

West Virginia State Tournament

The West Virginia state shoot for 1919 was held under the auspices of the Huntington Gun Club, at Huntington, West Virginia, on July 10 and 11, and was in every respect a complete success.

The attendance was much larger than in 1918, eleven professionals and twenty-eight amateurs taking part therein, and most of them shooting the entire program.

Including practice day, some 14,000 targets were thrown and the capacity of the single trap was about taxed to the limit, but there was not a single delay from trap trouble, very few broken targets and the shooting was constant from start to finish.

But one possible fault could be found with the surroundings and that was beyond the control of the management; the weather, especially the first day, being everything it should not have been for high scores.

On the first day it was very dark and cloudy most of the time, with one little shower, but occasionally for brief intervals there was intense light, while a gale of wind blew constantly from the shooters to the trap, and, owing to the fact that there was a thick hedge some 25 feet tall about 30 yards back of the shooters' stand, over which the wind dropped, sometimes on top of the target, pushing it down to four or five feet from the ground, and next reversing itself by getting under the target and lifting it up to from twenty to thirty feet, without there being any power in the shooter to figure which it would be, this made the shooting hard beyond description, so that the contestants all agreed they had never seen much more difficult targets. And to add to same, it was found at the close of the first day that the trap itself had taken an interest in the game, and while set for 50 yards, after warming up, it was throwing some 58 yards on the low birds, and anywhere on the high ones.

On the second day the light was very bright but steady, the targets not thrown but fifty yards, but there was still a wind, blowing this day in the faces of the shooters and making the flight of the targets very high at times, but on the whole the shooting and scores were improved.

While, however, the weather was unfavorable for high scores it was very cool and pleasant, and as the targets were uniformly hard, it was fair to all, and really seemed to add to the interest, taking away from the shooting that mechanical condition that is the main draw back to target shooting as a sport.

The race for State Champion was a very close one, Richard Gerstell, of Grafton, the winner, being one target to the good over T. R. Shepherd, of Huntington, at the close of the first day; at 180 they were tied and only one target in favor of Gerstell separated them at 270 targets shot at, but in the next to last event Shepherd lost three, and with it his chance to win and in the final event Lallance nosed him out of second place by one target.

While the home crowd was naturally for the home man and pulled hard for him, yet Mr. Gerstell is very popular with the Huntington Club and was sincerely congratulated upon the race he shot and his win.

As both Gerstell and Lallance expect to attend the Grand American Handicap the win assures a West Virginia Champion being in the State Championship race, and as Shepherd did not expect to attend in any event he did not feel the loss quite so severely though he tried hard to win for the honor of it.

The scores at 16 yards were as follows:

	1st day		2d day	
	Sh	at Bk	Sh	at Bk
*H. M. Shaul.....	150	128	150	139
G. H. Mead.....	150	134	150	136
T. R. Shepherd.....	150	135	150	138
J. B. Lallance.....	150	131	150	143
*J. B. Knapp.....	150	135	150	138
C. B. Cage.....	150	123	150	136
*A. C. Martin.....	150	115	150	109
Bert Bush.....	150	111	...	...
L. E. Dinsmoor.....	150	122	150	127
B. D. Eddy.....	150	125	150	123

*E. L. Moss.....	150	138	150	140
*W. S. Jones.....	150	140	150	145
W. H. Hall.....	150	139	150	128
H. T. Strother.....	150	141	150	137
*C. O. LeCompte.....	150	130	150	139
Jno. E. Miller.....	150	101	150	126
L. L. Stone.....	150	121	...	...
C. B. Stevers.....	150	123	...	...
Homer Kerr.....	150	135	...	...
C. M. Coffman.....	150	119	150	132
F. W. Schoew.....	150	126	150	129
D. C. Peck.....	150	109	150	132
R. Gerstell.....	150	136	150	141
*O. H. Nutt.....	150	137	150	147
Wm. M. Shattuck.....	150	126	150	126
W. R. Chamberlain.....	60	58	60	50
D. H. Frye.....	150	128	150	128
T. R. Richards.....	150	126	150	128
B. F. Livesay.....	150	134	150	129
J. S. Seriani.....	150	87	150	112
Lee Long.....	150	103	150	115
J. A. Muse.....	150	93	150	104
A. N. Davis.....	150	128	...	...
*J. L. Oney.....	150	110	150	117
H. S. Schoew.....	150	124	150	118
W. S. Estter.....	90	58	150	108
J. A. Simpson.....	150	138	...	...
M. E. Buffin.....	...	...	45	29
O. H. Somerville.....	...	...	30	15
C. C. Craig.....	...	...	60	51

* Professionals.

A fifty target handicap race was shot each day in which the scores and distances were as follows:

	Yds. 50 50				Yds. 50 50		
Livesay.....	18	40	47	T. W. Schoew	18	44	..
Frye.....	18	40	47	Shepherd	21	42	..
Lallance.....	21	41	46	Davis	18	42	..
Simpson.....	19	..	46	*Moss	21	40	..
*Nutt.....	21	41	45	Dinsmoor	18	40	..
Richards.....	18	41	43	*Oney	18	40	..
Strother.....	21	40	42	*Martin	17	39	..
Shattuck.....	19	42	42	*Jones	21	39	..
Craig.....	18	..	41	Mead	21	39	..
Gerstell.....	21	40	40	*LeCompte..	21	38	..
*Shaul.....	21	44	40	*Cages	20	37	..
Gwinn.....	18	..	39	Eddy	18	37	..
Hall.....	21	44	37	H. S. Schoew	18	34	..
Long.....	18	..	33	Peck	18	32	..
Kerr.....	20	46	..	Muse	16	39	..
Coffman.....	17	45	..	Bush	21	41	..

NOTES.

Mead again shot a good, game race but was not quite up to form.

When the boys saw Gerstell coming they knew it meant a shooting match from end to end as they tied up with him before.

Long runs were scarce owing to the tough targets, and were as follows: Nutt, 106; Jones, 86, 72; Lallance, 80; Shaul, 71; Hall, 56; Mead, 56.

Strother was high amateur for the two days with 278. Hall was very unwell the second day and incapable of doing himself justice, but he gamely shot it out.

In 1918, on the same grounds, in the championship race, then held at 100 targets, Mead broke 96, Shepherd 96, Gerstell 95 and Lallance 94, Mead winning in the shoot-off.

Lallance got off bad in the wind on the first day, but when the targets settled down on the second day he came very fast, being high amateur on the second day with 143.

Jones was high professional with 285 out of 300, one target ahead of Nutt, who broke 284 and also made the high single day score, breaking 147 out of 150 on the second day.

In event 6 this Huntington squad broke 73 out of 75, Knapp losing two targets, and in event 7 they all went straight, making 148 out of 150, the best squad run of the shoot.

High squad for the two days was composed of *Moss, *Jones, Hall, Strother and *LeCompte, with

1377 breaks; the Huntington squad, composed of *Shaul, Mead, Shepherd, Lallance and *Knapp being second with 1357 breaks.

No more welcome visitor ever comes to the Huntington Gun Club, and one whose departure is always a cause of sincere regret. We almost regard LeCompte as one of us, and as for Cage, we are not sure whether his address is Tennessee or West Virginia.

With the heartiest of good-byes and the sincerest of well wishes for all who took part therein, the West Virginia State Tournament for 1919 came to an end, and the shooters scattered to the various homes, each, we trust, more than satisfied that the time they had spent here was well spent.

The Richwood squad added much to the occasion and asked for the state shoot in 1920, and the same will be held there. At the annual election of officers for the State Association, T. M. Richards, of Richwood, was elected president, and D. F. Frye, of the same place, secretary and treasurer, and the outgoing president, T. R. Shepherd, of Huntington, becomes the vice-president.

Luther Squier was with us, renewing old friendships and making new ones, and he had charge of the office work, and, as is always the case when he handles such part of any shoot, the service was perfect, but not satisfied with what is enough for one man, he was ever ready to help otherwise, and gave some excellent advice to some shooters who were having trouble finding out their faults.

The tournament was a meeting of good fellows, a treat in good fellowship, with neither a grumble nor kick, and if those who came and saw and shot and went away, whether or no victors, feel toward the 10th and 11th days of July, 1919, as do those of the Huntington Gun Club, then such two days will remain red-letter days, ever a bright spot in the things of the past, to be recalled with a smile, as time touches them up with the magic of memory.

Huntington, W. Va.

A. C. MARTIN, Sec.