SKEET BASICS: Stations 7 and 8

BY ED SCHERER

Skeet station high seven is a sleeper. It's such an easy station that skeeters take it for granted. It requires 8" of lead, but most of you will overlead on your misses, especially if you're switching from one to two-eyed shooting. Perhaps the biggest problem the experts have on this target is riding the target so that when shot is fired, the spread of pattern is minimal.

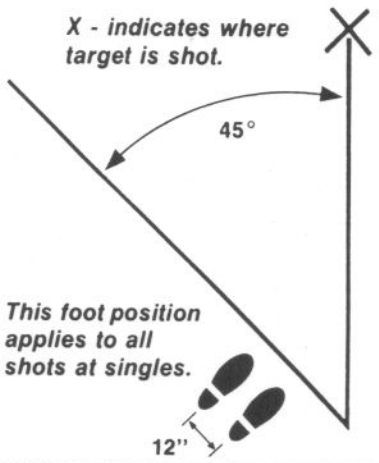
You Yankee shooters should fire your skeet gun into a snowbank at a spot halfway between Station 8 and the low house. This is where I'd like you to hit the target. Then shoot into a snowbank close in, equal to the distance the target is when it's brought way past the halfway mark. Study the shot spread of the two shots and you'll see quite vividly why you should shoot that target sooner. There's little room for error when your shot pattern spread is a foot versus a two-foot spread out there at the halfway mark.

On a windy day, that high house can be tricky at close range. Remember to freeze your cheek to the comb as you fire. Peeking or head lifting can be disastrous, especially on the high house double. Why is it that we invariably lift our heads from the stock when a target dips? Beats me.

Not too quick on the low house, please. If it's a windy day and the target is rising or dipping, I suggest you let the target make its move and then shoot. A strong headwind will invariably cause a rising target. Rise with it and fire just before Station 8, and if it sinks, take a good look and then shoot where it is. So many times I've seen skeeters shoot the target right out of the house and miss because shot spread was inadequate. Some shooters like to hold a low gun and then come up to the target. I prefer a higher holdpoint initially. Have the puller throw a target and note where the target is flying. Aim no more than a foot under this spot when calling. Too low a hold will cause your muzzle to swing through the target, and you'll very neatly shoot right over the clay bird and it's mighty embarrassing, isn't it?

Get with it on seven doubles and shoot that second target where I'd like the high house single shot (namely, out away from you so there is more pattern spread) and have your pal on the squad watch your cheek. If your cheek comes off the stock as the shot is fired, you're in for a heap of trouble. If, in addition, the comb is a bit high initially, I'll wager every miss on that second shot will be over the target.

Let's walk on over to Station 8. Draw a line from the top right corner of the opening on the high house to the top right corner of the roof. That should be a line going up at a 45° angle. Point your muzzle halfway up that line for the holdpoint and look over the barrel as you call for the target. Looking into the opening on the high house doesn't seem to help very much. When the sun is in your face and the target comes out of a shadow, looking into the opening helps even less. As the target hits the sky coming out of a shadow, there's still time to track and shoot . . . don't panic. As you blot out the target, fire instantly and keep your head frozen to the stock. If everything looks right and you're still missing, chances are your head is off the stock as you fire the

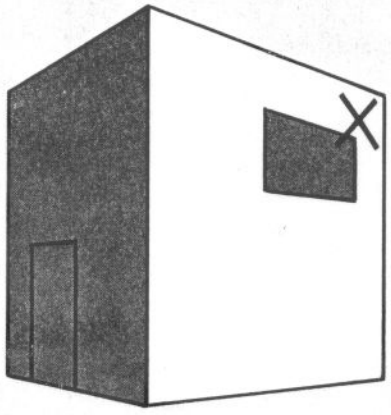


gun. Just as you call, loosen your grip on the forearm. At the range we shoot this target, there just isn't any lead. The swinging muzzle will take care of the lead. Just as you blot out that high house target with the muzzle, pull the trigger and you'll be rewarded with a smoke job, providing your head was firmly planted on the stock.

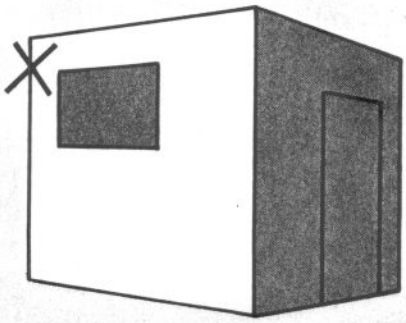
The holdpoint on high eight is the same for left-handers, except the muzzle is moved another 6" to the right. Your left eye picks up the clay bird as it leaves the house even though you're looking over the barrel. With your head firmly in place, shoot as soon as possible to take advantage of additional pattern spread. Remember now, blot it out. If you see the target when you shoot, I'll guarantee a miss. You must increase that muzzle speed as you fire to insure blotting out the target with your muzzle.

The holdpoint for low eight is the same for both left and right-handers. Look at the top left corner of the opening. Then move over a foot and up a foot. That's it! Look over the barrel and, as the target emerges, blot it out and pull the trigger. Keep your head locked to the stock. Here's a tip — if you see the target as the trigger is pulled, you'll miss. That low house rascal must disappear behind your muzzle as the shot is fired. Above all, don't rush the shot. Stand to the left side of the station. A line running from your toes will be at a 90° angle from the target opening. Have your friend hold your gun as you dry-fire a few shots at this target with your index finger extended on the hand that holds the forearm. Try this on four or five targets and note how much time there actually is to shoot this target. Do you see now why I don't want you to rush this target? There's plenty of time to set up a smooth swing. In skeet, the swing is the thing, and on low eight, a smooth swing is imperative. When you call for your 100th straight target here at low eight, make certain the hand holding the forearm is loose to insure that smooth swing. No white knuckle grip on that 100th target.

Next month, we'll spend some time on doubles at Stations 3, 4 and 5. In the meantime, send for my new book, "Scherer on Skeet", just off the press with the third printing, a 122-page dandy with over 90 photographs and illustrations in handy pocket size. Send $12.00 (postpaid) to: Ed Scherer, W30059 Woodcrest Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53188. An autographed copy will be sent in one week. SS



High 8, a tough shot for the inexperienced. Hold your gun between the outside corner and where the target emerges. Then call for the target, cover it up and you'll see puffs of black smoke.



Low 8 moves out smartly. It'll be easier to powder if you hold your gun to the right of the exit hole and below the corner of the house.

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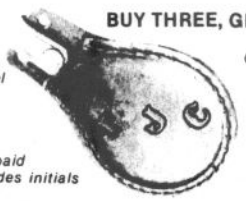
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