

# **MOUNTED SHOOTERS OF AMERICA**

## **2017 Guidelines and Rulebook**

The Mounted Shooters of America (MSA) is a national organization dedicated to holding the finest, most exciting mounted shooting competitions in the US and beyond. Founded in 2001, MSA is dedicated to earning a reputation of integrity, fairness and continuing excitement generated by innovating and pioneering within the sport of mounted shooting.

Membership runs a full 365 days from date of registration. You must have a current membership to be covered under the MSA insurance policy and to participate in any MSA sanctioned events including, but not limited to, practices, clinics, demonstrations and matches.

### **BASIC MEMBERSHIP:**

#### **BENEFITS:**

- Membership Card
- Online Rulebook
- MSA Decal
- Point tracking on a club, state, regional and national level
- Exclusive updates in Western Horse & Gun Magazine
- Eligible to win National High Point awards.
- Membership Plus – Add an annual subscription to Western Horse & Gun for 50% off subscription rate (\$10)

### **ANNUAL FEES:**

- Individual - \$55.00
- Family - \$85.00 (immediate family members living in the same household)
- Lil Bandit \$10.00 (if not included in a family registration) All Lil Bandits receive end of year recognition from The Mounted Shooters of America

### **CLUB AFFILIATION**

- Affiliation Fee \$250.00 annually. Affiliation runs a full 365 days from date of affiliation

### **AFFILIATE BENEFITS:**

- An embroidered affiliate briefcase which includes: Book of guidelines and match rules, online rulebook, course book, event producer's guide, range masters guide, match software, Xtreme Qualifier software, all software instructions and membership forms.
- Point tracking for all MSA members on a club, state, regional and national level
- Event promotion on Website
- Tri-fold brochures for club marketing
- General liability insurance for MSA sanctioned events.

## **JACKPOT DIVISIONS**

The MSA offers a D system using MSA software. MSA also offers a level system.

- Affiliates have the option to provide a D system jackpot or follow the level system or offer both at an affiliate match.
- Points are awarded once per qualified match by overall finish order regardless of which system/systems are used.
- The number of Divisions for a jackpot are to be decided by event producer. The number of payouts to each Division to be decided by event producer. Gender and age splits are an option.

Age splits are as follows:

**Adult:** Ages up to 45

**Platinum:** Ages 45-60

**Platinum Plus:** Ages 65 and older

- A match producer may combine age or gender divisions with a majority vote of competitors effected by the change. If ages or genders are combined, wins will not count.

### **MSA Level System:**

### **DIVISIONS:**

Divisions: There are Four Divisions: First year Rookie, Non - Pro, Semi - Pro, and Pro. These Divisions maybe split by gender and age. Competitors 45 and older, may elect to compete as a Platinum, based on their age the day after the World Championships. Competitors 65 and older, may elect to compete as a Platinum Plus. Competitors must make this request on the first day of the competition season. Move ups in all Divisions will be the same in Jackpot D events and Stage shooting events.

### **Member Divisions shall be determined in one of the following ways:**

HIGHEST standing **ever achieved** in any mounted shooting organization, when joining MSA for the first time.

- MSA classifications may be changed at the discretion of MSA, or an appropriate appointed committee, when evidence is shown to justify such a change.
- A MSA contestant may petition MSA or an appropriate appointed committee to move up or down a division. The procedure for submitting a petition is to submit, in writing, to MSA the reasons for such a change. Written petition must be submitted to the MSA prior to an event.
- Members must notify the MSA office upon any move up in any other mounted shooting association within 7 days of achieving the move up or before their next MSA match, whichever comes first.
- Failure to notify the MSA of a move up in another association may result in being disqualified for the remainder or the current season and the upcoming seasons at the discretion of the MSA.
- Failure to notify MSA of the highest level ever achieved in another mounted shooting association will result in disqualification for the current and upcoming seasons at the discretion of the MSA.

### **ROOKIE:**

The Rookie level is for anyone that is a new shooter who is a first year competitor starting in the 2017 season that has no prior affiliation with any mounted shooting organization.

- MSA awards the Rookie competitor who earns the most national points for their Rookie year a trophy buckle for Overall Rookie Cowboy and Cowgirl. The MSA will also recognize the Regional Overall Rookie Cowboys and Cowgirls with a trophy breast collar. Rookies of the year winners will also be recognized in Western Horse & Gun Magazine.
- A Rookie automatically moves into the Non - Pro Division after their first season. The season will be from the day after MSA Worlds through the following MSA Worlds.
- After three qualified wins with at least three competitors in the Rookie division, Rookies move into the Non Pro Division. However, for his or her Rookie year, the points will be tracked for and qualify for the end of the year Rookie awards, regardless of which division level a Rookie achieves.
- Rookie of the Year is awarded to first year members only, regardless of when they joined the MSA.

**Non Pro Division:** The Non Pro Division is made up members that are level one or *two or similar* in other shooting organizations. Any current MSA Non Pro member with no MSA wins may petition to move to the Rookie Division or remain in the Non Pro Division. A Non Pro Division member will be moved up after four wins, with at least four entries in the division.

**Semi Pro Division:** The Semi Pro Division is made up of competitors who have earned a class ranking in another organization of *three or four* or similar or has moved up with qualified wins at MSA sanctioned events. A Semi Pro Division member will be moved up after five wins, with at least five entries in division.

**Pro Division:** is an individual who is a level five or six or similar in another shooting organization. Official wins will be tracked when there are at least five entries in the division.

## **AGE DIVISIONS:**

### **LI'L BANDITS:**

- Li'l Bandits are competitors on a lead line or who ride unassisted that are 9 years old or younger
- Li'l Bandits must wear helmets.
- A parent or adult over the age of 18 may lead their child through the pattern. The leader is on foot and keeps the horse at a walk or a jog. Leaders may lead horse on horseback at a walk or jog provided they can demonstrate they can do so safely to the match official prior to the match.
- Match Director or designated official should hold a competitor meeting before the match with all competitors and parents attending. The meeting will address course set-up, dress code, safety, and the possibility of having an adult rider pre-ride course for clarity.
- Parents will sign a release form and will be responsible that their child is prepared to participate in a safe and responsible manner
- Parents are responsible to have their child ready, prepared and in time for their division.
- Tack should be appropriate for the use and safety of the rider and horse.
- Horses used for the match should fit the ability of the rider.
- All penalties shall be as stated in the MSA rules. In addition, "failure to follow course of fire" will include the use of predetermined placement of cones as explained in the courses. The competitor will stay within those additional cones.

- Match Director and Range Master for each match may alter these rules based on their judgment and for the safety of the contestant's ability to ride.
- Lil Bandits may move up to the Outlaw division at any point during the season if approved by a parent and if they are able to ride a course safely while using cap guns or dry firing pistols with the approval of the Range master. Points will not move with them to the Outlaw division.
- Lil Bandits are timed for their ride.
- Lil Bandits receive 1 point for each match they compete in.
- All Lil Bandits will receive end of the year recognition from the MSA.

### OUTLAW:

- Outlaws are ages 10 to 13. The Classifications are based on the age the competitor as of the day after MSA Worlds for the following season.
- An Outlaw rides the course without assistance and uses cap guns or dry fires real pistols. Outlaws must have two pistols and holster first pistol before drawing the second pistol and engaging the rundown targets.
- An Outlaw may shoot 5 rounds from the ground with the assistance of the Match Official and a parent/guardian if under 18.
- Outlaw shooters are timed for their ride.
- All Outlaws must wear holsters in all events.
- When shooting from the ground, there will be a 5 second penalty for each missed balloon. When a competitor chooses not to shoot from the ground, there is a total of 25 seconds added to their time, (5 seconds for each "missed" balloon.)
- There is no gender split.

**Adult Division:** Any MSA member, male or female ages 14-45.

**Platinum Division:** Any MSA member, male or female may join the Platinum Division if they are 45 or older on the 1st day of the competition season. The member must notify MSA of their intention on or before the 1st day of the competition season.

Members do not have to join the Platinum division. It is optional. If a Member chooses to ride in the Platinum Division they shall remain a Platinum member for the entire year.

**Platinum + Division:** Any MSA member, male or female may join the Platinum + Division if they are 65 or older on the 1st day of the competition season. The Platinum + Division is **Limited** (Rookie, Non Pro & Semi Pro) and **Open** (Pro) and is gender split. (For the 20X Xtreme & Xtreme Handicap, the Platinum Plus will run as Semi Pro.) Members do not have to join the Platinum plus division. It is optional. Those who choose to join the Platinum Plus Division shall remain for the current season.

### ENTRIES:

- A competitor may enter an event as many times as they wish on a different horse for each entry
- If you are the only person in your division, you cannot earn a qualified win. For example, if you choose to ride multiple horses and are the only person in your division, you cannot earn a win against yourself.

- A competitor may NOT enter twice on the same horse and may not use the same horse in different entries. Example: competitors may not switch horses for different courses. Running horses out of match go order will result in a 60 penalty. (The only time a competitor may change horses is if the horse is no longer able to compete due to injury or illness).
- Once a horse is “scratched” from an event due to illness or injury it is no longer eligible for any event for the entire match.
- All changes must be approved by the Match Director.

### **DRESS CODE: APPLIES TO STATE, REGIONAL, NATIONAL, & WORLD EVENTS.**

- The purpose of our dress code is to promote a professional equestrian sport with modern and period attire.
- Hats: A western style hat is required of all competitors wearing cowboy attire when in the arena. Hats of felt, straw and palm are acceptable. Safety helmets are also acceptable.
- Ladies wearing open skirt outfits (not split skirts) are exempt from the hat rule. Ladies dresses are not required to have sleeves.
- Boots: Boots are required when in the arena, boots should be western in style, ropers and packers are also acceptable.
- Chaps or Chinks are optional at MSA matches and encouraged for showcase events.
- Shirts: All competitors are required to wear a long sleeve button down or snapped shirt, with a conventional and or banded collar while in the arena. Shirts must be worn with sleeves to the wrist.
- We encourage all competitors to pursue western and patriotic themes in their dress. Match directors may get permission for special “costume” matches for special events. Match director will forward a written request to MSA detailing specifics of the event.
- Promotional logos may be worn on a competitor’s long-sleeved shirt during any MSA event if they are also wearing an MSA logo patch. MSA logo Patches may be obtained by ordering them online.
- Local affiliate matches are under the authority of each event producer and they may set dress codes at their discretion.

### **FIREARMS:**

- We realize each state may have its own rules regarding firearms. Event producers are responsible for designing their events to be in compliance with the state firearm regulations. Each competitor must be familiar with the state firearm regulations in the state in which they are competing in and/or traveling through. All Federal and State firearm laws must be followed at Mounted Shooting competitions and trump any and all discrepancies between federal/state laws and MSA rules.
- Only fixed sight, single action revolvers of .45 caliber, will be allowed in MSA competitions. Examples: Colt Single Action Army or Bisley Model, Smith & Wesson Schofield, or their reproductions and Ruger Vaqueros.
- A holster is defined as a pouch formed in the shape of a gun. A feedbag or saddlebag does not qualify and is considered by MSA to be unsafe. Pommel holsters are permitted as long as they are form fitted to the pistol.

- All Holsters must be form fitted to the single action .45 caliber pistols designated for use. They may not include leather or other materials attached to or above the opening for each pistol that provide a ramp to the holster. Use of such devices will subject the competitor to a sixty-second penalty for that stage.
- All firearms shall be maintained in the same external condition as originally manufactured from the factory. Allowed modifications will be limited to engraving, hammer knurling or turned down hammers as long as there is no lateral movement or welded add-ons. Custom grips are allowed including Birds head grips. The original external profile shall be maintained. All external parts shall be of the type manufactured for that particular model of firearm. Stock parts may be swapped from gun to gun. Site modifications will be limited to the filing of the front site. Triggers shall be operational; "slip hammer" revolvers are unsafe. No cutting or internal barrel modifications may be made. If any member is found to be using modified firearms, you will be disqualified from the match and your membership will be suspended for one calendar year from the offense.
- "Bird's Head" type grip frames on single action revolvers are legal for MSA matches. Included are standard factory production Bird's Head Grip Frame guns and guns equipped with aftermarket Bird's Head Grip Frames. This includes Standard, Factory Bird's Head and guns equipped with aftermarket Bird's Head Grip Frames.
- "Bisley Style Hammers" are legal on single action revolvers for MSA matches. A Bisley Style Hammer may replace a standard hammer so long as it is of the same manufacturer. Example: It is legal to replace a standard Ruger Vaquero hammer with a Ruger Bisley Hammer.
- The only exception to these rules shall be special modifications for medical/disability reasons; the match Director will make the final call. Any competitor found to not comply with the above stated rules shall be disqualified from the event.
- A competitor must submit their firearms for inspection by a match official upon request or risk disqualification.

### **AMMUNITION:**

- Competitors at MSA functions are responsible for having their revolvers loaded with issued ammunition by the shoot producer. Once a competitor accepts the ammo taken from the loading area, it is his/her ammo for that course.
- There is no "bad ammo".
- All competitors must bring ammo back to the loading area and return/dispose of all brass after each course.
- All competitors must remain in the designated armory area, if there is room, once their guns are loaded. The armors table is for ammo only. Guns may not be left on the armors table unattended and bags or other items are not allowed on the armors table. Anyone leaving guns and/or bags on the armorers table will receive a 60 second run. This is for safety!
- Only ammunition from MSA's certified ammo producers list may be used at MSA events. This is for consistency and safety. Failure to obey this rule will result in disqualification.

### **TARGETS:**

- The standard targets used in Mounted Shooting competitions are helium quality balloons.
- When inflated, a target should measure 6 to 9 inches in diameter. Care should be taken to make sure that targets are of uniform size for all competitors. Balloons shall be of two distinctly different colors; it makes it easier for a contestant to define the first half from the second half of a course. Some courses will use the same color for all targets.

- For safety reasons target stands should be made of a flexible material like PVC or polyethylene pipe no larger than ¾ inch in diameter, except when using an automated target system.
- Standard target poles should be 48 inches high, but can be varied to ground level to increase the variety possible within each mounted shooting course. Traffic cones make excellent, safe bases for target poles. Once the contestant starts the course they have accepted their course as it is.

### **TACK:**

- Competitors must use a saddle and bridle deemed in safe condition.
- Competitors may use any bit or hackamore to reasonably control their mount as long as it is not overly severe in design.

### **HORSES:**

- MSA Competitions are open to all breeds of horses and mules, registered and unregistered. Competitors are expected to compete with mounts that are healthy and in good physical condition. Horses should be introduced and conditioned to the sound of gunfire prior to competing in an MSA match. New competitors and/or mounts shall demonstrate that they can safely control or be controlled during the completion of a course of fire prior to entering a competition.
- No abuse of animals will be allowed. This is a Match Director call and no warnings will be given (consider this your warning). Anyone found to be abusing an animal of any kind will be Dis- Qualified from the event and asked to leave the premises with no refund given.

### **COURSE DESIGN**

- The Range Master will have the responsibility of making final inspection of the course before the first competitor begins their stage. Once a rider engages the course they have accepted the course as it is set.
- No running starts into the arena.
- All competitors must start with the gate closed or use of a baffled alley/gate.
- All MSA events must use an MSA Certified Range Master.

### **PENALTIES**

Penalties are added on to raw times after the completion of a course. Additional penalties may be added by an event producer or range master. The Range Master decides if a penalty is being called or not. Any discrepancies can be discussed with the event producer, who shall form an appeals board prior to the start of an event for the purpose of reviewing and deciding on any protest made by a competitor during an event.

- Missed target: 5 seconds
- Knocked over barrel: 5 seconds
- Knocked over gate cone or automated target inflator: 5 seconds
- Failure to follow course of fire: 10 seconds

- Dropped gun while engaging the course: 5 seconds
  - Failure to holster first gun: 5 seconds
  - Non-Qualified run or maximum time on any run: 60 seconds
  - Unsafe Gun Handling: 5 seconds per occurrence
  - Engaging the course without the Match Official's go signal: 60 seconds
  - Firing 6 rounds from one gun: 60 seconds
- In the event that a firearm comes into contact with the arena floor, once the course has been engaged, that firearm becomes a dead gun. The competitor receives a 5 second penalty for the dropped gun plus 5 seconds for each missed target. For safety reasons the Range Master or experienced adult member must be the only person to pick it up. No consequences shall be received for a firearm dropped beyond the timer after crossing the finish line at the completion of his/her run.
  - A competitor who becomes dismounted during the course of fire receives a nonqualified (60 second) run.
  - All targets shall be broken by direct gunfire, except as follows: Targets broken by nature prior to the competitor engaging that target shall be shot to be considered a hit. Any target that has been engaged and is broken by nature or unknown source shall be considered a hit if broken prior to crossing the timeline. If it is unknown what broke a target and the competitor has shot it, it shall be considered a hit.
  - No penalty will be given to any competitor for knocking over a target pole unless it is designated as a "gate" in the stage description. The two "Targets" that make up a designated gate on a course of fire shall be called "gates". If a competitor knocks over either target cone or automated target inflator making up a "gate" at any time during the completion of a stage it shall be considered a 5 second penalty.
  - A competitor shall have been determined to have engaged the course once he has crossed the start/ finish line and is on the clock. At that point, he/she accepts the stage as it is. Thereafter, any mechanical malfunctions of your firearm or gear, including your horse, shall not constitute a re-ride.
  - If a contestant passes behind the timer he/she is deemed to be dangerous and out of control and will receive a non-qualified run (60 seconds).
  - If a contestant re-crosses the time line after completing his/her run and restarts the timer, he/she will NOT be granted a re-ride. If the timing equipment has the ability to access the previous time, there will be no penalty. But if the time is unavailable the rider shall receive a non-qualified run (60 seconds).
  - If a competitor is notified during or after the completion of a stage that a timekeeping error or a timing malfunction occurred the competitor shall be granted a re-ride by the Range Master.
  - If a competitor crosses the timing line prior to completing the course of fire, he/she shall receive a non-qualified run.
  - The Range Master shall grant re-rides as soon as possible after the completion of that run. Re-rides are given as a new stage. The competitor does not carry forward any misses or a clean stage.
  - If a run is interrupted, the call for a re-ride is made by the Range Master.
  - The "no alibi" blank rule shall be in place for all MSA sanctioned matches. There are no squibs, high primers, or misfires accepted. There shall be no re-rides or scoring adjustments for problems with mounted shooting blanks.
  - If a competitor hits two targets with one shot, they may use the remaining round to pick up any legal target they may have missed. This is referred to as the Two Target Rule or TTR.
  - Gun twirling, shooting behind the back or other unsafe gun handling techniques in an arena shall be a 5 second penalty assessed per occurrence.



- Competitors may holster and re-holster, but may not have more than one revolver in hand at any given time. Failure to do so will be a 5 second penalty. If a firearm is holstered, then comes out of the holster and into the competitor's lap, there will be no penalty as long as the firearm does not touch the arena floor AND it was holstered before leaving the arena.
- If there is doubt on a call the outcome shall favor the competitor.
- The total final time for any ride shall equal no more than 60 seconds. The total time for any competitor that does not complete a course shall be 60 seconds for that course.
- No loaded firearms are permitted outside the staging area, period.

**The following violations will result in a non-qualified (60 second) run:**

- Discharge of a round outside the course of fire (Before or after the timeline) at any time or place prior to or after engaging the course. The penalty will be assessed for the course immediately following the incident unless the match has concluded, then it will be assessed for the previous course run.
- Engaging the course without the consent of the Range Master.
- Breaking the timer, without engaging the course, before the Range Master has given the "go signal" to the competitor shall have no penalty the first time during an event. The second time during the same event there will be a non-qualified (60 second) run.
- If a competitor loads and/or shoots 6 rounds from the same gun in a stage.

**Violation of the following will result in disqualification from the match:**

- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the range, staging and shooting areas. This includes all persons, competitors, range officials, guests or anyone else in these areas.
- Competitors must not consume any alcoholic beverage until they have completed all of their shooting for the day and have unloaded, inspected, and stored all of their firearms.
- Competitors must not ingest any substance, which may affect their ability to participate in a completely safe manner. Both prescription and nonprescription pharmaceuticals that may cause drowsiness or other physical or mental impairment are to be avoided.
- Abusive language or conduct will not be tolerated and at the discretion of the Range Master the competitor will be given a warning or disqualification.
- Competitors will have no live ammunition on their person or in their cartridge belts or saddlebags. Only dummy ammunition with inert or fired primers can be used in cartridge belts. No personal ammunition of any type is to be allowed at competitions.

**PROTESTS OF RANGE MASTERS DECISIONS**

- Prior to an event, the Event Producer shall form an Appeals Board made up of a minimum of three experienced mounted shooters.
- To file a protest, a competitor shall file the protest with a \$50 cash protest fee, directly to the event producer.

- If an appeal is granted the \$50 shall be returned to the contestant that filed the protest and the call corrected. If the appeal is rejected the \$50 shall go to the club or the event producer.
- All protests are to be filed within 30 minutes after stage results have been posted.
- All State, Regional and National matches should have Certified Range Masters.

### **TIMING:**

- Electronic beam “barrel racing” timers, such as the Pegasus Timer or FarmTek Timers, are preferred.
- The competitor and horse shall start the course of fire from behind a predetermined start/finish line.
- Once a competitor and horse have crossed and started the timer they have officially engaged the course.

### **MAIN MATCH:**

- Main Match events are generally 4 to 6 stage matches and have a minimum of 10 riders. Less than 4 stages must be pre-approved by the MSA. The number of stages must be determined prior to the start of the event.
- Main Matches can be run as Jackpot format or level format with or without a jackpot side match
- Each affiliate club should have at least one Buckle Match per year.
- Main Matches can run in conjunction with Xtreme Qualifier competitions
- Pointed Matches with payback are required to payback 50% of gross entry fees
- Entry fees for payback matches are at the discretion of the match producer
- No more than two 4 stage matches over a two-day period. This can be in conjunction with an Xtreme Qualifier event.
- Arena fees may not exceed \$25.00. We ask that you do not define fees as office fees.
- Events must be posted on the MSA Website at least 2 weeks prior to the event to count towards MSA points.

### **CLUB CUP**

2017 MSA Club Cup: The club with the most points for their hosted events in the competition season will receive a Trophy Cup, and \$1000 donation to the charity of their choice. Each club will receive one point per entry, per match for purposes of calculating results.

### **OPTIONAL EVENTS**

#### **XTREME QUALIFIER:**

- The Xtreme Qualifier is an eliminator style 3 stage Jackpot shoot.
- The rider must ride the same horse in all three stages.
- The Qualifier consists of 3 divisions: Non Pro, Semi Pro, and Pro. It is Gender Split. Platinum + will run as Semi Pro and Rookie will run as Non Pro.
- Qualification is determined by the fastest times within the D system with a maximum of 10 competitors from each D level.
- This final stage is the only score that will determine placement of winners.

- If a horse becomes lame or is otherwise pulled from the event after competing in the second stage and before the third stage of the Xtreme Qualifier, the competitor will not be able to compete on a different horse for the third stage and must scratch from the event. This is due to the fact that final placement and payouts are determined entirely on the third stage.
- MSA Points will be given to competitors based on their overall finish after the first two stages. The same point multiplier as in the main match for that event will be applied to the Qualifier points.

### **RUN FOR THE BUCKS:**

- An optional entry fee D format jackpot that pays back 80% per event.
- The D format is paid out based on the number of persons entered in the event.

### **SHARPSHOOTER:**

- An optional entry included in a main match, which pays back 100% to be divided equally between all entries that shoot clean (no misses, no penalties, no 60 second stages) during the entire Main Match.

### **RIFLE RULES:**

- A Rifle course shall consist of five initial targets being broken by pistol fire and the second five engaged by a rifle.
- Rifle used must be manufactured prior to 1900 or a reproduction. Rifles must be 45LC, 44/40, or 44 magnum calibers. NO REVOLVING RIFLES are to be used.
- Scabbards must be made of leather and attached to the saddle.
- Rifles must be in the scabbard at the beginning of the course
- The rider must cycle the lever prior to engaging the first rundown target. Failure to cycle the rifle will result in a 10 second penalty.
- The competitor must hold the stock of rifle against the shoulder or under the arm while firing. No shooting from the hip.
- All competitors are separated into 2 divisions (Limit & Open) and may be gender split, based on how the match director prefers to pay out. This will be determined before the match starts.
- Match Directors may alter rifle courses at their discretion for safety.
- If the Rifle is discharged before rounding the rundown barrel it will be a 10 second procedural plus missed targets (discharging while not engaging the targets.).
- The Rifle Class is an eliminator style Jackpot shoot at MSA Championship events and affiliate events. After the first two stages the top 10 or the top 50% in each divisional level will come back regardless of gender or open / limited divisions. The first two stages may be gender split and may pay after the first two stages. That is the match director's decision. The third stage will be based on finish level and predetermined time splits. The third stage does not carry over the times from the first two stages, it starts new. Final payouts are made based on the third stage only.
- To qualify for the World in rifle, you must attend at least four rifle matches.
- Rifle fees are \$5 per shooter, regardless of the event type (WPQ, Double WPQ, State, Regional, or Championship Series)

### **SHOTGUN RULES:**

- A Shotgun course shall consist of five initial targets being broken by pistol fire and the second five engaged by a shotgun.
- The 5 shotgun targets shall consist of two balloon clusters. The first cluster will consist of 3 balloons and the second will consist of two balloons.
- In the shotgun event you must leave all 5 rundown polls up with the clusters.
- The Shotgun Class is an eliminator style Jackpot shoot at MSA Championship events and affiliate events. After the first two stages the top 10 or the top 50% in each divisional level will come back regardless of gender or open / limited divisions. The first two stages may gender be split and may pay out after the first two stages. That is the match director's decision. The third stage will be based on finish level and predetermined time splits. MSA does not gender split final round of the shotgun showcase. The third stage does not carry over the times from the first two stages, it starts new. Clusters should be placed at either the 1&3 position or the 2&4 position of the rundown.
- Scabbards must be made of leather and attached to the saddle.
- Shotguns must be in the scabbard at the beginning of the course
- A hand must be on the forearm of the shotgun while in the act of firing the firearm. (Hand is defined as below the wrist).
- Match Directors may the shotgun stages at their discretion for safety.
- If the shotgun is discharged before rounding the rundown barrel it will be a 10 second procedural plus missed targets (discharging while not engaging the target.)
- To qualify for the World in shotgun, you must attend at least four shotgun matches.
- Shotgun fees are \$5 per shooter, regardless of the event type (WPQ, Double WPQ, State, Regional, or Championship Series)

### **STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS (4X Points)**

- Each state may have 1 state championship per year.
- The State Championship host affiliate shall be approved by MSA. The affiliate that produced the highest count of competitors in the previous calendar year shall be granted first right of refusal to host the State Championship. If the affiliate with the highest count of competitors sent to MSA does NOT wish to host the State Championship, it will be offered to the affiliate with the next highest count of competitors generated and so on. If there were no MSA competitions in a state the previous year the affiliate with the most current MSA members will be given the first chance to hold the state championship.
- To qualify as an MSA State Championship, the event must have six stages unless otherwise pre-approved or conditions deteriorate during the event, in which case the event may be ended at the completion of a stage, for safety reasons, as long as the event is at least 4 stages.
- State Championships are given 4X points
- State Championship events shall be hosted within the borders of the respective state unless it is impossible due to arena availability.
- State Championship buckles can be customized for each State Championship and can be purchased through Gist Silversmiths and may include the MSA logo.

## **REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (5X Points)**

- Each Region may have 1 Regional Championship per year.
- Regional Championship host affiliate shall be approved by The MSA. The affiliate that produced the highest count of competitors in the previous calendar year shall be granted first right of refusal to host the Regional championship. If the club with the highest count of competitors sent to MSA does NOT wish to host the Regional Championship it will be offered to the affiliated club with the next highest count of competitors generated and so on. If there were no MSA competitions in a region the previous year the affiliate with the most MSA members will be given the first chance to hold the regional championship.
- To qualify as an MSA Regional Championship, the event must have six stages.
- Regional Championships are given 5X points
- Regional Championship events shall be hosted within the borders of the respective region unless it is impossible due to arena availability.
- The Mounted Shooters of America will recognize the Top MSA Point earning Cowboy and Cowgirl in each MSA Region at the end of the competition year. Only Points earned at MSA sanctioned matches hosted by Affiliated Clubs based in the said region will accrue for the regional high point honors. You do not have to be a resident of the region to receive points towards high point awards in that region.
- Regional Championship buckles can be customized for each Regional Championship and can be purchased through Gist Silversmiths and may include the MSA logo.

## **MSA CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES (6X POINTS)**

- The Mounted Shooters of America may hold Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, Canadian and World Championship events annually as well as special events
- All MSA rules apply to Championship events.
- No time only rides will be allowed at Championship events.
- Championship Series Pistol fees are \$10 per shooter.
- Clubs are limited to put no more than 3 series events on per year. Being these are series events, Clubs must pay out to competitors at the end of each day.

## **WORLD QUALIFICATION POINTS (6X)**

To qualify for the World Championship: Any member who attends at least six qualified MSA events prior to opening of signups is qualified to attend MSA Worlds. At least one of the six matches must be a state, regional, or national competition.

## **SCORING:**

Mounted Shooting matches are scored according to elapsed time plus the total of any applicable penalties. The total sum of all of the courses determines the main match winners. See "Penalties" for more information.

## **POINTS:**

- The competition year starts the first day following the MSA World Championship.
- Each competitor receives one point for entering and one point for each competitor he or she places above in the overall standing.
- Points will be awarded for Main Match based on overall results at the end of the event.
- Rifle, shotgun, side jackpots, or showcase events do not qualify for points.
- Points are awarded as follows:
  - Regular Match – 1 point for each competitor you place above plus one for competing
  - Double Point Match – 2 X points as explained above.
  - State Championship – 4 X points as explained above
  - Regional Championship - 5 X points as explained above
  - National Championship - 6 X points as explained above
  - World Championship – 6 X points
- All Lil Bandits receive 1 point for each Match they compete in.
- Outlaw points are tracked separately
- Apprentice Division does not receive points.
- Shotgun and Rifle will receive points which will be tracked separately.
- The Mounted Shooters of America will recognize the Top MSA Point earning Cowboy and Cowgirl in each state, Region and Nationally at the end of the competition year by printing names in Western Horse & Gun magazine.
- You do not have to be a resident of the state or region to receive points towards high point awards in a state.

### **COURSE BOOK**

- The course book is available on our web site in PDF format. We have reduced the number of courses to 24 horsemanship courses and 13 fast courses based on the safety of our members and their horses. Fast courses are to be used only when necessary for time considerations and cannot exceed two stages for a match. There are also 8 rifle and shotgun courses as the three qualifier patterns. As most of our Affiliate owners are also competitors, we have decided that all courses selected at MSA certified matches must be selected at random. Each event producer shall contact Robby Moudy no later than 24 hours before a scheduled event to receive his or her courses. Robby will determine the course selections using the website random.org. and will provide the courses before the start of the event.

### **PATTERN SAFETY GUIDELINES:**

The “course of fire” or pattern of riding is commonly referred to as a “course or stage” and should be designed for maximum enjoyment of competitors and spectators, while testing horsemanship and shooting skills. The safety of competitors, spectators and horses is a principle concern. It is MSA’s intention to standardize all courses. Standardization of size will provide competitors with the opportunity to create true time records for specific venues and events.

- A standard mounted shooting course is to have 10 balloon targets. A competitor is to engage the course with two single action revolvers loaded with not more than 5 approved cartridges, per revolver. Revolvers are used one at a time. With the first revolver, a competitor must engage and shoot the balloon targets in the first half of the course.

After completing the first half of the course, the competitor shall holster the first revolver and draw the second revolver and ride to and engage and shoot the balloon targets in the second half of the course. A 5 second penalty will be assessed for any competitor that does not holster the first revolver. Pistols shall be returned to holsters.

- All competitors may ask the Range Master questions regarding the course of fire prior to crossing the starting line.
- The Range Master will have the responsibility of making final inspection of the course before the first competitor begins their stage. Once a rider engages the course they have accepted the course as it is set.
- No running starts into the arena.
- All competitors must start with the gate closed or use of a baffled alley/gate.
- Barrels should not be closer than 25 feet to the side rails of the arena and 25 feet to the end rail and Targets should be at least 30 feet from the side rails of the arena unless competitors, spectators and any people or animals are blocked from that side of the arena.
- After completing the course all contestants report to the armorer's table to unload. Guns may not be left on the armorer's table at any time.
- Courses should be drawn from the MSA course book, eliminating any that cannot be run safely in the event arena.
- All competitors are responsible for their own personal safety and that of their horse. They should also remain alert for other unsafe conditions and/or unsafe conduct by others. All competitors are considered safety officers and should take immediate action to remedy an unsafe condition by reporting anyone whose conduct is unsafe to the Match Director and/or Range Master.

### **SAFETY RULES AND GUIDELINES:**

- All Firearms will be treated as if they are loaded.
- All loading and unloading of firearms should be done in the loading area.
- All firearms shall remain unloaded until the competitor is called to the loading area.
- All competitors shall use the "match supplied" blank ammunition. More than one ammo product may be supplied to allow the competitors a choice. No personal ammunition of any type is to be allowed at MSA competitions under penalty of disqualification. No blank shall have an effective range longer than 20 feet for contestant and spectator safety
- No firearm shall be cocked until immediately prior to engaging a target.
- No firearms shall be left unattended at any time during a match. This does not refer to safely storing firearms in a personal RV, Trailer, or other vehicle owned by the competitor. Unattended firearms will result in a 60 second penalty.
- Competitors must go in the in gate and out the out gate if two gates are available. If there is only one gate, horses must not approach the gate to go in and out of the arena at the same time.
- Competitors are expected to compete safely within their individual capabilities at all times. Control your firearm's muzzle direction at all times.
- If you are warned by the Range Master to slow down, and you do not, you will receive a 60 second penalty. This is for your safety.
- Competitors will NOT ride into the course while balloon setters are inside. Competitors will not enter the arena during stage changes. When the announcement is made to clear the arena all competitors will precede immediately to the closest out gate.

- Public spectators shall not be allowed in horse staging areas.
- All competitors shall be knowledgeable and proficient in the safe use of firearms.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the arena, staging and shooting areas. This includes all persons, competitors, match directors, anyone else in these areas.
- Competitors shall not consume any alcoholic beverage until they have completed all of their shooting for the day and have unloaded, inspected, and stored all of their firearms. Violators will be disqualified immediately from the match and entry fees will be forfeited. Repeat offenders will be banned from MSA competitions. This rule applies to any medication or substance that may alter a contestants' level of consciousness.
- Competitors shall have no live ammunition on their person or in their cartridge belts or saddlebags.
- All firearms are subject to inspection by the Range Master, staff, or event producer.
- Competitors have final responsibility to make sure their firearms are loaded, check for missing or dented primers, cylinders rotate freely and to be certain they are properly indexed prior to stage engagement. The armorer is not responsible. There will be no re-rides for ammo or firearm related problems.
- Abusive language or conduct shall not be tolerated and at discretion of Match Director, shall be given a warning or disqualification.
- No abusive behavior to any animals either in or out of the arena. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action or disqualification.
- Failure to abide by safety rules may result in a 60 second penalty or a DQ.

#### **WESTERN SHOOTING HORSE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

- A western shooting horse registration form for each horse being registered must be filled out and submitted along with a copy of the horses' registration papers if applicable. The \$25 fee can be paid online and the paperwork will be mailed to you.
- Registered Horses' points will be tracked on MSA website.
- Lil bandits and Outlaws points are not eligible for the shooting horse certification program.
- Points may NOT be added retroactively.
- Points follow a horse year to year. And ongoing.
- If a horse transfers to another rider, the MSA shooting horse certification points can follow the horse. Contact the MSA office to transfer the owner name of the horse in the MSA records.
- Certification is based on Points accumulated through the MSA and may be published in Western Horse & Gun Magazine.
- Points are awarded to owner/horse teams only.

#### **OFFICIAL AFFILIATE FLYERS**

- As there has been some confusion with published information regarding local matches, the MSA has created a standard form to be filled out by affiliates for all certified matches. These forms will be provided as part of the process of applying for certification through the MSA office. These flyers will be posted by the MSA office on our Facebook page to promote events and will include a link to affiliate sites.

#### **LEVELS OF CERTIFICATION:**



- **Registered Western Shooting Horse:**
  - Certificate
  - Competed in 3 matches in their entirety regardless of overall results
  
- **Experienced Western Shooting Horse:**
  - Gold Seal Certificate
  - A Registered Western Shooting Horse which has 500+ points
  
- **Master Western Shooting Horse:**
  - Plaque
  - An Experienced Western Shooting Horse which has 2,500 points
  
- **Supreme Master Western Shooting Horse:**
  - Elite Plaque and Listing in the Western Shooting
  - A western shooting horse that has earned 500 points.
  
- **Horse Hall of Fame**
  - A Master Western Shooting Horse which has 2000+ points

When your horse qualifies for a certificate, upload a photo if desired on MSA shopping cart & pay \$5 fee.

**All members and affiliates are bound by the rules and guidelines specified by MSA**

\*\*The MSA reserves the right to add to, delete from or otherwise change the above rules and guidelines as necessary during the competition year if deemed necessary for safety or fair competition.

\*\*Mounted Shooters of America has the authority to direct disciplinary action or sanctions against an individual member or MSA Club including revocation of affiliation charter or individual membership. There are no refunds.

\*\*Club owner recognizes that as an MSA affiliate, they benefit from the programs, software, awards, promotions, marketing, branding and special events provided by the MSA and that the MSA has the right to protect its significant investment and efforts from unfair business practices, which intend to take advantage of and cause damage to the MSA.

Therefore:

Club Owner may not cancel, reschedule or change the venue of any MSA sanctioned event (hereinafter referred to as an **"Event Change"**) without the prior written approval of MSA. In the event Club Owner causes an unapproved Event Change, MSA may charge Club Owner a fee in the amount of \$ 1,000 (the **"Change Fee"**). MSA understands that last minute cancelations due to lack of attendance may occur. So long as the event is not provided to a competitive association or held without MSA sanctioning, such cancelations will be approved, if a phone call is made to any MSA official, including Ann Pihl, Rick Pihl, Robby Moudy or Frank Turben, at least one hour prior to the scheduled event or any time deemed reasonable by the MSA official. This fee is not intended for club owners acting in cooperation with the MSA. Club Owner agrees and acknowledges that it is impossible to precisely estimate the specific damages that would be suffered by MSA in the event of an Event Change in the event of an unauthorized Event Change and MSA and Club Owner expressly acknowledge and intend that the Change Fee is an agreed and negotiated provision for liquidated damages and not a penalty. Club Owner and MSA agree that the imposition of the Change Fee shall be MSA's sole and exclusive remedy in the event Club Owner affects an unauthorized Event Change.

Club Owner shall receive proprietary information and/or resources from MSA (collectively, the "**Proprietary Information**"), including, without limitation (i) names and contact information of MSA members and prospective members (collectively, the "**Members**"; the names and contact information hereinafter referred to as the "**Member List**"); (ii) marketing strategies; (iii) software applications ("**Software**"). Club Owner agrees that any of the Proprietary Information may be used solely for the operation of the Club and promotion of the MSA and shall at all times remain the sole and exclusive property of MSA, with Club Owner having a revocable non-exclusive license to utilize the Proprietary Information solely for the purposes expressly identified herein. By way of example and not limitation, Club Owner may not use any Proprietary Information to promote another organization that competes with the MSA, or solicit any Members to join a competing organization or form a new competing organization. Further, Club Owner shall not solicit any employees, agents or contractors of MSA for such purposes. Upon termination of its Club, Club Owner shall return any Proprietary Information in its possession to MSA within forty-eight (48) hours of its termination. In the event Club Owner breaches its obligations under this paragraph, MSA may, in addition to seeking appropriate equitable remedies including injunctive relief, charge Club Owner a fee in the amount of \$ 20,000 (the "**Default Fee**"). Club Owner agrees and acknowledges that it is impossible to precisely estimate the specific damages that would be suffered by MSA in the event of a default under this paragraph and MSA and Club Owner expressly acknowledge and intend that the Default Fee is an agreed and negotiated provision for liquidated damages and not a penalty.

In the event of a termination of a Club Owner's rights to operate a Club, Club Owner shall not for a period of 12 months engage in any activity, actively or passively, related to the promotion of, or operation of a business related to, the sport of mounted shooting.

MSA contestants whose checks are returned for insufficient funds are subject to fees. Members will then be required to pay by money order or credit card in the future for all other events attended. The same accounts for MSA club member events. However, if payment is paid immediately to MSA, and received in a timely manner, MSA memberships will not be placed on hold.

\*\*Mounted Shooters of America may charge any affiliate or member that solicits MSA affiliates or members to leave the MSA and join a competing association a fee of \$10,000

\*\*All Trademarks, Trade names, branding, software, publications, or any intellectual and real property of any kind belonging to the MSA is the sole property of the MSA and may not be used without permission. The MSA will use all legal remedies to recover any damages inflicted by use of its property without permission.

\*\* Conduct Policy: The MSA will not tolerate any disparaging or abusive remarks towards mounted shooters belonging to any association. If the MSA becomes aware of any such activity from a member or members, those memberships may be revoked. MSA officials reserve the right to respond to such activity directed at them or the MSA and to correct any false statements, which may be intended to harm the image of or discourage involvement with the MSA. The MSA will pursue all legal remedies in cases of defamation, tortious interference, or any case of unlawful business practice.