

## **ENFORCEMENT POLICY RESULTS TECHNICAL RULE #17**

Most of our members are aware of the rule that was reinstated and took effect at the beginning of this year. **TECHNICAL RULE #17: DISCHARGING THE GUN WITH THE MUZZLE BEHIND THE HOLSTER IS NOT ALLOWED**, had been a rule had existed since the formation of CFDA in 2002. At the time it had been removed for the 2012 season, it was a weakly written rule, with no enforcement policy, that was causing controversy in our sport with no clear way to enforce it as it was originally written. I have written extensively about this in the past two Gunslinger's Gazettes and I see no reason to rehash the whole issue here again. We have finished the process of establishing a reasonable enforcement policy which should make this rule as enforceable as any other CFDA rule we have going forward, as long as our members are committed to enforcing them.

We are a unique sport in that we the competing members of CFDA, are also responsible to enforce our rules upon our fellow competitors. It's extremely important to enforce our rules, without a clear set of rules that define fair competition we wouldn't have a viable sport that stands for anything worth than a wooden nickel. It would just be one gotcha after another. From the anarchy of cheating fellow competitors, on one hand, to overzealous Range Officers making unfair calls just to penalize someone for personal reasons, on the other. In my almost 50-years of shooting sports, I've experienced such organizations and I never wish to be involved with one again, and I doubt our members want that either.

It's our ultimate goal to maintain clearly stated rules that are simple and to the point. We should always strive to place our fellow competitors who also serve as our Hand Judges, Line Judges, Range Masters, Scorekeepers, Announcers, and Match Directors in a position to make as few judgment calls as necessary. Will judgment calls need to be made by our officials? Absolutely, we count on that! But, we must keep our rules clear and defined to the point that such judgment calls are not challenged as arbitrary and capricious. Hand Judges, Line Judges and Range Masters already have a duty to make calls for a number of reasons, most are made without hesitation, some are obviously missed, but show me any sport that can claim to be perfectly judged. We are not the NFL where officials are paid over \$200,000 a year to referee games, and yes they make mistakes too. So, we just do the best we can to enforce our rules to the best of our ability, but what is also unique to CFDA and our Spirit of the Game, we should also do our best as competitors to play within the rules of our game.

At the Four Corners Territorial in Phoenix in March, the CFDA Regulators in attendance reviewed and discussed a Rule 17 Enforcement Policy that I had prepared after taking in consideration many comments, opinions and viewpoints. We agreed that it was a good basis to begin with. Our CFDA Regulator *Thirsty #L107* and I were not competing in this tournament so we served as the dedicated Line Judges and/or Range Masters as needed. We learned a number of things that weekend. Plus, I learned even more serving in that same capacity recently at the Texas State & Southern Territorial Championships in Fort Worth, TX.

I believe that almost every one of our members have adapted their draws and have accepted their responsibility to play by our rules and not bend them to gain an unfair competitive advantage over a fellow competitor, which is clearly stated in our Gunslinger's Guidelines as a condition of paying membership and entry fees in our organization. To not accept this rule or any other is in breach of the "Spirit of the Game", and they would be subject to a Conduct Violation Penalty, as determined by an Arbitration Committee at a match, or CFDA Management if necessary beyond that.

**It is time to move on and play our game the way it is meant to be played. Safety First, Fun Second and Competition Third.**

The following is the Official Rule Clarification that had been published on the CFDA Website since March 22<sup>nd</sup>. There is also an additional comment that I have added to aid Line Judge in the hope that this rule will be enforced evenly across our entire sport.

**THANK YOU!**

Quick Cal, Executive Director

### **OFFICIAL RULE CLARIFICATION**

**(REPLACES)**

**ADDENDUM #3 - EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1ST, 2016 Page 23. TECHNICAL VIOLATIONS:**

**ADDENDUM #4 - EFFECTIVE MARCH 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2016**

**#17. DISCHARGING THE GUN WITH THE MUZZLE BEHIND THE FRONT HOLSTER POUCH CUT IS NOT ALLOWED.**

**Enforcement Policy:**

If a Hand Judge, Line Judge and/or Range Master can clearly determine that a competitor is discharging the gun with the muzzle behind the front holster pouch cut, the competitor shall be given one "Official Warning", if the violation occurs again in the same round, then the competitor shall be penalized with a "Loss of Shot", if the violation occurs again in the same round, then the competitor shall be penalized a "Loss of Round".

If a Line Judge has not been assigned, and it is not clearly obvious to the Hand Judge and/or Range Master that a competitor is discharging the gun with the muzzle even with or in front of the front holster pouch cut, then the Range Master will assign a Line Judge, who shall position themselves at a better angle to follow the above enforcement procedures. Note: Assigning a Line Judge does not in itself constitute an "Official Warning", unless the Hand Judge and/or Range Master declare an "Official Warning", before the Line Judge is assigned.

**Director's Comments:**

I have observed that over 90% of our competitors are not even close to violating this rule. The highly competitive shooters who attempt to fire the six-gun as close to the holster as possible generally perform a follow through towards the target as part of their draw and discharge the gun with the muzzle at, near, or in front of the front holster pouch cut. In some cases, it would take a slow motion camera to verify precisely where the muzzle of the six-gun is at the moment of discharge. I do not think it is wise for our sport to ever attempt to use photographic evidence or video replays to make these types of calls. Plus, our rules prohibit anyone from attempting to use such evidence to overrule any call or non-call by any official.

Therefore, I have learned to position myself as a Line Judge or Range Master about 3 feet behind the firing line, but a lane or two and sometimes up to a few yards further away from the shooter's strong side. I make sure that I'm in position to clearly see the front pouch cut of the holster.

When a judge is in position, the muzzle must be clearly and obviously behind the front of the holster to the naked eye when the gun is discharged, before a penalty is called. I've also noticed, that this penalty does become clearly obvious when a shooter's final lock-in point puts the muzzle in a position behind the front of the holster, it does not matter whether the gun is right over the holster pouch or even several inches higher.

Both trigger control and follow through are also important for a judge to observe, because sometimes the trigger is prematurely engaged, usually resulting in a (low) missed shot. Such a shot is somewhere between a boot shot and just a shot fired prematurely. Certainly it's not a boot shot unless the gun discharges in the holster, but none the less if the shot was fired behind the holster, a penalty should be called immediately and without hesitation, much the same way an umpire calls a strike in a baseball game.