



Planning for Your Match

By National Pistol Coach Sergey Luzov

In my previous article in the March/April 2011 edition, we discussed preparation for the match. Now, what about planning for the match itself?

Planning for a match should include all aspects of your individual needs. Also, it must include all training and competition priorities.

First, you need to examine the competition schedule and know all the training and competition start times. Having a print out with you at all times would be a good idea. Now you can plan your days accordingly. For example, if the match start time is in the afternoon, you will have to adjust your normal schedule for sleep, food and exercise to accommodate the demand for your body's best function in the afternoon.

Start time is not necessarily convenient for normal breakfast or lunch and can be right on top of your normal lunch time. In this case you'll have to decide on your food plan change—when and how much to eat before the competition, what is the plan for snack(s) between the course of fire (and final) and the hydration plan. It is possible that your match finishes late and you miss dinner or it is too late to go out to eat. Consider ordering food to the room or having groceries prepared in advance—but make sure that room service is an option at your hotel.

Also, remember that having enough rest is very important for your body to recover and perform. This is especially important for athletes who have a multiday



It's important to know when/where your match is and make sure to be on time, if not early!

match, which is almost always the case. Make sure to get plenty of sleep. It would be wise to discuss your sleep schedule and create a lights-out agreement with your roommate.

How about fitness? Well, light PT to maintain your body's physical function would be my recommendation. You do not want to spend all your energy to run a marathon a day before the match. Some light cardio or walking will help keep your body alert and ready for the match.

A pre-match training strategy is one of the most important parts of your plan. Normally, you have one or two training sessions before the match. They are not very long, so it would be a bad idea to try and

catch up with all the training you missed for the past month. Shooting as many shots as you possibly can is also not good. Instead, you need to determine tasks to accomplish for those short trainings and stay on course. Sometimes, more dry-firing on those days can be better solution.

It is also important for you to review the USAS/ISSF Rule Book and make sure you know the rules for your event, so you would be confident in taking action should the situation arise. Also remember to check your equipment before you go and make sure it meets the Rules requirements. It will give you peace of mind and save a lot of stress.

Now the match plan itself. The warm-up plan should include a timeline and list of tasks to accomplish: point setup; equipment necessary for the match (yes, timer too!), sighting timeline and focus task as well as match task goal, breaks plan, and finally, keys for the gun case. Consider giving your coach an extra set just in case.

Keep your start number and gun control form in the gun case. Make sure you have everything you need in one place in order to focus on executing your match plan. It would be wise to start training on a new schedule for several days prior the match, just like you planned for it. And one more thing: please check the weather for the place you go to. We've seen athletes showing up in flippers and shorts in the middle of winter in Colorado. And, it does not matter if you are from Hawaii or Florida. Take better care of your match plan and it will help you succeed.

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