

# Moving on up



Junior Ollie Baker is already a AA shooter.

Want to move up a class? Senior CPSA coach Roger Hill offers top tips for achieving your goal...

What is your shooting skill level? The only real indicator we have are the CPSA classifications, which for Sporting are AAA 85.5%+, AA 81.4%-85.5%, A 74%-81.3%, B 66.8%-73.9%, C 66.7% and below. So for the novice or beginner, say during your first year of Sporting shooting, you should be breaking about 50-60% depending on whether you are self-taught or started with a coach. If you are self-taught and only breaking about the 50% mark, now is the time to take some lessons before actually perfecting a fault and to give you a sound base technique to build on.

The aim for your second year should be to get out of C class and into the top end of B class. During your first year you may have stuck to one basic technique of achieving



## Did you know?

*Out of the junior Top Twenty Sporters, 50% are AA and 50% A class. In the colts, 50% are A, 25% B, 25% C.*

lead... if you had some lessons you would most probably have been shooting The Method or Pull Away, which is the base to CPSA coaching.

Lead is the one thing that cannot be taught. It is a feeling - and very personal how it is perceived. Someone may give a target two feet and hit it, others may give it six inches and still hit it! They still both gave the target the right lead or it would not have broken, but both saw a totally different picture. A good coach will work out very early on what you are seeing and work with you on your scale, lead must be instinctive, not measured.

Pull Away as your starting method should always be your fall back method, as it is the easiest to correct when the wheels have fallen off. There are other methods of achieving lead and now is the time to start to learn them and for which targets they work better on for you. You now need to add Swing and Maintained Lead - these two along with The Method make up what I call the base three methods (Chris Batha covers all three on page 44).

We now need to be able to self analyse our shot to work out why we missed. Clay shooting is very different to another kind of target shooting, when firing a rifle or pistol, you have a instant result on the target, proof

CONTINUED ON P38

"To get anywhere in Skeet you have to be hitting 25 straights"

of where the bullet went if it did not go and where you wanted it to go. You can either correct your aim or adjust your sights.

When you miss a clay target there is nothing! The shot went somewhere in the air around the clay. So for C and B class shooters to progress you must be able to work out what went wrong.

## The three R's

The R is the Result (a miss), the second is the Reason for the miss and the third to apply a Remedy. To self-analyse you must go through the shot from the very beginning - 90% of misses occurred due to something that happened before you pulled the trigger:

Here is quick check list to run through when you miss and 9 times out of 10 you will find the reason and be able to apply the remedy.

1 Where does the shot start? At your feet?

Was I balanced at the point of break?

2 Was the gun in my shoulder correctly (eye-rib alignment correct).

3 Was my visual and muzzle pick-up point right? Did the target beat me and all I could



do was shoot swing through rushed and with no control?

4 Did I use the most appropriate method to achieve lead on that target?

When going through this list, as soon as you find a fault correct it and shoot another target. Only ever change one thing at a time or you will never know what caused the miss, if you miss the next target go through the list again making corrections until you get a hit.

## Knocking on A

Now we are at the top of B class, knocking on the door of A class. We know how to self analyse, so what next? I find that for the Sporting shooter who is at this stage, two things are a big help and that is to have a few Trap and Skeet lessons, even if you have no intention of getting into these disciplines. As a Sporting shooter, almost in A class, there are is not a single Skeet target that if presented to you on a Sporting layout you would hit at least 90% of the time - so why have lessons or practice on Skeet?

To get anywhere in Skeet you have to be hitting 25 straights - after all, C class in Skeet is up to 90.1% and 92% gets into

B! So what does this give our Sporting shooter? Discipline and concentration is a big advantage to any shooter, so get on that Skeet range and get 25 straight and see how much discipline and concentration it requires.

Now for the Trap lesson, and I can hear you saying it's as easy as shooting fish in a barrel! What does Trap bring to the Sporting shot? Think about it. With trap, everything should be perfect up to the moment you call 'pull' - perfect stance, time to check eye rib alignment (gun mount), perfect visual and muzzle pick-up points. Then we call 'pull' and what we don't know (unlike Skeet and Sporting) is where the target is going. The lesson to be learned to look hard at the target to determine where it is going. If we break the target, shoot a piece of it, it trains our eyes to be quick to acquire the second target, plus faster trigger pulls on second shots. So when we are shooting Sporting, if we miss the first target of a pair, shoot it again and don't try for the second target. Shoot the same one again you are on it - you can only get 50%, so why try for the second target? Trap shooters have trained their second shot to be very quick and instinctive - a good lesson for Sporters.

At this stage you should also be starting to master shooting gun down and perfecting your gun mount. This, plus putting in the time for shooting practice and competitions, should get you into A class. You cannot do it if you don't put the cartridges through the gun.

NEXT MONTH: From A to AAA!

Roger Hill runs Pro Coach Shooting School in Essex, is a senior CPSA coach and course tutor and a Fellow of the Institute of Clay Shooting Instructors. You can contact him on 07836 504726, or roger@procoachshootingschool.com

