

# THE SHOOTER'S SCOPE

International Women's Day Special Edition Vol 3. Monthly Journal



SportsGiri Pvt Ltd

MARCH 2025, VOL 3



**PRECISION.  
RESILIENCE.  
VALOUR.**

*"She aimed, she fired, she conquered—rewriting records, redefining limits."*



Featuring: Ashi Chouksey, who set a new national record in the 50m Rifle 3 Positions Women's competition; Narmada Nithin Raju, the gold medalist in the Women's 10m Air Rifle competition; and Ramita Jindal, whose strong qualification performance reinforced Haryana's dominance in the sport.

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*Our Vision*

*To democratize sports shooting in India.*



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*To help overcome challenges faced by sports shooters, coaches, range owners, OEM and other stakeholders by technology infusion.*





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*Sports shooting is an Olympic event. Sportsgiri Pvt Ltd functions as the aggregator of all major needs of the shooters, coaches, range owners, OEM and the shooting community at large.*

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## SPECIAL EDITION : INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

“यत्र नार्यस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवता:”

(Transliteration: Yatra naryastu pujyante ramante tatra devatah)

“Where women are worshipped/respected, there the gods reside.”



This famous shloka from Manusmriti predates, by more than 2000 years, the current annual ritual of celebrating the UN recognised International Women's Day (IWD) on 08 March, since 1977. The march of women workers in New York in 1908 to the 'bread and peace' protest of Russian women on 08 March 1917 amid the World War I, the struggles, achievements and the fight for equality for the women continues unabated.

The contribution of women in sports, like in all other walks of life, has been phenomenal, though at a much slower pace. Circa 1900 Olympics saw the first participation of women with an abysmally low percent of 0.022, as compared to men. Their first appearance in sports shooting per se has been very late, in 1968, as mixed teams. Women's independent participation in shooting formally commenced only in 1984 Olympics.

To my limited understanding, India stands at the cusp of a phenomenal growth in sports shooting, with significant contribution from our women shooters. This 08 March 2025, while maintaining a long term positive view through 2036 Olympics, we wish to raise a toast specifically to our women shooters.

May the tribe of Manu Bhakers, Avani Lekharas and their ilk, grow by leaps and bounds! This Women's Day, doffing my hat for the ladies in our lives in general and sports shooters in particular!!

We would eagerly await your feedback at [magazine@sportsgiri.com](mailto:magazine@sportsgiri.com). Bouquets and brickbats both are equally welcome to help us improve. Like the shooters, our best is yet to come.

Jai Hind.  
Col Prem Rajpurohit, Veteran  
Editor

# *A message from the Sub- Editors*

In a world where every shot fired is a testament to courage, resilience, and unwavering determination, The Shooter's Scope is proud to dedicate this special edition to the women who have carved their mark in shooting sports—both in India and across the globe.

From the silent precision of a 10m air rifle to the sheer power of a trap shooter's stance, every woman who steps onto the range defies outdated narratives and proves that skill knows no gender. They are not just competitors; they are pioneers. They are not just athletes; they are revolutionaries.

As we turn these pages, we celebrate the legends who have paved the way, the rising stars who dream fearlessly, and the countless women whose passion for shooting may not yet be recognized but is no less extraordinary. We bring you stories of grit, triumph, and the quiet defiance of those who refuse to be limited by expectations.

To every woman who has ever gripped a rifle, drawn a bow, or steadied her aim for battles, for sport, for passion, for mastery—we salute you. Your journey is not just your own; it is a roadmap for the generations to come.

This Women's Day, we don't just applaud you. We stand with you. We shoot with you. And we promise to keep telling your stories, one bullet, one target, and one victory at a time.

Keep aiming high,

The Sub-Editors

Astha Bisht & Zoya Khan

The Shooter's Scope



*Astha Bisht*  
08/03/2025

*Zoya Khan*  
08/03/2025

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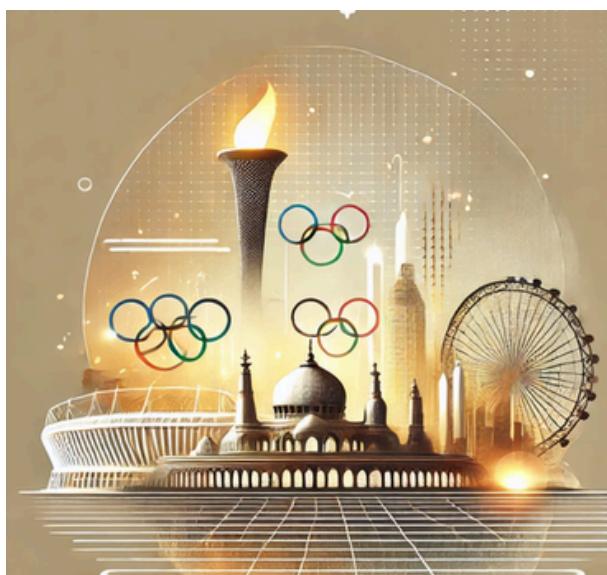
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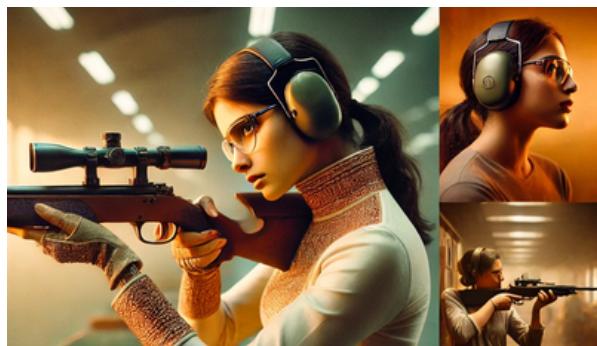


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# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

*Image credits: istock*

## *Aiming for Glory: The Rise of Indian Women in Sports Shooting*

As the world celebrates International Women's Day, the triumphs of Indian women in sports shooting shine as a powerful testament to resilience, precision, and unyielding ambition. Once considered a male-dominated sport, shooting has seen a revolutionary shift in India, with women not only stepping onto the field but conquering global arenas with remarkable performances. From clinching Olympic medals to setting new records, Indian women shooters have rewritten the narrative, proving that the sky is the limit when passion meets perseverance.

One of the most dazzling stars in Indian shooting is Manu Bhaker. A name synonymous with excellence, she has captivated audiences with her stellar performances on the world stage. At the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, she bagged two bronze medals—one in the women's 10-meter air pistol event and another in the mixed 10-meter air pistol team event alongside Sarabjot Singh. This historic feat made her the first Indian shooter to win two medals at the same Olympics, cementing her legacy in Indian sports. In recognition of her incredible achievements, she was honored with the Khel Ratna in 2025, becoming the youngest Indian shooter to receive the prestigious award.

Rajeshwari Kumari has also made waves in the sport, particularly in trap shooting. Her journey to the 2024 Paris Olympics was a landmark moment, as she became one of the few Indian women to qualify for the prestigious event. Though she finished 22nd, her qualification alone was a testament to the growing dominance of Indian women in shotgun disciplines. Earlier, she secured a silver medal in the women's trap team event at the 2022 Asian Games, further reinforcing her position as a leading force in Indian shooting.



The emergence of Raiza Dhillon as a formidable name in skeet shooting has been nothing short of spectacular. Hailing from Haryana, she was India's youngest shooter at the 2024 Olympics, a remarkable feat for the rising star. Her groundbreaking performance at the 67th National Shooting Championship in December 2024, where she shattered the junior national record and equaled the senior national record, showcased her immense potential and determination to dominate the sport in the coming years.



*The Tribune*



*Ganemath Sekhon's Instagram*

Ganemath Sekhon, another trailblazer in the skeet category, has been consistently bringing accolades to the country. She created history in 2021 by becoming the first Indian woman to win a medal in women's skeet at an ISSF World Cup, securing a bronze. Her momentum continued in 2023 when she won a gold medal in the skeet mixed team event at the ISSF World Cup in Cairo, alongside Mairaj Ahmad Khan. Her silver medal at the ISSF World Cup in Almaty further solidified her status as one of India's top shooters.

Beyond the realm of mainstream shooting, para-shooter Avani Lekhara has emerged as an icon of resilience and excellence. She made history by clinching gold in the women's 10-meter air rifle standing SH1 event at both the 2020 and 2024 Paralympics, becoming the first Indian woman to win multiple medals at a single Paralympic Games. Her journey has been a beacon of inspiration, proving that barriers are meant to be broken and dreams are meant to be pursued with unwavering determination.



*(Getty Images)*

Despite these phenomenal achievements, Indian women in sports shooting have faced numerous challenges. Limited access to world-class training facilities, financial constraints, and societal norms have often stood as roadblocks. However, with increasing government support, corporate sponsorships, and a cultural shift towards recognizing individual sporting excellence, the landscape is gradually changing. More young women are now choosing shooting as a viable career, inspired by the trailblazers who have paved the way.

The evolution of women's shooting in India also signals a broader transformation in the country's sports culture. While cricket and hockey have traditionally dominated the national consciousness, the success of shooters like Bhaker, Kumari, Dhillon, Sekhon, and Lekhara has opened new doors, inspiring young girls to challenge conventions and aim for the pinnacle of success on the world stage.

These exceptional athletes are not just rewriting history—they are shaping the future of sports shooting in India. Their unwavering commitment, extraordinary discipline, and fearless ambition serve as an enduring inspiration for the next generation. As India continues to nurture and invest in female sporting talent, the day is not far when Indian women will reign supreme in the world of shooting.

This International Women's Day, we celebrate their indomitable spirit, their passion, and their relentless pursuit of greatness. The road ahead is brimming with possibilities, and with continued dedication, India is set to witness even greater milestones in women's sports shooting. These champions are not just winning medals—they are building a legacy that will inspire generations to come.

# India's Road to the 2036 Olympics: Infrastructure, Challenges, and the Path Forward



India has officially entered the race to host the 2036 Olympic and Paralympic Games, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi confirming the country's bid at the International Olympic Committee (IOC) session in Mumbai. Calling it an "age-old dream" of 1.4 billion Indians, Modi emphasized India's commitment to making the Games a success, ensuring no effort is spared in its preparation. With its growing sporting infrastructure and a strong passion for sports, India aims to bring the world's biggest sporting event to its shores for the first time. The next editions of the Summer Olympics are already set, with Paris having hosted the 2024 Games, Los Angeles preparing for 2028, and Brisbane set to welcome the world in 2032.

However, while India's bid signals a major step forward in the country's global sporting ambitions, it also comes with significant challenges.

When compared to Olympic-ready nations like France, which hosted the 2024 Paris Olympics, India's sports infrastructure still has significant gaps to bridge. Paris had a well-established network of world-class stadiums, multi-sport complexes, and seamless transportation systems, ensuring a smooth and sustainable event. The 2024 Olympics set a high standard for sustainability, with Paris focusing on eco-friendly innovations such as fully recyclable and lightweight cardboard beds for athletes in the Olympic Village. These beds, designed for durability and comfort, reflected a commitment to reducing waste while maintaining efficiency. Additionally, 95% of the venues used for the Games were either pre-existing or temporary, ensuring minimal environmental impact. The city also prioritized renewable energy sources and eco-friendly transport options, such as hydrogen-powered buses and expanded cycling lanes.

Compared to this, India still faces challenges in modernizing its stadiums, ensuring sustainable infrastructure, and creating athlete-friendly facilities with cutting-edge technology and green initiatives. From building world-class facilities and improving transport infrastructure to ensuring financial viability and meeting stringent IOC requirements, hosting the Olympics will require meticulous planning and long-term investment. Additionally, concerns around governance, logistical execution, and sustainability will be key factors in determining India's readiness to take on this monumental task.

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India has a rich history of sports and has produced some of the world's greatest athletes. To sustain and nurture future talent, a strong sports infrastructure is essential. Over the past few years, India has made considerable progress in this sector, with both the government and private sector playing a crucial role. However, there is still much to be done to make sports facilities more accessible and to ensure young athletes receive the necessary support to excel. The sports infrastructure sector in India presents an investment opportunity worth \$2.2 billion, highlighting the potential for further development.

The country currently houses approximately 100 sports facilities that meet international standards, alongside numerous government-owned college and university grounds, community centers, and privately owned sports complexes. One of the most significant initiatives in recent years has been the Khelo India scheme, launched in 2018, which focuses on grassroots-level sports development. With 282 sports infrastructure projects amounting to \$1.43 billion executed under this program in the past five years, India has been steadily improving its facilities. The Sports Authority of India (SAI) has also played a crucial role in managing sports facilities, training athletes, and establishing regional centers to promote various sports.

State governments have also been taking proactive measures to enhance sports infrastructure. Haryana, for instance, invested over \$18 million to prepare for the Khelo India Youth Games in 2022. Similarly, Odisha constructed 89 multi-purpose indoor stadiums in urban areas, investing \$86.66 million to host the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in 2022 and the Men's Hockey World Cup in 2023. The private sector has also contributed by setting up sports academies and training centers, fostering grassroots talent and boosting India's sports industry.

Despite these advancements, challenges remain. One of the primary concerns is the maintenance of existing sports facilities. Poorly maintained infrastructure discourages athletes and spectators alike, ultimately hindering the development of sports in the country. Additionally, while cricket enjoys widespread popularity and investment, other sports such as football, hockey, and athletics require greater attention and better facilities to support professional training and international competition.

# *Shooting Sports Infrastructure: Challenges and the Road Ahead*

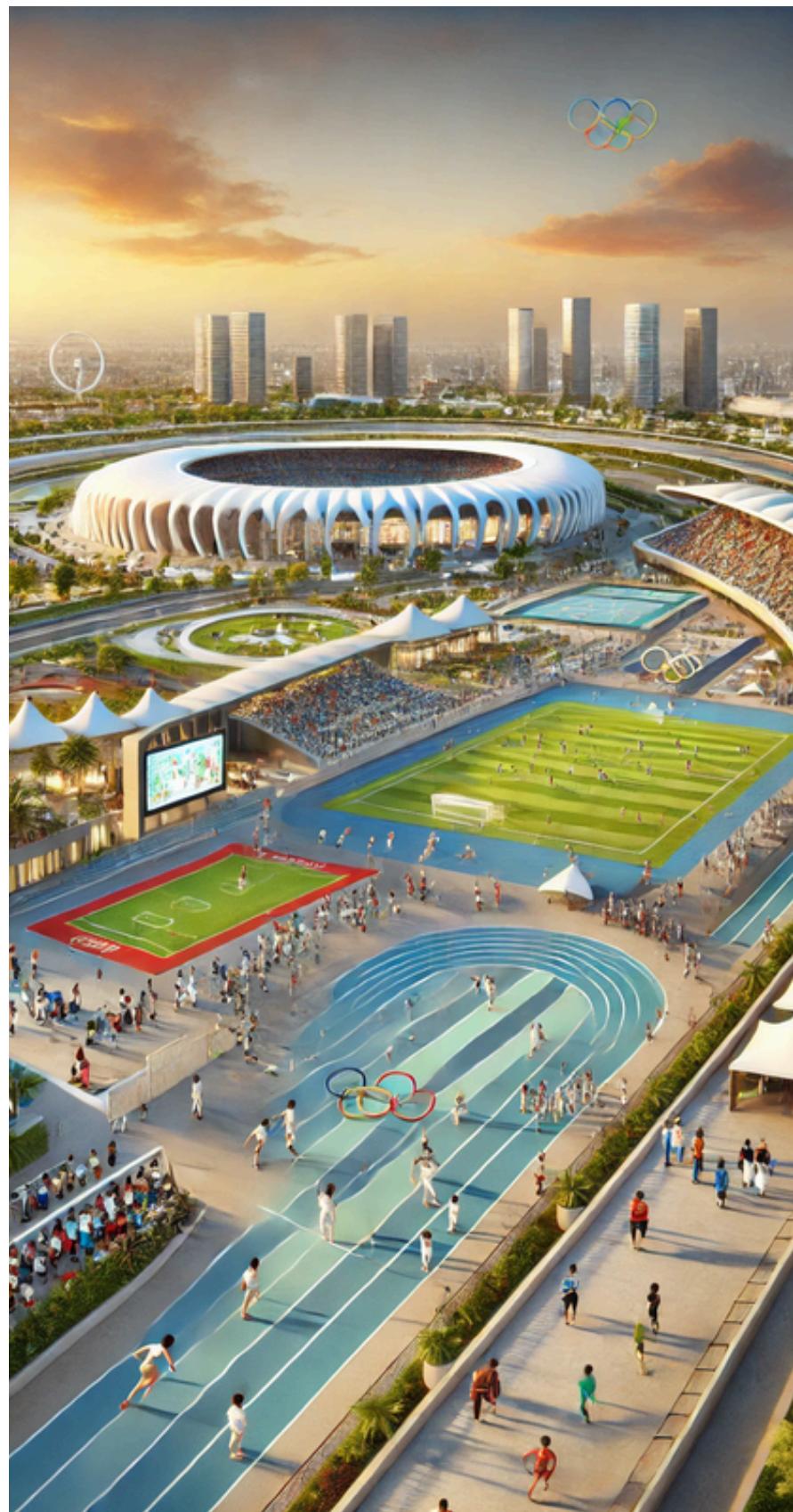
A comparison with the infrastructure deployed in Paris 2024 and the developments shaping up for Los Angeles 2028 highlights the benchmarks India must meet in shooting sports. The 2024 Paris Olympics featured a state-of-the-art shooting complex at La Courneuve, equipped with electronic target systems, climate-controlled indoor ranges, and high-tech training facilities to ensure optimal conditions for shooters. Los Angeles 2028 is expected to further raise the bar with AI-assisted training analytics and eco-friendly range designs.

In contrast, India faces several challenges in shooting sports development. The country lacks sufficient Olympic-standard shooting ranges, with many existing facilities suffering from poor maintenance and outdated technology. Additionally, while India has produced talented shooters, there is a shortage of internationally acclaimed coaches to refine their skills and implement advanced training methodologies. Another major issue is the absence of domestic manufacturing for guns and pellets, making Indian shooters heavily reliant on expensive imported equipment subject to regulatory restrictions.



Unlike cricket, shooting also lacks a structured grassroots league system, depriving young talent of competitive exposure. Financial support remains inadequate, with many emerging shooters struggling to afford training, travel, and equipment due to limited sponsorship opportunities. Furthermore, the absence of an alternative competition ecosystem beyond the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) restricts opportunities for athletes outside the national circuit. Addressing these issues through improved infrastructure, better financial backing, and the development of a structured competition framework will be crucial if India aims to compete at the highest level and successfully host the 2036 Olympics.

Investing in sports infrastructure is not just about hosting the Olympics but also about creating long-term economic and social benefits. With the sector valued at \$2.2 billion, increased funding can drive job creation, boost tourism, and enhance India's global sporting reputation. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) and streamlined regulatory processes could accelerate the development of modern stadiums, training academies, and sports science facilities. These investments will not only strengthen India's ability to host international events but also foster long-term sports development, benefiting athletes and industries associated with the sector.



As India aspires to host the 2036 Olympics, bridging the gap between its existing infrastructure and global Olympic standards becomes crucial. While significant investments have been made in stadiums, training centers, and grassroots programs, hosting an event of this magnitude will require large-scale urban planning, upgraded transportation networks, and world-class athlete facilities.



## India's Olympic Prospects

Hosting the Olympics will undoubtedly be a proud moment for India, but the country's historical medal tally presents a challenge. While India has seen growth in its sporting achievements, with standout performances in disciplines like shooting, wrestling, badminton, and athletics, the overall medal count remains limited compared to global powerhouses.

As the host nation, expectations will be high, and a modest medal tally could be seen as an embarrassment. However, rather than viewing this as a drawback, India must use the 2036 Games as a stepping stone—investing in talent development, grassroots programs, and elite training facilities to ensure a stronger Olympic performance.

*As Abhinav Bindra, India's first individual Olympic gold medalist, has stated, "Winning a medal isn't just about talent; it's about access to the right facilities, coaching, and exposure."*

The financial commitment for hosting the Olympics will also be substantial. Recent Olympic budgets provide a benchmark—Paris 2024 is estimated to have cost \$8 billion, while Tokyo 2020 saw expenditures exceeding \$15 billion. India, given its infrastructure gaps, could face significantly higher costs, potentially in the range of \$12-18 billion, depending on how much new infrastructure needs to be built versus repurposed. Ensuring financial viability through public-private partnerships and corporate sponsorships will be crucial.

Security presents another major challenge. The Olympics attract global attention, making them a potential target for security threats. India, with its complex geopolitical environment and history of security concerns, will need a comprehensive safety strategy. The deployment of advanced surveillance systems, counter-terrorism measures, and seamless coordination between central and state security forces will be necessary to ensure the safety of athletes, officials, and spectators. The success of security operations at events like the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi can serve as a foundation, but hosting the Olympics will require security efforts on an unprecedented scale.



# Rising Precision: A Deep Dive into Shooting at the 38th National Games

(28TH JAN TO 14TH FEB 2025 / DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND)

The 38th National Games in Dehradun was a turning point for Indian shooting sport with spectacular performances by veteran sportspersons as well as newcomers. The event not only highlighted the progress in shooting facilities but also reflected the growing importance of India in the international world of the sport.

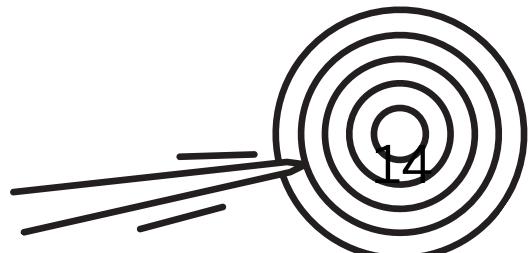
Madhya Pradesh's Ashi Chouksey won acclaim by setting a new national record in the 50m Rifle 3 Positions Women's competition, scoring an impressive 598 points, significantly above the old standard of 594. Tamil Nadu's Narmada Nithin Raju followed suit with a fine performance in the Women's 10m Air Rifle competition, taking the gold medal with a score of 254.4 points, just 0.1 points shy of the world record. The dominance of Haryana in the sport of shooting was further cemented by Anish Bhanwala's gold in the Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol competition, further cementing his reputation as one of India's top shooters. Suruchi's victory in the Women's 10m Air Pistol competition and Ramita Jindal's strong performance in the qualification round further cemented Haryana's dominance in the sport.

In comparison to the earlier editions, the 38th National Games saw a record surge in the levels of performance. The breaking of national records and near-world-record performances point to a direction towards greater technical accuracy and better training methods. On the state front, Haryana established its supremacy in the sport of shooting by delivering medal-winning performances in various categories. The emergence of Madhya Pradesh as a force to reckon with was aptly demonstrated by Chouksey's record-breaking show, while Tamil Nadu demonstrated its emerging potential with Narmada Nithin Raju's feat.



*Garhwali Post*

Organized at the newly inaugurated Trishul Shooting Range, the competition was appreciated for world-class facilities and earned praise from the shooters as well as experts. Off to the Paris Olympics, Sarabjot Singh described the range as the best in the nation, indicating the unprecedented progress achieved in developing shooting infrastructure in India. The ten-day competition was well-planned, offering a smooth experience to all the shooters. With the development of infrastructure, improved coaching facilities, and better event management, India is well-positioned to consolidate its position among the world leaders in the shooting sports arena. The success of the 38th National Games reflects the country's resolve to build a competitive shooting culture. The presence of young, up-and-coming talent along with veteran champions suggests a bright future, one where India can be a world-class shooting nation. If things continue on the same path, the success here could be the foundation for even greater success on the world stage.





*Rudrapur: Many competitions are being organized under the 38th National Games in Uttarakhand. In this episode, a trap shooting competition is to be held in Rudrapur of Udhampur Singh Nagar. In such a situation, CM Pushkar Dhami reached Rudrapur to take stock of the arrangements for the trap shooting competition. Where he did a ground inspection of the arrangements for the shooting competition. During this, he also tried his hand at shooting and took aim with a shotgun.*

(by <https://officersinfo.com/>)

The standout aspect of this year's National Games was the level of competition, which was very fierce across all disciplines. Shooters from the most distant corners of the nation showed up well equipped, with skill and calmness of mind that have only been seen a handful of times in local competitions. The men's and women's 10m Air Rifle competitions were the most keenly contested, with many close finishes that had the spectators at the edge of their seats.

Shooting as a sport in India has seen a massive surge in the last few years, thanks to increased access to training centers, international exposure to budding shooters, and consistent patronage from private and public sector organizations. But there are some issues that remain, particularly at the grassroots level. The lack of proper training centers in most of the states is a serious issue, and though national-level sportsmen are performing well, the need of the hour is to take the extra step in identifying and nurturing talent at the junior level.

The Games this year reflected an increased emphasis on sports science and data-driven training techniques. The majority of the best shooters credited their performance to meticulous performance analysis, biomechanical testing, and sports psychology sessions that enabled the fine-tuning of their abilities and mental resilience. The use of advanced tools, high-speed cameras for shooting posture analysis, and virtual reality simulation for accuracy practice were among the cutting-edge technology techniques adopted by teams in their preparatory phase.

The Games provided a good platform for young shooters to prove their mettle against the best. While the senior lot remained the dominant force, some of the young guns made a good impression with their performance. Among them, worthy of mention were Tilottama Sen and Varun Tomar, who proved to be full of potential and testified to the depth of India's talent pool.

Their ability to handle pressure and keep up with seasoned players, shot by shot, speaks volumes about the huge amount of work put in by various academies to prepare future champions. In addition to performances, the National Games also highlighted the growing significance of private academies in shaping India's future in shooting.

While most government-backed and private training academies were producing state-of-the-art sportspersons, India is gradually building a strong shooting culture. There remains room for enhancement in the accessibility of funds, equipment, and world-class training, particularly at the district level.

State-wise, Haryana topped the overall medal count in shooting, further cementing its position as India's shooting hub. Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Punjab also performed well; however, the imbalance in the number of world-class facilities and specialist coaches between the states still persists. It will be crucial to balance this imbalance in ensuring that India continues to produce world-class shooters on a national level.

In the future, the experience that has been gained through these National Games will be of vital importance to prepare Indian shooters for international competitions. With the 2024 Paris Olympics staring in the face, the majority of the sportspersons who performed well at Dehradun will now target international competitions. The ability to perform in the same manner as they did in the National Games on the international stage will be instrumental in determining India's performance in the forthcoming years. Though it is certain that India has the talent needed, the biggest obstacle is infrastructure development.

The National Games saw a high-profile shooting competition being successfully conducted; however, the question is: Can India sustain and take this forward? The future of competitive shooting in India will indeed be decided by future competitions, increased investment in grassroots development, and a consistent focus on sports science and innovation.

Now, the 38th National Games are evidence of India's potential. With strategic planning, long-term investment, and a will to perform, there is every reason to expect that Indian shooters will not only dominate at home but also make a mark overseas in the years ahead.



*Haryana's Suruchi bags Gold in women's 10 metre air pistol*



*With an unbelievable performance in the Women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions qualification round at the 38th National Games in Uttarakhand, Ashi Chouksey has made a sound shooting 598/600, a continuously unofficial score that seems to seal the current world record.*

## State-wise Top 10 Rankings in Shooting

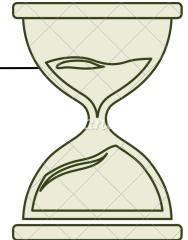
Rank	State	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total Medals
1	Haryana	10	7	5	22
2	Maharashtra	7	5	6	18
3	Tamil Nadu	6	6	4	16
4	Madhya Pradesh	5	4	5	14
5	Punjab	4	5	3	12
6	Rajasthan	3	4	4	11
7	Uttar Pradesh	3	3	5	11
8	Delhi	2	3	4	9
9	Karnataka	2	2	3	7
10	West Bengal	1	2	2	5

## Top 10 Shooters of the 38th National Games

Rank	Shooter Name	Event	Score/Performance
1	Ashi Chouksey	50m Rifle 3 Positions (Women)	598 (New NR)
2	Narmada Nithin Raju	10m Air Rifle (Women)	254.4
3	Anish Bhanwala	25m Rapid Fire Pistol (Men)	Gold Medal
4	Suruchi	10m Air Pistol (Women)	Gold Medal
5	Ramita Jindal	10m Air Pistol Qualification	Strong Finish
6	Tilottama Sen	10m Air Rifle (Women)	Emerging Talent
7	Varun Tomar	10m Air Pistol (Men)	Impressive Show
8	Sarabjot Singh	10m Air Pistol (Men)	Strong Performance
9	Rudrankksh Patil	10m Air Rifle (Men)	Silver Medal
10	Manu Bhaker	25m Pistol (Women)	Bronze Medal

# AIM HIGH: LIFE LESSONS YOUNG SHOOTERS LEARN ALONG THE WAY

*Competitive shooting might seem like an intense, high-stakes sport, but for young shooters, it's a whole lot more. It's a journey that goes beyond the bullseye, teaching them a set of qualities and values that make life richer and more fulfilling. Here's how learning to shoot also means learning some pretty amazing life skills.*

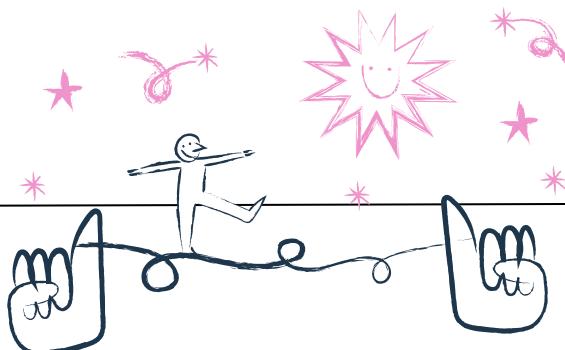


## 1. Patience and the Power of Pausing

In shooting, things don't happen in a rush. Each shot requires careful breathing, composure, and focus. For young shooters, this practice teaches the value of slowing down and taking a moment to breathe. This skill, of stopping to gather thoughts, extends to daily life, whether it's handling school projects, friendships, or even stressful situations. They learn that good things—and good results—come with patience.

## 2. Focus: Being Present in the Moment

Shooting sports have a unique way of keeping distractions at bay. When a young shooter is on the line, all that matters is their target and technique. This practice of being fully present translates beautifully to other aspects of life, helping them stay focused on whatever task they have in front of them, from studying for a big test to listening intently to a friend. Learning to concentrate on one thing at a time becomes second nature, and it's a skill that serves them well as they grow.



## 3. Confidence in Small Steps

Shooting teaches kids to appreciate the journey rather than expecting big wins right away. Each day at practice brings small improvements, and those small victories build a quiet confidence. Whether it's hitting the target a little closer each time or refining their stance, these incremental gains remind young shooters that confidence grows from taking small, consistent steps forward. This mindset makes them comfortable with progress, not perfection, as they move through life.

#### 4. Respect and Sportsmanship

While shooting may seem like a solitary sport, it's also a sport of camaraderie. From cheering on teammates to learning from opponents, young shooters quickly come to value sportsmanship and respect for everyone on the range. They learn that supporting others, even competitors, only enhances the experience. These qualities encourage them to foster positive relationships and respect others' unique strengths, creating a foundation of kindness and respect.

#### 6. Self-Discipline and Responsibility

To be a shooter, especially at the competitive level, requires a lot of commitment. Young shooters learn to organize their practice schedules, care for their equipment, and set goals for themselves. This sense of responsibility spills over into other areas of their lives, helping them become disciplined and accountable individuals. Whether it's managing schoolwork or balancing activities, they learn to follow through and make good on their commitments.

*Aiming for the target, shaping the soul—shooting teaches patience, focus, and the quiet confidence to hit life's marks."*

#### 5. Mental Flexibility and Staying Calm Under Pressure

Shooting requires young athletes to adapt to various factors, like changing wind conditions or different venues. This flexibility, coupled with the need to stay calm in pressure situations, makes shooters well-equipped for the unexpected. In day-to-day life, these young shooters are often the ones who can keep cool during a sudden change of plans or approach a problem from multiple angles. Staying calm and adaptable becomes a natural response.



#### Wrapping It Up: More Than Just a Sport

At the end of the day, shooting isn't just about medals or records for these young athletes. It's about the journey that shapes them into confident, focused, and kind-hearted people. As they take aim, they're building skills and qualities that will help them succeed in all kinds of "targets" life throws at them.

# *Through the Eyes of a Coach: The Mentors Behind Junior Shooting Champions*

In competitive shooting, a young athlete's journey is never a solo endeavor. Behind every shot, medal, and moment of focus stands a coach who has poured dedication, strategy, and guidance into their development. These coaches play a pivotal role, blending technical mastery with mental strength-building, helping junior athletes reach levels of excellence they never thought possible. These coaches are far more than instructors; they're mentors who instill life skills, from patience to perseverance, guiding athletes to reach their fullest potential on and off the range. Let's take a closer look at the world of these remarkable mentors and the impact they have on shaping junior shooting champions.

One such coach is Jaspal Rana from India, who has trained junior champions like Saurabh Chaudhary and Manu Bhaker. Known for his unwavering discipline and high standards, Rana teaches his athletes the value of patience and perseverance. "My role is to help them grow as shooters, but also as people," he says, focusing on character development alongside marksmanship.

In the world of Indian shooting sports, Jaspal Rana stands as a mentor, guide, and sometimes even a second parent to the young athletes he coaches. Rana's practices often include rigorous mental and physical exercises, pushing his athletes to confront and master their limits. His influence has helped turn India into a powerhouse in junior shooting sports, with young shooters finding inner strength and focus that reaches beyond the range.

*"I tell them that a champion isn't just defined by a trophy," he says. "It's how they handle their own emotions, losses, wins, and fears."*



Across the world, in Australia, Petr Kurka brings a deep empathy to his coaching. A former Olympian, Kurka recognizes the pressures young athletes face and takes pride in cultivating a sense of calm, allowing each athlete to discover their own strengths. “Every shooter has a unique rhythm,” he explains. “Our role as coaches is to help them find and refine that, letting them flourish in their way.” His supportive approach not only builds technical skill but creates a bond of trust, with athletes knowing they’re valued for their individuality. Under Kurka, they learn to channel stress into steady resilience—a skill that often carries them through life’s challenges well beyond competition.



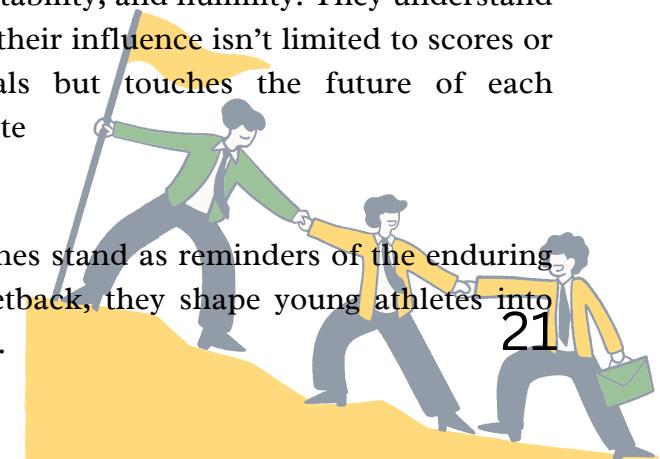
(Getty Images)

In a world that often focuses on quick success, these coaches stand as reminders of the enduring power of mentorship. Through every challenge, win, or setback, they shape young athletes into people ready to face life’s targets, one steady breath at a time.



(Getty Images)

Jay Shi in the USA, known for coaching junior pistol athletes, goes further in simulating high-stress scenarios to prepare his athletes. “If they can breathe through that pressure,” Shi says, “they can breathe through anything.” His methods, which include visualization and intensive mental training, help young athletes develop a rock-solid mental foundation. Shi’s athletes often describe how his coaching has changed them—giving them tools to stay composed and confident, both on the shooting range and in their personal lives. This guidance extends beyond championships. These coaches see their role as helping young people grow into adults with courage, adaptability, and humility. They understand that their influence isn’t limited to scores or medals but touches the future of each athlete



# The Importance of Recovery for Elite Shooters and Athletes

Recovery is essential for athletes, especially elite sports shooters, whose success hinges on endurance, precision, and mental sharpness. Proper recovery strategies not only improve physical performance but also help prevent injuries and mental burnout. Here's how recovery can optimize performance, backed by facts and research.

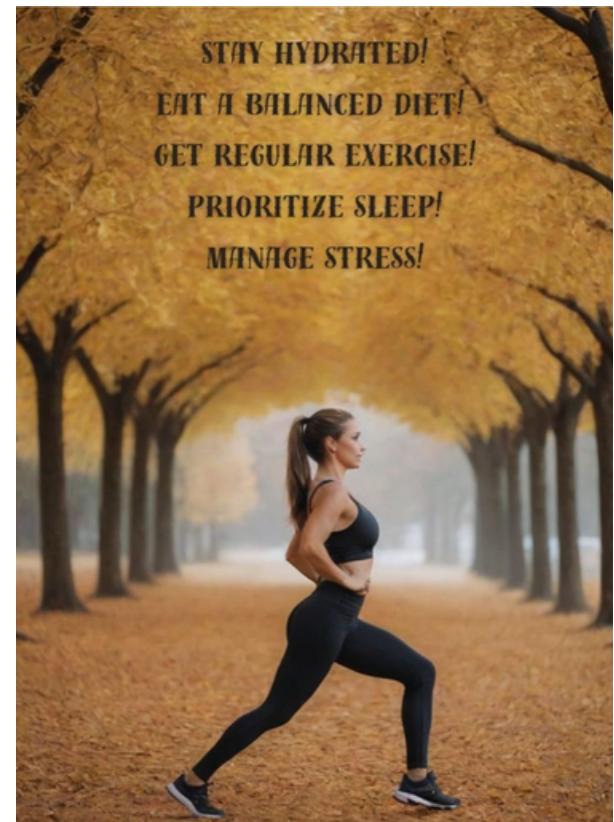
## 1. Physical Recovery: Sleep and Hydration

### *Sleep: The Ultimate Performance Enhancer*

Elite shooters need between 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night to ensure optimal recovery. Research highlights that sleep deprivation can slash endurance by up to 30%, slow reaction times, and impair concentration—all critical elements for precision sports. Quality sleep also helps regulate cortisol levels and supports the release of human growth hormone (HGH), essential for tissue repair and overall physical recovery.

### *Hydration: Maintaining Mental and Physical Edge*

Even a mild dehydration of just 1-2% of body weight can significantly impair cognitive functions such as focus and memory. For shooters, maintaining proper hydration is vital not only to prevent cramps and muscle fatigue but also to sustain steady performance during long competitions. Staying well-hydrated ensures that athletes remain sharp and physically resilient throughout their events.



## What Burnout May Look Like



## 2. Preventing Burnout and Overtraining Syndrome (OTS)

### *Recognizing the Signs of Overtraining*

Overtraining syndrome affects up to 60% of elite athletes, leading to chronic fatigue, mood disturbances, and decreased performance. In the realm of shooting sports, OTS manifests as mental burnout, reduced focus, and a heightened risk of injury, especially when training loads aren't balanced with adequate recovery.

### *Incorporating Rest Days and Active Recovery*

To combat overtraining, science recommends incorporating at least one full rest day per week, complemented by low-intensity activities such as stretching or walking on recovery days. This balance helps prevent both mental fatigue and physical strain, ensuring that shooters remain fresh and focused.

### 3. The Role of Nutrition in Recovery

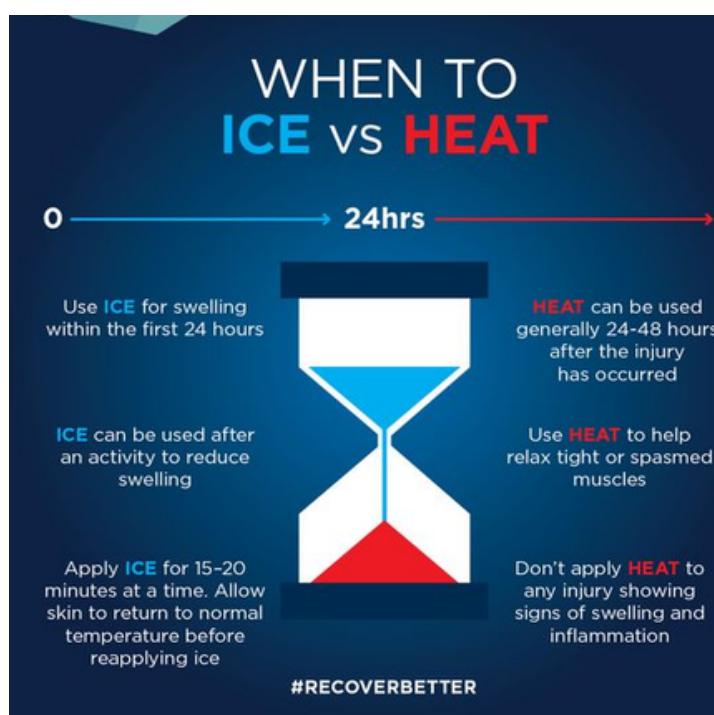
#### Fueling the Body Right

Nutrition plays a pivotal role in an athlete's recovery process. Carbohydrates are essential for replenishing muscle glycogen depleted during training. Athletes should aim to consume approximately 1.2 grams of carbohydrates per kilogram of body weight within the first hour post-workout.



#### Protein and Anti-Inflammatory Foods

Post-exercise protein intake of 20-30 grams aids in muscle repair and reduces soreness. Additionally, incorporating anti-inflammatory foods rich in antioxidants—such as berries, green tea, and omega-3 fatty acids—can enhance recovery by minimizing oxidative stress, allowing shooters to maintain their training intensity.



### 4. Specialized Recovery Modalities for Shooters

#### Cold Therapy: Quick Soothe for Muscles

Cold therapy, including immersion in cold water or cryotherapy sessions at temperatures between 10-15°C for 10-15 minutes, can reduce muscle soreness by 15-20% after intense physical activity. This method helps shooters recover faster, maintaining their readiness for subsequent training sessions or competitions.

#### Massage Therapy: Enhancing Circulation and Flexibility

Regular massage therapy has been shown to improve circulation and reduce muscle stiffness, cutting recovery times by up to 30%. Athletes who incorporate massages into their routines report fewer muscle injuries and sustained flexibility, essential for maintaining optimal shooting form and endurance.

### 5. Mental Recovery: Focus and Relaxation Techniques

#### Enhancing Concentration through Meditation

Mental focus is a cornerstone of shooting sports. Practices like meditation and visualization exercises can improve concentration by up to 15%, helping shooters stay calm and composed under pressure. These techniques enable athletes to maintain their composure during high-stakes moments.

#### Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), which involves tensing and then relaxing different muscle groups, has been shown to enhance both physical and mental recovery. By reducing muscle tension and promoting a state of calm, PMR helps shooters improve their overall performance and resilience.

#### 5 Benefits of Progressive Muscle Relaxation



## **Conclusion: Balancing Mind and Body for Sustained Excellence**

For elite shooters, recovery is far more than just taking a break—it's a comprehensive strategy that integrates mental and physical well-being. By prioritizing sleep, hydration, nutrition, and specialized recovery techniques, athletes can prevent burnout and sustain long-term performance. Emphasizing mental relaxation alongside proper physical recovery ensures that shooters remain sharp, resilient, and injury-free. These scientifically-backed recovery strategies not only help athletes maintain their peak performance season after season but also promote sustainable success in the demanding world of sports shooting. As the next generation of sharpshooters continues to rise, the importance of recovery will remain a critical element in their journey towards excellence and Olympic glory.

## **EMPOWERING LIVES WITH NUTRITION & FITNESS COACHING**

Smita, a devoted nutrition and fitness coach, is committed to assisting individuals in reaching their health and wellness objectives. She develops customized programs tailored to each client's specific requirements. Smita advocates for a comprehensive health approach, highlighting the significance of a well-rounded diet, consistent exercise, and a positive outlook.



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# ON TARGET WITH SAFETY: BEST PRACTICES IN COMPETITIVE SHOOTING

## HOW DISCIPLINE, TECHNOLOGY, AND TRAINING KEEP COMPETITIVE SHOOTING SECURE

*In the world of competitive shooting, safety isn't merely a checklist item—it's the foundation of the sport. With firearms comes the responsibility to ensure the safety of everyone involved, from competitors and coaches to spectators. Strict protocols, constant vigilance, and a culture that places safety above all else make shooting sports one of the most rigorously regulated athletic domains. Let's explore how today's best practices keep shooting ranges safe, respectful, and controlled environments.*

### Range Etiquette: The Backbone of Safety

Range etiquette is more than a code of conduct; it's a commitment to mutual respect and caution among all participants. This starts with basics that every shooter knows by heart: always keep firearms pointed downrange, never place a finger on the trigger until ready to shoot, and handle each firearm as if it's loaded. These actions are second nature to professional shooters and are drilled into newcomers from day one, building a disciplined, safety-conscious culture across the sport.

Respecting space is another core element, especially on a crowded range. Every shooter has their designated area, and strict attention to personal space helps maintain focus and prevent accidental bumps or distractions that could lead to mishandling.

### Protective Gear: A Must-Have on the Range

Mandatory protective gear is essential, ensuring that athletes' eyes and ears are shielded from potential harm. High-decibel noise from firearms can lead to permanent hearing damage, making noise-canceling earmuffs and earplugs non-negotiable for shooters. Eye protection, like ballistic-grade glasses, guards against flying debris and cartridge casings that can cause injuries.



(2016 Getty Images)

Many competitive shooters also rely on specialized gear tailored to their sport—such as padded shooting gloves and vests for shotgun events—which adds comfort and safety for long practice sessions. With safety gear in place, shooters can focus fully on performance without compromising protection.

### Regular Equipment Checks: Prevention Through Preparation

Regular, thorough equipment checks are critical in maintaining safety and preventing mishaps. Many shooters perform a complete inspection of their firearms before and after each session, checking for smooth functionality, sensitive triggers, and reliable ammunition. A firearm that misfires or jams during an event is not only a distraction but a potential hazard, so preventive maintenance is a priority.

At competitive ranges, range officers oversee equipment inspections, ensuring compliance with safety standards. These officers are trained to detect any issues with firearms, helping prevent equipment-related incidents before they happen.

### Safety Technologies: Modern Innovations for a Safer Sport

Advances in safety technology have made shooting sports safer than ever. Modern firearms often feature advanced safety mechanisms, such as trigger locks and manual safeties, that prevent accidental discharge.

In competitions, electronic scoring systems allow shooters and judges to observe scores from a safe distance, reducing the need to approach targets during live events.

Some ranges have also implemented digital monitoring systems, which track the activities and positions of everyone on the range. These systems enable immediate response to safety violations and help reinforce adherence to best practices, giving both athletes and organizers peace of mind.



*“In shooting sports, safety isn’t just a rule—it’s a culture built on respect, discipline, and vigilance.”*

— Maria Fernandez, ISSF Junior Development Coordinator



## Training and Certification: Building a Culture of Caution

Comprehensive safety training and certification are mandatory for competitive shooters. Courses in firearm handling and range safety are often required to ensure every participant has the knowledge to uphold safety standards. Certifications are periodically renewed, ensuring that shooters stay current with the latest best practices. Such training programs don't just emphasize technical safety—they foster a shared culture of responsibility and discipline. Certified shooters carry this knowledge with them, promoting safe practices not just in competition but in every instance where they handle a firearm.

## Emergency Protocols: Ready for the Unexpected

Shooting ranges take emergency readiness seriously, with detailed protocols in place for handling any potential incident. Many ranges are equipped with first-aid kits and clear emergency exits, and participants are briefed on procedures before every major event. Range officers and staff are trained in emergency response, and some ranges conduct drills to reinforce protocols. By preparing for all possibilities, shooting ranges ensure a swift, organized response should an emergency arise.

## Conclusion: Safety as the Core of Shooting Sports

At every level, safety in shooting sports is about more than following rules—it's a mindset, a commitment, and a shared responsibility. Through disciplined range etiquette, rigorous protective gear, and a blend of high-tech innovations and traditional training, the sport of shooting maintains a high standard of safety for all involved. In the words of competitive shooters, safety is the “first target to hit.” By fostering a vigilant culture and adopting the latest practices and technologies, shooting sports continue to offer a safe, respectful environment where athletes can focus on honing their skills with confidence. Safety isn't just a priority—it's the heartbeat of the sport.

*“Precision and control begin with safety; it’s the foundation that allows athletes to perform at their best.”*

— John Matthews, Competitive Shooting Coach

# **GLOBAL TARGETS: HOW CULTURE SHAPES THE WORLD OF COMPETITIVE SHOOTING**



*2024 Summer Olympics*

## **United States: Blending Tradition with Modern Competition**

In the United States, shooting sports are steeped in a blend of tradition and competitive spirit, rooted in the country's frontier heritage and values of independence. Programs like the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) and 4-H introduce young Americans to the sport early, emphasizing discipline, safety, and focus. JROTC air rifle competitions, for instance, train high school cadets in precision and mental resilience, preparing them for intense national events like the JROTC National Air Rifle Championship. Similarly, 4-H offers shooting programs that instill responsibility and sportsmanship, with participants competing in categories such as rifle, shotgun, and archery. Both programs foster a mindset of respect and self-discipline, shaping well-rounded competitors.

The U.S. also boasts a vast network of shooting clubs and organizations, such as the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) and the Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP), which provide rigorous training and competition opportunities.

## **From the U.S. to Turkey, young shooters bring unique traditions and values to the international stage**

Competitive shooting holds a unique place among international sports, celebrated in distinct ways across the world. Each country brings its own set of cultural values, traditions, and approaches to the sport, shaping the journeys of young athletes who aspire to make their mark. This article explores how shooting sports are practiced and appreciated globally, with a special focus on Turkey's rising influence in the field through the story of Olympic silver medalist Yusuf Dikec.



*Wikimedia.commons.org, public domain/PH3 Victoria A. Tullock, USN*

CMP's Air Rifle Summer Camps and SCTP's competitive leagues enable young athletes to refine their skills and compete at state and national levels, with many earning scholarships and progressing to collegiate and international competitions. These programs and clubs create a robust support system, helping American shooters develop not only technical expertise but also the resilience and focus needed to excel on the international stage.

# **EUROPE: COMMUNITY AND HERITAGE AT THE CORE**



In Europe, shooting sports are deeply woven into the cultural and social fabric, especially in countries like Germany, Switzerland, and throughout Scandinavia. In Germany, for example, Schützenvereine (shooting clubs) are iconic institutions, some tracing their origins back several centuries. These clubs are more than sports venues—they are pillars of community life, hosting local events, festivals, and ceremonies that foster a sense of belonging and continuity. Young shooters in Germany are often introduced to the sport through these clubs, where they learn marksmanship as a skill passed down through generations, blending sport with tradition. This community-oriented approach instills in young athletes not only technical proficiency but also a deep respect for discipline, patience, and sportsmanship. Many see marksmanship as a heritage skill, a proud tradition that extends beyond competitive shooting to a valued aspect of their identity.

Switzerland similarly emphasizes the communal aspect of shooting sports, with a strong military tradition that underpins its marksmanship culture. National shooting festivals, such as the Eidgenössisches Schützenfest, bring together families, friends, and entire communities to celebrate the sport, creating a festive atmosphere where participants of all ages showcase their skills. These events highlight the Swiss tradition of marksmanship as both a symbol of national pride and personal achievement, with young shooters learning from older generations in a shared, celebratory setting. Scandinavian countries also foster this spirit of community in shooting sports, often incorporating shooting activities into local clubs that emphasize both physical fitness and mental discipline. Through these community-centered traditions, European countries cultivate a balanced approach to shooting sports that values technical skill alongside heritage, pride, and camaraderie, creating a well-rounded experience for young shooters.

*"In Europe, shooting sports transcend competition; they are a celebration of heritage, community, and the lifelong bond between tradition and skill."*  
— Johann Müller, President of the European Shooting Sports Federation

# ASIA: DISCIPLINE, TECHNIQUE, AND STRUCTURED PROGRAMS



Asia has experienced remarkable growth in shooting sports, particularly in countries like China, South Korea, and Japan, which have produced numerous world-class competitors in recent years. In these nations, shooting sports are deeply integrated into educational and governmental frameworks, creating structured programs that emphasize precision, discipline, and rigorous training. For instance, China has invested heavily in state-sponsored sports institutions that support young athletes from a young age, allowing them access to top-notch coaching and advanced facilities. This commitment to a systematic training process has led to unprecedented success, particularly in the 10m Air Rifle discipline, where Chinese athletes consistently dominate international competitions through intense practice schedules that build endurance and mental resilience.

Similarly, South Korea has made significant strides in developing its shooting sports programs by investing in state-of-the-art facilities and comprehensive coaching systems. The country emphasizes both technical precision and mental fortitude, with South Korean shooters known for their meticulous techniques and disciplined training routines. This approach has resulted in impressive performances in events like the 10m Air Pistol and 50m Rifle. Japan is also contributing to this dynamic landscape, promoting youth participation through school programs and local clubs that instill both technical skills and sportsmanship. Together, these Asian nations cultivate a new generation of athletes who are not only skilled marksmen but also embody the mental strength and resilience needed to excel in the competitive shooting arena on the global stage.

# TURKEY: THE RISING INFLUENCE OF YUSUF DIKEC

As part of the broader tapestry of shooting sports celebrated across the globe, Turkey has emerged as a significant player, with Yusuf Dikec at the forefront of this transformation. His remarkable achievements in recent years have not only brought international recognition to Turkish shooting but have also inspired a new generation of athletes. Dikec's journey from a promising junior shooter to an Olympic silver medalist illustrates the potential of Turkish culture, which deeply values marksmanship, discipline, and national pride.

Dikec's breakthrough moment came at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, where he clinched a silver medal in the Men's 10m Air Pistol event. This achievement marked a historic milestone for Turkey, highlighting the nation's rising capabilities in international shooting competitions. Dikec's success resonates with the Turkish public, reigniting interest in shooting sports and encouraging youth participation. Rooted in a rich heritage of archery and marksmanship, Turkey's culture fosters a respect for discipline while embracing the excitement of global competition. Dikec embodies these values, emphasizing patience and focus as integral components of his training, thus bridging the gap between tradition and modern athleticism.



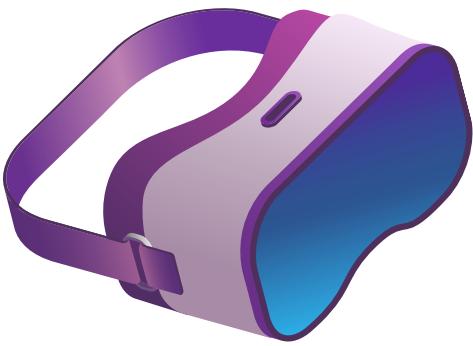
(Instagram/@yusufdikecofficial)

*“Yusuf Dikec’s journey is a testament to the power of perseverance and passion. He has shown that with dedication, even the sky is not the limit for Turkish shooting.” — Ali Yildirim, President of the Turkish Shooting Federation*

The influence of Dikec extends beyond his personal achievements. He represents a cultural shift within Turkey, where shooting sports are increasingly celebrated. Community-based shooting clubs have sprung up across the nation, providing aspiring shooters with the resources and support they need to develop their skills. Local mentors play a crucial role in this transformation, guiding young athletes through their journeys and instilling a sense of pride in their heritage. Dikec's accomplishments serve as a beacon of hope for these budding competitors, illustrating that dedication and perseverance can lead to success on the world stage.

Beyond his Olympic success, Dikec has made significant contributions to Turkey's shooting reputation through various national and international competitions. He has consistently set national records and earned medals at European Championships, establishing himself as a formidable competitor globally. His participation in ISSF World Cups further underscores Turkey's growing prominence in shooting sports, showcasing the talent and commitment of its athletes.

Yusuf Dikec's influence is not only about his medals; he represents the potential of Turkey to make a lasting impact on the shooting sports community worldwide. By blending the rich cultural heritage of marksmanship with modern competitive spirit, he proves that Turkey is ready to take its place on the global stage, encouraging a new generation of sharpshooters to follow in his footsteps.



# Tech-Driven: Virtual Shooting Competitions on the Rise

As technology continues to reshape the landscape of sports, shooting sports are experiencing a transformation through the rise of virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) competitions. These innovations are providing aspiring shooters with a new platform to practice, compete, and enhance their skills in an engaging and accessible environment. With the incorporation of advanced technology, virtual shooting tournaments are set to revolutionize the way athletes train and interact with the sport.

Virtual shooting competitions offer realistic simulations that mimic the conditions of live shooting ranges. Athletes can participate remotely, utilizing their own equipment and settings, or join organized events at designated venues outfitted with the necessary technology. This democratization of shooting sports allows individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage in the sport, particularly those who may not have easy access to traditional shooting facilities. Platforms like the VR Shooting League and the International Shooting Sport Federation's (ISSF) virtual events have successfully attracted participants from around the globe, fostering a vibrant community of shooting enthusiasts. According to the ISSF, these virtual competitions have seen participation rates increase by over 30% since their inception, showcasing a growing interest in this modern approach to the sport. The advantages of virtual shooting extend beyond mere accessibility. These innovative formats provide valuable opportunities for training and skill development. Aspiring shooters can refine their aim, timing, and mental focus without the costs and logistical challenges associated with traditional shooting practice. Additionally, augmented reality can simulate various shooting scenarios, helping athletes improve their decision-making skills and mental acuity under pressure.

"Virtual training has changed the way we prepare for competitions," says Dr. Elena Petrova, a sports psychologist and consultant for virtual shooting platforms. "It allows athletes to immerse themselves in realistic situations, enhancing their performance when they step onto the physical range".

More tech-driven competitions emphasize the importance of mental training and resilience, which are crucial components of success in shooting sports. Virtual environments provide instant feedback, allowing athletes to analyze their performance and make adjustments in real-time. This ability to practice in a risk-free environment cultivates confidence and prepares shooters for high-pressure situations they may face in traditional competitions.

As virtual shooting competitions continue to evolve and gain popularity, they are poised to play an increasingly significant role in the future of the sport. By engaging a new generation of athletes and providing them with accessible, high-quality training resources, these innovations are ensuring that the core values of discipline and precision inherent in shooting sports remain alive and well in the digital age. The integration of technology not only enriches the shooting experience but also paves the way for a more inclusive and dynamic future for the sport.

## Facts

*Virtual shooting competitions have been shown to reduce training costs by up to 70% for aspiring shooters, allowing them to practice in hyper-realistic simulations without the need for live ammunition or physical ranges. This accessibility has contributed to a 40% increase in youth participation in shooting sports worldwide, bringing in a new generation of competitors who are now able to refine their skills with just a headset and a simulated environment.*

# SPORTSGIRI



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