

What are the Different Shoots Held at Silver Willow ?

We have recently been asked by an inquiring mind, about what our shoots mean. We will attempt to answer these questions and a few more. Our desire is that this article will provide for a better understanding of the various kinds of competitions and shooting events that are held at Silver Willow and at other clubs. In all of these games, the primary emphasis is always one of safety above all else.

Pump Gun Shoot

The Pump Gun Shoot is a fun event that is limited to pump-action shotguns. Other firearm types can shoot at the same time, but their scores will not be considered in the awarding of prizes. Another similar event is the side-by-side event, in which only side-by-side shotguns are considered for the competition. These events are frequently fun events, and are intended to provide the participants an opportunity to dust off one of their less-frequently used shotguns and have some fun with it. The targets are usually set to be more accommodating to the type of firearm.

In some instances, the target presentation will be set up to allow for “full use of the gun”, which of course means that the firearm can be loaded with three shells, and the targets will be presented in such a manner that it will require three shells to be successful. This is the only time there is an exception to the “two shells only” rule.

Invitational

As the name implies, an Invitational shoot is a competition in which participants are limited to those who have been invited. These events are rare in Canada, and are not all that common in the United States either.

Two Man Team Event

Two Man team events, or perhaps more correctly, Two Shooter events, involve two shooters who will be engaging a series of targets at the same time. The folks who excel at this kind of event usually have good communication skills and work well together.

In a typical team event station, the two shooters will have their shotguns loaded and both will be in shooting positions, usually right beside one-another. When the event is started, a series of targets will be presented, and the team that both cooperates and shoots well will prevail. The targets will come from one or more traps, and with one call of “Pull”, all of the targets for that station will be released, in sequence. For instance, in some cases, there will be ten consecutive rabbit targets – the trapper will hold the button down until ten rabbits have been thrown.

The successful teams will have one shooter shooting and the other reloading, so they are never caught with empty guns. It is fast and furious action, making these events quite popular, even with novice shooters.

Registered Shoot

There are two sporting clays organizations in Canada, the CNSCA and the NSCA, each throwing registered targets during competitive events. Memberships to either of these organizations can be purchased online or on the day of the shoot. The term “registered” refers to the fact the targets are counted and a record kept of the results. There are additional fees charged for these targets, normally in the range of \$4/100 targets. During registered events, there is an expectation that the rules of the game will be scrupulously observed.

In registered events, shooters are in classes, allowing them to compete against people at a similar skill level. In most events, there is a High Overall (HOA) and then the winner in each class. Classes are E, D, C, B, A, AA and Master. Juniors, Sub Juniors, Ladies and Veteran classes also exist. Individuals can move between classes based on their shooting performance, essentially to keep the classes competitive. Those wanting to shoot in a Registered shoot but not to compete in the class system can enter into Hunter Class, which is a non-registered competitive class within the larger context of the registered shoot.

International Sporting (FITASC)

International Sporting, colloquially known as FITASC, is a highly structured version of sporting clays. Rather than being shot on a serial series of target stands or stations, it is shot in parcourse layouts. There are several different possible configurations, but the most likely layouts we will see in Canada, for the immediate future at any rate, are referred to as “old style” parcourses.

The old style layouts require five traps and three shooting positions. The shooting position is usually no more than a hoop on the ground. A menu is set up at each shooting position, informing the shooter of the sequence of the targets. Signs out in the field indicate to the shooter where the trap is located.

International Sporting is governed by a comprehensive body of rules, including the amount and size of shot allowed in the shotgun shell, the shooter’s starting position, how close or far the targets are allowed to be, and the colour of the targets.

While the rules might seem burdensome and unnecessary to the novice shooter, in reality, they make the game utterly fair and in the long run, more enjoyable. The best referees help the new shooter by explaining the rules and educating the new shooter.

The Flury

The Flury is an event, usually held at a 5 Stand or FITASC layout, in essence because there are several trap machines around a few shooting stations. At Silver Willow, the Flury has been a pre-programmed series of target presentations at specific time intervals. It can be for one, two or more shooters, with the concept being competent handling of the firearm as well as accurate shooting, as the targets come at a fast but manageable rate if the shooter is proficient with the firearm.

For a single shooter, the sequence might be two targets at the same time, with a four or five second delay, followed by a report pair of targets with another four or five second delay. The idea is to make the shooter work at hitting the targets, but at the same time, to efficiently remove the empty shells from the firearm and reload it before the next series of targets are thrown.

For two or more shooters, another element is added to the equation – namely, teamwork. The targets will come at a higher rate of speed, often with little to no down-time, and the successful team is the one that shoots accurately, conserves ammunition and is never caught with empty guns.

Sub-Gauge Events

Using sub-gauge shotguns is becoming increasingly popular in Canada as shooters continue to explore different applications for their sporting guns. These events are limited to shotguns with a 20 gauge, 28 gauge or .410 bore. In many instances, these courses are over-laid on existing courses, with different shooting positions and different target presentations. For example, the sub-gauge course can be set together with a Sporting Clays or a Super Sporting layout. Station 1 might have, for the Sporting Clays event, A-B True Pair. Some another shooting position, which will offer the shooter a completely different perspective on the targets, the menu might read:

20 Gauge – A-C True
28 Gauge – C on report B
.410 Bore – B on report A

This allows the shoot promoter to have more events available to the shooter without requiring any more space. The presentations, which are usually somewhat less challenging than encountered on the normal layouts, are well-suited to these smaller, lighter shotguns.