

AIM



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— ONTARIO

The Ottawa Valley Pistol League

BRIAN H. KING

IN THE WINTER of 1960 the Ottawa Valley Pistol League (OVPL) was formally constituted. Five teams agreed to a series of home-at-home matches, with the host team supplying the refreshments. Those teams were: RCMP "A" Division; RCMP "HQ" Division; Arnprior; Smith Falls and the National Defence Headquarters Rifle Association. Four of the five founding members—Red Doolittle, Ed Wilson, Harold Nichol and Brian King—are still active in the league. Just proves that you do not have to be young and foolish to enjoy a night out at the shooting range. Sadly, the fifth founding member, Larry Gaines, died a few years ago.

In the beginning an NRA gallery course of both .22 and centrefire was shot. With the introduction of ISU standard pistol and centrefire, these courses were also adopted. Today some clubs choose to shoot ISU, while others mix ISU and NRA courses. This proves challenging and demands a degree of flexibility from the shooters.

Over the years other teams have joined in and, unfortunately, some have disappeared. For a couple of years the US Embassy fielded a joint team of army, navy, and air force personnel stationed in Ottawa (JANAF). In the late 1960s another club joined and has been a powerhouse ever since—the Civil Service Recreation Association Fun Club, usually called the RA. Neither of the RCMP teams are still active; their interest waned when the PPC became their forte. It is interesting to look back at those two teams: either could field a squad consisting of 10 master-class shooters on any given

evening.

Although the OVPL has probably never had more than six teams at any time, it has been a breeding ground for Canada's national team. Names to conjure with include Jim Zavitz, Jim Thurlow, Bill Hare, Steve Kelly and, last but certainly not least, Olympic gold medalist Linda Thom.

The OVPL usually starts its season right after Christmas and continues until each team has played both host and visitor to all other teams. Home teams still provide the refreshments and Arnprior has the reputation of being the place to go to eat. It must have something to do with good country cooking. This year teams from Smith Falls, Arnprior, Kingston and Ottawa will be vying for top spot. After the last shot has been fired and the scores tallied, a barbecue will be held to honor the winning team. Top shooter and most improved shooter from each team also will receive a keeper trophy. Perhaps in another 30 years some youngblood will look back with fond memories and tell his children: "I remember when the league was going into its 30-something year. Boy, were those the days." •

Ontario Provincial Rifle Team

LINDA SZULGA

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE team and all Ontario shooters who did us proud at the National Championships in Sudbury! We took 37% of the ISU smallbore awards, 47% of the air gun awards, and 50% of the sporter awards. We'll work hard this winter and be ready for the next one in Winnipeg. The Manitoba team provided some serious competition this year, and we can bet they'll be out in full force next year!

In August the team enjoyed our inaugural "Ready, Set, Go for the Nationals!" training clinic, which had a turnout of 24 athletes, coaches and staff.

Judging by the results at the nationals, I'd say it was a worthwhile event. We thank the Maple Leaf Marksman Club in St. Catharines in southern Ontario for the use of their wonderful facility, and for their usual excellent hospitality!

In October, we kicked off the 1992-'93 training season with our "On Your Mark, Get Set for the Future" training clinic at the Peterborough Fish & Game Association facility in central Ontario. The club boasts full outdoor facilities, but considering it *snowed* both days, we were glad we had booked the indoor range. We also enjoyed the large clubhouse, complete with kitchen and good food. The themes were building the position basics and building a training plan. For many of our shooters, this was their first exposure to the concept of an annual plan, and so it was quite a good experience. For the others it was an opportunity to help fellow team members—a task they enthusiastically took up.

Our next clinic will be at the beginning of the outdoor season, in mid-May. In the meantime, I wish the entire team great success in their competitions and in their training throughout the winter.

Our thanks go out to everyone who donated items for the team to sell, and to those from all over Canada who bought items from our table at the nationals. •

Linda Szulga is the Ontario Provincial Rifle Team manager.

There's a new shooter in the family!

HALLOWEEN ARRIVED A tad early for national running target team member, Mark Bedlington and wife Tania—and a treat it certainly was! A bouncing baby boy arrived Oct. 29, weighing in at 7.5 lbs. Any suggestions for the "yet-to-be-named" baby? ...Freddy? ...Jason? ...Damian? •