

Territorial Governor Report - SASS Governor's Summit 2007
Deadly Sharpshooter SASS# 35828 L

The 2007 Territorial Governor's Summit concluded Saturday, December 8, 2007 with no major changes to the regulations for the SASS rules of Cowboy Action Shooting. The one new change was the nearly unanimous agreement (90% for) to allow optical sights for long range rifle side matches, if the sights adhered to the guidelines as provided. Comments from the floor indicated that such sights provide little, if any, shooting advantage; they just look cool.

The vote to require chaps, chinks botas and spurs for Classic Cowboy, as shown in the table below, was split. Those in favor of the change spoke fervently in favor of the original cowboy's typical dress, especially chaps and spurs. Those who spoke against the rule change argued that for one thing, chaps were too hot for summer matches, especially in the south. They also pointed out that chinks are relatively new, and do not represent working gear common to the original cowboy.

The vote to allow one minor safety per firearm was also split. Votes for the change argued that it would be a way of eliminating the "double jeopardy" issue of loading too many rounds at the loading table (minor safety for failing to load the proper number of rounds), then appearing at the unloading table with a live round on the carrier (minor safety), thus receiving two minor safety penalties for what was essentially one mistake. Those arguing against worried that both were separate safety issues and should not be changed, especially because the second of the two minor safeties, (live round on the carrier) could be corrected by the shooter while still on the firing line by ejecting the extra round, although most agreed that a shooter who didn't know he or she had loaded too many rounds would hardly be expected to realize it at the end of the firing string and deal with it then. Palewolf Brunnell, the RO-Committee representative suggested, after the vote was cast, that perhaps the solution would be to change the rule stating that failure to load the proper amount of ammunition is a minor safety. If so, look for this on next year's agenda.

The question of whether to change the rule as to when a stage begins from the "first round that goes downrange" to "once the timer sounds" was defeated and we will continue to commit to a stage when the first round goes downrange. There was much discussion about why this was up for vote, and the Wild Bunch felt that some shooters were abusing this by demanding a re-start in the case of bobbling a draw, or dropping shotgun shells, etc. I commented that the main reason we saw the need for a restart was that the shooter simply had not heard the timer. Others comments that they had never seen anyone abuse the rule as it now exists, and the potential rule change was defeated.

The potential rule change from a maximum shot size of #4 to #7½ was defeated 72 to 26% because many TG's said that they loaded reclaimed shot which usually contained a significant amount of #6 shot. Changing the rule would have made the practice of reloading shotgun shells with reclaimed shot illegal.

Shown below is a table with the actual agenda items, and the voting results.

SASS Territorial Governor Summit 2007

Tally of Votes - Action Shooter Items

Agenda Item	Item Text	For	Against	Abstain	Result
1	<p>Should we change the current Classic Cowboy category rules to require Chaps, Chinks or Botas and Spurs at all times and drop the other clothing requirements to three choices?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Percentage</p>	112	160	4	FAIL
		40.58%	57.97%	1.45%	
2	<p>As of now you may get as many Minor Safety penalties as you incur per stage. Should we change the rules to limit Minor Safety penalties to one per firearm per stage?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Percentage</p>	124	150	2	FAIL
		44.93%	54.35%	0.72%	
3	<p>As of now you are not committed to the stage until the first round goes down range. Should we change the rule to read as follows: A shooter, if properly started, is committed to the stage once the timer sounds.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Percentage</p>	84	190	2	FAIL
		30.43%	68.84%	0.72%	
4	<p>The largest maximum shot size currently allowed is a #4. Should we change the maximum shot size to a #7 1/2?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Percentage</p>	72	198	6	FAIL
		26.09%	71.74%	2.17%	
5	<p>Should we adopt the Proposed New Long Range Optical Category with rules as follows: (a) No length or power limitation on the scope. Scope tube body to be 3/4" or less in diameter and any ocular or objective lenses, adjusting or assembly rings to be less than 1" in diameter. (b) No internal scope adjustments for windage or elevation. (c) Mounts are to be of a traditional style of the period and contain the windage and elevation adjustments for the scope in either, or both, the front or rear mounts. No click adjustments in the mount. Either dove tail mounting or scope block mounting is allowed. Original scope mounts of either the Cataract or Malcom style or variations thereof, or replicas or derivative conforms to the criteria of paragraph (c) above.</p> <p>This rule matches exactly with the NRA Rifle Silhouette Rules of March 2005.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Percentage</p>	242	26	8	PASS
		90.30%	9.70%	2.90%	

Discussion (non-voting) Items:

1. *Should we allow a Frontier Cartridge Gunfighter category?* - Discussion on this item was mixed. There were several comments expressing concern about potential safety issue when a shooter has a black powder revolver in each hand and has to deal with a gun malfunction.
- 2.
3. *Lace-up Boots* - The question was not so much whether or not the boots laced, but whether the soles were “grip-enhancing.” The discussion focused on a particular brand, Ariat, commonly worn, and the discussion ended with the comment by Hipshot that the issue was easily settled with the “flashlight test.” If one shines a flashlight at the edge of the sole and the light passes through unencumbered, the boot can be said to be “grip-enhancing.”
4. *.22 caliber as pocket pistols in side matches* - The question was whether or not to allow .22 caliber pistols in these matches. Hipshot commented that as this was the *Single Action Shooting Society* this merely represented another opportunity to buy another gun. A straw poll vote indicated mixed interest, and the item was dropped from further discussion.
5. *Beretta Laramie as an acceptable main match gun* – The gun has apparently wind-driftable rear sights (with set screws) and is advertised as having adjustable sights. It also has a Schofield design with #3 grip frame. After much discussion, straw poll voting indicated that the gun could be used in main match competition, but in the Modern category, despite the Schofield appearance. Because of the discussion of what is an adjustable sight, it was decided that this should be an item of future discussion.

Open Floor Discussion:

These are discussion items brought up from TG’s on the floor to see if there is any merit in considering them as future voting items:

1. *Minor safety penalty for having an empty shell or hull on the carrier* – There was little discussion at the Summit. Hipshot said that this would definitely be re-opened for discussion at state and higher matches throughout the coming year and could be considered for the voting agenda next year.
2. *Penalty/action taken when a shooter falls* – As long as the guns are safe (long guns still pointed safely down range, revolvers still in holsters), there is no call. Courtesy may dictate the CRO asking the shooter if he or she is o.k., but then instructing them, if unhurt, to “cowboy on.” Someone suggested that the spectators carry score cards and display their appreciation of the shooter’s grace *a la* figure skating! Bottom line, if you aren’t hurt, start shooting!
3. *Should the Grande Dame category get the same consideration in guns and ammo as Buckaroos/Buckarettes?* – I don’t remember that we took a straw poll vote, but discussion was generally favorable.
4. *Should we consider a handicap system for older shooters?* – Again, there was no direct vote, but discussion was generally favorable.

5. *Could we develop a single rule book that would serve as the sole source of rules and regulations?* – Bottom line is that it will not likely happen. No reason was offered.
6. *Black Jack Zack (Winter Range) offered a proposal to alter categories that would distribute ages more evenly.* – He suggested that we combine Traditional and Modern, but create another age-based division, say 35'er that would span 14 years (age 17-34). Young (read fast) shooters could shoot in the Traditional/Modern category from 17-34, then switch to 49'er and shoot in that category for another 11 years before turning Senior. By combining Traditional and Modern, and creating 35'er, there would be a net gain of 0 categories, but a better age-based distribution. Black Jack Zack presented a nicely organized argument, complete with Power Point presentation that was very compelling. The Power Point will be made available on the TG wire, and when it becomes available, I will provide it to anyone interested. If nothing else, it serves as a good example of how to present a case before the Wild Bunch and TG's that is well accepted. Presumably this may come up as a voting issue next year.
7. *Rifle cases in shotgun carrier* – Just as an informational topic, and in the same vein as the topic introduced by Birdshot (see below), Cody Conagher brought up the fact that when rifle cases fall into the carrier of a '97, it can be more serious than simply interfering with loading. He specifically tested the pressures developed in the gun when a .38 case fell onto the carrier then was pushed into the chamber ahead of the shotgun shell. Depending on where the case remained, the result could range from humorous (the case blasted out of the shotgun) to serious, (Cody blew up his test gun). If the case moves forward, say as a shooter picks up the shotgun with muzzle low, the case may simply fall out or be blasted out. But when the case remained at the front of the shell, the pressures were extreme, and the gun failed catastrophically. No action was taken or suggested, but the point was made that staging '97's with the carrier facing down could be safer, especially when using a Marlin, or other type of rifle that tends to eject down or to the side where a shotgun might be staged.

Wild Bunch Decisions:

The following are decisions made by the Wild Bunch and presented to the TG's as new regulations:

1. *Power Factor* – After much analysis and discussion over the past two years, the Wild Bunch made a final decision on what constitutes a “light load” and will therefore be illegal for State and higher SASS matches. Remember that shooting illegal ammunition is grounds for a Match Disqualification! The following is from the Wild Bunch directly:

Power Factor

Beginning at End of Trail 2008, the minimum standard for ammunition used in all smokeless categories at State, Regional, National, International and World Championship Competitions shall be not less than a minimum power factor of 60 and no velocity may be less than 400 fps. The maximum velocity standard for revolvers will remain as 1000 fps. The maximum velocity standard for rifles will remain as 1400 fps. Buckaroo Category shooters choosing to use center-fire ammunition in handguns and/or rifles must also meet all power factor and velocity requirements. Pocket Pistols and Derringers are exempt from the Power Factor and velocity requirements.

Power Factors are simply calculated by multiplying the bullet weight times the velocity and then the resulting number is divided by 1000. Some examples are as follows:

100 gr bullet traveling at 600 fps has a power factor of 60: $(100 \times 600) / 1000 = 60.00$

77 gr bullet traveling at 800 fps has a power factor of 61.6 $(77 \times 800) / 1000 = 61.60$

200 gr bullet traveling at 400 fps has a power factor of 80 $(200 \times 400) / 1000 = 80.00$

Power factors are the simplest and easiest way to maintain a minimum ammunition standard and allow competitors to shoot the weight bullet or velocity they feel comfortable with.

The procedure to check power factors will be random for suspect rounds. Any challenges to Power Factors will be administered using the process listed within the SASS ROII Materials under the Appeals, Challenges and Protest section. If a competitor is checked, they will be asked for five rounds, preferably from a revolver already loaded at the loading table. One round will have the bullet pulled and weighed. The other four rounds will be fired across a chronograph using the competitor's firearm. The muzzle of the revolver should be raised to 80 degrees and then lowered each time prior to firing through the chronograph. If any one of the four rounds meets or exceeds the calculated 60 power factor and velocity requirements, the competitor's loads will be considered as legal. If all rounds fired through the chronograph measure less than the calculated 60 power factor and/or velocity requirements, the competitor will be given a 30 second Spirit of the Game penalty for the last stage completed. Any subsequent stage(s) shot with the same ammunition will result in the same penalty per stage. As listed in the SASS RO Materials, two Spirit of the Game penalties will result in a Match Disqualification.

[Not mentioned in the above is the fact that SASS made a deal with Dillon Precision to offer SASS-sanctioned clubs a discount (15%, I believe) for the purchase of a chronograph, bullet puller and balance]

Birdshot, from Hodgen gave a presentation on the practice of "coning" or tapering the front end of 12 gauge shotgun shells, ostensibly to make them easier to insert into the chamber. Birdshot was sent several dozen of these shells and said that when tested for SAAMI pressures, they exceeded 18,000 psi, and that if people continued to use this practice there would be catastrophic failures resulting in injury or death. There was no discussion. Hipshot declared that the practice was illegal as of that very moment and that use of them in a SASS match would be grounds for immediate match disqualification. Continued use of them could lead to being barred from all SASS matches. I guess Birdshot made his point!

Shotgun Rounds

It has come to our attention that practice of "Coning" or crimping shotgun shell to a smaller gauge (i.e. 12 gauge sized down to 16 or smaller is being practiced and these shells are being used at SASS matches. Limited testing of these loads by the technical staff at Hodgon Powder Company has been done using traditional load data and SAAMI standard testing equipment. The "Coned" load test results exceeded the recommended maximum SAAMI standards by as much as 7000 PSI. Therefore effective immediately, this process will not be allowed and the use of such ammunition will be considered as illegal ammunition.

The process of scoring shotgun shell hulls with a sharp blade is known as “ringing” and essentially makes the round a slug. Also effective immediately, this process will not be allowed and the use of such ammunition will be considered as illegal ammunition. The penalty for the use of illegal ammunition in any SASS match is a Match Disqualification.