shoulder the gun should be fired from. To decide which eye is dominant, perform this simple test. Point the index finger at an object with both eyes open, then close first the right eye, then the left eye. If the finger stays on the object either the right or left eye, that eye will be the dominant. If finger movement appears with both eyes, then they are approximately equal.

When eye dominance is established, consider the advantages of shooting with both eyes open.

1. Better judgment of distances.
2. Improved depth perception.
3. Increase in peripheral vision.

By seeing the target quicker and clearer, the chances of hitting the target is greatly improved.

Some shooters are right handed, but left eye dominant (and vice versa), but are able to change shoulders. This may sound difficult, but shouldering a gun becomes habitual and with practice, a change can be effected if deemed necessary. Another method used to correct opposite eye dominance, is to place a small patch of paper onto the left lens of the shooting glasses, alleviating the eye dominance (right lens for a left-hander). This leaves the shooter with good depth perception and an unimpaired field of view.

These possible solutions do not mean that one cannot nor should not shoot with one eye closed. It is to the shooters advantage to shoot with both eyes open. An example of which would be shooting Doubles in Skeet. The shooter using only one eye could be more disadvantaged in seeing the second target, than the shooter using both eyes with the extra peripheral vision.

There are many techniques used to exercise and strengthen eyes. An optician will be able to explain suitable exercises even though glasses may not be necessary.

The ability to see a target clearly, visualize it’s flight path and precisely point the gun, will ensure a well timed and accurate shot – paramount in clay target shooting.

SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY

Sports psychology is the thinking side of sport. Any sport required more than just the conditioning work or practicing and performing the skills. Every competitor has to think his or her way through the event.

In training, when it really doesn't matter if you make a mistake, endurance is sometimes tested, skills are often developed, but thinking is not taxed in the same way that it is when you are actually competing.

Today's athletes no longer have to battle the process of trial and error in finding a "Mental Approach" that suits their sport. The principles and training programs of applied sports psychology have now been developed to a level where coaches and athletes can easily avail themselves of material that relates to their sport and which very effectively de-mystifies the psychological factors of sport.

MENTAL PREPARATION

Mental preparation in sport involves the design and practice of structured thinking approaches. Often, to be an effective competitor, an athlete must think and do certain things that are completely unnatural, such as being composed, focused and controlled, when the entire stadium is going crazy, trying its best to distract them.

If athletes base their mental preparation on things beyond their control, they will waste a considerable amount of mental and physical energy in the process of worrying about what might happen, given certain unforeseen circumstances.

On the other hand, if athletes base their mental preparation on things they can control and spend their time in training and practicing these skills, by the time of competition, they will have very little left to worry about and will be able to approach the event with a much more focused and confident attitude.

The key to mental preparation is then to identify what can and cannot be controlled in your sport. Many of the "psychological factors" in sport are the subject of every day conversation, and you must be able to look at them from the perspective of what can be controlled.

MOTIVATION

Coaches cannot control the motivation levels of their athletes. They certainly cannot control their athlete's reactions to various imaginative "motivational techniques" sometimes adopted in the name of lifting performance. Through the programming of training sessions and competition support, coaches can assist athletes to continue to work towards desirable goals.

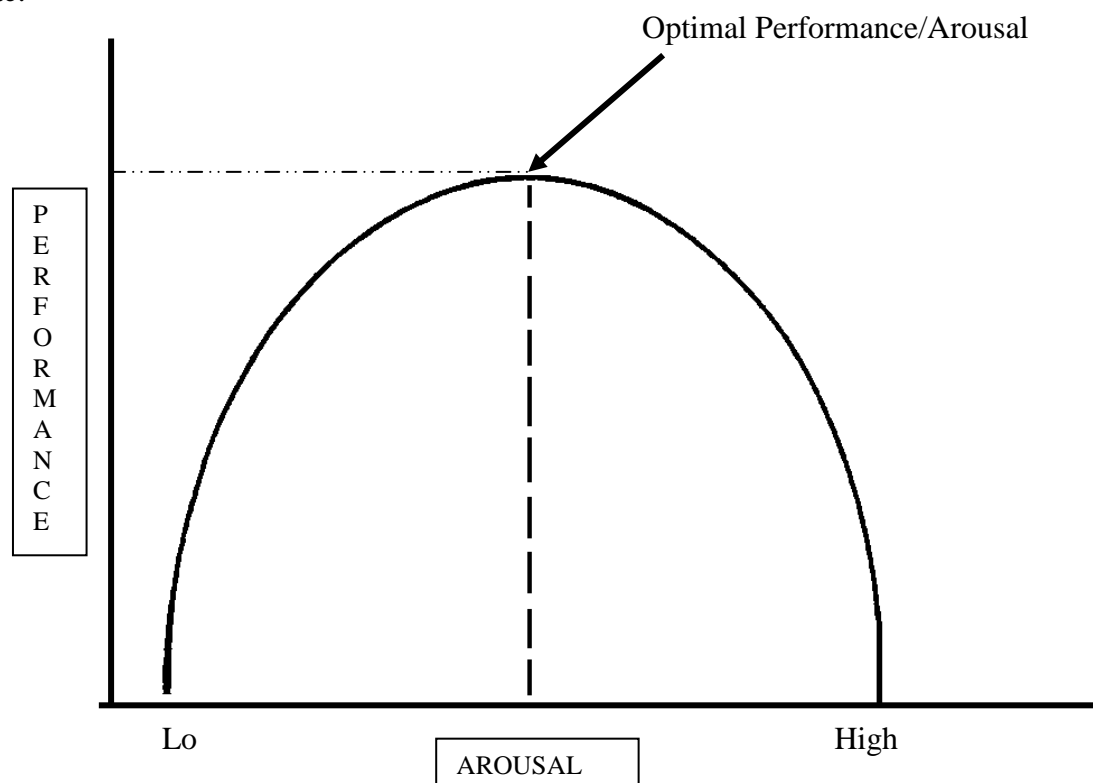
If an athlete prepares for a competition and is concerned about whether they will be able to lift enough for the event, or worse still, if they are relying on the coach to provide that "little bit of magic" they are basing their preparation on something they cannot directly control.

The athlete, who with the help of their coach, establishes clear goals to work towards each day and who plans for competition – mindful of those goals, is directly controlling their own motivation to compete. Focusing on effort levels and what can

personally be achieved, is much more motivation than focusing on uncontrollable factors.

AROUSAL AND PERFORMANCE

The classic representation of what happens to an athlete's performance as their level of psychological arousal increases is shown in the diagram below. The suggestion is that as your heart rate, blood pressure, respiration rate, tension levels etc, increase, performance increases to an optimal point and thereafter decreases at an alarming rate.



Whilst this is a good representation of what does happen to athletes under competitive pressure, we must not so readily accept that it is inevitable.

The athlete who is worried about the result of the event, the other competitors, the conditions of the venue, the weather or recent training sessions is certain to feel uncomfortable going into competition and will almost certainly be a victim of the “inverted U” (or is it really a victim of their own thinking – none of these things can be controlled).

Coaches who make last minute changes to strategy or tactics or who stress striving for results, are not helping here.

The athlete who is aware of the relationship between arousal and performance and who has spent time in training and developing self control skills, knows that they can move up or down the arousal scale to match their current needs. The athlete who has developed an understanding of what they should be concentrating on at various stages of their event, knows what to focus on when competing and how to regain concentration when they have been distracted.

Athletes can control their level of arousal and their concentration. With practice, a competition can become something to look forward to, a chance to test their skills under “pressure”.

DOWN THE LINE SHOOTING

The secret to Trap shooting is in gaining muzzle control. This can only be obtained if the following points are learnt and practiced:

1. Correct gun fit in relation to the shoulder, arms and face.
2. Body position.
3. Feet position
4. Gun aim position in relation to the trap house.
5. Correct eye focusing.

To explain each point in more detail:

1. Gun Fit

The gun butt should be placed to the shoulder, inside the point of the shoulder, never out on the upper arm.

If the gun is mounted to the shoulder correctly, then the eye should be directly in line with the rib of the gun, with no undue pressure placed on the neck or arms to obtain alignment.

If this alignment cannot be obtained in a relaxed manner, then the reason may be found by checking the following:

- ◆ Is the stock of the gun too long or too short
- ◆ Is the stock too straight or does it have too much cast

A coach will help determine which of the above is a problem.

Hold the gun firmly in both hands, making sure the gun feels balanced. The arms should be held out from the body with the right arm (the left arm for left hand shooters) just below the level of the shoulder. This should then create a relaxed position and a feeling of total gun control.

2. Body Position

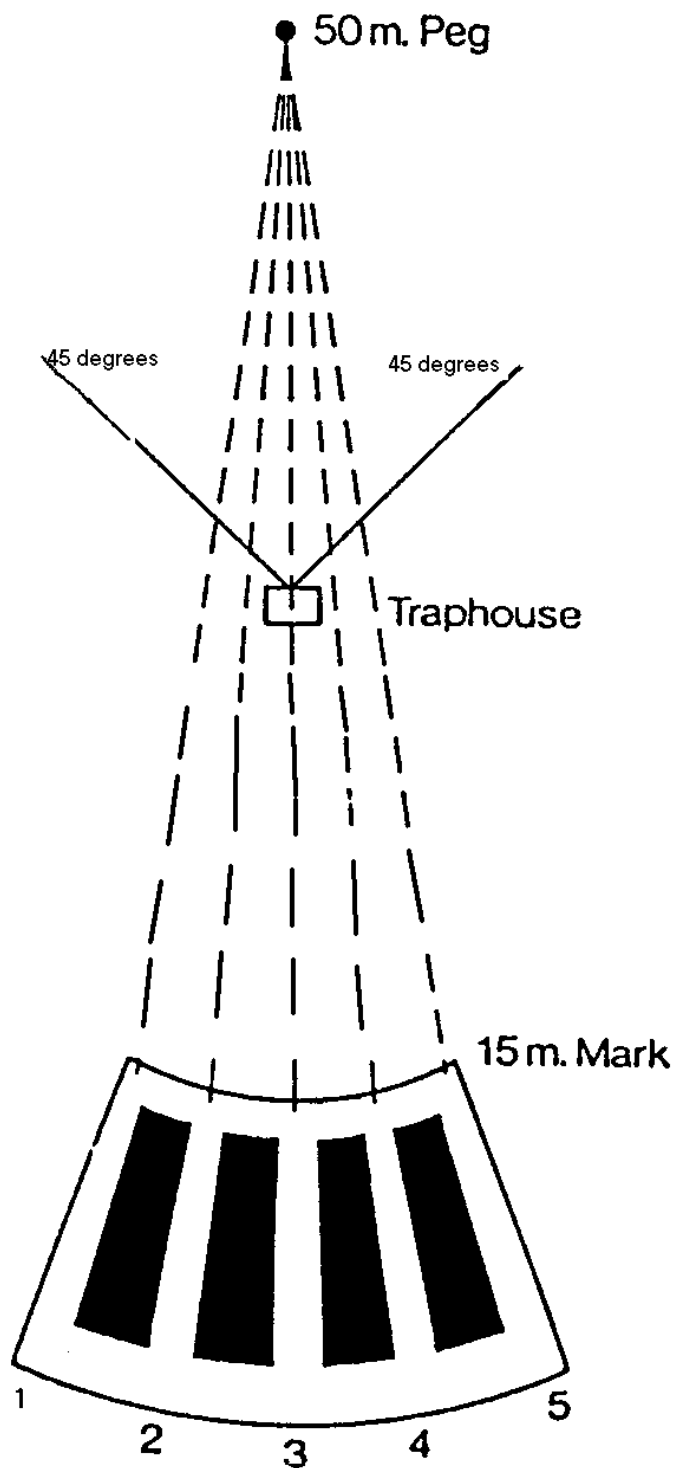
Correct body position can be obtained by the following two simple tasks:

- ◆ Stand upright, bend the front knee and allow approximately two thirds of the body weight to bear on the front foot.
- ◆ Lean forward from the waist so that the points of the shoulder are in front of the hips. This will bring the body to a position that will allow the recoil of the gun to be absorbed without losing balance. This will benefit a smooth follow through.

This last point is very important, as the shooter needs to be balanced after the first shot to enable the second shot to be fired correctly. This then is the muzzle control, first mentioned at the beginning of this section.

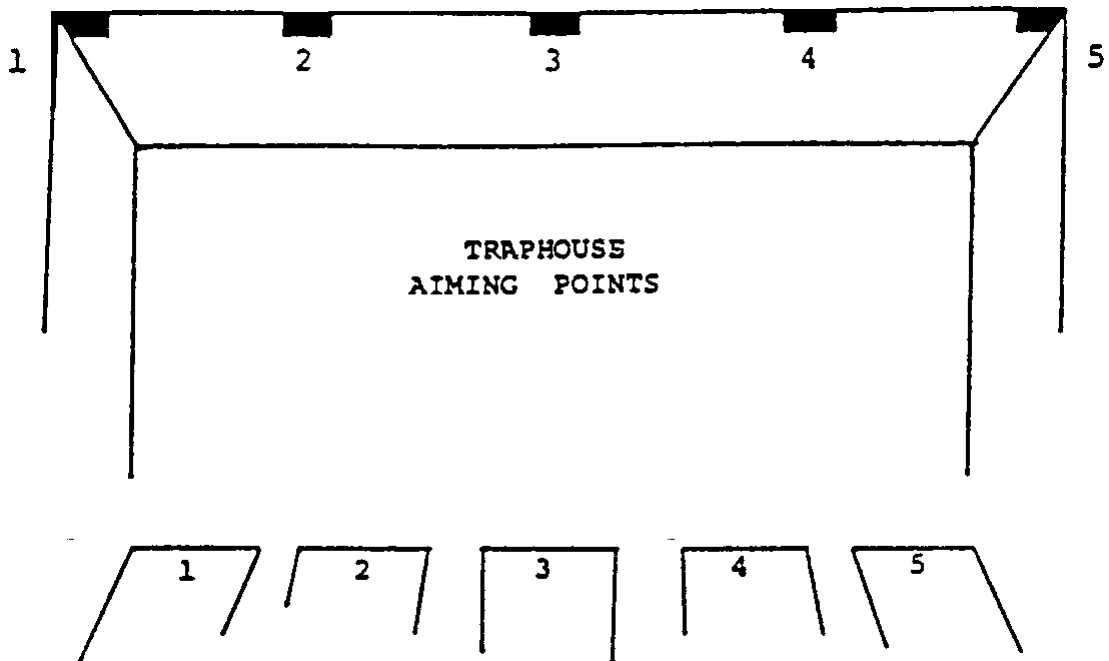
3. Feet Position

The feet should be positioned far enough apart to give a feeling of balance, a little practice will determine how far apart this is. Try 200mm to 300mm between the feet for a start. The feet need to be aligned differently for each of the shooting lanes (1 to 5). The reason for this is to make allowance for covering all angles, including the hardest target thrown, as views from each lane.



4. Gun Position

The trap house should be divided into 5 sections, one for each Lane (as per diagram). This then sets the shooter up to be able to cover the hardest target thrown in relation to each Lane (refer to Points of Aim)

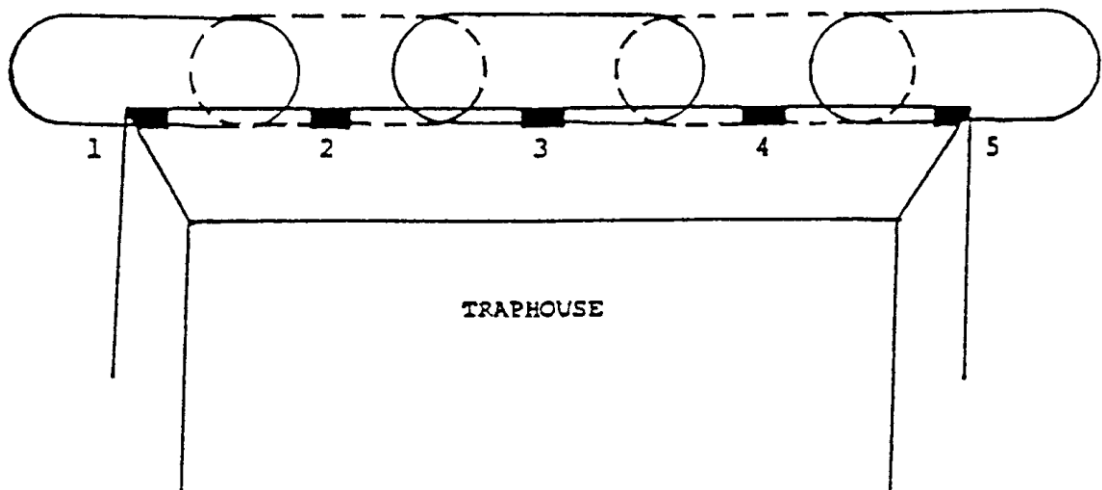


5. Eye Focusing

Having now obtained the correct gun mount, feet position and gun point on the trap house, the next thing to do is focus the eyes into the right area.

The diagram below shows you the correct field of focus for each lane, allowing total visibility of the area in which the target will appear.

When focusing the eyes, make sure that the head does not lift from the gun stock comb. Simply raise the vision to take in the required area. This act before calling "pull" should only take a few seconds.



STANCE

One of the most important aspects in shotgun shooting is to have a simple basic stance, which allows the shooter balance both before and after the firing of one or more shots, enabling control with smooth follow through.

A shooters stance should be comfortable and natural so that it can be consistently applied.

Exaggerated or varying stance puts stress on the shooter, which leads to fatigue and imbalance with resulting inconsistencies, particularly in trap shooting where target angles are varied.

If practiced, a shooter can easily adopt a correct stance that will be consistent, using the following pointers:

1. Facing the target area, the feet should be far enough apart to give the body natural valance. For persons of average height, this distance will be approximately 200mm to 300mm. If right handed, the left foot will be slightly forward of the right. If left handed, the right foot will be slightly forward of the left.
2. Feet positioned too closely together will make the shooter top heavy and feet positioned too far apart will restrict the body swing to either the left or right side.
3. Bend the forward knee slightly and allow approximately two thirds of the body weight to bear on the front foot. With the weight forward, a much freer swing to the left and right can be attained, than with the front knee locked.
4. Lean slightly forward from the hips. This assist the body to absorb the gun's recoil and allows for a better pivot. Hips should never be forward of the shoulders (a common fault with new shooters).
5. To provide stability for the shooter to swing, footwear should be comfortable and have a wide flat sole.

In Down the Line shooting, the targets are shot from five different lanes, radiating out at varying angles from the center of the trap house. Targets are thrown at random angles from an oscillating trap and therefore correct feet positioning is essential, to make the shooting of extreme angle target easier.

Correct feet positioning on each lane can be achieved if the shooter places their feet, as if to fire a shot at the fixed 50 metre peg. This peg is in line with Lane 3 in front of the trap house. To check these positions, raise the gun to the shoulder (in a standard shooting position), it should be pointing approximately towards the 50 metre peg.

POINTS OF AIM

In addition to the shooter adopting the correct stance and feet positions and to further assist them with angling targets, points of aim relative to the particular lane and trap house should be used.

Points of aim should be on or slightly below the leading edge of the trap house, so that when instantly the target appears, the shooter can identify the targets line of flight.

Points of aim over the trap house may cause the shooter to jump the target, rather more than follow its line of flight. As a shooter gains experience, so the point of aim may alter to suit their individual technique.

Lane One

The point of aim should be the top left hand corner of the trap house to cater for left swinging targets.

Lane Two

Point of aim is between the left corner of the trap house and the center point of the leading edge.

Lane Three

Point of aim is the center of the leading edge of the trap house

Lane Four

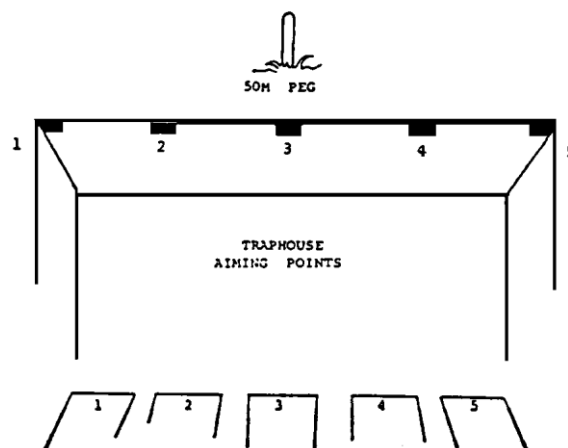
Point of aim is between the center point and the top right hand corner of the leading edge of the trap house.

Lane Five

Point of aim is the top right hand corner of the trap house to cater for the right swinging targets.

These points of aim, together with correct feet positioning, give the shooter a distinct advantage when shooting acutely angled targets.

All the above points should be adopted and practiced not only by novice shooters, but also by experienced shooters, who may find that this extra attention to detail will improve their shooting performance relative to a particular target.

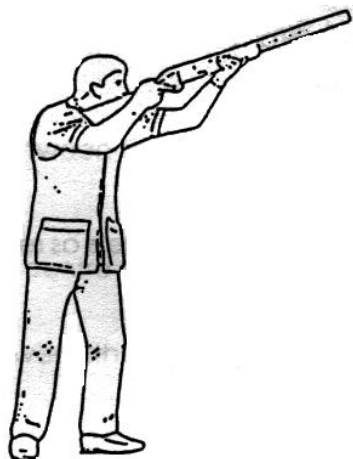


SKEET (Standard)

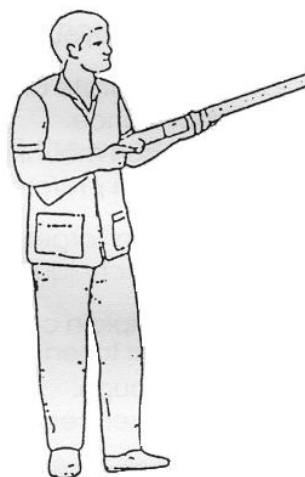
The standard discipline of Skeet, or as it is more commonly known “American Skeet” may be shot using two different styles of gun mounts.

1. Gun mounted up to the shoulder
2. Gun down or off the shoulder

The gun mounted up to the shoulder is accepted as the standard position.



Standard Skeet Ready Position



Alternative Skeet Ready Position

Points to be reinforced

1. Feet positioning and balance is first and foremost in importance
2. Gun to trap house point positions are important
3. Using the gun hold markers, position the muzzle slightly beneath the target flight line.
4. Targets must be seen before the gun is moved.
5. Never call before completely ready.
6. A good follow through is essential.
7. Do not allow the first target in doubles to be a rushed shot.
8. Do not allow Station 1 High or Station 7 Low to be a rushed shot.
9. Some backgrounds can affect gun point positions.
10. Crossing point is OUT from Station 8.

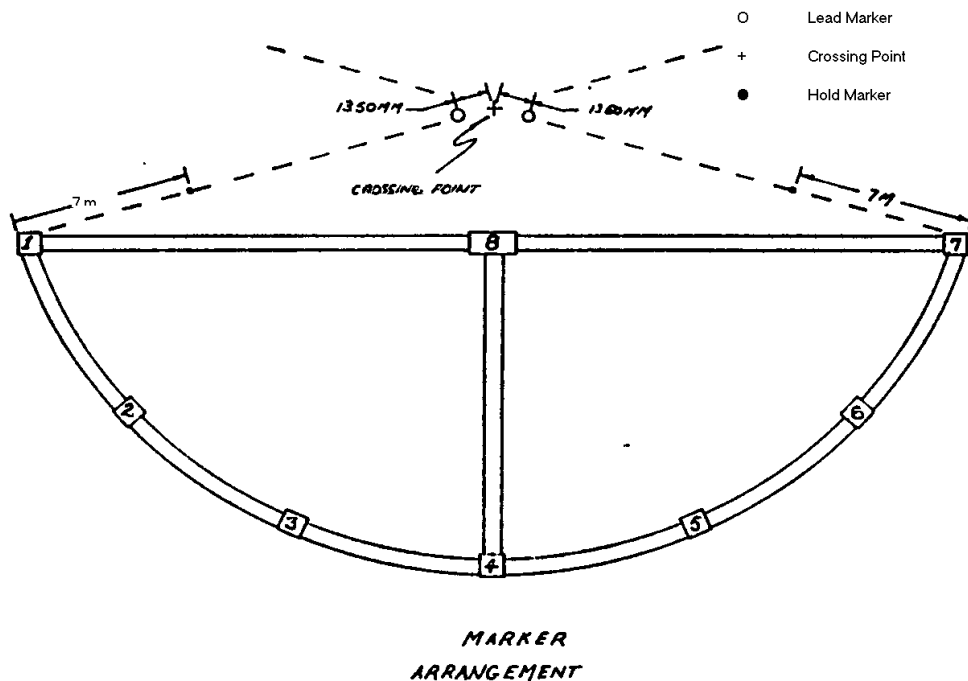
REFERENCE MARKERS

The use of reference markers cannot be understated as a learning aid in Skeet shooting.

When used correctly, they leave no doubt in the shooters mind as to where the gun is held in relationship to the trap houses, the placement of feet and the estimated lead needed to break targets at a particular point.

A good marker is one that can be easily seen, yet not obtrusive i.e. orange conduit or road marker cones.

These markers are set out as per diagram and may be varied according to the technique being taught.



1. The gun point marker for the High Trap is placed 7 metres from the house and under the flight line.
2. A marker is placed at and under the target crossing point
3. The gun point marker for the Low Trap is placed 7 metres from the house and under the flight line.
4. A High house lead marker is placed 1.3 metres to the left of the target crossing marker (under the flight line).
5. A Low house lead marker is placed 1.3 metres to the right of the target crossing marker (under the flight line).

As shooters starts from Station 1 and moves around the stations, they will observe the lead markers getting further apart until Station 4 is reached. The distance will then appear to decrease as the shooter reaches Station 7. This distance, seen between the markers is the estimated lead required to break single targets at or around the crossing point. The gun point markers will also appear to vary, but will enable the shooter to correctly position the gun/muzzle for each station being shot.

INDIVIDUAL SKEET STATIONS

STATION 1 AND 7 OUTGOING TARGETS

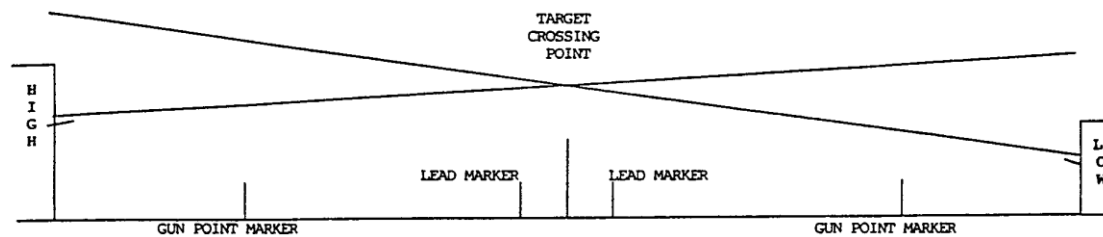
These two are the only targets that move directly away from the shooter. High 1 must be shot as a target falling onto the gun muzzle and Low 7 is shot as a rising target where the gun muzzle passes through the target.

STATION 8

As these targets must be shot before the target crossing point, care must be exercised to see the target clearly. The gun point markers are still used with the gun muzzle held at the height of the lower edge of the target chute.

DOUBLES 1,2,6 AND 7

The first target should be shot as the single target was, except after a short follow through, reverse the guns direction and shoot the second target as the muzzle passes through it.



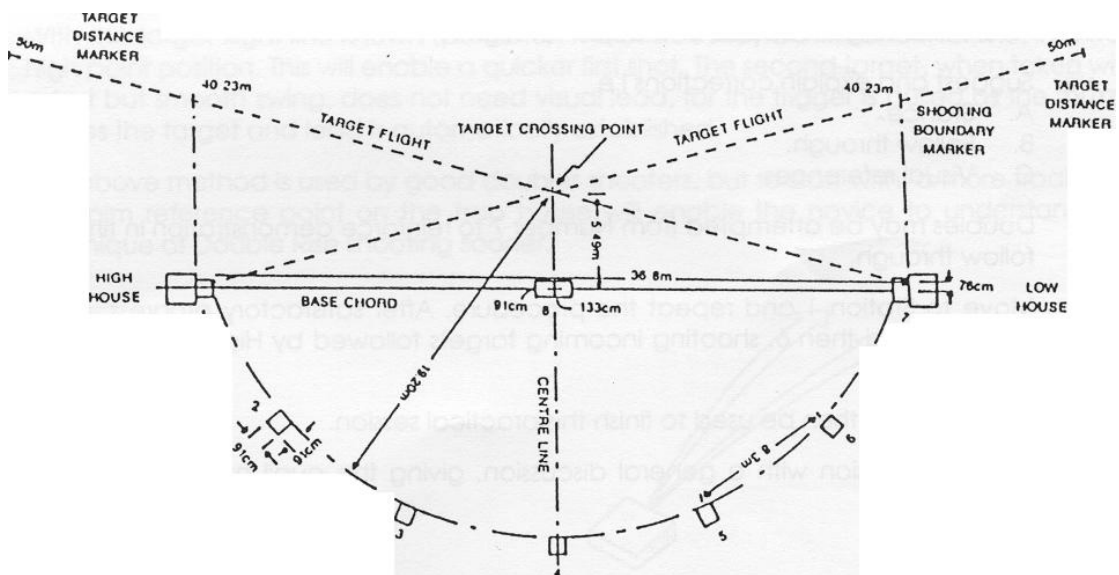
FEET POSITIONS

Positioning the feet correctly for a novice is and will be variable until a moderate level of skill is learnt. The shooter's feet should be positioned to enable them to shoot a single target in the area of the target crossing point (out from Station 8).

Body position is perhaps the most important single factor in successful Skeet shooting. When shooting, avoid any body position that required the use of muscles not normally used in a relaxed standing position. Extraneous movements or an exaggerated stance will contribute nothing to the score. A proficient Skeet shooter must remain well balanced while swinging, delivering the shot and following through.

The knee of the forward leg should be bent lightly with the larger proportion of the weight being placed over this leg. The body may lean forward from the hips, but not over exaggerated to the point of being off balance or tense. Feet should be placed at a comfortable distance apart, best described as no wider than the shoulders.

Too close or too far apart will create balance problems and unnecessary muscular tension. The body must be relaxed, balanced and comfortable.



DOUBLE RISE

Double Rise shooting required good timing, smooth gun/muzzle and body control.

Two methods are used to shoot this discipline, using a standard Trap gun.

1. Shoot the straightaway target first, followed by the angled target i.e.
From No 1 Lane The right target is straight.
From No 5 Lane The left target is straight.
2. Shoot the right hand target first (from each lane) followed by the left target (vice versa for left handed shooters).

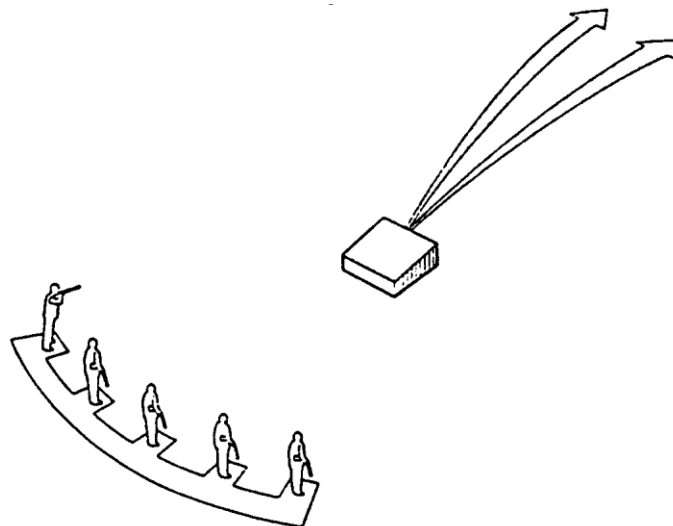
Stance has to be carefully considered, as the ability to reverse direction and shoot the second target, demands both smooth body and gun movement.

Care must be taken to ensure that the head does not lift from the comb while moving to the second target, consequently breaking gun eye co-ordination.

The first target should be shot slightly faster than the same target in DTL but knowing the target direction facilitates this without extra effort. The second target is then shot after a fast but smooth crossover.

With the target flight line known (per lane), the barrels may be lifted to that line, in a trap high point position. This will enable a quicker first shot. The second target, when taken with a fast but smooth swing, does not need visual lead, for the trigger is pulled as the muzzle passes the target and lead is automatically established.

The above method is used by good doubles shooters, but to start with, a more traditional gun aim reference point on the trap house will enable the novice to understand the technique of Double Rise shooting sooner.



ISSF SKEET

The discipline of ISSF Skeet shooting has a higher degree of difficulty than the Standard Skeet.

Contained here is a basic overview of the fundamentals involved.

The significantly different sections of ISSF Skeet are:

- 1 The starting position of the gun
- 2 The variable time (0-3 seconds) release of the target
- 3 The different shooting procedure, station to station.

Body position is perhaps the most important single factor in successful ISSF Skeet shooting. When shooting, avoid any body position that requires the use of muscles not normally used in a relaxed standing position. Extraneous movements or an exaggerated stance will contribute nothing to the score. A proficient shooter must remain balanced while swinging, delivering the shot and following through.

The knee of the forward leg should be bent slightly, with the larger proportion of the weight being placed over this leg. The body may lean forward from the hips, but not over exaggerated to the point of being off balance or tense. Feet should be placed a comfortable distance apart, too close together or too far apart will create balance problems and unnecessary muscular tension. The body must be relaxed, balanced and comfortable.

Irrespective of the Station being shot, the basic fundamentals apply, with only the foot placement angled to the trap houses and the perceived distances altering. With the body positioned to face the target breaking point, position the gun with the toe of the stock touching the body at hip bone height. The barrel muzzle is pointed just under the flight-line at a point 3 to 4 metres from the trap house. Turn the head and look at the target opening, but not directly into the actual chute.

Concentrate on broadening the field of view to encompass the entire area immediately around or forward of the target chute. Prevent the eyes from becoming locked at the actual target opening. Concentrate entirely upon seeing the target appear.

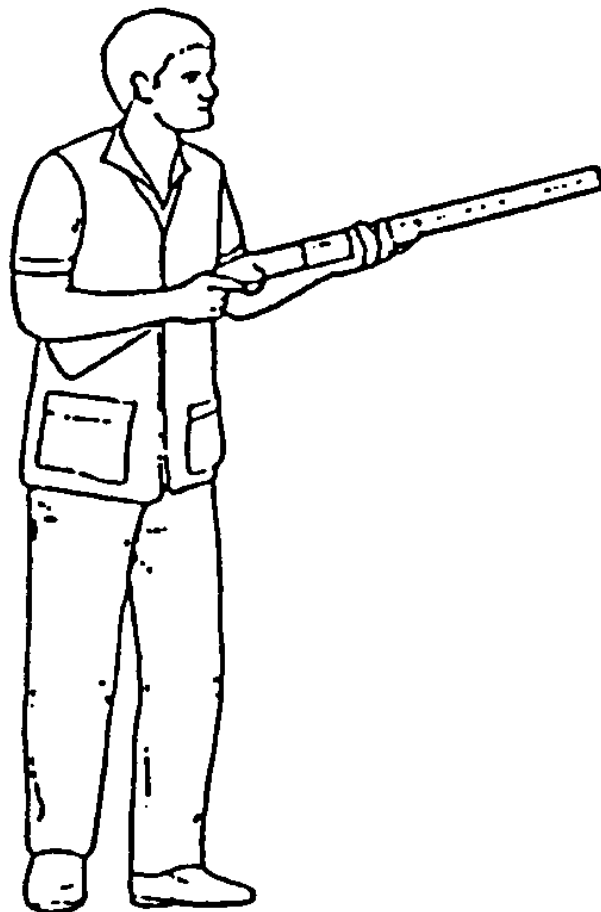
When the target emerges start the gun moving with the target and diagonally upwards towards the face and shoulder. When gun swing and reflex timing is correct the eye, gun and target should come together in one flowing movement for the correct delivery of the shot.

Do not rush or jab at the target. Accept the fact that the target will break at the target crossing point or beyond. Smoothness of swing, co-ordination of eyes, gun, target and follow through are the major factors in consistently breaking targets.

Doubles are shot using the same method. Shoot the first target and after a short follow through, reverse the gun direction and shoot the second target as the muzzle passes through it.

The correct choice of gun is of paramount importance to achieve optimum scores. The gun should be well balanced with weight evenly distributed being neither muzzle or butt heavy. A gun which is muzzle or butt heavy is difficult to handle and awkward to control. In the same vein a gun that is too light can cause a jerky swing, gun whip and excessive recoil. The comb should be parallel to the rib. The height of the comb determines the position of the eye over the gun therefore dictating the point of impact

In I.S.U. Skeet it is important that the jacket being worn be of a design that permits a smooth upward movement of the gun butt followed by a free swing and follow through.



ISSF SKEET READY POSITION

ISSF TRAP

The discipline of I.S.U. Trap shooting has a higher degree of difficulty than the standard D.T.L. discipline

Contained here is a short basic overview of the fundamentals involved.

With the traps of an I.S.U. layout being mounted below the ground level, a different sighting picture is presented to the shooter. Because of increased target speed, greater variety of height and angles in the I.S.U. targets, this sight factor cannot be over emphasised. It is further compounded because the target does not appear at one point in relation to the trap house.

With a bank of three (3) machines directly in front of the shooter, the target may appear at any point along a 1 metre horizontal span, dependant upon the trap released.

Therefore vision along the sighting plane must cover the entire area from which the target may appear. The shooter must see the target at the earliest point possible and determine the exact direction of flight and facilitate a smooth swing. The gun must remain stationary until the target is clearly seen, thereby reducing the tendency to jab or snap at the target.

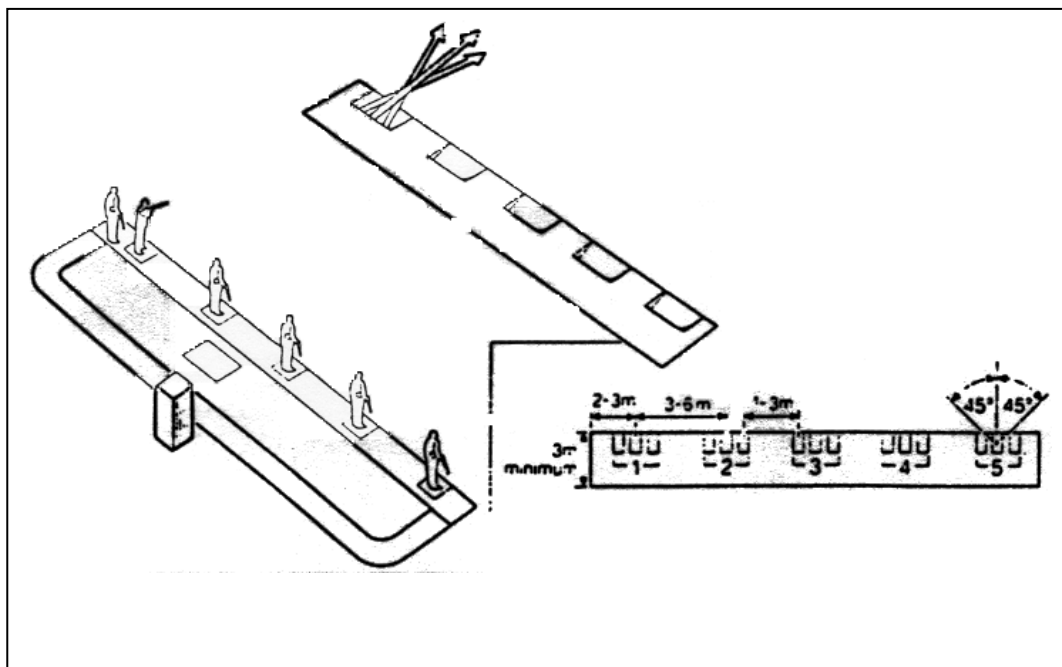
Because the five shooting pads are parallel to the roof line of the trap house, the feet position / stance for each is as per Lane 3 in the standard D. T.L. discipline.

For good body -gun relationship ensure that the body is relaxed but alert. Excessive body tension is a primary cause of a jerky swing.

Bend the forward knee slightly and allow approximately two thirds of the body weight to bear on the front foot as with D.T.L. The weight forward allows for a much freer swing. Lean slight forward from the hips. This assists the body to absorb the gun recoil as well as allow for a better pivot.

Targets are released by a voice-activated microphone, giving the appearance of a quicker release and prompting the incorrect idea of a faster gun movement and shot.

Preparation prior to calling for the target is extremely important for better execution of the shot.



BEING A WINNER

WHAT IS A WINNER

A winner is not necessarily a person who comes first – many do so however.

PRACTICE THE DOUBLE WIN

If I help you win – I win. If I help my family or country win – then I win.

A winner picks up a can from the gutter and puts it in the rubbish bin.

TOTAL WINNERS PRACTISE AND DEVELOP

Positive self-awareness

Positive self-direction

Positive self-discipline.

Notice positive – always look to the positive side of everything first.

POSITIVE SELF-AWARENESS

Be aware of the abundance within you – you can do anything if you want to enough and plan for it.

Be aware that you need to work for things that you want – nobody owes you anything.

Be aware that you need to be responsible for your own action – no excuses.

POSITIVE SELF-DIRECTION

You need to decide where it is you are going and then plan for it – set goals:

Short Term Goals – out of reach, but not out of sight.

Mid Term Goals – out of sight, but obtainable in the near future.

Lifetime Goals – The Ultimate goal.

POSITIVE SELF DISCIPLINE

The most important trait of all.

Gain self discipline and anything is possible.

Teach yourself to do the hard things first, so as to achieve the good things later on.

Practice self-discipline every day.

Complete the things you start – there is only one thing easier than giving up the first time and that is giving up the second time.

REMEMBER

**WINNERS MAKE IT HAPPEN
LOSERS LET IT HAPPEN**