

2021 Season Opener Nationwide Lewis Shoot

In May 2020, I started to kick around an idea about having a fun and exciting shoot where people could enjoy a friendly competition with shooters from across the nation.

The Stockdale GC has been one of the host sites for the ATA Central Zone for many years. The “telephonic” ATA Zone shoots now use an Internet-based website to collect scores from across their region. The Central Zone is a fun shoot for both shooters and those who just like to watch names and scores scrolling on the TV.

Although the basic idea was to have a sort of informal, nationwide get-together tournament, we felt we needed a way to enhance the appeal. Trophies would have involved shootoffs and the hassle of coordinating them across many clubs shooting at different times in different time zones. Due to how Lewis purses are distributed through a range of scores, they are very popular at trapshoots and can be used to invite more shooters into registered competition and get more registered shooters back into participating in a registered shoot they might not normally attend.

So we thought: why not join these two successful ideas into a nationwide Lewis tournament to help kick off the new ATA target year over the Labor Day weekend? The Season Opener Nationwide Lewis Shoot was born and held in September 2020.

We enlisted the help of David VanElgort (webmaster of shootscoreboard.com and shootatazone.com) and Scott Hoover (zone administrator for the Central and Western Zone shoots), both of whom have been involved with Internet-based multi-site Zone shoots from the beginning. David created a website for us to use, and Scott created the club instructions and helped keep things moving throughout the shoot day.

We knew the program was going to be a challenge. We didn't want shoot managers to have to change their existing programs, so in the end we structured a simple program that would maximize the number of Lewis options available and impose as little change as possible on a site's existing program.

At the consolidated Season Opener tournament level, the program consisted of 100 targets of each discipline per day over the three days of the U.S. Labor Day weekend. Lewis options were offered for each individual discipline, for the combined scores on each day's singles and handicap events, and on the three days' total 900 targets.

Clubs were not required to shoot all three days, nor were they required to shoot all three disciplines. For example, if a club was scheduled to shoot only on Saturday of Labor Day weekend with a program of 200 singles and 100 handicap, they could offer the nationwide Lewis on the first 100 singles, on the handicap, and on the combined first 100 singles and handicap. In this way, their shooters could have an opportunity at

the largest option payoffs possible with their existing program.

We had the shoot concept; now we just needed clubs. Numerous clubs were approached with the idea, but due to time constraints and in some cases, social gathering restrictions, only three clubs ended up participating in 2020: Stockdale GC (Ackley, IA), the KCTA PSP (Smithville, MO), and the Kingen GC (McCordsville, IN).

So on September 5-7 the inaugural Season Opener Nationwide Lewis Shoot was held. By all accounts it was a success. The KCTA reported that their attendance was greater than previous years' Labor Day shoots. New shooters at Kingen were excited to see their names on the scoreboard next to Trapshooting Hall-of-Famer and All-American Richard Marshall Jr., who was shooting at KCTA.

Among the three participating clubs, there was \$7,026 in Lewis payouts. Overall, 43% of the shooters entered the Lewis options, with 109 shooters receiving total payouts ranging from \$525 to \$7, and individual event payouts ranging from \$129 to \$1.50.

But as they say, that was then, and this is now. With the inaugural Season Opener Nationwide Lewis Shoot in the books, it's time to start planning the 2021 Season Opener, which is scheduled to be held September 4-6, 2021.

With the benefit of more lead time, this year we hope to have many more clubs participating. Ideally we'd like at least one club from each state and province, although there is no restriction as far as we're concerned on the number of clubs participating from any one state or province.

Did I say “province”? That's right. We want our friends from Canada to join us

in this get-together. Because of exchange rates, they'll be shooting for their own pool of option money, but the scores will be displayed along with scores from the U.S. clubs.

By this time each ATA club should have received a letter from the ATA explaining the Nationwide Lewis Season Opener. We'd now like to enlist the help of you, the shooter, in talking to your club to see if they are interested in participating. With a general reluctance by many to travel to a big shoot during these challenging times, the Season Opener is an ideal vehicle to create a big shoot in a small space.

We hope to see you all at the 2021 Season Opener Nationwide Lewis tournament.

—Dale Stockdale

Ed. note: To participate, clubs must have Internet access and use 3S cashiering software. There is a maximum website usage fee of \$50 per day per club (which may be reduced with sufficiently large club participation). Contact Dale Stockdale (dale.stockdale@stockdalegunclub.com; 641-425-5020) for more information about the 2021 Season Opener Nationwide Lewis Shoot, scheduled for Sept. 4-6 throughout the U.S. and Canada.

ATA 27-YARD PINS

The following shooters earned a 27-yard pin (for a first-time move to the back fence) as of reports received by the ATA office to Jan. 26.

Mark Paulson—Jan. 9



Shooters on the line at Kingen GC, McCordsville, IN, during the 2020 Season Opener. Results were published in the November *Gun Club Scores* section in T&F.