



# Reload!

*The Newsletter of the Connecticut Travelers*

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## APRIL 2006 NEWSLETTER

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### **MARCH MADNESS AT MID-HUDSON**

By Henry Nachaj

Spring Fever once again drove this Lone Canadian and friend Martin Blanchette to Mid-Hudson Sporting Grounds in New Paltz, NY for their signature March Madness Travelers shoot. I haven't missed many of these crazy Travelers March shoots that are usually equally unpredictable in both weather and targets - it is this variety that attracts us Canucks and nearly one hundred other Travelers to attend this event.

We left the cold wind and light snow of the North for the bright sunny skies of the Hudson Valley when we arrived at Mid-Hudson on Saturday afternoon hoping for a light warm-up of FITASC and 5-stand. After donning our light windbreaker shooting jackets we enjoyed the company of internet alias and fellow Traveler, Classy Baby also known as Val for some testy FITASC targets. That night Martin and I joined Phil and Stefanie Steinkraus for dinner at the one-and-only Gadaletto's fish market / restaurant in New Paltz. The seafood and company were both memorable—especially the calamari. Retiring to our new hotel, I showed Martin some of the pictures of the Pan African Championship and my Morocco trip over a few drams of 15-year-old

Dalwhinnie. Over years of shooting together, I've often managed to keep a few targets ahead of Martin (one of Canada's best shots) by getting him very well lubricated the night before, but now that he's severely cut back on his intake of golden liquor, I've lost my ability to sabotage his day with drinks—I guess, I'll have to resort to actually practicing to come out ahead.

Sunday brought a change of weather as the mercury dropped to a few degrees below freezing and a cold, humid wind and overcast sky greeted us upon arrival. As a welcome addition to the usual Traveler breakfast of black ink (both high-test and unleaded) and cholesterol-producing donuts, Mid-Hudson provided several healthier breakfast alternatives, including two types of melon.

After receiving our marching orders from Bruce Galotto we headed out. I took note with great pride that apparently some Travelers read what we write: Nearly no one was sporting the Michelin Man look wearing heavy winter clothing, apparently following my advice and opting for more comfortable thin layers, though I did have to shake my head once in disgust at seeing a pair of running shoes!

Fifteen stations greeted us with a great mix of close/far and fast/slow pairs.

Every station had two electric machines throwing targets. I was pleasantly surprised after shooting Mid-Hudson for so many years that just about all the stations have been radically redesigned. The new management has done a fantastic job of setting new, interesting and challenging targets. The targets this weekend were very testy and very technical. Not paying constant attention and improper gun placement would cause more than a few oopsies! A good number of shooters forgot the basics: V, insertion point and break point. They kept pointing their gun into the traps and then having to chase the targets. A minimum amount of gun movement is all that is needed. It was very important to keep focused at nearly every station, something that this Lone Canadian could not. With moments of utmost brilliance followed close on the heels of Special-Ed stupidity, our squad rounded the course and finally reached the clubhouse to be lured inside by the sounds and smells of our forthcoming reward, food! Inside the clubhouse, a warm French onion soup greeted us cold and weary Travelers providing momentary warmth and comfort—unfortunately this was just a warm snack to thaw us out before pushing us back out the door and onto the course!

Article I. One must never be distracted as I was for such a demanding course. Even the luxury of enjoying a contraband Cuban or two can be enough to take your mind off the task at hand. This lack of concentration allowed my intensely sober squad-mate, Martin, to apply all his experience and technique and excel far beyond my measly number for the day. Indeed, for a good while there, Martin was in the running for HOA.

Article II. Since we were staring the polar express run back up to Quebec in the face, Martin and I had to forgo the gastronomic delights featured at this shoot.

Apparently Bruce Galotto had his Wheaties that morning as he bested a very competitive field with a superb 87. Lavert Cypher shot a pump instead of his usual side-by-side which may explain why anyone managed to surpass his fine 86. Fellow Canadian Martin Blanchette also turned in a score of 86 but under the Travelers system, Lavert would take veteran honors and Martin would enjoy being Class 1 champ! A special mention to our ClayshootingUSA poster girl, Amber Kirylak, who won Class 5 and is moving up!

HOA	Bruce Galotto	87
Cl1 Champ	Martin Blanchette	86
Cl1 RU	Paul Fostini	81
Cl1 3rd	Jon Hyrncewich	80
Cl2 Champ	George Ostrander	83
Cl2 RU	Mike Primavera	83
Cl2 3rd	Jim Camiotes	79
Cl3 Champ	John Donnelly	82
Cl3 RU	Mike Boffalo	71
Cl3 3rd	Brian Flanagan	70
Cl4 Champ	Kristin Canale	72
Cl4 RU	John Hachman	70
Cl4 3rd	George Kutch	68
Cl5 Champ	Amber Kirylak	60
Cl5 RU	Richard Horn	57
Cl5 3rd	Emile Dorizzi	55
Lady Champ	Cyndi Dalena	78
Lady RU	Paula Moore	73
Lady 3rd	Pam Russo	63
Lady 4th	Gwyn Grant	44
Vet. Champ	Lavert Cypher	86
Veteran RU	Mike Steiner	80
Veteran 3rd	John Lawlor	77
Sen.Vet.	Eddie Moritt	76
Champ		
Junior Champ	Max Hachman	67
Junior RU	Luke Sponero	57
Junior 3rd	Ben Slome	53
Guest Champ	P. Sickles	80

### TRAVELERS GARNER ALL-AMERICAN STATUS

Congratulations go out to Travelers Anna Maria Collins who made the NSCA All-American Ladies First Team and Paula Moore who made the Second Team.

## SHOOTING MY WAY SOUTH

By Frances Gallogly

Clay shooting in the “Sunshine State.” Could anything be better? Each winter I spend time Down South discovering interesting new venues to shoot and making new friends. It started in 2001 with a 12-day trip by air. This February and March I spent five weeks driving through Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas enjoying the courses and competitions enroute.

It’s easy to rack up registered targets in the South. There are one, if not two, competitions each weekend. On this journey I shot four major tournaments and one minor (Rhino Rally at Rhino in Williston, FL; Seminole Cup at Quail Creek near Ft. Pierce, FL; Triple Classic at The Meadows in Macon, GA; East Coast Championship at Hunters’ Pointe in Washington, NC and the Waccasassa Inaugural in Branford, FL). In five weeks I accumulated a total of 1,650 NSCA targets and could easily have shot more.

I also enjoyed shooting for fun at courses such as WW Sporting Clays (Jacksonville, FL), Square One (Lake Placid, FL), Okefenokee Sporting Clays (Fokston, GA), Cherokee Rose (Griffin, GA) Hermitage Farm (Camden, SC), and Rose Hill (Rocky Mount, NC). You meet nice people wherever you shoot!

Waccasassa Plantation is a brand new course that I shot on the way to the Rhino Rally. I enjoyed my day there so much that I drove back all the way from Jekyll Island, GA, (about 3 1/2 hours) to shoot their first competition, the Waccasassa Inaugural. It’s in the town of Branford just 30 minutes north of Gainesville, FL. This is a beautiful new venue, and I heartily recommend it. See for yourself at [www.wplantation.com](http://www.wplantation.com). It began life as a rich man’s private hunting lodge. He sold it to a gentleman from Tampa named Hurley

who developed it into a beautiful hunting preserve and sporting clays facility. The lodge boasts some truly elegant guest rooms and there will soon be rustic log cabin rentals as well. A new dining facility also is under construction. Guided hunts are offered for deer, turkey, dove, quail, hog and ducks.

The sporting clays facility has 14 fully automated stands (including controllers with time delays for the solo shooter) and will soon be expanded to 18 stations. A second 18-station course is in the works. While I was shooting a particularly good target from their 50-foot tower, manager Tom Tatum suggested to me that I might like to try the same target another 20 yards back from “Bittman’s bush” (named for Mike Bittman of Team USA’s Veterans Team). Here was a true FITASC challenge!

There is a 5-stand that includes a FITASC parcour designed by Richie Frisella, Sr. In addition, there is an events pavilion, hiking, horseback riding and carriage rides. Contact sporting clays manager Tom Tatum (386-454-0655 or [hunter67@yahoo.com](mailto:hunter67@yahoo.com)) to make your arrangements.

The targets are always great at the Rhino Rally and Seminole Cup, events one can shoot back to back in Florida in February. A highlight for me this year was attending the third part of the Triple Classic sponsored by the Brunton family, publishers of ClayShootingUSA. The first leg was shot at Highclere Castle in England, and the second was shot in Moscow. This third leg was held at The Meadows in Georgia and was attended by some 900 shooters including many from the UK. Here was an opportunity to see the best of the best: Digweed, Faulds, Huswaihthe from the UK and most of our top shooters. The Meadows ran every event like clockwork and the targets were thrilling. I enjoyed the FITASC (new style) most of all. Instead of locating the six parcours in an open field or meadow,

many were set among pine forests and over lovely ponds. The visual appeal made the targets even more interesting and challenging.

Both the Seminole Cup and Triple Classic utilized outstanding referees from the University of Florida's Skeet and Trap Club. These young people were consistently professional and courteous and did a fantastic job at both events. Referees from the UK and US served in the FITASC and were a pleasure to deal with.

In between the Seminole Cup and Triple Classic I took a short break from shooting at a cottage I rented on Jekyll Island, GA (although I actually considered driving eleven hours to Louisiana and back to squeeze in the Cajun Elite!). This lovely spot is less costly than renting in Florida in early March. The island offers biking, kayaking, beach combing, bird watching, an historic district to tour, golf, tennis and many nice seafood restaurants where one can watch the sunset over the ocean. Jekyll is just an hour north of Jacksonville and an hour south of Savannah and proximate to shooting at WW and Branford in Florida and Okefenokee and Forest City in Georgia.

I saw many CT Travelers at the competitions I attended, and bring our club members' best regards from expatriate Travelers now living in the South: Jim and Anna Maria Collins (Miami), Dick Bayles (Sarasota), Vince Salvo (Richmond) and Bruce Buck (Ocala). My shooting vacation was such fun that next year I may expand it to three months of shooting below the Mason-Dixon line!

## CLUB HISTORIAN

John M. Hachmann

*Tax Time Revolt*, the name given to our annual April shoot is nearly upon us. I've heard it said that the only two things guaranteed in life are death and taxes. April

15<sup>th</sup> is the day we write that big check to Uncle Sam, but hopefully it's not the day the grim reaper comes to collect his due. Your pockets may be a little lighter but let's all meet up at the Ye Olde Newgate Coon Club on April 23<sup>rd</sup> to celebrate Spring '06 and rejoice that we are blessed to live in such a wonderful country—even if we are overtaxed!

Those who have not yet had the privilege of shooting at the Coon Club better get their checks in, ASAP. You don't want to miss this one. This place is just great: the charming clubhouse is probably a hundred years old, the venue is a fabulous wooded course and you will absolutely be won over by the terrific meal that is laid on for us. This is a special place--don't miss out!

Last year our Tax Time Revolt event was also held at the Coon Club. Plenty of Travelers attended the festivities and none left disappointed. The weather was just fabulous and by the time the shoot ended, more clothing was being carried than worn. Dress accordingly, and be prepared.

Here is a look at the 2005 *Tax Time Revolt* scoreboard...

HOA - Ralph Lowery with a score of.....	75
Class 1 - 1 <sup>st</sup> place - George Ostrander.....	72
Class 1 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> place - Lavert Cypher.....	72
Class 1 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> place - Ted Burke.....	72
Class 2 - 1 <sup>st</sup> place - Larry Prather.....	71
Class 2 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> place - Mark Latakas.....	68
Class 2 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> place - Ed Moritt.....	67
Class 3 - 1 <sup>st</sup> Place - Paul Cahan.....	68
Class 3 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> place - Dave Dunn.....	68
Class 3 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> place - Don Hutchinson.....	66
Class 4 - 1 <sup>st</sup> place - Lyell Williams.....	68
Class 4 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> place - Peter Colomello.....	63
Class 4 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> place - Ginny Tennison.....	60
Class 5 - 1 <sup>st</sup> place - Kristen Hachmann.....	54
Class 5 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> place - Doris Willinger.....	53
Class 5 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> place - Emile Dorizzi.....	53
Lady Division - Ginny Tennison.....	60

Veteran Division – Lavert Cyper.....	72
Sr. Veteran Divison – Al Anglace.....	70
Jr. Division – Kristen Hachmann .....	54

Congratulation to our 2005 Champions.  
April 23<sup>rd</sup> is the day for the rest of us to get our names onto the above scoreboard, so get out there and shoot the fabulous Newgate Coon Club.

### **HISTORIAN GOES ON TOUR**

Last month I offered a few lines of praise for my friends at Square One Cattle Ranch and Sporting Clays in Florida. As promised, this month I'd like to take the opportunity to give you a brief description of the Quail Creek Plantation in Okeechobee, Fl.

On day two of our mini vacation Ron and Kay Leonardi and Susan and I anxiously awoke knowing that we would soon be at Quail Creek Plantation. For more than two months I had been telling everyone what a beautiful place it was--I had the opportunity to shoot Quail Creek back in November of last year. We pulled in at around 9:30 a.m. to what looked like a small town in the old West. The clubhouse is great; they even have a stuffed alligator mounted on the wall! Quail Creek is definitely an upscale establishment that has not one but two completely separate sporting clays courses. They also have five-stand, and probably even more games but we just shot Sporties. They also do bird hunts.

We choose to shoot the Red course, it being the easier of the two. All targets were within IC-choke range. Don't get me wrong because this was definitely not a Gimme course, just the easier of the two. I wish I had taken my 28-gauge Beretta with me--this was definitely a sub gauge course! The presentation was superb. Incoming, crossing, quartering, straight up, rabbits, you name it, and they have it. Doubles, reports, singles, all done right!

Each stand was expertly designed and constructed. Many stands have two or even three different positions to shoot from. Climb up a few steps or even up two flights, stand to the left or right, move ten or fifteen feet and change your position and that changes the whole target presentation. This makes you want to shoot over and over again just so you can try everything! Managers Kirk and Maria run a fine business at Quail Creek and it is no wonder that the Seminole Cup was held there. We enjoyed it so much that we had to return the next day to try the Blue course.

Definitely more challenging, lets say *Travelers interesting*—just don't ask my score on the Blue course! Anyway, Florida really does have some fine establishments waiting for you. Check them out when the opportunity presents itself. I recommend that you call ahead of time to reserve a spot for your squad. Give Kirk and Maria a call at 863-763-2529. I guarantee that you will not be disappointed.

### **MY FIRST HUNT**

By Ben Slome

*Editor's note: Ben Slome is a thirteen-year-old Junior Traveler. His day of "hunting" was in truth a put-and-take, preserve bird hunt. Ben's father was ever-present and the experience was intended simply to give a keen adolescent a pleasant first experience afield. Reload may be a publication about CTSCA sporting clays in particular but under my editorship, it is also about shotgun shooting in general. If you have an aversion to hunting then I suggest you skip this article altogether. CTSCA has an inclusive membership—all are welcome, hunter and non-hunter alike. If you're interested in reading about a boy and his first canned-hunt, then read on.*

Hunting. What does it mean? Where I come from in New York City, most people hear that word and it makes them shiver because all they can think is *poor little animals*--just being shot for the fun of it. I also have to admit my own mother leans heavily in that direction. But really, modern hunting is doing a service by aiding Mother Nature. Take one look at the out-of control populations of deer herds and Canadian geese in the suburbs and it's pretty obvious something needs to be done.

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on my first day of upland bird hunting that Phil Steinkraus (Yes, the Phil who puts the newsletter together every month) and his wife Stefanie were kind enough to invite me on. We drove North on the Taconic to a little but very respectable place called Lido's and we hunted Chukar which I understand are an imported species of game-bird. When we got to the field Phil handed me his beautiful antique W.C. Scott side-by-side shotgun and showed me how it worked, explaining that the safety was automatic and would reset after breaking the gun and that the front trigger went to a right barrel that was choked Improved-Cylinder and the back trigger went to a left barrel choked Improved- Modified. Phil then briefed me on how to be safe, always being aware of exactly where everyone is in the field, including the dog pointing the bird. Most importantly he told me that whenever a bird gets up I need to ask three questions: 1) Is this a safe shot? Is there a person in the way or even nearby that could make this shot dangerous? 2) Is shooting this low bird going to put the safety of the dog at risk? And 3) Is this a good shot to attempt? Is the bird too close or too far to kill cleanly?

Then we were off, guns in hand, Jenny the gundog sniffing the ground furiously and the muffled sound of my father talking business in the background with Phil. It was incredible; my heart was

pounding and I thought I was ready. But then a feeling came over me. I had never killed anything in my life and was worried I might be overwhelmed by the power that was given to me by that shotgun, almost like the power of God. I was about to take the life of a healthy, harmless game bird that hadn't done anything to me. If you really want to know the truth, I was scared.

I started to walk slower and slower and then all of a sudden Stefanie said to me, "The dog is on point." I started sweating like a madman. I closed the gun and started looking all around waiting for that bird to flush and fly, high up into the air, with the drive to survive. Then, I took one last step and Whoosh! The bird screamed into the air, wings whirring with incredible force, I took aim and BANG! I lifted my head off the gun, and saw the feathers of the bird floating in the breeze. I had just snatched away the one thing so dear to all living things in a fraction of a second: I had taken life. The dog retrieved the bird within seconds, brought it back and dropped it on the ground at my feet. I bent down and just stared at it. I was astonished that I had killed something so beautiful and graceful. But, I wasn't sad. I picked it up, put it in my game pocket, and said, "Let's go find another one!" and we did. We kept walking along the road, and Chukars were just standing there in the afternoon heat, and the dog pointed them and we shot them. I was hooked. Whenever Phil, Stef or I would miss a bird I would always say, "Let's go after them!" So, for the whole day we tracked and shot birds.

The fun wasn't in the killing. I was walking in nature, being with friends and watching the dog work. The killing was not so much fun for me, but overall I loved this new experience.

After hours of enjoying this new and unusual activity we made our way back. We gutted and breasted out the birds, which was very disgusting, but only fair as I was the

one who pulled the trigger and put them in that state.

Then out of the blue, my dad and I were both suddenly thinking the same thing. How are we ever going to tell my mother about this? Mother is a kind and loving person and she has supported my shooting 100%, but she's also made it abundantly clear to me that she never wants me to hunt. She doesn't understand hunting and generally feels it to be cruel and inhumane. I had broken her golden rule—even if I was with my dad when I did it.

We both finally decided just to tell her the truth. Which we were soon to find out was the biggest mistake we've made in a long time. Man did she give us hell when we got home!

She has vowed that she will no longer be a part of my shooting. She will never again take me to another sporting clays event. Unfortunately our relationship is now a little less close than it was before the hunt, but in her own way she is right and wrong at the same time. Her views and opinions may be off base and inaccurate, but she was, and still is right about one thing: That day I broke her trust and an incredibly

important promise I made to her. For that she has every right to be deeply upset. I have taken away some very important things from this terrible mess my father and I have gotten ourselves into (Phil- I'm hoping Mom and I can work things out by next hunting season and I'll be able to hunt with you again): Never lie to your mother! And if you go hunting and wield that power of life and death, use it with responsibility: Never waste the animal, and always respect the animal.



### **CONTACTING THE TRAVELERS...**

**CTSCA Home Office:** Al Anglace, email <[aaa738@aol.com](mailto:aaa738@aol.com)> (by far the best way) or telephone 860-354-9351 if you absolutely must.

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**Guide Book** questions, Dick Orenstein <[oren@umich.edu](mailto:oren@umich.edu)> or call 203-226-5251.

Past issues of "Reload!" are available online at [www.ShotgunReport.com](http://www.ShotgunReport.com).

**- - - 2006 CTSCA SHOOTING CALENDAR - - -**

**APR. 23 – “TAX TIME REVOLT” – YE OLDE NEWGATE COON CLUB –Norfolk, CT.**

**MAY 21 – “MAY MINUET” – TAMARACK PRESERVE Millbrook, NY.**

**JUN. 9 & 10 – CLUB FITASC CHAMPIONSHIPS – MID-HUDSON SPORTING  
GROUNDS**

Reservations for this Championship will be made directly with Peter Wicker at Mid-Hudson. Guests will be welcome on an availability only basis. Any unfilled squads when reservations close will be taken from the waiting list of guests. Reserve early!

**JUN. 11 – CLUB SPORTING CHAMPIONSHIPS – MID-HUDSON SPORTING  
GROUNDS – New Paltz, NY.**

**Repeat of the successful “SWAP MEET” held a few years ago. Buy, sell or swap those no longer needed items. Buy your new unneeded items.**

**JUL. 16 – “SUMMERTIME SUMMERTIME” – ORVIS / SANDANONA  
Millbrook, NY.**

**AUG. 11, 12 & 13 – “GREAT EASTERN LOBSTER CLASSIC” – ADDIEVILLE EAST  
FARM – Mapleville, RI.**

**SEP. 10 – NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION FUNDRAISER – MID COUNTY  
FISH & GAME CLUB, LaGrangeville, NY.**

**SEP. 17 – “SEPTEMBERSHUTZENFEST” – MILLBROOK ROD & GUN CLUB  
Millbrook, NY.**

**SEP. 29, 30 & OCT 1 – ANNUAL FALL TRIP – Venue to be announced.**

**OCT. 15 – “SMALL GAUGE CHAMPIONSHIPS” – FAIRFIELD COUNTY FISH &  
GAME – Monroe, CT.**

**NOV. 19 – “SALUTE THE COLORS” – YE OLDE NEWGATE COON CLUB –  
Norfolk, CT.**

**DEC. 17 – DICK LOSEE MEMORIAL CHRISTMAS PARTY SHOOT – MID COUNTY  
ROD & GUN CLUB – LaGrangeville, NY.**

THIS IS A TENTATIVE CALENDAR AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO  
ACCOMMODATE OUR HOST RANGES' CALENDAR.

MOST SHOOTS WILL BE NSCA REGISTERED.

**- - - OTHER 2006 SHOOTS OF INTEREST - - -**

**Always call ahead to confirm.**

**April 14** – “Good Friday Blast”, Ye Olde Newgate Coon Club, Norfolk, CT. – Reservations needed 860 738-3619.

**April 30** – Shoreline Sporting Clays Tourney DU Fundraiser – Guilford Sportsman’s Assn., Guilford, CT. Dave at 203 435-7289 for details.

**June 11** – 4<sup>th</sup> Annual SHOOT FOR A CURE, Mid Hudson, New Paltz, NY

**June 17** – DU Fundraiser CT Sporting Clays Tourney – Fin, Fur & Feather, Chaplin, CT. 100 Sporting Clays, catered BBQ lunch, prizes (modified Lewis Class system), event T-shirts to pre-registered shooters, State pin & DU membership. Many raffle, silent auction and award items: guns, artwork, decoys, shooting items & accessories. Laura Pawelec 860 429-7033 for details.



**June 18** – “Fairfield’s First FITASC” – Fairfield County Fish & Game, Newtown, CT.

**June 25** – DU Fundraiser Northeast Sporting Clays – Addieville East Farm, Mapleville, RI. Jim Tappero 401 539-9930 for details.

**August 26 & 27** – Connecticut State Championships, Fairfield County Fish & Game, Newtown, CT.