

Steel Challenge rulebook

SCORING

Steel Challenge scoring is simple: your time is your score. There are five targets, commonly referred to as 'plates'. Four are primary plates and the fifth is designated as the 'stop plate'. Each of the primary targets must be hit at least once during each string of fire, followed by the stop plate, which must be hit last to stop the time. Competitors may fire as many rounds as they deem necessary for each string of fire. The best four out of five strings will be counted as the total score for each stage, except for Outer Limits, which will be the best three out of four runs.

The total score for all stages will determine the order of finish for final standings.

The maximum time allowed for each individual string is 30 seconds. Any hits made after the maximum time allowance will not be counted. The competitor will be stopped and asked to reload if they reach the 30-second limit.

All scoring for an individual string of fire ceases when the stop plate is hit.

All misses (primary targets left un-hit once the stop plate has been struck) will be scored with a three-second penalty each.

When a Range Officer scores a miss, it is the shooter's responsibility to appeal the decision at the end of that particular string of fire. The Range Officer will then go downrange and check the target. If the bullet leaves a clear mark on the plate, even if only on the edge, it will be scored as a hit.

Once the next string of fire begins, there will be NO further opportunity to appeal the call. The Range Officer's ruling as to a hit or miss shall be final.

SCORING METHODS

Steel Challenge events may be scored by 'Impact' (electronically wired stop plates) or 'Sound' (sound-actuated shot timers).

1. 'Impact' stop plates use an electrical switch to stop the elapsed time. (Not used for rimfire events.)
2. 'Sound' scoring uses conventional (USPSA-type) shot timers that 'hear' each shot. The competitor's elapsed time stops with the last shot fired.

Note: Impact-rigged stop plates will respond to 120 power factor ammunition (bullet weight X velocity/1000 = 'power factor'). An ultra light load or edger might not stop the timer. However, each stage will have a backup sound timer, which will be used each time there is not an impact stoppage. The backup timer will be gang wired and begins on the same initial start signal. A set 'factor' for bullet travel time to the stop plate plus the reaction time of typical hardware will be added to the sound timer to approximate the same time (based on an 800fps bullet speed).

Stage	Distance to stop	Plate sound-to-impact correction
Pendulum	30ft	.04 per run X4 = .16
Roundabout	30ft	.04X4=.16
Showdown	36ft	.07X4=.28
Five To Go	27ft (actual)	.04X4=.16
Speed Option	107ft (actual)	.16X3=.48
Smoke & Hope	42ft	.07X4=.28
Outer Limits	54ft	.10X4=.40
Accelerator	45ft	.08X4=.32

PROCEDURAL PENALTIES

Three (3) second procedural penalties will be given for:

- Creeping (moving the hands toward the gun), movement or jumping before the start signal
- Foot faults - A foot fault will be described as when shots are fired while any part of the body (foot) is touching the ground outside of the shooting boxes.
(Clarification: Foot pressure on the raised shooting box will not be penalised)
- Shooting the wrong targets from the designated boxes
- Incorrect or non-movement when movement is required.

EQUIPMENT

Handgun Calibre: Centrefire handguns must be the minimum calibre of 9mm/.38 special. Centrefire firearms shall be suitable for holster use. Rimfire shall be .22 Long Rifle calibre only.

Holsters: Holsters shall be mounted in the general vicinity of the waist and must retain the gun. IDPA categories must abide by the IDPA criteria, to include IDPA approved holsters and holster position. Triggers may not be fully exposed with the exception of western holsters for single-action revolvers. (Rimfire competition does not involve the use of a holster.)

Ammunition: There will be no multiple-projectile or Magnum loads allowed. All rounds must travel a minimum of 750fps. Competitors whose ammunition does not make minimum velocity will be disqualified from the match(es) where the sub-standard ammunition was used. In the Rimfire event, .22 Long Rifle ammunition must be used (no powderless cases allowed).

The Match Director may ask for a three-round sample of the competitor's ammunition at any time. The average of three rounds fired through the competitor's firearm over a designated chronograph shall determine whether the competitor's ammunition has met the standard.

Note: Impact-rigged stop plates will respond to 120 power factor ammunition as per 'scoring' above. Lighter ammunition may not stop the timer.

MISCELLANEOUS

It is the responsibility of the competitors to check their scores as written on their scorecards and to sign their scorecards when finished shooting. Any questions concerning the scores entered on the scorecard should be asked of the Range Officials at that time. If still needed, a Match Director will then be summoned. However, it is the shooter's responsibility to submit the correct scorecard for the appropriate stage, event and entry (primary, secondary, etc).

All shooting boxes will be 3'x3' except for Outer Limits, which are 4'x4'.

All courses of fire will be fired from a single shooting box with the exceptions of Outer Limits and Showdown, which will each have more than one shooting box. Showdown will have two 3'x3' shooting boxes and two runs will be shot from one shooting box and two from the other. The competitor may choose from either box to shoot their fifth and final run. There is NO movement between boxes during Showdown.

The Outer Limits will have three 4'x4' shooting boxes. The shooter will start on their weak side shooting box and will engage the 20- and 35-yard plates on the weak side of the centreline, move to the middle shooting box and engage the remaining two plates and stop plate. The distance between each of the three boxes will be 6'.

Note: Only two of the three boxes will be used by each shooter. Depending on whether you are right or left handed, you will begin in the appropriate outside box and finish in the middle box.

MOVEMENT

USPSA rules will apply for shots fired while moving into the second shooting box, summarised as follows: If the contestant fires and leaves Box A, then realises they missed and/or hit the targets out of sequence and returns to Box A and continues to shoot, there will be no procedural penalty. Any target(s) struck in the incorrect order (A vs. B) WILL be judged as a miss unless corrective shots are taken.

Upon reaching Box B, the contestant may begin to fire when one foot is in the box and the trailing foot is either in the box or in the air. Remember, if primary targets are engaged out of order without corrective shots being taken, a miss will be scored on each primary target struck out of order.

The shooter may not leave the initial box until AFTER the first two primary targets are engaged. Upon entering the second box, the competitor may begin to engage the targets when the trailing foot is off the runway.

What constitutes 'in' and 'out' of the box is defined under 'Procedurals'.

STARTING COMMANDS

Range commands will proceed as follows:

"Make Ready" - Under the direct supervision of the Range Officer, the competitor must face down range and prepare their handgun. The competitor must then assume the required start position. At this point, the Range Officer will proceed.

Note: The "Make Ready" command signifies the start of the stage. Once the "Make Ready" command has been given, the competitor must not move away from the start location without the prior approval, and under the direct supervision, of the Range Officer.

"Are You Ready?" - The lack of any negative response from the competitor indicates that he fully understands the requirements of the course of fire and is ready to proceed. If the competitor is not ready at the "Are You Ready?" command, he must state "Not Ready".

"Standby" - This command should be followed by the start signal within 1 to 4 seconds.

"Start Signal" - If a competitor fails to react to the audible start signal, for any reason, the Range Officer will confirm that the competitor is ready to attempt the course of fire, and will resume the range commands from "Are You Ready?"

"Reload if Required and Holster" - This command follows the completion of one of the component strings in a stage. Either the contestant has shot the stop plate, or has exceeded the maximum time.

"Stop" - Any Range Officer assigned to a stage may issue this command at any time. The competitor must immediately cease firing, stop moving and wait for further instructions from the Range Officer.

"If You Are Finished, Unload and Show Clear" - This normally follows the completion of the final string. If the competitor has finished shooting, he must lower his handgun and present it for inspection by the Range Officer with the muzzle pointed down range, magazine removed, slide locked or held open, and chamber empty. Revolvers must be presented with the cylinder open and empty.

“If Clear, Hammer Down, Holster” - After issuance of this command, the competitor is prohibited from firing. While continuing to point the handgun safely downrange, the competitor must perform a final safety check of the handgun as follows:

Self-loaders - release the slide and pull the trigger (without touching the hammer or decocker, if any).

Rimfire self-loaders, as above, but at the shooter’s option, he may decline to pull the trigger to prevent firing pin and barrel damage.

Revolvers - close the empty cylinder (without touching the hammer, if any).

If the gun proves to be clear, the competitor must holster or bag his handgun.

If the gun does not prove to be clear, the Range Officer will resume the commands from “If You Are Finished”.

“Range is Clear” - This declaration signifies the end of the stage. Once the declaration is made, officials and competitors may move forward to score/paint targets.

STARTING POSITIONS

Main Match: Hands are to be held in the ‘Surrender Position’, which is shoulder high, with the wrists and full hands visible from behind. The Range Officer will stop the count down and give one warning and one warning ONLY if they see that the competitor is setting up too low or starting to creep or ‘bounce’. Failure to comply will result in a three-second penalty for each occurrence.

Rimfire Match: There will be a flag centred downrange on the ground, approximately 12' from the shooter’s box. The competitor must wait for the command to fire while pointing/aiming their gun at the flag.

SAFETY RULES

The range is “cold!” Handguns will not be loaded except as directed by Match Officials. Self-loaders will have an empty chamber and magazine well and all chambers and revolver cylinders will be kept empty.

Range Officers will escort any person found in violation of this rule to a safety area, where they will ask the competitor to “Unload and Show Clear”. If the firearm is not loaded, the competitor receives no penalty. If the firearm IS loaded, the competitor will be disqualified from the match.

During loading or unloading, engaging the course of fire and during remedial action in the event of a malfunction, the muzzle of the handgun must ALWAYS be kept pointed downrange. If the muzzle of gun points rearward of the limit line (180 degrees of the shooter box), the contestant will be asked to unload and will be disqualified from the entire match.

After a string of fire, no contestant may leave their position until the firearm has been unloaded, inspected and cleared by the Range Officer. The firearm will then be holstered or placed in a protective sheath or bag.

In the event a firearm cannot be unloaded due to a broken or failed mechanism, the shooter will notify the Range Officer. In no case will a contestant leave the line with a loaded firearm.

During the contest, contestants will refrain from handling their firearms, except when instructed by a Match Official or in designated areas.

Due to the unique needs and nature of the Steel Challenge, drawing from concealed carry is not allowed.

Should a firearm be dropped during a course of fire, the contestant will not pick up the firearm, but allow a Match Official to do so. The Match Official will then unload and inspect the firearm.

SAFETY VIOLATIONS

The following violations shall result in disqualification:

- Pointing a firearm uprange (breaking the 180-degree line).
- Dropping a loaded firearm.
- Leaving the line with a loaded pistol.
- Any accidental discharge, including any discharge or detonation while loading/unloading/reloading, lowering the hammer, any shot fired outside of a timed string, and any shot that leaves the confines of the range (over a berm).
- Picking up a dropped firearm without the direction of a Match Official.
- Any shot fired into the holster or into the ground within 10ft of the contestant.
- Unsafe handling of a loaded firearm.
- Contestants under the influence of a controlled substance (alcohol or drugs).

The following violations may result in disqualification:

- Any behavior or action in violation of sportsmanship codes, or that which directly and/or adversely affects the performance of another competitor.
- Any disrespectful words and/or gestures to or towards a match official.
- Persons who have been disqualified may not shoot during the remainder of the match. However, completed match scores will still count. (For example, if a person shoots a complete score in 'Open Revolver', then disqualified while shooting 'Stock Revolver'. that competitor's 'Open Revolver' score still stands.)

GENERAL MATCH INFORMATION

Targets: All targets are painted white and will be repainted prior to each contestant's first run on each course of fire. All round targets, except for the Pendulum are 5' high to the top of the target and all rectangles are 5'6" to the top of the target (as set by a transom from the shooter's box). Pendulum has two round targets that are 6' to the top of the target. All course designs and measurements are 'approximate', with slight variations possible.

Safety equipment: Eye and ear protection for all shooters and spectators are required. Individuals observed without eye or ear wear will be required to leave the shooting area.

Tie Scores: Should a tie for first place on any stage occur, the fastest single run of that particular stage will be used to break the tie. If still needed, the second-fastest and third-fastest runs will be used to break the tie. Should a tie for overall placing occur, the Speed Option stage score will be used as the tie breaker.

Equipment Breakage and Malfunctions: The same gun, holster, and holster position must be used throughout the match. If there is a mechanical problem, equipment of similar make or model may be used as a replacement. If said guns or holsters are entered in a Category event, the same guidelines, conditions or restrictions must apply. If these guidelines cannot be met with the replacement gun or holster, the contestant will not be eligible for recognition in their Category, but will remain eligible for Overall Awards. Should a malfunction occur, the string of fire will be scored and competitor given the chance to retire for repairs or replacement of the equipment before resuming the course of fire. The squad will not wait, but proceed with the next competitor.

Arbitration/Final Scores: If someone wishes to file a protest for an arbitration hearing, there will be a \$100 cash fee. No arbitration requests will be accepted based on 'second guessing' what the Range Officer saw. The Range Officers' verdict on whether an action occurred shall be definitive (except foot faults, accidental discharges, breaking the 180, hit/miss on a target). The Arbitration Board will consist of three experienced competitors, appointed by the Match Director. If the protest is upheld, the \$100 fee will be refunded. The protest must be prepared in writing and submitted within one hour of the 'violation' and before the close of competition on the day of the occurrence. Scores will not be considered final until the complete scores have been posted for inspection by the competitors for one hour.

Ammo Carriers: Contestants are to go to the line prepared with the appropriate number of magazines or speed loaders and needed ammunition, so as to not cause unnecessary delay. (Single-action shooters will understandably require more time to reload.) A contestant may have an assistant to help them in reloading if needed.

Delay of Start: A balance between the competitor's need to ready themselves and the amount of time available in each day is essential for everyone's enjoyment. Your cooperation will be appreciated by the match staff and the other competitors.

DRESS CODE

The use of offensive or objectionable garments is not allowed. Specifically, para-military clothing, or clothing with controversial slogans or sayings WILL NOT BE ALLOWED. Active duty military personnel in uniform are exempt from this requirement. The match director will have final authority in respect to what garments competitors are allowed to wear. Anyone wearing these items will be asked to leave the range facility.