

## **Most Common Misunderstood/Overlooked SASS Rules**

Below are some common misunderstood and overlooked rules (meaning not known rules) with clarifications.

### **170-180 DEGREE RULES**

p. 18: "The 170° rule means the muzzle of a firearm must always be straight down range (+/- 85° in any direction). Muzzle direction and muzzle control is important between, before, during, and after shooting a stage. The 170° rule is the backbone of all safe firearm handling and is always in effect." p. 3: "Any firearm that breaks the 170° safety rule will result in a Stage Disqualification."

p. 3: "When drawing a revolver, the muzzle may be oriented into the straight down (180°) as it clears leather; but must then go immediately into the downrange 170°. When re-holstering a revolver, the muzzle may be oriented into the straight down (180°). These restrictions against breaking the downrange 180° angle apply to all holsters and methods of draw/re-holster. This allowance applies to all types/styles of holsters, from canted double strong side to cross draw, to shoulder/Huckleberry rigs."

### **AMMO FOR RELOADING**

p. 3: "Ammunition required for loading/reloading during the course of any stage must be carried on the shooter's person, in a bandoleer, cartridge/shot shell belt loop, holster cartridge loop, pouch, pocket, or be safely staged as required by stage instructions." **Procedural**

- Staging ammo has to be written in the stage instructions or allowed as a range rule.
- If not stated in the instructions and if there is a place to stage the ammo safely (meaning where the shooter won't break the 170), a shooter may stage the ammo AFTER the timer has begun.

### **CLEARING A LONG GUN AT END OF STAGE**

p. 18: "If the long gun is the last firearm used, it must be cleared prior to it leaving the shooters hand(s) at the unloading area."

- Note that after shooting the long gun, the shooter may release the long gun anywhere on the firing line but must clear it prior to releasing it at the ULT. Firing line: from first firearm placed on the loading table until all firearms are confirmed as cleared at the unloading table.

### **COCKED REVOLVER LEAVING HAND**

p. 15: "A cocked revolver may never leave a shooter's hand, including from one hand to the other. This does not apply when loading or reloading on the firing line."

- Note that changing the revolver from one hand to the other means transferring from one hand that is gripping the revolver to the other hand gripping the revolver. If cocked during the transfer, then the penalty is a SDQ.
- When a cocked revolver is holstered, once the shooter removes their hand from the grip, the appropriate penalty will apply. (Clarification 2017 Winter Range TG mtg.)

### **COWBOY PORT-ARMS**

p. 14: "Defined as a standing upright with the butt of the long gun at or below the waist of the shooter, the muzzle at or above the shoulder, and the long gun held with both hands."

## DECOCKING A FIREARM

p. 14: “No firearm may be decocked on the firing line to avoid a penalty if cocked at the wrong time, position or location once a round has gone downrange. Once a revolver is cocked, the round must be expended (shot). However, if a round has not gone downrange, and under the direction and supervision of the TO, the revolver may be decocked. This requires a positive indication/acknowledgement from the TO for the shooter to do so. (See also “Double Jeopardy” avoidance in Safety & Handling Conventions – All Firearms)”

- Note that if decocked without the direction and supervision of the TO, then the penalty is a SDQ.
- This applies to decocking a revolver at the end of a stage as well, such as when the shooter loses count and the TO says that’s all and the shooter leaves the hammer cocked. By decocking (instead of pulling the trigger safely down range) it’s avoiding a penalty such as holstering a cocked revolver or a cocked revolver leaving the shooter’s hand.

## DISCARDED LONG GUN - RETRIEVAL

p. 15: “If the long gun is not discarded empty prior to the next firearm being fired, only the shooter may return to open and/or clear the firearm at the end of the stage under the observation of the TO.”

## HITTING TARGET WITH THE WRONG FIREARM

p. 22 “Misses are 5-Second penalties. Revolver, rifle, and shotgun targets must be engaged with the appropriate type of firearm. A MISS is defined as the failure to hit the appropriate target type using the appropriate type of firearm and includes: ... Each target hit with an incorrect firearm – either intentionally or by mistake.”

- If the shooter hits rifle targets with their pistol(s) or pistol targets with their rifle, then each target hit with the inappropriate firearm is considered a Miss (not a procedural).
- The TO should assist the shooter, if at all possible (without further shooter incurred penalties), to get the shooter on the appropriate target type.

Ex: 5 targets are lined up in a row used for the rifle and the pistols. The scenario calls for the shooter to double-tap sweep the 5 targets with the rifle, then use the pistols to place 10 rounds on the 3 middle targets (targets 2, 3, and 4). Shooter engages the 5 targets with a double-tap sweep with the rifle. The shooter then uses pistols to engage the targets by hitting the far-left target once (target # 1), then the 3 middle targets (target #'s 2, 3, and 4) with 9 rounds (totaling 10 rounds). **MISS** – All 5 targets are in play for the rifle scenario. Only the 3 middle targets are in play for the pistols. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> targets are rifle targets. The shooter hit target # 1 with a pistol round (a rifle target), so the shooter used the incorrect type of firearm when hitting target #1.

## HOLSTERS/BELTS

p. 3: “Main match holsters must be located one on each side of the belly button and separated by at least the width of two fists at the belt. (Note: Pocket pistol and derringer holsters are not “main match” holsters).”

- Pay attention to the words, “each side of the belly button” (this is the *holster* at the belt and while shooting). It might be good to use something like a leather slide (the width of your two fists together) to keep the holsters in place so they do not move while shooting.

p. 3: “Ammunition belts must be worn so all ammo is positioned at or below the belly button.”

## Illegally Acquired Ammunition

p. 28 "Illegally acquired ammunition is any ammunition not carried to the line and/or staged by the shooter in an approved manner."

p. 22 (5-Second Penalties): "Each target hit with illegally acquired ammunition."

p. 22 (10-Second Penalties): "Use of illegally acquired ammunition."

Ex: Shooter has to engage 6 shotgun targets at the end of the scenario. Shooter knocks down 4 shotgun targets, then realizes they have no more shotgun shells on their shotgun belt. A spotter grabs 2 shotgun shells from their own belt and hands them to the shooter. The shooter grabs the spotter's 2 shotgun shells, then engages the remaining SG targets, knocking down all 6 shotgun targets. (**Procedural and 2 Misses** – shooter used another person's shotgun shells to hit 2 targets. The shooter did not carry those shotgun shells to the line themselves.)

## Live Round in the Chamber

p. 16: "A shotgun is considered SAFE to leave the shooter's hands in the following condition only (some conditions may be corrected before firing the next firearm): - Empty."

p. 23: "Staging or discarding a long gun containing a live round in the chamber (once it leaves the shooter's hands).

Ex: Shooter engages rifle targets successfully, makes rifle safe on the table, picks up SxS shotgun and loads two shotgun shells into the shotgun chambers. The shooter then realizes the pistols are to be shot next, so places the SxS down on the table with live shotgun shells still in the chamber, but does not close the shotgun. The shooter engages the pistol targets successfully and holsters, then picks up the open shotgun, closes the action, then knocks down all of the shotgun targets. (**SDQ**)

## LOADING TABLE

p. 29: "Competitors shall not leave the designated loading area with a loaded firearm unless they are called to the stage as the next competitor to begin the stage by the Timer Operator or Expeditor." Penalty is a SDQ.

## LONG GUNS THAT SLIP AND FALL *(Clarification 2020 Winter Range TG mtg)*

- **MSV:** "If a shooter discards a long gun after use, and is at complete rest for a very brief moment, then slips and falls without breaking the 170, then a MSV. "
- **Stage DQ:** 1) Long gun is in continuous motion and falls. 2) Shooter bumps a prop and long gun falls. 3) Shooter knocks the long gun and it falls.
- "Dropped firearm – a firearm that has left the shooter's control and comes to rest at a location or position other than where it was intended."

## MSV and a MISS

If the shooter receives a MSV (and the correct number of rounds has NOT been fired as called for by the stage instructions), then it is also a Miss.

## RANGE OFFICERS GIVING COMMANDS

June 2017 End of Trail TG meeting Clarification: "Only the Timer Operator and the three (3) spotters are the only ROs (Range Officers) that can give commands to the shooter and if any of those four (4) ROs give the shooter the wrong instructions, then it "could" be grounds for a reshoot."

**RIFLE/SHOTGUN - SAFE FOR MOVEMENT IN HAND**

p. 16: "A rifle is considered SAFE for movement (in hand, while moving through a stage) in the following condition only:

- Hammer fully down on an empty chamber or expended round, action closed.
- Action open, round on carrier or in chamber."

**SASS DEFAULT**

p. 14: "If no starting position is given, the shooter shall stand upright with revolvers holstered, hands at the sides and not touching any firearm. (SASS default)."

- SASS default still applies even if not explicitly stated in the stage scenario. e.g.: If the stage scenario calls for hands on hat, hands holding rope, hands touching both sides of window frame, holding dynamite, etc., then the rest of your body must be at SASS default. You do not have to be looking straight down range. You can look down at your firearm. (Clarification 2017 Winter Range TG mtg.)
- Holding an object with one hand does not mean your other hand can be touching your guns, unless stated specifically in the stage instructions.
- "Hands" not touching any firearm. Forearms are not hands, so the forearms can touch firearms.

**SHOOTERS'S CHOICE – REPLACING EJECTED/DEFECTIVE ROUNDS** (PaleWolf Brunelle, SASS #2495)

A shooter who ejects a rifle round in the middle of a shooting string has FOUR choices:

- 1) Re-engage same target; then reload at the end of the string for the last target = No Penalty
- 2) Re-engage same target w/NO reload = Miss for the ejected (unfired) round
- 3) Skip to next target w/NO reload = Miss
- 4) Skip to next target w/reload/return to re-engage skipped target = Procedural

**STAGING LONG GUNS**

p. 16: "A shotgun is considered SAFE for movement (in hand, while moving through a stage) in the following conditions only:

- Action open, round in chamber or on carrier.
- Hammer(s) fully down on an empty chamber(s) or expended round(s), action closed."

p. 17: "All long guns initially staged on a horizontal surface shall be staged lying flat where at least the rear of the trigger guard is on the staging area."