

METHUEN ROD & GUN CLUB, TRAP LEAGUE

2024 LEAGUE RULES

The Methuen Rod & Gun Club (MRGC) Trap League is hosted by the Methuen Rod & Gun Club. The purpose of the league is to provide an evening of fun, fair, and competitive trap shooting to participants of all abilities.

LEAGUE OVERVIEW

The format of the MRGC Trap League is similar to a “handicapped” bowling league. It is a team competition, with all shooting taking place from the 16-yard line. There are no age restrictions, but shooters under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian present during shooting.

League management calculates a number of handicapped targets each shooter receives, and those handicapped targets are added to the shooter’s actual score, which contribute to a total team score. Handicaps are updated weekly & based on an established formula (see “Calculating Handicaps”).

League management schedules dates/times of competition, tracks scores/standings, keeps individual shooter statistics, settles disputes, and accounts for league expenses.

SEASON DATES

The 2024 season starts Tuesday, May 14th and Wednesday, May 15th. The regular season will last 14 weeks, with each team competing against each other twice. At the close of the regular season, there will be 1 week reserved for Week 14 makeups and championship shoot off’s (if needed), followed by a league banquet on August 28th.

COMPETITION

Each match consists of two teams shooting two relays apiece. The team with the highest total score (including applicable handicap targets) is the winner of the match.

Each team member present must participate by shooting at least one relay, unless a shooter becomes ill or is physically unable to participate. If there is a difference of opinion between team captains on this issue, league management will make the final determination.

TEAMS & ROSTERS

Teams are comprised of a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 shooters, based solely on the preference of the individual team. Other than team captain, any number of non-member guest can participate.

Shooters may only appear on the roster of one team.

As of June 10th, rosters will be considered “closed”, and no additional team members can be added. In the event a team is dissolved mid-season, remaining shooters may shoot for other teams with approval from league management.

SCHEDULES

Scheduling of matches is done by league management, and they reserve the right to make changes to the schedule as needed. All matches are held at Methuen Rod & Gun Club.

MATCH TIMES

Matches will be held on Tuesday & Wednesday evenings at 5:30 PM & 6:30 PM. For the first four weeks of the season, matches will start at 5:15 PM and 6:15 PM due to available daylight conditions. Failure of a team to shoot when scheduled/agreed will result in a forfeit.

TEAM CAPTAINS

Captains are responsible for serving as the main contact for league management, communicating information to their respective teams, assigning squads, completing paperwork, making payment to MRGC for rounds shot, and ensuring accuracy of team score sheets. Team captains must be a member of the Methuen Rod & Gun Club, and actively participate as the team captain.

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

The “Home” team (listed first in the schedule) generally shoots first, but captains may mutually agree to shoot in a different order.

The “Home” team is responsible for opening the trap house, setting up the field for competition (callers, barrel rests, etc.).

The “Home” team is responsible for topping-off the trap machine prior to the start of the match, as well as at some point *during* the match to ensure that the machine has enough targets to complete the match without interruption.

The “Home” team of the night’s last match is responsible for topping-off the trap machine, putting away all equipment, ensuring there are at least 10 unopened boxes of targets in the trap house, locking both the trap house and storage container, and shutting off the lights.

If at the end of the night there will not be at least 10 unopened boxes of targets in the trap house, the “Home” team is responsible for bringing out a load of boxes from the storage container before locking up the trap house for the evening.

LEAGUE FEES

Each shooter is assessed a one-time league fee of \$20.00 for participation in the league. All participants that shoot at least one relay are required to pay the fee. Team captains are responsible for coordinating payment of their team’s fees to league management within the first four weeks of the season (preferably on the first night of shooting).

TARGET FEES

Shooters are required to pay individual target fees of \$4.00 per round for all relays shot (both competition & practice). Target fees are collected by team captains, and deposited in the drop-safe each night with the appropriate completed report.

RANGE RULES

The range rules of Methuen Rod & Gun Club, Inc. will be followed by all participating teams & shooters. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the suspension and/or disqualification of a shooter and/or team with no refund of league fees. Copies of the Methuen Rod & Gun Club Range Rules are available on the club’s website (www.methuenrodandgunclub.org).

In addition to violations of range & safety rules, teams and/or shooters may be suspended and/or disqualified for conduct that is considered unsportsmanlike. This includes abusive language, threats, or any other action deemed by league management not to be keeping with the intended purpose of the league. League fees for suspended/disqualified shooters will not be refunded.

The use of eye & ear protection is a requirement of the league.

HANDICAPPING

To encourage participation from shooters of all abilities, each shooter will be assigned a target “handicap” so that everyone is competing at the same general level.

Initial handicaps are calculated based on “known ability” (previous league performance, ATA registered shooting, shooting to establish an average, or other method). Handicaps are re-calculated each week based on match performance, and new handicaps will be used for the next match.

“Known ability” is used as one score in the calculation of handicaps until the shooter has participated in two league matches. After the shooter has participated in two league matches, “known ability” is no longer factored into the calculation, and only broken targets (not including handicap) are used.

PARTICIPANTS THAT HAVE NOT ESTABLISHED “KNOWN ABILITY”

Shooters without “known ability” are those that have not previously participated in the league, have not shot registered ATA targets to have an average listed in the ATA average book, or have not shot in another league where league management can establish a recent average.

Shooters without “known ability” must establish their average by shooting a minimum of two documented rounds before they are eligible to receive handicap targets added to their score. Shooting for average can be done at any open shooting event at MRGC (or other location recognized by league management). If a shooter has not established “known ability” prior to participation in their first relay of league shooting, only their raw scores (no handicap) will count until they have shot two documented rounds (either in league, open trap, or a combination of both).

CALCULATING HANDICAPS:

If a shooter’s average is greater than (or equal to) 23.00, a handicap of 0 will be applied.

If a shooter’s average is less than 23.00, they will receive handicap targets in the amount equal to the difference between 23.00 and their running average rounded to the nearest whole number, (.00-.49 rounds down, .50-.99 rounds up).

Example #1:

Shooter’s average is 20.00

23.00 - 20.00 = 3.00

The handicap for this shooter is 3

Example #2:

Shooter’s average is 17.30

23.00 - 17.30 = 5.70

The handicap for this shooter is 6

Example #3:

Shooter’s average is 22.67

23.00 - 22.67 = 0.33

The handicap for this shooter is 0

Example #4:

Shooter’s average is 24.06

The shooter’s average is greater than 23.00

The handicap for this shooter is 0

League management reserves the right to make a correctional handicap adjustment to a shooter, but will do so only after notice has been given to both the shooter and team captain with a detailed explanation.

NO “HANDICAPPED” 25’s

Shooters that have a handicap of 1 or more targets for a match cannot use handicap targets to achieve a score greater than 24 in an individual relay. To achieve a score greater than 24, the shooter must break 25 targets.

SCORING & SCORE SHEETS

All scores are to be recorded and reported on a 3-part league score sheet. The score sheet will legibly identify the date, team names, team members (first & last names), and scores. Please do not include score sheets with your shooting fee drop.

It is the responsibility of both team captains to email/text a quality photo of the score sheet to league management immediately after the conclusion of that night’s match.

MATCH RESULTS & HANDICAP TRACKING

League management will track match results & individual averages to determine handicaps. Results & averages will be emailed to team captains prior to the next scheduled match. It is the team captain’s responsibility to bring handicap information with them to their match.

All score sheets are verified by league management to ensure accuracy and compliance with league rules. League management reserves the right to correct score sheets for mathematical errors, incorrect handicaps, etc. which may affect match outcomes.

Score sheets are available for review by any participant upon request by their team captain.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF SHOOTERS & FORFEITS

For a match to be official, a team must field a minimum of 4 shooters per relay. If a team does not have at least 4 shooters - and prior arrangements have not been made between team captains to reschedule the match - it is considered a forfeited match (loss) by the team which does not have enough shooters.

“DUMMY” SCORES

If a team has only four 4 shooters for a relay, a “dummy score” will be used in place of the 5th shooter’s score. The dummy score is calculated by taking the opposing team’s lowest score (including handicap) for that relay and subtracting two targets.

Example:

Team A only has only four shooters to start the match. After Team B shoots their first relay, Team A takes the lowest score (including handicap targets) from Team B’s relay, and subtracts 2 to get the “dummy score” to be used for their “fifth” shooter for that relay.

If multiple relays are shot by a 4-person squad, the “dummy score” is calculated for each corresponding relay.

Even if both teams have only four shooters to start a match, it is important that “Dummy Scores” must still be used, as the league *may* use “total points” and “points against” as tie-breakers for final standings when needed.

MAKE-UPS & INCLEMENT WEATHER

Make-ups for missed matches must be completed prior to the end of the regular season unless otherwise approved by league management. The only exception is for make-ups for Week 14 matches if needed.

It is expected that teams make every effort to get their matches in - even in light rain or drizzle - and keep make-up matches to an absolute minimum.

League Management reserves the right to determine/alter the format of make-up matches based on the number of teams that require them at the end of the season.

“SHOOT-AHEADS”

Shooting in advance of regularly scheduled league matches is allowed under the following conditions: (1) agreed-upon by the team captains involved, (2) is done no more than a week in advance of the regularly scheduled match, and (3) league management has approved the match.

If updated handicaps from the most recent regularly-scheduled match have not yet been distributed, the teams involved will shoot and record only their raw scores. Once handicaps from the previous matches have been calculated, league management will add applicable handicap targets to the raw scores to determine the final match winner.

TIE-BREAKERS

If a match ends in a tie, the match will be “carried over” to the next match between the same teams. If this is not possible, the match will be “carried over” to the next time both teams shoot on the same night. In either case, the tie will be settled as follows:

- Each team’s first relay score will serve as the tie-breaker.
- If the score remains tied after the teams’ first relays, each team’s second relay score will serve as the tie-breaker.
- If the score remains tied after both teams have shot their two relays, team captains can mutually agree to settle the tie by an alternate method.

If the schedule does not provide for teams to shoot against each other again on the same night, team captains can mutually agree to settle the tie by an alternate method.

Ties not resolved by the last night of the regular season will be settled by league management using “total points”, then “points against”, if needed.

FAILURES TO FIRE (FTF's)

Shooters are allowed two Failures to Fire (FTF) in a relay. The scorekeeper must announce the FTF as it occurs, and an "F" marked on the score sheet in the corresponding box. After a FTF is called, the shooter can call for another target. After two FTFs in a single relay, any subsequent FTFs are to be scored as "lost" targets.

For the purposes of this league, a "failure to fire" is when

- A whole target appears promptly after a shooter calls for it.
- The target is within the legal limits of flight.
- The shooter makes an effort to pull the trigger, but a wad does not leave the barrel.

If a shooter does not make an attempt to fire at a legal target, this is considered a "lost target", not a "failure to fire", and should be called by the scorekeeper as such.

LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

The team with the best record (most wins & fewest losses) will determine league champions & runners-up. Forfeits will be considered losses when calculating win/loss records. In the event that two or more teams have identical records for champion, a shoot-off consisting of a complete match will determine the champion. If a complete match shoot-off is not possible, league management will determine/use another method (based on performance and excluding methods of chance) to determine the champion.

For tiebreakers other than for champion, "total points" will be used to settle ties in final standings. If a team that is involved in a tiebreaker has won 1 or more matches by way of forfeit, an average match score will be used for any forfeited match to calculate "total points". If there is still a tie after total points are calculated, "points against" will be used to settle the tie.

TROPHIES

The league champions will have their names engraved on the league trophy. A trophy for "High Gun" (raw scores, no handicap) and "Highest Average Increase" (raw scores, no handicap) will also be awarded at the end of the season. Other trophies/awards may be awarded at league management's discretion.

LEAGUE BANQUET

After league expenses, league management will allocate the remaining funds towards a dinner/banquet.

REMAINING FUNDS

Any funds remaining after league expenses and/or banquet will be returned to the team captains to redistribute to their team members, donate to a club project, or donate to charity by the team and at their sole discretion.

FINAL AUTHORITY

For items not specifically covered by these rules, league management will make the final determination, and may use the most recently published rules of the Amateur Trapshooting Association and/or input from team captains as a guide.

RULE REVISIONS

League members are encouraged to offer suggestions or ideas for changes and improvements to these rules prior to the season. Once rules are finalized, no changes will be made unless extraordinary circumstances warrant a rule change. In such cases, league management may request input from team captains, but final decisions are made solely by league management.

Thank you for participating!