



# A WILD BEAST AT HEART

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## A Sunday in Lombardia



### *TAV Cieli Aperti*

Once again my friend, and your virtual Italian tour guide, **Signor Pino Facchini**, took me to an interesting and entertaining tour of the Italian shooting activities.

We started the weekend by meeting for lunch at T.A.V. Castiglione Torinese, located on the shores of *Fiume* (River) *Po*, and about 20 minutes from my apartment in Torino. **Signor Maurizio Di Benedetto**, club manager and president, graciously offered us lunch – risotto, salad, cheese and fruits, and of course a good bottle of wine.

Sharing a meal at one's table is one of the most important social acts in the Italian culture and something all of us should make a practice of doing.

After lunch **Pino** and I shot a couple rounds of International Trap (Fossa Olimpica), when he shot perfect score. After that, as a visiting American, I was invited to shoot "Universal Trap". This is mix of American and International Trap: a single launching wobble machine, but the shooters rotate stations after each shot and the firing line is 8 meters (8.8 yards) behind the trap house. I am happy to say that I did very well at it.

On Sunday morning, 25<sup>th</sup> September, I met **Pino** at his home in Grugliasco and we started our journey to Lombardia (capital Milano). Lombardia is one the northern Italian provinces and stands between Piemonte (where Torino is located) and Veneto (capital Venice).

We made a stop in **Brescia** and visited **Castellani S.n.c.** ([www.castellani.brescia.it](http://www.castellani.brescia.it)), manufacturers of shooting apparel. According to Mr. Maurizio Castellani, owner and president, they dressed over 80% of all shotgun athletes at the Beijing Olympic Games. **Signor** Maurizio told me that the only reason that he drives a Porsche is to respond quickly to his customers.

Around lunch time we arrived at **A.S. Trap Concaverde** ([www.trapconcaverde.it](http://www.trapconcaverde.it)) in Lonato, very close to Lake Garda, which is one of the most beautiful locations in the world.

Our first commitment was lunch, which was being served in the full service restaurant that is part of the club's facilities (which also include a gun shop, permanent booths for corporate sponsors and industry representatives, and electronic score boards, so anyone can keep track of the competition in real time.

There are twelve international trap fields at **Concaverde** and the range is surrounded by a dirt berm some 12 meters (40 feet) high, 120 meters (130 yards) from the firing line. The berm is covered with a green mesh and has a couple different functions. Besides the safety aspects of shot containments, it also serves as a great sound and wind deflector or barrier, and provides good visual contrast for the orange clay pigeons. Additionally, the mesh helps reclaim the shot fired, so it provides both environmental as well as economical benefits. There are gutters at the bottom of the berms where the shot rolls down and is reclaimed.

With six shooters per squad, there were 72 on the firing line simultaneously, and it resembled a thunder storm. The shotgun reports were the thunders and the falling shot the rain.

This particular Sunday there were around 750 athletes competing. The competition was for 100 birds, and most shooters fire two 28 gram (one ounce) rounds per bird. That would mean about 9,400 pounds of lead shot that become an additional source of income to the club.

We stayed at **Concaverde** until the Piemonte squads finished shooting and at around 3:30 PM we started our back towards Torino, but **Pino** planned an important detour on the way.

We drove to *Cologno al Serio* (by Bergamo) to visit and shoot at **T.A.V. Cieli Aperti** ([www.cieliaperti.com](http://www.cieliaperti.com)). *Cieli Aperti* means open skies, and along with Concaverde is one the most outstanding shotgun ranges that I ever had the opportunity to visit.

There are eight International Trap fields at **Cieli Aperti**, and some of them double as skeet and Five Stand (Compak) fields. The sound deflector and shot reclaiming berms surround the complex. The shooting stations are not only covered as in other clubs that I visited, but they are basically enclosed by safety glass, so the shooter can fire comfortably in any weather, there is reduced wind influence on the targets and the expectators can watch in complete safety. Needless to say that there is good sound insulation in the inside of the "stations".

**T.A.V. Cieli Aperti** was designed and built by competitive and exhibition shooter Renato Lamera ([www.renatolamera.it](http://www.renatolamera.it)), and he and his family manage the complex.

It was late afternoon, but **Pino** and I were welcome by Adriano Lamera, Renato's son, and we shot two rounds of International Trap. **Shooting Pino's son, Rocco**, Beretta 682 I did my best score to date, braking 22 birds.

After shooting we continued back to **Torino** with an additional stop in **Carisio**. We had dinner at a truck stop, and that was like no other truck stop dinner that you may have ever had. Besides a liter of good local red wine, we had *agnoloti* pasta, *tagliata con funghi* (prime steak with mushrooms) and *gelatto* (ice cream).

I finally arrived at my apartment around midnight, tired but really happy for the privilege of learning and experience so much on a single day.

This morning I was talking with some other SMGC's members and admiring the fall colors painting our tree line under the blue October sky, and I can tell you that I would not trade it by any high technology shot reclaiminig berm anywhere in the world.

**Posted by Rodrigo at 4:34 AM 0 comments** 

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