

Station 3

By Ed Scherer



Ed Scherer was a popular columnist on instruction for Skeet Shooting Review during the 1980s and 1990s. He passed away in 1995. The following is a print from March 1991.

High 3 is the hardest of all to maintain lead. I rank it with high 2 as a “zipper.” It appears so fast and departs so soon it tends to make skeeters despair. Fear not, however, while I come to your rescue.

The muzzle load point can not be compromised. It’s common, when a bird outruns the skeeter, to move out the hold point, thinking it will be easier to get to the target and execute a quicker shot. Alas, this isn’t the case. A better approach is to examine where the hold point is. A dozen clay birds stacked 17 feed out from the face of the high house and under the flight of the target is the perfect hold point. Muzzle should be pointing exactly over this hold point. Keep muzzle no higher than the bottom of the target opening.

Feet, just before calling, should be faced away from the target opening so as shot is fired, the body is still unwinding. Here is a tip for the high house target. Your navel should be faced directly into the low house opening. I suggest a line be drawn across the tips of your toes and then another line at a 90 degree angle from this first line should run into the low house opening. This assures feet in proper position. Now crank your hips back, swinging the entire body to where muzzle is directly over the high house hold point. Note how your body is wound up ready to unwind as the target emerges.

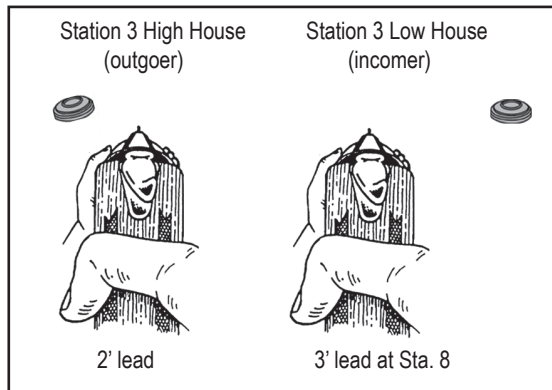
Leading with the Knee

Here is another tip. As you are wound up, ready to call, bend your front knee, but keep the back knee firm. Put 60 percent of your weight forward on the bent knee. Do a few dry fires on high 3, leading with the knee. As the knee turns to the right, the entire body follows creating a smooth continuous swing. When feet are in place so that the navel faces the low house, the swing will continue throughout the

shot. The shoulders also will remain level, which in turn prevents shooting under the target. Too many times feet and navel face closer to the high house openings, causing a lowered right shoulder as shot is fired. You will run out of swing because the body just can’t continue its swing when feet are improperly placed. As right shoulder drops, the errant shot could be low.

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Eyes should be looking half-way between muzzle of skeet gun and the high house opening. Loosen left arm just as bird is called for and be ALERT. As bird flashes from the opening, start swinging your muzzle immediately. Always remain in front of the target with your muzzle. A 2 foot lead is required to hit this target and it should be shot before the Station 8 crossing point. The longer the shot is delayed, the smaller the lead and that is why it is easier to understand why a great amount of misses here are in front.



Viewing the Lead

Now here is something that will help to explain the lead. Pick a spot 6 feet before the Station 8 crossing point, put

two stacks of targets at right angle to your Station 3 shooting stand, making sure targets are 2 feet apart.

Now walk back to your shooting stand on 3 and view that 2 foot space. Visualize the stack on the right as the gun muzzle. Then space seen between the simulated gun muzzle and that other stack of targets is the required lead to smash high 3. Neat trick, eh? Trying to tell someone what a 2 foot lead looks

like is more realistic when the lead is actually viewed where target is shot.

Low 3 is broken in the same area as the high house, in this case 6 feet past Station 8 crossing point. Walk back out to your stack of targets, but, in this case, move the targets so they are 3 feet apart. Walk back to your Station 3 shooting stand and visualize that 3 foot lead. Remember, the stack of targets on the left is now your gun muzzle, while the gap between the simulated muzzle and the other stack of targets is the actual 3 foot lead required on low 3. I wouldn't tarry too long on low 3 or the wind will change the lead. If you tend to "ride" the target past the maker where your targets are stacked, you'll be in a heap of trouble when target bucks a head wind. The lead needs to be changed and you are now in trouble. Break it where I ask you to and the wind can be ignored.

Hold point for low 3 is over a stack of targets placed 17 feet out from low 3 opening, but make sure that stack is also under the flight of targets. The eyes are peering directly into the opening as a target emerges, the muzzle must start moving immediately. Never allow the target to reach the muzzles. A few dry runs here will help you spot the target and smoothly start your muzzle as target emerges.

If you can, increase your skill level where muzzle starts moving immediately as bird emerges and if muzzle was placed directly over my stack of targets, it is surprising how little lead

adjustment must be made in executing the shot. Muzzle height should be just below the target opening. Bear in mind the stack of targets used for a hold point must be removed in a registered match. In a recent article, I suggested erecting a lead gauge. Perhaps it is time to build one and use it on the practice rounds. Remember, do not despair. Follow my tips and the victory will be yours.

Having trouble, as a rank beginner holding those constant leads at Stations 3, 4 and 5? Move your

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hold point to closer to the opening as the bird appears, allow bird to move out, than start a smooth swing till muzzle passes the target. Your muzzle speed will be faster than bird speed and it will take less lead when shooting. This is how we shot back in the 1930s, before we knew about constant lead. Birds can be hit this way.

As your skill level increases, keep moving the hold point out and gradually switch over to constant lead.

Note, everything I've said also applies to the left handed shooter with one exception; the naval of the left handed shooter faces directly at the high house opening.