

ATA Article for March 2015

Greetings from Ontario, Canada

As I write this article in late January (which you will read in the March Trap & Field edition) our Canadian dollar is in decline against the American greenback hovering at just over 80 cents. It could fall even further. This poses a challenge for many of our Ontario shooters who attend shoots south of the border. Most ammunition that we in Canada shoot is priced in US dollars and a 20% premium over US market price will definitely have a negative financial impact. The decline in the price of oil hurts our Canadian dollar as we are fundamentally a "commodity-based" economy. So the reality for all of us, north of the border, is that we can travel further on cheaper gas but pay more for everything priced in US dollars.

I remind our American friends that the currency differential allows your US dollars to have much more purchasing power for anything priced in Canadian dollars. Maybe this is the year that you can plan to take in registered shoots in Canada, do some shopping, and enjoy the bonus purchasing power of your strong dollar.

Last year I devoted an article on how Americans can navigate the red tape in bringing non-restricted firearms (long guns such as your competition shotguns) into Canada. The process is not that difficult and if you need some help I will be pleased to try and guide you. [The article I wrote on this was published in the April 2014 edition of Trap & Field.]

By the time you read this article, the 2015 Toronto Pan American Games will be less than 120 days away. All of the shooting events will be hosted at the Toronto International Trap & Skeet Club. Shooting events include international trap, skeet and double trap, rifle, hand gun and air gun events. Subject to earning a "starting position" in any event, there will be athletes from countries from the western hemisphere descending on Toronto. The Pan Ams is always the second largest multisport event, eclipsed only by the summer Olympics. The Pan Am events which occur every four years are held under the endorsement and shared sponsorship of each participating country's Olympic Committee.

Venue construction is not inexpensive and there is the cost of enhanced security. The funding partners which includes various levels of government and the private sector are always digging into their collective pockets because of cost overruns. There are those that are very vocal in their criticism of spending tax dollars on a sporting event. But the Games will go on and everyone is working diligently on completing the facilities. At Toronto International construction has slowed because of winter conditions but I am confident deadlines will be met and, as a result, Ontario (and Canada for that matter) will have a multi-shooting sport facility as a heritage that can be enjoyed by generations of shooters ranging from the novice to high performance athletes.

My focus and time continues to be dominated by the Pan Am efforts. As a consequence, I have not been able to attend as many major ATA competitions as has historically been the case. I miss the ATA tournaments and the friendship of my shooting colleagues. I will take in some events here and there but until after the Pan Ams conclude, I think you know by now where a lot of my time and energy is devoted. I am actually in contention for a berth on the Canadian Pan Am shooting team in trap and/or double trap. I am well beyond my "best before date" when it comes to international shooting but when opportunity

knocks, I believe I would regret not at least vying for a berth on our National Team especially for the most significant multi-discipline sporting event in Ontario's history.

Our Pan Am team trials are set for early May. A lot of Canadian shooters will be contending for the team and I will be one of them. Stay tuned.

As for ATA shooting – I will do some and will certainly execute my responsibilities as an ATA Delegate. Significant ATA competitions for me will probably not be in the cards until the shooting year starting September 1, 2015. But, as Arnold Schwarzenegger once said, "I'll be back".

Paul Shaw

Ontario Delegate