

# SASS MOUNTED SHOOTERS HANDBOOK



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Single Action Shooting Society (SASS) is an international organization created to preserve and promote the fast growing sport of Cowboy Action and Mounted Shooting. SASS is responsible for developing rules and regulations, publishes *The Cowboy Chronicle*, monthly journal of the Single Action Shooting Society, endorses State, Regional, and National matches conducted by affiliated clubs, and annually produces END of TRAIL, the World Championship of Cowboy Action Shooting™.

## **SASS MOUNTED SHOOTING**

SASS Mounted Shooting is an exciting equestrian sport that combines elements of old-time Wild West Show exhibition shooting along with cavalry drills, barrel racing, historical reenactments, and Saturday afternoon Westerns. SASS Mounted Shooting is a direct outgrowth of SASS Action Shooting and is a natural progression for those cowboys and cowgirls who want to bring horses into their Wild West fantasy.

Contestants in the Mounted Shooting competition must be twelve years of age or older and use two .45 Colt-caliber single-action revolvers loaded with five rounds each of specially prepared blackpowder blanks to shoot ten targets from horseback while riding a specified course of travel. Unburned granules and burning embers of blackpowder exiting the barrel of the revolver will ordinarily break a target out to a range of 10 to 15 feet. Riders are timed through the course and each missed target adds five seconds to the rider's raw time. The contestant who rides the fastest and shoots the straightest will win. In some matches contestants may also use a combination of a .45 Colt-caliber single-action revolver and a pistol caliber rifle or a double barrel shotgun (coach gun) in competition.

Children 11 years of age and younger may compete in the Buckaroo Class.

Historically, Mounted Shooting matches have been held just about any place one can ride a horse—at rodeos, shooting matches, in parks, and on the desert or prairie. However, we have found the quality of the matches, as well as the safety of the horses, riders, and spectators, is enhanced immeasurably when the events are held in an arena. The recommended arena size is 150 by 300 feet, though many matches have been held in smaller arenas. All SASS sanctioned State, Regional, National, and World Championship matches consist of at least six stages (unless inclement weather prevents the completion of stages). In these cases, three or more stages run back to back may make up a SASS match, and the total sum of all stages determines a contestant's score. In special circumstances SASS may waive the six-stage requirement.

## **SCHEDULING**

A SASS Mounted Shooting Affiliated Club can host:

- Annual and monthly points qualifying matches,
- One annual points qualifying State Championship upon application and acceptance,

- One annual points qualifying Regional Championship upon application and acceptance.
- One annual points qualifying National Championship upon application and acceptance

A “match” is an event that provides the opportunity for level move-ups and is conducted under the rules and guidelines set forth in this SASS Mounted Handbook. Annual and monthly matches must not conflict with any SASS State or Regional Championships in the state for State Championships and region for Regional Championships. SASS State and Regional Championship matches must not conflict with each other or the SASS National or World Championships.

## **POINTS**

In order to qualify for points, State Championships and above must run a minimum of six stages and have at least ten contestants. Annual and monthly matches must run a minimum of four stages and have at least ten contestants to qualify for points. The minimum number of stages may vary with approval from SASS according to the rules and guidelines set forth in this SASS Mounted Shooters Handbook. Mounted participants shall receive one point for entering the match and one point for each competitor he or she places above in the overall standings. In the case of multiple point matches, points are multiplied by the point factor.

Points are tracked for SASS members and will not be required to qualify for entering a SASS competition. They are used for tracking achievement and to qualify for prizes and awards. Points must be submitted to the SASS office within 15 days following the match. The points program begins annually with points for all END of TRAIL Mounted Shooting competitors and is free of charge to affiliated clubs.

- Annual and monthly match contestants receive single points,
- State Championship match contestants receive double points (point factor 2),
- Regional Championship match contestants receive triple points,
- National Championship match contestants receive quadruple points, (point factor 4)
- World Championship match contestants receive quintuple points. Additional material is available in the Mounted Range Officer I and II (MRO-I and MRO-II) courses. These courses teach good Mounted Shooting practices and explain many of the rules stated herein.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Participants in SASS sanctioned Mounted Shooting competitions must be members of the Single Action Shooting Society.

SASS Members receive the following:

- A distinctive badge,
- Membership card,
- Lapel pin,
- Official SASS Logo decal,

- Unique membership certificate with registration of your personal shooter's alias,
- Subscription to *The Cowboy Chronicle*, monthly journal of the Single Action Shooting Society.

## ALIAS

Every SASS member is required to select a shooting alias representative of a character or profession from the Old West, western fiction, or western film and/or television genre. Your alias is like a western livestock brand, registered at the SASS office. It may not in any way duplicate or easily be confused with any other member's alias. SASS Headquarters is the final arbiter of whether an alias is acceptable or not. The following rules are enforced in accepting a new alias for SASS registry:

- It must be "printable" before a wide audience,
- No duplications are permitted,
- If it SOUNDS the same, it is the same,
- Adding "Too" or "II," for example, is not acceptable,
- "Ranger" could become "Texas Ranger" but not "The Ranger,"
- "John Henry Chisum" could be modified to "Jack Chisum" but not "John H. Chisum" or "Jon Chisum,"
- Historical names may not be modified to make them different. "Wyatt Earp" and "Marshal Wyatt Earp" are considered the same.

The SASS Alias Registry changes daily. Phone the SASS office or check the SASS web site to confirm the availability of your choice of alias.

## CLOTHING & ACCOUTERMENTS

SASS Mounted Shooting is a combination of historical re-enactment and Saturday afternoon Westerns. Participants may choose the style of costume they wish to wear, but all clothing must be typical of the late 19th century or a B-Western movie or television western. SASS puts a great deal of emphasis on costuming because it adds so much to the uniqueness of our game and helps create a festive, informal atmosphere that supports the friendly, fraternal feeling we encourage in our competitors. In order to compete a contestant **MUST** be in costume at all match events, including dinners, award ceremonies, and dances. **ALL** clothing and equipment **MUST** be worn appropriately, how it was intended and how it would have been worn in the Old West or as seen in B-Western movies and on television.

### Dress Requirements for Competitors

**Shirts and Blouses:** Long sleeve traditional western design shirts and may include snap button shirts, button up, lace up, smiley pockets, shield shirts, plaid shirts, denim shirts, or leather shirts. Shirts may have appliqué, fringe, piping, embroidery, or different colored yokes. Sleeves may be rolled up to the forearm. Ladies may wear short sleeve Victorian style shirt, peasant blouse, or camisole.

**Pants and Skirts:** Traditional styled western pants. Jeans (no bling) may be worn but must be worn with chaps or chinks over them. Ladies may wear split riding skirts, full-length dress or Victorian styled long formal dress. Spanish,

Indian style, or saloon girl dress is appropriate. Dresses may be short sleeve or sleeveless.

**Headwear:** Headwear shall be worn during competition for the entire match. Headwear may include western style felt cowboy hat, cavalry style felt hat, Victorian or other lady's hat with veil, ribbon, bow, feather, or other appropriate hair ornamentation to complete a look; Mexican style sombrero of felt or straw, Native American style headband with feathers, or protective headwear are appropriate.

**Footwear:** Boots may be lace up or pull on and must be a traditional design of leather or leather looking material; moccasins or military style boots must be of leather or leather looking material. Ladies may also wear Victorian style shoes or lace up shoes. They must be of leather (leather looking material), silk, or brocade fabric.

**Accoutrements:** Accoutrements are strongly encouraged. They may include, but are not limited to the following: gloves or gauntlets, scarves with slides or tied around the neck, coat, jacket, vest, frock coats, dusters, chaps, cuffs, belts or buckles, period watch, hat bands, sleeve garters, knife in sheath, botas, leggings, suspenders, or sashes. Ladies may also wear period jewelry, period hair ornaments, snood, feather boa, cape, sashes, stockings, bustle, hoop, and corset.

### Outlawed

The use or presence of any outlawed item is a Stage Disqualification.

- Short sleeve shirts (male competitors only).
- Short sleeve tee shirts, long sleeve tee shirts, and tank tops for all competitors. Long sleeve Henley type shirts with buttons are acceptable.
- Spandex or other modern body-hugging material, fitted tops.
- Modern feathered cowboy hats (Shady Brady). Straw hats of traditional design (e.g., Stetson, Bailey, sombreros,) are acceptable.
- Ball caps.
- All types of athletic shoes or combat boots, no matter the material from which they are constructed.
- Nylon, plastic, or Velcro accouterments.
- Promotional or sponsor's logos on tack or clothing are forbidden. Manufacturer's clothing labels are acceptable.

### FIREARMS

Each contestant shall be armed with two revolvers. Only fixed sight single action revolvers of .45 Colt caliber, designed prior to 1898, or reproductions thereof, are allowed.

Examples of these revolvers include Colt Single Action Army and Bisley Models, Smith & Wesson Schofield and Russian, Remington Models 1875 and 1890, and Ruger Vaqueros and Montados. All firearms shall be maintained in the same external condition as originally manufactured by the factory. Allowed modifications are limited to engraving, hammer knurling, or turned down hammers as long as there is no lateral addition or welded add-ons. No rubber grips are allowed. The original external profile shall be maintained. All external parts shall be of the type manufactured for that particular model firearm. Stock parts

may be swapped from revolver to revolver. Ejector rods shall be maintained. Site modifications are limited to the filing of the front site. Triggers shall be operational; “slip hammer” revolvers are unsafe. Custom grips are allowed, including birdshead grips (like the Cimarron Thunderer). Included are standard factory production birdshead grip frame revolvers and aftermarket grip frames that are a production type product. No “one-of-a-kind” custom-made grip frames are allowed. The side profile for grip frames cannot be altered on any revolver. Bisley style hammers are legal on single action revolvers. A Bisley style hammer may replace a standard hammer so long as it is from the same manufacturer. Example: It is legal to replace a standard Ruger Vaquero hammer with a Ruger Bisley Hammer.

## **GUN LEATHER**

Each rider will need a belt and two holsters. Most competitors use one holster on their strong side and a cross-draw on their off side, allowing them to shoot both revolvers with their strong hand without shifting the reins from one hand to the other. It is permissible to mount holsters on the saddle. All holsters must be of leather construction and must securely retain the contestant’s firearms throughout the strenuous range of motion required in mounted competition. Holsters should conform to historic Old West designs. A holster is defined as a leather pouch formed in the shape of a revolver. A feedbag or saddlebag does not qualify and is considered to be unsafe. Holsters are limited to belted holsters, pommel, cantle, and/or shoulder holsters.

## **BLANKS**

Blanks for all SASS recognized Mounted Shooting events must be certified Mounted Shooting Blanks provided by the match producers and loaded for each contestant by a designated Armorer, if available. Contestants may be authorized to load their own revolvers by the Match Director if no Armorer is available. All SASS Mounted Shooting blanks are certified and loaded with blackpowder or a substitute such as Pyrodex. No live ammo (blank or bullet) is to be carried on the horse or by a mounted contestant during competition. Each rider is responsible for correct indexing of his/her revolver and checking for high primers or any other condition that may inhibit their ability to complete the course.

## **HORSES**

SASS Mounted Shooting competition is open to any horse or mule, registered or grade. A competitor must use the same horse throughout the entire match as well as in any side match for which their main match results are used to qualify. However, should a competitor or Match Director deem a horse physically unfit to continue the match, the competitor may ride a backup or borrowed horse to finish the match. The competitor shall not be allowed to return to the original mount that was deemed unfit to ride. No more than two riders may use the same horse.

A competitor may enter a competition more than once by paying the additional entry fees; but, must use a different horse for each entry and may not mix the same horses in the entries.

Horses should be introduced and conditioned to the sound of gunfire prior to competing in a match. A Mounted Shooting competition is not the appropriate forum to introduce your horse to the sound of gunfire for the first time. Basically, a rider needs a well-trained horse conditioned to tolerate gunfire he or she can keep under control with one hand on the reins while shooting with the other hand.

No abuse of animals is allowed. If the Range Master determines a mount is being abused, an initial warning will be issued. If disregarded, or if abuse is deemed excessive, expulsion from the match will follow.

## **SADDLES AND TACK**

Contestants are encouraged to use period saddles of an early western design, such as Slick Forks, Hope Tree, Mother Hubbard, or McClellan. However, one may compete with any saddle as long as it is constructed of traditional materials (leather) and is in safe condition. Headstalls, tie-downs, reins, and breast collars must be of leather construction. The idea is to present a picture “out of the past” of the mount and rider. All tack must be of non-neon tones, traditional patterns and not blatantly change the overall traditional appearance of the competitor’s rig. Contestants may use any bit or hackamore to reasonably control their mount as long as it is not overly severe in design.

Tack may not display any visible advertisements or endorsements, including logos.

## **TARGETS and EQUIPMENT**

The standard targets used in SASS Mounted Shooting competitions are helium quality balloons. When inflated correctly, a target will measure six to nine inches in diameter. Care is taken to make sure targets are of uniform size for all competitors. Targets shall be of two distinctly different colors unless course descriptions stipulate otherwise. For safety reasons target stands should be made of a material like PVC unless automated target inflators are being used. Standard target poles should be 48 inches high, but can be varied from ground level to 60 inches to add variety to each stage.

## **STAGE DESIGN**

A stage is a course of fire or riding and shooting pattern designed for the maximum enjoyment of competitors and spectators while testing horsemanship and shooting skills. When designing and setting a stage, the safety of riders, horses, and spectators is always a primary concern. SASS provides a comprehensive Mounted Shooting course of fire stage book; while these stages are not required to be used, they are strongly recommended.

A standard Mounted Shooting stage has ten targets. A contestant engages the course of fire with two single action revolvers loaded with five approved cartridges. Revolvers are used one at a time.

With the first revolver, a contestant engages the first designated course of fire (the first half of the stage). Upon completing the first half of the course, the contestant shall holster the now empty revolver and draw the second revolver and

ride to engage the second half of the stage. The Range Master is responsible for making an inspection of the course before riders get their “go.” Course of fire as defined in the riders meeting takes precedent over any printed material.

There shall be no running starts into the arena.

All riders shall start a stage with the gate closed unless false gates are being used. All barrels *must* be plastic and closed at both ends. They may not be closer than 25 feet to the arena side rails and the end rail, and targets shall be set at least 30 feet from the side and end rails.

After completing the stage, the contestant shall immediately report to the Armorer, who will unload both revolvers.

## **TIMING**

Timers are used in SASS Mounted Shooting competitions. Electronic beam timers similar to those used in barrel racing competitions are required for all competitions where SASS points are awarded.

## **SCORING**

SASS Mounted Shooting matches are scored by total elapsed time plus a penalty of five-seconds for each missed target plus any other safety or procedural penalties that may be assessed by the Range Master. The total sum of all stages determines a contestant’s score. The decision of the Range Master is final.

If a contestant wishes to protest the Range Master’s decision, he/she shall do so by filing a \$50 cash protest fee with the Match Director. An Appeals Board for any SASS sanctioned match shall be made up of three experienced SASS MRO-I certified members and one alternate who shall hear the appeal. This Appeals Board shall be set up by the Match Director prior to the shooter’s meeting. No appeal shall be heard, discussed, or pre-vote opinion taken of the Appeals Board until the \$50 is paid in cash to the Match Director. The Appeals Board shall convene at an appropriate time set by the Match Director and listen to the rider’s case. They shall then discuss and vote in private on whether to accept or deny the protest based upon the SASS Mounted Shooters Handbook. If the appeal is granted, the \$50 is returned; if the appeal is rejected the \$50 goes to the club sponsoring the event.

The board of a sponsoring club has sovereignty if no rule or penalty exists in this SASS Mounted Shooters Handbook.

## **PENALTIES**

Penalties are avoided if at all possible. This is accomplished through good stage design and attention to detail. Discretionary penalties have no place in timed events.

1. Penalties shall be restricted to the following:
  - Missed Target: 5 seconds
  - Knocked over barrel: 5 seconds
  - Failure to follow course of fire: 10 seconds
  - Dropped gun: 5 seconds
  - Failure to holster: 5 seconds

- Non Qualified run or maximum time on any run: 99.99 seconds.
  - Unsafe gun handling: 5 seconds PER OCCURRENCE.
  - Loss of hat prior to engaging the course: 10 seconds.
  - Knocking over a gate cone or automated target inflator: 5 seconds.
2. A firearm that is dropped once the course has been engaged is a dead firearm, and the competitor incurs a 5-second penalty plus any missed targets. A competitor who drops a firearm before engaging the course may be removed from his/her place in line until the firearm has been cleaned. No consequences shall be received for a firearm dropped beyond the time line after crossing the finish line at the completion of his/her run.
  3. A Competitor who becomes dismounted during the course of fire receives a non-qualified run.
  4. In the event a firearm comes into contact with the arena floor, that firearm becomes a dead gun. For safety reasons the Range Master or designated match official shall be the only person to pick it up.
  5. Total final time for any ride shall equal no more than 99.99 seconds.
  6. All targets shall be broken by direct gunfire, except as follows. Targets broken by nature prior to the competitor engaging that target shall be shot to be considered a hit. 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. If it is unknown what broke a target and the competitor has shot it, it shall be considered a hit.
  7. No penalty will be given to any competitor for knocking over a target pole unless it is designated as a “gate” in the stage description. The two “targets” that make up a designated gate on a course of fire shall be called “gates.” If a competitor knocks over either target cone or automated target inflator making up a “gate” at any time during the completion of a stage it shall be considered a 5 second penalty.
  8. A competitor shall have been determined to have engaged the course once he/she has crossed the start/finish line and is on the clock. At that point, he/she accepts the stage as it is. Thereafter, any mechanical malfunctions of your firearm or gear, including your horse, shall not constitute a re-ride.
  9. Passing behind the timer. If a contestant passes behind the timer he/she is deemed to be dangerous and out of control and will receive a non-qualified run.
  10. If a contestant re-crosses the time line after completing his/her run and restarts the timer, he/she will NOT be granted a re-ride. If the timing equipment has the ability to access the previous time there will be no penalty. But if the time is unavailable the rider shall receive a non-qualified run.
  11. If a timekeeping error or a timing malfunction has occurred, the competitor shall be granted a re-ride by the Match Director.
  12. If a competitor crosses the timing line prior to completing the course of fire, he/she shall receive a non-qualified run.
  13. The Match Director shall grant re-rides as soon as possible after the completion of that run. Re-rides are given as a new stage. The competitor does not carry forward any misses or a clean stage.
  14. If a run is interrupted, the call for a re-ride is made by the Range Master.

15. The “no alibi” blank rule shall be in place for all SASS sanctioned matches. There shall be no re-rides or scoring adjustments for problems with Mounted Shooting blanks, including squibs, high primers, or misfires.
16. If a competitor hits two targets with one shot, the remaining round may be used to pick up any legal target that may have been missed. This is referred to as the “Two Target Rule.”
17. Gun twirling, shooting behind the back, or other unsafe gun handling techniques shall be a 5 second penalty assessed per occurrence.
18. While competitors are required to wear a cowboy hat, protective headwear, or appropriate headwear at all times in the arena, your hat must remain on top of your head until you have engaged the course. The penalty for a hat falling off prior to engaging the course (crossing the timeline) shall be a 10 second penalty.
19. Competitors may holster and re-holster, but may not have more than one revolver in hand at any given time. Failure to do so will be a 5 second penalty. If a firearm is holstered, then comes out of the holster and into the competitors lap, there will be no penalty as long as the firearm does not touch the arena floor AND it was holstered before leaving the arena.
20. If there is doubt on a call the outcome shall favor the competitor.

## **PROCEDURALS, NON-QUALIFIED RUNS, DISQUALIFICATIONS**

### **Procedural**

Failure to follow the prescribed course as set forth in the course description.

### **Non-Qualified Run**

1. Discharge of a round outside the course of fire (any time or place prior to or after engaging the course) shall incur a 99.99 second penalty for either the previous or next stage at the discretion of the Match Director. If the competitor reloads and shoots the pattern he or she shall be disqualified from the match.
2. Engaging the course without the consent of the Range Master shall be a penalty of 99.99 seconds.
3. Breaking the timer, without engaging the course, before or after the Range Master has given the “ready to ride,” the competitor shall be given a 99.99 second penalty. **NO WARNINGS SHALL BE GIVEN.**
4. If a competitor loads and/or shoots six rounds from the same gun in a stage, match officials (Range Masters for the event or Match Director or his/her designated representative) have the right to inspect any and all firearms before or following a competitor’s run. SASS expects match officials to exercise good judgment in when and how inspections are performed to create a fair environment for all contestants.
5. Failure to wear the minimum SASS dress requirements.

### **Match Disqualifications**

- 1., Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the range, staging, and shooting areas. This includes all persons, competitors, range officials, guests, or anyone else in these areas.

2. Competitors shall not consume any alcoholic beverage until they have completed all of their shooting for the day and have unloaded, inspected, and stored all of their firearms.
3. Competitors shall not ingest any substance which may affect their ability to participate in a completely safe manner. Both prescription and nonprescription pharmaceuticals that may cause drowsiness or other physical or mental impairment are to be avoided.
4. Abusive language or conduct shall not be tolerated, and at the discretion of the Match Director the offender shall be given a warning or disqualification.
5. Competitors shall have no live ammunition on their person or in their cartridge belts or saddlebags. Only dummy ammunition with inert or fired primers shall be used in cartridge belts.
6. All competitors shall use certified “match supplied” .45 Colt Mounted Shooting blanks. No personal Mounted Shooting blanks of any type are to be used in SASS competition.
7. No abuse of animals shall be allowed. This is a Match Director call, which shall result in expulsion from the match.

## **SAFETY**

SASS Mounted Shooting requires riding and shooting skills of an intermediate to advanced level. Persons unsure of their own skill level should contact the Match Director about qualifications, practice, and pre-match training clinics.

All contestants are responsible for their own personal safety and the safety of their mount. Every contestant is a designated safety officer and should always be alert for unsafe conditions or unsafe conduct by others. Any contestant should take immediate action to remedy any unsafe condition or confront anyone whose conduct is unsafe.

No contestant shall discharge a firearm in the direction of the spectators unless he is more than thirty feet from the edge of the arena and the Match Director has given approval.

The Match Director shall designate a Range Master whose job is to determine safety during the course of each stage. The Range Master shall be responsible for ensuring the course is safe to engage and all personnel are out of the arena or in an area that is considered safe. He/she shall ensure all targets are up to par and the stage is the same for all contestants. No rider shall be allowed to engage the course until cleared by the Range Master. He/she shall have the authority to stop the contest at any time he/she believes the area has become unsafe for the rider or other persons. Should the ride be stopped for safety reasons, the contestant will receive a re-ride.

The Range Master is designated by the Match Director to determine violation of any match rules. He/she makes decisions regarding procedurals, rules of engagement, and other items defined herein. The Match Director has the right to remove or disqualify anyone from a stage or match for poor sportsmanship, animal abuse, or flagrant violation of safety guidelines and rules set forth in this SASS Mounted Shooters Handbook.

**Safety Guidelines and Rules**

1. All firearms shall be treated as if they are loaded at all times. “Spinning” the six-gun is not allowed.
2. All firearm loading and unloading shall be accomplished by the Armorer, a special designated match official, or as directed.
3. All firearms shall remain holstered except when loading, unloading, or preparing to engage a course.
4. Do not cock a firearm until immediately prior to engaging a target.
5. Competitors are expected to compete safely within their individual capabilities at all times. Do not try to “over ride” your own horsemanship skills and remember to be mindful of your firearm muzzle direction at all times.
6. Never look at the cylinder front to verify the revolver is loaded.
7. All competitors must be knowledgeable and proficient in the safe use of their firearms.
8. Riders have final responsibility to make sure their firearms are loaded, check for missing or dented primers, cylinders rotate freely, and to be certain they are correctly indexed prior to stage engagement. The Armorer is not responsible.
9. Abusive language or conduct shall not be tolerated, and at the discretion of the Range Master, the offender shall be given a warning or disqualification.
10. Any new shooter orientation shall be conducted prior to competition.
11. SASS recommends the use of eye and hearing protection at all matches.
12. Be mindful of your mount. Often there are children and other spectators in areas crowded with horses. Be careful.
13. Sweeping any personnel within 40 feet with a firearm is not allowed. The Match Director shall declare a safe zone where all handguns will be holstered.
14. The rider assumes all responsibility for participation in these events.
15. Interpersonal conflicts will not be tolerated.

**Think  
SAFETY...SAFETY...SAFETY!**

**RIDER CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

SASS has adopted a classification system based upon a competitor’s riding and shooting ability. All points matches also earn riders qualifying move-up wins if the following criteria are met. All riders are classified in six Divisions, a Senior Division, and a Junior Division. The six basic Divisions and the Senior Divisions are further divided into “ladies only” Divisions. There are no “men’s” Divisions. For example, there is a Division Three and a Ladies Division Three. Ladies may compete in either one. SASS often also recognizes the top male and female mounted competitors, regardless of their competition Division.

Once the designated number of wins has been accumulated, advancement to the next higher Division is automatic. Division advancement for SASS Mounted Shooting is administered by the SASS office. SASS competitors are required to declare their Division classification based upon the following Division advancement protocol. For a win to qualify toward a move-up, the contestant must win his/her

Division by beating at least two other shooters competing in the same Division or a combination of three contestants at that Division level or higher. For example, the competitor beats the only other competitor in his/her Division and two other competitors in higher level Divisions. Members discovered willfully misrepresenting their actual Division will be disqualified from all SASS sanctioned matches at which a competitor's Division was willfully misrepresented. Competitors may be required to show proof of advancement. Copies of event results and other pertinent literature should be retained.

All contestants enter the sport of Mounted Shooting in Division 1. Movement is based upon number of wins in contestant's existing Division. Division 1s must win their Division twice; Division 2 contestants must win their Division three times; Division 3 contestants must win their Division four times; Division 4 competitors must win their Division five times; and Division 5 competitors must win their Division six times. For a win to qualify, there shall be at least three competitors within the appropriate Division, except Division 3, which shall have four competitors, Division 4, which shall have five competitors, and Division 5 which shall have six competitors. Division 5 competitors may also advance to Division 6 by winning the Overall SASS World or National Championship so long as there are 50 or more competitors participating in the event.

**Senior Division:** Any male or female, having attained the age of 50 shall be eligible to ride in a Senior Division.

**Junior Division:** Junior riders are 12 to 15 years of age. Juniors have six months after their sixteenth birthday to make the decision to move down one Division, or remain in the same Division as an adult. Juniors are able to compete for the Overall in their respective gender, but the Junior Division is not separated by gender. The Junior Division can also be broken into two classifications: Open and Limited.

- Open: Any Junior who is Division 4–6.
- Limited: Any Junior who is a Division 1–3.

Junior Division move ups shall be as follows: A full Limited Class consists of three Juniors in any combination of Level 1, 2, or 3 riders of either gender. A full Open Class consists of four Juniors in any combination of Level 4-6 riders of either gender.

All age relevant Divisions shall be allowed the option of moving on January 1 of the competition year in which they turn the appropriate age, or on their birthday, or on December 31 of the competition year in which they turned the appropriate age. Once they choose to move they cannot move back to their previous Division.

SASS recognizes the highest contestant classification given/assigned by any other Mounted Shooting association or organization that has a similar classification system.

**Buckaroos Division:** Any child 11 years old and under may join this division. Buckaroos complete the course on horseback without firearms. Buckaroos should be encouraged to ride the course and shoot at the targets with cap guns or similar props, but these props are not required. A parent or legal guardian shall be present.

## TEAM EVENTS

Teams will generally be assigned by match officials, matching faster riders with slower riders. Other methods may be used on authorization of the Match Director.

## CART SHOOTING

Cart Shooting is a game where the shooter rides in a horse-drawn cart through a 10-target course of fire, shooting the targets as he or she goes. This particular game is ideal for those who don't have their own horse or are otherwise not comfortable competing from horseback, but who want to participate in SASS Mounted Shooting. The term "horse" is used in the following, but includes horses, mules, and donkeys. The term "cart" is used in the following and includes carts, surreys, buggies, and wagons, but not Chariots. SASS rules above govern firearms, ammo, clothing, and SAFETY.

There are three Cart Shooting categories:

1. **Combined Team** – Shooter and driver sign-up and compete as a team.
  - This is a two-person team. One driver and one shooter will compete in the cart.
  - Any penalties are applied to the team. Example: A missed target costs both the driver and the shooter five-seconds.
  - All shots must be taken from the appropriate side of the cart; no "crossover" shots allowed. Shooting with the right hand requires shots be taken off the right side of the cart. Shots taken with the left hand must be taken from the left side of the cart.
  - No shooting across the driver's body.
  - No shooting over or behind the driver's head.
2. **Shotgun Shooter** – Shooters that are assigned to a pre-qualified driver / cart / horse and shoot for fun.
  - Same rules apply as for Combined Team.
3. **Pioneer Cart Shooter** – Competitors that shoot and do their own driving.
  - Only a Pioneer Cart Shooter is allowed to drive his own cart while shooting.
  - May make crossover shots.

The following rules apply for all categories:

1. All carts must be safe and well maintained. Period vehicles are preferred, but not required.
2. Harness must be safe and maintained. Leather preferred.
3. Hitches can consist of one or two horses.
4. Carts shall have seats for both the driver and the shooter.
5. The Match Director determines the course of fire with input from a designated Cart Shooter representative. Cart Shooting scenarios will not always follow the same Mounted Shooting pattern due to turning and safety restrictions.
6. All cart teams are required to attend a Cart Shooters meeting before each stage.
7. Each driver/horse team must prove themselves to be a safe team.

8. In case of a crash or any broken parts after a stage starts, one must STOP IMMEDIATELY. The contestant or team is given a 99.99-second time. One may change carts and/or harness for the next stage and injured horses may be replaced with horses trained for cart operations, as approved by the Match Director.

## **MOUNTED RIFLE SHOOTING**

Cowboy Mounted Rifle Shooting is a side event in SASS Mounted Shooting™. Competitors should be accomplished Mounted Shooters prior to participating in this event.

Rifle competitions may be divided into divisions (Limited 1-3, Open 4-6).

The rifle used shall be of legal length and manufactured prior to 1900 or a reproduction of such a rifle. It shall be a production firearm, not a one of a kind or home-made gun. It shall be a pump action, lever action, or revolving rifle/carbine.

Pump and lever actions shall be .45 Colt, .44-40 or 44 Magnum calibers. The revolving rifle/carbine shall be .45 Colt. Minimum rifle barrel length is 16 inches, with an overall minimum length of 27 inches.

Mounted Shooting rifle blanks for the pump and lever guns shall be “5 in 1” or “3 in 1” blank cartridges. Revolving rifle/carbine ammunition shall be regular certified Mounted Shooting blank ammunition as used in revolvers for Mounted Shooting.

All Mounted Shooting blanks shall be certified and supplied by the Match Director.

All Mounted Shooting rules apply during this event, plus:

- The first five targets are shot with the revolver, the second five with the rifle.
- The competitor must enter the course with an empty chamber in the rifle.
- Failing to cycle the lever or pump action prior to engaging the first rundown target will be a 10 second penalty.
- Failure to hold the stock against the shoulder or under the arm while firing shall result in a 10 second penalty.
- Wavering or extending the arm while firing any rifle/carbine shall be a 10 second penalty. It is highly recommended to follow the manufacturer’s instructions while firing the revolving rifle/carbine.
- The rifle/carbine must be in a saddle-mounted scabbard of traditional leather construction and not be drawn from the scabbard until after the first five targets have been engaged.

## **MOUNTED SHOTGUN SHOOTING**

Cowboy Mounted Shotgun Shooting is a side event within SASS Mounted Shooting™. Competitors should be accomplished Mounted Shooters prior to participating in this event.

Mounted Shotgun competitions may be divided into divisions (Limited 1-3, Open 4-6).

Shotguns used shall be any legal two-barreled, side-by-side “Coachgun” style shotgun. External hammers may be used. Barrels must be a minimum of 18 inches in length with an overall shotgun length of 27 inches.

Mounted Shotgun Shooting is accomplished by engaging the first five targets with a Mounted Shooting revolver; the remaining targets are engaged with the shotgun.

Any gauge shotgun is SASS legal, but if not a .410 caliber, adapters must be used to allow .45 Colt blanks to be used. Mounted Shooting Shotgun blanks shall be supplied by the Match Director and be caliber .45 Colt.

Normal SASS Mounted Shooting rules apply, plus:

- A hand must be holding the forearm of the shotgun while in the act of firing the gun, or a 10 second penalty will be applied.
- The shotgun must start the stage in a saddle-mounted scabbard of traditional leather construction and not be drawn from the scabbard until the first five targets have been engaged.
- The safety shall be on or the external hammers on half-cock prior to crossing the start line.

### **SPIRIT OF THE GAME**

The “Spirit of the Game” or “Code of the West” is a code of conduct and an attitude towards participation in all SASS related activities and competitions. Competing under the “Spirit of the Game” or “Code” means one fully participates in the activities and events without looking for short-cuts or ways to create an unfair advantage out of what is or is not stated in the rules, shooting procedures, or course descriptions. For example, bypassing a target to save time is described as “failure to engage” and is definitely not in keeping with the “Spirit of the Game.” Any participant who does not believe in this “Code of the West” or “Spirit of the Game” should pursue some other sport or activity!

FUN is the main reason for these competitions, and SASS members are among the friendliest people in the world! Riders, shooters, and Old West aficionados all come together as one group to share fun, ideas, horse training techniques, shooting tips, and Old West lore at these events, which are colorful and exciting for competitors and spectators alike.

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