

Shooters' Hot Streaks: Although trapshooting stories of old have limited interest, I haven't written one for some time, so here is a new one. During my time as a trapshooter from about 1937 until 1950 (shooting was sharply curtailed in 1943, '44, and '45), several outstanding feats were achieved by those I knew. Some, having to do with long runs without a miss and official national averages, were widely reported within the trapshooting community and through the *Sportsmen's Review*, the official weekly magazine of the Amateur Trapshooting Association.

Two nearby shooters, Steve Crothers of Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania, and Walter Beaver of Berwyn in the same state, made their respective marks during the 1920s and '30s. Crothers won the Pennsylvania State Championship 14 times in 21 years (1921-1941) and won the "Marshall Marathon" at Yorklyn five times. Beaver won the Grand American Handicap in 1933 with 98 from 25 yards, the only shooter to do this during the 30 years that 25 yards was the maximum handicap distance behind the trap.

The world's squad record with each of the five shooting 100 registered targets was broken at Yorklyn in 1935 when Arthur Cuscaden, Ned Lilly, Hale Jones, Joe Hiestand, and Bill Eldred broke 498 out of 500, breaking the old record of 497 made at Maplewood, New Hampshire, in 1916. The same 1935 squad broke their own record, again at Yorklyn, in 1936 with 499. Steve Crothers won the "Marathon" in 1931 with 499 out of 500, a feat duplicated by Joe Hiestand in 1935. In 1938, Fred Tomlin, a "pro" shooting for Remington, broke 400 straight at Yorklyn to extend a long run to 702 straight, only to be overtaken 10 days later by Joe Hiestand. Hiestand broke the last 66 targets at Yorklyn before going to the Grand American tournament at Vandalia, Ohio, that started just a week later. He shot 900 16-yard targets at Vandalia, breaking them all over a five-day period. Before his official long run was ended about a month later, he had broken 1,179 straight. In the late 1930s, the high-average shooter for a calendar year often averaged over 99% on 2,000 or more registered targets. All these feats were well publicized.

I well recall some lesser-known "streaks." John B. "Cap" Grier of Rockland, Delaware, shooting for Western-Winchester, broke 100 straight doubles at Yorklyn in 1941, followed two days later by 97 out of 100 from 25 yards on a very windy day (only amateurs were eligible to win the handicap, which was won by P. J. Jones of the Canal Zone with 95 from 22 yards).

John Rigg of nearby Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, was a Class A shooter (not AA), who usually shot from 23 yards in handicap events, in those days at the discretion of the handicap committee at the host gun club. Early in 1939, however, he started to shoot very well, and by June when the nearby State Championships came around, he was handicapped at 25 yards, the maximum at that time. At the New Jersey State Shoot held at the North Jersey Gun Club at Fairfield he not only broke 100 straight in the handicap (from 25 yards) but 200 straight in the 16-yard event and 97 out of 100 doubles for an all-'round total of 397 out of 400. If this was not enough, Rigg won the Pennsylvania State Handicap at Reading a week later, again with 100 from 25 yards! Never in a class with Crothers and Beaver, he performed other streaks, like when he didn't miss a target at six straight Penn-Del League shoots at Yorklyn (50 targets each time) over a two-year period after World War II.

A complete "dark horse," Roy Hemmig of Reading, shooting in the last squad of the day, won the 1937 Pennsylvania State Championship at Shamokin with 200 straight. Shooting very little between, he shot again in this championship at Brinton Lake in 1938, again breaking 200 straight (this time he was tied by Walter Beaver and Walter Penrose, and Beaver won after breaking 75 more in the shoot-off).

I had never heard of Walter Penrose of West Chester, Pennsylvania, when he appeared at a Penn-Del League shoot at Longwood, two days before the start of the 1938 State Championships at Brinton Lake. He missed his first target and broke the next 49 at Longwood. In the 200-target championship, he broke 200 straight and kept his record perfect until the 3rd shoot-off, when he finally missed one, giving Walter Beaver the championship. In the wrap-up event the last day, again he broke a perfect score of 100. Always jovial and fun to be around,

Penrose, who was less than five feet tall, shot a lot during the next 15 years but never so well as during that streak in June 1938.

Work Report: On Tuesday, July 7, 12 volunteers were on hand for the work session, as follows: Ted Kamen (in charge), Tom Marshall, Steve Bryce, Dave Leon, Tim Ward, Jerry Lucas, Ed Paschall, Mark Russell, John Schubel, Mac Taylor, Jay Williams, and Brent McDougall.

Locomotive 401 was cleaned from its runs on July 5, and the Lionel electric trains were further improved. It was determined that the late Ken Ricketts had taken four of our locomotives home for repair, and we are still working with his estate to retrieve them. The steam automatic from our Model 725 was examined, the old fuel packing was removed, and new packing was added. The hydraulic brakes on our Mountain Wagon were adjusted on the "star wheels," but it is recommended that we replace the master cylinder.

Gloss black surfaces on the Cretors popper were painted. The top side of the metal canopy top still needs final prepping and painting.

Our first Tuesday "Evening at the Museum" session featured the Cretors restoration and was attended by seven new interested people. Under the program arranged by Jesse Gagnon, Steve Bryce and Mark Russell conducted the presentation, describing the many steps involved in our total restoration. Although there are still many things to be done, we hope to complete the restoration in August.

On Thursday, July 9, eight volunteers were in attendance: Bill Schwoebel (in charge), Jared Schoenly, Kelly Williams, Tim Ward, Steve Bryce, Tom Marshall, Mark Russell, and Anne Cleary.

The burner for the Model 87 with its new vaporizer was installed. The peanut roaster for the Cretors machine was assembled. The wheels from the Model 607 were completely dismantled in preparation for new wood wheels, and a lock ring was taken home (by Jared Schoenly) for straightening and latch repair. The hubs may still need minor work before they are sent to the wheel shop.

More packing was added to the steam automatic from the Model 725, and it is ready for mounting in the car. Packing was also added to the firing-up valve on the Model 76. A small meeting was held to plan for the steam locomotive training session on July 16. Members interested in learning the operation of these scale-model engines are encouraged to attend. The session begins at 6:30 P.M.

On Friday, July 10, our Auburn Valley diesel locomotive pulled several trains giving happy rides to about 40 youngsters. Dave Leon and Linda Herman, with assistance from Mike Ciosek, capably handled the operation with no problems.

On Saturday, July 18, under the auspices of Lou Mandich, several antique cars will drive to the Strasburg Railroad for a special day. Dave Leon and I (Tom) hope to go in the Model 87 or the 71. If any drivers, intermediates, or students are interested, it might be good experience. We are supposed to assemble at the Last Chance Garage in Unionville at 8:30, which will mean about 7:00 A.M. for firing up. Our return should be by 5 P.M. after a round-trip of about 75 miles. If you have an interest, please let Tom know a.s.a.p. If there is enough interest, we can plan on a second car.

With sadness, we report the passing of Tim Nolan. Tim moved to Colorado about six months ago from his former home in nearby Maryland. He had settlement for a house in Littleton, CO, on July 1 and died there a few days later. We are awaiting more details. Tim was a dedicated volunteer with FAHP for the past several years.