

Ladies Skeet Long Run Broken After 25 Years

A great achievement took place at Melbourne Gun Club on the 1st of May 2016 during the annual two day MGC "Bonanza" Skeet shoot. The "Bonanza" is a tournament used by many skeet shooters as a warm up shoot for the Skeet Nationals and the attendance is always littered by high calibre shooters.

In the "Blue Ribbon" event the "Calcutta" which is shot first on Sunday morning Sarah Bennett was one of several shooters to shoot the possible in the event.

As the shoot offs started the rain started to pour and the wind started to howl as a cold front swept through the club. The shoot off dwindled down to Sarah Bennett and Multiple National Champion Michael Buttigieg going shot for shot, station by station round after round until a long way into the 4th box finally a low six was left to go on its merry way.

After the shoot off ended it was the realisation that Sarah had broken the Ladies long run National Record of 176 set by Maree Rooke in 1991.

Sarah had shot a 190 Break!

Ladies skeet shooting has enjoyed an enormous growth in the last several years and the competition and quality of these competitors is second to none. At our recent Skeet nationals we had 25 lady competitors with is now 15% of the overall attendance.



Maree Shuster (Rooke)

But it wasn't always like that and we have Lady competitors such as Maree Schuster (Rooke) to thank for that as she was an early pioneer in ladies skeet shooting. Maree has won over thirty titles as Australian Women's Skeet Champion and holds the previous women's skeet break records of 104, 140 and the now past record of 176 straight shot in 1991.

In 1986 Maree was the first woman in the history of the sport to make the Open State & National Skeet Teams - qualifying in number one position for the State of NSW. Maree attained AA grade status in skeet shooting, the first female to achieve this feat.



Sarah Bennett and Maree Schuster (Rooke) at the 2016 Skeet Hall of Fame presentations

In 1991 she competed at the ISU Australian Nationals winner of the women's events and qualifying for the national training squad – open and women's. Maree was in the skeet team for the Oceanic Games where she won gold in the women's event and shot the only skeet qualifying score for the women's team.

At the Australian ISU Grand Prix she was placed 4th followed by the World Championships where she was placed 19th in the individual's women's event.

Maree's Long run record had stood unbroken for 25 years.

Maree was so happy to hear of Sarah's achievement that she attended this year's Skeet Hall of Fame night to personally present the Ladies National Record Plaque to Sarah. In passing the baton to Sarah, Maree also recounted how hard it was to succeed as a lady in the early days and how proud she was of today's skeet community where the sport is flourishing and the ladies competition is so strong.

To top it off at the end of the Skeet Nationals, Daniel Spatz from Krieghoff Germany and Renae Birgan from Clay and Hunt awarded Sarah a plaque recognising her achievement.



Sarah Bennett being awarded a plaque of recognition by Krieghoff

From all skeet shooters in Australia we applaud and commend your achievement Sarah. Well done!