



3RSSA PILOT REPORT

Access to Restrooms

2024

3 Rivers Shooting Sports Academy

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3RIVERS SHOOTING SPORTS ACADEMY

VISION: To make youth participation in the shooting sports as easily accessible, team oriented, and professionally run as the best youth activities that compete for the time and talent of young athletes.

MISSION: To pilot initiatives and connect youth-oriented organization to resources that help provide welcoming, expert, and professional entry to competitive level shooting for athletes, parents, and coaches.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify and innovate to break down barriers to the youth shooting sports
2. Partner with youth-oriented organization to build and grow youth teams
3. Connect regional and national resources to youth teams and organization
4. Provide expert team coaching and shooting instruction to youth organizations and athletes

PILOT OVERVIEW AND EXECUTION

Purpose of Pilot

The barriers to youth sports are more than cost. Athletes and parents make family decisions every year based on not only the love for a sport, but also facilities, resources, professionalism, and convenience of the activity. In our work with shooting clubs and youth athletes, access to clean and accessible restrooms have been a reoccurring theme. Too many clubs offer a single rudimentary (often male only) restroom for their members – and then wonder why their youth shooting programs fail to flourish and convert athletes and parents to active members.

The Scholastic Clay Target Championships (SCTP) held at the Cardinal Center in Ohio are a testament to the uptrend in youth shooting where acres of shooting fields, coaches, athletes, and their families spend entire days outdoors. While the facility continues to expand and improve its offerings, its skeet fields stand alone with only port-a-let toilets as restrooms. We used this opportunity to capture the impact of clean, comfortable, and convenient restrooms on athletes, coaches, and family members shoot experience.

Pilot Execution

We coordinated with the company that already services the Cardinal Center to provide two restroom trailers for the far bank of skeet fields, the only fields that do not have permanent restroom facilities nearby. Tidy Tim's Toilets provided two nearly new restroom trailers that hook to power and contain male and female facilities, air conditioning, urinals, stalls, sinks, soap, paper towels, and garbage collection. The total cost approximately \$5,400 for 10 days for the trailers and \$3,800 for 10 days of daily servicing.

We branded the trailers with 3RSSA (3ft x 5ft banner) on the outside and 12in x 18in posters on the inside. All signage contained a QR code that asked users to take a quick online survey, using Microsoft Forms. To incentivize survey participation, the posters stated that the top 3 teams who had the most survey responses would receive a \$500 donation to their MidwayUSA Foundation Endowment, courtesy of 3RSSA. The surveys were designed to capture two things. First, it would provide a way to estimate trailer usage. Second, the survey contained questions to assist us in identifying what groups of people and how much value they placed on an accessible restroom facility.

Finally, we supplemented the survey with on site counting and observation of the two facilities. Random, 30-minute, observation times were selected throughout the week to count male and female usage of the facilities. These observations allowed for us to estimate the overall usage of the facilities by comparing the usages to the number of survey responses generated during the same time period as well as capture qualitative data and experiences from athletes, coaches, and parents.

RESULTS

The main findings of the pilot and its survey are striking, but not surprising.

- All categories of participants rated having the trailer restrooms as a major improvement.
- Females (athletes, coaches, and family members) were more likely to take the survey and rate the importance of having the facility available higher.
- The trailers provided more than just clean restroom to participants.

Table 1 below summarizes the 238 survey participants, which represented approximately 1/5th of the overall number of people that used the restrooms during the weeklong event. The summary statistics show that coaches and assistant coaches were the most likely to make use of the restrooms and take the survey, followed closely by athletes and parents. More significantly is the number of female athletes and parents who used the restroom and participated in the survey. Despite being severely underrepresented in the shooting sports (less than 10% of shooters at this year's SCTP Championships were female), female athletes make up nearly 50% of the athlete respondents and female parents make up nearly 80% of survey respondents.

Table 1: Survey Summary Statistics (N=238)

	Male	Female
Athlete	33	27
Coach / Assist Coach	46	6
Parent	29	83
Family Member	3	11
Totals	111	127

Figure 1 below shows how clean, convenient, and comfortable restroom access matters across the various groups of people who attend the SCTP event. Two things are worth noting. First, over 80% of attendees report having clean, convenient, and comfortable restroom facilities as being a “Major Improvement” or “Life Changing.” Second, parents are the most appreciative of nicer restroom facilities, with over 90% rating the access to clean, convenient rest rooms as a major improvement. The response, both in number and in attitude, of parents to an upgraded restroom experience highlights an important part of athlete participation in youth sports. Parents, often more than the athlete, value facility amenities - and it is parents that play a critical role in determining where and what sports their children will participate in.

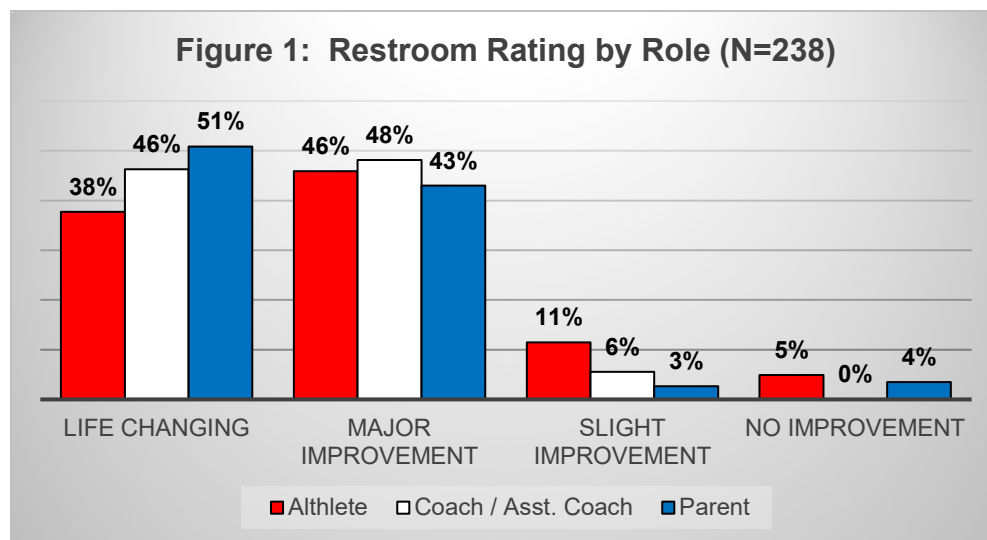


Figure 2 takes the same survey data and disaggregates it by gender. While both males and females rate restroom facility access as a major improvement, females are more likely to see the improvement as “Life Changing”. While there is certainly some hyperbole in this statement, it does demonstrate that females view restrooms as a much more important amenity than males, 54% vs 35%. In other words, a lack of convenient, clean, and appropriate restroom facilities is more likely to serve as a barrier to entry into the shooting sports for females and may explain part of the reason the sport continues to lag other sports in its ability to become more representative.

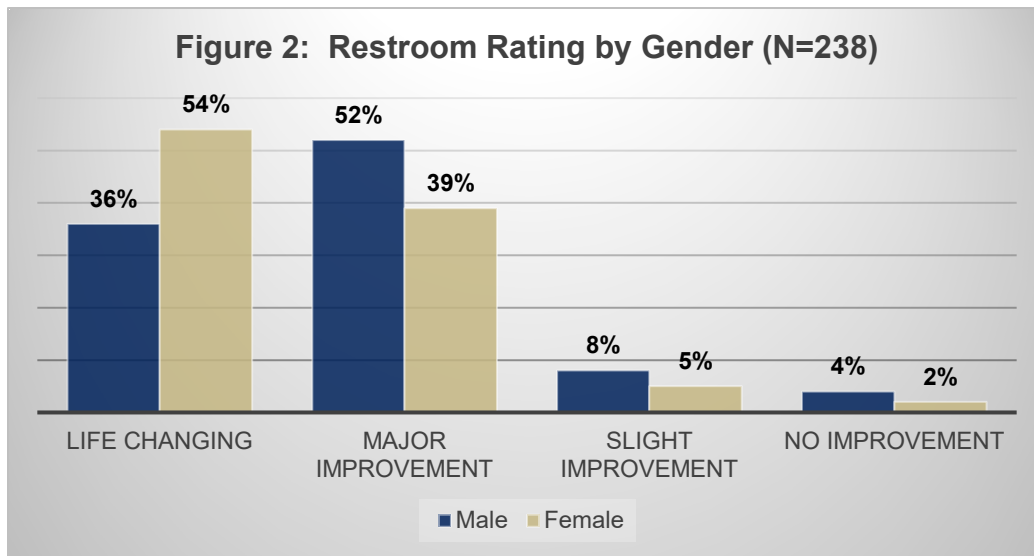
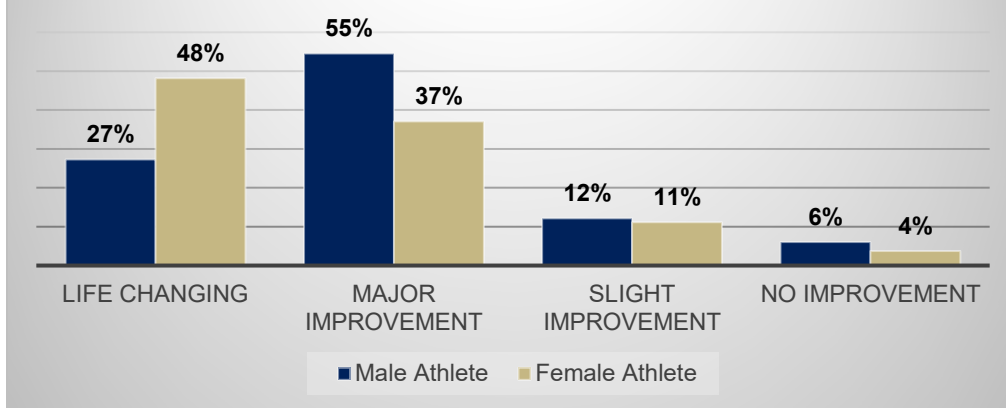


Table 3, below, provides a deep dive into the differences across genders in terms of restroom access by focusing only on athlete respondents. Here we see a larger difference between female and males that rate restroom access as “Life Changing”, 48% vs 27%. Anecdotally, we observed reasons for this that go beyond biology - which is an important factor on its own. Females used the restrooms for shoot preparation. Female shooters often spend extra time adjusting their shooting equipment, clothing, and hair prior to stepping on the field. Making sure hair is pulled back and out of their face to increase target acquisition and adjusting undergarments to allow for proper shoulder mounting of a shotgun are factors often needing a mirror and privacy. Females were also more likely to apply sunscreen and makeup before stepping on the field. When competing in a male dominated sport, it is not surprising females may want to look like females. It makes them feel more confident and comfortable - factors that lead to more targets broken, more success, and greater retention in the sport. A popular t-shirt for sale at this year’s SCTP shoot read “Shoot Like a Girl.” We agree. Lastly, just the idea of a proper restroom is more important to a female shooter than it is to a male. Emergencies happen, and when they do, they can be life changing.

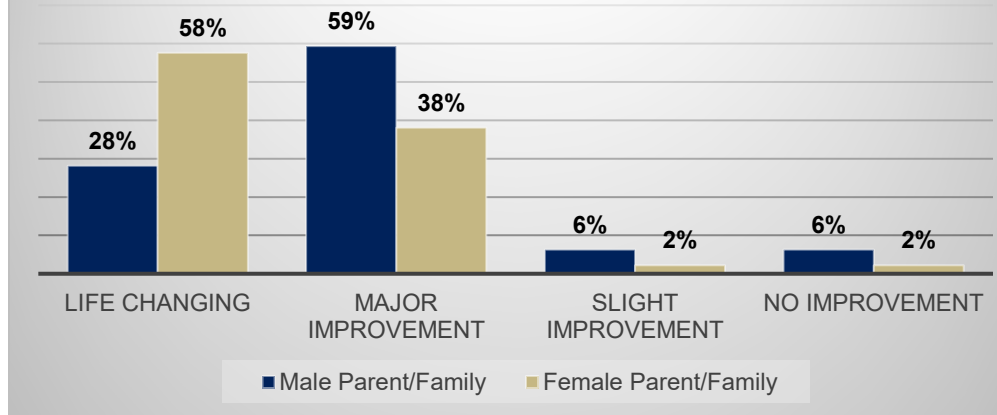
Table 3: Restroom Rating by Gender for Athletes (N=61)



“My daughter, a shooter, had an emergency that required a restroom. Your trailer saved her from an embarrassing moment and having to pull out of the competition...keeping her in the sport.”

Table 4 below continues to investigate the difference by gender, this time looking at parent responses. We see a consistent pattern of females (mothers in this case) valuing a clean and convenient restroom more than males (fathers). Notably, this is the largest difference across genders (30 percentage point difference) - meaning that mothers are much more sensitive to this issue. While it is not shocking that mothers might feel more strongly about restroom amenities, the magnitude of this difference is worth considering. By far, mothers are the parents most often asked to support a child’s participation in a sport. They drive athletes to practice and often remain at a sports facility during practice to work, relax, or socialize. The competition between sports for athlete attention and participation also competes for parent time and support. Facilities that make mom more comfortable (or at least make mom less uncomfortable) are likely to attract more athlete attention and commitment. As one coach noted, “when mama is happy, the shooter and coaches are happy.” And as Table 4 shows, better restrooms seem to make mothers happy.

Table 4: Restroom Rating by Gender for Family Members (N=124)



One mother who had been standing in front of the mirror in the restroom trailer was asked if she was alright. She responded, “Oh yes, nothing is wrong. I’m just standing in here to get out of the heat. I love my son, but I could barely stand the heat any longer. The A/C in this restroom is a godsend.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The pilot results and survey findings indicate that facilities may play a more significant role in gaining athlete and parent support for the sport than many shoot organizers, club owners, coaches, or supporters realize. Youth athletes and their parents face numerous competing demands on their time, making it essential for clubs to address areas that might be serving as barriers to the sport. Activities that provide professional coaching, community support, a team-oriented atmosphere, and appealing facilities are more likely to attract and retain participants

Our objective was to quantify the value of improved facilities—specifically restrooms—to help clubs prioritize investments that attract youth shooters. Based on our findings, we offer the following recommendations:

Enhance Restroom Facilities at Events: Continue supplementing Port-A-Lets with restroom trailers for International and American Skeet events at the Cardinal Center (and any venue where restrooms are far from shooting fields). Given the importance of these facilities, especially for female athletes and parents, shoot organizers might consider seeking corporate sponsorship or slightly increasing event fees to cover costs. For example, a \$1 per 100 targets fee increase would cover trailer expenses for the 3,100 athletes at the 2024 event (excluding servicing costs).

Reassess Club Facilities for Youth Engagement: Clubs seeking to increase local youth participation must recognize barriers that may be deterring potential shooters. For example, during a recent consultation, we found a club's female restroom being used as storage and the male restroom in poor condition—issues unnoticed by the older male members but potentially off-putting to young athletes and their families. This study underscores the importance of basic amenities in creating a welcoming environment for new participants.¹

¹ As a follow up to this example, 3RSSA assisted this club in getting funding and support for cleaning, updating, and repairing their facility, with an eye toward amenities that support youth shooters and the parents that support them. Within 18 months, their membership has doubled thanks in large part to their youth team's growth and parents becoming club members so that they can shoot with their children. These parents and athletes are active in helping maintain the "home field and facility" of their team.

COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Multiple Uses by Different People

- Parents looking to cool down
- Athletes washing hands before they shoot (gun oil and sunscreen)
- Athletes washing their hands and face after they shoot (gun residue and sweat).
- Athletes fixing their equipment before heading to the field (hair, makeup, sunscreen, cleaning glasses, uniform fit)
- Parents, friends, and coaches staying near fields because they didn't have to drive to clubhouse facilities

Reduced Demand on Port-o-lets

- Cleaner Port-o-lets throughout the day
- Port-o-lets primarily used for urine (keeping them in better shape)

Surprise and Appreciation

- "Those are the nicest toilets I've ever seen"
- "Thank you for such a nice experience"
- "Thank you, you don't know how much this make a difference"
- "I wasn't expecting something like this to be here"
- "Wow!!"

Team Survey Participant Winners*:

1. WILMOT TRAP TEAM | Burlington, WI (Team ID: R66265)
2. CENTRAL FALCONS TRAP & SKEET | Silver Lake, WI (Team ID: R59105)
3. LOWELL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | Ada, MI. (Team ID: R49905)

*These teams received a \$500 donation from 3RSSA into their MidwayUSA Foundation Endowment. The MidwayUSA Foundation matched this \$500 donation so that each team received \$1000 in total.