

Stawell's win-win-win

by Executive Director of
Publications Tim Bannister



SSAA (Vic) President and SSAA National Junior Vice President Bob Cooper welcomed guests and potential Koorie participants at the launch of the Indigenous Introductory Program.

A boriginal Victorians will be the beneficiaries of a new shooting program aimed at putting guns in their hands and introducing them to the sport.

The Indigenous Introductory Program is a first in shooting and has been jointly developed and funded by SSAA Victoria and Sport and Recreation Victoria. Officially launched at the Stawell Clay Target Complex recently, SSAA (Vic) President and SSAA National Junior Vice President Bob Cooper said features of the program included the themes of participation and inclusion, as well as breaking down stereotypes that exist in the sport of shooting.

Present at the launch were Australian Shotgun Coach Greg Chan, Member for Ripon Joe Helper, the Victorian Minister for Sport and former AFL footballer Justin Madden, and Federal Parliament's Lower House Speaker of the House David Hawker. Former Down the Line National Junior High Gun and World Cup multi-medallist Brett Hall was a guest at the launch and talked of his rise within the sport.

"When Greg [Greg Chan - now the Australian Shotgun Coach] started to coach me, it was the start of an amazing shooting career.

"We attended the Nationals every year held around the country and finally made



Victorian Minister for Sport Justin Madden congratulated SSAA for its role in tailoring recreational shooting to a wider audience.

it into the Australian Shooting Team. I competed in Korea, Japan, Cyprus, Italy, America, Egypt and India," he said.

The program is likely to run once a month and is designed to showcase the many different shooting disciplines that are available to indigenous Australians in a safe, welcoming and friendly manner, as well as promoting the responsible use of firearms. Involvement within the SSAA Victoria Conservation and Pest

Management program is also predicted with the creation of a 'buddy' system where Aboriginal Victorians new to the SSAA will be paired up with an existing member who will act as a 'mentor'. All new shooters will still have to receive the same accreditation as anybody else, but will receive the benefit of the guidance of an 'old hand'.

According to the SSAA's Bob Cooper, the crossing over of the Conservation and Pest Management program and the Indigenous Introductory Program is likely to open up new avenues to members.

"Partnerships with Parks Victoria and other organisations will be further strengthened and developed while new land and opportunity to hunt for pest animals may well be available," he said. "This is a win-win-win situation for the shooting sports, the Aboriginal community and SSAA Victoria. I'd like to thank my staff and Sport and Recreation Victoria for making this program a working reality and to also thank our support partners VicHealth, the Victorian Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation, Stawell Clay Target Complex, Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly and Brambuk Aboriginal Cultural Centre." ●

Former Down the Line National Junior High Gun and World Cup multi-medallist Brett Hall.



Australian shotgun coach Greg Chan (below right) was on hand to guide the junior shooters through the basics of breaking clays.



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