

# A-Z OF SHOOTING

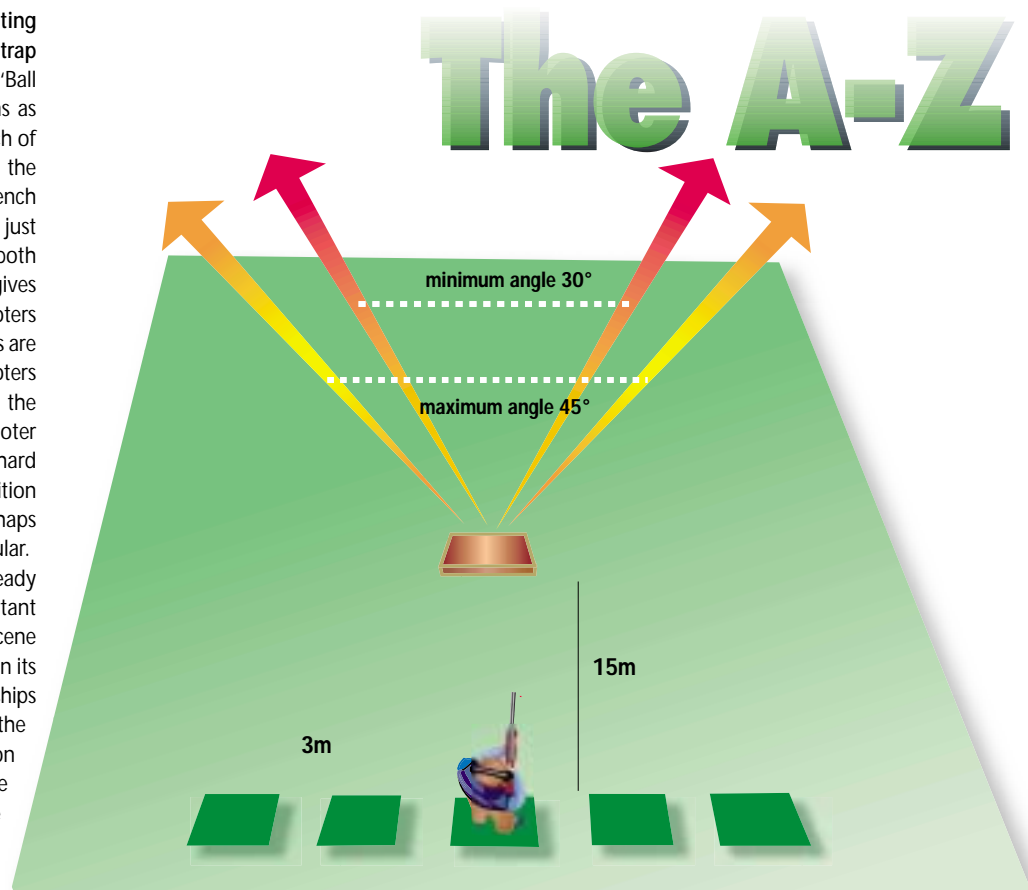
With so many different shooting disciplines to choose from it can be confusing for beginners and experienced shots alike to keep up with them all. In this new series we will be giving you an introduction to all the various forms of clay target shooting. If a discipline is run by a recognised governing body and British shooters can compete for championship honours in it then you will be able to find out all about it here. To kick off we start, appropriately, at A for Automatic Ball Trap or ABT for short.

ABT is a relative newcomer to the clay shooting scene and is a product of modern trap technology. It is also widely known as just 'Ball Trap' (painful as it sounds) and to Americans as 'Wobble Trap'. It was devised to provide much of the challenge of Olympic Trap without the associated high fixed costs of installing a trench with fifteen permanent traps. Instead it uses just one automatic trap that is constantly varying both the angle and elevation of the target. This gives an enormous variety of targets for the shooters but the one major drawback is that the targets are random, unlike Olympic Trap where all shooters will have faced the same mix of targets by the end of the competition. In theory one shooter could be unlucky enough to receive 100 hard right handers in succession during a competition and it is this inherent unfairness that has perhaps prevented the discipline becoming more popular.

Having said that, the low cost and ready availability of ABT has made it an important stepping stone into the international trap scene for many shooters, as well as a specialisation in its own right for many. With national championships and home international team places at stake, the discipline supports a busy competition programme. There is however little international competition outside of the British Isles. Major championships and selection shoots are usually shot over two days and 200 targets.

## THE BASICS

For the shooter stepping up from Down The Line, the basics of ABT will be familiar, although there are some important detail differences. There are five shooting positions positioned three metres apart in a line 15 metres from the trap. The shooting line can be either straight as in Olympic Trap or curved to the 15m radius — either is legal in this country. The trap is set below ground level,



## THE STARS

Almost all the leading names in the ABT world have several strings to their bow, moving with ease between the different trap shooting disciplines. You will find Olympic stars such as Ian Peel — the first man ever to shoot two 200 straights — figuring high in the rankings along with the likes of star junior Ed Ling. Here are a few who have been in the news lately:

### Sue Bate

Having enjoyed great success at DTL, Sue added ABT to her repertoire in 2002 with immediate success. In just her second competition, she won the Ladies English Open title and then narrowly missed out on the double when she lost to Jan Landells in a shoot off for the British Open. Having qualified for the England team at the first attempt she went on to be Ladies High Gun at the International match in Ireland.



### Peter Cole

The South West has always been one of the hot spots for ABT shooting and Devonian Peter Cole has been at the top of the discipline for many years and consistently near the top of the national averages. This year Peter led the England team to victory in the Home International match finishing as the individual High Gun with a score of 196/200.

with the roof level with the shooting positions. Most layouts are now equipped with acoustic release systems. The target parameters are set at a distance 10 metres out from the trap house roof. The lateral angles are set between 30 and 45 degrees from the straight ahead point, while the height can vary between one and four metres. At an elevation of two metres the targets should fly 70-75 metres, considerably faster and further than the standard DTL target.

moving to his right. As peg one is vacated shooter six moves on to it while the shooter from peg five moves down behind the line to peg one. This constant rotation continues until all six have shot 25 targets each, five from every peg.

Etiquette note: it is considered bad manners to move from the peg until the shooter to your immediate right has fired. Full use of the gun is allowed and all kills count equally, whether first or second barrel.

**EQUIPMENT**

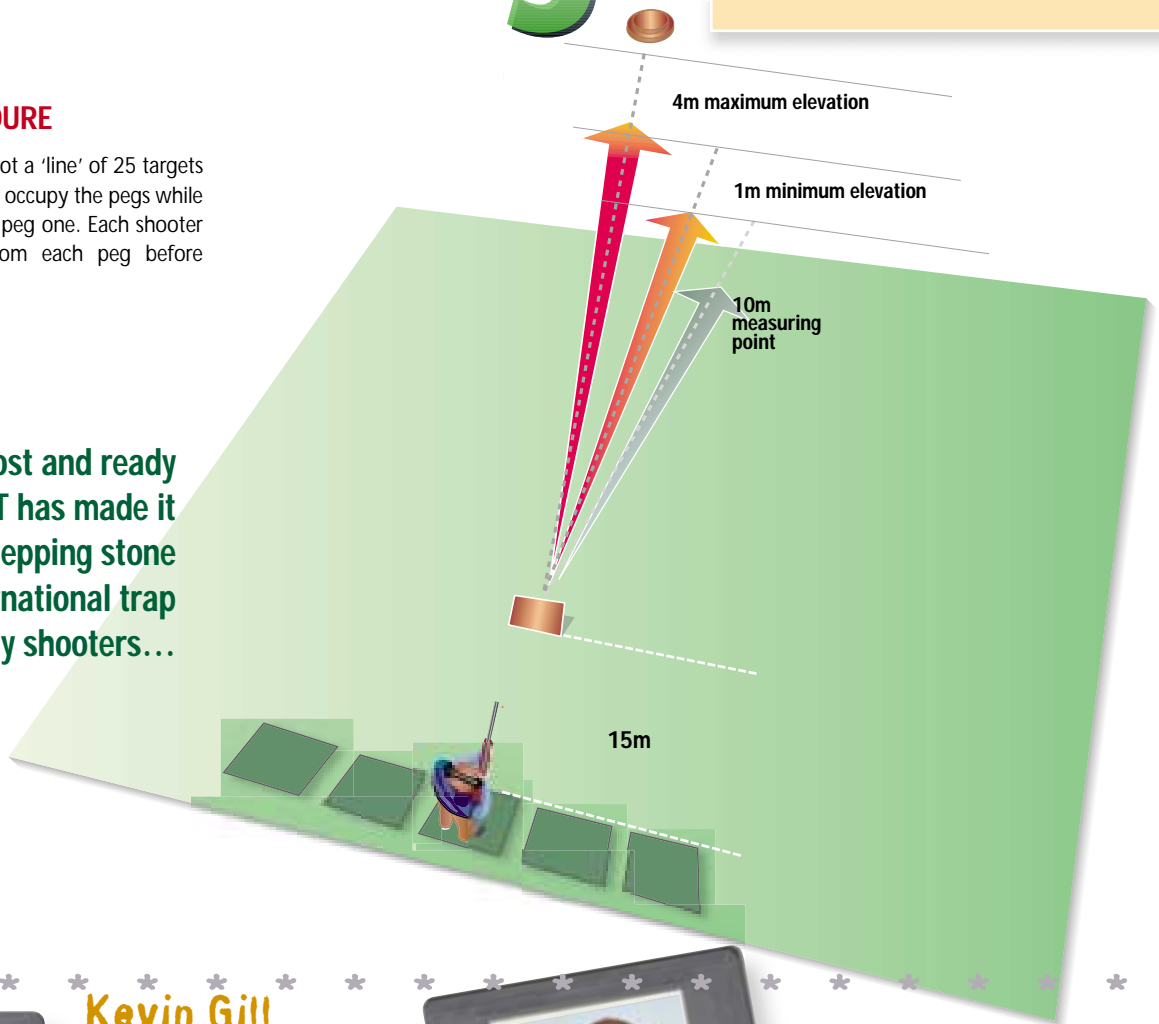
- Specialist trap guns would be considered essential for all serious competition work. These will typically be tightly choked – 3/4 and full – with barrels of 30 or 32 inches.
- Standard 28 gram cartridges are allowed usually in English shot sizes 7-7 1/2
- Targets are chosen for optimum visibility against the background with black or blaze the most common.
- Shooting glasses with interchangeable lenses will be invaluable so that lens colour can be altered to suit the prevailing light conditions.

# of shooting

**SHOOTING PROCEDURE**

Squads of six shooters shoot a 'line' of 25 targets each. Numbers one to five occupy the pegs while number six stands behind peg one. Each shooter takes just one target from each peg before

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**Kevin Gill**

An accomplished all round trap shooter, with Olympic and Commonwealth Games appearances to his credit, Kevin has had a great season in 2002 on the ABT circuit. He did the double of English and British Open Championships using the new Salvinelli Monza trap gun.



**Nigel Caves**

Another talented all rounder, Hertfordshire's Nigel Caves and his wife Karen are familiar faces on the ABT circuit and both can be relied on to be pushing for honours whenever they compete. Nigel shot more registered targets than any of the other leading names in 2001, finishing fourth in the national averages with an impressive 94.5% from 2600 targets shot.