

NSSA Rules Committee Meeting
National Shooting Complex, San Antonio, TX
January 29, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Trish Magyar at 8:30AM with all Committee members present: Woody Anderson, Bill Batty, John Bratty, King Heiple, Don Kelly, Sid Miller, Debbi Perry and Lou Riddle. Louise Terry was unable to attend due to a prior commitment. Also present was Linda Steen.

Everyone was thanked for his or her time and interest to serve on the Committee. The purpose of the Committee is not to create rules in an effort to address every conceivable situation that might arise. If anything, we need to look at ways to eliminate some of the rules and simplify them. To that end, all of the committee members have been tasked to review the Rules Book and identify any rules that can be removed and/or combined to make them more easily understood and applied.

1. **Briley "Wand"** – What Rules changes, if any, are needed when a voice release mechanism is used? Billy Williams gave the Committee an overview of Briley's voice release button. With Briley's system the button is pushed to arm it, and released to release the target in the manual mode. The wand can also be used as regular pull cord by removing the wand, or holding the wand down, away from the shooter. The wand has the ability to release the target anywhere from instantly to up to three seconds. Briley has produced a training video, which has been posted to YouTube. The key to successful implementation is referee training.

Action: The Committee agreed that NSSA should publish a policy stipulating if voice release mechanisms are to be used in a registered tournament it has to be stated in the program, and it has to be available on all fields. Shoot management can have an "opt out" policy, if so desired, but at a minimum, if the voice release doesn't work for a particular shooter, shoot management has to provide a means for "manual" pulls. Debbi Perry and Lou Riddle will work with Linda Steen to develop the wording for the policy.

Note: During the February 17th Executive Committee phone conference, they felt it would be more appropriate to incorporate the use of voice release systems in the Rules Book, as it would provide better visibility than a headquarters "policy". The Rules Committee had a phone conference on February 24th resulting in a **motion by Sid Miller, 2nd by Don Kelly, to forward to the Executive Committee for approval and forwarding to the Board of Directors for a vote the following proposed change for Voice Release Systems:**

I-H. Use of Voice Release Systems (VRS)

1. *The use of a voice release system by shoot management for releasing targets during a registered tournament is permitted so long as done in compliance with the official rules and regulations contained within this book.*
2. *Voice Release Systems must be available on all tournament fields at the start of the tournament.*
3. *Shoot Management should provide a means for "manual pulls" if the VRS does not work for a particular shooter.*

Motion passed all in favor. [See attachment (1) for full rules change.]

2. **Email from Earl Benton recommending a "Seniors Tour Option"** the gist of which is to have 50 target events as an option for older shooters during a "regular" 100 target event.

There is nothing to preclude a club from holding such an event, but it would have to be a separate event from the 100 target event. Also, it doesn't have to be limited to seniors. *No action taken.*

3. **Ken Pletcher Open Entry Fees** – This shoot last year provided a reduced entry for shooters who were also entered in the Armed Services Skeet Championships the following week. The NSC did it as a gesture of thanks to our military shooters. After the shoot was concluded, individuals who subsequently did not shoot, or weren't eligible to shoot, the ASSC protested the reduced entry. NSSA ultimately refunded the difference back to those shooters. The question is, "Is it permissible for shoot management to offer different entry fees for different category of shooters?"

Rule II-B-2 states that, with the exception of junior, sub-junior and collegiate, anyone who participates in an individual gauge for a reduced entry fee shall not be eligible for tangible or

intangible awards. So, the answer to the question is, it is not permissible to offer different entry fees for different category of shooters.

4. **Mandatory Class Purses “Opt Out”** – A proposal to permit shooters in the Senior concurrent age category, and above, the same discretion as Sub-Junior, Junior and Collegiate shooters to not have to pay any portion of an entry that goes back as money, and still be eligible for awards.

Clubs have always had the discretion to offer optional purses. To have an “opt out” for shooters other than sub-junior, junior and collegiate is the same issue item 3, above. *No action taken.*

It was also discussed that the Gun Club Manual is in dire need to updating, as a lot of clubs don't know what they can and cannot do. The Gun Club Manual will also be put on the website.

5. **Proposed Change to Rule II-B-5 (HOA/HAA Titles)** – It has been recommended we change what comprises HOA to provide more flexibility to shoot management.

Motion by Bill Batty, 2nd by Woody Anderson, to forward to the Executive Committee for approval and forwarding to the Board of Directors for a vote the following proposed change for High Over All events (deletions are ~~struck through~~ and additions *italicized and underlined*):

II-B-5. HOA/HAA Titles

HOA/HAA titles may be an aggregate of all gauges offered in that registered tournament (preliminary events, Champion of Champions, not to be included) and will officially be recognized by the NSSA only when they include championships or title events in ~~at least three~~ *any* of the four standard gauges and load divisions defined in ~~paragraph No. 1 above~~ *II-B-1 or Doubles*, and a total of at least 200 targets. ~~Provided that the foregoing shall not be deemed to forbid local awards of special prizes for events of combination not recognized.~~ i.e., a HOA could be 100 20 gauge and 100 doubles, or 200, 300 or 400 .410, or other combinations, as long as each gauge is scheduled as a separate event. If doubles are not to be included in the HOA, they may be run as a preliminary event.

~~a. High Overall (HOA). HOA is the aggregate of all gauges shot in a registered tournament, excluding doubles, preliminary events and Champion of Champions.~~

~~b. High All Around (HAA). HAA is the aggregate of all gauges shot in a registered tournament, including doubles, but excluding preliminary events and Champion of Champions.~~

Delete “HAA” from the Table of Contents & Index

Delete HAA from II-B-2.

V-C-4. High Overall/~~High All Around~~

- a. Unless otherwise published in the program or posted at the shoot, a shooter's HOA ~~or HAA~~ class will be based on his/her 4 or 5 gun average, using the NSSA HOA/HAA Classification Tables event at the time of their entry into the first event of the shoot and **will not be changed as a result of a reclassification due to a preliminary event, except when a shooter's HOA class would be lower than their lowest gun class** (see V-C-4-b). *When the HOA event is comprised of the four standard gauges (i.e., does not include Doubles), then the 4 Gun HOA Classification table will used. Likewise, when the HOA event is comprised of the four standard gauges plus Doubles, then the 5 Gun HOA Classification Table will be used. When the HOA event is not comprised of the four standard gauges or the four standard gauges plus Doubles, a shooter's HOA class will be based on his/her highest class of the gauges included in the HOA event, unless otherwise published in the program or posted at the shoot.*

Delete "HAA" in 4-C-4-b through d, and re-print "HOA/HAA CLASSIFICATION TABLES" as follows:

HOA CLASSIFICATION TABLES

4 GUN HOA (without doubles)

AAA	97.81 & over
AA	96.38 – 97.80
A	93.88 – 96.37
B	90.25 – 93.87
C	85.25 – 90.24
D	79.25 – 85.24
E	79.24 & under

5 GUN HOA (with doubles)

AAA	97.64 & over
AA	96.10 – 97.63
A	93.30 – 96.09
B	89.20 – 93.29
C	84.20 – 89.19
D	78.20 – 84.19
E	78.19 & under

Shoot Management has the discretion to offer, Class E HOA as necessary.

Motion passed all in favor to forward the above proposed Rules changes to the Executive Committee for approval and forwarding to the Board of Directors for a vote.

Reason for Change: Recognizing HOA events of less than three of the standard gauge events and to include doubles, if shoot management desires, will provide more flexibility for clubs/shoot management to conduct shoots that appeal to their clientele. For example, a HOA comprised of only two guns or four separate events consisting of the same gauge is not currently recognized by NSSA. When a shoot includes doubles, shoot management has the option of including them in the HOA event. It is recommended, if doubles are not be included in a HOA event, that they be thrown as a preliminary event, especially when *Skeet Manager* shoot software is being used to run the shoot.

6. Smoking on the Field – Request from a member to have a "smoke free" shooting environment.

It should be a club/shoot management decision. However, clubs could offer a "smoke free" field, especially if a shooter has a problem. Also, referees should be encouraged not to smoke when they are pulling. It is recommended that shooters and referees refrain from smoking during a round of registered targets. We will include, not in the Rules Book per se, "shooter etiquette" right after the "Skeet Welcomes You" page. King Heiple will provide a one-page shooter etiquette, which will include not smoking during a round of registered shooting. [See attachment (2).]

7. Rule II-C-4.a.2 – Declaration into Next Older Age Concurrent Category – Headquarters would like to clarify the rule as to what constitutes "written notification", and that the request must be acknowledged by NSSA Headquarters.

Action: Add, after "written", "(i.e., letter, email or fax)", and, after "selection", "such notification must be acknowledged in writing by NSSA Headquarters before the declaration becomes effective."

Motion by Bill Batty, 2nd by Debby Perry, to insert the above wording as housekeeping. Motion passed all in favor.

8. Wheelchair Shooters' Position on Shooting Pad and Shooters' Foot Position on Pad – The question has been raised that wheelchair shooters may not have both feet over the pad due to the position of their chair, and a shooter who "walks" off the pad or lifts a foot as the shot is being fired, doesn't have both feet on the pad, as required by the rules.

The Committee's interpretation is, so long as a wheelchair shooter has any portion of his/her wheelchair over the pad and a shooter starts with both feet on or over the pad when they call for the target, any action that changes their foot position subsequent to their call for the bird is irrelevant.
No action taken.

9. "Additional" Targets when Shooter Doesn't Shoot Main Event – Is it permissible for an individual who didn't enter a main event to shoot "additional targets" to register targets only for that gauge? There is nothing in the Rules that prohibits shoot management from allowing someone to shoot targets only, even if they didn't enter the main event or it has been completed, since the individual would not be eligible for any awards.

Action: King Heiple will write a column describing a variety of circumstances under which targets only can be shot.

10. **Suspension of Shooting Under Adverse Weather Conditions** – There is concern that some shoots are requiring shooters to compete under adverse weather conditions. This is a safety concern... But how do we write a rule that covers it? After lengthy discussion, it was decided we could include something under III-G, Safety Precautions to bring attention to weather conditions under which shooters should not be forced to continue shooting.

Motion by Don Kelly, 2nd by Sid Miller to add the following, and renumber current III-G-14-17:

III-G-14. Shoot management or the Chief Referee, with shoot management concurrence, will suspend all shooting under clearly unsafe weather conditions such as, but not limited to, hail storms, lightning and tornadoes. Shooting may resume when the condition has passed.

Motion passed all in favor to forward the above proposed Rules change to the Executive Committee for approval and forwarding to the Board of Directors for a vote.

11. **AAA/AA** – Should moving in/out of AAA more than once during the year be reinstated? The data itself does not support the opinion that a significant amount of non-AAA shooters are “stuck” in AAA. In fact, the data show that more shooters are stuck in AA and A. *No action taken.*
12. **Classification System Review** – A Classification subcommittee performed an analysis of the YE data using the Classification model, developed six years ago by the statistics professor at UTSA, and concluded the class cutoffs are okay at this time; there are no major anomalies. The entire Committee reviewed the distributions and agreed it was not necessary to recommend any class cutoff changes at this time. *No action taken.*
13. **Referee Exam** - No changes are recommended at this time, since there have not been any significant changes in the rules from the referee's perspective.

Motion by Debbi Perry, 2nd by Don Kelly, to adjourn; motion passed all in favor. The Rules Committee adjourned at 11:50AM

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Magyar
Chairman, Rules & Classification Committee

Attachments:

- (1) Voice Release System Rules Change
- (2) Skeet Ettiquitte Insert

NSSA Rule Book Change for Voice Release Systems (VRS)

Adding New Rule

I-H. Use of Voice Release Systems (VRS)

1. *The use of a voice release system by shoot management for releasing targets during a registered tournament is permitted so long as done in compliance with the official rules and regulations contained within this book.*
2. *Voice Release Systems must be available on all tournament fields at the start of the tournament.*
3. *Shoot Management should provide a means for "manual pulls" if the VRS does not work for a particular shooter.*

II-A-7-o *If Voice Release Systems are to be used during a registered tournament and/or shoot-offs, Shoot Management must so stipulate in the shoot program and/or at the registration desk and must document and provide an "Opt Out" policy to all shooters. Such policy could be by squad, shooter or no opt out. Regardless of the policy, Shoot Management must still comply with I-H-3 and provide manual pulls when the VRS fails to work for a shooter's call.*

III-F-2-i. *The referee must in no manner interfere with the shooter while using the Voice Release System (VRS) either by touch or observable distraction.*

Changing Current Rules (*changes italicized*)

I-D-1 MANDATORY POSITIONS FOR REFEREES USING MANUAL PULL DEVICES

- a. For shooting Station 1 (1R), stand six feet to the right and three (3) feet back of the front of Station 1 where possible.
 - b. For shooting Station 2 (2R), stand six (6) feet back and three (3) feet to the right of Station 2.
 - c. For shooting Stations 3, 4, 5 and 6 (3-4-5-6R), stand six (6) feet back and three (3) feet to the left of the respective station.
 - d. For shooting Station 7 (7R), stand six (6) feet to the left and three (3) feet back of the front of Station 7 where possible.
 - e. For shooting Station 8 (8R), stand on centerline of the field, not less than six (6) feet from shooter (and not more than 10 feet).
 - f. During doubles shooting, as shooters are coming back around the circle, referees should stand six feet back and three feet to the right of Stations 5, 4 and 3. (See diagram on pages 30-31)
- Exception: A shooter may request the referee to move behind the station at Station 3 or 5.

I-D-2 MANDATORY POSITIONS FOR REFEREES USING VOICE RELEASE SYSTEMS

While a referee must stand as close as possible to the mandatory positions detailed in 1-D-1, it is acceptable for a referee using a VRS to slightly adjust his/her position to meet the needs of either the shooter or the VRS without causing interference with the shooter or the squad.

IV-C-3 It is recommended that the chief referee also have the responsibility of instructing all other referees and being certain they are acquainted with the rules and approved interpretations. *This also applies to any Voice Release System (VRS), selected for use by Shoot Management. Shoot Management and/or the Chief Referee should ensure that all referees have been properly trained on the use of the VRS so they can consistently release targets without interference to the shooter. This training must contain guidelines on when to revert to a manual release of targets when a shooter's call fails to activate the VRS.*

IV-D-1 He/she shall be completely familiar with the shoot program, *any VRS used during the tournament*, and the NSSA rules.

IV-D-16 Only assigned field referees, as designated by shoot management or the chief referee, may pull, score or referee registered targets. A voice release system may be used *but requires a trained field referee releasing the targets.*

Skeet Shooting Etiquette

Despite the Rule Book which follows, skeet is a very social sport and you will enjoy your shooting the most if you follow generally accepted good manners and also a few that are peculiar to our sport.

Remember first that safety is of paramount concern to all in handling firearms. So never let your barrel point at anyone, even if the action is open and apparently empty! It will offend! Load your gun only when on the shooting station. Follow all the safety rules in the rule book carefully and don't be offended if you are corrected about one of them. Remember also that both eye and ear protection are required for everyone on a skeet field and are the rule for NSSA events.

Almost all will welcome you to shoot with them on a squad. Introduce yourself if you are new to the club or squad and conversely to a newcomer. If you are new to the sport tell your squadmates that this is the case. If you are an experienced shooter, help welcome newcomers and explain rules and perhaps suggestions regarding conduct without being rude or obnoxious. But don't coach new shooters unless requested and almost always do separately, and not at all in registered matches.

If shooting is occurring on the field, remember that your behavior in the background, clubhouse porch or parking lot can be very distracting to those trying to concentrate on their shooting. In the clubhouse never handle other peoples guns without asking permission. Be sure your gun's action is open or if an over-under, closed only when in the rack. Open it immediately upon picking it up!

For registered shooting be on time and don't delay your assigned squad. On the field be ready to step up and shoot when it is your turn, not chatting in the background. While shooting be very careful what you do with your gun and shells. Don't eject your shells into the puller, referee or squadmates. Many shooters reload shells so only pick up your own and only after the round is over.

If on the field, stay back where you are not in the shooter's peripheral vision. While shooting turn off your cell phone and be quiet when a shooter is on the pad and refrain from smoking during the round. During registered shooting remember that other shooters on the squad are working hard. So no matter how badly you may be shooting don't let your displeasure become a distraction to them.

In all shooting remember that the referee is there both to help and protect you. He/she needs your courtesy and support. Thank them for their job well done after the round or flight is over and thank your squadmates for the occasion to shoot with them.