

ATA article for December 2019

Greetings from Ontario, Canada.

There is so much media coverage on current issues that it is mind boggling to separate fact from fiction. Don't worry. Many years ago President, Harry Truman aptly described all of this when he said, "If you can't convince them, confuse them."

Sometimes this works very well in the Court room as well. Where it doesn't work is on the trap line. Scores almost universally are absolute – either you hit a target or you miss it and no amount of trying to convince a score keeper or referee, and no amount of manufactured confusion will help.

There is comfort in knowing we are part of a sport with objective scoring. Many sports have "subjective" scoring where often the top and bottom referee scores are tossed and one averages the remaining. Sometimes reasonably fair – sometimes not so fair. President Truman may have described this type of scoring as "confuse them".

It is this time of year when many jurisdictions are tabulating averages and determining their various state and provincial teams. From what I understand, most teams are selected on the basis of a minimum number of targets, which sometimes includes important events like the State or Provincial Championships, then a composite average that includes singles, handicap and doubles. If a shooter does not shoot doubles, for instance, there's a zero chance of making the team. I personally prefer having accomplishments of shooters recognized based upon victories or other objective criteria instead of just composite averages. In Ontario, and I believe in North Carolina, recognition is given in part at least under this concept.

Indeed, the All-American Teams are based on points earned at qualifying competitions – not on composite averages. In Ontario our "delegate team" and "category delegate team" do not consider averages at all. Wins at qualifying shoots are what are considered and we have a lot of talented shooters who don't shoot all three disciplines at all or well enough to qualify for the Provincial team based on averages but can actually make one of our delegate teams because they are good in one or two disciplines.

Ontario shooters know how our system works and like it. It takes a little time for shoot management to track and report results but the effort is worth it.

If anyone in a State or Province outside Ontario wants details on how we do this, just get in touch and we will be pleased to share it.

Have a great Christmas season.

Paul Shaw,
Ontario Delegate