

# 5 DOGS CREEK

## PLANNING A MONTHLY MATCH

### *Planning for the match:*

Well before you begin the detailed planning of your match, decide if you are going to have a theme for your shoot. A theme isn't strictly necessary, but it makes your match unique. Themes don't have to be elaborate. Consider holidays near the match date, a favorite movie, a historical event, or the type of shooting you intend to emphasize (i.e. "lots of shotgun" or "close, big and fast"). Announce your theme at the shooters meeting the month before your match, so shooters know what to expect.

Think up five or six scenarios for each day. The number depends on the expected weather and how long each stage will take to complete. Many people have a long drive home after the match, so the average posse should be able to finish by early afternoon. If you need help with ideas, you can also see sample scenarios at [www.PineyWoodsPlace.com](http://www.PineyWoodsPlace.com) or <http://www.rrccowboy.com/bot1.htm>. Shooters' books from previous annuals also provide examples of well thought-out stages. Your match-planning packet includes a template for each bay to document stage instructions and target layout.

It is critical that the scenarios be coordinated so they take approximately the same amount of time to fire, score and reset...otherwise the "slow" scenario causes a log jam of posses. If you want to include an activity that takes extra time (for instance a pistol reload on the clock), you'll have to make up for it elsewhere in the stage (for instance not shooting any shotgun on that particular stage).

Some of the factors you should consider in making your scenarios of approximately equal length are:

- expected posse size.
- total number of rounds fired.
- number of different guns employed.
- number of targets that require resetting.
- reloading time.
- amount of empty brass to be picked up.
- props that have to be replenished.

Be sure also to look at your plans through the timer operator and scorekeepers eyes. Unclear instructions, overly complicated scenarios, or targets that are difficult to judge as a "hit" or a "miss" make a lot more work for the posse. It is also more likely to result in scoring disputes and complaints by shooters.

After you've drafted your scenarios, consider having another experienced shooter read thru them and ask any clarifying questions. If these questions came up now...you can expect them to come up at match, so include the answers in your written instructions.

Try to evaluate your scenarios thru the eyes of other shooting categories, such as cap-n-ball shooters, ladies, juniors and gunfighters. The match will be shot by EVERYONE. For instance, some shooting positions are difficult in a long dress or when kneeling. If you think there may be limitations for some shooters, provide an alternative for them (i.e. stand next to the prop). Gunfighters expect to be able to fire both pistols at the same time in at least half the scenarios.

Document each scenario on a separate sheet of paper. Documentation should include the layout of the bay, target placement, shooters instructions and ammunition counts. You'll need enough copies of each scenario to provide one to each posse leader and a few spares.

Call or visit the Sheriff (or designated deputy) to review your scenarios for safety issues. It's ALWAYS important to have another experienced shooter review the plans. It is best to review your scenarios with the sheriff/deputy at least two weeks before the match.

Make a list of any special targets/props you'll need and assemble them. The key to our storage shed is available from any member of the Town Council. You can get help from the Storekeeper if needed.

Make contact with potential posse leaders and confirm their availability. Posse leaders should have completed the R.O. I course. The Sheriff can help you identify individuals to lead posses.

### ***Day of the match:***

You should have the bays setup and targets in place at least an hour before the scheduled shooter's meeting. Usually it is best to set up the day or even the week before as it always seems to take longer than expected. It is critical that the range be ready when shooters begin to arrive for sign up.

Ideally, copy of the scenario sheet should be posted at each loading station. This helps a posse move quickly thru the stages, by avoiding questions from the shooter on the firing line.

Arrange a time to walk-through the bays with the Sheriff (or designee) and all posse leaders. This is a detail check of shooter instructions and safety issues. (For instance, making sure all targets are at an appropriate distance and angle). Having this group walk thru ensures that each posse shoots each stage in the same way. This is critical to a fair competition.

During the match, if there are questions about procedures, intent or scoring, you may be asked to work with the Sheriff to resolve them.

### ***After the match :***

It is your responsibility to see that loading tables, carpets and any special props are returned to storage. Don't be shy...shanghai a bunch of shooters and put 'em to work.

Now is your chance to bask in the praise of your fellow shooters for putting on a fun, safe match!!!

## **REMEMBER.....**

1. You don't have to do all the work yourself. Matches are more fun to plan and usually more creative if you work with a couple of partners.
2. The sheriff and his deputies are only a phone call away...and is there to help you.
3. A copy of the SASS Match Directors Guide is attached for use as guidelines and ideas. It is written mainly with large matches in mind, so some of the details may not be necessary for a monthly club match.
4. In hot months, the weather IS a safety concern. Stages need to be straight-forward, with minimal resets, so that shooters can finish before the hottest part of the afternoon.
5. Many of our shooters will drive 2 hours to shoot the match. They expect a chance to shoot enough to justify the trip (figure at least 50 pistol, 50 rifle, and 20 shotgun).
6. If you want to try something out of the ordinary, limit yourself to once per stage at most. If you have an unusual shooting sequence, try to use the same sequence for all guns in that stage.

7. Consider taking the RO II course when it is offered. RO II is focused on stage design.
8. ***SAFETY COMES FIRST, LAST AND ALWAYS.***

*Rev 5/07 dpm*