

Greetings from Ontario, Canada. And congratulations to our up and coming subjunior shooter Bryce Mann who topped a strong field at the Michigan Fall Handicap, winning the All Around championship with 392 as well as securing many subjunior awards. Several other Ontario shooters won category, class and or place trophies - Well done Ontario shooters David Storing, James Wood, Bill Zager, Keith Saunders, Dianne Wood, Bill Wylie and Terry Jordan secured trophies at the Missouri Fall Handicap (go to motraps.com) for details (go to michigantrap.com for details).

Finally, after 15+ years a government bill is being introduced (expected during the week of October 24) to kill the long gun registry. With the Conservative majority in both Houses it is expected to pass without significant incident. We'll have to see what the bill actually proposes but for sure the registration of long guns (rifles and shotguns) will be toast. I expect that the accumulated records will be destroyed. The registry for handguns and prohibited weapons I suspect will stay. It will be open for the provinces to try their hand at registration but under "non-criminal law" legislative authority. Quebec has opined it may enter the registration field.

No matter how far the Harper government goes it will be too far for some and not nearly far enough for others. I am in the latter camp. Registration is only the tip of the iceberg - a symbol of state intervention so to speak. But there are so many other areas of law relating to firearms that need to be scrapped or amended. These include a significant revamping or scrapping of many of the Firearms Act regulations such as the storage, transportation and display regulations, the gun club and ranges regulations, and the list goes on. The Criminal Code needs to be amended as does the Firearms Act to remove the provisions that have little to do with crime and enhanced public safety but a lot to do with harassing and criminalizing law abiding firearm owners. Nevertheless, scrapping registration is a start.

I recently had the honour of being one of 18 Canadians selected to represent Canada at the 2011 Guadalajara Pan Am Games in the shooting sports. My son Drew was one of my team mates. My first games was in Indianapolis in 1987 and I attended Pan Ams in Argentina (95) and the Dominican Republic (2003) as well. Security was very tight. Mexico out did itself with its presentation - particularly the opening ceremonies, which was spectacular. The Pan American Games are a combination of Olympic and non-Olympic sports. Our Canadian Olympic Committee sponsored our Pan Am Team of several hundred athletes, coaches, trainers, team leaders and support staff in 36 different sports. Forty-two nations competed in 361 medal events. In some of the Olympic events, a quota starting position for the 2012 London Olympic Games was at stake. On the first competition day of the Games one of our women air pistol shooters won a gold medal and an Olympic starting position for London. What is remarkable however, is that this young 22 year old, Dorothy Ludwig was still breast feeding her six month old infant and had to arrive in Mexico the day before her event, shoot and return to Canada the next day. Although Dorothy won the quota spot, she does not necessarily get to fill it. It belongs to the country and any air pistol Canadian woman who has an MQS (minimum qualifying score) could potentially vie for using it. It will be up to the SFC hand gun section to determine who goes in this event to London. As an aside, I won a quota spot for Canada at the 1987 Pan Ams but someone else used it by beating me at the selection match. In 1996 another Canadian won a trap quota spot but I prevailed at the selection match to use it for the '96 Atlanta Olympics. It cuts both ways.

There is only one additional quota spot for Canada in the shooting sports - men's air rifle which was secured at the Championship of the Americas competition last year in Brazil. We are shut out of representation at the London Olympics in all other shooting disciplines, both men and women. The lone trap quota slot was won by Columbia. It was hotly contested by a great many talented shooters from many western hemisphere countries including the US, which by the way has also been shut out of earning a trap starting position for London.

Although the women's trap event had no available quota spot, one of our ladies, Lindsay Boddez won a silver medal in her event. I swear you could hear the cheering from her home at Sturgeon County, Alberta, all the way to Guadalajara.

Major Games like the Olympics, Pan Ams and Commonwealth Games give a unique opportunity for Countries to participate in a multitude of sporting events. Some sports disappear and new sports emerge. You will be pleased to know that "shooting" enjoys a core sport status and as such should be entrenched for the foreseeable future.

Finally, guess where the 2015 Pan Am Games will be held? Toronto, Ontario. We have less than 4 years to be prepared, not just for the shooting sports but for all other of the 40 plus sports as well. The Shooting Federation of Canada, as the NSO (National Sport Governing body) will need lots of help as it works with the Pan Am Committee. I very much suspect that Ontario ATA trapshooters may have a role to play somewhere if interested. Let me know.

Paul Shaw
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