

Muzzleloading

SSAA Muzzleloading is an interactive discipline that caters to the original and replica rifles, muskets, shotguns, revolvers and pistols used during Australia's colonial days. Percussion, flintlock, matchlock and wheel-locks are the four types of ignition that can be used. Historically, this takes us from the earliest practical hand-held firearms up to when smokeless powders replaced black powder in 1886.

Firearms and classes

Muzzleloading events cover several classes and sub-sections. Each class of rifle is shot from the offhand, cross-sticks/prone and benchrest positions, but there are also events shot in the kneeling or sitting positions.

Class 1 (Military) comprises original and replica rifles and revolvers that were issued to troops somewhere in the world, such as the .577" Enfields and Colt cap and ball revolvers. Class 2 (Traditional) comprises traditional or civilian-style percussion rifles or pistols loaded with a patch and ball. Class 3 (Open) only requires that the rifle or pistol uses black powder and lead bullets. There are also several Firelock classes and two Shotgun classes.

Targets and scoring

All shooting is done at 50m Pistol targets, with the exception of the smoothbore flintlock musket and matchlock events, which are shot at French 200m targets placed at 50m. Offhand events are shot at 50m, while the prone and benchrest events are shot at 100m. To avoid having a sighting-in period, all Muzzleloading events (except Shotgun) comprise 13 shots fired within 30 minutes. The best 10 scoring shots count.

Getting started

The recommended way to choose which muzzleloader to purchase is to visit your nearest range that has black powder on the program and talk to the shooters and perhaps have a shot with the different firearms. Most Muzzleloading shooters start with a secondhand Class 2 percussion rifle of about .50-calibre that is loaded with patch and ball.

