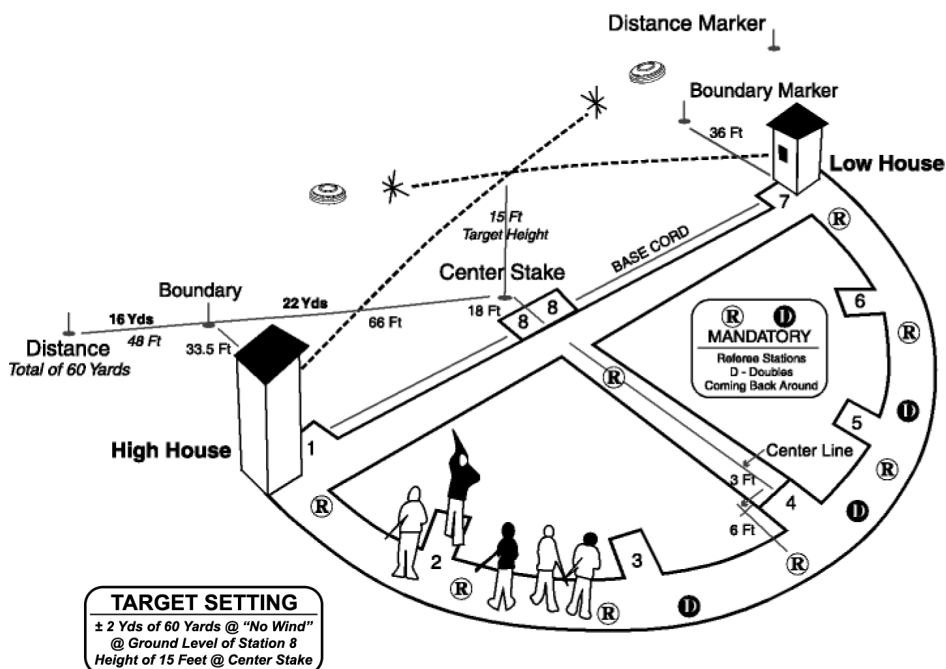




# REFEREE HANDBOOK

## VERSION 2026



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**Field Referee** performance determines the success or failure of present and future shoots. You are the Club's and NSSA's representative, as well as an ambassador of the game. Shooters will form a good or bad impression of the club, shoot and NSSA based on how you handle yourself. Please refrain from smoking during a round. Courteously introduce yourself to the shooters. Explain that you will call lost and questionable targets only. Ask all shooters to check their gun's safety and barrel selector. Let shooters know the shooting order, event type and make sure everyone has eye and ear protection. Note: Smaller gauge shotgun can be used in a larger gauge event. Wish all members good luck and good shooting

## **BE PREPARED:**

**Weather:** Be prepared for cold, hot and wet weather.

## **Eye and Ear Protection:**

- a. Eye and Ear Protection - All persons (including shooters, referees and trap personnel) must wear some form of eye and ear protection on a skeet range at a shoot sanctioned by NSSA.
- b. While on the skeet field, the referee must wear some form of eye and ear protection, and is prohibited from using any type of listening device "ear-buds" or "ear- phones" in lieu of hearing protection.

**Stay Alert and Listen:** Be prepared to pull targets on the shooters' call. No two shooters call for targets the same way or in the same rhythm. Calls and rhythm can also vary from station to station. Try not to watch the shooter before he/she calls for the target. Watch for each target in singles and for the outgoing bird in doubles. This will help preclude pulling targets on shooter movement and will allow you to make a "No Bird" call, if necessary, in a timely manner.

**Be Positive and Hustle:** Be ready when the squad is ready! The lead-off shooter should never be ready before you are.

**Score Carefully and Legibly:** Use a "/" or "X" to indicate dead targets and an "O" to indicate lost targets. Add scores and write the results accurately.  
See Sample on page 14.

**Be Safety-Conscious:** Be aware of what's happening on your field. Makes sure shooters don't load their guns until on the shooting station. Make sure that shotgun actions are open and that guns are pointed in a safe direction when not on the shooting station.

**Field Assignments:** Be at your assigned field and ready to start at least 10 minutes before the scheduled flight time. Make sure that trap machines are full of targets and that you have the appropriate proof ammo, if provided. Make sure that you have a sharpened pencil (it's a good idea to have more than one), a score sheet and clipboard. Make sure all the names are printed or written on the score sheet and that all shooters are present and ready to go. Note: Changing the order of the squad is not recommended without advance approval from shoot management.

**Score Verification:** At the end of the flight, request that all shooters verify their scores, and have the squad leader initial the totaled scores.

## SECTION III - SHOOTING PROCEDURE

### A. DEFINITIONS

#### 1. Shooting Positions

- a. Shooter must stand with any part of both feet within the boundaries of the designated shooting station.
- b. Station 8 the designated shooting station is the half of the rectangular pad most distant from the respective high or low house.
- c. Any shooter with one or both feet definitely off the shooting station should first be made to shoot over and, if he/she persists in standing off the station, he/she shall be penalized by loss of the target for each subsequent violation in that event. However, if the shooter missed the target while committing the first violation of shooting position, the result shall be scored "lost."

#### 2. Gun Position - Any safe position which is comfortable to the shooter.

#### 3. No Bird - Any target thrown for which no score is recorded, or failure of a target to be thrown within the prescribed time limit of one second. This permits the throwing of instant targets but gives a short time period in order to prevent a contestant from refusing a target which does not appear immediately after his/her call. If a shooter fires upon a target which appears after one second has elapsed between his/her call and the emergence of the target, and also before the referee calls no bird, the result of his/her shot shall be scored. If he/she withholds his/her shot after such an alleged slow pull, the referee may declare the target no bird provided he/she, in his/her sole judgment, decides that the delay exceeded the one-second time allowance. The pull is not required to be instantaneous.

#### 4. Regular Target - A regular target is one that appears after the shooter's call and within a period not to exceed one (1) second, and which passes within a three-foot circle centered at a point fifteen (15) feet above the target-crossing point. The target-crossing point shall be measured from the level of Station 8. The target, in still air, must carry to a distance equivalent, on level ground, to 60 yards from the skeet house when passing through the center of the hoop, with an allowance tolerance of plus or minus two yards. The prevailing wind during a shoot may cause the targets to fall short or long, but they are regular targets providing they pass through the setting hoop.

#### 5. Irregular Target

- a. An unbroken target that has not conformed to the definition of a regular target.
- b. Two targets thrown simultaneously in singles. However, if by error or for mechanical reasons doubles are thrown and the shooter shoots and breaks or misses the correct target, it shall be scored as in singles. It shall be the shooter's prerogative to elect to shoot or withhold his/her shot when doubles are thrown in the calling of singles.
- c. Target thrown broken. Under no circumstances shall the result of firing upon a broken target be scored.

#### 6. Regular Double - A regular target thrown from each skeet house simultaneously.

#### 7. Irregular Double - Either or both targets of a double thrown as irregular targets or only one target is thrown.

#### 8. Proof Double - A repeat of a regular double requiring two live rounds of ammo.

#### 9. Shooting Bounds - For Stations 1 to 7, inclusive, an area forty-four (44) yards in front of the skeet house from which the target is thrown. For Station 8, the distance from the skeet house to a point directly over a line with Station 4, 8 and the target crossing point.

#### 10. Balk - Failure to shoot at a regular target or double due to the fault of the shooter.

#### 11. Malfunction of Gun - Failure of gun to operate or function through no fault of the shooter.

#### 12. Defective Ammunition

- a. Defective Ammunition will be defined as:
  - 1) Failure to fire, provided firing pin indentation is clearly noticeable.
  - 2) When a target is missed in the case of an odd-sounding shell, which in the sole judgment of the field referee does not deliver the shot the distance to the target,

and therefore does not give the shooter a fair opportunity to break the target.  
NOTE: If a target is broken with an odd-sounding shell, it shall be scored dead regardless and will not be considered defective ammo. Odd-sounding shells where the shot does travel the distance to the bird and provide the shooter a fair chance to break the target will not be considered defective ammo, and the results of those shots will be scored.

- 3) Brass pulling off hull between shots on doubles.
  - 4) Separation of brass from casing when gun is fired (usually accompanied by a whistling sound as the plastic sleeve leaves the barrel).
  - b. Wrong sized shells or empty shells shall not be considered defective ammunition.
  - c. Repeated Targets - A target shall be repeated for each allowable instance of defective ammunition.
  - d. Number allowed - A shooter will be allowed only two instances of defective ammunition from the first box of shells used in that round. After two instances of defective ammunition in a round or a shoot-off round, a shooter may obtain a FACTORY box of ammunition and is then allowed two additional instances per box of FACTORY shells in that round. If shells are not changed in a round after two ammo malfunctions have been ruled, the third and all subsequent occurrences in that round will be excessive. EXCEPTION: If a shooter is provided a proof shell by the referee and defective ammunition is ruled on that proof shot, that instance will not count against the shooter as defective ammunition.
13. **Dead Target** - A target from which, in the sole judgment of the referee, a visible piece is observed before the target hits the ground as a result of having been legally fired upon.
14. **Lost Target** - A target from which in the sole judgment of the referee no visible piece is broken as a result of having been fired upon.
15. **Optional Shot** - The shot fired after the first 24 targets have been scored dead in any one round (Station 8 low house only); or fired following the shooter's first lost target. In the latter instance it must be fired from same station and at the same house as the one first missed.
16. **Skeet Squad**
- a. A normal skeet squad is composed of five (5) shooters.
  - b. Any five (5) shooters may designate themselves as a squad. All shooters shall be formed into squads of five (5) shooters each, as nearly as possible. Less than five (5) is permissible for expedience, but more than six (6) should not be squadded for safety reasons.
17. **Round of Skeet** - A round of skeet for one person consists of twenty-five (25) shots, the object being to score the greatest number of dead targets. Twenty-four shots are fired as described in III-B-1. The first shot scored lost in any round shall be repeated immediately and the result scored as the twenty-fifth shot. Should the first shot lost occur in a double, the lost target shall be repeated as a single with the result of this shot scored as the twenty-fifth shot. If the first shot lost should be the first target of an irregular double, then a proof regular double shall be fired upon to determine the result of the second shot, and then the first target scored lost shall be repeated as a single and scored as the twenty-fifth shot. Should the first twenty-four (24) targets of a round be scored dead, the shooter shall take his/her optional shot at low house eight only.
18. **Shooting Up** - The procedure of a late shooter shooting out of turn to catch up with his/her squad (III-B-6).

## B. GENERAL

### 1. Squad Shooting Procedure For A Round Of Skeet

- a. A squad shall start shooting at Station 1 in the order in which the names appear on the score sheet. The first shot scored lost in the round shall be repeated immediately as the optional shot.
- b. The first shooter shall start shooting singles at Station 1, shooting the high house target first and the low house target second. Then, loading two shells, he/ she shall proceed to shoot doubles (shooting the first shot at the target from the nearest

skeet house and the second shot at the target from the farthest skeet house) before leaving the station. The second shooter shall then proceed likewise followed by the other members of the squad in their turn.

- c. Then the squad shall proceed to Station 2 and repeat the same sequence as on Station 1.
- d. The squad shall then proceed to Station 3 where each shooter will shoot at a high house single target first and a low house single target second before leaving the shooting station.
- e. The same procedure shall be followed at Stations 4 and 5.
- f. Upon advancing to Station 6 the leadoff shooter will shoot singles in the same sequence as at the previous stations. Then, loading two shells, he/she shall shoot doubles by shooting at the low house target first and the high house target second before leaving the station. The other shooters will follow in their turn.
- g. The same procedure will be followed on Station 7.
- h. The squad will then advance to Station 8 where each shooter shall shoot at a target from the high house before any member of the squad shoots at a target from the low house.
- i. The squad shall then turn to Station 8 low house and the leadoff shooter will shoot at the low house target.
- j. The shooter shall repeat the low house target for his/her optional shot before leaving the station, provided he/she is still straight (no lost targets in the round). The other shooters will follow in turn.
- k. At this time the shooter should verify his/her totaled score.

## **2. Rules and Procedures for Doubles Events**

- a. No less than a fifty (50) target event.
- b. Shooting commences at Station 1 and continues through 7 and backwards from 6 through 5, 4, 3 and 2. Rounds 2 and 4 will end with doubles on Station 1 using the 25th shell from rounds 1 and 3. That is, rounds 1 and 3 will consist of 24 shots ending with doubles at Station 2, and rounds 2 and 4 will consist of 26 shots ending with doubles at Station 1.
- c. When shooting doubles at Stations 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7, shoot the first shot at the target from the nearest skeet house and the second shot at the target from the farthest skeet house. When shooting doubles at Station 4 the shooter must shoot first at the high house target going around the stations from 1 through 7 and shoot at the low house 4 target first when coming back around the stations from 7 through 2 (or 1).
- d. The rules for doubles in a doubles event are the same as the rules for doubles in a regular round of skeet.
- e. All other NSSA rules apply.

## **3. Shooter's Right To Observe Targets**

- a. At the beginning of each round the squad shall be entitled to observe two (2) regular targets from each skeet house and shall have the option of observing one regular target after each irregular target.
- b. Shoot management, state association, state chief referee and/or zone chief referee shall have the right, where topographically possible, to make it mandatory to use a hoop or other suitable device whenever a target adjustment is necessary.

## **4. Progress From Station To Station**

- a. No member of the squad shall advance to the shooting station until it is his/her turn to shoot, and until the previous shooter has left the station. No shooter shall order any target or shoot at any target except when it is his/her turn. Targets fired upon while shooting out of turn, without permission of the referee, shall be declared "no bird."
- b. No member of a squad, having shot from one station, shall proceed toward the next station in such a way as to interfere with another shooter. The penalty for willful interference in this manner shall be disqualification from the event.
- c. No shooter shall unduly delay a squad without good and sufficient reason in the judgment of the referee in charge of his/her squad. A shooter who persists in deliberately causing inexcusable delays after receiving a first warning from the referee shall be subject to disqualification from the event.

5. **Broken Gun** - When a gun breaks in such a manner so as to render it unusable, the shooter has the option of using another gun if such gun can be secured without delay or dropping out of the squad until the gun is repaired and finishing the event at a later time when a vacancy occurs or after all other contestants have finished the event. Nothing shall prohibit the shooter from missing one round because of a broken gun, having the gun repaired and then rejoining the squad for all later rounds that the squad has not started. In that case the shooter will finish any or all rounds, starting with the shot where the breakdown occurred, that were not shot because of a broken gun, on the proper fields and in the first vacancy that may occur, or after the event has been finished by all other contestants.
6. **Shooting Up**
  - a. Where a shooter has registered in but does not show up to start an event with his/her squad, he/she will not be permitted to shoot up after the first man in the squad has fired a shot at Station 2.
  - b. He/she may join the squad for all later rounds, but the round missed because of lateness must be shot on the proper field in the first vacancy, or after all other contestants have finished.
7. **Slow Squads** - It is suggested that shoot management use substitute fields when breakdowns or unusually slow shooting squads are disrupting the normal sequence of squads. Under normal conditions, a squad should complete a round in 20 minutes, including breaks between rounds. Squads using more time cannot object to being transferred to a substitute field.

## C. SCORING

1. The score in any one round shall be the total number of dead targets.
2. Targets declared no bird shall not be scored.
3. One lost target shall be scored on:
  - a. A balk or failure of gun to fire due to fault of shooter. Should this include both targets of a regular double, it shall be scored as first target lost, and a proof double shall be thrown to determine the result of the second shot only. If a balk should occur, or his/her gun fail to fire because of the shooter's fault, when a proof double is thrown and the result of the first shot has already been scored, the second target shall be scored as lost.
  - b. Each excessive instance of defective ammunition, or excessive malfunction or malfunctions of gun.
  - c. Doubles fired upon in reverse order.
  - d. Target fired upon after it is outside the shooting bounds.
  - e. Each successive foot position violation.
  - f. Each successive time balk. When a shooter steps onto a station and more than 10 seconds elapse before his/her call, it shall be considered a time balk. However, a time balk will not be called unless the shooter's repeated delays directly contribute to the round exceeding the 20-minute-per-round allowance, inclusive of breaks between rounds (see III-B-7). The referee may warn the shooter once each round without penalty.
4. If a shell having once misfired is used again, and fails to fire, the results shall be considered a fault on the part of the shooter and scored lost.
5. No claim of irregularity shall be allowed, either on singles or doubles, where the target or targets were actually fired upon and alleged irregularity consists of deviation from the prescribed line of flight, or because of an alleged quick pull or slow pull, unless the referee has distinctly called no bird prior to the firing of the shot. Otherwise, if the shooter fires, the result shall be scored. The referee shall have final say as to whether he/she called no bird before the shooter fired.
6. If the brass pulls off a hull between shots on doubles, score as defective ammunition but do not score it as a gun malfunction.
7. During a regular round or a doubles event, if the brass pulls off a hull, or if a defective ammunition occurs between shots on doubles, the referee will score the results of the first shot and a proof doubles shot to establish the second shot result.

## D. GUN MALFUNCTIONS

The shooter must not be considered at fault if he/she has complied with the manufacturer's operating instructions for loading the gun, and the gun does not fire. In the case of a gun going into battery (locking closed) for the first shot on doubles or any shot on singles, if the shooter has closed the action in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and if the bolt appears visually to be closed, the failure of a gun to fire shall be scored as malfunction.

### 1. Semi-Automatics

- a. On a semi-automatic, the shooter is not required to push forward or strike the breech bolt retraction lever to insure locking the gun. This is a normal gun function.
- b. The shooter must load the shell or shells into the gun and see that the action appears closed. If he/she loads two shells on singles or doubles, and if the second shell fails to go into the chamber or is thrown out of the gun, it shall be scored a malfunction unless a no bird is declared on the second shot.

### 2. Pump Guns

- a. The shooter is required to pump the gun, as recommended by the manufacturer, on doubles and to close the action completely forward (visually) on singles.
- b. If the shooter short-shucks the gun, the hammer will not be cocked, a fault of the shooter.
- c. If the lifter throws the second shell out of the gun it shall be a malfunction.
- d. It shall be a malfunction if between shots on singles or doubles the gun returns the empty shell to the chamber provided the hammer is cocked.
- e. The referee shall check for a malfunction as instructed under that title and shall then apply forward pressure on the forearm to see if the shell is lodged (a malfunction). However, if the gun closes smoothly, without jiggling, it is not a malfunction.

### 3. Double-Barreled Guns

- a. The shooter is responsible for loading a shell in the proper barrel, or two shells for doubles.
- b. The shooter must close the action in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.

### 4. Shell Catching Devices

Where any device is attached to a shotgun that must be adjusted or removed to permit shooting doubles, it shall be the shooter's responsibility to perform such adjustment or removal. Failure to fire a second shot on doubles, due to such device, shall not be an allowable malfunction, and the bird shall be scored lost.

### 5. Repeated Targets

A target shall be repeated for each allowable malfunction and/or each allowable defective ammunition.

### 6. Number Allowed

Only two malfunctions of any one gun in the same round or shoot-off round shall be allowable. The third and all subsequent malfunctions of the same gun shall be excessive. However, when more than one person is using the same gun in the same round, this rule shall apply to each person separately.

### 7. Loading Two Shells

During the shooting of single targets, a shooter may load two shells except at Station 8 high house, or for the last single target on any station, or unless forbidden by club rules, and if the gun jams or malfunctions between shots, it shall be scored as a malfunction and the shooter permitted to shoot the target over. However, the shooter is still restricted to two allowable malfunctions with one gun in one round.

### 8. Malfunction on Singles or First Shot Doubles

To establish that a malfunction has occurred the shooter must not open the gun or touch the safety before the referee's inspection.

- a. If the shooter is holding the trigger pulled, the referee, after seeing that the gun is pointed in a safe direction, will place his/her finger over the shooter's and apply normal pressure.
- b. If the shooter has released the trigger, the referee, after seeing that the gun is pointed in a safe direction, will exercise extreme caution not to jiggle or attempt to



further close the action and will apply normal pressure to the trigger.

- c. The target shall be scored lost if the gun fires the first barrel as determined by the barrel selector or is opened before the referee's inspection. If the gun fired the second barrel without firing the first barrel, a malfunction will be ruled. A malfunction will be ruled if it does not fire and the referee's examination for ammunition, safety, barrel selection, etcetera, establishes that the shooter had fulfilled required responsibilities.
- d. For a gun modified with a release trigger, the referee will not require the shooter to pull and then release the trigger. See III-G-11 for appropriate procedure when a shooter holds down the trigger of a release trigger.

#### **9. Malfunction Between Shots on Doubles**

If an apparent malfunction occurs between the first and second shot on doubles:

- a. The referee shall apply the same procedures as listed under malfunction on singles to determine if an allowable malfunction has occurred.
- b. During a regular round or a doubles event, if an allowable malfunction has occurred, the referee will score the results of the first shot and a proof doubles shot to establish the second shot result.
- c. If such malfunction is excessive (not allowable) and the first shot is a dead bird, it shall be scored first bird dead, second bird lost, but, if the first bird is lost then both birds shall be scored lost.

#### **10. Fan-Fire**

If a gun doubles or fan-fires while shooting singles or doubles the referee shall rule a malfunction, and during a regular round or a doubles event, if the first target was a dead bird, nothing established, then a proof single or double shall be fired upon to determine the results. However, if the first target was lost, it shall be so established, and a proof double shot to establish the second shot result.

### **E. DOUBLES OR PROOF DOUBLES**

1. If the first target emerges broken, the doubles shall, in all cases, be declared no bird and a proof double shall be thrown to determine the result of both shots.
2. If a double is thrown but the targets collide, it shall be declared no bird, and the result of a proof double shall determine the score of both shots.
3. If the first target of a double is thrown irregular as to deviate from the prescribed line of flight and is not shot at, a proof double shall determine the score for both shots, whether the second target is fired upon or not. The referee shall be the sole judge of irregularity.
4. If the first target of a double is thrown irregular as to deviate from the prescribed line of flight, and is shot at, the result shall be scored for the first shot in accordance with III-C-5 and if the shooter is deprived of a normal second shot for any of the reasons in III-E-5 the second target only shall be declared no bird and a proof double shall be fired to determine the result of the second shot.
5. If the shooter is deprived of a normal second shot for any of the following reasons, the result of the first shot shall be scored even if an apparent gun malfunction may have occurred on the second shot, and the second target only shall be declared no bird and a proof double shall be fired to determine the result of the second shot.
  - a. The second target is thrown broken.
  - b. The second target is thrown irregular as to deviation from the prescribed line of flight and is not shot at.
  - c. The second target is not thrown at all.
  - d. The second target is not thrown simultaneously.
  - e. Both targets are broken with the first shot.
  - f. The wrong target is broken with the first shot. (For proof double ruling see paragraph 8 below.)
  - g. The second target collides with fragments of the first target properly broken, before the result of the second target is determined.
  - h. The result of the first shot is determined, and interference occurs before the second shot is fired.

6. There shall be no penalty for withholding the first shot when either target of a double is irregular. A proof double shall determine the score of both shots thereafter.
7. If a double is thrown and an allowable gun malfunction or defective ammunition occurs on the first shot, it shall be declared no bird, and the result of a proof double shall determine the score of both shots. If such malfunction is excessive, (not allowable), the proof double shall be thrown to determine the result of the second shot only.
8. In shooting a proof double after the first target (of a double) is lost, if the shooter fires at, or breaks the wrong target first, said proof double shall be scored as both targets lost. If, in such a proof double after the first target (of a double) is dead, the shooter fires at, or breaks, the wrong target first, it shall be scored as first target dead and second target lost.

## **F. INTERFERENCE**

1. Any circumstance beyond the shooter's control which unduly affects his/her opportunity to break any particular target is interference.
  - a. If a shooter fires his/her shot, the appearance of a target, or a piece of target, from an adjoining field shall not be ruled as interference, unless such target, or piece of target strikes or threatens to strike the shooter or his/her gun. It shall be the final judgment of the referee to consider the evidence and determine whether a target or piece of target strikes or threatens to strike shooter or his/her gun.
  - b. If a shooter withholds his/her shot due to what he/she considers to be an interference, and if the cause is observed and ruled interference by the referee, the interference may be allowed.
  - c. If a shooter withholds a shot for safety purposes, the referee may give the shooter the benefit of the doubt and rule interference, providing he/she agrees safety was involved.
  - d. Activities on other fields shall not be ruled as interference under any circumstance if safety to any person is not a question.
2. If the shooter shoots at a target, he/she accepts it. He/she must abide by the result unless the referee considers that there was legal interference. Following are a few illustrations of what may be considered legal interference:
  - a. A target box being thrown out the door in the shooter's line of vision between the time of the shooter's call and the firing of his/her shot.
  - b. Opening the skeet house door unexpectedly or suddenly under the same circumstances.
  - c. Any sudden disturbance or exceptionally loud noise, except an announcement over the loud speaker.
  - d. A bird flying directly across the target's line of flight just before it is fired upon.
  - e. A child or any other person or animal running out on the field suddenly in the shooter's line of vision.
  - f. A thrown object, or wind-blown object, blown through the air so as to cause a conflict (a piece of paper being merely blown along the ground shall not qualify in this category).
  - g. The sun shall not be considered as interference. It must be accepted as a normal hazard.
  - h. Cell phones on or adjacent to a skeet field must be kept in the vibrate mode or off. No cell phone may be used on a skeet field. A cell phone ring may be considered interference, except if it is the shooter's own.
  - i. The referee must in no manner interfere with the shooter while using the Voice Release System (VRS) either by touch or observable distraction.

## **G. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

The safety of competitors, field personnel and spectators is of primary importance and requires continuous attention and self-discipline. On any part of club grounds, as well as on the shooting field, particular attention must be given to the safety procedures outlined in the following paragraphs and to other safe gun handling techniques. Caution must also be used in moving about the field and club grounds. Where self-discipline and attention to safety

procedures is lacking, it is the duty of the field personnel to enforce them and the duty of competitors to assist in such enforcement.

## **1. Eye and Ear Protection**

- a. Eye and Ear Protection - All persons (including shooters, referees and trap personnel) must wear some form of eye and ear protection on a skeet range at a shoot sanctioned by NSSA.
- b. While on the skeet field, the referee must wear some form of eye and ear protection, and is prohibited from using any type of listening device "ear-buds" or "ear- phones" in lieu of hearing protection.
2. No gun shall be loaded until the shooter is on the shooting station. Loaded is considered as having any part of any shell in any gun.
3. Throwing a gun will result in immediate expulsion from the shoot.
4. As a safety precaution, test shots will not be permitted without permission of the field referee. Such permission shall not unreasonably be withheld.
5. The loaded gun shall be kept pointed in a direction that will not endanger the lives of shooters, field personnel or spectators.
6. When not on the shooting station, the gun shall be carried with breech open and empty. Pumps and automatics will have the bolt open. Fixed breech (double barrels including over-and-unders and side-by-sides) will be broken open and empty.
7. When the shooter is on the shooting station and ready to shoot and a delay occurs, such as equipment breakdown, the gun shall be opened and all shells extracted.
8. During the shooting of single targets, management may permit the loading of two shells. However, no one will be allowed to load two shells to shoot their last singles target on any station. Management cannot compel the loading of two shells in the shooting of singles.
9. The loading of more than two shells in the gun shall not be allowed at any time.
10. A gun may not be used that will accept more than one (1) gauge of shells at the same time.
11. Trigger Guard – All shotguns used in a NSSA Sanctioned event must be equipped with a trigger guard.
12. **Release Triggers**
  - a. A shooter will not be permitted to use a gun with a release-type trigger unless the referee and the other members of the squad are notified.
  - b. Guns equipped with release triggers must be clearly labeled with safety stickers that meet NSSA standards. Shooters may obtain official stickers with placement instructions by contacting NSSA Membership Services or use their own compliant stickers.
  - c. If the trigger is set as a result of a gun or ammunition malfunction, the shooter has the option of opening the gun or, with the referee's permission releasing the trigger with the gun pointed safely down-range.
  - d. Extra caution must be exercised if the gun is given to a referee who is unfamiliar with its operation. Guns with release type triggers must be clearly marked with designated safety stickers. Release trigger stickers, with instruction on placement, are available from NSSA headquarters. Please call or write to Membership Services.
13. Any shooter whose gun accidentally discharges twice within one round for mechanical reasons shall be required to change guns or, if time permits, have his/her gun repaired, before continuing to shoot the round or subsequent rounds.
14. When a shooter intentionally fires a second time at the same target, he/she shall be warned by the referee. The second time the shooter intentionally fires a second shot at the same target in any event, the penalty shall be automatic disqualification from the event.
15. The placement of markers other than those specified in NSSA Rule Book shall be deemed illegal.
16. Shoot management or the Chief Referee will suspend all shooting under clearly unsafe weather conditions such as, but not limited to; hail storms, lightning and tornadoes. Shooting may resume when the condition has passed. When lightning is observed

by any shoot staff a cease fire will be called immediately. This can be done by an announcement over the PA system, a long blast on an air horn and/or cutting the power to all the fields. Shoot management will insure that all the fields are cleared of participants and staff, with all taking cover. Shoot management will continue to monitor lightning strikes, starting a new time clock with each observed strike. After a duration of 20 minutes with no strikes, shoot management will begin the process of returning the participants and staff to the field(s) to resume shooting.

17. In the interest of safety, interference and time, only the club management's personnel shall be permitted to pick up empty shells from the grounds during a registered shoot, and extreme care must be exercised to prevent interference with other squads shooting.
18. No spectator shall be allowed on the skeet fields, and the referee shall be responsible for the enforcement of this rule.
19. The use of any drug, legal or illegal and including alcohol, prior to or during an NSSA sanctioned event by a registered competitor or referee is prohibited, with the exception of prescription or non-prescription over-the-counter medications that do not impair a shooter's or referee's ability to perform safely.

## **SECTION IV - REFEREES**

### **A. LICENSED REFEREE**

1. NSSA official referees shall pass prescribed written examinations (with the aid of a rule book) and also eye tests, using glasses if necessary. For the eye test, a visual card system will suffice and save cost of a professional eye examination. Eye test cards are available through NSSA Member Services.
  - a. These examinations will be given by their state associations or NSSA affiliated clubs.
  - b. Applications for official NSSA referee cards and emblems shall be approved by the applicant's state association, where one exists, or by an NSSA affiliated club where there is no state or district association.
  - c. It is recommended that all state organizations adopt the policy of using only NSSA official referees as chief referees.
2. Referees for NSSA World Championship Shoots
  - a. All applicants must be licensed NSSA referees for current year.
  - b. Each applicant must be recommended in writing by two current officers of his/ her state association or by one NSSA director from his/her state or zone.

### **B. CHIEF REFEREE**

When shoot management designates a chief referee, he/she shall have general supervision over all other referees and shall be present throughout the shooting.

1. It shall be his/her responsibility to appoint the necessary assistant chief referees and all other referees shall meet with his/her approval.
2. The chief referee shall designate and assign the referees to the fields and shall be held responsible for their conduct at all times during the shoot.
3. It is recommended that the chief referee has the responsibility of instructing all other referees and being certain they are acquainted with the rules and approved interpretations. This also applies to any Voice Release System (VRS) selected for use by Shoot Management. Shoot Management and/or the Chief Referee should ensure that all referees have been properly trained on the use of the VRS so they can consistently release targets without interference to the shooter. This training must contain guidelines on when to revert to a manual release of targets when a shooter's call fails to activate the VRS.
4. It shall be the chief referee and/or shoot management's responsibility to stop a shoot or shoot-off when darkness or other conditions prevent a fair chance to shoot. This action must be carried out simultaneously on all fields. Example: Use of public address system or the shutting off of power; or a suitable signal, the significance of which is known to all referees. Use of the referee's eye test card - 5/16" dot at 21 yards- is MANDATORY. Eye test cards are available through NSSA Member Services.
5. Where practical, each state association should appoint a chief referee for its state. It is

suggested that this chief referee be placed in charge of all referees in the state and that he/she conduct training courses to develop better referees.

## **C. FIELD REFEREE**

The field referee is responsible for the conduct of shooting on the field to which he/she has been assigned. On this field, he/she shall have jurisdiction over the area in rear of the field (that used by other shooters and spectators) as well as over the actual shooting area.

1. He/she shall be completely familiar with the shoot program and the NSSA rules.
2. He/she must be constantly alert, impartial and courteous (though firm) in the handling of shooters.
3. Upon protest, the referee shall rule upon the occurrence, and then without delay, proceed with the round as if nothing had happened. At the completion of the round, he/she shall notify the chief referee.
4. The referee shall distinctly announce all lost targets and all no bird targets.
5. The referee shall see that each shooter has a fair opportunity to shoot in his/her turn, and if a shooter has been unduly interfered with while shooting, he/she shall declare no bird and allow the shooter another shot.
6. The referee shall declare no bird as soon as possible when:
  - a. The shooter's position is not according to the rules. The shooter shall be warned by the referee of his/her illegal shooter's position, but if he/she continues to violate the position, he/she shall be penalized by the loss of one target for each subsequent violation in that event.
  - b. Target does not emerge within the allowed time after the shooter's call.
  - c. Target emerges before shooter's call.
  - d. An irregular target is thrown in singles, doubles or proof doubles.
7. It shall be the referee's first duty to declare "no bird" as quickly as possible when he/she determines that an irregular target has been thrown.
  - a. If the shooter fires before the no bird call, the result of the shot shall be scored.
  - b. In the case of doubles or proof doubles, if the referee's call of no bird occurs after the firing of the first shot the result of the first shot shall be scored and a proof double shall be thrown to determine the result of the second shot only.
  - c. No result of firing on a broken target shall be scored.
8. The result of shooting at a target after it has been declared no bird shall not be scored and the shot will be repeated in all instances.
9. Dusted targets or perforated targets that are retrieved after landing shall be declared lost.
10. When the targets thrown from any machine are repeatedly irregular, the referee shall suspend shooting and order the machine adjusted or repaired. At shooter's request, after such repair or adjustment, the referee should allow shooter to observe a target, if such request is reasonable and not excessive.
11. The referee shall grant a shooter permission to shoot out of his/her regular turn where it is justified.
12. The referee shall disqualify for the event:
  - a. A shooter who in his/her opinion has willfully interfered with another shooter while the latter is shooting.
  - b. Any shooter who repeatedly violates any of the safety precautions listed in Section III or for any act that in the referee's opinion endangers the safety of shooters, field personnel or spectators.
13. It shall also be the field referee's responsibility to supervise the keeping of correct scores and to see that all scores are verified by the respective shooters before the score sheet is taken from the field.
  - a. Every regular target fired upon shall be shown on the score pad and it is recommended that the mark / or X be used to signify dead and "0" to signify lost.
  - b. If an error in scorekeeping is discovered on the field, the field referee shall remedy it promptly at the time of discovery.
  - c. In the event there is any question as to the correctness of a score after the score sheet leaves the field, shoot management shall check with the field referee and

order the score corrected if it is determined that an error has been made.

- d. The referee's responsibility in seeing that shooters verify their scores is to announce after each round, please check your scores.
14. The referee shall be the SOLE judge of decision of fact. For example, his/her decision as to whether a target is dead or lost shall be irrevocable, regardless of the opinion of spectators or other members of the squad.
15. It is better for a referee to continue to officiate at the same field.
  - a. Relief referees shall not take over the fields until the shooters have completed the round, except in cases of emergency, such as illness, etcetera.
  - b. No NSSA official referee may be disqualified in the middle of a round but he/she may choose to disqualify himself.
16. Only assigned field referees, as designated by shoot management or the chief referee, may pull, score or referee registered targets. A voice release system may be used.
17. Whenever possible, have assigned field referees at registered shoots. However, in an effort to offer reduced shoot entry fees, shoot management may elect to have squads self-referee IF it is published in the shoot program and/or at the shoot registration desk. In such cases, the squad leadoff shooter shall be responsible for carrying the score sheet to and from the field, and having each shooter initial his/her final score at the end of the final round. In cases of any dispute or protest situation, these should be taken to shoot management immediately upon completion of the last round. Any protest to be filed must follow existing procedures as published in Section II-E.

## **SECTION VI – PROTESTS**

### **A. ONLY A SHOOTER, SHOOT MANAGEMENT OR REFEREE MAY INITIATE A PROTEST WHEN:**

1. In his/her opinion, the rules as herein stated have been improperly applied.
2. The conditions under which another shooter has been permitted to shoot are improper or otherwise questionable.
3. He/she feels an error has been made in the compilation of a score.

**A PROTEST IS NOT REQUIRED FOR SHOOT MANAGEMENT TO TAKE CORRECTIVE ACTION ON AN ERROR IN SCORING UPON DISCOVERY**

### **B. HOW TO PROTEST**

**Failure to comply with the following requirements and procedures will automatically void the protest.**

1. A protest shall be initiated immediately, when it is possible to do so, upon the occurrence of the protested incident.
  - a. Any protest involving an incident occurring on the field during a round must be made within thirty (30) minutes of the occurrence of the incident.
  - b. Other protests (not involving an incident occurring on the field during a round) shall be filed in writing directly with shoot management as soon as possible; but in no case more than twenty-four (24) hours after the discovery of the incident the shooter wishes to protest. (For instance, see paragraph VI-A-2.)
  - c. The team captain must make protests in team events. Team members who believe they have reason to protest will state the facts to their team captain, who will make the protest if he/she feels such action is justified by the facts.
2. Protests involving an incident occurring on the field during the shooting of a round shall proceed in the following manner:
  - a. The initial protest shall be filed verbally with the field referee. A protest involving the scoring of a target, if filed immediately on the station, shall result in a second shot, or shots, being fired and the results recorded and noted as being associated with a protest. For other types of protests not involving the scoring of a target, the referee shall record the time of the incident, will rule upon the occurrence, and then without delay proceed with the round as if nothing had happened.
  - b. After the completion of the last round, the referee shall state the complaint verbally to the chief referee (or shoot management when there is no chief referee) who shall

then rule on the protest. If not satisfied with the decision, then:

- 1) For cases where the unsatisfactory decision was made by the chief referee, the shooter may file a written protest with shoot management, stating all the facts in the case. Such protests must be filed within 24 hours after the occurrence of the protested incident. Shoot management must reply within 48 hours of receipt of the protest. If not satisfied with the decision of shoot management, then:
- 2) For cases where the shooter is unsatisfied with the decision of shoot management, the shooter may file a written appeal with the NSSA stating all of the facts. Such an appeal must be filed within 7 days after the decision of shoot management has been made known to the protesting shooter.
3. Protests not involving an incident occurring on the field during the shooting of a round shall proceed in the following manner:
  - a. The protest shall be filed in writing directly with shoot management as soon as possible but in no case more than twenty-four (24) hours after the discovery of the incident the shooter wishes to protest.
  - b. Shoot management must reply within 48 hours of receipt of the protest.
  - c. If not satisfied with the decision of shoot management, then the shooter may file a written appeal with the NSSA stating all the facts. Such appeal must be filed within 7 days after the decision of shoot management has been made known to the protester.

## **C. REFEREE RESPONSIBILITY**

Upon protest, the referee shall record the time of the incident, and will rule upon the occurrence, and then without delay, proceed with the round as if nothing had happened. After the completion of the last round, he/she shall notify the chief referee or shoot management.

## **D. SHOOT MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY**

In order that protests may be uniformly and fairly handled, the protesting shooter and the Protest Committee (defined as either Shoot Management, or a judge or panel of judges appointed by shoot management and delegated with the authority to fulfill shoot management's protest responsibilities as defined herein) should observe the following guidelines.

### **1. Determine if:**

- a. An incident occurred.
- b. A protest was made in a timely manner in accordance with VI-B-1.
- c. A verbal protest was made to the chief referee (when appropriate).
- d. The chief referee ruled on the protest (when appropriate).
- e. The protest committee's decision was made known to the protesting shooter.

### **2. Then:**

- a. If there was a chief referee, was the complaint brought to his/her attention by the protesting shooter (when appropriate)?
- b. Was the written protest tendered to shoot management within 24 hours of the protested incident?
- c. Is the shooter not protesting a referee's decision of fact?
- d. Is the shooter protesting: Improper application of the NSSA rules, or the conditions under which another shooter has been allowed to shoot, or an error in score-keeping?

If VI-D-2-a. through d. above can all be answered "Yes," the protest committee should then decide whether to grant or deny the protest. If the answer to any of the questions VI-D-2-a. through d. above is "No," the protest is invalid.

## **E. ANY APPEAL TO THE NSSA OF THE PROTEST COMMITTEE'S DECISION SHOULD INCLUDE:**

1. The facts outlined above.
2. A copy of the written protest.
3. A copy of the protest committee's decision. Shoot management should be prepared to provide the information in VI-E-1 through 3. above to the NSSA upon request.



# Squad Sheet Sample

Field: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Referee: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Below shows different ways scoring correctly. **Neatness is required for accurate scores.** Score Column on the right is the total round only. You can use the margin on the right for subtotals. When required put Total scores in the 2<sup>nd</sup> thru 4<sup>th</sup> name column. Due to computer programs, **no changing lineup.**

## SKEET

### NO SQUADDING CHANGES

COMP No.	CLASS	NAME	SCORE	LONG-RUN From FRONT / BACK (Deduct 1 if Round in LESS than 24)																Opt	Score
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
213	AAA	Washington Skeet	100	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	25
214	AA	New Jersey Skeet	100	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	25
215	A	New York Skeet	88	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	22
216	B	California Skeet	92	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	23
217	C	Florida Skeet	92	(24)	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	23

Scores Check By: \_\_\_\_\_

1st: \_\_\_\_\_

2nd: \_\_\_\_\_

Posted By: \_\_\_\_\_

Computer: \_\_\_\_\_

Board: \_\_\_\_\_

Cashier: \_\_\_\_\_

Boards:

MAIN Concurrent Teams ☐

☐ Class Purse

☐ Class Options ☐