

MSCA 2008 – a Review

Let's be honest, 2008 wasn't the greatest year for Sporting Clays in the state. The number of shooters, targets shot and registered events are all down and we had more canceled shoots in 2008 year than I recall us ever having. Attendance at the State and Great Lakes were off by 18 to 22%. Overall registered targets shot this year was down around 13% from last year. Looking at the last 5 years of registered targets shot, I sadly must report the numbers are declining. We all need to encourage those inclined to give some registered targets a try. At the same time our decrease in activity fared better than the "market" performed last year and considering our economic situation in this state most of us are still around and kicking and the clubs are surviving.

I invite all of you to take a look at the 2009 shoot calendar, it was put together this year – it is loaded with special events from April through September. The Super Ironman at 4 clubs- "Charlevoix Classic"- "Motorstate" at Detroit - "State" at 4 Square – "Great Lakes" at Huron Pointe – "West Michigan" at Kent League – Lewiston "Firecracker and Big Blast". Flat River is back in the association and Benzie has joined. Marion will be hosting a 410 event.

The shoot selection meeting is one of the most important things the association does; it works best when all clubs are represented.

For those of you that venture out of state you know our terrain here in Michigan is outstanding for this game. When I think terrain I think "4 Square" at Jeddo, they will be hosting the State Shoot this year – they did an outstanding job with the Great Lakes in 2007. I have spent the last several winters in Texas, which some believe is the epicenter of Sporting Clays. I just can't agree, and while I have not shot all the clubs I recently did an event with well over 100 shooters – great weather – I saw a couple of NSCA All Americans shoot .856% and .792% of the targets, the .856% was the winner. This isn't the first time I have seen these kinds of results down here and this club is slated to hold a very big shoot soon. There will always be some grouching about targets, but when it is all said and done I think we have it pretty good in Michigan. We have a variety of courses to chose from, driving to the clubs is reasonable, our tournament fees are lower than most and I believe our targets are as good or better than what you find in other parts of the country. All of us must support our own club; we should also support those that are giving of their effort to make Michigan one of the greatest places to shoot.

An All State Selection team was reinstited this year as was an All State Race team; results are in the hands of the State Association and will be published soon.

The State Association has waived the state portion of line fees for Jr and Sub Jr shooters, would hope Nationals would follow as we truly need to see more of them on the course. On the other hand kudos's to the clubs that are participating in the SCTP program by either sponsoring teams or giving the kids a price break. Many of these youngsters will not continue to shoot as they get older but I believe a lot of them will return to shooting when they get down the road a ways and I suspect their positive comments about the experience will only help the sport.

My comments would not be complete without thanking Joe and Jason Huf for their continued financial support of the game. The "By Pas" products work well around our house and I trust we will all put in a plug for their product whenever we can.

Ed Skinner, President of the MSCA Board of Directors in 2008