

Introduction

By: Kim Rhode



Shooting has obviously been an important part of my life. It has given me many opportunities and taught me lessons that I'm not able to put into words. As you look through this special edition of **SHOOT! MAGAZINE**, look for what interests you and the opportunities shooting can provide for you. There are many opportunities in the junior shooting arena, including scholarship shooting programs, Olympic shooting, college teams, cowboy shooting, and hunting. You'll find many wonderful articles and information about how to get into these programs. Whatever discipline you enjoy, you will find good

friendship and fun! Shooting is a great sport and I truly believe that it has molded me into the person that I am today.

Traveling around the world, being part of a team, learning to be a "good" competitor (meaning a humble winner and a gracious loser), being so glad (and proud) to be an American, learning responsibility and to never give up, are all lessons I learned from shooting. Participating in any sport can teach you these lessons, but remember shooting is a sport, just like any other sport. It requires practice, discipline, hand-eye coordination, stick-to-ativeness, good sportsmanship, and all



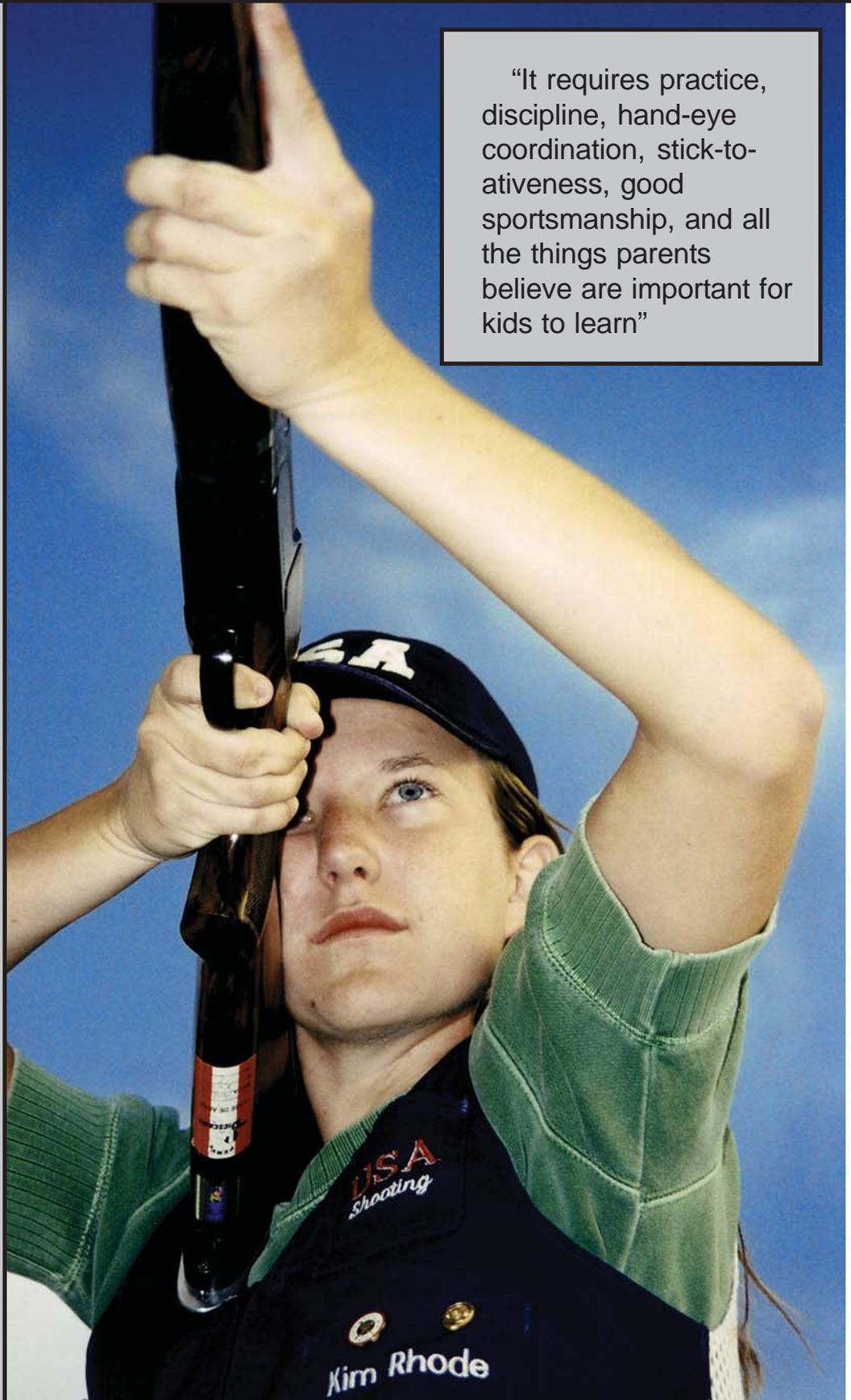
the things parents believe are important for kids to learn. When I started in the shooting sports it also brought me closer to my family and my roots.

My first memories of shooting are hunting with my parents and grandparents. We hunted deer, pig, duck, geese, dove, chukar, quail, antelope, turkey, and anything else that the Western United States had to offer. These trips were my introduction to shooting. My dad would hold the gun for me and taught me to aim, swing, and lead the target. My parents were obviously big supporters of my shooting but my grandparents were also shooters. My grandmother was a bird hunter and I loved listening to her stories about working the dogs and how many birds she got. My grandfather was originally from a ranch in Montana. His father and grandfather were also shooters, so shooting was something that I believe I was destined to follow.

Have you seen the pyramids of Egypt or gone shopping in Korea? When I studied world history in school, many of the countries we studied I had actually visited, like Finland, Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece, Korea, China, Egypt, Peru, Argentina, The Dominican Republic, and Canada to name a few. When we talked about happenings or history in different countries I could easily remember facts and in many instances, such as the pyramids of Egypt, had toured through them. This was something that many of my teachers had not even done!

Have you ever been part of a team? You make friends that you have something in common with and often form lifelong friendships. You know that they will support you and be there through good and bad times. You learn to look out for one another.

“It requires practice, discipline, hand-eye coordination, stick-to-ativeness, good sportsmanship, and all the things parents believe are important for kids to learn”



Have you ever been in a competition? Two important lessons come from any competition. First off, never ever give up. Even if you're off to a rocky start, a true competitor holds it together and looks forward to the next target or the next round. You never give up. As a match comes to close to an end, I have seen many of my fellow competitors buckle under pressure. If you look forward and continue to do your best, you can come out a winner. I know I have done it! The second lesson is you don't always win. No one *always* wins. Sometimes it is painful to lose and difficult to look your competitor in the eye and shake their hand, but it is an important part of being a good competitor. It is easy to win, be happy, celebrate, but you must never lose sight of the competitors who did not win and be gracious. Shake their hand and remember you will be there sometimes. No one *always* wins.

Fun is one of the most important things. Whatever type of shooting you like, keep it fun and safe. I fell in love with shotgun shooting because of the moving targets and excitement of the shoot offs, but there are so many different types of shooting to choose from. For example, some of the cowboy action shooting is done from horseback. This adds a whole new challenge to hitting the target. Then there are the cowboy/western clothes and guns. Take the time to read through this entire special edition and see where your interests lie. Look for your opportunity. There is something for everyone.



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