

Florida 4-H Shooting Sports

General Rules

The Florida 4-H follows the guidelines for the State Shooting Sports Events as established by National 4-H Headquarters at the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

By entries in these events, the team coach or shooting sports program coordinator verifies that those youth entered are bona fide members of the 4-H program in their respective counties, knowledgeable and proficient in the safe use of the equipment, and knowledgeable of the general rules of the events. Match and/or range officials may dismiss or disqualify any participant if he/she believes the participant does not demonstrate the basic proficiency and knowledge required.

The Florida 4-H Shooting Sports Program consist of 7 disciplines with 3 events in each.

Discipline	Event 1	Event 2	Event 3
Archery – Compound	Field Round (1/2 course)	FITA Round (1/2 FITA)	3-D Round
Archery – Recurve	FITA round (1/2 FITA)	Field Round (1/2 course)	3-D Round
Air Rifle	3-Position Sporter	Sporter – Standing	Silhouette
Hunting	Wildlife ID & Management	Hunter Decision-Making	Hunting Skills
Muzzle-Loading	50 Yard Bullseye	25 Yard Bottles & Haffner Combo	Silhouette
Shotgun	Sporting Clays	Trap	Skeet
Smallbore Rifle	Silhouette	CMP Sporter	3-Position

The above chart is not a firing order. Firing orders will be provided upon check-in prior to the start of the match. Every effort will be made to provide practice or warm-up time on the day prior to each event.

I. PARTICIPATION

1. **4-H Membership** – All 4-H Shooting Sports members in good standing and meeting the criteria below are eligible to compete in 4-H Shooting Sports events, subject to limitations imposed by the specific event and the rules for active membership instituted by their county. Official 4-H enrollment is required.

2. **Age Requirements** – Participants will abide by the state 4-H age requirements. Juniors ages 8 -10, Intermediates ages 11 – 13 and seniors ages 14 – 18. All ages are based on the age of the participant as of September 1 of the current 4-H year. Junior shooters are permitted to shoot ONLY Archery and Air Rifle.

3. **Official Entry** – Participants and teams must be approved as the official entry of the county they represent.

4. **Individual Participation** – All individuals participating as team members will compete concomitantly as individuals. Where teams cannot be formed, individual participants may compete in the state events for individual awards and recognition.

5. **Team Composition** – Teams are composed of no less than 3 and no more than 4 individuals.

6. **Team Representation** – No participant may be a member of more than one team or represent more than one 4-H Shooting Sports Program or county. This does not preclude individuals who change residences and are otherwise eligible from participating as members on any team in 4-H events after meeting the eligibility requirements of the sponsoring program.

7. **Event Participation** – Each of the seven disciplines in this competition includes three events. Each participant is expected to complete all individual events in any discipline they represent.

8. **Event Selection** – *The management of each discipline may select one or all three events as a state competition. The guidelines and events can go up to but may NOT exceed the distances, number of shots or time limits set forth in the Rules.*

9. **Substitutions** – A team may send a substitute for a registered participant who is unable to attend a state match.

II. AWARDS & SCORING PROCEDURES

Awards

Overall Recognition – High overall individuals and high overall teams will be recognized based upon the results from all of the events offered. Members of the top 3 teams and top 10 individuals in each discipline are recognized.

Medals – 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place team members and individuals

Ribbons – 4th – 10th place individuals

Plaques – Each of the top 3 teams will receive a team plaque.

Scoring

Because of the desire for each event and discipline to have equal standing in determining “overall” awards, various methods of scoring have been used. Whether raw scores, placement points or percentage points are used in determining awards at the state competitions ---- none is perfect. This is because of the different shooting events for each team category; each with varying degrees of difficulty.

Ties

Ties will only be broken to determine top 10 individuals and top 3 team awards. Each event has its own specific method for breaking tie scores.

III. EQUIPMENT AND FIREARMS CHECK-IN

1. All firearms and archery equipment, including air rifles, must be checked in prior to the start of the competition. Spot checks of equipment may take place on the range prior to or after any event. Spot checks, prior to or after any event, are permitted and likely. Competitors whose equipment does not meet the event standards will be given an opportunity to adjust or to modify equipment to bring it into compliance prior to a second check. Check-in staff may be able to assist in that process if needed. Equipment failing to meet specifications during spot checks will result in disqualification.

IV. RANGE PROTOCOLS

Note: in this section “firearm” is broadly defined to include all rifles, shotguns, and muzzle loading arms regardless of type or action, including air guns. Range safety protocols will be strictly and vigorously enforced.

1. Firearms will be the last piece of equipment brought to the range by the competitor and the first piece of equipment to be removed from the range at the end of each event. When

moving among positions, e.g. to different firing points in silhouette, the action must be open, the clear bore indicator in place and the muzzle pointed in a safe direction. In shotgun events, a visibly open action is sufficient.

2. All firearms will remain cased until the competitor prepares to take the range for their relay and the range officer has declared the range ready. The clear bore indicators must be in place until the shooter is on the firing line and will be replaced in the action prior to leaving the firing range. This does not apply to shotguns where the open actions permit visual observation by range staff.

3. Muzzle loading rifles will have a marked ramrod in the barrel except while loading or firing. Loading will take place at the loading line.

4. No direct loading from bulk containers, cans, bottles, powder horns, etc. is permitted.

a. Charges shall be transferred from horn or flask to the muzzle using a powder measure or similar device.

b. Capping or charging will take place on the firing line.

c. Upon a cease fire, any muzzleloading rifle shooter with a loaded rifle shall keep the rifle pointed down range and raise a hand to signal that he/she has a loaded firearm. The range officer shall issue the command, "Dump it in the hill", and the shooter shall fire into the berm to clear the rifle.

5. Except while actually measuring a powder charge, no powder container shall be left open. Any open container will be confiscated by range staff.

6. Break action shotguns must be opened immediately upon being uncased with the muzzle pointed in a safe direction until they are placed in the racks on the range. Shotguns must be carried from station to station with the action open and the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.

7. No competitor shall rest the muzzle of a shotgun or any other firearm on a shoe, toe pad or similar device such that the muzzle points at any part of an individual's body.

8. Bows may be drawn only on approved ranges with the permission of the range staff. Under no circumstance is "sky-drawing" permitted.

9. Deliberate shooting or attempting to shoot any living animal while on competitive ranges is grounds for ejection from the event or from the match.

10. Muzzleloading rifle competitors must review the limits on powder charges in silhouette. Damage to targets will require a replacement fee and reduction in the load to eliminate such damage.

V. PRACTICE ROUNDS

1. Practice rounds will be squadded with an effort to give all competitors who wish to practice an opportunity to do so. Practice on all ranges where it is permitted will be supervised by State Staff. Efforts to allow all those wishing to practice have an opportunity to do so, practice will be squadded and monopolization of ranges will not be permitted.

2. Where practice on competition ranges is not permitted, shoot management will attempt to provide an alternative practice site.

3. Where practice is not permitted on competition ranges, no shooter, coach or other individual aside from authorized range staff shall preview, walk, scout, use range finding devices, or attempt to inform competitors of shooting distances, shot placement, or other information designed to give the shooter an advantage. 3-D archery, hunting live fire and sporting clays are examples.

VI. HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Medical Consent Form and Adult Supervision – It is the responsibility of each team to have the appropriate health consent and release forms for each participant. An adult supervisor or coach must be present at each event site with immediate access to those forms during events. They must also have access to them in off hours.

2. Safety – Safety is the first priority for range staff, participants, coaches and spectators. Standard and accepted range and shooting safety rules will be followed at all times. Any site specific safety considerations will be announced at the appropriate venue. Match directors, range officers or other event staff may caution, warn, or eject any person on any range for unsafe behavior. Such ejection may result in forfeited scores, disqualification or ejection from the grounds. Any spectator contributing to unsafe behavior or rules violations may be barred from the ranges by the State Committee or event management at any level.

3. Cell Phones & Other Electronic Devices

a. Except in emergency situations, cell phones, radios, or other electronic communication devices may not be used on or in the immediate vicinity of competitive ranges during active competition.

b. Essential communication may take place off the ranges where the process will not interfere with participants in any venue or compromise safe operation of the range.

4. Ranging, Walking or Previewing Ranges – In any contest where estimating ranges is inherent in the contest, use of range finders, previewing ranges, communicating distances to later competitors or similar actions are forms of cheating. As such it is grounds for disqualification for any individual or team involved in such actions.

5. Eye and Ear Requirement

a. Eye Protection: Adequate eye protection (shooting glasses, safety glasses or safety goggles, or hardened prescription glasses are required for all competitors in black powder, rifle and shotgun games. This includes hunting live fire events. Such protection is strongly advised for archery events as well. Coaches or spectators on or near firing lines are subject to the same requirements.

b. Ear Protection: In hunting live-fire, muzzleloading, shotgun and smallbore, all competitors and those on firing lines must have adequate hearing protection. Where electronic hearing protection is used, it may not include radio or similar broadcasts as background noise, since that could interfere with range commands. This protection is strongly advised for spectators who are close to such ranges.

VII. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

1. Participants with Physical Disabilities: A participant who cannot fire from one or more prescribed shooting positions as outlined in the rules or who must use special equipment when firing may petition for permission to assume a special position or to use specialized equipment or both. Evaluation of the request requires exact duplicate photographs of the position or equipment and its proposed use and a medical doctor's statement if the disability is not clearly and completely evident. Those instances require a written petition supported by a physician's written statement detailing the problem, the physical issues preventing the use of standard position or positions or modifications in equipment required to permit participation in the event. Such petition must be supported by exact duplicate photographs of the position or equipment and its proposed use. The petition must be accompanied by a medical doctor's statement if the physical disability is not completely evident in the pictures submitted. An individual with a disability, for purposes of reasonable accommodation, is defined as a person who has a physical impairment substantially limiting one or more major life activities.

Those with lower body injuries, temporary or permanent, may shoot from a wheel chair, using the wheels as their feet and the next more challenging positions for those they cannot

assume.

2. Filing a Petition for Accommodations:

a. Petition Review – Each petition will be reviewed by the State 4-H Shooting Sports Committee. The committee may require additional or supplementary statements or pictures. After review the Match Director will be instructed by the committee to issue special authorization to individuals who submit petitions and pictures which have been approved.

b. Carrying Authorization – Participants who have received special authorization will be required to carry them when competing and to present the certificate when requested by officials of the match.

VIII. COACHING

1. Coaching – Only one official coach may represent each team. The designated coach is the only adult permitted to discuss procedures, ask questions, or advocate for his/her team with range officials. The coach must be designated on the official entry form and approved by the appropriate County 4-H Agent or their official representative.

2. Event Coaching – As a general rule, limited coaching is permitted in each event. Coaches may not create a disturbance, upset either their competitors or others, create unnecessary delays, or otherwise interfere with the safe and efficient operation of the range and execution of the matches. The coach may assist participants during prep time, setting up equipment, spotting sightseer shots, and offering positive advice and support. Unless called to the line by range officials, coaches will remain in the coaches; area. The coach's area will be set up behind the competitor ready line. Once record shooting begins, no coaching is permitted unless initiated by the shooter through the range officer and with his/her permission. Coaches may NOT initiate contact with their shooters. Coaches may not handle firearms or equipment once the match has begun, nor may they advance to the firing line unless authorized by the range officer. Coaches may use spotting scopes to observe shot placement. Specific coaching instruction may be issued on the ranges for each event.

3. Spotters and Scorers in Silhouette Matches – Team members may be split into different relays to permit shooters to spot for one another. Teams with three competitors may have one of the original pair spot for the third team member. Quiet conversation between the spotter and the shooter is permissible. An official scorer, either from another team or an event official will be assigned as an official scorer. Match directors will provide instruction as needed for scorers.

IX. CONDUCT

1. 4-H Image and Honor - the Florida 4-H Shootings Sports is a youth event showcasing a major component of the 4-H Program in the individual counties. Its nature demands that all of us involved in the event from the match directors and the state coordinators to the young people, parents and coaches participating must put forward the best image of the 4-H Shooting Sports Program and the 4-H Program in general. To protect that public image, use of alcoholic beverages and any use of tobacco products by minors is not permitted on the grounds of any 4-H shooting sports facility. Violation of this policy is grounds for disqualification and dismissal from the Florida 4-H Shooting Sports activities.

2. Dress Code – Participants are expected to dress appropriately for the events in which they participate. Team uniforms or shirts are encouraged but not required. Both young people and adults should wear appropriate for the weather while remaining modest and socially acceptable. Clothing with sexually suggestive wording or graphics; and alcohol or tobacco advertisement is not appropriate. Range officials will enforce dress codes, if required. All participants and coaches must remember that they may be photographed or interviewed for use by local or regional media. That means that each of us represents all of 4-H Shooting Sports. Let's do all we can to make sure that is a positive image!

3. Footwear Policy – Any participant while on the shooting line or shooting in any outdoor shooting event is required to wear shoes that completely cover their feet. Examples of footwear that are not acceptable include, but not limited to: sandals, clogs, crocks, flip-flops, and bare feet.

4. Behavior and Sportsmanship – All participants, coaches and spectators will demonstrate the highest levels of sportsmanship, supporting the objectives and ideals promoted by the 4-H Program in general and the 4-H Shooting Sports Program in particular. Participants or coaches will render aid and/or testimony if asked to do so by any match official. All participants, coaches, and observers are expected to conform to appropriate state 4-H Code of Conduct, expectations or volunteer agreements, as well as to the State 4-H Shooting Sports Program Code of Conduct, not only to the letter, but in its intent.

5. Knowledge of Rules and Procedures – Where possible, each event in this program has been associated with the appropriate National Governing Body for that event. Exceptions to the rules are noted in the "Synopsis". Participants and coaches are responsible for reading the rules, understanding procedures and used in each event, and complying with the rules and standards involved. Questions are encouraged to clarify areas of confusion or misunderstandings.

X. CHALLENGES AND PROTEST

1. Challenges – Participants ONLY may review their targets and challenge scoring. Once targets have been scored, they will be made available after the match. Upon the awards presentation at each match, the right of challenge expires and the scores will be deemed correct as posted.

2. Protest – Youth participants ONLY may protest:

- a. injustice they feel has been done them individually;
- b. conditions under which another competitor was permitted to fire, or
- c. equipment not meeting standards another competitor was permitted to use.

3. All challenges must be brought to the Range Officer and the Match Director. They must then determine the outcome of the challenge.