

St. John's Rod and Gun Club 2025 Sporting Clays Committee Report

Sporting clays continued at the club throughout 2025 with the usual activities including Wednesday evening spring/summer shoots, Wednesday morning “off-season” shoots as well as weekend and other special events held throughout the year. These shoots typically included either 50, 75 or 100 target courses with a variety of target presentations, which changes from event to event. Presentations have included fleeing, rising, crossing and incoming targets (in either standard, midi or mini sized clay targets) as well as rabbits, attempting to recreate some of the small game and waterfowl shots people may encounter while hunting.

Uncertainty surrounding wildfires in August resulted in a disruption to activities at the club for a period of time, including cancellation of multiple Wednesday evening shoots as well as the annual Hunters Challenge event. However, the Hunters Challenge is planned for a return in 2026!

While most shoot events during the year saw average turnouts, a large uptick in participation was noted during Saturday shoots held in the fall. This saw event participation reach pre-COVID numbers, with many new faces coming out to break some clays. Based on interest from club members, it was decided to increase the number of Saturday shoot events going forward to accommodate members who might not be able to make it to the Wednesday shoots.

The Sporting Clays Committee would like to thank all the club members and guests who attend our sporting clays shoots and join in the comradery. The friendly ribbing and stories shared on the course are part of what makes sporting clays events so successful. We would also like to thank those who facilitate our shoots, whether it be helping to set (or dismantle) courses, loading clay launchers, working the kitchen or registration desk, etc. An extended thanks goes out to those who have helped out with maintenance/ improvements when needed. Most of the work on the sporting clays trail and equipment maintenance over the past year has been carried out with volunteer labour, which is greatly appreciated.

Sporting clays activities during the year included the following:

1. Wednesday Evening Sporting Clays:

- Shoots ran each Wednesday evening from mid-May to mid-August while evening daylight is sufficient.
- Courses typically included 50 targets over 5-6 stations that shooters could shoot multiple times, daylight permitting.
- These shoots saw 15-20 dedicated shooters most weeks.

2. “Off Season” Sporting Clays Shoots:

- The Sporting Clays Committee made every effort to hold a Saturday shoot at least once a month in the off-season when days are short. However, weather is often a challenge, particularly during the winter months, when weekend storms and/or large accumulations of snow on the sporting trail can result in cancellations or inability to otherwise set a sporting course. 2025 events included:
 - January Fun Shoot – Held on January 25th.

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- o April Fun Shoot – Held on April 12th.
- o Regatta Day
- o Thanksgiving Shoot - Held on October 4th.
- o October Fun Shoot - Held on October 18th.
- o Turkey Shoot (Joint with Trap) – Held on November 22nd. This event saw the largest event turnout of the year with over 40 participants.
- o Santa's Challenge - Held on December 6th

3. Regatta Day Blast:

- This shoot is an annual event first held in 2015 on the Regatta Day holiday, which normally consists of a 75-100 target sporting course and shooting challenges with lunch served in between. Starting in 2024 the shoot has been held on a Saturday instead of actual Regatta Day to enable participation from those who may not get the Regatta Day holiday.
- 2025 consisted of a 75 target course and lunch and prizes for various class winners.

4. Wednesday Daytime Shoots (AKA Old Fellows Clays League):

- Once the days get too short for Wednesday evening sporting clays, the Club shifts to daytime shooting which continues throughout the fall, winter and Spring (weather permitting) until evening sporting clays restarts in May. Shooting typically starts at 10 am and utilizes the Sporting Clays or Five Stand courses depending on time of year and weather conditions (e.g. deep snow around the clays trail).
- Attendance has been up to 15 shooters weekly.

Other Activities:

- Support was provided to the youth group who in return help with setup and takedown, moving boxes of clay targets, etc.
- Raised \$200 for the Food Sharing Association at the Santa's Challenge in December.

Maintenance

- A volunteer maintenance day was held in April to clean up around the sporting clays trails and conduct maintenance on clay throwers, shoot stands and sporting clays shed. During the day the youth volunteers reclaimed many boxes worth of unbroken clays (from the many misses on the clays trail!) to be reused by them and reduce cost of their shooting activities.
- Grounds improvements were made around the sporting clays trail, with labour and equipment usage donated by member Chris Auchenleck. Chris is also providing the labour for the rough-in of the new Skeet range being constructed between clays stations 10 and 11.
- While preventative maintenance hopes to stave off malfunctions during events, a number of clay throwers saw various repairs throughout the year which was completed by a small group dedicated members, including Leo Carns who has been working on our clay throwers for years.