



2025-2026

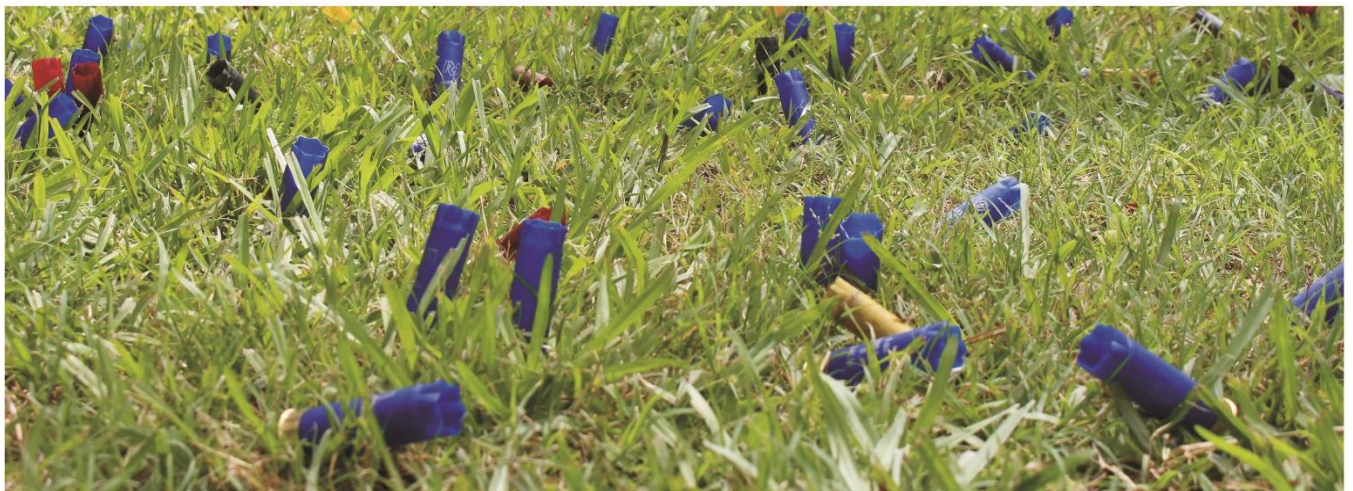


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Glossary

Team - The school or club you represent

Squad - 3 person group determined by the coach

HOA – High Over All

Divisions - Consists of Varsity and Junior Varsity, and School and Club Teams

Substitution - Personal illness/injury of a shooter (or) unforeseen, Exceptional circumstances

Program Objectives

The Mississippi Scholastic Shooting Program (MSSP) is a team-based, youth development program that uses the shotgun sport of Sporting Clays to instill life skills

such as discipline, safety, teamwork, ethics, self-confidence, and other life values. The program also utilizes this discipline to teach hunting skills through the safe use of hunting equipment, including firearms, and their relationship to hunting situations.



The MSSP is **not** designed to compete with 4-H or other youth-based organizations, but should complement those entities. The MSSP will provide youth an opportunity to compete for their schools in a scholastic shooting sports program and be able to win prizes and scholarships in a variety of categories.

Team Requirements

Teams are schools and clubs comprised of three person squads. Each shooter is required to attend at least **eight (8) practices** before competing in a shoot. The Proof of Practice

Attendance Sheet are required when turning in a team roster (available on the MDWFP webpage). Each team must have at least one coach with one of the coaching credentials listed below.

- **Head Coach** – Must have completed the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) *1-Day Head Coach Class*, before they can be a team coach on event day. This class is geared towards safety procedures, rules and regulations, and acclimation to the MSSP database. However, we encourage at least one representative from each school to attend the *MDWFP 1-Assistant Coach Class*, where coaches can learn teaching techniques, etiquette, and more in a range setting.
- **Coaches Meeting** – There will be a mandatory coaches meeting prior to all events. Any coach not attending the meeting will result in his/her squad being disqualified from participating in the event.
- **Primary Responsibility** – The coach's primary responsibility on event day is to create a safe environment, at all times, for shooters, spectators, coaches, and range personnel. Teams are also responsible for a minimum of eight (8) practices per year.
- **Coaching the Squad** – The coach is allowed to coach the squad between stations, or while watching other squads shoot. Coaching should NEVER hinder the flow of a tournament. Once the shooter enters the shooting box, all coaching must stop.
- **Assistant Coaches** – All teams will need at least one head coach that meets MDWFP coaching credentials. However, teams may utilize assistant coaches, but a *Coach's Registration Form* must be filled out for each assistant coach. Each squad must be accompanied by a coach during a competition. Assistant coaches are required to have completed hunter's education.
- **Revocation of Coaching Certification**- If a coach is found to be teaching or instructing shooters to behave outside of the MSSP mission statement, the coach will lose the privilege of MSSP Coach Certification. Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to: bad sportsmanship, arguing with trappers or referees, disrupting shoot operations, and tampering with score cards. This rule pertains to all coaching staff. Head coaches are responsible for their school's coaching staff.

Safety Rules & Requirements

1. The Four Basic Firearm Rules are ALWAYS in effect at all MDWFP events:

- *All* guns are *always* loaded! Treat them that way!
- *Never* let your muzzle cover *anything* you are not willing to destroy!
- Keep your finger off the trigger, until your sights are on target!
- *Always* be sure of your target!

Ear and Eye Protection – Both are required by everyone on the course - shooters, coaches, parents, spectators, and range personnel. Apple Air pods and like devices are not considered ear protection. **No exceptions!**

- 2. Actions Open** - Automatic and pump guns must have their actions open at all times, with the barrel pointed up, when walking or riding. The ejection port must be facing forward, to be visible, when carrying the shotgun. Over/under shotguns must be carried over the shoulder, with the barrel in front of the shooter, controlled by the hand on the barrel, and pointed down.
- 3. Slings and Straps** - Slings or straps attached to the shotgun are NOT allowed at any MDWFP shooting event. (Toe tabs are strictly prohibited!)
- 4. Vehicles** - To operate a cart or any ATV, the operator must have a valid driver's license and meet all requirements of the host club to operate any onsite vehicle. Carts are provided for each squad and one coach. No more than three participants and one coach are allowed on the carts at any time. All guns will be transported in a vertical position, while on vehicles.
- 5. Muzzle of Shotgun** - The muzzle is to be controlled and pointed in a safe direction at all times. The shotgun's muzzle cannot be rested on any part of the body, including but not limited to, the foot area, chin, hand or arm.
- 6. Footwear** - Open-toed shoes, such as flip-flops/sandals, *etc.*, are **NOT** allowed at any MDWFP sponsored shooting event.
- 7. Shooters Can Load 2 Shells, Maximum** - Do **NOT** load your shotgun, until you are within the confines of the shooting station/platform, with the barrel pointed down

range. Load only **TWO** shot shells at a time and do **NOT** step off of the platform, until your gun is unloaded!

- 8. Hunter Education Requirement** - All shooters must have completed a *Hunter Education Program* to be eligible to shoot in any competition.
- 9. Disqualification** - If any of these rules are broken, it will result in the entire 3 person squad being disqualified. **No exceptions!**
- 10. Shoot Rules** – Our events will follow National Sporting Clays Association (NSCA) rules, unless they conflict with MSSP Rules, in which case MSSP rules will supersede the rules of the NSCA.

- 11. Factory Ammunition Only** – Maximum loads for any gauge event may not exceed Gauge Ounce Lead:

12 ga. 1 1/8 oz. 20 ga. 1 oz. 28 ga. 3/4 oz.

.410 (2 1/2" Maximum) 1/2

No lead shot smaller than U.S. No. 9 (nominal diameter 0.080) or larger than U.S. No. 7-1/2 (nominal diameter 0.095) shall be used in any load. No steel shot smaller than U.S. No. 9 or larger than U.S. No. 6 (nominal diameter 0.110) shall be used in any load. Shot shall be normal production spherical shot. Plated shot is permitted. High visibility, training, and "tracker" wads are prohibited.

****No ammo velocity may exceed 1350 feet per second***

- 12. Malfunctions** - Shooters are allowed three (3) malfunctions per round. If a shooter has a malfunction while shooting, the shooter must keep the muzzle of their firearm pointed down range for 30 seconds. Once the trapper gives the OK to clear the firearm, both the trapper and the shooter will work together to determine the cause of the malfunction. **We do not consider a "safety left on" to be a malfunction, if a shooter's shotgun fails to fire, due to a "safety being left on." The shooter will be allowed to repeat the pair.**

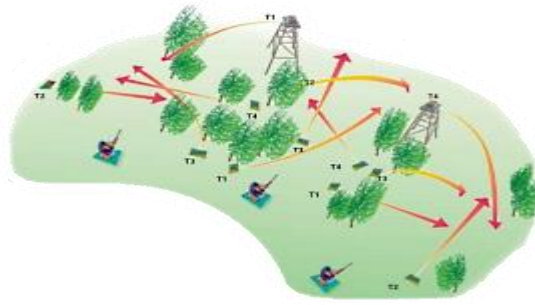
- 13. Spectators** - All spectators are expected to behave in a respectful and courteous manner. Any spectator in violation of any range rule will be subject to dismissal.

- 14. Early Viewing of Targets** – No shooters, team representatives, or coaches are allowed on the course before their squad's starting flight time or after their squads have completed their rounds.

Discipline Overview

Sporting Clays

Sporting Clays dates back to the early 1900s and is often described as golf with a shotgun. *Sporting Clays* is set on a walking/cart course in a natural environment. The shooter moves from station-to-station where targets are presented differently at each station to mimic hunting situations for species such as quail, grouse, pheasant, dove, ducks, geese, and rabbits. Target presentation names have root in game species, such as “springing teal” and “running rabbit.”



Sporting Clay Course

Courses will consist of 10-15 stations. During a round of sporting clays, each shooter will attempt 100 targets per person. These targets will be shot in either “report” pairs, “following” pairs or “true” pair presentations.

Report Pair-On the call of “pull” the first target is launched. The second target is launched on the “report” of the shotgun

Following Pair-(Only one thrower used on this presentation) On the call of “pull” the first target is launched. The second target will be launched as soon as the thrower has time to cycle and fire again.

True Pair-On the call of “pull” both targets are launched simultaneously.

School Title

Each year there will be an *Overall School Champion*. This title will only be awarded to schools and will be determined by taking each school’s top three (3) individual shooter scores at the state tournament and adding them together.

Clubs

Clubs are welcome to bring teams to compete in this program; however, they are NOT eligible to win the title of *Overall School Champion* and any student who attends a school that has a team participating in MSSP is required to shoot on his/her school team.

Assigning of Regions

Once all shooters are registered into the MSSP database, schools will be assigned to either the North, Central, or South Regions. Proximity to the three ranges (McIvor, Turcotte, and McHenry), as well as statewide participation, will factor into which region a school is assigned. Proximity will be determined as miles from the school to the shooting facilities, according to Google Maps. All efforts will be made to divide the state into three equally participating regions. Please expect for this assignment to change over future seasons as the program continues to grow.

Shooting Divisions and Disciplines

Divisions for Qualifiers

During the Fall Qualifiers, participating schools will be divided into three regions. North, Central, and South. Regions will be assigned after rosters are finalized. Two

qualifying shoots will be held at the McIvor Shooting Facility (North Region), Turcotte Shooting Facility (Central Region), and the McHenry Shooting Facility (South Region).

(The State Championship Shoot will not be broken into Senior Varsity and Junior Varsity. All shooters that qualify will be shooting in one division.)

Senior Varsity - Grades 10, 11, & 12 **Junior Varsity** - Grades 7, 8, & 9

Senior Varsity Team - Grades 10, 11, & 12 (3-shooter squads determined by the coach) with a maximum of 4 squads per school.

Junior Varsity Team - Grades 7, 8, & 9 (3-shooter squads determined by the coach) with a maximum of 4 squads per school.

- To participate on a Senior Varsity Team, a shooter cannot be 19 years old BEFORE August 1st of the school year in which he/she wishes to participate.

- To participate on a Junior Varsity Team, a shooter cannot be 16 years old BEFORE August 1st of the school year in which he/she wishes to participate.

Disciplines

Individual Sporting Clays, – In this event, individual shooters compete against each other in each discipline. The winner is the shooter that has the most number of hits, for their division. [If a shooter competes in *squad events*, the score that he/she shoots in *squad event* is his/her score for the *Individual* event.]

Squad Sporting Clays – In this event, 3-shooter squads compete against each other for the best combined score.

Qualifiers for State Championship Shoot

Due to the increased number of participants in the MSSP, two Qualification Shoots/Qualifiers per region will be implemented in the fall to place squads for the Spring State Championship Shoot.

Fifty (50) squads total will advance to the State Championship in the spring. Twenty (20) squads from the North Region, Twenty (20) squads from the Central Region, and ten (10) squads from the South Region

Top Gun Event (Held at the State Tournament): The top 5% of males and females from each region will be invited to participate in this event that decides the shooters who broke the most targets across all the shoots of the season. Any shooter who qualifies for this event, but did not qualify for the state shoot with their squad, will only be eligible to participate in this event.

Substitutions at Qualification Shoots/Qualifiers

Each head coach may submit up to two (2) substitution shooters per division (Varsity and Junior Varsity) to be listed on the Qualification Shoot/Qualifier roster. These shooters must be registered into the database.

If a substitute shooter is to be utilized by a coach, then said shooter must be submitted to the tournament director prior to the coaches meeting the day of the shoot.

Substitutions at the State Championship

At the State Championship, the highest scoring non-qualified shooter from the fall Qualification Shoots will be the predetermined alternates. In the event of all eight (8) squads qualifying then one substitution can be made from the alternates made available during the fall qualification shoot.

Awards for Qualification Shoots/Qualifiers

(All awards will be given to both Varsity and Junior Varsity for Sporting Clays)

- 1st -3rd Place Sporting Clay Squad (3 shooters)

Awards for State Championship

The state championship will NOT be divided into Varsity and Junior Varsity

- HOA School
- 1st-3rd Sporting Clay Male
- 1st-3rd Sporting Clay Female
- 1st-3rd Sporting Clay Squad
- HOA Top Gun
- Top Gun Male
- Top Gun Female

Shoot Offs

Individual

All ties will be shot off on 5-Stand with 10 pairs for each shooter, until a winner is determined.

Squad

Squad ties will be decided by a 30-target 5-Stand shoot-off (10 targets per shooter). This will be repeated until a winner is determined.

School

School ties will be decided by a 30-Target 5-Stand shoot-off (10 targets per shooter). The highest scoring squad at the event will represent their school.

Key Dates

May 1st - YPI Grant application due.

September 3rd- All head coaches and shooters must be registered into the MSSP database. Review contact information for head coaches. Email addresses must be correct.

September 10th - All squading must be complete and saved into the MSSP database.

For Additional Information Contact:

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