



Kaleidoscope

Shooting range offers chance to polish old skills, learn new

The All Seasons Shooting Range at 4713 Hartley St. is the only indoor range in the area for pistol and rifle shooting. Two Daily Nebraskan reporters had the opportunity to experience the range first-hand recently as they emptied a few rounds with a .45 caliber pistol.

Owners Larry and Karen Gulbranson have operated the range for a little more than two years. The Gulbranson's observed a similar operation in Kansas City to help them design theirs. The range handles almost any caliber pistol or rifle, but deals basically with big bore pistols, according to Gulbranson.

The actual range consists of six lanes with adjustable targets of either 25 or 50 feet or 25-meter Olympic range.

"We put in the 25 meters in case anyone seriously training for the Olympics wanted to practice here," Gulbranson said. "There are more shooting events than any other Olympic sport."

All aspects of the range are geared toward personal safety. Steel walls and shield guards costing \$60,000 divide shooters in each lane, while sound-absorbing walls help lessen the amplification of the ear-splitting gun shots. Because of the deafening blasts and the risk of empty shells popping back in the shooter's eyes, everyone is required to wear glasses and ear muffs while on the range.

The range is monitored via closed-circuit television which allow the Gulbransons to supervise activity from the front of the shop. Warning lights can be flashed or the range shut off if anyone is suspected of mishandling a weapon.

"Safety is paramount. Everything is designed for the shooter's safety," Gulbranson said. "We've had a few minor incidents, but we've never had to reprimand anyone for doing anything crazy,"

he said.

Besides marksmen wishing to sharpen their eye, the range also conducts Practical Pistol leagues and a \$40 four-week course on self-defense.

Mrs. Gulbranson said quite a few women attend the self-defense course. "We can teach them how to use a pistol, but whether they are psychologically ready to use a gun, they will never really know."

The pistol leagues include such activities as shooting out a poker hand on a target. The night we were there, cardboard "hostages" were being set up which had to be fired around in order to hit a scored target.

"Shooting is getting bigger all the time," Gulbranson said. "Originally it was a self-defense type of thing, but it has kind of turned into a game. A lot of gamesmen are involved with things now such as the quick-draw." He said in the Soviet Union, people up to age 19 are strongly encouraged to practice pistol shooting.

Mrs. Gulbranson said there really hasn't been much interest shown by university students toward the range. She said university rules prohibiting firearms in living units make it difficult for students to own guns. The range does rent guns and ammunition and is trying to acquire lockers where people could store their own equipment. An hour's lane time is \$4 for one person or \$5 for two.

"I think we give people an avenue to keep their skills proficient," Mrs. Gulbranson said. "We think this is something people can enjoy."

"We're also an alternative for people who've never gone out with a gun to get experience," Gulbranson said.

"We've had a lot of people become interested in all different aspects of guns, such as collecting," Gulbranson said. "We've had a lot of beginners in, a lot of people who would never otherwise have dreamed of using a gun."

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Top: A .357 Python Magnum — one of the handguns for sale at the All Seasons Shooting Range. Upper right: The Gulbransons' workbench with its closed circuit television for monitoring the shooting range. Lower right: Reporter Kevin McCoy "empties a few rounds" at the range. Lower left: The .45 caliber automatic. McCoy used at the shooting range. The pistol has two safeties and automatically ejects the shells after firing.

