

Trap Shooting at the Olympic Games

By EDWARD BANKS

The first introduction of trap shooting as one of the features at the Olympic Games was in 1908 when the Olympic contests were held in England. The United States were not represented at the traps, but Canada sent a team which only just missed winning the team championship by the narrow margin of two "breaks," the scores being: British Team No. 1—407; Canada—405; and British Team No. 2—372. For championship work the scores from an American standpoint were very low, but then the conditions under which they were made were very severe when compared with the conditions which govern similar contests in the United States and the Dominion of Canada. The distance the shooter was placed from the traps was "not less than 18 yards" (as a matter of fact 18 yards was the mark), and the clay pigeons were thrown far and fast (between 60 and 65 yards) against a background which made them hard to locate accurately. Plenty of trees heavily foliaged and a piece of trestle-work, over which one of the lines to the north of England runs an abundance of trains, do not make an ideal background for clay pigeon shooting even when the "targets" are not thrown more than 50 yards.

How difficult the conditions must have been is shown by the following figures: Each team shot at 630 clay pigeons (105 per man). The winners: British Team No. 1, broke 407, an average of 64.6 per cent. Canada broke 405, an average of 64.3, while British Team No. 2 only broke an even 59 per cent.

It was in the Individual Championship event that North America came to the front, with Walter H. Ewing, of Montreal, as winner, and his fellow countryman, George Beattie, of



Showing Arrangement of Traps for Nos. 3, 4 and 5 Positions

Hamilton, Ont., the winner of second honors. The conditions were 80 "targets" per man, 70 of which were thrown from known traps at unknown angles, the other ten from unknown traps at unknown angles. Mr. Ewing broke 72 of his eighty targets, an even 90 per cent., and so far outclassed his field by his wonderful shooting that it was a case of "Ewing first, the rest nowhere." Mr. Beattie, who took second honors, finished no less than twelve breaks behind the leader.

As soon as it was known that the program for the Olympic Games of 1912 would contain trap shooting features similar to those in the program arranged for the contests in England in 1908, C. W. Billings, of Glen Ridge, N. J., Ralph L. Spotts, of New York, and other good shots in amateur circles, got together and agreed that the United States ought to be represented by a team of trap shooters. The result was that the following team was selected to go to Stockholm, Sweden, to take part in the trap shooting program scheduled for June 29 and July 1-4 inclusive, no shooting being done on Sunday, June 30: C. W. Billings, Glen Ridge, N. J. (captain); Jay R. Graham, Ingleside, Ill.; John H. Hendrickson, Long Island City, N. Y.; R. L. Spotts and D. H. McMahon, of New York City; Frank Hall, Ridgefield Park, N. J.; and Dr. E. F. Gleason, of Boston, Mass.



J. R. Graham Shooting Last 10 from No. 3 Position—15 Traps

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That the team was selected with pretty good judgment is evidenced by the fact that it brought back first honors in both the team match and in the individual championship race, Jay Graham winning the latter after a stiff tussle with H. Goedel, of Germany, and M. Braun, of Russia, who finished second and third respectively.

The conditions were the same in both matches, team and individual, viz.: 90 clay pigeons thrown from known traps at unknown angles, and the last 10 thrown from unknown traps and at unknown angles. In the above respect they differed therefore from the conditions in effect in 1908; they also differed so far as the "rise" or distance the shooter stood from the traps is concerned. At Stockholm the "rise" was 15 meters, i. e., practically 16 yards, the same as in the United States; at London in 1908 it was 18 yards.

The shooting grounds at Stockholm were at Rasunda, within the city limits, and were easily reached by automobiles. Shooting started each day about 9:30 a. m., and was generally over by 4 p. m., an hour being occupied in the middle of day by lunch.

The team race was shot in three stages: First stage, 20 clay pigeons per man, or 120 to the team of six men. Second stage, 30 clay pigeons per man, 180 per team; these were all thrown from known traps at unknown angles, and both stages were scheduled for June 29. The third stage was at 50 clay pigeons, 40 of them thrown the same as in the first and second stages. For the last ten which were thrown from unknown traps at unknown angles, only one shooter at a time was called to the "score" or shooting mark in front of the middle (or No. 3) set of traps. There were five firing points, or marks at which the shooters in the events were placed, and in front of each mark was a set of three "expert" traps, the clay pigeon pulled for each shooter might go from any one of the three. For the last ten clay pigeons, it might go from any one of the fifteen. And the distance between the two outside traps was 25 meters.

Six teams entered for team championship honors. The nations represented were : United States, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden, France and Russia.

The first and second stages of the team race were decidedly close and interesting. At the end of the first stage the Americans led, with 108 out of 120; close up was Germany, with 107 and the British, with 104, were in third place. When the second stage was finished the Americans were still in the lead, with 269, but Germany and Great Britain had changed places, the latter being now second, with a total of 264 to the Germans' 263. In the second stage the Americans had scored 161 out of 180, the British 160 and the Germans 156.

The third and final stage was shot on Monday, July 1, in the same clear and bright, but somewhat windy weather that had prevailed on the previous Saturday. It was in this stage that the Americans outstayed and out-shot their opponents. Their lead of 5 at the end of the second stage, half way through the

match, was increased to 21 when the race was over. The British team just nosed out the Germans by a single break, Mr. Charles Palmer, of the Britishers, having to break his last clay pigeon to win second honors for his country. The totals in the third stage were 263 out of 300 for the Americans; the British and the Germans tied on 247 apiece. The final totals were: America, 532 out of 600; Great Britain, 511; and Germany, 510.

The individual scores of the American team were as follows, Mr. McMahon having stepped down in favor of his team mates and accepted the role of substitute:

Jay R. Graham	94
C. W. Billings	93
R. L. Spotts	90
J. H. Hendrickson	89
Frank Hall	86
Dr. E. F. Gleason	80

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Tuesday, July 2, the weather was so stormy, heavy rain falling, that no shooting could be done, and accordingly the first and second stages of the Individual Championship were decided on Wednesday, July 3. The race was shot in three stages, the conditions being precisely the same as for the team race.

There were sixty entries and of these two-thirds qualified to continue in the race with scores of 15 (or better) out of the first 20 clay pigeons shot at. The leaders at the end of this stage were: Jay R. Graham and Dr. Gleason (U., S. A); Freiherr von Zeidlitz und Leipe and H. Goedel (Germany), all with 19 out of 20; H. R. Haneby (Great Britain) had 18.

When the second stage was ended Graham and Gleason were still in first place, tied up on 47 out of 50, while the German crack shot Goedel had 46.

It was on the Fourth of July that the third and final stage was shot, and appropriately enough the contest ended in a victory for the United States, the Illinois amateur, Jay R. Graham, landing in first place with 96 out of his 100 clay pigeons, a wonderful piece of work under the hard conditions, and a score that showed that his 94, the highest score made in the team race, was no fluke. Notwithstanding Graham's big score, he was really closely pressed all the way by H. Goedel, who won second honors for his country, with 94. A Russian, M. Braun, was third, with 91, and H. R. Haneby, of England, fourth, with 88.

On their return to this country the American team as a whole, and also as individuals, have expressed themselves as more than pleased with the treatment they received during their entire stay abroad, and particularly at the shooting grounds during the contests. Mr. Billings says: "There were no protests and no kicks at all." As for the refereeing, all united in saying that the work of the referee was the best they ever saw, and it is only right, therefore, to mention that the referee in question was Napoleon Krook who, I am told, looks after the interests of the Standard Oil Company in Sweden. The judge was

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Jay R. Graham, Winner of Olympic Individual Championship, 1912

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Count Loewenhaupt, a member of the Swedish nobility. The score was kept in a book that was laid on a table and no one could see his score until he had finished his string; so accurately was the record kept that not a single objection was made to any entry on the score sheet.

The victories of the Americans in both the team race and for the individual championship were received with the best of feeling, and

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with special enthusiasm in the case of Graham's win of first place in the individual match. This is well shown by a reproduction of the scene after Mr. Graham had been declared the winner, which appeared in a Swedish newspaper, published the evening of the day on which he won the honor (the Fourth of July), the paper being the "Dagens Nyheter, Stadion edition." The picture shows Graham perched on the shoulders of some of his friends but most prominent in the foreground of the photograph is the personal representative of the King of Sweden, Mr. Samolson, who is holding Graham's right ankle with his right hand while he supports with his left hand the knee and thigh of the victor, which rests on his left shoulder.



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