

THE INTERNATIONAL MATCH

A. GENERAL. The two medals in Figures 1 and 2 have one thing in common, both are awarded only to the finest shooters in the world. The International Distinguished Award is the highest award this nation can bestow upon a marksman. This medal is awarded to a shooter when he receives his first medal in international world competition. The Olympic Gold Medal is awarded of course to the world champion at the Olympics.

World Medals are given in only four competitions:

1. The Olympic Games are the most difficult competitions in which to win a medal. Only individual medals are given, i. e., only one gold, silver, and bronze per event. Also the U. S. team is composed of only four individuals selected at a tryout, normally run concurrently with the National International Championships. Only two shooters compete in each event from each nation.
2. The Pan American Games, unlike the Olympics are open only to nations in North, South, and Central America. Four man team awards are also presented, and for this reason normally eight shooters are selected for this competition. Although four shooters fire in each event, only two can shoot for the individual medal and they are selected prior to firing.
3. The World Championships, open to all nations, includes all six international events. Normally four 300 meter and four 50 meter shooters are selected with one alternate. All shooters are eligible to win both an individual and a team medal. Each of the above events are held once every four years are so spaced that two do not fall on the same year.
4. The European Championships are open to all nations of Europe and basically everyone who is excluded from the Pan American Games. Normally fired semi-annually, this competition is conducted exactly like the World Championships.

B. MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ISU AND NRA TYPE MATCHES.

1. Time: National Rifle Association matches require the competitor to shoot his positions in a limited amount of time. International Shooting Union matches allow a longer period of time for the shooter to work and concentrate on his performance. There is no need to hurry the shot.
2. Targets: The target black of the ISU and NRA targets are almost identical. However, the scoring rings on the ISU target are considerably smaller than those on the NRA target. Thus, the ISU target is more demanding upon the shooters. It is a more discriminating measure of performance than the NRA target.
3. Firing Points: In ISU matches, firing points are usually covered and enclosed on three sides. The purpose of this is to protect the shooters from the elements (Figure 3). Also, all shooters are equally protected, this is not always true in NRA matches when trees or buildings behind an open firing line protect some shooters from wind, while other shooters go unprotected.

C. HOW AN INTERNATIONAL MATCH IS CONDUCTED.

1. Sighting shots are made at specified targets. They must be made before or between 10-shot strings for match score. In other words, once a shooter begins shooting for match score, he must complete a 10-shot string in that position before he can return to a sighter target in that position.
2. Before the match begins, each competitor's targets are clearly marked by position and numbered. It is the shooter's responsibility to see that he fires on the correct target.



Figure 3. International Rifle Range.

3. In world championship smallbore competition, only one shot is fired at each target. Thus the changing of targets requires the firer to proceed to a much slower pace than is the custom in NRA matches. In 300 meter matches, 10 shots are usually fired at each target. The sequence of the match is prone, standing and kneeling,

4. Scorekeeper:

a. Behind each competitor is a registrar or scorekeeper (Figure 3). He is responsible to:

(1) Signal the pit detail to change targets,

(2) Insure that the competitor does not fire more than the legal number of match or sighting shots.

(3) Record the value (as best he can) of each shot on a scoreboard for the benefit of spectators.

His record of the number of shots fired is official. His record of the value of each shot fired is unofficial. The registrar keeper's record should be preserved, however, as it may be referred to by the Jury of Appeals in reviewing targets.

1. The position of Register Keeper is highly valued in European countries, where spectator interest in shooting events run very high. Regulation ISU ranges have large areas reserved for spectators. During a match, the area behind a leading shooter is usually completely filled with spectators equipped with binoculars. Spectators are traditionally very courteous and sympathetic toward the shooters.

5. Awards Ceremony: A traditional ceremony attends the completion of every ISU event. The first three place winners mount a 3-tier pedestal and are presented with gold, silver, and bronze medals, for first, second, and third place (Figures 4 and 5). Then the first place winner is honored by the playing of his national anthem and the raising of his national flag. The completion of this ceremony marks the official close of the match.

D. COURSES OF FIRE. There are six types of International Shooting Union matches of interest to the international shooter. They are as follows:

1. English Match (50 Meters). The competitor fires a maximum of 15 sighting shots and 60 shots for match score from the prone position. The time limit for this match is 2 hrs 30 min. More shooters throughout the world compete in this event than any other single international event.

2. Smallbore Three-Position (50 Meters). The competitor fires a maximum of 10 sighting shots and 40 shots for match score in each position (prone, standing, and kneeling). The time limits are: 1 hr 30 min prone; 2 hrs standing; 1 hr 45 min kneeling.

3. Free Rifle (300 Meters). The competitor fires a maximum of 10 sighting shots and 40 shots for match score in each position (prone, standing, and kneeling). The time limits are: 1 hr 30 min prone; 2 hrs standing; 1 hr 45 min kneeling.

4. Smallbore Standard Rifle (50 Meters). The competitor fires a maximum of six sighting shots and 20 shots for match score in each position (prone, standing, and kneeling). The total time is 2 hrs 30 min.

5. Full Bore Standard Rifle (300 Meters). The competitor fires a maximum of six sighting shots and 20 shots for match score in each position (prone, standing, and kneeling). The total time is 2 hrs 30 min.

6. Air Rifle (10 Meters). The competitor fires a maximum of 10 sighting shots and 40 shots for match score from the standing position. Currently this event is fired only in the World and European Championships.



Figure 4. Individual awards ceremony.



Figure 5. Individual awards ceremony.

F. CONDUCTING AN INTERNATIONAL RIFLE MATCH IN THE UNITED STATES UNDER NRA SANCTION.

1. It is obvious that all aspects of the organization and conduct of an ISU match are designed to (1) provide an accurate discriminating means of measuring performance and (2) give every shooter an equal opportunity to deliver the best performance he is capable of producing. This spirit can prevail in an ISU match even though some aspects of its organization and conduct are modified to adapt it to less expensive facilities.
2. Sponsors should not hesitate to conduct ISU type smallbore matches as they are becoming more and more important, especially among the younger shooters that hope to someday compete for their country.
3. As stated before, the firing points should be covered and enclosed on three sides. We feel that this is essential to the proper conduct of an ISU type match. Preparing the firing points can be accomplished quite easily, especially if a roof already exists over the firing points.
4. The purpose of the enclosures is to protect the shooters from wind, rain and sun. Any material, and any design of construction, which will serve this purpose, is adequate. The enclosure may be temporary or removable so that the range may be converted back to NRA match specifications.
5. Many clubs have found that 6-foot target frames can be erected to form enclosures. Others have used target cloth stretched on portable frames. Any material will serve which keeps out weather and direct sunlight.
6. Notice that two firing points are enclosed together (Figure 3). The enclosure thus forms a booth which houses two shooters.

7. A single rear wall extends the length of the firing line. An aisle or doorway exists between the firing booths so that spectators and officials may walk up and down the firing line without interfering with shooters.

8. The target contains 5 bull's-eyes. One of these bull's-eyes is designated as a sighting target. (There is one target for use at 50 meters, another for use at 50 yards if there is no 50 meter line.) The target sheets are the same size as NRA 50 yard target sheets, and fit standard target frames.

9. Practical requirements dictate that 5 shots be fired in each match score bull's-eyes. This enables the shooters to fire 20 match shots before changing targets. If a half course is fired, the shooter is allowed a total of 6 sighting shots in each position. If a full course is fired, the shooter is allowed a total of 12 sighting shots in each position. (The usual 10, plus 2 for the delay in changing targets.) Any unusual delays entitle the shooters to two (2) more additional sighting shots immediately after the cease fire is lifted. Under NRA modified rules unlimited sighters may be fired.

10. Officials and shooters will find that matches conducted in such a manner will run just as smoothly as a regulation NRA type match, and perhaps more so because shooters are not rushed in changing targets or equipment.

11. Match officials are sometimes over-concerned with the shooters' equipment. Rarely is illegal equipment used intentionally. Many times the official rules do not cover certain situations or items of equipment. In such cases judgment must be rendered from the spirit of the competition rather than the rule book. Officials should not hesitate to call upon the advice of experienced ISU shooters in determining the admissibility of a specific piece of equipment.

12. Many shooters will be interested in ISU matches in 50 foot indoor gallery ranges. Matches may be conducted with no modifications to existing range facilities. Half course and full course matches may be registered with the NRA.

13. Fifty meter international targets reduced for use at 50 feet are available. These targets (A-36) have 12 bull's-eyes, two of these designated as sighting bull's-eyes. Only one shot should be fired at a match score bull's-eye. Any number of shots may be fired on a sighting bull's-eye.

14. Sponsors, match officials, and competitors are encouraged to become familiar with ISU Rules. Copies of the rules may be obtained from the National Rifle Association.