

# FITASC

ARE YOU ONE OF THE MANY SHOOTERS NEW TO FITASC SPORTING?

## FOR NEWCOMERS

WANT TO TRY IT BUT ARE PUT OFF BY ALL THE STRANGE RULES AND PROCEDURES? THEN THIS IS THE PLACE FOR YOU. CLAY SHOOTING USA'S ASSISTANT PUBLISHER BEN BRUNTON – FITASC WORLD CHAMPION IN 1999 – PROVIDES POINTERS TO EASE YOU INTO THE MOST CHALLENGING OF ALL THE SPORTING CLAYS DISCIPLINES.

### GUN HOLD

For many people the rule on the address position is a major mental block. It can mean significant alterations to technique for those who are used to shooting with the gun either premounted or just outside the shoulder, but with time and plenty of practice it should not

be an insurmountable obstacle. Let's just recap on the rule: *The shooter must adopt the ready position... with the heel of the gun touching the body under a horizontal line marked on the shooter's vest. This line will be indicated by a tape of contrasting color fixed to the jacket by some permanent means... located 9.85" (25cm) below an imaginary*



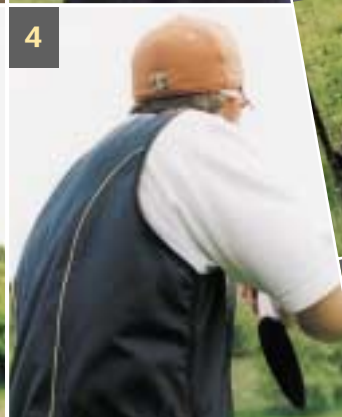
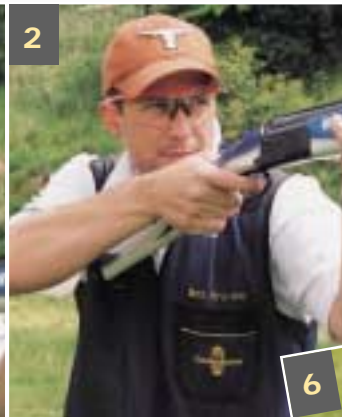
STEPPING ON THE HOOP IS NOT ALLOWED.

*line drawn over the top of the shoulders along their axis.*

The correct position is shown in picture 1. Contrast it with picture 2, which is a ready position I use for many of my targets when shooting Sporting and you will see how much lower the gun has to be. One of the best ways to get

used to this position is to practice regularly at home, dry mounting the gun onto an imaginary point or line on the wall. A few minutes of this each day will soon have your gun mount silky smooth.

Note also the requirement in the rules for the heel of the gun to be touching the body, as in picture 3. Holding it away from the body (4) will result in a warning from the referee. The other key point to remember about the ready position is that it must be held until the target is in sight. Moving too soon will again lead to a warning and lost targets if the offence is repeated.



**IN THE HOOP**

The shooting position in FITASC is a 1 metre hoop placed on the ground – there are no cages. The rules state that both feet must be within the limits of the hoop. Stepping on the hoop (5) is not allowed.

You should also be prepared to dance! The much wider field of fire means that you will often have to make big movements between shots in the doubles. Pictures 6/7 shows a normal shooting cage for Sporting and the maximum amount of foot movement you are likely to need. Compare that with 8/9 – a full 180 degree turn may be required in FITASC for the second target, requiring some fancy footwork along the way!

One final point of etiquette – FITASC shooters generally are neat and tidy sorts and like to see empty shells thrown in the waste bins provided, not ejected on the ground.

**THE MENU**

Every hoop will have a menu board in front of it showing the sequence of targets to be shot. The



whole squad will be shown the sequence of singles before the first man shoots. If you are first to shoot then it is important that you pay particular attention as you will not have the luxury of watching others tackle them before you. Even experienced competitors get in a tangle sometimes trying to remember all the targets and the various pick up points. Remember — how you shoot the targets is

your choice and yours alone – you do not have to copy other squad members.

A good example of this is shown in picture 10. The trap is set high on a bank behind me and the target can be shot as an overhead going away. However there is nothing to stop me turning around and shooting this as a driven target (11). You should of course inform the referee of your decision so that he and the other squad members can move to a safe point. Freedom from the restrictions of the shooting cage may also change the way you set yourself up for certain targets. To illustrate this look at pictures 12/13 in which I am shooting from a Sporting cage. The target is quartering from my left and away and the sides of the cage dictate how far back I can go to the trap. This in turn means that I

must shoot it later. The same target from the FITASC hoop (14/15) can be shot earlier as a result of the freedom to turn back further.

**MODIFYING YOUR TECHNIQUE**

As we have already seen, the different rules and extra freedom of movement will mean making some adjustments to your technique for certain targets. One





of the presentations that causes newcomers problems is the rabbit, the result of having to shoot downwards. Picture 16 shows my normal Sporting address position for rabbits with the gun just out of the shoulder. To shoot this FITASC style I exaggerate the lean forward, keeping the muzzles well below the line of the target (17). This helps overcome the tendency to go over the top as the gun is mounted in the normal upright stance. I will also hold out further along the target's flight path to allow extra time for the mount.

Similar problems arise with trap-style going away targets. In Sporting, like many others, I prefer a premounted or nearly premounted position for this target on the basis that it is the most efficient – millions of trapshooters can't be wrong! The low gun hold rule clearly makes what is normally quite a simple shot much harder.

Again I would recommend a low starting position, with the muzzles well below the eye line. The mount should then bring the gun up to the face in the same plane (18/19) ready to take the shot. Holding the muzzles higher, just below the point where the target is seen (20) can result in the gun pivoting about the axis between the hands, making the muzzles dip (21). This causes a loss of control and a fight to get back on line.

The other presentation that causes me (and many others) problems is the teal. In Sporting I like to shoot these aggressively from a high hold (22). I find it difficult to generate the required gun speed from the standard FITASC ready position so I drop the heel even lower (23). For me this gives the speed I want but also a smoother swing. If teal cause you problems, then experiment with different positions to find the most comfortable and consistent.



18

LOW MUZZLE POSITION HELPS ...



19

... THE GUN STAY ON PLANE DURING THE MOUNT



20

A HIGH MUZZLE HOLD ...



21

... OFTEN CAUSES THE GUN TO PIVOT AROUND THE GRIP HAND



22



23

A LOW HOLD ALSO HELPS BUILD GUN SPEED ON TEAL TARGETS

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