

Area gun club stresses care, discipline

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

It's not as easy as simply loading, aiming and firing, but recreational shooting is becoming more popular in the Peel-Halton area, especially among teenagers taking advantage of numerous gun courses offered at the Peel Game Farm in Brampton.

"The main advantage of the sport," claims John Harvey, an RR 2 Georgetown resident and secretary of the Peel Handgun Club (PHC) for the past 12 years, "is that there is practically no age barrier and you don't have to be an athlete to shoot."

Located on the west side of Heart Lake Road, two miles north of Highway 7, the 14-acre game farm was once used by local farmers to raise pheasants for hunting in the early 1950s. Now scattered through-

out the privately-owned property are a handgun range, rifle range, trapshooting area and an indoor airgun range for younger shooters—all supervised by highly-skilled gun enthusiasts who are among the farm's 600 members.

Shooters come from all over metropolitan Toronto, the Golden Horseshoe to Hamilton, Peel and Halton to use probably the finest, most complete shooting range club in the province. And the farm has turned out a number of Canada's finest shooters, including George Boas, currently on the Canadian International team for small-bore rifle shooting. Dr. Jules Sobrian, whose handgun expertise was demonstrated at the Pan-Am games in Mexico and Winnipeg, and a long list of championship trapshooters since 1948.

shooters can train on a 50-metre range using club equipment; some rifles may weigh as much as 11 pounds. Thanks to renovations on the farm's clubhouse, there is a 10-metre airgun range in the basement for winter practice.

Youngsters often get involved with trapshooting while loading the target discs for adult shooters. Mr. Blade explained. The farm's junior trapshooting program encourages team competition and young trapshooters from the club to travel across the province for matches.

But the age barrier rises for youngsters yearning to practice with handguns, and the PHC starts its junior program with air pistols on the 10-metre indoor range. Even adults have to pass an in-class training course and attend eight sessions on the range before they become bona fide PHC members and become eligible for police permission to transport pistols from home to range.

BRING OWN
Membership in the handgun, small-bore rifle or trapshooting club is relatively cheap, averaging about \$50, with the exception of the handgun club which requires prospective members to take a \$50 training course for the first year, in addition to a \$40 membership fee.

Firearms are available at the club, but experienced members usually bring their own guns, ammunition and

targets. Mr. Blade recommends trying out the club equipment first before buying a target rifle or pistol.



While the courses teach new members how a gun works and the proper way to fire it, there is strong emphasis on discipline and safety, clearly evident during a visit to the handgun range Sunday. Inside the enclosed, heated firing shed, shooters obediently stopped firing and stepped away from the firing line at the rangemaster's command. Once targets were checked and renewed, shooting did not begin until the rangemaster indicated that the range was clear.

And there were no urban cowboys out to quickly pop off

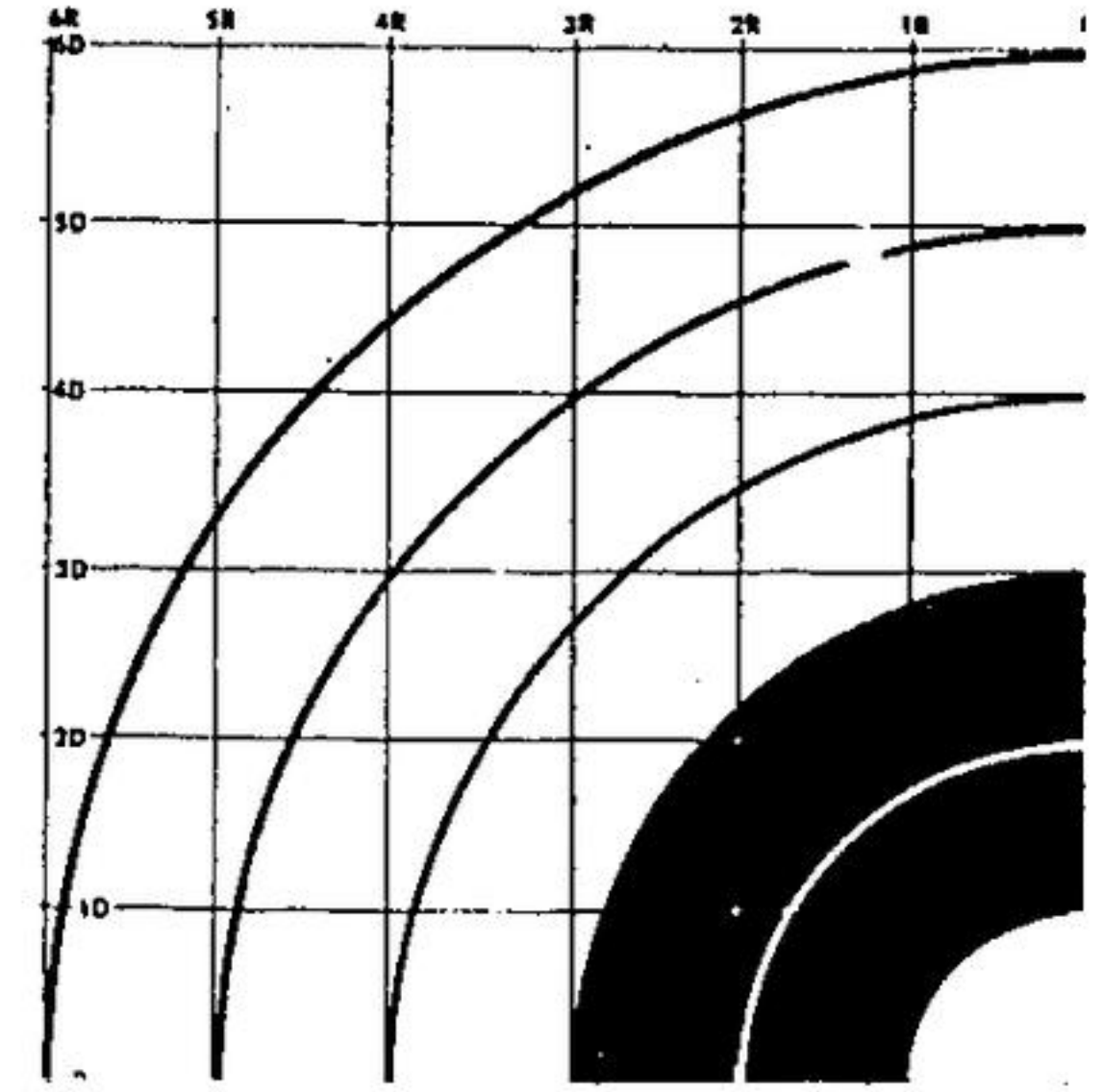
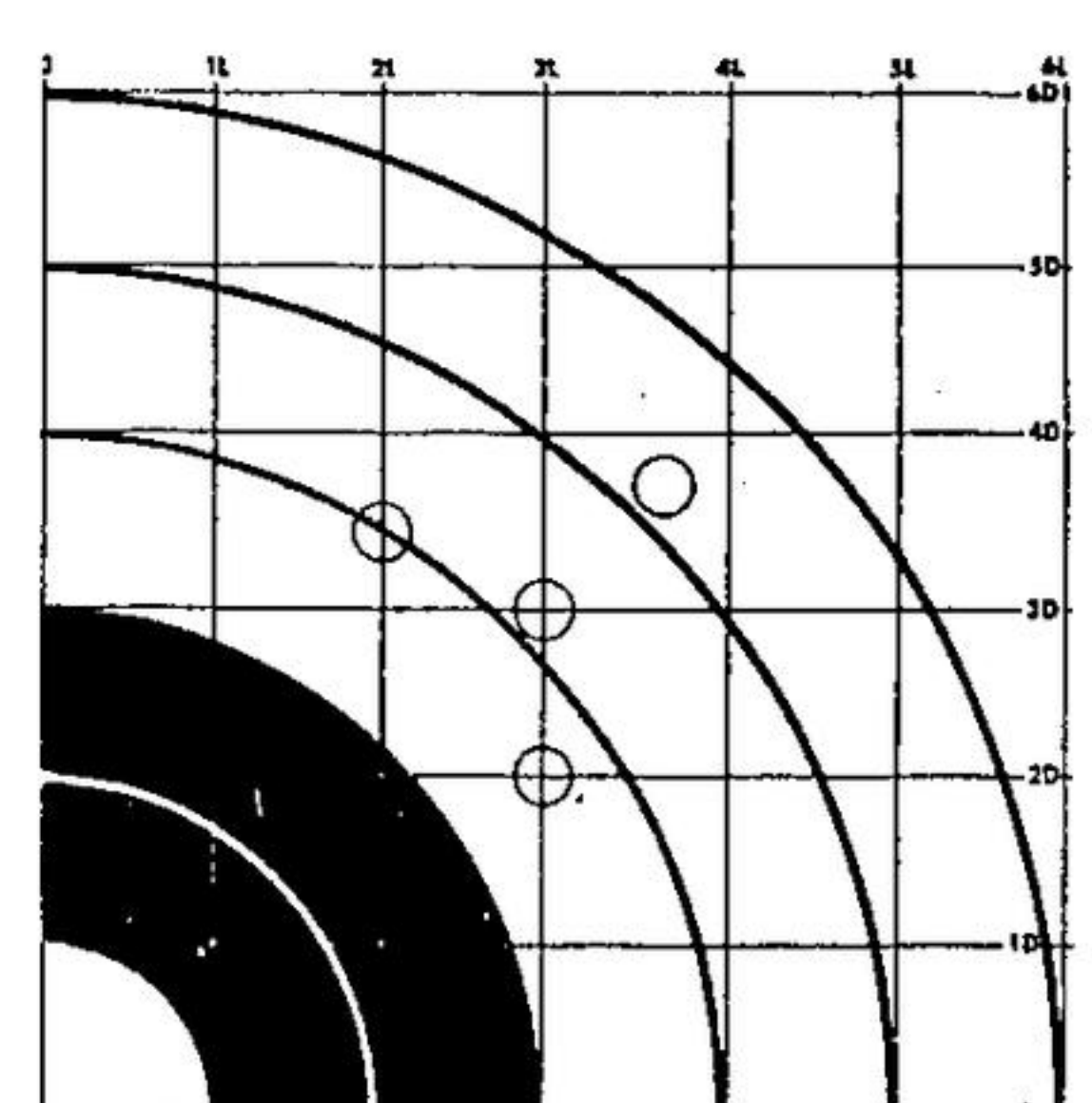
a few rounds before lunch. The guns were packed in large, padded cases - not holsters - and many of the shooters were not only champion marksmen, but skilled artisans who design and mold their own bullets and mix their own loads.

Mr. Blade's ammunition, in fact, includes slugs made from lead once used in the linotype process to print The Herald. A visit to the range every week allows him to test his workmanship.

Mr. Harvey, meanwhile, maintains that he enjoys shooting targets even more than he likes to hunt.

"It's the ideal form of recreation," he said "even though the cost of ammunition is going up. I can shoot targets all day for about the same cost as a round of golf or some curling."

Further information on the Peel County Game Farm and the gun club facilities is available at 846-2610.



Hardly a conventional pistol shooting stance, this prone position has proved quite effective in gun competitions for Ernest Muller of Rexdale. A member of the Peel Handgun Club, Mr. Muller was practicing Sunday at the Peel Game Farm's range on Heart Lake Road in Brampton. Pistol shooters from around Halton and Peel bring a variety of interesting pistols to the range and Mr. Muller's seven-millimetre "Wichita" (above) was no exception. (Herald photo)

GO trains lose that old 'clickety-clack' sound

CP Rail is taking the familiar clickety-clack sound out of train rides along GO Transit's new commuter corridor being developed between Toronto and Milton.

It's the result of a major rail upgrading programme, now in the final phase, being carried out by CP along its right-of-way under contract to GO Transit.

Work crews started in late fall to replace most of the existing conventional jointed rail throughout the corridor with modern continuous welded rail and the entire GO Train route has now been completed.

The welded rail, weighing 136 pounds per yard, comes

in quarter-mile lengths compared to the standard 39-foot lengths of conventional rail. And when two lengths of welded rail are joined, they're welded instead of bolted, creating a continuous track surface instead of the normal joint with a small space between rail ends. As a result, there's no more clickety-clack sound as train wheels pass over these joints.

Of course, there are other advantages in using welded rail. Conventional rails tend to take their worst beating at the joints and therefore require heavy maintenance at these points. And joints are the most frequent area of

fault when service disruptions attributable to tracks occur. So the elimination of the joints provides for a more reliable service standard as there are fewer potential trouble spots on the line.

Cost of the entire upgrading of the CP Rail plant is estimated at \$32 million with the money coming from the province.

The 50-kilometre commuter route will be GO's fourth rail line and will have seven stations, with Union Station as the terminal point in Toronto. The stations are: Milton, Meadowville, Streetsville, Erindale, Cooksville, Dixie and Kipling.



CP's rail changecut machine lifts out the old rail and lays, levels and aligns new track along GO's new Toronto-Milton commuter corridor.



Shooters using the handgun range at the Peel Game Farm in Brampton can shoot from the comfort of the Peel Hand Gun Club's enclosed shed which faces the range. But not anyone can throw a pistol into the trunk of their car and drop by for a little target practice. Federal regulations and club rules insist that prospective members join the club, take its courses and prove their proficiency at the sport before they can even transport their own guns to the range. (Herald photo)

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