

# 2019 ACTA Skeet Hall of Fame Dinner

The Range Function Centre, National Ground, Wagga Wagga  
MONDAY MAY 20 2019



Monday night of the Skeet Nationals is always very much anticipated as it kickstarts the week of Skeet shooting with a review and celebration of the many achievements made by the Skeet community in the previous shooting year. The Skeet shooters also get to witness and celebrate the Hall of Fame Inductee and this year it was David O'Sullivan from Victoria. Approximately 120 attendees were present in the new ACTA "Range" building and the atmosphere was tremendous with people getting dressed up and socialising with shooters from all over the country and enjoying the food and service at the new venue.

ACTA National President Robert Nugent welcomed the gathering and made special comments regarding the Skeet shooting community. Robert also thanked the ASSA for the behind the scenes work to assist the ACTA to compile and organize the Skeet Hall of Fame.

The 2018 year in review looked back at the 2018 shooting year there was some wonderful shooting achievements, We kicked off by recognizing skeet shooters who had achieved either their First State Title or First National Title in 2018.

The first State Title winners were: Nadine Katarski NT Handicap, Richard Sammon Vic 28 gauge, Ryan Miller NSW Handicap, Mark McDonald SA 12 gauge, Steve Atkins NSW Doubles, Paul Saliba Vic State Title.

First National Title winners were: Nathan

Campbell National Handicap, Richard Sammon National Doubles, Sam Agostino NZ 20 gauge, Wayne Petersen NZ 12 gauge, Robbie Marino National 20 gauge.

## **Annual Long Break Awards:**

20 gauge (Tie) Michael Buttigieg and Harry Bader 225 Break

Doubles David O'Sullivan 145 Break

12 Gauge Michael Buttigieg 510 Break

## **Grand Slam Awards:**

The Grand Slam in skeet shooting is 200 target Break in 12 gauge, 100 target break in 20g and 100 target break in Skeet Doubles:

Jack Stockdale, Craig O'Neil, Salvatore Agostino



*Michael Buttigieg & Harry Bader 20 gauge Long Break*



*Shane Bennett, ASSA President with Michael Buttigieg 12 gauge Long Break Award*



*David O'Sullivan Doubles Long Break Award*



*Jack Stockdale Grand Slam Award*



*Craig O'Neil & Salvatore Agostino Grand Slam Awards*

**National Record Presentation:**

Richard Sammon Vic 160 break 28 gauge  
Dean Everett NZ 100 break .410 bore



*Richard Salmon 28 gauge & Dean Everett .410 bore Records*

**AA Elite Award:**

Wayne Petersen 36, Salvatore Agostino 37



*Wayne Petersen & Salvatore Agostino AA Elite Awards*

**Adrian Cousens Award:**

The finalists for the evening were: Michael Buttigieg 60 Points, Jack Stockdale 70 Points, Salvatore Agostino 40 Points, Antony Ballarino 60 Points, Leigh Roberts 40 Points.

The Adrian Cousens medal was won by Jack Stockdale of Korumburra Gun Club in Victoria.

**Masters Award:**

This year was the first year that the Master's Award has been awarded and medals were presented to the 12 gauge and the Skeet Doubles winners. The Master Awards are presented to shooters who have achieved double the breaks required to win a Grand Slam Award, for example in the 12 gauge the score needed is a 400 break and in Doubles a 200 break is required to qualify for a Master's Award

We were very lucky this year to Welcome Ian Hale to the Hall of Fame. Ian who represented Australia in 6 x Commonwealth Games and 2 x Olympic Games skeet shooting events travelled from his



*Adrian Cousins Medal finalists: Michael Buttigieg, Salvatote Agostino, winner Jack Stockdale, Leigh Roberts & Antony Ballarino*



*Masters Awards: Adrian Cousins, Ian Hale, David O'Sullivan & Michael Buttigieg*

international home base to be at our dinner. Please see a separate article about Ian contained in this edition of the CT.

Ian Hale and Adrian Cousens both shot over 400 breaks at the 1984 Skeet Nationals at Melbourne Gun Club, Adrian shooting a 446 only to have

it broken approximately 2 hours later by Ian shooting at 487.

Fast forward to 2017 and Michael Buttigieg and David O'Sullivan also shot 400+ breaks with Michael going on to set an Australian 12 gauge long run of 783. It was a marvelous sight to have all 4 of these immensely talented shooters on the stage at the same time. The Masters Award were presented by Mal Dyson from the ACTA.

The last award of the evening was the Master's Award for Skeet Doubles this was won by Michael Buttigieg of Victoria with a 225 break.



*Michael Buttigieg, Masters Award for Skeet Doubles*

## **2019 Skeet Hall of Fame Inductee David O'Sullivan**

David O'Sullivan first started rabbit shooting on a friend's property and graduated to clay target shooting by joining the Frankston Gun Club in 1997. His mother would bring David to the club after cricket training and often he would be seen still wearing his cricket whites on the skeet field! David and his father John O'Sullivan struck up a conversation with a very nice club member one day whilst David was practicing, this kind gentlemen turned out to be Adrian Cousens! Adrian kindly took David under his wing and many weekends were spent up at the Bairnsdale gun club practicing under Adrian's watchful eye. David's big break happening in 2000 when the ACTA decided to fund



*David O'Sullivan 2019 Hall of Fame Inductee*

a junior team to the Skeet World Championships in San Antonio Texas. David shot extremely well at the world championship even shooting several 100 straights which bode well for the future.

Back in Australia and David was keenly following the major skeet shoots and very early success with National runner-up in the 20 gauge in 2000 and 2002 and Skeet Doubles events in 2001. David really gained international notoriety in New Zealand in 2011 where he shot off against Tod Bender, multiple world champion in the NZ 12 gauge event in cold and miserable conditions and pushed the world champion to his limits.

David's first National title came in 2012 at the Australian Skeet Nationals where he won the Champion of Champions event, but this was eclipsed several days later when he took the Overall High Gun.

During his shooting career David has amassed 9 National titles, 10 x National runner-ups, 26 State titles, 5 Glenn Cup Trophy Teams, 4 x World teams, 8 x All Australian Teams and 460 Hall of Fame points.

David is truly deserving of his induction to the 2019 Skeet Hall of Fame.

# Masters Award Presented to IAN HALE

The 2019 Skeet Nationals and the associated Hall of Fame Dinner was a perfect platform to invite Ian Hale. Ian was very humbled and graciously accepted the invitation meaning he would need to travel from his now home in Indonesia, to Wagga Wagga. I was fortunate to not only assist with the arrangements for Ian's attendance, but Ian also allocated some of his time to sit down with me and paint a picture of his colourful journey through his long involvement in the Sport of Clay Target Shooting.

Ian, a Life Member of the Frankston Australian Clay Target Club (FACTC), did not commence his participation in the sport at what would become his home Club. In fact, it was not even built as yet at its current location in Rossiter Road, Carrum Downs. Ian would attend the Cranbourne Clay Target Club and later moved to the Keysborough Clay Target Club where he received some training in Skeet from Danny Parsell.

Eventually FACTC was built with Ian taking his place as one of the original Committee Members. Ian recalled shooting many rounds of Trap on the newly built grounds, and until the skeet grounds were formed, he would shoot American and ISSF Skeet (or ISU Skeet when Ian was competing) at Melbourne Gun Club. American Skeet was eventually built on Grounds 1 and 2, ISSF Skeet on Ground 3 and from here Ian would shoot many rounds of practice with Michael Inguanti, David Cunningham and Alex Crikis (partner in the Australian Team and member of Melbourne Gun Club).



*Ian Hale with his Masters Award*

There were no coaches readily available like the Australian Team has access to today, and also with minimal domestic ISSF Skeet competition, Ian had to rely on participation in American Skeet competitions to help keep that competitive edge. It was also apparent that team funding was minimal to near non-existent therefore Ian's international representation to events such as World Cups or World Championships, was primarily at his own expense.

Ian attended his first Commonwealth Games in 1978 and went on to attend four more consecutive Games in 1982, 1986, 1990 and 1994. Ian was the first in any sport to make the team for consecutive Commonwealth Games. The most memorable for him being 1994 in Canada, where

Ian had the honour of being the Flag Bearer for the Australian Team; an honour that no other Australian Clay Target Shooter has been bestowed to this day. Ian's medal haul from his Commonwealth Games representation included one each of Gold, Silver and Bronze.

Ian was part of the Australian Team in three consecutive Olympic Games in 1980, 1984 and 1988, finishing in fourth place in Los Angeles in 1984. Ian broke a World Record at a German World Cup in 1986.

Clay Target Shooting to Ian is a family sport and he believes that Clubs are a very important component in the success of anyone aiming to be competitive in their chosen discipline. Clubs create opportunity for domestic competition and form the utmost important part of any Australian Team Members training regime.

Ian was very chuffed when he was presented with



*Ian Hale with Adrian Cousens (L) & David O'Sullivan (R)*

his Life Membership at FACTC in the 1990's. Ian was inducted into the VCTA Skeet Hall of Fame in 2016 and during this year's Skeet Nationals, received his Master's Award for shooting a 12 gauge long break of 486 in 1984.

Ian was presented with his award together with his good mate Adrian Cousens, who also was acknowledged for the same award for the same year.

At the now age of 69, Ian has well and truly stopped competing but his passion for the sport is ongoing. It was a perfect opportunity during the Skeet Nationals to introduce Ian to current ISSF Skeet competitors Keith Ferguson and Mat Costa.



*Ian Hale with current ISSF Skeet participants Mat Costa (L) & Keith Ferguson (R)*

Ian was only too happy to share his stories and offer some advice with one of the topics being discussed; should Keith and Mat be shooting American Skeet gun up or gun down!

In closing, I asked Ian if he had some primary words of advice and he said "I just loved competing and I really enjoyed the game. If you fault, you have no one else to blame but yourself. Enjoy what you have whether it is a win or a loss and then just focus on your next event".

*Jane Vella,  
FACTC Secretary*