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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 - This 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 sports of *Skeet*, *Trap* and *Sporting Clays* to instill life skills such as discipline, safety, teamwork, ethics, self-confidence, and other life values. The program also utilizes these disciplines 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 in schools. 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 categories.

Team Requirements

Teams consist of schools wanting to compete in *Skeet, Trap* and *Sporting Clays*. 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** – Head Coaches must have completed at least the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (*MDWFP*) *2-Day Shooting Coach Class*, before they can be a team coach on event day. MDWFP will also accept *4-H Shotgun Instructor Course, National Sporting Clay Association (NSCA)/National Skeet Shooting Association (NSSA) Level I, II, III* or *Scholastic Instructor Course Training*, and *NRA Shotgun Instructor* credentials, as well. However, we encourage at least one representative from each school to attend the *MDWFP 2-Day Shooting Coach Class*, so we can go over any program changes from year-to-year.
- **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, but 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.

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. **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. 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 shooter(s) being disqualified. **No exceptions!**
10. **Shoot Rules** – Our *Sporting Clays, Skeet, and Trap* competitions will follow NSCA, ATA, and NSSA Rules, unless they conflict with MSSP Rules, in which case MSSP Rules will supersede the rules of the aforementioned bodies.
11. **Factory Ammunition Only** – No reloads are allowed! Any shooter found using illegal ammunition will be disqualified – **no exceptions!** Legal ammunition for 12, 20, 28 and .410 cannot use shot size greater than #7 1/2 shot (#8, 8 ½, or #9 shot are legal). The maximum load for 12 gauge is 1 1/8 oz. of lead, 20 gauge – 7/8 oz., 28 gauge – 3/4 oz., and .410 – 1/2oz in a 2 1/2” length shell.
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.**

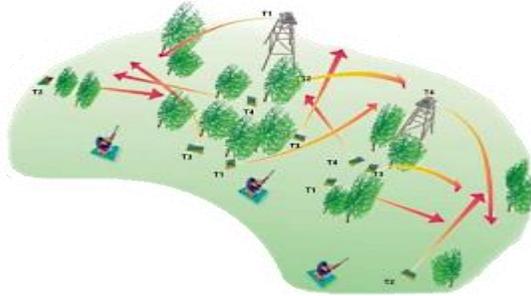
Cost Estimates

- 1. Shotgun:** Each shooter will need a shotgun. They can shoot a pump, semi-automatic, or a double-barrel shotgun, but no single-shot shotguns are allowed, as they would be inappropriate for use in these sporting events.
- 2. Shells:** Teams are required to have at least eight (8) practices per year. We suggest at least 100 rounds per shooter, per practice session. That would work out to be 800 shotgun shells/year, for practice sessions, and at current prices, would cost approximately \$208.
- 3. Clay Targets:** Target fees at all MDWFP ranges are 25¢ per clay target. Thus, 800 clay targets/year would cost \$200. (*This cost may be higher at a non-MDWFP range.*)
- 4. Competitions:** There will be no charge for clay targets at state competitions. However, shooters must provide their own shotgun shells. If a shooter participates in each of the annual events, it will take 350 shotgun shells, at a cost of approximately \$91. (We strongly suggest bringing extra shells for each shooter for gun malfunctions and trap malfunctions.)
- 5. Uniforms:** This is up to the school or club to which the shooter belongs. Uniforms can be anything from a tee shirt to a high end shooting vest. Uniforms are not required.
- 6. Total Minimum Cost:** The total minimum cost per shooter, per year, meaning the cost of shotgun shells and clay targets (*if you are shooting at an MDWFP range*) for each shooter, will be approximately **\$499**. Again, this amount may be higher if you do not have access to an MDWFP range. Contact your local range to determine fees/rates. Eight (8) practices is a *minimum* practice amount. We highly suggest *more* practices.
- 7. Offsetting the Cost:** Schools can offset costs by applying for *Youth Program Initiative (YPI)* grants through the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. We welcome teams to reach out to sponsors, as well.

Discipline Overview

Sporting Clays

Sporting Clays dates back to the early 1900s and is often described as golf with a shotgun. Unlike the confined fields of *Trap* and *Skeet*, *Sporting Clays* is set on a walking 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

Skeet

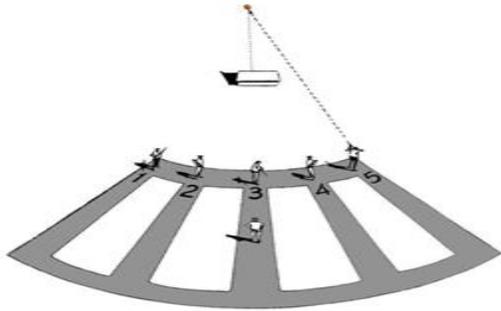
Skeet dates back to the early 1900s as a way to simulate the crisscrossing hunting action of flying upland birds, such as dove. The shooter rotates through different stations along a semi-circle, as targets from two opposing houses (one at each corner of the semi-circle) “pass” across the field. The 2-target presentations are thrown one-at-a-time, and at the same time, for an additional challenge.



Trap

Dates back to the late 1700s and was designed to simulate the flight path of flushing game birds, such as grouse, pheasant, and quail to hone a hunter's skills.

The targets are thrown from a single location, in front of the shooter, who moves in a semi-circle to change the angle and difficulty of the going-away shot.



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 in each event, and totaling them to determine the highest score encompassing all 3 events at the State Championship Shoot.

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.

Shooting Divisions and Disciplines

Divisions for Qualifiers

(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, Skeet and Trap – 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, Skeet and Trap – In this event, 3-shooter squads compete against each other for the best combined score in each of the 3 disciplines. The winning squad is the one with the most number of hits. The composition of each squad must be decided by the coach, prior to registration. Each squad member must be in the same division.

Qualifiers for State Championship Shoot

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

The top fifty (50) squads will advance to the Spring State Championship Shoot, based on accumulated scores at the two Qualification Shoots/Qualifiers.

The top ten (10) of the fifty (50) qualified squads will have earned the honor of representing the State of Mississippi at the Southeastern Clay Combine.

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.

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.

If no alternates are available, due to the number of team members, then only one (1) lateral move is allowed.

Substitutions at the State Championship Shoot

At the Spring State Championship Shoot, alternates will be predetermined by the highest placing squad from the fall Qualification Shoots.

Awards for Qualification Shoots/Qualifiers

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

- HOA Sporting Clay
- 1st -3rd Place Overall Female Sporting Clay
- 1st -3rd Place Overall Male Sporting Clay
- 1st – 3rd Place Sporting Clay Team (3 shooters each place)
- Top 50 Squads will advance to the State MSSP Championship Shoot.
- Top 10 Squads will advance to the Regional Southeastern Clay Combine.

Awards for State Championship

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

- HOA Skeet
- 1st-3rd Skeet Male
- 1st-3rd Skeet Female
- 1st- 3rd Skeet Squad
- HOA Trap
- 1st-3rd Trap Male
- 1st-3rd Trap Female
- 1st-3rd Trap Squad
- HOA Sporting Clay
- 1st-3rd Sporting Clay Male
- 1st-3rd Sporting Clay Female
- 1st-3rd Sporting Clay Squad
- HOA MSSP Combine Champion (This will be the 3 discipline scores added together)
- 1st-3rd MSSP Combine Champion Male
- 1st-3rd MSSP Combine Champion Female
- 1st-3rd MSSP Combine Champion Squad
- MSSP Combine School Champion

Shoot Offs for Top 3 in Each Category

Skeet/Trap

Skeet shoot offs will be from ATA rules and NSSA rules, unless superseded by MSSP Rules.

Sporting Clays / Combine

Sporting Clays and the Combine awards will be shot off on 5-Stand with 10 pairs for each shooter, until a winner is determined.

Squad

The shooter from each squad, that shoots the best score in the event, will be the squad's representative in the shoot off. In the case of a tie on a squad, it will be the coach's choice.

Key Dates

May 1st - YPI Grant application due.

October 1st - All team rosters are due for each team. All shooters must have completed their hunter education requirements by this deadline. The coaches must have completed their coaches training and send in their credentials with their team roster. The parental release forms are also due at this time. These forms can all be found on the website.

Seven (7) days before any shoot - The Tournament Rosters and The Proof of Practice Attendance sheets are due. We will not accept any changes to the rosters or any rosters after the due date.

For Additional Information Contact:

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