

SSA High Power Rifle Match Overview (SOP)

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Welcome to Shongum Sportsmen's Association High Power Rifle Match page of our Web site. For your information, this is also referred to as a "National Match Course" of fire. Our High Power Range is 100 yards. High Power Rifle matches are contests of marksmanship skill where competitors shoot at paper targets with scoring rings of varying sizes corresponding to the course of fire. Basically, the match is shot with a US military type rifle, a commercial equivalent, or a "target" rifle. It is derived from the US military's turn of the century marksmanship training with the 1903 Springfield rifle. The allowed rifles are:

1. Match Rifle- Any rifle e.g. match bolt action rifles, sights may be metallic or optical. Optical sights may be of any magnification, either fixed or variable. If the Match Program requires the use of metallic ("iron") sights for a specific event, only metallic sights may be used when firing that event. Red dot type sights are permitted. No front or rear support except the use of a sling (except Standing) and be capable of holding at least five rounds in the magazine. Rifles with non-standard original military sights are Match Rifles.
2. Service rifle - (M1, M1A, AR type rifle. The rifle may have an optical sight with a maximum power of 4.5X installed on the receiver. Variable scopes with a maximum of 4.5X are permitted. Only commercially manufactured scopes that were produced with a maximum magnification of 4.5X and have a maximum objective lens diameter of 34 mm may be used. If an optical sight is used, the same optical sight configuration must be used in all stages of a course of fire. The centerline of an optical sight shall be no higher than 3.5 inches above the centerline of the bore. Red dot type sights are permitted as long as they do not have magnification over the 4.5x limit. No front or rear support except the use of a sling (except Standing).

We shoot the fourth Sunday of every month with the first relay firing at 10 AM (sign up starting at 9AM). Any changes to this schedule will be noted on the calendar page of our Web site at <http://www.shongum.org/> . Since you're reading this, you're probably new to this type of match shooting and are looking for a quick overview of what to expect.

Our first concern is safety of course, both yours and your fellow shooters. Eye protection and hearing protection are mandatory on our range. If any person is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and or drugs will be removed from the range. As far as the rifle is concerned, any firearm brought onto the range must be in a case, and the case must remain closed while any person is down range. There is absolutely no gun handling during this range setup period! If you get there early and no one is down range, you can bring you cased rifle to the firing position, but never open the case.

Only after the match director states that you may handle your rifle, you are allowed to bring the encased rifle to the firing line, open the case, and remove the rifle from the case and start handling and adjusting your equipment and rifle. The barrel of the rifle must always be pointed down range. All firearms must be empty, with their bolts open and magazines out, Open Bolt Indicator installed. At this point in time, the rifle can not contain any live or empty cartridge or empty case of any kind. Additionally, all guns must be facing down range at all times, OBI installed in all guns when not actively shooting and before going down range to score. When you return to the firing line you may not handle any of your equipment until you hear the instruction "shooters to the line". When the range commands begin you may not insert a magazine into your rifle or insert any rounds into the chamber until you hear the word "load" from the Match Director or line caller. Remember that safety is first, last and always".

Whether it is your first time or just have a question concerning match procedure, just ask the Match Director or one of our Range Safety Officers that are present at the match. As for first timers, please arrive at the range early and report to the club house and make it known that you need a safety check for the match. At this point leave your rifle and equipment in your car. After that just follow directions. Please do this first, as it will take time away from our sign in procedure to bring you up to speed later when there will be more shooters present on the firing line.

During the match don't worry about your score, it does not matter, the other competitors will not look down upon you if you have a poor score. If you are indeed new to this competition, be aware that there are two things you should be careful about. First, you should be especially careful to follow the directions given you by the Match Director or Range Officer. Just handle the rifle in a 100% safe manner, follow the Match Director's commands and you'll be fine. For obvious reasons, if you violate a safety rule, you could be removed from the range and secondly, you should take care never to shoot on someone else's target.

Reduced Distance

High power rifle shooting at the full regulation distances requires a range with firing lines at 200, 300 and 600 yards. Every official NRA stage or course of fire normally conducted at 200, 300, or 600 yards can be run at 100 yards on the NRA official reduced targets. The SR-1 target simulates the 200 yard target; the SR-21 is the 100 yard equivalent of the 300 yard target and the MR-31 gives the same appearance at 100 yards as the normal 600 yard target does at the full distance. Because of their small size, the reduced targets are well adapted to being hung on stationary frames. Because of the short distances involved, we walk down to the targets after each course of fire and remove them for scoring in our club house after that relay is finished firing.

There are four shooting stages to this match, all shot at 100 yards. All stages will be preceded with a three minute preparation period where the shooter can handle their rifle and equipment, make any adjustments, and aim down range, **but never load any ammunition into their rifle.**

Course of Fire

1. Sighters - at 100 yards in 5 minutes.
2. Slow Fire, standing - 10 rounds at 100 yards in 10 minutes.
3. Rapid Fire, sitting or kneeling - 10 rounds at 100 yards in 60 seconds.
4. Rapid Fire, 10 rounds prone - 100 yards in 70 seconds.
5. Slow Fire, 20 rounds prone - 100 yards in 20 minutes.

In the Sighters Stage, you will be allowed to fire an unlimited number of shots to sight in your rifle; all rounds must be single loaded, firing from any position, slings permitted for a time limit of 5 minutes, score not counted, and using target SR-1. Use the sighter shots to see where the bullets are hitting and then adjust the sight settings to hit in the center of the target.

In the Off Hand or Standing Stage, we shoot in the standing position. Again all rounds are single loaded, the use of a sling is **NOT** permitted, 10 rounds to be fired in 10 minutes using target SR-1.

In the Rapid Fire Sitting or Kneeling Stage, we start from that position; use of slings permitted, 10 rounds, 60 seconds, SR-21, with a mandatory reload.

In the Rapid Fire Prone Stage, we start from the prone position; use of slings permitted, 10 rounds, 70 seconds, SR-21 with a mandatory reload.

In the Slow Fire Prone Stage, we start from prone position, again all rounds are single loaded, and the use of a sling is permitted, 20 rounds, 20 minutes, SR-31.

In all of the rapid fire stages, we will start from the indicated position, with a clip of 8 rounds lying within easy reach for later, we load 2 rounds on the load command, and with an M1 rifle, the bolt is closed and safety is on, with other rifles, the bolt is open, safety is on! When the signal to fire is given we load the first round, release the safety and shoot 2 rounds and then reload and shoot the remaining 8 in the time allotted. It is a shooters' preference on how many rounds are loaded first, but it is mandatory for a reload of the rifle during the course of fire.

If you finish a slow fire string with several minutes remaining, you may move quietly back off the line without disturbing those still shooting and please no talking with the other shooters. Leave your gear in place -- making a ruckus by rolling your mat or packing your stool is a real distraction to those still firing. If you finish a rapid fire string early, just stay in position for the few remaining seconds. These are just matters of common courtesy and safety.

Equipment:

Besides your rifle, ammunition, an OBI (you can ask other shooters if they have a loaner for you to use, they usually do) eye protection and hearing protection, here is some suggested basic shooting equipment which you may benefit from:

Sling: A shooting sling is helpful in steadying the positions and controlling recoil. The sling may be used in any position except standing.

Spotting scope or binoculars: A spotting scope or a substitute optical device is useful for observing the placement of you shots on the target, especially during Sighters and slow fire.

A jacket to help keep the rifle in place and reduce felt recoil

A glove for the hand that holds the rifle forearm will help pad the forward hand from sling pressure.

A mat or blanket makes the prone position more comfortable and can also be used in the Sitting position.

Many shooters use a hat to shade the light for a better view of the sights.

A shooting stool or camping stool is handy when you need to sit down.

Range commands

The following sequence of commands is not intended as a guide; rather it is a fixed set of words and events to be used by the Match Director, Chief Range Officer or the person conducting the match.

A whistle or other start signal will be used to announce each start and stop (cease fire) event.

Preparation Period

Relay number ___ to the firing line.

Shooters on the line, this is your three minute preparation period for the Sighters stage of the National Match Course, do not load any live ammunition at this time! Your three minute preparation time will commence now (start signal).

Your three minute preparation period has ended (stop signal).

#1 Sighters

Shooters on the line, this is the Sighters stage of the National Match Course, unlimited sighting shots, slow fire, any position, use of slings permitted, single load. Total time will be five (5) minutes.

With your first round, load.

Is the line loaded? The line is loaded!

Ready on the right? Ready on the left?

Start signal.

Cease fire signal.

Unload all weapons.

Please remove all magazines, install your open bolt indicator and place your rifle safety on.

Range Officer inspects all rifles for safety settings.

Is the line safe? The line is (not) safe.

You may move forward to police your brass and change targets.

#2 Standing

Relay number ___ to the firing line.

This is the slow fire standing stage of the National Match Course, Ten (10) shots for record, slow fire, standing, use of slings is not permitted, single load. Time allowed ten (10) minutes.

Your three minute preparation time will commence now.

Your three minute preparation period has ended.

Shooters on the line, with one round, load.

Is the line loaded? The line is loaded!

Ready on the right? Ready on the left?

All ready on the firing line!

Start signal.

Cease fire signal! Unload all weapons.

Please remove all magazines, install your open bolt indicator and place your rifle safety on.

Range Officer inspects all rifles for safety settings.

Is the line safe? The line is (not) safe.

You may move forward to police your brass and change targets.

#3 Sitting or Kneeling

Relay number ___ to the firing line.

This is the sitting or kneeling stage of the National Match Course, Ten (10) shots for record, rapid fire sitting or kneeling, mandatory reload. Time allowed sixty (60) seconds. The use of slings is permitted.

Your three minute preparation time will commence now.

Your three minute preparation period has ended.

Shooters on the line, with a clip or magazine with two (2) or five (5) rounds, load.

Is the line loaded? The line is loaded!

Ready on the right? Ready on the left?

All ready on the firing line!

Start signal.

Cease fire signal. Unload all weapons.

Please remove all magazines, install your open bolt indicator and place your rifle safety on.

Range Officer inspects all rifles for safety settings.
Is the line safe? The line is (not) safe.
You may move forward to police your brass and change targets

#4 Rapid Fire Prone

Relay number ___ to the firing line.
This is the rapid fire prone stage of the National Match Course, ten (10) shots for record, rapid fire prone position, time allowed seventy (70) seconds. The use of slings is permitted.
Your three minute preparation time will commence now.
Your three minute preparation period has ended.
Shooters on the line, with a clip or magazine with two (2) or five (5) rounds, load.
Is the line loaded? The line is loaded!
Ready on the right? Ready on the left?
All ready on the firing line!
Start signal.
Cease fire signal. Unload all weapons.
Please remove all magazines, install your open bolt indicator and place your rifle safety on.
Range Officer inspects all rifles for safety settings.
Is the line safe? The line is (not) safe.
You may move forward to police your brass and change targets

#5 Slow Fire Prone

Relay number ___ to the firing line.
This is the slow fire prone stage of the National Match Course, Twenty (20) shots for record, slow fire prone position, single load, use of slings permitted, time allowed twenty (20) minutes.
Your three minute preparation time will commence now.
Your three minute preparation period has ended.
Shooters on the line, with one round, load.
Is the line loaded? The line is loaded!
Ready on the right? Ready on the left?
All ready on the firing line!
Start signal
Cease fire signal. Unload all weapons.
Please remove all magazines, install your open bolt indicator and place your rifle safety on.
Range Officer inspects all rifles for safety settings.
In a safe manner with all rifles pointed down range, box or case all rifles
Please remove your rifle and all your equipment from the firing line.
Alter all rifles are first cased and then removed from the firing line.
Is the line safe? The line is (not) safe.
You may move forward to police your brass and help bring all targets back to their storage area.

After all of this, most of us return to the club house and help/watch score targets, listen to all the excuses from fellow shooters, and maybe add one or two of our own. Many shooters bring their lunch, and generally unwind from the match and listen to all the promises for the next month's match before going home.

Feel free to ask for help from any of the experienced shooters, and welcome to our sport.

We expect to see you!
Good shooting!