

Cowboy Action Revisited

By Latigo Red

My previous article, (*The Cowboys R' A Comin'*) seems to have stirred up more questions than answers on the Cowboy Action Shooting Matches. Let's see if I can clear up a few of the more common ones and this will be for club matches only. All SASS rules are strictly enforced at all matches above the club level. Safety will be first, last and always, no questions here, Right?

Clothing! If it looks very old style it's probably ok. Attire for C.A. is not all that hard to figure out. As previously mentioned just about anything that looks like it could have been worn before the year 1900 is permissible and what you will see at a C.A. match will really vary. When it really boils down to the nitty gritty, a pair of blue jeans (not designer type), a long sleeve shirt, an old style hat (western or derby) and western boots, brogans or moccasins is all that is needed. Many other articles can be added if an individual really wants to get into the mood or the action, but these additions are not required to compete.

Firearms! All firearms may be originals or replicas.

- A rifle, of a type that was developed before 1900, such as a lever action with open sights that shoots a center fire pistol cartridge. Some examples are 44/40, 38/40, 32/20, 45LC and just about any caliber pistol cartridges. The 30/30, 38/55, 40/65, 45/70 and rifles with box magazines are not allowed in normal competition.
- A shotgun of a type available before 1900 which will include side by side double barrels that do not have shell ejectors and the Winchester 1897 pump or similar pump action shotgun with an exposed hammer.
- A pistol of the single action variety, shooting one of the above calibers. A second pistol of the same variety will be required in at least one stage per match. Usually this pistol can be borrowed from another shooter if you do not have one.

Ammunition! May be factory made or handloads.

- All rifle bullets must be lead without any partial or full jackets or gas checks. Muzzle velocity must be kept under 1400 fps. Velocity between 1000 and 1200 fps is probably better.
- All pistol bullets must be lead without any partial or full jackets or gas checks. Muzzle velocity must be kept under 1000 fps. Velocity around 800 fps works well for most.
- All shotgun ammo must be # 4 lead shot or smaller (no steel shot allowed). Field or trap/skeet loads with # 7-1/2 or # 8 shot work really good because sometimes your target may be flying.



Another thing to remember about cowboy action shooting is that you are usually shooting at steel targets and you may be held responsible for any of your ricocheting lead that damages personal property of others or produces bodily injury. This safety violation is grounds for instant disqualification. So keep the velocity down on all ammunition.

Ammunition Needed! Varies from match to match.

The amount of ammo needed will vary but usually if you bring about 50 rounds for your rifle and 40 rounds for your pistol and 25 shotgun shells you will have plenty.

Holster Rigs! Pistols cannot be stuck in your pants or regular belt. All handguns must be carried in a safe holster capable of retaining the firearm throughout a normal range of motion. Holsters may not depart the vertical by more than 30 degrees. If you use Cross draw or butt forward holsters you must rotate your body, when drawing, to keep the gun muzzle pointed away from the spectator area.

The above rules are "Club Level" only and if you travel to matches elsewhere you may run into a different set of rules all together. A full set of SASS rules is available free for the download at www.sassnet.com and every C.A. shooter should have and read them. The match director and/or range safety officer will have the last word on all questionable situations.