



US MOUNTED SHOOTING

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Online Rulebook and Pattern book supersede printed copies.

2026 Rulebook

A. PURPOSE:

Our ultimate mission at USMS is to provide a safe, fun, and competitive environment for the sport of mounted shooting. Mounted shooting is a timed equestrian sport, where mounted shooters compete using two single action revolvers, navigating through various courses while engaging 10 inflated balloon targets.

B. MEMBERSHIPS:

1. Each individual MUST hold a current USMS membership to ride at any USMS sanctioned event. Memberships MUST be current to receive any earned year- end awards as well.

C. CONTESTANTS:

1. Male or female competitors 12 and older will compete with blanks in the main match.
2. Male or female competitors 10 and 11 are considered Senior Buckaroos. Male or female competitors under 10 are considered Junior buckaroos. Senior Buckaroos and Junior Buckaroos will have their own class to be run before during or after each main match. Senior Buckaroo competitors shall carry toy guns or unloaded revolvers and shall point at each target or penalties will be applied. USMS recommends Buckaroos to wear a helmet but is not required. Buckaroos may be led through the patterns. (Buckaroo age is determined by their age on **January 1st for the 2026 season**) A buckaroos competitor's parent may submit in writing a request to move to the open main match class early. They may not move back to the buckaroo class once they move up to main match.
3. **Rookie of the Year:** Competitors Shall not have competed in a mounted shooting association event prior to their rookie season. Mounted shooting association is defined as (USMS or CMSA). Rookie year is based on the USMS season January 1st- December 31st. Points will be tracked by horse and rider team. Riders graduating/moving up from the Buckaroo program are also eligible their first-year shooting in the adult class. For eligibility you Must NOT have competed in a

USMS or CMSA event prior to January 1st 2026 to be eligible for Rookie in the 2026 season. Shooters may do time only runs at events and still hold rookie status.

D. SAFETY RULES AND GUIDELINES:

1. All contestants shall act in a professional manner. Any physical altercations, abuse or unnecessary abuse to any animals or other competitors, will result in disqualification and forfeit of all entry fees.
2. All firearms shall be treated as if they are loaded.
3. No alcohol or drugs are to be consumed by the contestants before or during any event. Any competitor found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, will result in disqualification and forfeit of all entry fees.
4. Contestants must enter and exit the arena at a slow and in control manner.
5. Contestants are expected to compete within their capabilities and control their firearms muzzle at all times.
6. Contestants are only allowed 5 rounds in each revolver.
7. Contestants shall only use match provided blanks that is certified by USMS.
8. No contestants are allowed in the announcer booth after the match is started. Only exception is appeal panel and workers.
9. All contestants assume responsibility for participation in these events.
10. Contestants are responsible for their dogs. Dogs must be on a leash at all times. No contestant shall bring an aggressive dog. Contestant will be disqualified and shall leave the property if their dog is involved in any incident to include but not limited to fighting, biting, or destroying property. Owner of dog will be held liable for any damage and will forfeit all fees.
11. All guns shall be kept unloaded until entering the designated loaded area. Any competitor found with shells in their gun outside the designated loaded area, will be disqualified from the event and forfeit all fees.
12. If an accidental discharge happens by a person other than the rider, the penalty will still apply to the person responsible for the gun.

E. BUCKAROOS:

1. A safety meeting with ALL Buckaroo competitors & Range Master shall be held prior to start of the first Buckaroo course.
2. A horse that is not competing in the Buckaroo class may be used at the discretion of the Range Master to show the Buckaroos how to engage the course.
3. Additional spotters may be in the arena but the Range Master is the only one who can assess penalties.
4. The Range Master may place additional marker cones in the arena to direct the Buckaroos in a certain direction and path for the particular course. If additional markers are used, they should be 16-18' away from the original target pole.
5. Buckaroos shall not be allowed to ride in tandem with anyone in competition during a USMS sanctioned event. Buckaroos must be able to ride the horse on their own, or with lead line assistance. Buckaroos being ponied by another horse or lead line is allowed, but will receive a 60

second penalty for the run. Parents may stand inside arena for coaching with no penalty as long as timer not tripped.

6. Lead line Buckaroos shall not be allowed at USMS corporate events unless approved in advance by the match director.

Junior Buckaroos shall engage the course as prescribed in the rule book. They may wear guns/holsters or address the targets. Junior Buckaroos will **not** be penalized for not engaging targets.

Senior Buckaroos shall engage the course as prescribed in the rule book. All Senior Buckaroos shall wear holsters and use either non-firing replica or unloaded competition firearms. All Senior Buckaroos shall ride to, aim at all targets, and change guns.

- a) Missed or hit targets. This is a non-appealable call. No appeal will be heard and no score adjusted.

BUCKAROO SHOOTING

1. Senior Buckaroos shall shoot from a standing, stationary position.
2. The Range Master or parent will stand near the Senior Buckaroos when each shot is fired to ensure the safety of both the Buckaroos as well as those watching in the immediate area.
3. All Senior Buckaroos shall wear hearing and eye protection when ground shooting. Any Buckaroo that arrives without hearing and eye protection shall receive 60 seconds in penalties.
4. Senior Buckaroos will be given a 5 second penalty for all missed targets.
5. Buckaroos may cycle back through revolver if they slip hammer.
6. A minimum of a 5 target "stage" will be used for ground shooting at each event.
7. The Range Master shall be responsible to oversee the Buckaroo for loading the firearm, and ensuring the Buckaroo safely unloads the firearm at the end of the stage. If the Buckaroo does not want to load and unload the firearm a parent, guardian, or Range Master may assist.
8. In the event the parent and/or guardian or Buckaroo has an accidental discharge while loading the Buckaroos firearm or while handling the firearm prior to shooting, that Buckaroo shall receive 60 seconds in penalties.
9. Senior Buckaroos shall never carry a loaded firearm out of the designated shooting area. If a Buckaroo carries a loaded firearm out of the designated shooting area, they shall receive 60 seconds in penalties.
10. Buckaroos may do time only runs with blanks, but shall not shoot blanks while competing in Buckaroo class.
11. Junior Buckaroos are not required to ground shoot at any USMS sanctioned event. If they choose to shoot, penalties will be assessed for missed targets.

F. PENALTIES:

Qualified Run defined: A competitor who maneuvers the course and shoots all targets in under 60 seconds with no penalties or procedurals.

1. Missed target - 5 seconds
 - a. If a competitor hits two targets with one shot, the other target does not have to be engaged. The extra round may be used to engage another target; however, targets must be engaged in proper order. If a target is broken by nature, it shall be engaged as normal and will be

considered a hit. If a competitor knocks over a target and as a result the balloon pops, it shall be considered a miss.

- b. 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.
2. Overturned gate pole or automated target inflator – 5 seconds
3. Overturned barrel - 5 seconds
4. Dropped gun during the course - 5 seconds per gun
5. Entering arena without a cowboy hat/helmet when required - 5 seconds
 - a. No penalty if hat comes off before or after the timer.
 - b. If hat comes off rider and breaks the timer while engaging the course – 60 seconds
 - c. Any rider that intentionally knocks their hat off before the timer – 60 seconds
6. Discharge firearm before timer – 5 seconds
7. Two guns unholstered at one time – 5 seconds
 - a. Competitor may holster and re-holster during the course but shall only have one pistol out at a time.
8. Procedural - 10 seconds (Only one procedural per stage)
 1. Failure to round the random barrel or the rundown barrel
 2. Failure to go through the gate
 3. Failure to follow the prescribed pattern
 4. Failure to engage targets in the proper order
 5. Failure to engage all the correct targets or gates before rounding the random barrel
9. Breaking time line without completing the course - 60 seconds
10. Any dismount while engaging the course - 60 seconds
11. More than 5 rounds per gun - 60 seconds
12. Failure to follow dress code - 60 seconds
13. Any run over 60 seconds shall be considered an unqualified run
14. Showboating, gun twirling, acting unsafe – 60 seconds
15. Shotgun contestants must either have the external hammers halfcocked or the safety on prior to entering the course - 60 seconds
16. Shotgun/Rifle – Competitors shall shoot across their body or maintain two points of contact while engaging targets. **One-handed strongarm shots are not allowed** – 10 seconds
17. Safety Rule Violations – Disqualification
18. Accidental discharge outside the arena – 60 seconds on the current stage
19. A competitor is considered to have engaged the course once they have crossed the start/finish line and their time has begun. At that point, **the competitor** accepts the stage as presented.
20. It is the **competitor's** responsibility to perform a final course check. Once the course has been engaged, it is considered accepted as presented. If balloons are improperly set, the course must be ridden by position rather than balloon color.
21. Any mechanical malfunctions of the competitor's firearm, gear, or horse shall not constitute grounds for a re-ride.
22. Passing Behind the Timer: If a contestant passes behind the timer, they shall be deemed dangerous and out of control and will receive a non-qualified run (60 seconds).
23. If a run is interrupted, the decision to grant a re-ride shall be made by the Range Master.
24. If there is any uncertainty in a call, the decision should be made in favor of the competitor.

G. FIREARMS:

1. Pistol:
 - a. Single action long Colt .45 caliber revolver pistols only.
 - b. Fixed blade sites only, no adjustable sites.
2. Shotgun:
 - a. Any legal gauge double barrel, single action, break over shotgun.
 - b. Barrel length shall be at least 16 inches and overall length at least 30 inches.
 - c. Shotgun scabbard shall be made out of leather and shall be attached to the saddle.
 - d. Shotgun shall be holstered in the scabbard at the beginning of each stage and shall only have one pistol.
 - e. Shotgun shall have the safety on until you are navigating the course.
3. Rifle:
 - a. Shall be manufactured prior to 1900 or a reproduction thereof and shall be .45 Colt, .44-40, or .44 Magnum calibers.
 - b. Shall be lever action. NO revolving or pump rifles.
 - c. Barrel length shall be 16 inches and overall rifle length shall be 30 inches.
 - d. Rifle shall be holstered in the scabbard at the beginning of each stage and shall only have one pistol.

H. LOADING AND UNLOADING AREA:

1. Loading of firearms will only be allowed in one designated area. The maximum number of competitors will be determined by the Match Director and should be adjusted depending on the size of the area. This will be determined before the match starts Once revolvers are loaded you are not allowed to leave this area before your run.
2. Unloading of firearms after each run is mandatory. There will be a bucket to put spent casing upon exiting the arena. All guns must be unloaded before leaving area. © 2022
3. If you are not in the loading area you may wear your guns but they must be empty. Any guns found with shells in any area other than the designated loading area will be disqualified and forfeit of all entry fees and earnings.
4. USMS official may inspect your guns at any time during the event. Refusal will result in disqualification and forfeit of entry fees.

I. DRESS CODE:

1. Male Competitors: Shall wear traditional, classic, or modern western attire:
 - a. Long sleeve, button down, collared shirt, buttoned at the wrist
 - b. Western style jeans
 - c. Western style hat or helmet,
 - d. Western style cowboy boots.
2. Women Competitors: May wear Western Attire or a classic 19th-century period skirt or dress
 - a. Long sleeve, collared shirt, buttoned at the wrist
 - b. Western Style Jeans
 - c. Western Style Hat or helmet
 - d. Western Style Cowboy boots
 - e. Short sleeves are allowed that extend beyond the point of shoulder.

- f. Hats are not required if wearing a full skirt or dress. Must wear leggings or traditional Victorian bloomers underneath skirts.
 - g. Split skirts with leg holes are considered trousers, long sleeves and western style hat is required.
 - h. Victorian-style lace-up shoes or western style cowboy boots.
3. Buckaroo boy competitors shall follow the requirements for Male competitors.
 4. Buckaroo girl competitors shall follow the requirements for Women competitors.
 5. Chaps and chinks are optional.
 6. USMS recommends every competitor to wear a helmet but is not required. Competitors may substitute and use a helmet when a western style hat is required.
 7. Ball caps, t-shirts, and sneakers are not allowed for competition.
 8. Clubs may offer a themed shoot and offer altered dress code to adhere to theme of shoot. For example: Christmas sweaters, costumes, Hawaiian etc. Riders that do not wish to participate in the theme will default to USMS full dress code. Clubs MUST advertise the altered dress code from the start of advertising the event. Events that are live streamed, corporate hosted, in front of spectators and fair shoots etc., will always follow Full dress code.

J. POINTS:

Points will be tracked by horse and rider team (excluding Buckaroos).

1. Pistol Points

Points will be accrued per stage at each event. The points earned will correspond to the D in which they place. Contestants will earn an additional point for every contestant they place higher than. If a penalty is assessed, contestant will earn zero point for that stage.

2. Shotgun/Rifle Points

Points will be accrued per stage at each event. The points earned will correspond to the D in which they place. Contestants will earn an additional point for every contestant they place higher than. If a penalty is assessed, contestant will earn zero point for that stage.

3. Buckaroo Points

Points will be accrued per stage at each event. Contestants will earn an additional point for every contestant they place higher than. Points will be tracked by the rider only.

4. Year-end awards

Shooting season will be a full calendar year. The 2026 shooting season will be January 1st - December 31st, 2026. Year-end awards will then be calculated, all prizes will be mailed to contestants. Contestant MUST have a current membership to receive awards. Contestants will have till January 5th to notify USMS of any discrepancy in the points. After January 5th the awards will be final and mailed out to competitor. We ask that competitors that win year-end awards send in photos of you and your horse with your awards so USMS can post on

website/social media for the sponsors. More info about year-end awards can be found online under points tab.

5. Futurity

The Futurity is a program for 4- & 5-year-old horses that have not competed in mounted shooting before January 1st of current season. See full details about the Futurity program online under Futurity tab.

K. ENTRIES:

1. USMS reserves the right to refuse entry to any person.
2. All entry and grounds fees shall be paid before books close. See event page for date/ time of books closing as it may vary per event. Online registration does not guarantee entry, unless you have paid in full. If entry isn't paid, contestant will be removed from the draw.
3. Points shall be tracked by horse and rider team. It is the responsibility of the contestant to notify the Match Director if a contestant decides to ride a different horse other than the one entered.
4. Contestants may enter multiple horses. Each entry stands alone. Points and earnings will not be added together from multiple horses to determine prizes. When entering multiple horses, contestant shall draw to determine which horse goes first in the go order. When entering multiple horses, each horse and rider combination stands alone. All fees apply per entry. Buckaroos can only enter one horse.
5. Contestants must complete all stages penalty free under 60 seconds per stage to be eligible for clean shooter payout.
6. Competitor shall be penalty free to be eligible for stage payout.
7. All corporate hosted pistol USMS events shall be done using the clean shooter 4D format. At the conclusion of each stage, the number of clean shooters is divided by 4 (rounded down), therein establishing the 4Ds.
8. Clubs have the option to payout on any pay structure they choose, but points will always be awarded on the 4D clean shooter format.
9. All corporate hosted rifle and shotgun USMS events shall be done using a 2D format. At the conclusion of each stage, the number of clean shooters is divided by 2 (rounded down), therein establishing the 2Ds.
10. USMS will place any shooter that is working the event in the go order. Check the go order once posted and know where you need to be and be ready when you are called. You will be called three times then you are considered a no show and will receive 60 seconds.
11. Any time-only with blanks that are offered shall be ran after the main match.
12. Stage patterns may be posted 12 hours prior to the event.
13. All horses competing in USMS must have a current coggins.
14. All contestants are responsible for their own personal safety and responsible for reading and follow these rules.

L. SUGGESTED PAYOUTS:

Pistol:

- 1 – 35 Entries – pays 2 spots per D, per stage
- 36 – 55 Entries – pays 3 spots per D, per stage
- 56 – 75 Entries – pays 4 spots per D, per stage
- 76 – 100 Entries – pays 5 spots per D, per stage
- Add 1 payout spot per D for every 25 entries after 100

Rifle & Shotgun:

- 1 – 5 Entries – pays 1 spot, per stage
- 6 – 12 Entries – pays 1 spot per D, per stage
- 13 – 24 Entries – pays 2 spots per D, per stage
- 25 – 36 Entries – pays 3 spots per D, per stage
- Add 1 payout spot per D for every 12 entries after 36

Showdown

- Points from all completed stages prior to the showdown, will qualify the top 12 in each D.
- If there is a tie between the 12th and 13th qualifier, the tie breaker will be decided by the overall fastest time with penalties on qualifying stages.
- If there's less than 49 entries, there will be no qualification process.
- Competitor shall be penalty free to be eligible for stage payout.
- Competitor shall ride the horse they qualify on, no exceptions.
- Payout will be structured on a 4D format.
- 1 – 48 Entries – pays 2 spots, per D
- 49 – 60 Entries – pays 3 spots per D
- Add 1 payout spot per D for every 12 entries after 60

Senior Side Pot

- Must be 60 or older to be eligible for entry.
- Times will be taken from the main match stages.
- Payout will be structured on a 2D format. Pay per stage.
- Competitor shall be penalty free to be eligible for stage payout

Shotgun/Rifle

- Contestant must be entered in the main match before entering in Shotgun or Rifle.
- Contestant may enter multiple horses. Additional horses do not have to be entered in the main match.
- Payout will be structured on a 2D format after 5 entries. Less than 6 entries will be structured on a 1D format.
- Competitor shall be penalty free to be eligible for stage payout

- In the event that no one shoots clean at a corporate event on stage 1, the money will roll to stage 2. If no one shoots clean on stage 2, the money rolls to the finals showcase. If no one shoots clean in the showcase, the top 3 places will be paid regardless.
- In the event that no one shoots clean at a club event, it is up to the Match Director to pay out as they see fit but the money must be paid out in that event. Cannot roll over to another event.
- Competitors shall shoot across their body or maintain two points of contact while engaging targets. **One-handed strongarm shots are not allowed.** Failure to comply will result in a 10-second procedural penalty.

M. USMS Corporate Shoots

1. All Around Winner: Competitor shall enter shotgun or rifle to be eligible. Points will be taken from each class to determine the winner. 1 point will be awarded for each eligible competitor you place above. An eligible competitor is entered in an additional class. Pistol points will be earned based on the overall placing after all stages. Points from all three classes will be added together to award the All-Around winner. In the event of a tie between competitors, the tiebreaker will be awarded to the competitor with the fastest overall time in the main match.
2. Shotgun & Rifle Divisional Winners: Points will be accrued per stage. The points earned will correspond to the D in which they place. At the end of the event, the competitor with the highest number of points in each division will be awarded. In the event of a tie between competitors, the tiebreaker will be awarded to the competitor with the fastest overall time.
3. Pistol Divisional Winners: Points will be accrued per stage. The points earned will correspond to the D in which they place. Contestants will earn an additional point for every contestant they place higher than. If a penalty is assessed, contestant will earn zero points for that stage. At the end of the event, the competitor with the highest number of points in each D will be awarded. In the event of a tie between competitors, the tiebreaker will be awarded to the competitor with the fastest overall time.

N. RANGE MASTER:

1. Shall pass the USMS Range Master test with a passing grade of 80% before he or she is allowed to post as Range Master.
2. Shall be at least 14 years of age.
3. Shall study the selected courses with the Match Director to make sure they are suitable and safe for each arena.
4. The Match Director for each event shall select an appeals committee with one alternate. This should consist of experienced shooters.
 - a. Appeals board shall consist of 3 competitors and 1 alternate. This board shall dispel all controversy regarding any calls made by the Range Master or any rules questioned.
5. Range Master will make sure courses are set up properly, all gates are closed, course has 10 inflated targets, and timer is working.
6. When available a red-light green-light will be used. Range Master will turn it from red to green when the course is ready to be engaged.
7. When the light system is not available the Range Master will raise his/her arm, flag indicating the course is ready to be engaged.
8. If you run on a red light or the Range Master has not cleared the course, you will be given a 60 second penalty.
9. Range Master determines how many penalties or procedurals have occurred during a run.

10. Range Master will determine any re-rides.
11. Range Master will determine any targets not broken by gun fire.
12. Range Master is in control of the arena during competition.
 - a. If a competitor is mistreating their horse in the arena, the Range Master shall ask the competitor to leave the arena and give them a 60 second penalty.
13. Range Masters are not to be engaged in conversation by contestants. If a competitor approaches, you should politely ask them to speak with the Match Director.
 - a. Contestant wishing to protest the Range Master's call, must present the protest to the Match Director.
 - b. Only contestants entered in the event are allowed to protest and must provide a \$50 protest fee. In the event that the call is overturned by the appeals board, the fee will be refunded.

O. CLUB AFFILIATION:

1. Club membership dues are \$300. Club memberships are based on a calendar year.
2. Event financial statements shall be postmarked within 5 business days or will be subject to a 10% fine.
3. Corporate will approve all club memberships.
4. No clubs may have a match within 4 hours of another USMS club on the same dates. (unless approved by corporate)
5. Clubs shall only use USMS certified blanks for all affiliated events, clinics, and practices. Visit the USMS website for a list of certified blanks providers.
6. Clubs will pay point fees as follows: \$5 per main match entry for single points, \$10 per main match entry for double points, \$15 per main match entry for triple points. Point fees are paid per event. All fees apply to Buckaroos as well.
7. Clubs need to advertise how many points will be awarded for their event.
8. Clubs have the ability to decide how they want to payout their event, but USMS points will always be awarded on the 4D clean shooter system. If a club chooses to use a different pay scale other than the 4D clean shooter, the club will need to supply their own software to calculate the altered payout.
9. Clubs MUST advertise what payout structure will be used for their events.
10. Club owners are highly encouraged to wear branded USMS- approved apparel at all sanctioned events.

P. CANCELLATION POLICY:

1. Credit: If a competitor decides not to attend an event they have paid for, a credit can be applied to their account without penalty.
2. Refund: If a competitor decides not to attend an event they have paid for, a refund can be issued (upon request) and will access a 5% fee based on the total refund amount.
3. A credit or refund only applies to request made 24 hours prior to the books closing. After this time, no credits or refunds will be permitted.

4. USMS corporate checks paid to competitors are good for 90 days. After 90 days any lost or destroyed checks will **not** be reissued. If less than 90 days any check that is destroyed, lost or stolen, USMS may reissue a new check upon request minus stop payment fee from original check.

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