



ON TARGET WITH THE N

By Philip Schreier & David Kulivan
Photos by Philip Schreier

More than 34,000 Boy Scouts and nearly 7,000 staff and support volunteers attended the 15th National Scout Jamboree at Fort A.P. Hill, VA, Jul. 23 through 31, 2001. Scouts had a chance to experience seven shooting sports events in a variety of venues throughout the 75,000-acre Jamboree site.

It was estimated that more than 50,000 Scouts and visitors participated in the shooting sports events. The Bikathlon, trap shooting, and air-rifle range each had stations in all four action areas, and there were two shooting booths located in the Venturing Rain Forest. Additionally, Rifle Shooting and Shotgun Shooting merit badge qualifications were offered in the Merit Badge Midway tent.

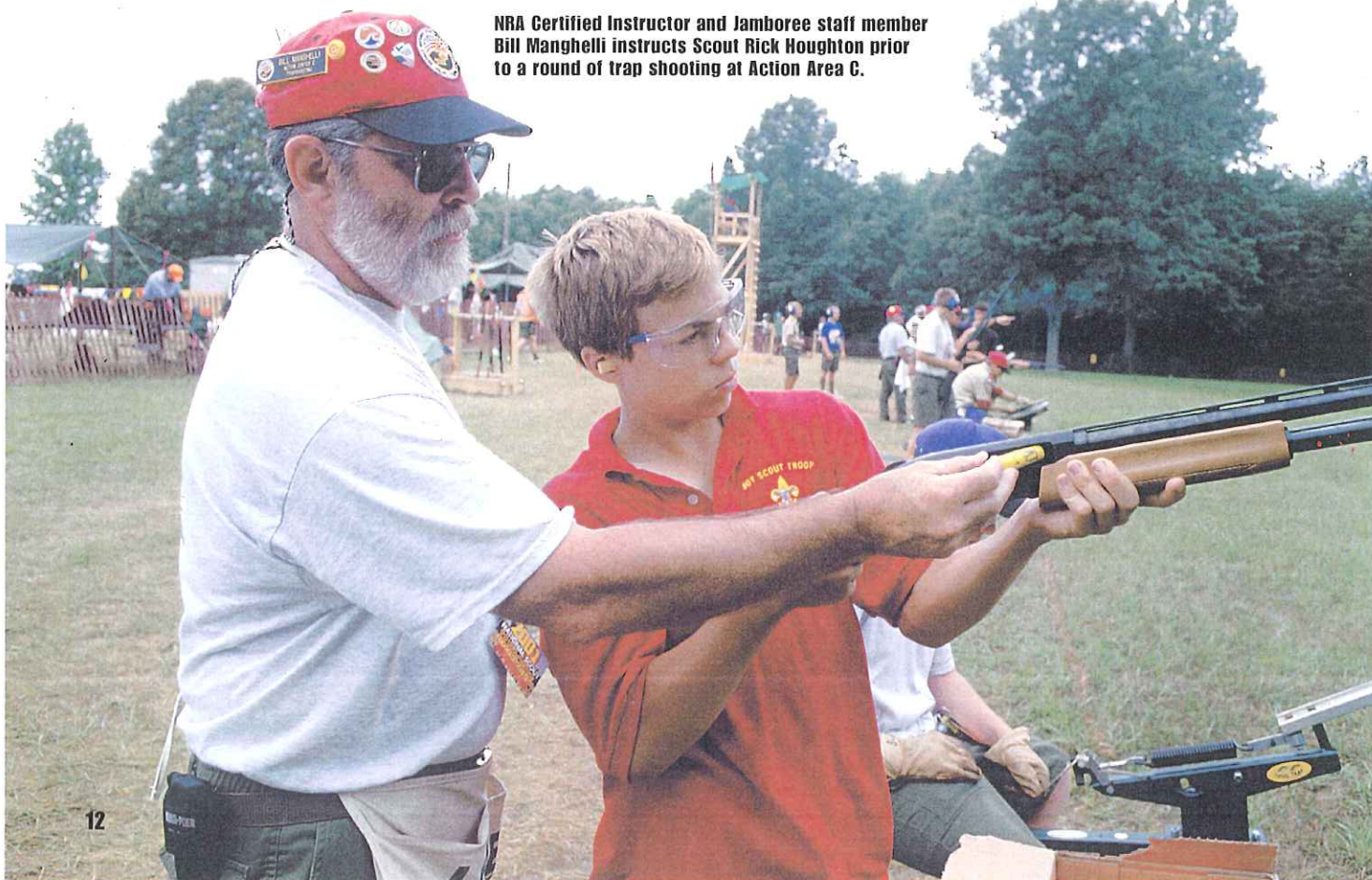
At the Bikathlon Action Area, Scouts were given MOSH BMX bikes and a briefing on firearms safety before they set out on a cross-country bike race that was intended to repli-

cate the Olympic Biathlon, in which a cross-country skier fires at different stations during the course of the ski race. Wearing crash helmets, Scouts raced through a dirt trail, stopping at two different shooting stations where they dismounted, donned safety glasses and, using air rifles supplied by Crosman, fired five shots at falling targets. They then remounted their bikes and raced on, hoping to cross the finish line in record time. Penalty seconds were added to their finish time for each target missed during the two shooting stops. Scouts who made it through the race and fired all 10 shots with accuracy received a special award.

Scouts who wanted to earn their Rifle Shooting merit badge could attend a class at the Merit Badge Midway, which was manned by NRA staff and volunteers, to receive partial credit for their merit badge requirements. Firearms safety and laws governing their use were covered, and firearms operation and cleaning was demonstrated in the Midway area. Scouts willing to brave the long lines at the air-rifle range areas could actually earn the entire badge if time and skill permitted.

The air-rifle range was a popular area where Scouts could fire a string of shots on official NRA targets at a range of 50 feet. Following a short safety class, Scouts were issued safety glasses and could shoot for fun or work toward their merit badge requirements.

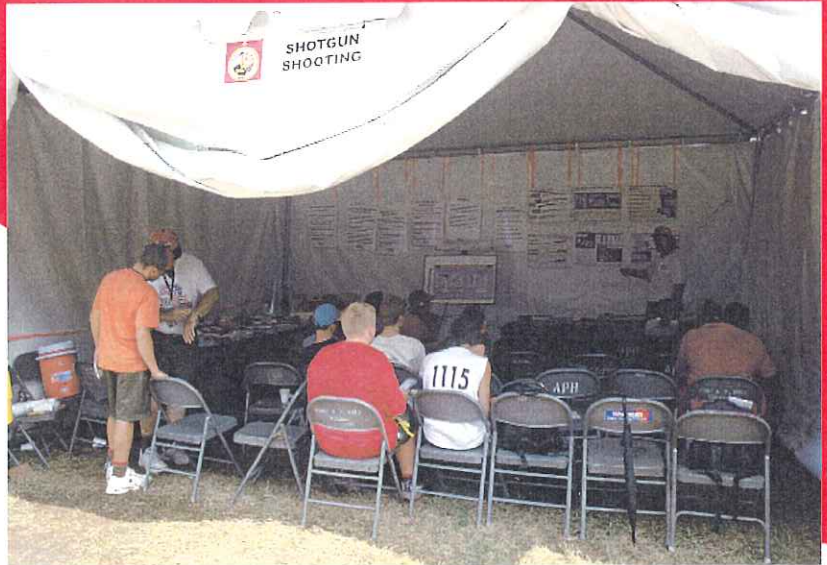
NRA Certified Instructor and Jamboree staff member Bill Manghelli instructs Scout Rick Houghton prior to a round of trap shooting at Action Area C.



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Jamboree staff instructor Michael Brechlin prepares a scout for a round of trap.

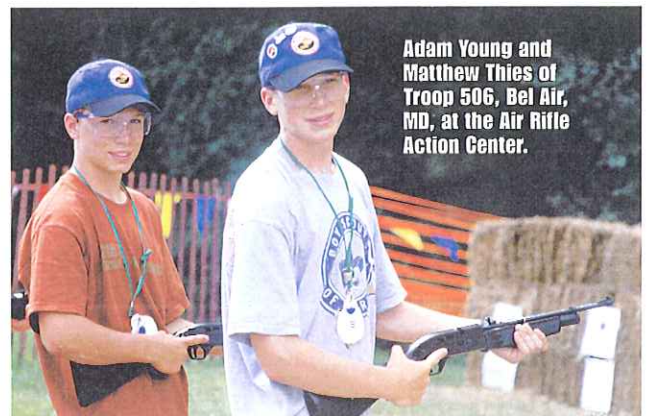


NRA Certified Instructor William Shaffer teaches a class on shotgun.



The Air Rifle Action Center was very popular with the scouts.

Volunteer Instructors taught thousands of Boy Scouts the importance of firearms safety.



Adam Young and Matthew Thies of Troop 506, Bel Air, MD, at the Air Rifle Action Center.



The Boy Scouts kept the birds flying at the trap range.

The Shotgun Shooting merit badge was also offered at the Midway, and partials were awarded to those who participated in the numerous safety and instruction classes that were offered every day. Both merit badge booths were staffed by NRA certified instructors and NRA staff members who not only provided instruction, but also distributed 25,000 safety pamphlets.

The trap-shooting areas seemed to be the most popular areas at the Jamboree. Each area had 10 shooting stations with a manual trap-throwing machine, and was staffed by NRA certified instructors and volunteers who used a little of Tom Sawyer's logic to keep the clay pigeons flying: Scouts who volunteered to help man the traps were permitted to shoot extra rounds to compensate them for their service.

Before being allowed to enter the trap field, Scouts attended a brief firearms safety session. Then, equipped with safety glasses and hearing protection, they were escorted to their stations and received five rounds of Winchester AA 20-gauge ammunition. The special edition Jamboree shells became an instant souvenir, as the empties with the Jamboree logo were soon seen dangling from the caps of dozens of Scouts. Winchester also made dozens of its Model 1300 shotguns available for the Scouts to use during the week-long event.

Jamboree staff member and NRA Certified Instructor Stan Crowell of Denver, CO, was chief range officer at area C and said that nearly 1,400 Scouts each day cycled through his area, with a record 1,700 Scouts on one day. Attendance was similar at each of the three other action areas, translating to nearly 40,000 Scouts enjoying the shotgun areas during the Jamboree.

Another popular attraction was the Venturing Rain Forest. Venturing, a new BSA program, offers a co-ed camping and adventure experience. The 2001 Jamboree marks the first time this program was on public display at a Jamboree. More than 120 Venture Crew members and adult staff



Bill Manghelli keeps a careful watch over the trap range.

From a rain forest to trap shooting, Scouts enjoyed a multitude of shooting events.



created a Rain Forest under a circus tent, and simulated a sample of typical events and activities that Venture Crews experience, such as administering emergency first aid at an airplane wreckage site; riding on a BMX bike trail; swimming in a scuba dive tank; repelling; shooting at an air-rifle range and going on a pheasant hunt under a circus tent. The NRA provided a computer-simulated, full-size interactive screen and two laser shotguns. Scouts were able to walk through a cornfield and take aim as a covey of three birds rose up and flew off. Each session consisted of five covey rises, and it was no easy task to attain a perfect score of 15 birds. Staff member Eagle Scout Nicholas Thomas of Colorado worked the Rain Forest all week and was one of a few who made a perfect score.

One event that has been popular at every Jamboree since the first one in Washington, D.C., in 1937, is trading with other Scouts. Patches, council strips, T-shirts and hats have always been good barter material, and the 2001 Jamboree was no different, as hat pins became quite collectable. (They became so popular that some have since been sold on e-bay!) Again, the NRA did not disappoint, as more than 15,000 miniature fluorescent clay pigeons bearing the inscription "BSA/NRA 2001 Jamboree" were quickly distributed to those who participated in the numerous shooting events staffed by the NRA.

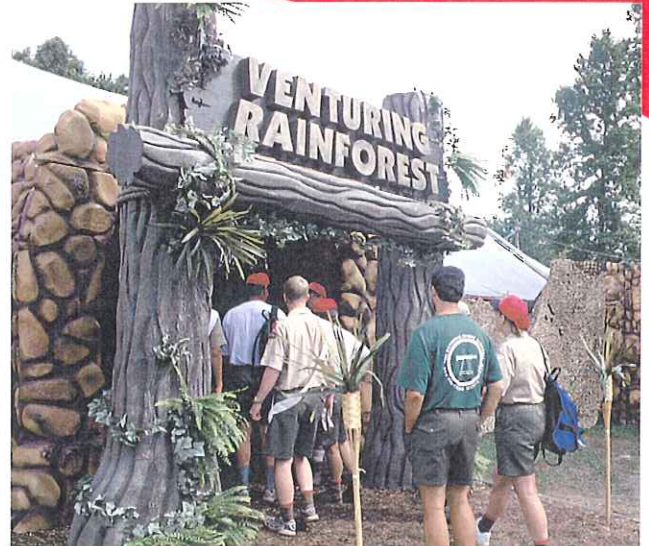
In support of the efforts of the shooting sports and Scouting programs, the NRA Foundation has provided significant financial resources for the Boy Scouts of America to further its firearm safety and education programs. One key commitment is the NRA Foundation's grants for Boy Scout Jamboree and camp materials, which are used to acquire NRA education, training and safety material for Boy Scout shooting sports instructors. The camps, coordinated by Boy Scout Regional Directors, afford an opportunity for these shooting sports leaders to receive the proper training and information they need to effectively teach the Rifle and Shotgun merit badge courses. Through these grants, the NRA Foundation is reinforcing our commitment to the programs of the Boy Scouts of America and ensuring their future.

An enthusiastic contingent of NRA volunteers and staff helped ensure a productive role for the NRA at the Jamboree as well. Traveling from all parts of the country to participate, volunteers gave their time and resources to help the Scouting movement.

The Jamboree was truly a remarkable event, transposing a U.S. Army post into the largest city in Caroline County, VA, for a week. It took four years of planning and preparation, and plans for the next Jamboree began the afternoon that this one ended. It was the largest presence of shooting sports activities at any Jamboree.

BSA Jamborees occur every four years, with the next one scheduled for 2005 at Fort A. P. Hill, VA, the permanent Boy Scout Jamboree site since 1981. If the Scouting program interests you and you are above the age of 10, contact the Boy Scouts of America, P.O. Box 152079, Irving, TX 75015-2079, or check out their website at www.scouting.org.

Additional information about the NRA's Scouting-related activities can be received from David Kulivan, Program Coordinator of Youth Programs, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030; (703) 267-1550. The NRA's youth website is www.nrahq.org/safety/education/youth.asp.



The Venturing Rain Forest was one of the most popular events at the 2001 National Scout Jamboree.



Michael Brechlin works with a young Scout on the trap range.