



Match Strategies for Shooters

The plan can be simply to stop trying to shoot this shot and go back to a fundamentals check both mentally and physically.

1. **Mental Check:** Clarify the picture of a correct shot delivery process mentally, and then start the physical check.
2. **Physical Check:** Lift, approach and hold with the front sight focus a few times. No dry fire.
3. When the mental check is achieved and physical check confirms it, you can proceed.
4. Now, add your triggering technique, and you will be focused back on the shot process again.

There are more challenges in a match that all athletes know about and even more still to learn in the future. Every athlete can develop a personal core match strategy on dealing with common difficulties to start with, and then work on mastering it. Use the above example as a clear and simple start to approaching any challenge.

Some action plans will work right away, but some will take more time to develop. Research and development of more strategies will result in an athlete's handling a greater variety of difficult situations successfully--which takes confidence to the higher level. Ultimately, you can develop match strategies that are trained for use on demand and that are flexible to deal with any challenges that appear. Your decision making ability during competition stress will become clear and will result in a greater level of confidence and performance in any match situation.

Sporting competitions always challenge athletes of all disciplines to face and overcome difficulties throughout the event. Our pistol events are no exception and I often observe athletes trying to get through a tough spot without really having a solid strategy to identify, deal with and overcome the challenge. It is hardly possible to get over the difficult situation, if the athlete never thought of the possible scenario ahead of time and did not create a contingency plan of action. What can an athlete do if they hit a tough spot during the competition? Here is a simple example of a Match Strategy and how it can be used successfully.

Match strategy is an action plan through the match that includes common challenges faced in a match and plans for dealing with them.

1. Identify problematic areas usually experienced in matches.
2. Develop a logical plan for handling those situations. It is important to learn to recognize arising challenges early so timely action can be taken to prevent a performance decline.

Example:

The first shot in a slow fire match: Often I see athletes perform very well and smoothly in the sighting shots and then change their performance with a push of a button on the first record target. If you face this challenge, try the following process to overcome it.

Identify the problem that is causing the "symptoms" to appear. Normally a shift in mental focus is the number one problem. Outcome related thoughts are replacing a shot process: "What if?" The result (symptoms) is multiple over holds and a hesitation in triggering. At this point, you have enough data to apply an action plan.

