

# AAFTA Clubs and Shooters Handbook

2007 Revision

American Airgun Field Target Association

## **AAFTA**

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By-Laws  
Rules  
&  
Guidelines

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Club:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Contents

<b>AAFTA Board of Governors</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Past National Champions</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Award for Meritorious Achievement</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>AAFTA By-Laws</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Article I – Name .....	7
Article II – Purpose .....	7
Article III – Membership.....	7
Article IV – Responsibilities to Affiliates .....	8
Article V – Dues .....	8
Article VI – Meetings .....	8
Article VII – Board of Governors.....	9
Article VIII – Representatives .....	10
Article IX – Rules and Guidelines .....	10
Article X – Suspension or Expulsion .....	10
Article XI – Amendments .....	10
<b>Code of Ethics</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Fitness to Serve as an AAFTA Governor.....	11
<b>Associate Membership</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Individuals .....	11
Clubs or Associations.....	11
<b>AAFTA Division Rules</b> .....	<b>12</b>
PCP Division .....	12
PISTON Division.....	12
HUNTER Division.....	12
Additional Classes .....	12
Team Competitions .....	12
<b>AAFTA Calendar</b> .....	<b>13</b>

<b>AAFTA PCP &amp; PISTON Division Shoot Rules.....</b>	<b>14</b>
1.Airguns:.....	14
2.Sights:.....	14
3.Ammunition: .....	14
4.Targets:.....	14
5.Scoring: .....	15
6.Shooting Position: .....	15
7.Seating: .....	15
8.Disputed Scores: .....	16
9.Penalties: .....	16
10.Target Sequence: .....	16
11.Time per Shot: .....	16
12.Tied Scores: .....	17
13.Match Director: .....	17
<b>AAFTA HUNTER Division Shoot Rules.....</b>	<b>18</b>
1. Airguns.....	18
2. Sights.....	18
6. Shooting Position.....	19
7. Seating .....	19
<b>AAFTA Safety Rules.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>AAFTA Guidelines .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Getting Started .....	22
Match Planning.....	22
Course Preparation.....	24
Targets .....	25
Practice Area (Range).....	28
Shooter's Meeting.....	28
Class System .....	29
Awards Presentation .....	30
Match Terminology .....	30

Target Malfunction Procedure.....	31
Etiquette .....	32
<b>Version History .....</b>	<b>33</b>

# The Sport and its History

by: Jack Kirkendoll

Field Target shooting got its start in the early 1980's when a handful of British airgunners attempted to create a new sport to simulate hunting with an airgun. Metal targets in the shape of typical airgun quarry were placed at typical airgun hunting distances. A paper target was placed on the kill area of the animal. Competitors shot at the target and then a judge went down to score the hits and replace the paper kill zone.

This worked well when there were only a few shooters. As the sport grew, the interruption caused by going downrange to score each competitor was limiting. Using a target that could be reset from the firing line with a cord sped up the scoring process, thus allowing more shooters the fun of shooting. The fact that the 1/8" plate steel targets sounded and fell back when hit added immensely to shooter satisfaction and spectator appeal.

Shooters began customizing their favorite airguns and the technology race was on! Gun manufacturers began to claim that their modifications were just what the field target shooter needed to get "one up" on his competition. From this race was born a new breed of airguns; guns that would shoot very accurately at ranges of 50 yards, and with adequate power (maximum 12 foot pounds due to English government regulation) to knock down those metallic targets.

Today, thousands of British airgunners travel all over England every weekend to compete in field target matches, a very "informal" version of precision match shooting.

Field target shooting came to the U.S. in the mid 1980's, appearing almost simultaneously in California and Florida. Florida hosted the first U.S. Championships in 1987, in West Palm Beach. This match was so well accepted that a small hard-core group of airgunners formed the AAFTA (American Airgun Field Target Association), and immediately scheduled the next Championship in Indianapolis, Indiana in June of 1988. Since then, Los Angeles, California hosted them in 1989; Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1990 and 1991, Plymouth, Michigan in 1992, Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1993, Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1994 and 1995, Los Angeles, California in 1996, Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1997, Hernando, Mississippi in 1998 and Port Malabar, Florida in 1999

Minneapolis, Minnesota will host the 2000 National and World Championships. The AAFTA, which produces a monthly newsletter, is now helping to spawn new clubs all over the U.S. and Canada.

In the U.S., shooters are squadded in random groups of three. Each squad starts on a lane that has been appropriately marked in the woods or fields. One to three targets will be located down each lane at random distances. Each shooter takes a turn firing once or twice at each target. He alone must estimate the range of each and be so familiar with his airgun's trajectory that he is able to hit the target's "kill-zone". Skill plays a much more important role in shooter success than the power of his airgun. Only if the target face falls is a point scored. Local matches typically consist of 20 to 60 shots per shooter, while regional or national matches usually consist of 100 or more shots over two days. The emphasis is placed on encouraging and getting to know your squad members, as well as other competitors. The competition has a definite air of informality, as the competitors are more attuned to improving their own performance, rather than competing directly with others.

Shooting is done "freestyle", that is, any position is allowed, as long as the gun is supported by the hands and body only. The "open class" utilizes traditional shooting positions. Most prefer the sitting position, with the gun laid over the arm or resting on the knee, while sitting on a cushion.

The name of the game is "precision". Only the best pellets will give the results needed to make the long shots (as far as 55 yards) or short shots on reduced kill zones. These generally measure 1 - 1/2", with some at 1", and a few at 3/4", 1/2" and 3/8". Shooting distances vary from 10 to 55 yards, with an average of 30 yards overall. The groups that some of these shooters produce would startle even some benchrest shooters!

The rules of field target shooting are few, and are regulated only by the AAFTA. Local clubs are encouraged to create many classes to reward shooters at all levels. Even regional and national competitions include enough classes to allow everyone to compete for awards.

Just remember, the object of field target shooting is involvement and camaraderie. Whether or not you ever desire to compete in regional or national matches, you can enjoy this new sport with your club or just a few friends in a safe shooting location. The most important thing is to enjoy airgunning by shooting as often as you can. Good shooting!

# AAFTA Board of Governors

## Chairman

**Cliff Smith** (through 2007)

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**Roz Sumpter** (through 2008)

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# Past National Champions

Champion	Rifle	Scope	Pellet
<b>1987 Florida</b> Rodney Boyce (FL)	Theoben Grand Prix	Leupold 14-35x	RWS Superdome 8.4 H&N
<b>1988 Indiana</b> Rodney Boyce (FL)	Air Arms Shamal	Leupold 18-40x	Barracuda 10.6 H&N
<b>1989 California</b> Terry Doe (UK)	Sports Match GC2	Zeiss 9x	Barracuda 10.6 H&N
<b>1990 Louisiana</b> James Bair (GA)	Theoben Imperator	Leupold 18-40x	Barracuda 10.6
<b>1991 Louisiana</b> Rodney Boyce (FL)	Air Arms NJR-100	Leupold 18-40x	Crosman Premier 10.5
<b>1992 Michigan</b> Britt Harrison (LA)	Air Arms NJR-100	Leupold 18-40x	Crosman Premier 10.5 H&N
<b>1993 Minnesota</b> Bob Peiser (FL)	Air Arms NJC-100	Leupold 18-40x	Barracuda 10.6
<b>1994 Louisiana</b> Britt Harrison (LA)	Air Arms Custom-100	Burris 8-32x	Crosman Premier 10.5
<b>1995 Louisiana</b> Britt Harrison (LA)	Air Arms Custom-100	Nightforce FT 36x	Crosman Premier 10.5
<b>1996 California</b> Robert Crocker (SC)	Air Arms Custom-100	Nightforce FT 36x	Crosman Premier 10.5
<b>1997 Louisiana</b> Ron Carlson (MN)	Air Arms Custom-100	Nightforce FT 36x	Crosman Premier 10.5
<b>1998 Mississippi</b> Robert Crocker (SC)	Air Arms Custom-100	Nightforce FT 36x	Crosman Premier 10.5
<b>1999 Florida</b> Robert Crocker (SC)	Air Arms Custom-100	Nightforce FT 36x	Crosman Premier 10.5
<b>2000 Minnesota</b> Ron Carlson (MN)	Air Arms Custom-100	Burris 8-32x	Crosman Premier 10.5
Tom Price (WA)	Air Arms TX-200	Burris 8-32x	Crosman Premier 7.9

# Past National Champions

	<b>Champion</b>	<b>Rifle</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Pellet</b>
	<b>2001 Georgia</b>	FWB P70 HP	Bushnell 4200 6-24x	Beeman Kodiak 10.6
	Dave Slade (CA)			
		Whiscombe JW50	Burris 8-32x	JSB Exact 8.4
	Roz Sumpter (TN)			
	<b>2002 Mississippi</b>	Larry Durham SS#2	Nightforce FT 36x	Crosman Premier 10.5
	Steve Schulz (MD)			
		Whiscombe JW50	Burris 8-32x	JSB Exact 8.4
	Roz Sumpter (TN)			
	<b>2003 Michigan</b>	Steyr LG100 ZM	BSA 10-50x	Crosman Premier 10.5
	Greg Sauve (WI)			
		Whiscombe JW50	Burris 8-32x	JSB Exact 8.4
	Roz Sumpter (TN)			
	<b>2004 Tennessee</b>	Anschutz 2002 ZM	Burris 8-32x	Crosman Premier 10.5
	James White (AR)			
		Air Arms TX-200	Nikko Stirling 10-50x	JSB Exact 8.4
	Paul Cray (NY)			
	<b>2005 Washington</b>	Mac1/LD USFT	Nikko-Sterling 10-50x	Crosman Premier 10.5
	Billy Lo (NY)			
		Air Arms TX200	Nikko-Sterling 10-50x	JSB Exact 8.4
	Paul Cray (NY)			
	<b>2006 Connecticut</b>	Steyr LG-100	Leupold Comp 35x	Crosman Premier 10.5
	Warren Williamson (OH)			
		Whiscombe JW50	Bushnell 4200 8-32x	JSB Exact 8.4
	Roz Sumpter (TN)			

# Award for Meritorious Achievement

Every organization is obligated to recognize, from time to time, certain individuals whose contributions toward its goals exceed the standards that it has established for itself. The Board of Governors hereby resolves that "The AAFTA Award for Meritorious Achievement" will henceforth serve to acknowledge those who have made outstanding contributions toward the promotion of Airgun Field Target Shooting in the United States.

1993	Bob Peiser
1999	Rodney Boyce
2000	Jack Kirkendoll
2005	Brad Troyer

# AAFTA By-Laws

## Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be American Airgun Field Target Association (hereinafter referred to as AAFTA).

## Article II – Purpose

The American Airgun Field Target Association is established for the purpose of promoting field target shooting clubs in the United States.

To accomplish this objective, AAFTA commits itself to establish a set of Rules and Guidelines so that participants may compete in regional and national competitions in a manner fair to all.

To provide these Rules and Guidelines to affiliated clubs in the interest of creating a standard among all members.

To assist affiliated clubs in conducting regional and national competitions governed by the aforementioned Rules and Guidelines.

To further the sport of Airgun Field Target Shooting in the United States by encouraging gentlemanly conduct, safety, fairness, and participation by all members.

To promote airgun shooting as a healthy and recreational activity to the general public.

## Article III – Membership

The membership of AAFTA will be comprised of affiliated clubs within the United States which desire to shoot airgun field targets.

- A. A member shall consist of a club with at least two members, which applies for membership, and is accepted by the Board of Governors.
- B. Member clubs must hold at least one field target match per year strictly following the AAFTA Rules and Guidelines to remain in good standing.
- C. Upon acceptance by the Board of Governors, clubs will be issued a certificate of membership to AAFTA.
- D. Members are required to submit to AAFTA, match results from sanctioned matches. Members are encouraged to

submit all match results to AAFTA, and are further encouraged to submit information on club activities and match publicity to local, regional, and national news sources.

## Article IV – Responsibilities to Affiliates

Affiliates are responsible for their own affairs, to include safety, club organization, disputes among members, dissemination of information, liability, and conduct in shooting activities. AAFTA will endeavor to assist clubs as requested, and to maintain, as the National Standard, the AAFTA Rules and Guidelines for field target shooting. AAFTA will designate the site for the U.S. Field Target Championship each year, and will provide the trophies for the National Champions.

## Article V – Dues

There shall be \$25.00 per annum dues, due in January of each year, for an AAFTA member club. The dues will be used to support Field Target shooting through publicity, promotional materials and the AAFTA Newsletter. AAFTA will remain a non-profit organization. A member whose dues have been received by the AAFTA treasurer shall be considered a “member in good standing” for that year, while a member not having paid its dues will have its status changed to “associate member”, as defined in the section “Associate Membership” of the AAFTA handbook, by March of the year for which dues were to be paid. The member listing in the AAFTA newsletter shall reflect the status of all members.

## Article VI – Meetings

- A. The annual meeting of the association shall be held at the U.S. Championship Match each year with the general membership that is present.
- B. Regular Meetings. The regular meetings for business of the association shall be held at such times and places as may be fixed by the Board of Governors.
- C. Two-thirds Majority Vote. Issues brought before the members at the annual meeting will be decided by two-thirds vote of those present, to include proxy votes.

## Article VII – Board of Governors

The Board of Governors shall be responsible for the business affairs of AAFTA, and shall enforce and regulate the Rules and Guidelines referred to in these By-Laws.

The Board of Governors consists of six members, each elected for a term of three years. Elections for the Board of Governors shall be held at the annual meeting of the association.

Beginning in 1992, three members of the Board of Governors will be subject to reelection or replacement while the remaining three members' terms will expire in 1993. Thereafter, elections for the Board will be held every third and fourth years.

Members in good standing and current members of the Board of Governors can nominate candidates for election. All candidate nominations must be communicated to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the board no later than 60 days before the annual meeting of the association.

A proxy ballot sheet listing all nominated candidates for that year's election will be mailed to all members in good standing no later than 40 days before the annual meeting of the association.

At the annual meeting of the association the election will be held by each member in good standing casting one vote each for three candidates. Votes are cast in secret and in person by the appointed representative of a member at the annual meeting of the association.

Should the representative of a member not be able to attend in person, the member's representative can authorize in writing another person to cast the member's votes, or the member can vote by mailing the proxy ballot sheet with votes indicated next to the names of three listed candidates. The vote by ballot sheet must be mailed to the Chairman of the Board of Governors no later than 15 days before the annual meeting.

The three candidates receiving the most votes will become members of the Board of Governors on the first of January following the election. In case of a tied vote, the tie will be resolved by each member representative present at the annual meeting casting one vote for one of the candidates in the tie. Should this result in another tied vote, the Chairman of the Board of Governors will resolve the tie with his vote.

Should a member of the Board of Governors resign, or for any reason not be able to fulfill his tenure, a replacement will be

appointed by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board of Governors.

The Board of Governors will consist of a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and a Secretary-Treasurer elected by a majority vote of the Board.

Any member of the Board of Governors may be suspended or expelled for any cause deemed sufficient by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Board of Governors.

## Article VIII – Representatives

Each member club of AAFTA will appoint a representative whose purpose will be to handle all business between the Board of Governors and his member club.

## Article IX – Rules and Guidelines

The Rules and Guidelines of AAFTA shall be established by the Board of Governors.

## Article X – Suspension or Expulsion

Any member may be suspended or expelled from AAFTA for any cause deemed sufficient by the Board of Governors by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the general membership present at the annual meeting of the association.

## Article XI – Amendments

Amendments may be proposed to entire articles of these By-Laws by any member at the annual meeting. Such proposed amendments must be submitted to the Board of Governors for approval. After the Board of Governors approves any amendment, they must be acted upon by the AAFTA membership at the next annual meeting. A two-thirds vote of the general membership will be necessary for its passage.

An amendment to a section of an article may be proposed by any member. Such proposed amendments must be submitted to the Board of Governors for approval. After its approval by the Board of Governors, it must be acted upon at the next annual meeting. A two-thirds vote of the members present will be necessary for its passage.

# Code of Ethics

## Fitness to Serve as an AAFTA Governor

1. Each Governor is a representative of AAFTA and shall not by word, act, or omission create even a perception of impropriety in the conduct of official duties.
2. No Governor, in order to further his own economic interests or those of any other person, shall directly or indirectly use his office for pecuniary purposes.
3. Removal of a Governor for violation of these ethical standards shall be by majority vote of the remaining Governors.

# Associate Membership

## Individuals

Each and every person subscribing to the AAFTA NEWS newsletter automatically becomes a non-voting Associate Member of AAFTA.

## Clubs or Associations

The Board of Governors resolve that foreign clubs and associations may join AAFTA as an Associate Member Club or Association. This no cost service may be taken advantage of by putting your request in writing and, upon acceptance by the Board of Governors, your club or association will be issued a Certificate of Associate Club/Association Membership. This membership, like the individual AAFTA Associate Member, carries no voting privileges.

# AAFTA Division Rules

Competitors shoot in one of three divisions. PCP Division or Piston Division, based on the power plant of the gun they are using, or Hunter Division under a separate set of rules (see Hunter rules on page 17). If a question arises about the division a competitor will shoot in, the Match Director will always have the final say.

## PCP Division

Any Precharged/PCP airgun, any sight.

## PISTON Division

Any Piston/Spring gun, any sight.

## HUNTER Division

See Hunter Rules (page 18) for airgun requirements

## Additional Classes

The match director may provide additional classes to any of the divisions. These classes are generally based on restrictions to equipment usage or target types. Classes are generally only offered if there are enough shooters to justify them. Examples of classes within a division could be A & B, or Standard & Unlimited. Match Directors should determine the specifics of any classes they wish to make available at a particular match and outline them in the match announcement when possible.

## Team Competitions

It is customary to include a club/state team prize at the U.S. Championship match each year. The team should consist of five shooters who are regular attending members of a club in that state. The team score should be comprised of the top four scores of the five shooters on the team with the lowest score being dropped.

# AAFTA Calendar

The AAFTA Calendar will lock-in certain dates each year for the major field target shooting events. The World Championships, The United States Championships, and major Regionals will all have top priority when the dates are chosen for these events.

# AAFTA PCP and PISTON

## Division Shoot Rules

### 1. Airguns:

- A. Any safe airgun of any configuration, shooting a single pellet.
- B. Any airgun declared unsafe to people and/or property (including targets) by the match director will be barred from use.
- C. The use of more than one airgun is not permitted during the course of fire, except in the event of malfunctioning equipment.

### 2. Sights:

- A. Any form of sighting system may be used.
- B. No separate device designed specifically for, or used for range finding may be used to view the targets.

### 3. Ammunition:

- A. Any design of pellet that is completely constructed of lead or lead alloy only.

### 4. Targets:

- A. Silhouette "fall-when-hit" targets resettable from the firing point will be used. Silhouettes may be of typical airgun quarry, or targets appropriate to shooting sports.
- B. Targets should not be closer than 10 yards, nor further than 55 yards from the firing point.
- C. The match director should assure that shooting lanes and physical limits of the firing points are clearly defined.
- D. A clear and unobstructed view of the hit zone must be afforded from at least one shooting position.
- E. Shooters may reset their own targets once they are given permission from the scorer.

## 5. Scoring:

- A. Scoring shall be on the basis of one point for each "hit" and a zero for each miss.
- B. A hit will be awarded when the target falls, any movement of the kill zone paddle which does not result in the target face plate falling will be recorded as a miss.
- C. When a gun is shouldered, any discharge of air down the barrel and/or disengagement of the sears shall be recorded as a miss if the target does not fall. A shooter may announce their intention to discharge the gun into the ground without penalty of a miss.

## 6. Shooting Position:

- A. Any shooting position is allowed, but the range may be set up to necessitate use of a forced position on some targets. If a kneeling shot is stipulated, the shooter may opt to shoot the target offhand (standing) instead. A sign declaring a forced shooting position may be used at a shooting lane.
- B. If shooting OFFHAND (Standing), NO rigid support from the ground, or any part of the body, to the rifle, or the hand/arm supporting the rifle, is allowed.
- C. KNEELING position definition: Buttocks clear of the ground, but may rest on one foot. The 'bum bag' may be placed under the instep of the supporting foot if desired. The arm supporting the rifle may rest on the knee or leg. One knee must be touching the ground. A cloth or THIN mat is allowed for the knee on the ground.
- D. Rifle slings may be used.
- E. No form of support from the ground for the airgun and/or body may be used (eg. bipod, benchrest, chair, tree stump, etc.).
- F. The airgun must be supported by the shooter's hand(s) and body.

## 7. Seating:

- A. The maximum height for any form of seat is 6 inches, measured with the shooter sitting on the seat.
- B. The six inches is measured from the ground to the highest point of the seat.

- C. The seat can only be used as a seat and not any other means of shooting support EXCEPT as a support for the instep/ankle when shooting in the kneeling position..

*\*Note: Variations of Rules 6 & 7 may be applied at the discretion of the match director in recognition of shooters desires while ensuring that no unfair advantage is accrued. In the event an advantage is obtained, those shooters shall compete in a separate class for awards.*

## 8. Disputed Scores:

- A. Any challenge must be made to the marshal prior to leaving the target.
- B. Any dispute not resolved at that time will be referred to the match director whose decision will be final.

## 9. Penalties:

- A. The penalty for deliberate infraction of Shoot Rules, unsafe practice, ungentlemanly conduct, or any form of cheating is disqualification.

## 10. Target Sequence:

- A. The match director shall designate a sequence for shooting targets – by number, left-to-right, nearest-to-farthest, etc.
- B. A shot on a target out of sequence shall be recorded as a miss for the correct target in sequence.
- C. If the wrong target was knocked over, it shall be reset and then shooting shall resume on the correct target in sequence.

## 11. Time per Shot:

- A. The Match Director and/or Marshal may impose a time limit per lane or per target before or during the match. Match Directors should note the use and limits of timers in the match announcement, if possible. Timers should be of the countdown type with an audible alarm when times runs out. Typical time allowed is one (1) minute per shot with one (1) minute set-up time per lane, ex. Four (4) shots on a lane equals five (5) minutes of time for that lane.

- B. The timer can be started by a squad member or the shooter, and can be placed so the shooter can monitor his or her own time. Timers are to be started when the shooter 1) sits down for a sitting shot, 2) shoulders the rifle for the first time for a kneeling/standing shot, or 3) lays down for a prone shot.
- C. If a "cold" line/cease-fire is called while a timer is active, stop the timer and add an additional 15 seconds to the time remaining and restart the timer when "hot" line/resume-fire is called.
- D. Any shots taken after the alarm sounds will be counted as a miss. In case of a tie with the alarm, and the squad members agree on the tie, then the shot is given to the shooter. A marshal or the match director will handle any disputes.

## 12. Tied Scores:

- A. In the event of two (2) or more shooters tying for an award, a shoot-off or other tie-breaking system will take place.

## 13. Match Director:

- A. In any matters arising and not covered by these rules, the Match Director's decision will be final.

# AAFTA HUNTER Division

## Shoot Rules

Note: Hunter Division is a new division. These are the Hunter rules we will use at the 2007 National Match, but we encourage all member clubs to experiment with these rules and provide feedback to the board of governors about your experiences.

### 1. Airguns:

A. Any safe sporter style airgun of any power plant (Piston, PCP, etc.)

B. Match style rifles must have any adjustable components set to minimum adjustment, butt pads centered. No butt hooks.

### 2. Sights:

A. Optical sights of any reticle style may be used, but are limited to a **maximum of 12 power magnification**. Variable scopes of greater max power than 12X must be turned down to 12X or lower.

B. No turret adjustment allowed during the match. (No clicking.)

C. Optical sights with parallax adjustment (adjustable objective, or sidewheel focus), may be adjusted so that the target is in focus. Range (yardage) markings may be used.

D. No separate range finding device may be used.

### 3. Ammunition:

### 4. Targets:

### 5. Scoring:

Refer to PCP and Piston shoot rules for 3, 4, and 5

## 6. Shooting Position:

- A. Any shooting position is allowed, but the range may be set up to necessitate use of a forced position on some targets. If a kneeling position is stipulated, the shooter may opt to shoot the target offhand (standing) instead. A sign declaring a forced shooting position may be used at the lane.
- B. A rifle sling attached to the rifle at two points may be used.
- C. Monopods, shooting sticks, bipods may be used, but NOT tripods.
- D. When shooting in a match on the same course with the other divisions (as at the National Match), Hunter Division shooters can NOT use terrain features or lane markers for support. If shooting a Hunter only course, terrain features (trees, stumps, fence, etc.) may be used for support.
- E. No shooting jackets, harnesses or straps. Clothing worn by the shooter must not restrict body movement.

## 7. Seating:

- A. Any form of seat without back or arms and having a maximum height of 15 inches may be used.
- B. The seat may NOT be used as a 'bench rest' to support the rifle while shooting.

## 8. Disputed Scores:

## 9. Penalties:

## 10. Target Sequence:

## 11. Time per Shot:

## 12. Tied Scores

Refer to PCP and Piston Shoot Rules for 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12

## 13. Match Director:

In any matters arising and not covered by these rules, the Match Director's decision will be final.

# AAFTA Safety Rules

***These Safety Rules Will Be Strictly Enforced. Anyone Abusing These Rules May Be Expelled From The Shooting Range And Match Participation.***

1. All Airguns shall be kept unloaded until on the firing line, with the muzzle pointed downrange, and ready to fire.
2. Airgun muzzles will, at all times, be pointed away from all persons.
3. When on the firing line, safe airgun procedures will be observed including:
  - A. No Airgun will be cocked or loaded until a shot is ready to be fired downrange.
  - B. When an Airgun is cocked or loaded on the firing line, the SAFETY will not be released until the muzzle is pointed at the target and the shooter is ready to FIRE.
  - C. When cocking Piston Airguns, the Shooter must hold the cocking lever or barrel while inserting a pellet to prevent the accidental discharge of the gun and prevent injury to himself or other shooters.
  - D. Safe spacing of shooters on the firing line is both judicious and courteous.
  - E. Each shooter is responsible for his or her direction of fire, and safety toward other shooters.
  - F. When the Range Safety Officer or Marshal declares the line "COLD", all Shooters will break the breech, open the loading port or bolt, or unlatch the cocking lever to signify a safe "COLD" line.
  - G. The Range Safety Officer should be notified when a shooter wishes to put-up a new practice target. The Range Safety Officer will, at his discretion, call for a "COLD" line. At that time, targets may be put up on his command. On the field target course, the appointed Marshals will act as deputies of the Range Safety Officer (Chief Marshal).
  - H. The Range Safety Officer or Marshal will have the final decision on matters of "Safety on the Range".
  - I. Only lead pellets may be used on the range.

4. Safety must be encouraged and enforced. Therefore, it is important that all shooters strive to practice safe airgun handling. It is also important, that shooters remind anyone of unsafe airgun handling and, if necessary, report unsafe practices to the Range Safety Officer or Marshal.
5. NO children shall be allowed on the firing line. Junior Shooters MUST be cleared by the Range Safety Officer by being instructed on RANGE SAFETY.
6. No alcohol will be allowed on the sight-in range or field target course.

# AAFTA Guidelines

The information contained in the guidelines has been gathered from experienced Airgun Field Target Match Directors and shooting participants. The intent of this publication is to guide AAFTA Member Clubs when holding a Regional or National Airgun Field Target Match.

## Getting Started

If your club wishes to hold a Regional or National Airgun Field Target Match, there are several things you should consider.

- A. Does your club have enough members who are willing to give their time to prepare and run the match properly?
- B. Are your Facilities adequate?
- C. Does your club have the financial support necessary for the match.
- D. Does your club have enough targets suitable for the match?
- E. Has the match date been approved by AAFTA and is the weather in your area acceptable on that date?

Having answered these questions positively, your next step is to select a Match Director. The Match Director is responsible for seeing that the match is run according to the AAFTA Rules and insuring fair play for all participants.

## Match Planning

1. **Duties:** Predetermine each club members duties regarding the match. That includes preparation before, during and after the match.
2. **Schedule:** Contact AAFTA to schedule an open date on the AAFTA Calendar. (consider weather, holidays, school, vacations, and range conditions).
3. **Layout:** Decide the number of shots and the course layout.
4. **Food:** Determine what food services will be offered. This will be determined by how much money is available, or how far it is to the nearest store/restaurant, etc. Water should be available to all participants and soft drinks provided free, or for a fee.

5. **Restrooms:** Restrooms must be provided for men and women.
6. **Accessories:** Some form of seating should be available for shooters and spectators, taking into consideration rain or shade. Scorecards, clipboards, name tags and pencils should be provided. Whistles to call marshals are a nice touch too.
7. **Scoreboard:** A scoreboard visible to contestants and spectators should be provided.
8. **Awards:** All awards should be presented at the conclusion of the match.
9. **Tie-Breaker:** Pre-plan a tie-breaker system for the match.
10. **Announcement:** A mailer or invitation should be prepared well in advance of the match. The invitation should include:
  - A. Dates and times of the match and practice hours.
  - B. Location of the range, with directions or a map.
  - C. Host Organization with contacts and phone numbers.
  - D. Awards, Divisions and Classes
  - E. Entry fees and deadlines for registration (with registration limits)
  - F. Information on food and drinks.
  - G. Safety information, sanctioning, and sponsors.
  - H. Motels (with addresses and/or directions) including rates and phone numbers
  - I. Air tank availability and/or an air tank rental company name with an address and phone number.
  - J. Patches, shirts, hats or pins for sale.
  - K. Any equipment restrictions or special notices.
  - L. Copies of the shooting rules should be provided.
11. **Promotion:** Based on your budget, you may elect to have your match announcement published in the AAFTA Newsletter instead of sending a mailer. If you so desire, the Editor will design the announcement for you.
12. **Time Management:** Shooting times should be planned to allow all shooters enough time to finish the match. Take into consideration the number of shooters, number of lanes, and

number of shots at each target (remember, two shots at one target takes less time than one shot at two targets).

13. **Shooter's Meeting:** A shooters meeting should be held prior to each match. Allow from 10 to 20 minutes for each meeting.
14. **Marshals:** Arrange for your volunteers to be Marshals well in advance and get a firm commitment from each person. The number of Marshals you will need depends on the geography of your course. If you have the course laid out over a large area, you will need more Marshals. Train your Marshals well in advance so they can perform properly and be an asset rather than a liability.
15. **Results:** Send in the match results and a descriptive story to AAFTA NEWS as soon as possible. In addition to names and scores by classes, include a description of rifles, scopes and pellets used by the competitors.

***Assuming you planned your match... Make a plan... then work your plan!***

## Course Preparation

1. **Layout:** Each course should be laid out using the available terrain. To lay out a safe course, remember that a "cone of fire" should be developed to direct all shooting away from competitors, and into a safe direction. Things to take into consideration when laying out a course:
  - A. One lane should never cross another lane, and one course should never cross another course. These are good safety precautions.
  - B. Shooting locations (i.e. "shooting pads") should be on a plane that allows safety for all.
  - C. If you will be using tree targets, cut your lanes with the trees in mind for the targets.
  - D. Based on the terrain, can you see the target from the "shooting pad"?
  - E. Make sure that resetting strings can be run back to the firing line without tangling in briars, etc.
  - F. One lane should not be too close to another lane.
  - G. Will the shooter be sitting in a mud hole if it rains?

- 2. Shooting Pads:** Shooting Pads should be dry! When it rains, a little pea gravel helps drain water and is more acceptable to most competitors. These locations should be reasonably level so that a competitor can safely take a shot.
- 3. Lane Markers:** Lane Markers are used to identify where the shooter must take the shot. Two lane markers should be used for each shooting pad. The gun barrel should be between the markers with the shooters torso behind the markers when addressing the lane. These markers can be made of wood, steel, or other material and should signify the lane number.
- 4. Hit Zone Visibility:** Target hit zones should be clearly visible from the shooters pad with no obstruction in the flight of the pellet. Remember both short and tall shooters when clearing the lane. When trimming the lanes, look for even the thinnest weeds, grass, or vines.

***A well laid out course, properly prepared, eliminates problems at match time!***

## Targets

- 1. Type:** There are both commercial and "home made" targets that can be used in matches. Any target that is reliable and capable of withstanding repeated 20 foot pound pellet strikes can be used. Targets should be tested with both high power and low power airguns. The quickest way to ruin a match is to have a target that does not work properly! The target should fall when hit in the hit zone, and *not* fall when *not* hit in the hit zone!
- 2. Hit zone size and shape:** Hit zones should be round in shape! Hit zones sizes can range from 3/8" to 1-3/4". Smaller hit zones are generally used in lesser numbers at shorter distances.
- 3. Hit zone size and distance:** Care should be taken when placing targets at close distances since pellets can ricochet or bounce back! When setting a course, shooter proficiency should be taken into consideration. The following target distances are the recommended maximum distances for expert level shooters.

## Hit Zone Size

## Maximum Distance

3/8"	20 Yards
1/2"	30 Yards
3/4"	40 Yards
1"	50 Yards
1"+	55 Yards

These distances should be reduced based on the shooters abilities. As shooters get better, they may need to be increased.

- 4. Average Target Distance:** For a Regional or National match, the average distance of all the targets should be 30-32 yards. Remember, you can put reduced hit zone targets at shorter distances to keep the average and still have a challenging course. It is not necessary to stretch all the 1-1/2" targets to the maximum range.
- 5. Target strings and rubber bands:** It has been found that a good quality braided Dacron line (50-80 Lb. test) will not stretch and will last longer under ultraviolet rays than Nylon or Polypropylene. This line is used for offshore fishing and is extremely durable, but it is rather expensive. It is recommended that Nylon not be used since it stretches and makes the target hard to reset. A simple fishing swivel, 10-12 inches in front of the target, keeps the lines from becoming twisted and makes them easier to wind up after the match. A short, braided steel fishing leader used through the target hole will keep the line from fraying on the metal target. Rubber bands or short bungee cords attached to the target and to the line with a little slack will curtail string snags which prevent target knock-downs.  
  
*\*Note: Competition Kite string is made from the same braided Dacron line, so check kite suppliers for better deals. If the braided Dacron line is too expensive, use only enough for the target placement distance (eg. 25 Yards, 40 Yards, or 55 Yards).*
- 6. Target Installation:** Targets should be staked to the ground via stakes (nails) through holes in the target base. It is important that all targets be secured to the ground and leveled (a small torpedo level will do) with the target face square to the firing line. Targets should be placed directly on the ground. Any ground cover (leaves, sticks, pine needles, etc) should be removed. Targets that are not secured will be loosened and pulled up with hard resettings, thereby, making them unreliable. Tree targets need to be securely fastened to the tree so that the target will not shift

out of alignment during a match. Hose clamps, nylon straps or rope can be used to prevent the need to use nails or screws in the tree. In order to be reliable, tree targets must have a rubber band or a small bungee cord attached to the reset string to prevent the string from becoming too heavy to allow the target to fall when hit. Prior to installing any target on the course, it is important that all targets be lubricated and checked for proper operation.

7. **Target Painting:** Since Field Target shooting is a fun sport as well as a challenging sport, detailed painting of the targets make them more enjoyable for all competitors. Flat Black targets don't excite anyone! A little art work goes a long way in creating realism! Hit paddles should be given a base coat of white paint then day glow orange should be applied over that. Of course, all hit paddles should be repainted between matches.
8. **Target Placement:** Placement relies on the imagination of the course designers with the following guidelines:
  - A. All participants should share equal visibility of the entire hit zone.
  - B. The terrain should dictate the shooting position.
  - C. All competitors should have the same opportunity to shoot in the same shooting position.
  - D. When placing a target in a lane, a spotter should be in a shooting position to give detailed instructions to the person setting the target. This way the spotter can make sure short and tall, as well as left and right-handed shooters have the same advantage. Binoculars or a scope will allow the spotter to see if any obstructions exists. Lane markers should be adjusted to afford the shooter the ability to get a clear shot on all targets in the lane.
  - E. All targets should be set from a predetermined plan.
  - F. When setting targets, the shooting sequence should be determined (eg. shoot the nearest target then the longest target).
  - G. When two targets are in one lane, care should be taken to make sure that the string from the longest target does not interfere with the other target.
  - H. If the course has a tendency to have standing water or rain, make sure targets are not under water if it rains on match day.

- I. Make sure that the Marshals can get to the targets during the match. Have ladders available for tree targets if necessary.
- J. Make sure that targets in one lane cannot be confused with targets in another lane.

***Target preparation, maintenance, painting and planned target placement are essential to a successful match!***

## Practice Area (Range)

A safe practice area should be provided for the competitors the day before the match and just prior to each match. This practice area should have the following:

1. At least 55 yards of clear safe shooting area.
2. A suitable dry area from which to sit and shoot.
3. Some form of target holders for the competitors to use.
4. A sturdy bench rest with sand bags.
5. Yardage markers each 5 yards from 10 yards to 55 yards.
6. Gun Racks.
7. A designated area for SCUBA/air tanks.
8. A designated and marked "Firing Line".
9. A range safety officer on the firing line at all times when shooting is taking place. The range safety officer should have complete control at all times.
10. Rest rooms should be available.
11. Spinners, practice field targets, and chronographs add to a good practice area!
12. **Children should not be near the firing line and should be supervised by a parent at all times!**
13. **No pets should be allowed in the practice area!**
14. **During practice or during a match, all AAFTA Safety Rules should be in force.**

## Shooter's Meeting

The Match Director should hold a Shooter's Meeting prior to each match to discuss information pertinent to the match. This is an

opportunity to welcome contestants and introduce Marshals, Scorekeepers, and other workers. This meeting should be from 10-20 minutes in length and include the following:

1. Special club rules and procedures.
2. Explanation of scoring and score cards. The score card should track the course layout.
3. Point out where facilities are located, including shooting lanes.
4. Number of shots per target.
5. Number of lanes.
6. Where to turn in score cards.
7. Lane Assignments & Squadding: It is customary to squad shooters in groups of 2 or 3 depending on the number of shooters attending the match. A suggested method of squadding for qualifying rounds is to designate a top shooter, an intermediate shooter and a novice when using the customary 3-person system of squadding in all but the final round. In the final round, it is customary to squad shooters with those whom they are directly competing.
8. Shooting times to begin the matches.
9. In-depth discussion of the AAFTA Safety Rules, with an introduction of the Marshals and any discussion of time limits.

## Class System

If conditions warrant it, a suggested system to further subdivide the two standard AAFTA Divisions (PCP and Piston) might be as follows:

**Unlimited** - any airgun in the class with any scope. Additional bodily support such as jackets, straps, etc. are allowed as long as the airgun is supported solely by the body.

**Standard** –

**Option 1** - any gun in the division with any scope, but no additional bodily support of any kind is allowed.

**Option 2** - any airgun in the division with a sporter style stock, a scope limited to 20x, and no additional bodily support of any kind is allowed.

In a major match, such as the Nationals, it is suggested that Veteran, Women and Junior Classes be established that encompass all relevant shooters in both the PCP and Piston Divisions with sufficient awards to satisfy the number of registered shooters. Other Classes can be created by the match committees as the situation dictates.

**It is very important to note that all competitors, even though they may be shooting in a Class such as Unlimited, Standard, Junior, or Veteran are ultimately competing in either the PCP or the Piston Divisions. All Classes are defined as subdivisions of those two basic divisions (PCP and Piston) With that in mind, all competitors in each Division are competing for the overall placement awards for that Division first, plus any other Class awards they may be entered in as well.**

## Awards Presentation

Each AAFTA Division should have at least a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place award. It is not recommended to have a separate match winner and then 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place awards. It is recommended that there be one 1<sup>st</sup> place, or champion award, for each Division followed by 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, etc. All awards should be presented immediately following the final match. A suggested method of presenting the awards is to present the lowest place award for each Division and Class available at the match first, then the next lowest place award for each Division and Class, and so on up to the 1<sup>st</sup> place/Champion award in each Division. It is suggested that awards should be displayed during the Award Presentation. Pictures for publications should be taken by the host club and identified for the press.

## Match Terminology

**Hot Line:** Safe to commence firing.

**Cold Line:** Cease fire, unload all guns.

**Shooters Meeting:** A time when the match director will address all competitors and discuss rules, procedures, times, number shots, and other pertinent information prior to a match.

**Shooting Pad:** A location from which a shot must be taken at a target in a lane.

**Lane Markers:** Two poles, stakes, etc. used to identify body placement on a shooting pad.

**Split:** When a pellet hits the edge of a hit zone on the target and "splits" into pieces, with one of the pieces striking the hit zone.

**Paddle:** The round disc to be hit on the target that unlatches the trigger and allows the target face to fall.

**Marshal:** A volunteer that administers the rules with regard to targets on the course. He also, enforces the safety rules.

**Range Safety Officer:** Calls the line on the practice range.

**Blow Off A Shot:** When a competitor wants to shoot a pellet into the ground because of a bad pellet or mechanical problem.

**Squad or Squadding:** A group of shooters all assigned to shoot the same lane.

**Tie Breaker Lane:** A lane designated before a match to break a tie score.

**Time Limit:** A time imposed on a shooter to prepare for and shoot a target.

**Lane:** A designated area in which a target is placed when shooting a match.

**Air Bottle:** SCUBA tank or equivalent.

**Shooting Time:** The time shooting will commence at a match.

**Reset:** When a string is pulled from the shooters pad to make the target ready for the next shot.

## Target Malfunction Procedure

If a reset string breaks, call a Marshal to repair it.

A shooter may lodge a protest if he feels a target failed to fall with a good hit. The procedure is as follows:

1. All shooters in his squad must complete their shots at the target in question.
2. If the target falls once, the protest is disallowed.
3. If the target fails to fall and all the squad members agree on a possible malfunction, call a Marshal who will:
  - A. Check the target for proper function, level, and to ensure that the face is square to the firing line.
  - B. Repair the target.
  - C. Replace the target with an identical hit zone size target.
  - D. Note the protest if the target appears to be functioning properly.

- E. Remove the target from the match if it is broken or if five protests have been noted by five separate squads. All competitors scores would then be re-tabulated as hits for that target.

The decision of the Marshal is final! If the target is repaired or replaced, shooters in the squad will re-shoot, for score, the target in question. If a target is removed due to 5 protests (the target periodically malfunctions), the target should be removed from the match and not replaced.

## Etiquette

Author: Rodney Boyce

A definition of Field Target is that it is a freestyle shooting sport that is a viable alternative to the other existing disciplines such as Ten Meter, Silhouette and Benchrest. However, the foundation the sport of Field Target is based on is gentlemanly conduct and good sportsmanship without which our shooting sport would become at the very best - unpleasant. It behooves us all to not be distractive while others are shooting. Avoid walking behind and around a shooter trying to concentrate on range finding and shooting. Save idle chatter to moments when it does not disturb others. Admittedly, all this is pretty obvious stuff but I know that we have all been guilty of lapsing occasionally into a "no-think" state of being distractive.

If a shooter deliberately persists in trying to rattle a fellow competitor a terrible potential burden is placed on the Match Director. Shoot Rule No.9 states: "The penalty for deliberate infraction of the Shoot Rules, unsafe practice, ungentlemanly conduct or any form of cheating is disqualification." A protest invoking this rule would certainly be a loud sour note for any match.

The protocol of Field Target requires us to be gentlemen and supportive of each other. If a shooter makes a good shot, say so. It's music to our ears even if it's a "gimme".

1. Be quiet while a shooter is in the process of shooting.
2. Be mindful of other shooters while moving from lane to lane so as not to disturb a shooter in the process of shooting. Stop movement until the shooter has released his/her shot.
3. Be careful while moving from lane to lane so as not to disturb others equipment.
4. Refrain from the use of profanity and foul language while on the course or at the practice range.

# Version History

## 2007

1. By-Laws
  - i) Article V revised
  - ii) Article VII revised
2. AAFTA Division rules
  - i) Revised to include Hunter Division
3. AAFTA Shoot Rules
  - i) Heading changed to AAFTA PCP & Piston Div. Shoot Rules
  - ii) 6.B Offhand position rule added.
  - iii) 6.C Kneeling position definition added
  - iv) 7.C Seat use revised
  - iv) AAFTA Hunter Division Shoot Rules added

## 2005

1. By-Laws
  - i) Article V revised
  - ii) Article VI, Subparagraph C, revised
2. AAFTA Shoot Rules
  - i) Section 4., Subparagraph A., revised
  - ii) Section 6., Subparagraph A., revised

## 2004

3. AAFTA Classification (Division) Rules
  - i) Changed to AAFTA Division Rules
  - ii) Classes changed to Divisions, Sub-classes to Classes
4. AAFTA Shoot Rules
  - i) Section 5., Subparagraph C., revised
  - ii) Section 11., All Subparagraphs, revised

## 5. AAFTA Guidelines

- i) Match Planning, Section 10., Subsection D., revised
- ii) Class System, All Sections, revised
- iii) Awards Presentation, All Sections, revised

## 2003

### 1. By-Laws

- i) Article IV revised

### 2. Classification Rules

- i) Removal of Standard Piston Class as a required AAFTA class.
- ii) Unlimited Piston Class renamed to Piston Class.
- iii) Additional Classes revised.
- iv) Team Competitions revised.

### 3. AAFTA Shoot Rules

- i) Section 1. Subparagraph C. added

### 4. AAFTA Guidelines

- i) Targets, Section 6. revised
- ii) Practice Area (Range), All Sections. renumbered
- iii) Class System, All Sections, revised
- iv) Awards Presentation, All Sections, revised
- v) Target Malfunction Procedures
  - (1) Sections renumbered
  - (2) Final paragraph revised

## 2002

Base Handbook from which this Version History derives

# NOTES

# NOTES

# NOTES



