

CENTRAL SHARPSHOOTERS UNION

The merger of the Westlichen Schuetzen Bund and the Oberin Mississippi Schuetzen Bezirks formed the Central Sharpshooters Union. The initial meeting where the merger was agreed to was held in Joliet, Illinois, November 8, 1897.

The Central Sharpshooters Union adopted the constitution of the OMSB as its constitution. The annual meeting of delegates was dropped after 1900, so the only general meetings of delegates after that were at the biennial schuetzenfest.

The complete list of the Biennial Schuetzenfests is at the end of this article. The shooting programs of the fests list all the previous locations, but not the dates. The dates in the list were accumulated from the minutes book of the Recording Secretary of the CSSU and the archives of the ASSRA. Neither source was complete by itself, but the two together included the dates of all the tournaments.

After each tournament the Executive Committee produced a complete list of all prizewinners with prizes and included the minutes of the delegates' meeting. These lists were mailed to all entrants. Copies of several of these are available. Other results were published in national periodicals, e.g. Shooting and Fishing, or local Newspapers. News articles can be more informative than the published 'fest results as they tell more about the tournament itself. Also very informative are the 'Fest programs that present the rules, and occasionally describe the facilities.

The number of entries in the honor target is listed for those tournaments where I have results as an indication of the size of the tournament. The honor target was usually free to all members, so virtually every member entered. The tournaments where the number of non-members attending is available show that the number of non-members was not large, usually about 10 or less. The number of honor target entries when placed in a spreadsheet and plotted is remarkably linear: showing a steady decline through the years. The least squares fit line is $y=5780-2.969x$ where $x = \text{yr}$. This line gives an $R^2=0.8842$. An R^2 of 1.0 is a perfect fit, so 0.88 is very high.

The primary function of the Central Sharpshooter's Union was to hold the grand biennial tournaments. The last day of the tournament was usually a Sunday. This would have been when the prizes were distributed.

The CSSU also held 100 shot matches starting in 1905. These were included with the biennial 'fests, usually Monday following the regular tournament. The years when there was no tournament, the 100 shot match was held as a separate one day event.

The CSSU also held telegraphic team matches during the years when there was no Grand Schuetzenfest. The first of the telegraphic team matches was in 1904 and the last that I have seen mentioned was in 1914. These will be described in a separate article.

| Biennial Schuetzenfests of the CSSU | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|-----------|----------|----------------|----------------------|--|
| Fest | Year | Month | Dates | City | Honor Target Entries | |
| 1 | 1897 | June | 24 to 27 | Joliet, IL | 147 | |
| 2 | 1899 | June | 22 to 27 | Dubuque | 155 | |
| 3 | 1901 | June | 19 to 23 | Chicago | | |
| 4 | 1903 | June | 17 to 21 | St Louis | 120 | |
| 5 | 1905 | July | 15 to 18 | Davenport | 145 | |
| 6 | 1907 | July | 25 to 28 | Milwaukee | 99 | |
| 7 | 1909 | July | 14 to 18 | Highland, IL | 116 | |
| 8 | 1911 | July | 12 to 16 | Monroe, WI | | |
| 9 | 1913 | July | 22 to 27 | St Louis | 96 | |
| 10 | 1915 | July | 14,15,16 | Davenport | 91 | |
| 11 | 1917 | July | 24,25,26 | New Glarus, WI | 94 | |
| 12 | 1919 | June | 18 to 22 | Highland, IL | 81 | |
| 13 | 1921 | July | 14 to 17 | Davenport | 68 | |
| 14 | 1923 | June | 19 to 22 | New Glarus, WI | 59 | |
| 15 | 1925 | August | 19 to 22 | St Louis | 48 | |
| 16 | 1927 | September | 3 to 6 | Davenport | 69 | |
| 17 | 1929 | August | 20 to 23 | Davenport | 67 | |
| 18 | 1931 | August | 22 to 27 | Davenport | 55 | |

