



Smallbore Silhouette Shooting Tips

Some strategies I use when shooting my best:

1. I try to load my 2 clips with 5 rounds each, set my stopwatch and have sights adjusted BEFORE being called to the line.
2. I place my 1st clip and stopwatch in a convenient location and rifle in it's acceptable NOT READY SAFE position when I'm called to the line.
3. I find my comfortable shooting position without rifle in hand before READY command is given.
4. At the Ready command I check my sights, insert clip, close bolt and I check my "NATURAL POINT OF AIM" before I proceed to shoot EACH bank of 5 animals. I adjust my feet and stance so my "NATURAL POINT OF AIM" is near the center of the bank of animals I'm proceeding to shoot.
5. I visualize my shot hitting the selected spot on the animal that I want to hit.
6. I concentrate my FOCUS on the selected spot on the animal that I want to hit, dependent on wind and mirage conditions as advised by my good coach. ...rather than "looking at" the whole animal.
7. I start and continue to squeeze the trigger as my crosshair/dot APPROACHES the spot on the animal that I want to hit; I stop and hold my trigger squeeze as my crosshair/dot leaves the spot. I "break the shot" as my crosshair/dot ENTERS the animal towards the spot, not as it moves toward the edge of the animal from the spot of my focus.
8. I concentrate on only my shot at the current animal. ...not thinking about the prior shot or the shot at the next animal. ONE shot at a time!
9. The only person I hear talking is my good coach and I follow his instructions on conditions.
10. I follow through on the shot, mentally call my shot when it breaks, and check with my coach on shot placement.

PLAN = Position, Line of bone support, Aiming spot, and Natural point of aim.

3. Don't dwell on bad shots. You can't get them back.

4. Get into a firing rhythm.

5. Believe in yourself.

Finally, DO NOT THINK !!! Just shoot. Get into a zone where all distractions are blocked out. Thinking is what causes misses. Thinking about your score, your buddy's score, your last shot, how many you have hit in a row, how many you have missed, or anything else can kill a shot.

Shooting is a mind game. All you must do is quit thinking for 2 minutes and 30 seconds.

Nathan Lane

Since I get as much fun out of coaching as shooting, here are some strategies I use when coaching my best:

1. Before the READY command I set my stopwatch. I ask my shooter, "Have you got your position on number X bank of "Y" animals?" I focus my spotting scope on the 1st animal in the appropriate bank of animals so I can "read" the mirage. I check the flags and other wind indicators to estimate wind conditions.

2. At the READY command, I start my stopwatch and ask my shooter: "Have you got your sight set for "Y" animal?"

b) "Do you have your NATURAL POINT OF AIM on number X bank of "Y" animals

I'm not expecting any response from the shooter, these are just reminders.

3. I check wind and mirage conditions and advise my shooter of wind and mirage conditions and show on shot plotting board what spot on the animal to focus on.

4. Then I say, "let it settle. ...squeeze that trigger as the dot enters the animal".

5. I continually "monitor" wind and mirage conditions and advise my shooter to either hold the shot or to focus on a different spot if conditions change substantially.

6. After the shot breaks, I ask my shooter to call the shot.

7. I advise my shooter on shot placement on my shot plotting board and verbally, if asked, ONLY IF I DEFINITELY SAW the hit.

8. I advise the shooter of time left if asked and give the time left before shooting last animal in the bank. I advise when 10 sec. is left if last shot hasn't broke on last animal.

Clarence Johnson

Cross Train. Pick an activity that has nothing to do with shooting, but that will help you in more ways than you think. Try to pick an activity that you DON'T HAVE TO DO. e.g. I don't have to go running, riding my bike, swimming. It's much easier for me to stay on the couch and watch TV. By sticking to a cross-training schedule, you will gain discipline, determination, and focus. You will also learn where to go to reach deep down within yourself to "climb over" any obstacles that could be in your way of success or victory. Yoga is my favorite. It combines everything you need for Silhouette; the coordination of mind, body, spirit, and breathing.

2. Be brave when it comes to experimenting with the ergonomics of your rifle/scope setup. Try different rings and riser combinations along with different holding methods. Most of the time, this costs you no money to do, but results in huge benefits on your hold and subsequent follow thru. Don't be a Sheep, i.e. setting up your rifle cause most everyone else has their rifle set up that way.

3. Dry fire. Personally, I hate it. It's boring, but I make myself do it. You'll see the benefits.

4. Try to set realistic, attainable goals that are slightly out of reach, but that you can see off in the distance of your mind. This is where the benefits of cross-training will let you easily get the goals you have set.

5. Beware of creating bad habits. As much as we think we should practice live firing, sometimes it may be way too windy, we may be tired, or whatever. This may cause us to miss more frequently, and start to develop bad habits like snap shooting and so on. As shooters, we want to establish a pattern of hitting, not a pattern of missing. Avoid falling into this trap by recognizing a situation where you could be doing your training more harm than good. Find another activity to improve your shooting on a positive level.

6.- Seek out the numerous books and videos on sports psychology or mental training or competition that cover subjects such as positive reinforcement, mental imagery, goal attainment, and so on. Like most any other subject you encounter in life, you may not agree with every last shred of information, but there are a lot of hints that will help you along your way.

7. All of us have busy lives, but try to take the time out to do at least one or two small things EVERY DAY to make yourself a better shooter.

8. Seek the advice of champions. I did. Be open minded to at least try their suggestions. Some of them worked for me, while other suggestions didn't at all. You will be able to look at your results and look inside of yourself to see what works for you.

9. Bring or borrow a spotting scope out to the range on a hot humid summer day. Don't bring your rifle. You won't need it. Set the turkeys and rams up at their respective distances, and watch what Mama Nature does with wind and mirage. Learn to read and be aware of conditions that affect your shooting.

10. THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE: Do some type of activity at your local silhouette matches that is FUN! I have some really accurate match rifles, and they are a dream to shoot, but sometimes the most exciting part of Match Day that I look forward to is taking my Remington Nylon 66 autoloader with a Weaver 4 power scope out and trying to hit targets. Most of the time, I can't because I'm laughing too hard!

Clark Williams

- (1) Try to see the target fall (after the trigger breaks) through the scope which helps your follow through and
- (2) Try to make every shot during the match at least have a chance to hit the target.

Wayne Hudson

Things That Help Me Shoot A Better Match

1. High top boots. 2. Shooting vest.
3. Good 50 shot + practice, some time during week before match.
4. Slow trigger squeeze.
5. Keep both eyes open.
6. Good follow-thru.
7. Don't count and dwell on what has happened so far in match.
8. Shoot "40" one shot matches.
9. Confidence in equipment.

Butch Cook

Smallbore Rifle- Things that Help

1. Establish a routine: stance, breath control, control of trigger finger, and follow-thru. (Ask if you must!)
2. Keep a timer along with the Match Director. This lets you know if you are taking too much time or too little. Always put your gun down between shots to rest your arms.
3. Do not rush to make a shot. If it doesn't feel right, put the gun down, take a few breaths, and try again.
4. Practice! Practice! Practice! Some practices will be "good" and some "bad" but that is not important. Becoming familiar with the gun, building confidence, and establishing a routine are important. This practice is good for new shooters or old hands.
5. Learn to compete with yourself and concentrate on bettering your last score. It takes time and work and patience. Expecting too much too soon can be a shooter's downfall.

Charlotte Cook

Silhouette Suggestions

1. Buy the best scope one can afford.
2. Learn how light and temperature affect clicks. Apply to shoots.
3. Shoot lots of paper and lots of dry firing. Metal targets for fun and paper for learning.
4. Develop personal shooting sequences and perfect it.
5. Follow through every shot.
6. Shoot matches one shot at a time.
7. Shoot lots in practice and every tournament possible.
8. Persevere, i.e. expect plateaus and perhaps occasional regression but overtime will improve. Coaches say takes 3-5 years to approach one's best.
9. Compete against self, not others.
10. Shoot with partner, preferably someone better than you.

Glenn Hughes

I would like to submit some ideas for the Tips Page of the website.

1. PRACTICE!
2. Focus on the sights