

9. THE SCORE SHEET

Since the target is a long way from the firer, the only means of seeing the shot hole is to have a spotting disc put into it and the disc is observed through a telescope. Also, to avoid confusion, old shot holes are patched out so that only the most recent shot appears on the target. A diagram of the target is therefore used on the firing point and the position of the shots is plotted on it.

There are several reasons for doing a score sheet during a shoot and then keeping it:

1. To keep a true record of the value and position of shots during a shoot, the weather, the rifle used and the ammunition used.
2. To help compute the correct wind allowance.
3. To keep track of the elevation.
4. To find the MPI as early as possible in the shoot and indicate any sight correction needed.
5. To build up a history of the firer and the rifle, so that any changes can be spotted quickly.
6. To have a record to show Team Captains who are doing team selections as they often like to see more than just scores.

Types of Score Sheet

Most people now use single score sheets rather than score books. These are then kept in loose-leaf folders. It is probably best to take to the range only the sheets required and not the full folder, in case of rain. The sheets can be held on a piece of board with rubber bands or clips. There are many designs of score sheet now available and many people now design their own.

Some are available which only show the bull and inner at short range. These are very useful for the average cadet as they usually stray a little further out in their earlier shoots. Senior cadets, doing the Imperial Meeting or Athelings Selection may wish to use them. There are also wet weather score sheets which can be filled in with a soft lead pencil, even under water, but the score must be transferred to a paper sheet at the end of the shoot. A score sheet must at least have:

1. A representation of the target on which to record the position of the shot. Some score sheets only show the bull and inner which is fine for known good shots but not very useful for beginners.
2. Boxes in which to record elevation, estimated wind, call and score. Some versions also have boxes to record true wind and flag direction.
3. Graph areas to draw wind and elevation graphs.
4. A wind table to help with initial judgement of wind.
5. Boxes to record details such as the rifle and its components and the weather.

Pre-Requisites

1. The rifle should be zeroed to the individual using it, though with 'club' rifles this might not quite be so. However, club rifles should still be zeroed by a good shooter so that with a beginner, a shot will still hit the target (URA Fullbore Target Rifles are zeroed to read approximately 5 minutes at 300 yds).
2. The grouping capacity of the firer should be known.
3. The elevation needed for that shoot should be known.

Before Shooting

1. Well before the shoot, several pieces of information should be entered on the score sheet (some might even be done the night before): the event, date, rifle, the sight settings, and the target. (Remember to set the sight settings on the rifle also).
 2. As early as possible, enter the time, weather and ammunition batch.
- You should be at the range at least 15 minutes before the shoot. This gives time to assess the wind but wind is not entered until a shot has been fired, in case a sudden change has to be made at the last minute.

During The Shoot

1. The position of a shot is shown by one symbol only, placed as shown by the spotting disc. The sighters are shown by A and B, the scoring shots by 1, 2 etc. Do not use X's, dots or 'spiders legs' – one symbol only is necessary for each shot hole.
2. The new elevation is written down as soon as it is decided, before the shot is fired. The wind used is written down immediately after the shot is fired (if there is a wind change when on aim, a quick change has to be made; if time is taken to write down the wind, it will probably have changed again). Be careful to enter the elevation and wind for the shot being fired. It is a common mistake with beginners to write them in for a shot that has already been marked.
3. If a bad shot is fired, it must be 'called' before the target comes up again and a symbol to indicate what may have gone wrong, put in the 'call' box.
4. If there is no change to be made to anything in the right-hand columns, the box should be left empty – this indicates that whatever was in the previous box still applies.
5. As soon as the sighters are fired, the wind and elevation graphs should be started (these are covered in separate lessons).
6. Use the evidence of all good shots fired to decide on the elevation needed and move the sights AS SOON AS IT IS OBVIOUS WHAT CHANGE IS NEEDED. Avoid the tendency of some beginners to 'just fire another one to confirm'. If, say, both shots fired so far are low, the next one is likely to be low as well unless something is done about it. Avoid also the temptation to change on only the last shot and NEVER alter on a bad shot.
7. If a bad shot is fired, it is plotted but a circle is put around it and it is not used it to decide the MPI.

After The Shoot

1. Record any unusual items in the 'remarks' box which might explain anomalies noticed later e.g. 'sloped firing point' or 'erratic marking'
2. At the end of the shoot, the mean elevation is worked out and noted for the next shoot at that distance.
3. Periodically, review all score sheets to try to discover any problems e.g. always under-calling the wind: gradually increasing group size (is the barrel wearing out?).

A score sheet is easy to use under normal NRA conditions, when there are two or three firers sharing a target: there is time to do paperwork.

Below is an example of a properly completed score sheet.

There is more to learn about score sheets, in more advanced lessons – completing the elevation and wind graphs.

