

## Have you got



No, not that one, this one...



In fact if you are one of the many who are looking for an alternative to sitting in front of the same old mindless formulaic television shows then how about trying the sport of target shooting?

Shooting is a sport where men and women, able bodied and disabled can pretty much compete at a high standard alongside each other to well beyond the age that most other sports regard participants as being over the hill. Unlike sports such as football or rugby where your playing career is essentially over by the mid 30's, shooting is a sport actively pursued by many people well into retirement, in fact the current world

prone rifle champion is actually 48 and still going strong.

There are many disciplines from which to choose, from 10 meter air pistol to 1000 yard full bore, but the most popular are the small bore events including air rifle and .22 calibre rifle. Probably most people's first experience of shooting is at tin cans in the back garden with a air rifle, and the next step is to move on to the very popular event of sporting air rifle where competitors aim at targets instead of cans, using standard off the shelf rifles shot from a standing position at a distance of 20 yards

From there many move on to .22 rimfire shooting either prone (lying down) or 3 positional at distances of up to 100 yards. The targets are quite small, at 50 meters the 10 ring is about the size of a new five pence piece, with a central X ring about 6mm in diameter which is used as a tiebreaker in the event of a draw.

For those who really want to get into precision shooting then benchresting involves firing from a seated position with the rifle supported on a rest, sounds easy until you realise that the 10 ring is 2mm in diameter and the top shots rarely if ever miss, completely obliterating the ring counts as an X and is often the way to separate the scores.

The best way to get into shooting is to join an NSRA (National Smallbore Rifle Association) recognised club where you can learn to shoot safely using club equipment and receive coaching to help you improve. Fortunately the Aire and Worth valleys are well served by Keighley Rifle club situated in the old Parkwood Quarry at the top of Saint Paul's Road. The club has excellent facilities being one of the few clubs in the north to have it's own 100

yard outdoor range as well as a clubhouse with a good indoor 25 yard range. Probationary membership for the first six months costs just £25 during which time you can use the club equipment to try all the disciplines available. The only additional cost for the ammunition used so costs are pretty minimal.

Once a certain standard is reached then competition is actively encouraged in club, local, county and national events. Most are postal competitions which are shot on home ground and then the scores are sent away. Competitors are divided into divisions and shoot against people of an equivalent ability so it is quite possible for novices to win medals. Most people



find a bit of competition keeps the sport interesting and provides a way to really measure progress, but it doesn't matter, at Keighley there are people who just shoot for fun and never compete, but we also have 2 members who shoot for England, it's up to you.

So if you're looking for something more challenging than sitting in front of the telly every night, then come along to find out if you have the X factor when it comes to shooting. The club is open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. For more information take a look at the club's website at [www.keighleyrifleclub.co.uk](http://www.keighleyrifleclub.co.uk) or call **07830 207123** for more details.

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