

Youth Group Report 2024

Our Club juniors are a dynamic bunch, not only as a measure of their shooting enthusiasm, but also their inevitable graduation into the adult world. The group is constantly attracting new members, while invariably seeing our older shooters embrace careers or college activities taking them in new directions. The active group typically numbers up to 20 young people and often double that when parents participate. Fortunately not everyone turns up at the same time, since we have very limited instructional resources. Graduate members and other interested adults like to keep in touch and shoot when opportunity allows so this year we have created a new email-connected family of adult ex-members to facilitate social connection and ongoing participation in Club events.

Engagement in the junior group is restricted to club members, although most newcomers come from the general public by word of mouth and subsequently become members. There is no effort to solicit or recruit new members in order to avoid overwhelming the instructional resources. Fortunately parents often become members in support of their children and are a great help with supervision.

As in the past, our main objective is to ensure our young members are well prepared in firearms safety and responsibility. Most will pass the Canada Firearms Safety Course and subsequently gain their Minor's Licence, while those under age for the licence will undergo the same instruction and examination in a less formal situation.

Our own GunQuest skill development program <https://sjrgc.com/page.php?page=gunquest> continues to be the primary instruction model. It was revised this year to include 50 challenges covering all of the Club's activities and all our young shooters are engaged. Completion of the program to the top, Marksman, level is quite demanding, typically requiring 2 years of intensive commitment and I am pleased to report this year two of our members achieved the top level, the first to do so in the past five years following the covid hiatus.

It is a special pleasure at the range to experience the interaction of our regular members with our young shooters. Older members invariably take time off shooting to counsel the youngsters with stories or advice and to offer the opportunity to try some interesting or unusual guns. Our juniors are grateful for this encouragement and the old hands seem to enjoy the interaction. Our thanks and appreciation to fellow members and the Club Executive for their continuing support.

Alastair Allan