



USAMU Running Target Range History

*By Michael Theimer
USAMU Running Target OIC
1972 - 1976*

Dixie Road

Hibbs Range

Easley Range

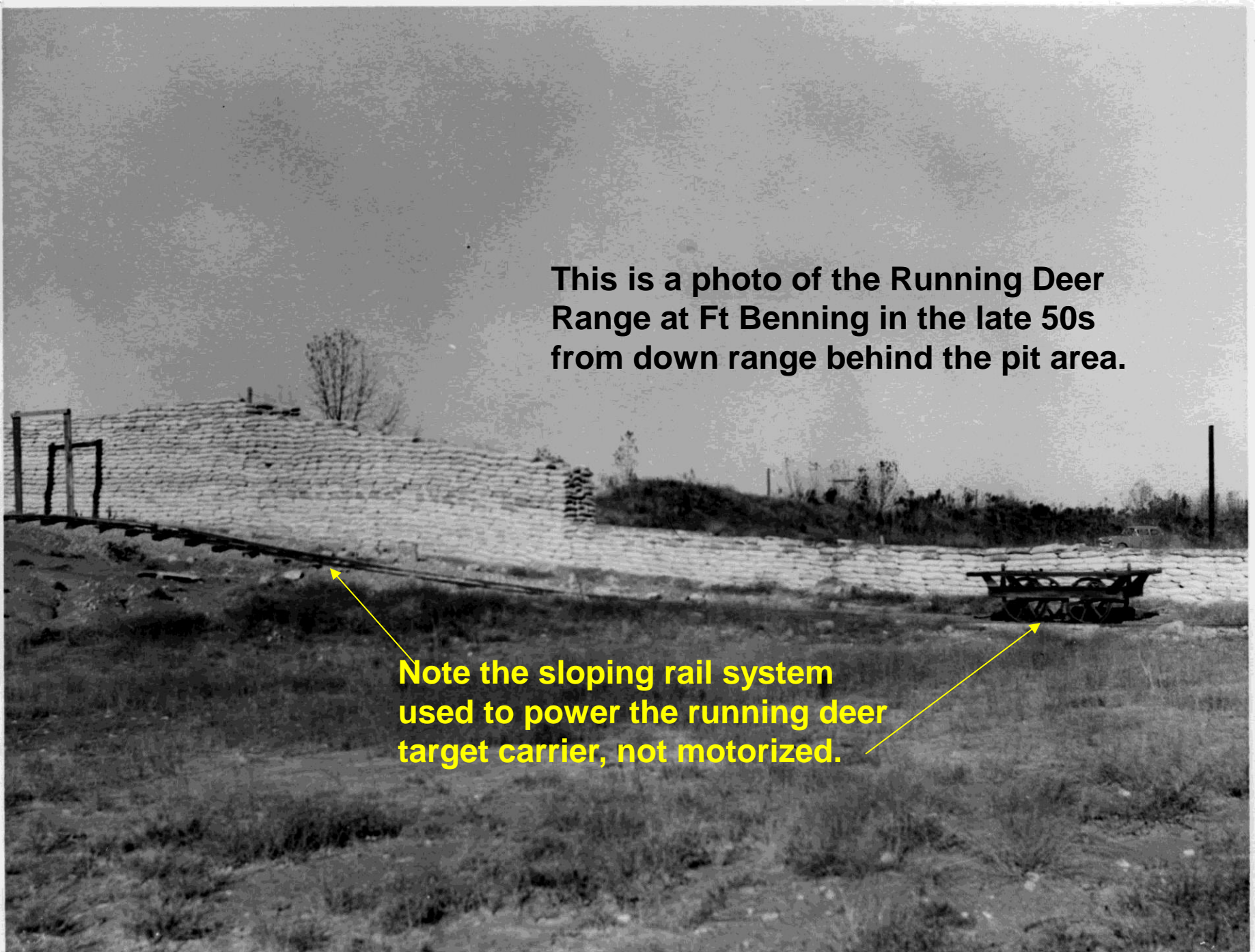
"The Pecan Grove"

Philips Range

Running Target firing line and Office/Classroom

This is a photo of the Running Deer Range at Ft Benning in the late 50s from down range behind the pit area.

Note the sloping rail system used to power the running deer target carrier, not motorized.





100 METER RUNNING DEER
Landing zone: 1 x 1 m
Scoring zones: 10
Diameter of the bullseye: 10 mm
Diameter of the 10 ring: 100 mm
Diameter of the 1 ring: 1000 mm

50 METER RUNNING BOAR
Landing zone: 1 x 1 m
Scoring zones: 10
Diameter of the bullseye: 10 mm
Diameter of the 10 ring: 100 mm
Diameter of the 1 ring: 1000 mm

10 METER RUNNING BOAR
Landing zone: 1 x 1 m
Scoring zones: 10
Diameter of the bullseye: 10 mm
Diameter of the 10 ring: 100 mm
Diameter of the 1 ring: 1000 mm

10 METER RUNNING TARGET
Landing zone: 1 x 1 m
Scoring zones: 10
Diameter of the bullseye: 10 mm
Diameter of the 10 ring: 100 mm
Diameter of the 1 ring: 1000 mm

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Landing zone: 1 x 1 m
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Landing zone: 1 x 1 m
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Diameter of the 10 ring: 100 mm
Diameter of the 1 ring: 1000 mm

The above shows the evolution (or de-evolution) of Running Target. The full size deer target is the 100 meter, center fire rifle target. The upper right is the 50 meter smallbore full size wild boar target. The small wild boar target was the first 10 meter air rifle target. In subsequent revisions, the running boar picture was removed to eliminate any media issues about “encouraging violence toward animals” in the Olympic shooting sports (i.e. head/shoulder silhouette was removed from the Olympic rapid fire pistol target).



50 METER RUNNING BOAR

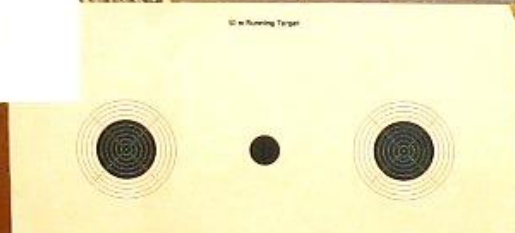
RIFLE EVENT
SIGHTS: ANY SCOPE
CALIBER: .22 LR
FIRED FROM 1966 TO 1988 (22 YEARS)
AS AN OLYMPIC EVENT
FIRED FROM 1989 TO PRESENT AS
NON-OLYMPIC EVENT

The 50meter Running Boar Target used from 1966 to 1988 as an Olympic event (twenty-two years). Any sights were allowed to include scopes. The only Olympic shooting event to allow scopes.



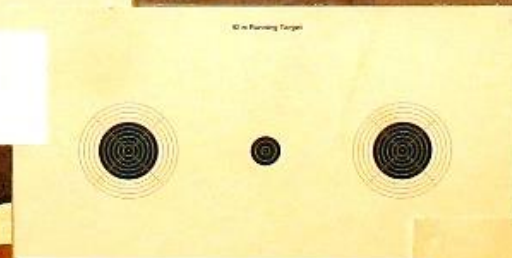
10 METER RUNNING BOAR

AIR RIFLE EVENT
SIGHTS: ANY SCOPE
CALIBER: .177 LEAD MATCH PELLET
FIRED FROM 1970 TO 1988 (18 YEARS)
NON-OLYMPIC EVENT



10 METER RUNNING TARGET

AIR RIFLE EVENT
SIGHTS: SCOPES LIMITED TO 4X
CALIBER: .177 LEAD MATCH PELLETS
FIRED FROM 1989 TO 1995
OLYMPIC EVENT



10 METER RUNNING TARGET

PAPER TARGET
AIR RIFLE EVENT
SIGHTS: SCOPES LIMITED TO 4X
CALIBER: .177 LEAD MATCH PELLETS
FIRED FROM 1897 TO PRESENT
OLYMPIC EVENT

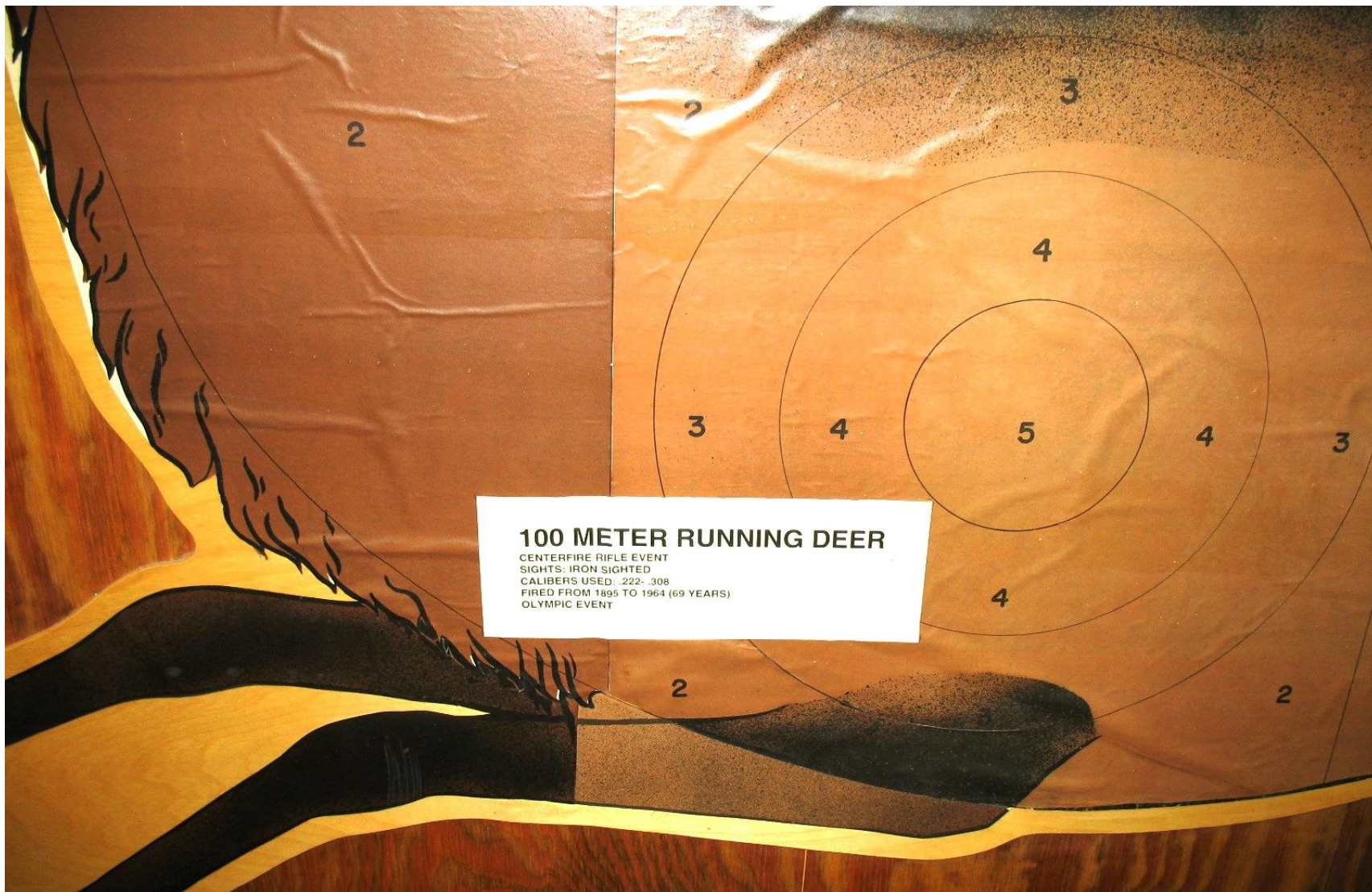


10 METER RUNNING TARGET

ELECTRONIC TARGET
AIR RIFLE EVENT
SIGHTS: SCOPES LIMITED TO 4X
CALIBER: .177 LEAD MATCH PELLETS
FIRED FROM 1997 TO PRESENT
OLYMPIC EVENT

The top Running Boar Target was the first 10 meter non-Olympic target, but due to political pressures to eliminate any issues with 'encouraging violence toward animals', the running boar picture was removed, but an 'aiming point' had to be printed on the target to accommodate lead for shooting a moving target.

The last Running Target at the bottom right is the 'electronic' target which did not have scoring rings printed on it. The 10 meter Olympic Running Target was used from 1989 to 1995 when RT was dropped as an Olympic shooting sport, but is still very popular in Europe and Scandinavian countries where it started.



100 METER RUNNING DEER
CENTERFIRE RIFLE EVENT
SIGHTS: IRON SIGHTED
CALIBERS USED: .222- .308
FIRED FROM 1895 TO 1964 (69 YEARS)
OLYMPIC EVENT

The 100 meter center fire rifle Running Deer event was an Olympic event from 1895 to 1964 (sixty-nine years). Various caliber rifles were used from .222 to .308. Due to the expense of building a 100 meter Running Deer range, it was reduced to a 50 meter .22 cal. smallbore rifle event and a running boar target approved for the event.



Left
scoring
clock

Sight in
target

Right
scoring
clock

Wind
flag

Running Boar targets
were stapled back to
back and double
stacked to allow two
shooters to train on
one range without
anyone in the pits
flipping targets for left
and right runs

When I arrived in November 1972, the 100 meter high power rifle Running Deer range had been converted to a Running Boar 50 meter range using 22 cal. target rifles.

Main shooting booth and target controls

Secondary shooting booth and 'warming hut'



When I arrived in November 1972, we were shooting from improvised shooting booths made from converted outhouse sheds. Note the smoke stack from our kerosene heater.



**Covered area for
target scoring &
pit crew**

**Target carriage
runs on a track
with cable and
motor at the far
end of the track**

**This is a double
stacked target used
for training only, not
competition**

The 100 meter Running Deer range walls were closed in with painted plywood to shorten the opening down to a 10 meter opening for 50 meter Running Boar event.

Behind the shooting sheds, was a covered firing line for rifle practice which was its original design




This original covered firing line with sturdy roof would provide the roof and concrete floor for our new double Running Target range shooting booths, office, and classroom.



In 1974 we began a 'self help' project to build the new double RT range. The Corps of Engineers provided a one yard cement mixer and a front end loader plus they dumped over 9 yards of sand and gravel which we shoveled by hand into the mixer.



We built the forms from scrap plywood and 2x6s and poured the cement into the open top of the forms. Sgt. Moeller is directing the front end loader with the cement. As a side note, we didn't reinforce the bottom half of the form well enough and it bulged requiring extra cement.



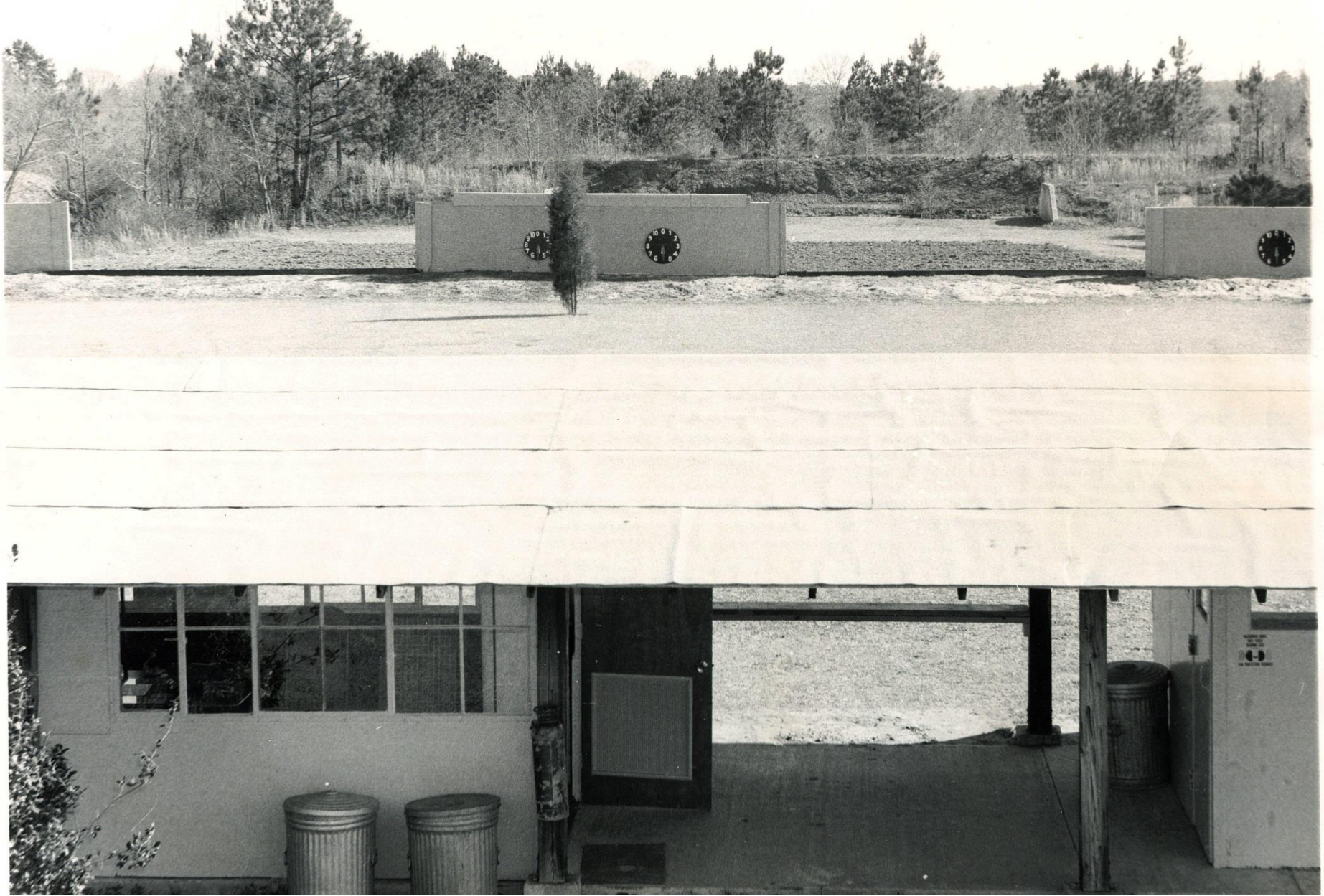
**Original target
shed in
background**

**Right range
shooting
booth**

**10x30 classroom
an office area**

**Left range
shooting
booth**

This is a view looking from the target back toward the shooting booths and classroom-office area. The walls were crafted from solid core doors removed from deserted buildings on Post (with authorization...of course).



This is a view looking from the back of the firing line toward the double RT range openings. On the right is the right shooting booth and on the left is the door to the office and classroom. Note the plowed area behind the range is the team garden.



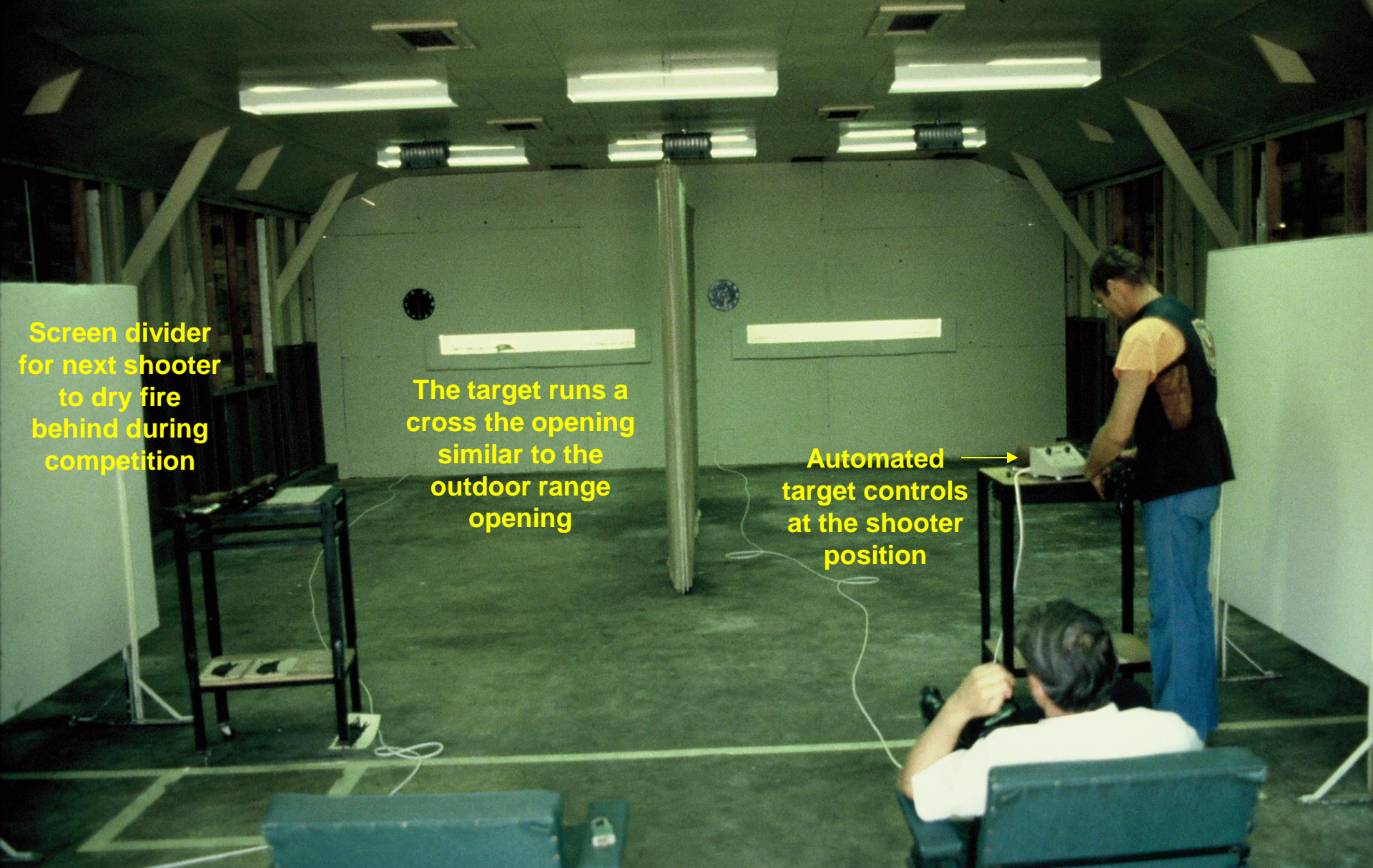
**This bridge
crossed over a
creek to the Fort
Benning Gun Club**

Another view of the shooting booths, classroom/office areas. Vertical windows were installed horizontally to provide full view picture windows for spectators in the classroom area. The double RT range was completed for training and competitions in early 1975.

This is a double stacked target used for training only, not competition

Sight in target

This is the right range covered pit area. This is where a pit crew (shooters took turns in the pits during competitions) marked targets and worked the scoring clocks which told the shooter his score and direction of hit on the target before it was released to go back in the other direction.

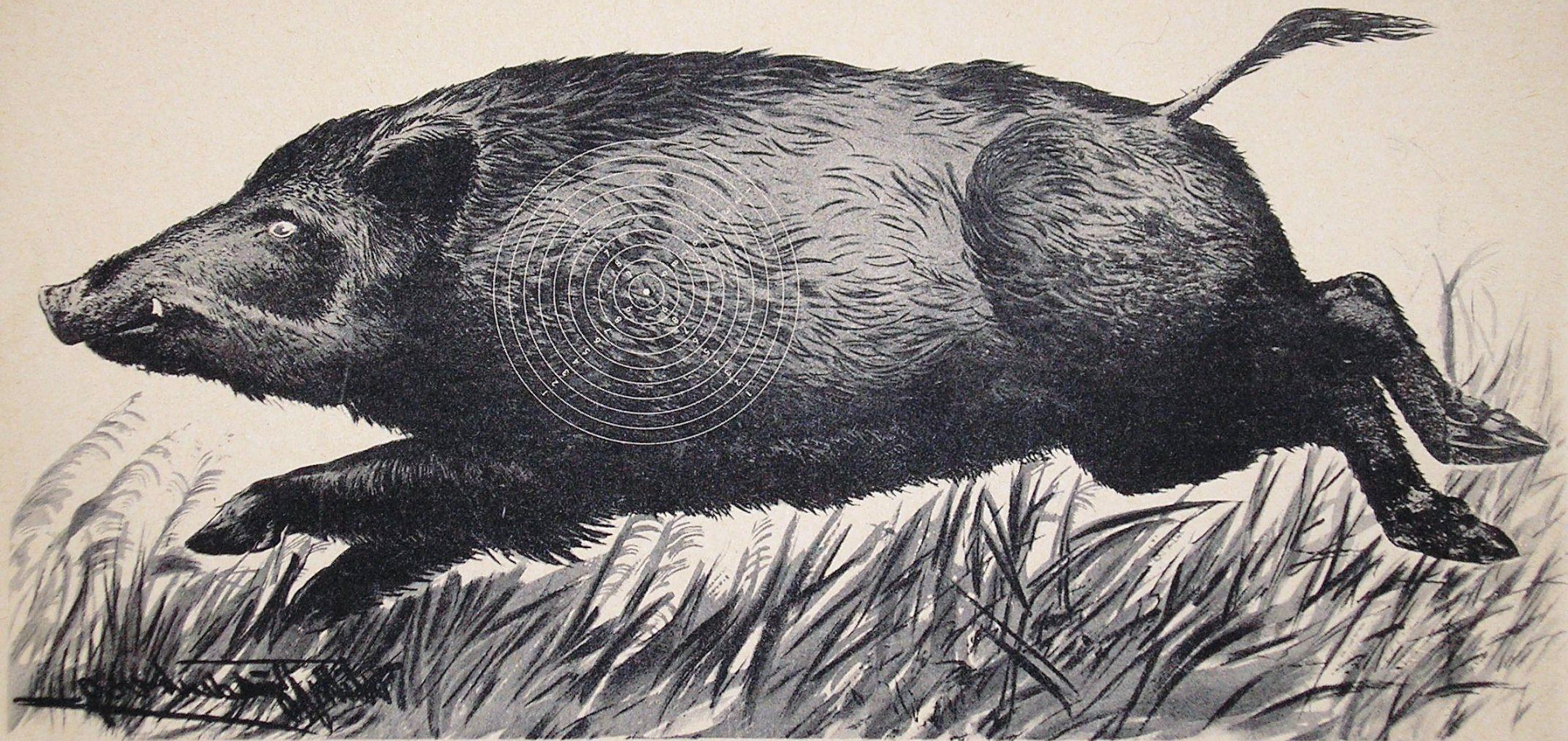


Screen divider
for next shooter
to dry fire
behind during
competition

The target runs a
cross the opening
similar to the
outdoor range
opening

Automated
target controls
at the shooter
position

In 1976 I built this airgun 10 meter Running Target range in a deserted/unused building on Post. Daisy Airgun company began to build/sell an airgun version of the RT range for the American shooters and helped introduce RT to civilian and junior shooters. Eventually the Olympic 50 meter event was replaced by the 10 meter airgun event. This increased the civilian shooter participation.



This was the official 10 meter airgun (.177 cal.) Running Target (left run target). The 10 ring is actually a dot about the size of a large pin head. Almost everything was reduced to 1/5 of the normal target and range dimensions. Airgun required much more precision and follow through on every shot. I liked the 50 meter 22 cal. event better because it was more 'forgiving' of poor follow through. The 177 cal. pellet travels at a lower velocity and takes longer to leave the barrel.



This was the official 50 meter smallbore 22 cal. Running Target (left run target).



Running target was the only Olympic shooting sport that allowed a scoped rifle.

The scope had a special reticle that allowed the shooter to hold off the center of the target on an 'aiming point', usually the tusk, nose or eye. This was necessary because the lead required when shooting at a moving target. You could not shoot at the running target (10 ring) or you would miss the 10 ring completely.

Rifles had adjustable cheek pieces which could be raised or lowered to bring the shooters eye in alignment with the mounted scope. The butt plate was adjustable to insure a proper shoulder contact. The trigger is adjustable for pull/weight. Some shooters used variable barrel weights to reduce barrel 'bounce' when tracking the target. A standard shotgun style vest was worn by most shooters. Some used leather vests or jackets.



The Running Target shooter had to start from the ready position much like skeet shooting. The RT shooter could not bring the rifle up to firing position until the target was exposed running across the opening.

The shooter would bring the rifle up, track the target and fire one shot for each run (left and right). There were 30 shots slow (5 second exposure each) and 30 shots fast (2.5 seconds exposure each) for a total of 60 shots and a possible 600 points. This was referred to as the 'Olympic Runs'. The top shooters scored in the 570s to 580s on a regular basis with an occasional 590s.

To make things more interesting a 'Mixed Runs' event was adopted in which the shooter did not know if they were getting a fast or slow target. Two 20 shot strings (20 slow and 20 fast, mixed) for a total of 40 shots and 400 possible points. The top shooters scored in the 470s to 480s with occasional 490s.

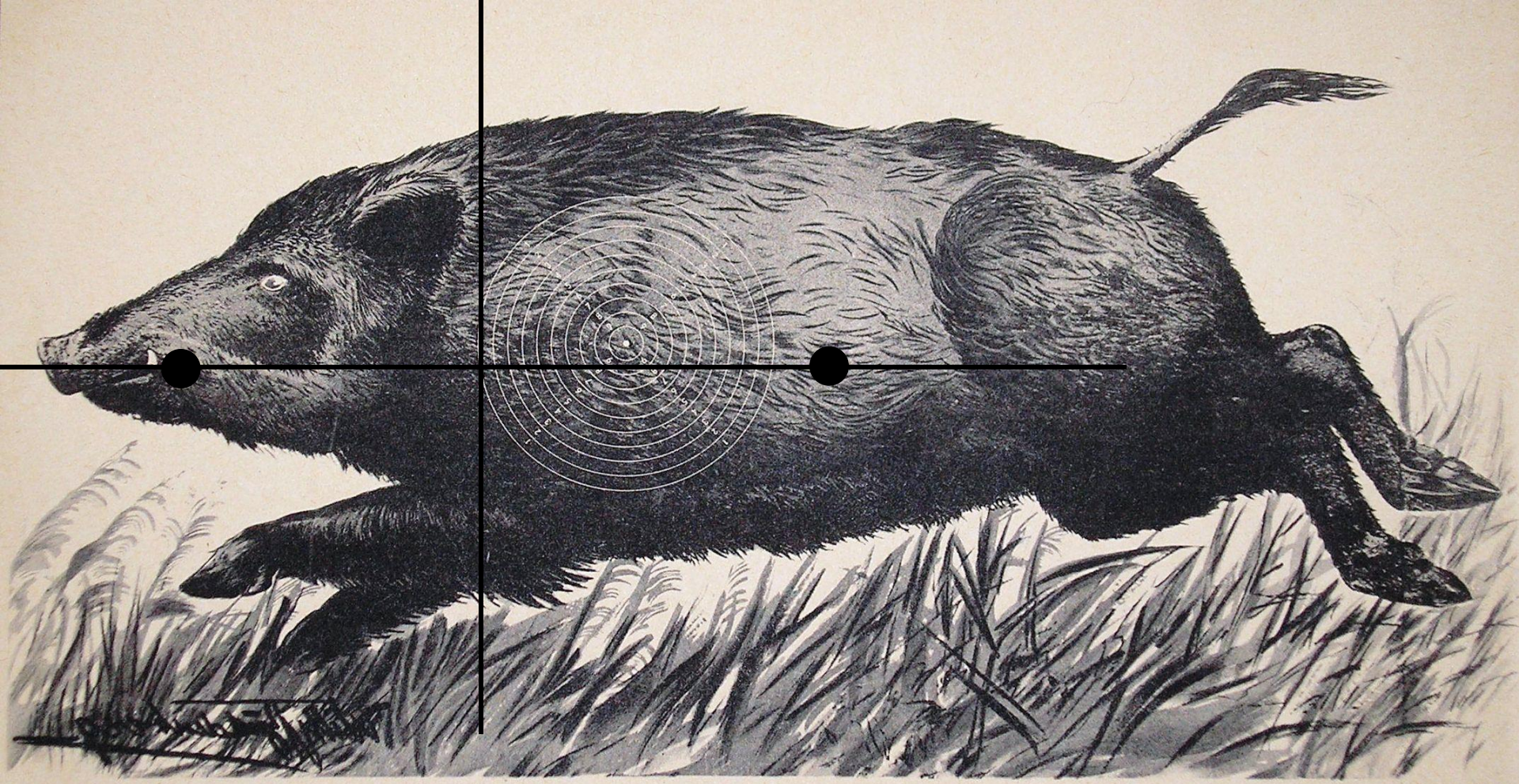


In the 1970s and 80s there were two rifles made specifically for 50 meter Running Target:

- Walther Running Target Rifle – top rifle (my rifle which I used in the 1976 Olympics)
- Anschutz - Model 1403 Running Target Rifle – bottom rifle (one of the most popular RT rifles)

These were bolt action, single shot, 22 cal. Long Rifle, adjustable cheek piece, adjustable butt plate, thumbhole stock, adjustable triggers, removable barrel weights and special scopes.

The scopes used by the USAMU RT team were Redfield 3x9 variable scopes with special two dot reticles made by Dick Thomas of Premier Reticles.



This is an example of what the two dot reticle looked like through the scope for slow runs. You notice the lead required to hit the 10 ring of a running target. An elevation change was made to the scope to hit just above the crosshairs which put it in alignment with the ten ring for 50 meters or the dot for 10 meter airgun.



This is a double 10 meter RT range that I built at the US Olympic Training Center in 1980. It had some design challenges with being a Commissary building at the old Ent Air Force Base in Colorado Springs (which was sold to the US Olympic Committee for \$1).

On the opposite end was two other 10 meter RT ranges. This increased training and competition capacity. This was only a temporary facility until the US Shooting Center was built in 1985.

