

ATA Article for October 2015

Greetings from Ontario, Canada

I previously overlooked identifying and congratulating our 2015 delegate and category delegate teams.

At every ATA registered shoot in Ontario there are two pins awarded – one for the high (non-category) male and one for the high category shooter (of the five original categories). A minimum entry threshold applies.

During the target year that ended August 31, 2014, there were a total of 56 male shooters who won one or more delegate pins and 42 category shooters who won one or more category delegate pins.

At the end of the target year, the ten men shooters with the highest pin yield and the five category shooters with the highest pin yield received trophies and were named to the men's delegate team and the category delegate team respectively. Here were the results for the 2015 teams (based on 2014 achievements):

DELEGATE TEAM:

	<i>Pins</i>	<i>Name</i>
1 st	9	Ken Allan
2 nd	7	Lloyd Beecraft
3 rd	6	John Costa
	6	Billy Zager
5 th	5	Frank Bonaiuto
	5	Frank Bonaiuto Jr.
7 th	4	B. J. Jackman
	4	Nebojsa Mitrovic
	4	Paulo Sampaio
10 th	3	Tom Batsos

CATEGORY**TEAM:**

	<i>Pins</i>	<i>Name</i>
1 st	12	Warren McLay
2 nd	8	Keith Saunders
3 rd	7	Ed Wilmott
4 th	6	Ken Fellows
5 th	5	Neville Henderson

We in Ontario believe that these delegate pins and race for a position on one of the two delegate teams adds a little excitement and reward for excellence. Congratulations to all who earned a pin and special congratulations to those named to one of the delegate teams.

As the Ontario delegate, one of my responsibilities is to submit the Ontario team for the team race that coincides with the Clay Target Championship. The team has to be composed of Ontario shooters that finished highest at our OPTA singles championship. I have to go a long ways down our list to find shooters that are in attendance at the Grand. When I did a computer review of Ontario shooters that had classified as at the day before the Clay Target Championships, I found only 15 names and a few of those people may not have entered any events. Our participation numbers at the Grand keep declining. When in Vandalia Ontario usually had about 220 shooters.

When I discussed the declining Grand numbers in Sparta at our 2015 OPTA AGM and privately with Ontario shooters who have attended but were not intending to attend in 2015, here is what shooters told me:

- Sparta is too far for many to travel (about 14 to 18 hours driving for most shooters compared to 4 to 8 hours when at Vandalia);
- Accommodation is still hard to find in and around Sparta, prices are elevated for the Grand week and it is often too long a distance to travel back to their hotel and return for shoot-offs or other activities and if they stayed at the grounds until all was completed for the day they or their spouses (or both) are exhausted;
- There is little to do after shooting in or around Sparta (when Walmart becomes the social meeting place it says a lot);
- The exchange differential between the U.S. and Canadian dollar is a pivotal factor for many (for example, I exchanged \$3,000 Canadian before I went to Sparta and got about \$2,200 U.S. dollars);
- Few in Ontario are chasing All American team points so the Grand is not that important to them;

- Most Ontario shooters told me that shooting at the Cardinal Center in Columbus, Ohio, is much more enjoyable for them – for a lot of shooting and non-shooting reasons;
- While Sparta has a super shooting layout, it is for many too remote and impersonal. You often never even see people from your own province.

Bottom line, the Ontario shooters that I represent are not likely, anytime soon, to include the Grand American in Sparta in their shooting agenda. This is disheartening for me as I enjoy the fellowship and comradery of my fellow Ontario shooters and the Grand should be an event high on everyone's priority list. For now at least it is not.

On the political front, we have federal elections on both sides of the border – Canada, scheduled for October (the month you receive the current Trap & Field edition) and U.S. scheduled for fall of 2016. Which party and which candidate(s) will best protect your firearms heritage? If you don't know – find out.

Paul Shaw

Ontario Delegate