

Single Action Shooting Society®

**Wild Bunch Action Shooting™**

Range Operations Course



# **Student Handbook**

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Table of Contents

**UNIT 1: Wild Bunch Action Shooting Range Operations Course** ..... 3

**UNIT 2: Wild Bunch Action Shooting Basics** ..... 3

**UNIT 3: WBAS Shooting Categories**..... 3

**UNIT 4: WBAS Ammunition**..... 4

**UNIT 5: Holsters, Cartridge Belts, and Bandoleers**..... 5

**UNIT 6: WBAS Firearms** ..... 5

**UNIT 7: WBAS Range Operations** ..... 6

**UNIT 8: WBAS Timer Operator**..... 9

**UNIT 9: 1911 Malfunctions** ..... 9

**UNIT 10: CAS V. WBAS – Key Elements** ..... 10

**EXAM REVIEW** ..... 13

## **UNIT 1: Wild Bunch Action Shooting Range Operations Course**

This course is not designed to be a reading or full presentation of the Shooters Handbook for Wild Bunch Action Shooting.

This course is not designed to be an introduction to Wild Bunch Action Shooting. Instead, the course highlights and presents key elements of WBAS Range Operations. The SASS Range Operations Basic Safety Course is a pre-requisite for this course.

**The SASS Shooters Handbook** is the greatest resource available to all SASS Shooters, members, & Range Officers.

Become familiar with the Handbook and reference it when enforcing the rules – it is your back up!

## **UNIT 2: Wild Bunch Action Shooting Basics**

### *The SASS Shooting Sports*

Undeniably, WBAS and CAS share similarities as sister sports of the Single Action Shooting Society.

However, there are distinct differences between the 2 disciplines, and it is important to remember that WBAS was not developed to be, nor is it to be presented as “CAS with a 1911”. While the 2 sports share SASS’ long standing safety covenants, each discipline has specific safety rules and firearm requirements, as well as varying penalty assessments.

### *Wild Bunch Action Shooting (WBAS)*

WBAS is a multi-gun shooting sport typified using 1911 Pistols in .45 ACP, along with Lever action rifles and shotguns.

- WBAS promotes SPEED – ACTION - ACCURACY
- WBAS matches are not a bullseye competition but do provide stage scenarios that incorporate down range as well as lateral movement, more pistol and shotgun rounds fired per stage, more distant targets, and a variety of reactive targets such as plate racks, dueling trees, moving targets, and rifle/pistol knockdown targets.
- WBAS matches are staged in a unique, characterized style of the “Old West” – just after the turn of the century.

## **UNIT 3: WBAS Shooting Categories**

This course is not designed to be a full presentation of all the available shooting categories from the Shooters Handbook.

Before choosing a category, ensure you have taken the time to learn the requirements for the category you are choosing.

SASS WBAS recognizes two basic (Open) shooting categories based on the 1911 pistol:

- MODERN
- TRADITIONAL

Plus: Ladies (biological/at birth only), Senior (65+), and Junior (to 16) category breakouts of both shooting categories when warranted- at the Match Directors discretion.

At the Match Directors discretion, the following additional main match categories may be offered:

- Teddy Roosevelt (using rifle caliber rifle)
- Doughboy (uses bolt action military rifle)

	MODERN	TRADITIONAL
Differences		
PISTOL	Modern & Traditional style pistols are allowed.	<u>ONLY</u> Traditional style pistols are allowed.
STYLE	May be shot in any shooting style. (One handed or two handed)	<u>Must</u> be shot one handed, unsupported. Support hand may be used for loading, racking the slide, and in case of malfunctions.
Similarities		
RIFLE	Any main match legal rifle in .38 caliber or greater.	Any main match legal rifle in .38 caliber or greater.
SHOTGUN	Any main match legal shotgun. 20 gauge minimum, 10-gauge max.	Any main match legal shotgun. 20 gauge minimum, 10-gauge max.
AMMO	Any SASS legal ammunition	Any SASS legal ammunition
ENTRY	Modern and Traditional are both open categories. There are no restrictions on age or gender.	
Full category details are listed in the WBAS Shooters Handbook.		

## **UNIT 4: WBAS Ammunition**

### ***WBAS Ammunition – PISTOL***

- 1911 Pistol in .45 ACP
- Pistol ammunition must meet a minimum power factor of 150.
- Pistol ammunition must have a minimum bullet weight of 177 gr.
- Maximum velocity standard for the pistol is 1000 fps.

### ***WBAS Ammunition – RIFLE***

- .38 Caliber or higher
- Rifle ammunition must meet a minimum power factor of 60
- Maximum velocity standard for the rifle is 1400 fps

### ***WBAS Ammunition – SHOTGUN***

- 20 gauge minimum, no larger than 10 gauge (12 gauge max for slide action shotguns)
- Shot size must be number 6 lead birdshot or smaller for all events. (no steel or plated shot)
- Shotgun shells may not be sized down (necked) using any die not manufactured for a specific gauge.
- Shotgun shells may not be scored (ringed) as to cause the shot-shell case, wad, and shot column to be shot from the firearm as one projectile.

### ***WBAS Ammunition – ILLEGAL***

The following type of ammunition is ILLEGAL in WBAS:

- Jacketed or semi-jacketed
- Hollow point
- Plated

- Gas checked (\*Gas checked is allowed only in Teddy Roosevelt, Doughboy and BAMM side matches)
- Multiple projectile bullets
- Ammunition with bullets recessed below the case mouth
- Electrically fired ammunition
- Coned shotgun ammunition (partially crimped or ogival crimped)
- Magnum and high velocity shotgun shells

### *Power Factor*

Power factors are simply calculated by multiplying the bullet weight times the velocity – and then the resulting number is divided by 1000.

### Examples:

- 200 gr bullet traveling at 750 fps has a power factor of 150 ( $200 \times 750 / 1000 = 150$ )
- 250 gr bullet traveling at 800 fps has a power factor of 200 ( $250 \times 800 / 1000 = 200$ )

## **UNIT 5: Holsters, Cartridge Belts, and Bandoleers**

The WBAS Shooters handbook contains a full listing of rules and parameters surrounding holsters, belts, bandoleers, loops, and pouches.

If there is any question regarding the legality of any item, or if clarification is needed, reach out to SASS Headquarters for more information.

## **UNIT 6: WBAS Firearms**

The firearms used in Wild Bunch Action Shooting are:

- 1911 Pistol
  - A full-size single stack 1911 semi-auto in .45 ACP  
(Different requirements for the pistol determine Modern vs. Traditional shooting category – check the Shooters Handbook!)
- Rifle
  - Original or replicas (approx. 1860-1899), center-fire of at least .38 caliber and not larger than .45 caliber
- Shotgun
  - Any side by side or single shot typical (approx. 1860-1899), center-fire of at least 20 gauge and no larger than 10 gauge. Notably, the Model 12 is legal in WBAS.

The WBAS Shooters Handbook should be referenced for firearm specifics.

There are restrictions and guidelines on:

- ✓ Sights
- ✓ Stocks & Grips
- ✓ Barrels
- ✓ Calibers
- ✓ Triggers, trigger guards
- ✓ Hammers
- ✓ Modifications

## **UNIT 7: WBAS Range Operations**

Enforcing all SASS Safety Rules is not negotiable.

All SASS Basic Range Safety Conventions apply:

- ✓ Shooter Responsibility
- ✓ The 170° Rule
- ✓ Firearm Staging & Handling
- ✓ Stage Conventions
- ✓ Loading & Unloading Practices
- ✓ Ammunition

### **Stage Conventions**

- Knockdown Shotgun targets that do not fall, may NOT be re-engaged. (NO make-ups)
- No missed target may be re-engaged.
- Only the shooter may handle their firearms- from the loading table to the unloading table.
  - \*Exceptions: malfunction or when the shooter needs assistance – but not during the course of fire

In WBAS, if no starting position is given, the shooter may start in any position as long as hands are not touching any firearm, ammunition, or magazines.

### **Range Operations – Rifle**

#### ***Loading & Unloading table***

- Rifles are loaded with the number of rounds required for the initial target sequence- up to a maximum of 10 rounds
- No penalty for overloading, BUT any overloaded rounds that are fired are treated as illegally acquired ammunition, with penalty.
- Rifle must be checked clear at the unloading table

#### ***Rifle Conventions***

- Rifles may be staged with the magazine loaded, action closed, hammer fully down on an empty chamber (NOT the safety notch), with the muzzle pointing in a safe direction (adheres to the 170°)
- The muzzle is never initially staged on the ground.
- Vertical staging is not restricted if the stage scenario and provided prop calls for safe, vertical staging of the long gun(s).
- Rifles are always staged muzzle down range with the action closed, the chamber empty, and the hammer fully down. (NOT the safety notch)
- Vertical staging is not restricted if the stage scenario and provided prop calls for safe, vertical staging of the long gun(s).
- Rifles will be cycled and discarded pointed safely downrange.
- If the action of a long gun closes after being cycled, the shooter will, at the conclusion of the stage, show it to be clear to the TO.
- If there is a live round in the chamber of the gun, the penalty is a Stage Disqualification (SDQ)
- If there is an empty case in the gun, it is a NO CALL – as long as the gun was cycled.
- If there is an empty case in the gun and the gun was not cycled, it is a Minor Safety Violation (MSV).
- Once a rifle is cocked, either the round under the hammer must be expended (shot) or the action opened for the rifle to be returned to a safe condition.
- Unfired, ejected rifle rounds may be replaced (reloaded) on the clock.

A rifle is considered SAFE to leave the shooter's hands in the following condition(s) only (some conditions may be corrected before firing the next firearm):

- Empty.
- Hammer fully down on an empty chamber or spent round, action closed (restaged for further use)

A rifle is considered SAFE for movement (in hand, while moving through a stage) in the following condition only:

- Hammer fully down on an empty chamber or expended round, action closed.
- Action open, round on carrier or in chamber.

## **Range Operations – Shotgun**

### ***Loading & Unloading Shotguns***

- Shotgun magazines may be loaded with up to the correct number of rounds for the initial target sequence, up to a maximum of 6 rounds.
- Side by Side/Double barrel shotguns are loaded under TO supervision at the staging location and staged open. The action may not close until “after the beep”.
- Additional rounds needed must be loaded from the body or other staging position.
- There is no penalty for overloading the shotgun, but any rounds that are fired are treated as illegally acquired ammunition- with penalty.

### ***Shotgun Conventions***

- Loaded shotguns must be staged with the muzzle down range, the action closed, the chamber empty, and the hammer fully down or on the safety notch.
- Unloaded shotguns must be staged with the action open.
- If vertical staging is used, the double/side by side will have to be staged empty.
- Mule eared shotguns can be cocked at the beginning of a scenario, whether staged or in the shooter's hands.
- Shotguns will be cleared and discarded with their barrels pointing in a safe direction.
- If the action closes after being cleared, the shooter will, at the conclusion of the stage, show it to be clear to the TO. No person other than the competitor may handle the gun prior to opening the action and showing it to be clear.
- Shotguns are to be shown clear at the unloading table, per SASS Unloading conventions.

A shotgun is considered SAFE to leave the shooter's hands in the following condition only (some conditions may be corrected before firing the next firearm):

- Empty.
- No live round in the chamber, action cycled, and the muzzle safely downrange.
- Hammer fully down on an empty chamber or expended round, action closed. (restaged for further use)
- Action open.

A shotgun is considered SAFE for movement (in hand, while moving through a stage) in the following conditions only:

- Action open, round in chamber or on carrier.
- Hammer(s) fully down on an empty chamber(s) or expended round(s), action closed.

## **Range Operations – 1911 Pistol**

When handling the 1911, the shooter's trigger finger must be outside the trigger guard when moving, reloading, or clearing a malfunction after the pistol is first charged. Charging means the act of placing a live round in the chamber of a pistol. Typically, a shooter is given the verbal warning, "FINGER!" the first time. A repeat violation earns the shooter a Minor Safety Violation (MSV) penalty.

### *Loading*

- At the loading table, a (loaded) magazine will be inserted into the 1911, the slide NOT cycled, and the pistol re-holstered.
- **Magazines:**
- Magazines may be loaded with ammunition at any time.
- Additional loaded magazines are carried to the firing line on the shooter's person via an approved means.

### *1911 Pistol Conventions*

- After being first charged, the 1911 pistol is never re-holstered until cleared at the end of the stage by the TO/RO or other designee.
- The pistol is discarded with the muzzle pointed safely downrange, with the action locked open or with the slide closed with no live round in the chamber.
- They may have an empty magazine, or no magazine.
- Pistols are shown clear on the firing line at the end of the stage prior to re-holstering. (Pistols are cleared on the line and not at the unloading table)

### *Magazines*

- May be loaded with up to seven rounds at any time, unless limited by stage instructions.
- Changing magazines "on the move" is allowed- as long as the trigger finger remains outside of the trigger guard. Once the slide moves into battery and a live round is in the chamber, the "basketball travelling rule" is in effect.

A pistol is considered SAFE for movement in hand:

#### *PRIOR to the first charging:*

- Slide closed on an empty chamber with no magazine or loaded/empty magazine

#### *AFTER the first charging:*

- Chamber empty of a live round
- Slide may be forward or locked back
- Pistol may contain a loaded magazine, empty magazine, or no magazine

A pistol is considered SAFE to leave the shooter's hand in the following condition(s) only:

- Chamber empty of a live round
- Slide may be forward or locked back
- Pistol may contain an empty magazine or no magazine

A pistol is considered SAFE for re-holstering in the following condition(s) only:

- Before the 1911 is charged, if drawn at the wrong time or place.
- Slide closed and hammer down on an empty chamber with no magazine- **ONLY** after TO/RO inspection at the firing line.

### *1911 Range Operations – Unload & Show Clear*

At the end of the course of fire, the following commands and process must be followed.



This will be done by the TO/RO or designated person.

1. **UNLOAD AND SHOW CLEAR:** remove any live rounds and the magazine (if one is inserted). With the slide open, hold the pistol so that the official can see there is no magazine inserted and that the chamber is empty.
2. **SLIDE FORWARD:** allow the slide to go forward into battery. It may be eased forward.
3. **HAMMER DOWN:** While the pistol is pointed in a safe direction, pull the trigger allowing the hammer to drop, unimpeded.
4. **HOLSTER:** place the cleared, safe pistol in the holster.

## **UNIT 8: WBAS Timer Operator**

To fulfill the duties of a Timer Operator in Wild Bunch Action Shooting, the TO must have a good understanding of the firearms being used.

\*The WBAS TO needs a strong familiarity with the 1911, their possible malfunctions, be prepared to anticipate the shooter's next move, and assist when necessary to prevent a safety violation.

The WBAS Timer Operator's firing line order cycle varies from the SASS Standard:

1. TO assigns 3 spotters
2. TO ensures the firing line is ready for the next shooter; targets are reset, etc.
3. The TO calls the next Shooter to the line – Assess the Shooter
4. The TO watches, guiding, if necessary, the gun staging process
5. The TO ensures the shooter is starting in the correct position
6. Upon the ready indication by the Shooter, the TO says: "Shooter ready.....Standby..... beep"
7. At the conclusion of the stage, the TO immediately calls out the time to the shooter
8. The TO directs the Shooter to unload and show clear the 1911 pistol under WBAS rules, holstering the pistol before directing the shooter to the unloading area. Upon the shooter's departure from the line (with all firearms), the TO declares the "All clear," indicating the line is safe to reset targets, pick brass, etc.
9. The TO polls the Spotters regarding misses
10. The TO announces the time and any misses/penalties to the Score Keeper and the shooter
11. The TO ensures the firing line is ready for the next shooter; targets are reset, etc...

## **UNIT 9: 1911 Malfunctions**

Firearm malfunctions can catch anyone off guard- whether you are a seasoned competitor or a novice.

Understanding the common malfunctions and having the knowledge to troubleshoot them is crucial for maintaining safety.

When serving as a TO, the ability to verbally coach a shooter handle a malfunction is a great asset.

### ***Failure to Feed***

The firearm fails to chamber a new round properly.

#### Troubleshooting:

- The culprit is often a dirty or improperly lubricated magazine. Tapping the bottom of the magazine to ensure its properly seated, rack the slide to chamber a new round, and continue firing.

#### *Failure to Eject (aka “Stovepipe”)*

A spent casing doesn’t eject properly.

#### Troubleshooting:

- This issue can be caused by a weak extractor or an improperly maintained firearm. To address a stovepipe, tap the base of the magazine to ensure it is seated correctly, rack the slide forcefully to eject the casing, and resume firing.

#### *Double Feed:*

Occurs when two rounds attempt to enter the chamber simultaneously, causing a jam.

#### Troubleshooting:

- This is often a result of a damaged magazine or a weak magazine spring. Lock the slide to the rear, remove the magazine, clear the jam, reload, and resume firing.

#### *Ammunition Malfunctions*

Other common firearm malfunctions are detailed in the SASS Basic Range Operations Safety Course and will not be covered here.

- Misfire
- Squib Load
- Chain fire

#### ***Safety is Paramount***

Encountering a malfunction that you are unsure how to handle, seek the assistance of a qualified firearm instructor, range officer, or gunsmith.

Training, practice, and knowledge are essential to becoming proficient and responsible.

Remember: Safe gun handling is the Shooter’s responsibility.

## **UNIT 10: CAS V. WBAS – Key Elements**

WBAS is rooted in – and got its start – in Cowboy Action Shooting.

Most competitors in WBAS first started participating in the SASS Shooting Sports via Cowboy Action Shooting.

As such, it is helpful to identify the following key elements that differentiate the two disciplines for reference.

**Remember: WBAS is NOT CAS with a 1911!**

#### **In Wild Bunch Action Shooting:**

- You load the shotgun at the loading table (exception for double barrels)
- There is no penalty for overloading ammunition (as long as the extra rounds aren’t fired)
- There is no penalty for an empty case/hull in a gun that is open or that the shooter has cycled. If a proper attempt has been made to cycle the gun, it will be cocked.
- The already cleared pistol is NOT removed from the holster at the unloading table

- You may NOT re-holster the pistol at the completion of the shooting string. (SDQ)  
The pistol must be placed on a provided prop. If the course of fire ends with the pistol it must be shown clear and made safe, then re-holstered. If drawn at the wrong time and not racked, the pistol may be re-holstered without penalty.
- The shooter must keep their trigger finger outside of the trigger guard when moving, reloading, or clearing a malfunction with the pistol. (MSV)
- You may not “hand off” any malfunctioning firearm. The malfunctioning firearm must be staged on a provided prop with the muzzle pointed in a safe direction. (There is no penalty- just instruct the shooter)
- The shooter is the only person who may physically clear a malfunctioning firearm during the course of fire. Once the malfunctioning firearm leaves the shooters hands, it may not be used again during the course of fire.
- Once the shooter stages their firearms on the firing line, no other person shall touch them. The shooter shall be the only person to move their firearms from the firing line to the unloading table. \*Exception: A malfunction or disability – as directed by the TO

## **QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD – EXAM**

**EXAM**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Alias: \_\_\_\_\_ SASS # \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor Alias(es): \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle your answer to each question.

1. Can a shooter re-holster the pistol if drawn at the wrong position?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No – you can never re-holster the pistol until cleared
  - c. Yes, if not charged
2. During the process of clearing a malfunction of the 1911, a shooter ejects the partially loaded magazine, clears the malfunction, retrieves the dropped magazine, inserts it into the pistol and continues shooting. What is the penalty?
  - a. Minor Safety Violation
  - b. Stage DQ
  - c. No penalty
3. A shooter asks to stage shotgun reloads on a ledge on the stage. Your answer is:
  - a. Yes, as long as the shooter brings them to the line in a safe manner
  - b. No, that is not allowed
  - c. Only if the Match Director approves
4. When is it safe to move with a long gun?
  - a. With the action open
  - b. With the action closed on an empty chamber
  - c. With the action closed on an empty round
  - d. All of the above
5. The shooter puts down their 1911 and moves to the next firearm. The slide closes. What is the call?
  - a. No penalty
  - b. Minor safety violation
  - c. No penalty- as long as there is no live round in the chamber of the pistol
6. A shooter is shooting in the Modern category but is clearly using a Traditional 1911 pistol. What is the call?

- a. Procedural penalty
  - b. Stage DQ for “shooting out of category”
  - c. No call – Traditional pistols are allowed in the Modern category
7. A shooter in the Modern Category can shoot one handed or two handed.
- a. True
  - b. False
8. A shooter in the Traditional category can shoot two handed.
- a. True
  - b. False
9. Which of the following Power Factor calculations is correct?
- a. 200 gr bullet traveling at 750 fps has a power factor of 150
  - b. 250 gr bullet traveling at 700 fps has a power factor of 200
10. The minimum power factor for the 1911 pistol is:
- a. 60
  - b. 150
  - c. 120

## **EXAM REVIEW**

**Congratulations, Course Complete!**

**Thank You for taking the SASS Wild Bunch Action Shooting Range Operations Course.**