

Match Director's Guide

Introduction

The Match Director is the single representative of a hosting club or association, responsible for all facets of an MSA match. There is a tremendous amount of work that goes into an MSA match. His/her job starts well before the match begins. This guide can be used as a checklist for Match Directors. Most clubs schedule a number of matches during a calendar year. For the purpose of ease, we will follow one match from beginning to end in this guide. MSA Clubs may have one Match Director or may assign a different individual for each match.

Things you need to know:

When your Affiliation is approved, you will receive a CD with everything you need to produce a mounted shooting event.

MSA Clubs are covered by MSA's \$1,000,000 general liability insurance policy for \$250.00 per year.

MSA clubs agree to follow MSA rules.

MSA clubs must provide a schedule of match dates to MSA which will be published on the MSA website.

Scheduling

It is important to get the match schedule out as early as possible. This allows participants plenty of time to schedule your match on their calendar. It is also helpful to work with clubs in your region or area to avoid doubling up on dates and make your shoots complementary to each other. **You must use the MSA Standardized Flyer and Entry Form.**

Arena

Covered arena's take Mother Nature out of the picture and ensures your contestants they will be shooting in good conditions. If you use a covered arena advertise as such.

Preferred size: 100 feet wide by 300 feet long. Courses can be modified to accommodate a smaller arena if necessary.

Footing should be that of team penning or barrel racing. (no rocks) Should have equipment to work the arena, such as tractor, etc.

Stalls or pens to accommodate your contestant's animals. Contestants tend to be very concerned about the comfort of their animals when expecting them to be so highly competitive.

If outdoors and it is dry, make arrangements for watering the arena.

Have a concession stand available.

Make sure you have adequate bathrooms.

It is always nice to have showers if you are having a two or three-day match.

Match

Timing system: Two; with one serving as a backup system.

Scoring system: One computer and one dry copy by hand.

Match Directors.

Announcer who knows our sport.

Gate personnel to keep the flow going. No one likes dead time.

To keep the match running smoothly you should average 60 sec. between shooters. Make sure your announcer and gate personnel are aware of this goal. Have someone check to keep you on schedule.

Ammo should be of the highest quality you can get. You must use ammo from one of the MSA certified ammo producers.

The unloading area should be situated so it doesn't block the exit area of the arena.

Have plenty of balloon setters and inflators.

Set stages up to eliminate procedurals. You should use experienced people. By following the above guidelines, you should be ensured of a great MSA Match.

Sponsors

Once you have a date for your match submitted to MSA it is time to approach businesses or other organizations for award monies and prizes. You need a lot of time to develop this which is why scheduling early is so important. Get into the area where the match is being held. Surrounding tack shops, feed mills and equine supply stores are a good place to start. Do not limit yourself strictly to horse related businesses however. They are plenty of opportunities to gain sponsorship in an area. Use your imagination. This is a sport that sells itself; explain what you are doing and how many people are attending.

The Host Arena

You should physically check out the host arena 45 days before your match. Confirm the cost of arena rent for your event (check your contract if you have one), but make sure to make contact with the owner/manager. Check to see if there are adequate restroom facilities; are there functional restrooms and are they located conveniently for campers and riders or do you need to supplement with portable toilets? Is there a food stand? Is there a cost for camping? Are electric hookups available? Cost? How about horse stalls? Electric hookups for trailers? Barrels for the stages? And MOST important; check out the arena. Is it big enough? Is there an area for the target setters to work safely? What about a staging area; entrance and exit gates? Announcer stand? Bleachers? Is the ground acceptable for the kind of running we do? Does the host arena have the means to drag the arena? Cowboy mounted shooting has developed into a very competitive sport with contestants pushing themselves and their horses. Safety is always the first concern, so good ground is paramount to a good shoot. Most of this has already been done before scheduling, however conditions can change and it is important to follow up 45 days prior to the match.

Balloon Setters

Most clubs use balloon setters as a way to keep the match moving. In the case of large shoots, balloon setters are mandatory in order to get the stages done in a timely fashion. It is easiest to find balloon setters in the area of the shoot. Local 4-H clubs, youth riding clubs, church groups, and youth baseball or football teams or other school clubs (check with the local schools) work great. These groups use balloon setting as a fund-raiser to provide equipment for their organization. (You should make it known immediately that there is no live ammo used at these shoots and that there is no projectile. Some clubs do not like children around guns, which is something we work to dispel.) If the host arena does not offer a food stand this may be another opportunity for the club to raise funds by running the food stand as well. It is important that the youth group realizes that setting targets for a MSA match can be a very athletic job and it is necessary to have a good number of setters properly dressed (running shoes for sand, no sandals). A typical time from beginning to the next participant is about 75 seconds, which means every 75 seconds they are responsible for removing deflated targets, placing new targets, and blowing up 10 targets. That's a lot of running, so don't sugarcoat it. These kids will be earning their money. It is helpful if you plan to supply a tent for shade, cold drinks and plan on buying a minimum of 1 lunch for each target setter. Often it works well to have more than one spot for the balloon setters to work or enter from. This may shorten the distance they have to run to reset the targets thereby saving time between shooters.

Announcers, Timekeepers/computer person and Armorers

Many clubs use volunteers for these jobs but it is good to confirm who will be doing what long before the match starts. It is important that you keep electronic (on the computer) and hard copy (handwritten) scores to ensure accuracy. MSA provides software for timekeeping. You will also need to coordinate speaker systems, tables for the armorers, computers, and timers. Also, who is bringing the cones, barrels, target inflators, and any other equipment you deem necessary to run a match.

Ammo and Targets

Most ammo suppliers need a minimum of 30 days to complete an order, so be thinking ahead. Estimate how many shooters you think will be attending, multiply that by the number of stages you will be hosting. Then add ten percent. That's the amount of ammo you will need for this match. You will need the same amount of targets.

Promotion

It is important to get all the details of the shoot out to the potential participants as early as possible. This is done on the MSA website as soon as you submit the schedule. It is also helpful to send out e-mails or hard copy letters reminding shooters of the up-coming match. For bigger matches radio and television media coverage may be used. Flyers posted at neighborhood feed stores and tack shops. The more people exposed to cowboy mounted shooting the more successful your match will be.

Awards

Decide what you need for awards, making sure you cover every level that will be participating. The awards should be confirmed before the shoot so they can be announced. This should be part of any flyer sent out to encourage participants. Participants like to know what prize structure will be.

Budget

Once you have all the components of the shoot in place it is time to develop a budget for the shoot. You will need this to generate a registration form. It is important to include all your costs for this shoot in the budget. Everyone tries to keep the costs down, however you cannot operate a club and lose money on your shoot. The way to develop this budget is estimate how many shooters will be participating and break down your costs per shooter. Then you will know what you need to charge as an entry fee.

Registration/Registration Form

You must arrange to have individuals take registration forms. Some of this may be done in advance via mail-in registrations. On the evening before and the day of the event you must assign someone to be responsible for the registration. This will require an organized individual(s) used to handling money. Some cash should be kept on hand to make change. Each contestants MSA membership card **MUST** be checked to confirm their Division and MSA number as they register. This information should be turned over to the timekeeper/computer person to enter into the MSA electronic form.

The entry form needs some basic information from the riders. MSA number and Division the participant is riding at are mandatory. Bio information for the announcer is helpful. And a liability release form that the rider must sign before competing.

Your registration, timing and scoring people must read & understand the following rules.

REGISTRATION

To be included on the MSA Score sheet, a contestant shall be one of the following:

- A current MSA Member (Adult or Outlaw)
- A Temporary Member (Adult or Outlaw), who is issued a letter designation such as T1, T2, T3 An individual will only be considered a contestant in a match if he or she pays an entry fee and engages at least one stage of the match.

You must use the MSA Official Score sheet included on your Club CD for any MSA sanctioned event. No other score sheet will be accepted. No handwritten sheets will be accepted.

All cells in the MSA Number column & the Division column MUST be filled in with the correct information.

Time Only's are not allowed on MSA Score sheets.

MSA cards shall be checked at registration to insure correct MSA numbers, Division specification and that their Card is current for this year. **Each competitor shall compete at the Division listed on his or her Membership Card**

Results will be double checked (certified) by the MSA office.

NEW CONTESTANTS JOINING AT A MSA MATCH (ADULT AND OUTLAW)

Issue a Temporary number (T1, T2, T3) to each new competitor, Have them fill out a MSA Member application. Send his or her Member fees with your results.

POINTS

AN MSA Member shall receive one point for each contestant he or she places above in the overall standing plus one point for themselves. This will be calculated by the scoresheet software

If a person joins at a particular match, their points will count at that match and thereafter.

Points shall not be awarded retroactively.

Points will not be awarded until all event fees are paid to the MSA office.

Event fees must be submitted to the MSA office as follows:

- Point fees are charged per rider based on the type of event as follows:
 - Regular Match - \$5.00 per competitor per entry
 - Double Point, Championship Series and State Championship events - \$10.00 per competitor per entry
 - Regional events - \$15.00 per competitor per entry
 - Lil Bandits and Outlaws do not have point fees
 - Point fees apply to all Main Match, Xtreme Qualifier, Rifle and Shotgun events.

Points cannot be uploaded into the database until all new memberships and point fees have been received at the MSA office. To save time, you may go online to submit point fees and register new members.

HOW TO HANDLE RESULTS OF AN MSA MATCH

E-mail the entire score sheet to info@newmsa.com. Please include your Club name and event date. E-mail match results to the MSA office within 48 hours of completion of the event.

Match Day

Although you are the Match Director, you do not need to do everything. DELEGATE responsibilities to other club directors and members. Most people want to help to feel part of the club and if everyone does something no one will be overworked. It will be a very long weekend if you don't. At the end of this guide there will be a match day checklist.

Before the first shot

Choose your Range Masters. These should be individuals who are **certified** and experienced in performing these duties.

(Review the Match Directors Handbook). Make sure your support staff is ready: announcer, target setters, timekeeper, and armorers.

Protests of Range Masters Decisions

Prior to an event, the Match Director should form an Appeals Board made up of a minimum of three experienced cardholders.

To file a protest, a contestant shall file the protest with a \$50 cash protest fee.

If an appeal is granted the \$50 shall be returned to the contestant that filed the protest. If the appeal is rejected the \$50 shall go to the club or the event producer. All protests are to be filed on the same day the call took place.

If someone requests that you convene the Appeals Board, find a private area away from contestants. You need to collect the \$50 in cash. Then you chair the board although the Match Director has no voice on the outcome and should remain completely neutral. If the appeal is in favor of the contestant you should return the \$50.00 they put up to convene the appeals board.

Safety Meeting

Safety meeting – assign someone to do the safety meeting. Make sure that all elements of safety are covered; loading, unloading, gun handling, what to do with unfired rounds, where to enter and exit, etc. You should especially pay attention to those items that are specific to your shoot. All of the other safety issues should be covered also.

This safety meeting sets the tone for the match and you can address any special circumstances you will encounter over the course of the match; an example would be your target setters are on the east side of the arena and your Range Masters will be directing gunfire away from them. Also, if you are going to be dragging the ground or racking it should be announced here at what intervals that will take place as to provide consistency and fairness.

Once the safety meeting is complete the arena can be turned over to the Range Master. If possible it is suggested that you, as Match Director, do not act as a Range Master. As Match Director you will need to be able to troubleshoot any problems that may arise.

End of Match

After completion of the match announce when the results will be posted and awards presented. The scores will need to be in the prescribed format for MSA. These scores need to be sent within 48 hours of the completion of the match.

Summary

In order to host a successful MSA match, you, as Match Director you need to do your homework. There will always be minor problems that arise during the course of the match. If the preparation for the match is done, these problems are easy to fix. Remember to delegate responsibilities; you cannot do every aspect of the match. Your job is to make sure every aspect gets done in a professional manner. You are representing both your club or association and MSA. There are checklists at the end of this guide, use them.

45-Day Checklist

- Check the Hosting arena
- Date confirmed
- Good ground
- Bathrooms
- Camping amenities
- Host hotels & motels
- Balloon Setters – confirm date and time with crew; ensure tent and cold drinks will be available
- Announcers/timekeepers/computer entry – confirm announcer and support staff; make sure computer equipment and software is available and who will set that up. Make sure there is a PA system available. Confirm support staff
- Armorer – confirm dates and availability
- Equipment - make sure that the equipment will be brought to the shoot; target inflators, poles, cones, timers
- Ammo and Targets – confirm who has these and who is bringing them to the shoot.
- Registration Form and Promotion – make sure someone is circulating the correct form with prices, dates, times etc.
- Awards – make sure there is someone handling the awards. This includes ordering buckles, obtaining other prizes, figuring out cash payouts. Etc.
- Budget – ensure that the budget is being adhered to so that there are no surprises.

Match Day Checklist

- Support Staff in place
- Someone to setup computer equipment
- PA system
- Timer
- Cones and poles – courses of fire for each stage Target inflators, pegs etc.
- Tent for balloon setters; refreshments for balloon setters.
- Tent for Armorer
- Someone taking registration
- Grounds men
- Balloon Setters – instructed as to what to do and when to do it. Make sure they know to wait for the Match Director's signal (or the horse to be exiting)
- Ammo and Targets – ensure that they are at the shoot; have someone get the balloons to the balloon setters; ammo should go on the Armorer's table. A tent should be put up over the Armorer's table.
- Draw Patterns – You must send an email request to robbymoudy.msa@gmail.com for your stages 24 hours before your event. This rule will be strictly enforced.
The pattern should not be set up until just prior to the first shot. No individual will be allowed in the arena during or after stages are set. Shooters should be in staging area getting ready to compete.