

# SKEET SHOOTING



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*Review*

**Skeet Shooting  
Returns to Yale**



*Yale's New Shooting Facility*

# The Scatter Gun at Yale

The case for collegiate skeet shooting received impetus recently when Yale University dedicated these facilities at New Haven, Conn. At their Winter meeting, NSSA executives took action on a program which will eventually recognize the activities of over 150 college skeet clubs in operation throughout the United States.

By Edward C. Migdalski



Winchester-Western's chief promoter for collegiate shooting, Jim Dee, right, congratulates Edward Migdalski, director of the Oliver F. Winchester facility, at the dedication.



The successful completion of the *Oliver F. Winchester Shooting Fields* at the *Yale Outdoor Education Center* has revived great interest in the scatter gun at Yale. The scatter gun, a sporting firearm better known as the shot gun, and clay bird shooting, now officially called trap and skeet, have been part of the Yale recreational scene since the latter part of the 19th Century.

It is a well known fact that during the late 1800's Yale was a recognized power and leader on the gridiron. Few of today's sporting gentry however, realize that during that period Yale's undergraduates were also leading the way nationally in clay bird shooting. At that time, shot gun shooting along with sailing and fly fishing were known as "sport of gentlemen."

At Yale, interest in scatter gun use has not waned since its inception so many years ago; but because the University's gunners had no field of their own, organized shooting as a student activity varied greatly from year to year. During the past dozen or fifteen years the skeet club was not an official Yale organization; it was an additional activity offered to members of the Yale Fishing Club. During those years shooting persisted in spite of the disadvantages and many disappointments experienced by the group and its leaders. Within recent years Yale's shot gun target shooters used a variety of fields; all of which were available to them for relatively short periods of time. For example, a trap field was improvised along the outer edge of the Yale Golf Course, but activity there was of short duration because the muffled gun sounds distracted the more meticulous golfers. Then other arrangements were made. The Hamden Rod and Gun Club, Winchester's Bethany Range, Choate School in Wallingford, and Winchester-Western in North Haven all allowed us use of their fields. Ironically, in each instance just as the shooting became well organized for the Yale shooters the facility was denied them for reasons beyond their control. Perhaps the most frustrating and disappointing endeavor occurred when the Yale Skeet Club was offered the use of a dilapidated overgrown field located in the outskirts of Madison. Regularly on weekends Yale students and their leaders spent several hours cutting brush and grass, repairing and painting the houses, picking up loads of broken bottles, cans, paper and other debris. After weeks of toil when the field began to look good, the Yale group was told that they would have to pay rent if they wanted to continue to use the field.

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Scatter gun activity at Yale is no longer frustrating. The magnificent shooting facilities provided by a grant from Winchester-Western and alumni contributions have given the activity security and incentive.

The Oliver F. Winchester Shooting Fields were officially opened on Saturday, October 17th. Several hundred persons gathered to witness the dedication ceremonies and to watch six colleges and universities participate in a trap and skeet tournament. The Yale team won the meet by taking first in the skeet event and placing second to Dartmouth in trap. A regular set of matches during the school year will be scheduled for the skeet team. The Yale Club will also annually host the Eastern Regional Intercollegiate Trap and Skeet Tournament and hopefully will send a team to the National Intercollegiate event to be held in Missouri in 1971.

Aside from the competitive shooting by the Yale Skeet Team, the fields will be used for education and recreation. Instruction in shooting and safe gun handling will be held at the field. Lectures on target shooting and safe hunting will take place in the classrooms of Tracy Lodge, the main building of the Outdoor Education Center. A fine old barn adjacent to the fields will be converted into a Yale Rod and Gun Club House where lectures and social events can be carried on conveniently. A wide range of recreational shooting will be sponsored by the Yale Skeet Club. Anyone in the Yale community (students, faculty, staff and alumni) may join the club. By purchasing clay birds and ammunition in quantity, cost of shooting to club members will be lower than charged at public shooting centers. Special management effort will be made however, to insure maximum advantages to students in programming shooting time and cost of participation.

Yale alumni outdoorsmen have played a strong part in influencing the great surge of interest at Yale in outdoor recreation. They have provided encouragement and funds not only for the shooting fields, but also for construction of the *Sailing Center*, *Fly Fishing Trout Pond* and the *Wildlife Conservation Marsh*. Through the recent addition of these magnificent facilities to Yale's outdoors complex, the University can well be proud of offering to its students the most comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Club Sports Program in the nation.