

Trap Range Etiquette

Trap shooting , perhaps more so than other shooting disciplines, is a “quiet” sport which requires a lot of concentration for competitors to consistently shoot high scores. Distractions to the shooters and disruption of the squad’s rhythm need to be minimized. Trap shooters like everything to be orderly, and to follow an established protocol. Adhering to this protocol, or etiquette, also contributes to the safe conduct of the event. Accordingly, the following conventions are observed:

Guns are **ALWAYS** carried with the action OPEN and with NO shells in the gun. This includes carrying your gun from your vehicle to the range, from the gun rack to the firing line, and when changing stations during a round of trap.

Guns should remain in the gun rack and out of your hands until your squad is called. The closing of actions and racking of slides is dangerous and distracting to officials, spectators and other shooters. If you absolutely need to check your gun or demonstrate something to someone, please do so well away from the spectator area and be sure your gun is unloaded and always pointed in a safe direction.

While we all like our guns to be admired by others, always ask permission before handling another person’s firearm.

The person who shoots first from station 1 is the “squad leader”. To start a squad, the squad leader will wait until he/she observes that all 5 shooters are on their stations. The squad leader will then ask the other shooters and puller if they are ready to begin. This is done by the squad leader asking, “squad ready?” and “puller ready?” The squad leader should make eye contact with the other shooters and puller to confirm that all are ready to begin. The squad leader may then also ask to see one “free” target, traditionally by saying “let’s see one”.

Do not put a shell in your gun or close the action until it is your turn to shoot. Only one shell may be loaded.

After the squad leader has fired his/her fifth shell at each station, the scorer will announce “ready” to the squad. This is to alert the squad that they are on their last shot for that station and that a station change is about to be announced. “Ready” is a short-hand reminder to the squad that, “after this shot, don’t load another shell”.

All shooters should remain on their station, standing facing the trap quietly, until the fifth shooter has fired his/her fifth shell **and** until the scorer has announced “change stations”. Do not leave your station until the scorer has announced “change stations” or “squad out” at the end of the round.

When changing stations, guns must be **OPEN** and **UNLOADED**. This means that no live

shell or empty shell is allowed in the gun during a station change. Care should also be taken to assure that your muzzle does not swing past or point at any other shooter, puller or spectator. Guns should be carried with the muzzle pointed up or at the ground.

At a station change, the shooter on station 5 will walk **behind** the other shooters to station 1. When ready at station 1, the shooter will announce to the squad leader “ready on one”.

The squad leader is always the first person to shoot after each station change. This means that after the first station change, the shooting begins with the squad leader who is now on station 2. After the next station change, the squad leader will be on station 3, and so on. The squad leader should not begin until he/she has observed that all shooters are on their stations and ready.

Semi-automatic shotguns should be equipped with a shell-catcher. Ejected hulls hitting or flying past other shooters is a distraction.

Hulls that fall to the ground should not be picked up until the squad is completely finished shooting.

Do not raise your gun or move around until the shooter ahead of you has fired. Also, do not distract other shooters with unnecessary talk on the firing line. Unnecessary chatter or movement is also distracting to the puller and scorer and can cause slow or fast pulls or incorrectly scored targets.

If a delay occurs on the line due to a malfunction or any other reason, guns should be unloaded and actions open.

Guns must be opened, unloaded and placed in the gun rack anytime shooters are directed to do so by the puller.

Guns must be **out of your hands** and in a rack when personnel are down range. There is nothing more disconcerting for range personnel than to see people pointing guns at them as they emerge from the trap house. Normally, an orange flag or cone will be displayed at the trap house when personnel are down range.

Safety is everyone’s full-time responsibility at the range. Should you observe an unsafe act, you should always feel comfortable in immediately bringing it to the attention of the individual involved. Be firm and polite and no one will find fault with you for speaking-up.

FSS: 10/9/2011

(The above has been compiled from ATA rules and other sources.)