

A Shooter's Preparation for a Competition Match

ASK yourself "What are you going to do at your next shoot?"

If the answer is "I don't know", don't despair. There are a lot of shooters who have no plan of attack or game plan to which they will adhere during their next shoot.

A shooting plan may not make anyone shoot any better, but it will help with approaching the event with added confidence knowing that all the preparation has been done in training and it is about to be carried out.

Making a plan simply means that: writing down what is required to perform well in whichever event is chosen.

A SAMPLE SHOOTING PLAN

(Centre Fire precision)

When I arrive at the range I will familiarize myself with the surroundings and find out in which shooting bay I will shoot. When it is time to set up for shooting, I will prepare my equipment and then sit down quietly to prepare my thoughts for the match.

I will use the sighting series as a test to see whether I am really seeing the sights and whether I am applying a smooth trigger release, being sure to only shoot for a group.

I will work for an early shot release because I have found that this gives me the best results. This I can achieve with pre-loading the trigger pressure whilst settling into my area of hold. I am able to hold well inside the 9 ring, so if the trigger press is carried out smoothly, all the shots should be within this area.

The application which I shall follow for each shot is:

I raise the pistol with the trigger finger on the trigger and feel the pad pressure being taken up.

With the pistol above the target, I lower it whilst seeing the sights roughly aligned and slowly come down through the centre of the target.

As the pistol comes down through the target and the sights come through the centre of the black, I slow down slightly to maintain control over the pistol and begin to really strive for correct sight alignment.

During this stage I increase the trigger pressure so that, as the pistol 'pauses' under the black, within my area of hold, I am striving to achieve good sight alignment whilst pressing the trigger. I will achieve a 'surprise' break as the pistol settles in the area if this technique is followed.

Having fired the shot, I maintain follow-through on the sights and the trigger pressure.

Analysis of the shot will be in three steps.

1. *Was I seeing sights?*
2. *Did I have a positive, smooth trigger release?*
3. *Did I follow-through on the sights and maintain trigger pressure after shot release?*

Any deviation from these 3 aspects will mean that some part of my plan has not been carried out. I will then go back through the plan to re-assess the objectives of firing a good shot.

A plan should be written for a particular shoot coming up at least two weeks prior and read the plan twice a day for the first week and once a day for the second week. Then, on the morning of the shoot, go through it again. At no stage should the written plan be changed during these two weeks. If it is done, it shows a lack of confidence in the technique used.

Once into the event, you should only be concerned with the three elements of analysis. The plan should not be read during the shoot as this may give self doubt. The shot should be analysed and then, depending on the outcome of the result, work done on the aspect which caused a break-down of the shot.

For instance, a shot is fired. The shot is called left and a '9' nominated. The shot is left, but a '7'. Go through the check list of the three elements. Perhaps the sights were not seen as well as possible, hence the bad shot call.

RE-PLAN the next shot to emphasise 'seeing sights'.

It does not matter how long the plan is, but it needs to be explicit in its instructions on how a shot is to be fired. This is only a guide for a plan and should not be followed word for word. It is important that plans are made for each event and each shoot. No plan should be used more than once, as perception of the importance of different events can change from day to day and month to month.