

# Skeet Shooting

REVIEW

1999

# WORLD SHOOT





by **Todd Bender**

## “DOCTOR”

This past November, our sport lost one of its greatest supporters and longest tenured members, Dr. Arthur T. Shima. The passing of “Doctor,” as I grew to refer to him, affected me greatly because he was the father of my best friend.

Dr. Shima was born on December 19, 1913, in Seattle, Washington. He had many passions in his life, two of which were medicine and skeet shooting. However neither overshadowed his greatest passion ever, a girl named Rose Tomita. They met in Los Angeles. Shima was a student at UCLA and Rose at the same time, attended USC. Attracted by beauty, Doc had traveled to USC to obtain the phone number for Rose’s roommate, however upon meeting Rose, he never asked for that number rather he asked for Rose’s. Unfortunately and quite mistakenly, Rose’s mother was adamant that Shima was no good and would amount to nothing, so in 1941 they eloped to Yuma, Arizona. It was then that he set out on his course in life, to raise a family and excel in his chosen field of work.

Dr. Shima was a medical officer in the US Army, and was a Captain in the US Army Reserves until 1953. He graduated Loyola School of Medicine in 1945, and did his residence pioneering the new science of anesthesiology. He was a fellow in the American College of Anesthesiology and the International College of Surgeons. He was president of the Chicago Medical Society in 1986-87 and was president of the Illinois Anesthesia Society in 1967. He had academic appointments to Loyola University School of Medicine and the Department of Surgery at the University of Illinois, and was a Professor of Anesthesiology at Rush Medical College. He was Director of Anesthesiology at both Westlake

Hospital from 1951-77 and West Suburban Hospital from 1956-90. During his tenure at Westlake, he was president of the Medical Staff in 1962 and ‘63.

He began shooting skeet in 1952, and became an integral part of the Lincoln Park Traps Club in Chicago. During his career he shot with skeet greats D. Lee Braun and Jay Schatz. He once requested lessons from Braun, but at the time Braun was employed by Remington, and not allowed to accept income from lessons. As compensation, Dr. Shima purchased a four-gun set of D Grade Remington 1100’s from D. Lee.

Noah Schatz recalls a favorite story of his father, the late Jay Schatz. It seems Jay was shooting an event at Lincoln Park Traps when he was struck in the head with a piece of broken target while on Station 7. He began to bleed at an alarming rate, and to make the situation worse, he was straight without a miss – an infrequent occurrence adds Noah. Fortunately, Dr. Shima was shooting on the very next field and was summoned for his expertise. After examining the wound, Dr. Shima



*The Shima family squad at the 1995 World Shoot consisted of son Mark, grandson Tak, Dr. Shima, daughter-in-law Ceci and son John.*



**Arthur Takayoshi Shima**  
1913-1999

respectfully looked at Jay and said, "I am sorry, but I cannot help you, I am straight too."

Doc introduced both of his sons to shooting, particularly son John at age 8. John recalls early in his career, someone asked Art if he gave or encouraged lessons for his son. Dr. Shima replied "...no, I just give him shells, shooting is just for fun, no one can make a living shooting skeet." Recalling this story, John grins sheepishly with an element of pride.

Dr. Shima also maintained a private pilot's license and flew with his sons to many skeet tournaments. At age 13, John recorded his first 100 straight at the Jayhawk Gun Club in Kansas. John

could not stay for the shoot-off because they had to fly back to Chicago that evening. He could not miss school the next day. In lieu of shooting off for the championship, Doc buzzed the gun club at low altitude. Twice.



John and Art Shima in 1971.

As a teenager, John had a normal but rather elevated interest in cars. One of Dr. Shima's greatest mistakes came when, without thinking, he mentioned to John that if John won a World title at the 1977 World Championships he could have any car he wanted. John won the HOA and 28 gauge World

championships that year. True to his word, when John returned to their home in Oak Park, there was a Ferrari sitting in the driveway.

The first and oldest son Mark, also distinguished himself in the sport of clay target shooting, though later that activity subsided as his focus shifted to follow his father's study of medicine. Today Mark is a leading cardiologist in Illinois. In recent years, Mark returned to the game bringing along son Tak. In fact at the 1995 World Skeet Shooting Championships, three generations shot on the "Shima Family" squad. Shooting with Dr. Shima were sons John and Mark, grandson Tak, and John's wife Ceci Shima.

Although so far only mention has been made of Dr. Shima's sons, the Shimas also had a daughter, Amy. In 1993, my family and I traveled to San Diego to spend a week with friends. One day we decided to take both families to the San Diego Zoo. While in line to purchase admission I happened to glance over at an older couple sitting on a nearby wall. Because they seemed familiar at a distance, I walked over, paused, then sat down alongside the woman. "Hi Doctor, Hi Mrs. Shima," I extolled. Noticeably surprised, Mrs. Shima turned and exclaimed, "Todd, what are you doing here?" I replied, "The same thing that you are." That statement however was not quite true. I was there with family and friends to see the best zoo in the world. Arthur and Rose were there, waiting to meet their daughter Amy, the chief veterinarian at the best zoo in the world.

While John has without a doubt carved his place in history and excelled within his chosen profession, like their father, each of Arthur and Rose's children have done the same. It seems that the same drive and standards that Dr. Shima set for himself were passed on to his children – clue to which may be found in Dr. Shima's middle name. The "T" stands for Takayoshi, which translates from Japanese to English as "high and noble."

After the passing of Rose, Dr. Shima's health began to deteriorate, and understandably so. The man who dedicated his whole life to his family and excellence had lost the most important piece. I was very fortunate at this time, because Doctor started

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spending more time with John, and because of our clinic schedule, with me. It was time for John to start taking care of his father. When we did clinics, Dr. Shima went with us. We were Bender, Shima and Shima. While John and I taught, Dr. Shima would pace the fields as if observing and critiquing our efforts. If this became tedious, he struck up conversations and generally enjoying himself all day long. Also during this time, Doctor kept me in line. If my group went past the appointed time to conclude the day, I was scolded. You see, I had cut into the Martini time of the elder Shima partner. I cherish those moments with my best friend's father.

For years I have thought of John Shima as the best friend and best guy in the world. I found out he is also the best at being a son. If I couldn't have a son like John, I'd want a daughter like Amy. As the burden of care increased upon John, Amy quit her job at San Diego Zoo and moved back to Oak Park to help John care for their father. Although Dr. Shima's health was failing, his spirit was

alive and well within him, and his children.

Due to health reasons, Dr. Shima fired his last registered targets with John in 1998. The 1999 World Championships marked the first time in 28 years that Dr. Shima did not attend with his son. Dr. Shima passed quietly on November 13.

I have met a number of "good" people in my life, from all walks of life but it will take some doing to remove

Doctor from the top of that list. His daughter Amy, sons John and Mark, and two grandchildren Carolyn and Tak (short for Takayoshi) survive him. Dr. Shima will be missed deeply by his family, friends, and his sport. He was one of the true gentlemen left in our game. However, for anyone who knows John and this special family, we can take solace in the fact that the spirit of Arthur Takayoshi Shima will live forever within those whose lives he touched.



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