

MILITARY BOLT ACTION BENCH REST COMPETITION

PREAMBLE: The purpose of this competition is to bring the older military bolt-action rifles out of the closets and gun safes and back onto the ranges through competition and companionship of other shooters having similar interests. The spirit herein is to provide such competition at a minimal cost and to avoid having the competition become a dollar race as has occurred in many shooting sports.

FIREARMS:

The competition is limited to bolt action; center fire, "as issued" or "stock" rifles such as would have been issued to an average recruit of a recognized military organization. Special versions of these rifles such as "sniper" rifles or .22 caliber training rifles are not acceptable as they are special purpose weapons and cannot be considered "as issued". It is not our intent to provide a comprehensive list of such rifles but rather relate allowable modifications keeping in mind the spirit of this competition.

MODIFICATIONS: Allowable modifications shall include: "free floating" the barrel, smoothing the trigger pull and action, exchanging the front sight for a taller and/or wider one and using "target paper" shims between the muzzle and barrel channel. Using these guidelines, "glass bedding" is not allowable.

CALIBER: Any "as issued" caliber is allowable, but not a re-chambered rifle with a different caliber unless such action was a generally available modification. An example of such acceptable re-chambering would be the British Short Magazine Lee-Enfield. This rifle was normally issued in the .303 caliber, but when the members of NATO attempted to standardize their ammunition to the 7.62mm NATO round, several countries, such as India, simply re-chambered or re-barrelled their SMLE rifles to the NATO caliber then re-issued them to their troops. This rifle, in the new caliber, then became their "standard issue" rifle.

SIGHTS:

The sights allowable must be of the "as issued type." Optical, target or sniper type sights are not allowed. Receiver sights cannot be "bushed", nor can normally uncovered front sights be "hooded".

Manufacturer's modifications are acceptable. An example would be the Marine Corps "flat top" front sight for the 1903 Springfield or the '03-A3. Another would be the change from a non-adjustable, for windage, rear sight on the SMLE #1 Mk III, to the windage adjustable sight that was retrofitted to that rifle.

Having stated the above limitations on sights, we realize that most of the military rifles to be used in this competition were originally "sighted in" for a minimum of 250 yards. This means that with a six o'clock hold on the target at one hundred yards the point of the bullet's impact will be about a foot high. This, of course, will ruin your whole day. Consequently, we are allowing the front sight to be modified to the extent that a taller and/or wider sight may be installed to allow a proper sight picture on the target. A wider front sight may also be utilized on those rifles originally designed with no rear sight windage adjustment. But in neither case shall the front sight lose its "military configuration". Hoods designed as sight protectors are acceptable.

AMMUNITION: Ammunition may be either military surplus ball, commercially available cartridges or hand loads using either jacketed or cast bullets. Since many of these rifles have barrels that are becoming scarce the use of low velocity hand loads is highly recommended. This tends to lessen the wear on the barrel and also makes a proper six o'clock hold on the target easier to obtain with the sights available.

COURSE OF FIRE:

The basic course of fire shall be five strings of ten rounds each for a total of fifty rounds. The first two strings are fired for group and the last three for score. A winner shall be determined for each string and an overall high shooter shall be determined by the aggregate of the three scoring strings. Matches between clubs shall follow this same course of fire. The target utilized is the NRA's SR-21 simulated 300 yard target as used in the DCM matches. Individual clubs may utilize other targets but for inter-club competition the SR-21 shall be the official target.

EQUIPMENT/ACCESSORIES:

Since all shooting will be done from a bench rest the use of slings is probably moot. Most any type of rifle stand is allowable but clamps, vises or other devices that act to fix the rifle to a stand or to the bench shall not be allowed. The use of spotting scopes, sight black, shooting jackets and other personal gear, which tend to make a competitor's shooting more enjoyable is allowed.

SAFETY: Normal National Rifle Association range safety practices shall be enforced in conjunction with specific rules which may apply to a particular range. Any competitor found in violation of these rules shall be disqualified. All Shooters shall use eye and ear protection during the competition. The match director shall advise competitors and spectators of any special rules concerning their particular range. If hand loaded ammunition is being utilized it shall be tested prior to shooting it in a match. A match is not the place to try out new loads.

Newly acquired rifles must be functioned-fired prior to a match to determine their safety and reliability with similar loads as will be utilized in the match.