

# The Skeeters



In the world of professional trapshooting, no competition is as challenging as the Julia Child Invitational Skeet Meet. Conventional trap shoots employ clay discs as targets, but the JCISM wouldn't be caught dead – or at least bleeding profusely from a hollow-point bullet wound – playing around with a disc. Instead the JCISM uses items endemic to Julia Child's kitchen: egg beaters, blancmange, spaghetti (in sauce), farina (in season), 100-ml vials of boric acid, and, of course, haggis. The difficulty of the competition lies in the targets, whose aerodynamically anomalous trajectories are never easy to gauge. Unlike traditional meets, the JCISM contestants shoot simultaneously, not individually. And they usually compete in the most colorful aprons and toques imaginable. Usually, but not always. There was that one meet back in '01 in Manhattan that people still talk about. The contestants – or “skeeters” – showed up in black robes, looking like they'd just stepped off the shuttle from the catafalque factory. They lined up on their marks, as usual, but when the first tray of bruschetta came flying off of the catapult, all nineteen of them yelled in unison “Allahu Akbar!” (Arabic for “I hate blancmange!”), and fired at the judges and spectators. It was pure pandemonium, and serious injury to the objects of the contestants' wrath was avoided only because their guns' ammunition consisted of very small bread sticks.