

# City Policemen Teach Area Youngsters Fundamentals Of Gun Handling Safety

By DEAN A. KRENZ

What would you say is the safest organized youth recreation program conducted across the nation today? Basketball, ping pong, swimming, target shooting or baseball?

If you decided on ping pong, baseball, swimming or basketball, you were wrong! While participants in these sports suffered sprains, fractures and lacerations, 250,000 junior shooters in organized National Rifle Association clubs finished 1959 without a single accidental injury. When the records are in, 1960 is expected to be another credit to riflists.

Klamath Falls has a share of that amazing record through its Police Beneficiary Association-sponsored gun handling courses conducted here since 1954. During that time 1,143 Klamath Falls area youngsters have learned the basic tenets of gun handling and safety during 10-week courses.

"We're not telling them guns are not dangerous," said Lt. Bud Adkins, founder and promoter of the program. "We teach the youngsters that guns must be handled with care and respect at all times."

"Only in that way can shooting be the safest recreation."

A pioneer effort in Oregon, the Klamath Falls program started in 1954 when Adkins was coaching a young baseball team.

"I hated to see the team break up, so I asked them if they'd like to take a gun handling course," Adkins recalled.

## Started With Five

The energetic police officer started the year with five students and ended it with 81. The course has been going full throttle ever since. Now the Police Association puts about 100 students through the course twice a year.

The course is open to boys and girls, 10 to 15 years old inclusive, with signed consent of their parents. Cost of the course is modest, indeed. There is a \$1 fee for the course. Ammunition is sold wholesale at 55 cents a box at the range, and rifles are provided.

The .22 caliber target rifles used are provided on a loan basis by Civil Defense, Adkins explained.

Recently the district counselor of the parent National Rifle Association commended the local NRA club as the most active and best-operated group in the West Coast area.

Credit can be claimed by the Police Association alone. In sponsoring the program, the association donates the use of its own firing range, provides for all utilities, and unselfishly devotes many hours of spare time for instruction. The program is not a function of the police department, and taxpayers in no way contribute toward it.

The Police Association is justly proud of its accomplishments with the young people who have gone through the course.

"We feel certain that the courses have been a factor in saving several lives and in avoiding many injuries," Adkins declared. "This is something no one can measure, but we're confident the benefit is with us."

Lest the public believe the

## THE COVER

Oscar Gerleve, a member of the Klamath Falls Police Beneficiary Association, gives young Dale Knapp of Klamath Falls some pointers on gun handling. Policemen donate their own time and some of their association funds for a gun handling course that is serving as a model for the remainder of the state.



DIANE COOK and Nancy Clark jokingly taunt John Detroit with results of their target shooting in the Klamath Falls Police Beneficiary Association-sponsored gun handling course. Girls are generally as good or better shots than the boys. All shots in these two targets are well within the center black circles. — Photos by Don Kettler.

course is aimed at marksmanship alone, Adkins explained that only a third of the time is spent on the range. The major portion of the course is taken up with classes in safety and related subjects.

## Safety Is Aim

"The idea is not to make sharpshooters out of these youngsters," he said. "We want to get across the habits of safe gun handling. Being able to hit a bullseye is incidental to that goal."

Getting the prized charter from the National Rifle Association took some doing on the part of Adkins and his compatriots. Under NRA rules there was no provision for a training club with changing membership. After effective arguments by the Klamath Falls men the NRA officially sanctioned the club. As a member of NRA the club receives marksmanship medals and diplomas and instructional materials. Being a part of a national organization, local shooters have an opportunity to be ranked nationally.

Perhaps not so surprisingly, girls have shown a strong interest in the course, Adkins pointed out. About two out of five members of each class are girls intent on proving they can hit the targets just as well as the boys, or better.

And how they prove it!

It's not unusual for the girls to outshoot the boys in matches. The most recent class last month held a match between boys and girls—Adkins' class of girls won 416-403. The boys were good sports, but learned new respect for feminine ability.

"The girls are generally more attentive, and serious about the course," Adkins explained.

## Top Marksman

It is a boy, Adkins' son Ricky, however, who is top marksman of the local club. Ricky shot his way to the highest NRA medals after staying with the club as a junior instructor. Other learners also have an opportunity to keep on plinking for higher awards after they finish the gun handling course.

Most youngsters, boys and girls



BUD ADKINS had good reason to grin after his girls' team defeated a boys' team coached by Phil Chlopek. Adkins and Chlopek are regular instructors in the gun handling program. Youngsters 10 to 15 years of age can take the course with parental consent.

alike, take the course because they are interested in hunting, Adkins said, recalling the old days when "you learned it all on your own."

The Klamath Falls program has attracted attention around the state, and it is not surprising that many communities have written for the local formula for success.

"There has been talk of the legislature requiring a gun handling course diploma before a youngster can get his first hunting license," Adkins said. "It makes us even more proud to be providing this training before it is legally required."

Policemen who conducted the last course included Adkins, Oscar Gerleve, Phil Chlopek, Dennis Lilly and Walter Comady, instructors, and John Kennard, Al Bianconi, Russell Mattmiller and Ray Howard, assistants.

## Fair Maidens, Wind Get Blame

HONOLULU (AP)—Fair wind and fair maidens were blamed partly for bringing the 30,000-ton British liner Arcadia to grief on a reef just outside Honolulu's harbor entrance Thursday.

It appeared that as the ship maneuvered to pick up an off-shore boarding party she drifted in the steady trade wind and crunched gently on a coral reef. The boarding party included one of Honolulu's welcoming taskforces of Hula girls, but it also had customs inspectors and shipping agents.

No one was hurt. The only damage found was an indentation about a foot long and half an inch deep, embedded with bits of coral, about 25 feet below the water line forward of the bridge.

But it took several tugs more than two hours—while all other

shipping was halted through the 480-foot wide harbor entrance, to work the Arcadia free.

The big P&O-orient liner—carrying 1,182 passengers and a crew of 713—was scheduled to leave at midnight Thursday night for the South Pacific and Australia.

## HOT STAKE STREAK

BALTIMORE (AP)—During a six-day period early in November, Bill Hartack won three stakes while dividing his talents at three racetracks. He scored in Garden State features with Tick Tock and Royal Native and at Pimlico with Brandy Sea. Earlier he had planned to ride out the New York season without interruption but he consented to travel 800 miles in one week to ride stakes races.