

NJACC Competition Rules

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present the rules for running and participating in scheduled NJACC shooting competition events. These rules are intended to govern any NJACC Competition Event. However, event-specific rules in the match bulletin for the event will provide more detailed information on the matches and the firearms eligible for the matches within the particular event. The match bulletin will also provide information about the theme, location, date and times, and awards (if any) for match winners.

The NRA format for their rule books was used as an outline for the NJACC rules to make the rules easier to navigate for those familiar with the NRA books. However, the NJACC rules are by nature of the events much shorter, simpler, and less formal.

As these rules are modified over time, the current copy of the rules should be available for download on the NJACC web site.

The goals for documenting the rules include:

- Make the upfront rules more fair and effective so that competitors approaching the Match Director last minute with requests for rulings will have had a document to review before the match and so the Match Director has a written set of rules to use as a guideline for making a ruling.
- Provide a set of written rules that allows competitors to objectively protest a perceived use of questionable equipment
- Produce a set of rules that foster friendly competition yet avoid having competitors “game the system” with unfair procedures or equipment
- Have rules that encourage use of original equipment (rather than tricked-out or non-historic equipment) and marksmanship

Spirit of the Events

There are plenty of NRA sponsored events that are intended for serious shooting competitions with modern match-conditioned rifles and pistols. The rules for those events are very formal and detailed. The firearms used (maybe with the exception of “service” category firearms) can be conditioned or modified under the rules to improve the performance of the firearm solely for purposes of the competition. The improvements can include substituting factory parts with “better” aftermarket parts that may improve performance with or without changing the appearance of the firearm.

Rather than trying to duplicate the intent of NRA events, the NJACC events are intended to allow owners

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of original historic firearms (and accurate replicas) to shoot these firearms in an unaltered or “unimproved” condition at less formal (more fun and greater camaraderie, yet very safety-conscious) historic firearms shooting events. Like vintage car racing where the rules are intended to produce entertaining events that feature the cars rather than the drivers, NJACC events are intended to encourage the use of unaltered and original (and replica) firearms in friendly marksmanship competition rather than fostering head-to-head serious competitions with anonymous “race guns”.

Locations

The NJACC events take place at established outdoor and indoor shooting ranges, either the NJACC Range or at another range where we have obtained permission to run an event. In all cases, event procedures and participant activity and behavior must abide by the rules of the range and the club that owns the range. Specific range and club rules that are more stringent than NJACC club rules or the NJACC Competition Rules (for example, range safety rules) will take precedence if in conflict with these rules.

Interpretation of the Rules

Any competitor can protest or challenge the use of a particular firearm for a particular match. Any participant can approach an official about perceived safety or rules violations. The Match Director for the event has final say as to the eligibility of a particular firearm or modification for a particular match and final decisions regarding safety or rules violations. In making the decision the Match Director may consult with others to obtain more information before making his/her decision. The Match Director can disqualify a shooter who he or she believes is refusing to adhere to the rules, or is acting in an unsafe or disruptive manner.

Eligibility of Competitors

General

NJACC events are open to all responsible competitors who are legally eligible to own, handle or shoot the firearm(s) at the event. It is the shooter’s responsibility to accurately determine and communicate their eligibility.

Junior

Minors under the age of 18 can only participate under the direct supervision of a parent or guardian. In addition to competing in any individual matches, minors can also compete in “junior only” matches if included in the event.

Female

In addition to competing in any individual matches, females can also compete in “female only” matches if included in the event.

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Physically Disabled Shooters

Physically disabled shooters who can safely handle and fire the firearm can participate in the competition. Rules that would be difficult for the shooter (such as position) will be relaxed to accommodate the shooter's disability.

Equipment and Ammunition

General

In general, the intent of the rules is to support the use of as issued or as used versions of military and historic firearms. Modifications to the firearm such as aftermarket non-original style stocks or modified stocks, non-original bedding of the stock, replacement sights, modified or replacement triggers, aftermarket barrels that differ in dimensions from the issued barrel, etc. are not allowed for matches that specify use of a military version of a firearm. However, cosmetic modifications that do not affect historical accuracy such as stock or metal refinishing are allowed. The substitution of taller than issued front sight blades of otherwise approximately the same dimensions is allowed for rifles and carbines to accommodate firearms with an otherwise minimum sight setting greater than 100 yards. Modifying a rear sight blade such as gluing an aperture onto an open rear sight ladder is allowed. Replacing an open rear sight ladder with an aftermarket aperture style ladder is allowed.

Replica Firearm

Because some original firearms may be too old to fire safely or too rare and expensive to fire, accurate aftermarket replicas are acceptable. To be eligible the replica must be true to the original and cannot include "improvements" (modern or different sights, stock bedding, heavier barrels, etc.) that provide competitive advantage over an original. Other than for sniper matches or as specified in the match bulletin, telescopic and other optical sights are not allowed.

Rules for Specific Firearms

M1A, AR-15

Since it is not legal in NJ to possess or shoot true military issue M-14 rifles and M-16/M-4 rifles and carbines, NJACC matches allow substitution of NJ-legal service grade M1A and AR-15 type firearms. Versions of these firearms that conform to the NRA Service Rifle definitions (per NRA High Power rules) can be used in the appropriate matches. Optical sights are not allowed for service category non-sniper firearms.

M1 Garand

M1 Garand rifles should conform to an "As-issued M1 Garand" condition (see NRA rules) and not include modifications like national match barrels and sights or bedded stocks.

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NJ Legal AK-style rifles

Since true AK rifles are not permitted in NJ, only NJ-legal AK style replicas are permitted. These replicas must be in a military configuration. Sporting rifle versions with different sights, stocks with different dimensions, heavier or longer barrels, etc. are not permitted.

1911 and 1911A1 Pistols

Shooters are encouraged to use authentic ex-military 1911 and 1911A1 pistols. Period-specific Colt (or licensed copy) commercial versions are also acceptable. In all cases, it is not permissible to use original 1911 or 1911A1 pistols or their “replicas” if they are modernized beyond the military issued standards. For example, Colt Series 70 or 80 series models or equivalents from other manufacturers, stainless steel copies, modifications like larger or different sights, grips of a different size or grips made from different materials, internal competition add-ons like match barrels and bushings, competition triggers, etc. are not allowed.

Sniper Rifles

Original military sniper rifles with original scopes are encouraged. Replicas using original or correct rifles with authentic or reproduction scopes and mounts are permitted (e.g., Gibbs reproductions of the 03A4 sniper rifle). Original rifles with modern or not as-issued scopes are not permitted to be used as period military sniper rifles.

Ammunition

General

It is the shooter’s responsibility to use ammunition that is correct and safe for the particular firearm. Although use of appropriate surplus or commercially produced ammunition is encouraged, hand loaded or reloaded ammunition is allowed. Black powder, black powder substitutes, or duplex loads cannot be used in indoor matches. Where applicable, use of stripper clips and spare magazines is permitted.

Black Powder Cartridges

Unless otherwise specified in the rules, black powder can be used, as can black powder substitutes (such as Pyrodex), a safe and appropriate smokeless powder loading, or a safe and appropriate duplex load.

Muzzle Loading Firearms

Black powder muzzle loaded firearms can be loaded with a safe load of Pyrodex or other black powder substitute, but NOT smokeless powder.

Other Equipment

Benches

Range-supplied shooting benches are available at the ranges used. Individual competitors can provide their own benches as long as they do not offer competitive advantages over the range-provided benches.

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Shooting Rests

During the initial sight-in period, any front or rear rest is allowed.

During matches, all pistol shooting is done from an unsupported position and no rests are allowed.

Only front rests (commercial front rests, sandbags, wooden blocks, etc.) are allowed for muskets, rifles and carbines during matches. The shooter must shoulder the rear of the rifle or carbine. No part of the firearm can touch the bench while shooting. Rear rests are not permitted. Front rests that provide more than 8" of support for the forearm are not permitted unless turned sideways to reduce the "length" to 8" or less. Front rests may not provide a channel in which to rest the rifle. Shooting sticks are allowed for shooting in non-bench positions unless otherwise stipulated in the match-specific rules.

Clothing

Shooters are encouraged to wear weather-appropriate clothing, particularly military uniforms or period clothing. Formal competition shooting coats and other clothing that provides artificial shooting support are prohibited.

Gloves

Gloves are permitted for long arms and handguns as long as they do not provide additional support.

Slings

The use of shooting slings is permitted for use as per NRA High Power rules for all positions other than when using a front rest in the prone position or when using a front rest on the bench.

Shooting Mats

Shooting mats can be used when shooting in the prone position.

Spotting Scopes

Spotting scopes used by the shooter are allowed.

Wind Flags

Individual competitors can use wind flags up to 24" in front of their shooting position.

Eye and Ear Protection

Eye protection (at a minimum eye glasses) and hearing protection (plugs or muffs) are required at all times when on the firing line.

Open Bolt Indicator

An open bolt indicator ("OBI", "flag", "empty chamber indicator", or "ECI") must be put in the firearm while it is unattended on the bench or shooting area and whenever the firearm must be "made safe" before going downrange to change targets. Firearms must be cased until brought to the firing line and only one firearm can be uncased at a bench at one time.

Targets and Frames

Paper targets are stapled or taped onto the range-appropriate target stands and backers. The specific match targets will be listed in the match bulletin and will be supplied.

Frames can be range-supplied or supplied by the individual shooter. Individually supplied frames must conform to range rules. If the frame and target size allows, up to four rifle targets can be attached to a single target frame. Up to two pistol targets can be attached to a pistol frame. Only one target frame is allowed per shooter.

Positions

Musket, Rifle and Carbine: NRA standard positions (standing, sitting, kneeling, prone) or seated at bench with or without a front rest

Handguns: Unsupported standing, one handed hold unless the match rules allow a two-handed hold

Courses of Fire

Matches

Each match at an event ("series of matches") is separate from the other matches. The match bulletin describes the number of matches, the name and number of each match, the eligible firearms, the distance, the number of rounds to be fired, and the time limit for each match.

During registration the competitor will receive a full set of targets for the total number of matches in the event's match series if entering the full series. If the competitor is registering only for specific matches, he or she will get only the targets for the specific matches being entered. Unused match targets can be used for re-fires in the same event but cannot be used for other NJACC events. Unused targets cannot be given to other competitors for their use for entry at a match.

Shooting benches and firing points are available to shooters on a first-come basis. If there are more shooters than benches or firing points, under the Match Director's discretion, shooters may be able to share positions if accommodations can be made without unfairly penalizing the shooter already at the bench.

Initial Sight-in Period

During the initial sight-in period competitors can take unlimited sighter or practice shots at an unlimited number of practice targets. There will be multiple opportunities for cease fires to allow target changes during the sight-in period. Sight-in targets cannot be entered for score.

Match Periods and Match Sets

During the events, a competitor can mount up to four targets on a frame at one time (two targets per frame for indoor pistol matches). A “match period” is the timed period intended for shooting one match. A “match set” is the set of match periods between cease fires for target changes. Within a match period a competitor can shoot in any one of the matches for which they are registered. Competitors can shoot at only one target for score during any one timed match period and cannot shoot at the same target for score in multiple match periods. If a shooter runs out of time during a match period and fires for example only 9 shots on a 10 shot match target, the shooter cannot shoot a 10th shot on the same target during a different match period during the match set or during a subsequent match set. The shooter can either hand in the 9 shot target for scoring or re-fire the entire target. Match periods can also be used for additional non-scored practice and for sighters on non-match targets. After each four match set (two for pistol) there will be a cease fire to allow shooters to remove and retrieve the completed targets and put up new targets. Completed targets for score should be submitted to the Official Scorer after each match set. Competitors can fire the matches in any sequence and can shoot re-fires of any match during any match period.

Re-Fires

Competitors can choose to re-fire any given match. To re-fire a match if the shooter has used up all of his or her match targets, the shooter obtains a new match target from the Official Scorer by paying a match re-entry fee for each re-fire. The shooter can submit the original target and or the re-fired target(s) for score. Only the highest scoring target will count for the competitor for the match. If multiple targets are submitted by a competitor, the “second best” target is NOT used for tie-breaking.

Competition Regulations

“Coaching”

Coaching (e.g., a spotter looking through a scope saying “you hit the 7 ring at 3 o’clock”, etc.) is permitted during the sight-in period before the start of the first match. Because the matches are time-limited individual competitions and coaching provides the competitor with a time-saving advantage by the shooter not having to look through a spotting scope during the timed match, coaching is not permitted after the initial sight-in period. However, the parent or guardian of a junior shooter is allowed to coach his/her junior shooter during a match. Other than coaching junior shooters, after the initial sight-in period, only the shooter is allowed to be on the firing line and only the shooter can handle the firearm and ammunition.

Smoking

To insure the safety of all participants (particularly black powder shooters), smoking is not allowed on or near the firing line.

Range Commands, Controls and Operations

Discipline

All competitors, officials, and spectators must pay constant attention to the careful and safe handling of firearms and caution when moving about the range. When self-discipline is lacking it is the duty of range personnel to enforce discipline and the duty of competitors to assist in such enforcement. Any person should loudly call a “CEASE FIRE” in case of an emergency or an unsafe condition requiring a cease fire command.

Safety

Competitors are responsible for following NRA safety rules at all times. All uncased firearms, loaded or not, must be kept pointed downrange. All firearms are to be kept unloaded, magazines removed, and with actions open except when shooting and as directed by a range officer. Open bolt indicator flags must be in place while the firearm is unattended and at all times when the range has been declared “safe” for target changes. When the range is called “safe” or “cold” (for example when allowing competitors to go downrange to change targets), no one is allowed to touch firearms and everyone must step back from the firing line until the range is called “hot”.

Policing Range

Each competitor is responsible for policing their firing point (removing their spent brass and other debris prior to leaving their firing point).

Firing Line Procedure and Commands

The Match Director or his/her designate will call the line, indicating when the range is “hot” (OK to handle firearms) or “cold” (or “safe”, for participants to go forward of the firing line for target changes).

Range commands will include but are not limited to the following: THE LINE IS HOT, LOAD AND MAKE READY, THE “X” MINUTE FIRING PERIOD WILL BEGIN ON MY COMMAND, READY ON THE RIGHT – READY ON THE LEFT – READY ON THE FIRING LINE, COMMENCE FIRING, CEASE FIRE, MAKE YOUR FIREARMS SAFE, THE LINE IS SAFE AND YOU MAY GO FORWARD AND CHANGE TARGETS, etc. A whistle can be used to indicate the beginning and end of a firing period. (Note: “X” or “X minute” as used above is defined as a specific period of time in minutes or seconds given by the Match director or his/her delegate.)

Tournament Officials

Match Director

The Match Director is responsible for the content of the match bulletin and for the overall running of the event. The Match Director is responsible for items like calling the line, range safety, rule enforcement, decisions regarding eligibility of firearms for particular matches, etc.

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Official Scorer

One person designated by the Match Director will serve as the Official Scorer. The Official Scorer is responsible for event registration, collection of fees, distribution of blank targets, scoring targets, and determining match winners. He or she will make the final determination for scoring the targets. He or she may delegate others to help with scoring.

Others

The Match Director may assign some of his or her responsibilities to other match participants who are not shooting at the time. For example, a Range Officer, a Range Safety Officer, cook, etc. may be assigned.

Target Scoring

Targets will be scored after removing them from the frame after a match or set of matches. NRA scoring rules will be used to determine the score. The targets can be pre-scored by the shooter or another person but the scoring will be reviewed by the Official Scorer and corrected as needed. The shooter is responsible for getting his or her targets to the Official Scorer on a timely basis. Each shooter is responsible for making sure that each submitted target includes his or her name, the match name and or number, and the name of the firearm used. Targets not correctly identified will not be accepted for scoring and will not be included for match results.

Decisions of Ties

Where more than one shooter has the same high score for a particular match, the winning target will be determined in the following order:

1. By the greatest number of X's
2. By the fewest misses
3. By the fewest hits of the lowest value
4. By the fewest hits of the next lowest value, etc.
5. By the smallest overall group size

If these tie-breakers are not sufficient, multiple winners and trophies will be awarded.

In the case of single shot sniper competitions, the target with a single hit closest to a "dead center" X is the winner.