

## WESTLICHEN SCHUETZEN BUND

The Westlichen Schuetzen Bund (WSB) was formed in 1879 as the Nordwestlichen Schuetzen Bund, changing its name in 1885. It is interesting that the people of Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, the area covered by the Bund, considered themselves in the “Northwest” in the 1860’s and 1870’s. Iowa became a state in 1846, Minnesota in 1858. Kansas became a state in 1861, Nebraska in 1867, and the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming in 1889.

Member vereins in the WSB in 1897 were:

Chicago Sharpshooters	Chicago, IL
Nord Chicago Schutzenverein	Chicago, IL
Cincinnati Rifle Association	Cincinnati, OH
Excelsior Rifle Club	Davenport, IA
National Rifle Club	Elgin, IL
Germania Schutzen Section	Fountain City, WI
Hartford Rifle Club	Hartford, Conn
Indianapolis Shooting Ass.	Indianapolis
Joliet Schutzenverein	Joliet, IL
La Crosse Sharpshooters Assn.	La Crosse, WI
Milwaukee Sharpshooters Society	Milwaukee, WI
Monroe Schutzenverein	Monroe, WI
Monticello Rifle Club	Monticello, WI
Wm Tell Schutzenverein	New Glarus, WI
New Holstein Scheutzenverein	New Holstein, WI
Omaha Schutzenverein	Omaha, NE
Oshkosh Schutzengesellschaft	Oshkosh, WI
Peru Schutzengesellschaft	Peru, IL
Central Sharpshooters Ass	St Louis, Mo
Wausa Schutzenverein	Wausa, WI
Winona Schutzenverein	Winona, MN

Notice that the Davenport club in the list is the Excelsior Rifle Club. There are several mentions of the Excelsior Rifle Club and the WSB in the protokoll of the DSG during the time the WSB was in existence, and as early as 1876. The history by Bredow mentions that the members of the DSG were active in the WSB.

The Excelsior Rifle Club was closely tied to the DSG, but the Excelsior Club has been mostly associated with indoor shooting in the early 1900’s. It did have a history in indoor shooting, but that’s another story. The Excelsior Rifle Club had an earlier life. Bredow mentions several members of the DSG that won events in the tournaments of the WSB listed above.

In 1885 at Indianapolis, Indiana Emil Berg won first prize for greatest number of center shots. ... In 1887, in Chicago, the Davenport team captured first prize. The members were Emil Berg, Edward Berger, George Cook, Henry Schroeder, and John Bredow. (JFB)

In order to enter as a team in 1897 the members would have to have been members of the WSB. All the named team members were members of the DSG.

The DSG had more members than active shooters in those times: having around 200 members, but at most 70 shooters that participated in monthly shoots. There was certainly reason to join the DSG even if a person was not interested in shooting. Membership included admission to the Schuetzen Park, which from the earliest times had a bowling alley, dance hall, and other facilities. It was an attraction that a community minded person might support as a valuable asset in and of itself. Many of those who were shooters would not be interested in traveling out of town to large shoots. The WSB, however, required dues paid per member of the Associated Vereins. The DSG was already supporting the OMSB to the full extent of its membership. Possibly the Excelsior Rifle Club was formed for the more active Shuetzen to participate in the tournaments of the WSB as members without paying membership fees for those not interested.

According to the archives of the ASSRA the tournaments of the WSB were as follows:

1 June	26-30?	1879	Chicago
2		1881	St Paul
3 May-June	30 to 3	1883	Highland, IL
4 June	19 to 23	1885	Milwaukee
		1885	Indianapolis
5 June	(last wk)	1887	Chicago
6 June	19 to 23	1889	Indianapolis
7		1891	St Louis
8		1893	
9 June	19 to 23	1895	Milwaukee

There are two tournaments listed for 1885. It is likely that one of these was an event of the National Schuetzen Bund rather than the WSB. In 1893 there was a National Schuetzen Bund tournament in Chicago associated with the Columbian Exposition. There may or may not have been a separate tournament of the WSB that year.