



United States Helice Association ([www.USHelice.com](http://www.USHelice.com))  
7750 N MacArthur Blvd · Suite 120-324, Irving, TX 75063

## *RULES & REGULATIONS*

### PART I

#### Section 1: Miscellaneous

- 1.1. These Rules are mandatory for USHA-sanctioned competitions. All shooters are expected to know the Rules and abide by the results.
- 1.2. Only gauges 12 and smaller may be used. Maximum loads for 12 gauges remain 1oz, 7-1/2 (Euro: 28g, 2.7 mm). Referees may check cartridges at any time and reserve the right to disqualify those found to be in violation.
- 1.3. Only factory-loaded shells are permitted at USHA-sanctioned events.
- 1.4. Category ages are as follows: Veterans, 55 and older; Super Vets, 65 and older; Juniors, 20 or younger.

#### Section 2: Safety

- 2.1. It is the responsibility of the shooter to remain safe at all times. Shooters will only operate from the Shooting Stand. All starting positions (gun down, fully mounted, etc.) are allowable provided they are deemed safe by the referee.
- 2.2. Shooters will load / unload only when upon the Shooting Stand. A shooter shall not load until the ring is clear of personnel. While loading, shooters shall point their gun in a safe direction. Before turning around, the shooter will unload and leave the action open.
- 2.3. No shooter may fire upon a target that lies outside of the designated boundaries. This rule is in effect to protect both staff and shooters, particularly when adjacent rings are in use. Referees may record scores as "LOST" for any shooter found in violation.

### Section 3: Gun & Cartridge Malfunctions

#### 3.1. First Barrel Malfunctions:

a). Upon occurrence, shooters will point their gun upwards and request referee inspection, being careful not to release the trigger, adjust the safety, or open the action. If upheld by the referee, another target will be allowed.

b). If a shooter experiences a first barrel malfunction yet elects to make an attempt with the second barrel (thereby forgoing a referee inspection) the result shall stand.

#### 3.2. Second Barrel Malfunctions:

a). Upon occurrence, shooters will point their gun upwards and follow the same procedures described above. If upheld by the referee, another target will be allowed.

b). If allowed, the shooter must intentionally miss with the first barrel (safely discharging into the ground or air) before making an attempt with the second barrel. The result of the second shot shall stand. First barrel kills will be recorded as "LOST."

#### 3.3. Shooters are allowed three (3) misfires due to shell or gun mechanical malfunction. Beginning with the 4th misfire, the results shall stand. Scorekeepers will record any gun / cartridge malfunctions on the respective shooter's scorecard.

### Section 4: Shooter Malfunctions

4.1. A missed target due to an engaged safety mechanism or a lack of ammunition shall be recorded as "LOST."

4.2. Simultaneous discharge of both barrels is considered shooter error. Unless the referee determines otherwise, the results shall stand.

4.3. Shooters run the risk of losing all birds in a crank IF, having been called by name (3) times, they are preceded to the Shooting Stand by the next shooter in line.

4.4. Targets shot out of turn shall be recorded as "LOST" unless cleared previously by the referee OR it was determined to be an honest mistake. If the mistake was honest, a "NO BIRD" shall apply to each target killed and the shooter may resume his correct place in line.

### Section 5: Machine & Target Malfunctions

5.1. If a machine releases a target before the command "PULL," the shooter may either refuse it or shoot it. If shot, the result shall stand. If refused, another target will be provided.

5.2. If a machine or machines release multiple targets simultaneously, the shooter may refuse them or shoot. If shot, the result shall stand. If refused, another target will be provided.

- 5.3. Shooters may inadvertently trigger the release of a second target while making an attempt on the first (i.e., shooting a machine). In these instances, only the initial target is considered legal.
- 5.4. Should any target partially break apart upon the command "PULL," it is to be considered a legal target if it flies normally. Conversely, if such a target is not in normal flight when the first shot is fired, it will be deemed a "NO BIRD," even if killed.

## Section 6: Race Play

- 6.1. All shooters will shoot from the same meter line. There is no slide rule in effect.
- 6.2. On manually loaded machines, the trapper will start them when the shooter is on the Shooting Stand and is loaded. When such machines are in use, the shooter and trapper will interact as follows:  
  
*Shooter: "Trapper Ready?"*  
*Trapper: "Ready!"*  
*Shooter: "Pull!"*
- 6.3. Shooters who fire unintentionally before calling "PULL" shall receive a "NO BIRD" and another target will be provided.
- 6.4. Shooters may only make attempts on the target while it is in its acceleration phase of flight.
- 6.5. Kills are recorded when the witness cap separates completely from the orange wing and falls within the fenced perimeter, or ring. However, if any substantial piece of the orange wing remains affixed to the witness cap, the target shall be recorded as "LOST."
- 6.6. The referee may inspect a separated witness cap that falls into the ring at any time.
- 6.7. If the witness cap lands inside the ring but bounces over fence, the score will be recorded as "GOOD."
- 6.8. If the witness cap bounces off of and over the fence having never hit the ground, the score will be recorded as "LOST."
- 6.9. A low target whose flight remains hidden from the shooter (i.e., obscured by a machine) is considered a legal bird, even when said target follows a "ONE SHOT, ONE BIRD" ruling.
- 6.10. A shooter may seek to apply the "Balk" rule if, while making an attempt on a target, they were distracted by an unsafe situation, an alarm raised by a trapper or referee, or by any "command," from any origin, directed to the shooter personally. Absent an immediate "NO BIRD" call, the shooter will raise their gun and claim a "Balk." If confirmed by the referee, another target will be allowed.

- 6.11. If a shooter disagrees with a particular call, they should initiate protest by first raising their gun. If the dispute is not settled at the referee level, the head-referee (or his appointed jury) will render the final decision. All protests must occur immediately following the disputed call in question.
- 6.12. It is the shooter's responsibility to verify his or her scorecard entries. Any disputes must be lodged before the next shooter begins their crank. Disputes elevated after the fact will not be entertained.

## Section 7: Ground Strikes

Low birds and the occasional ground strike are an exciting and important aspect of the sport. Although such targets often generate their fair share of controversy for both shooter and referee alike, shoot committees are nevertheless encouraged to produce them from shoot to shoot.

Referees should pay particular attention to ground strikes. Key elements to note are the target's flight characteristics, flight time, and distance traveled before and after impact. Equally important, the referee must judge how much time a shooter had to fire one or both barrels in relation to the elements described above. Three typical ground strike scenarios, and their rulings, are described below.

- 7.1. If a target strikes the ground but resumes flight with no noticeable change in speed, it shall be considered a legal bird. Such a call remains the case even when the target remains in light contact with the ground.
- 7.2. If a ground strike results in a partial loss of flight (i.e., a noticeable change in speed) before the shooter has a reasonable opportunity to make an attempt, a "NO BIRD" shall be called. If such a strike occurs in between shots, a "ONE SHOT, ONE BIRD" is warranted.

The "ONE SHOT, ONE BIRD" command implies that the shooter will be allowed another target but may only make the attempt using a single cartridge.

- 7.3. If a ground strike results in total loss of flight before the shooter has a reasonable opportunity to make an attempt, a "NO BIRD" shall be called. If such a strike occurs in between shots, a "ONE SHOT, ONE BIRD" is warranted.

In the scenarios above, trappers and referees are encouraged not to penalize fast shooters with a "ONE SHOT, ONE BIRD" if a lightning-quick attempt was made but missed. The "reasonable opportunity" clause should be applied to all shooters, regardless of speed. In these cases, a "NO BIRD" is more appropriate.

- 7.4. In those instances where the shooter's first shot drives a complete target into the ground:
  - a). If the referee deems that the shooter had sufficient time for a second shot, the result shall stand.
  - b). If the referee deems that there was not sufficient time for a second shot, a "ONE SHOT, ONE BIRD" is warranted.

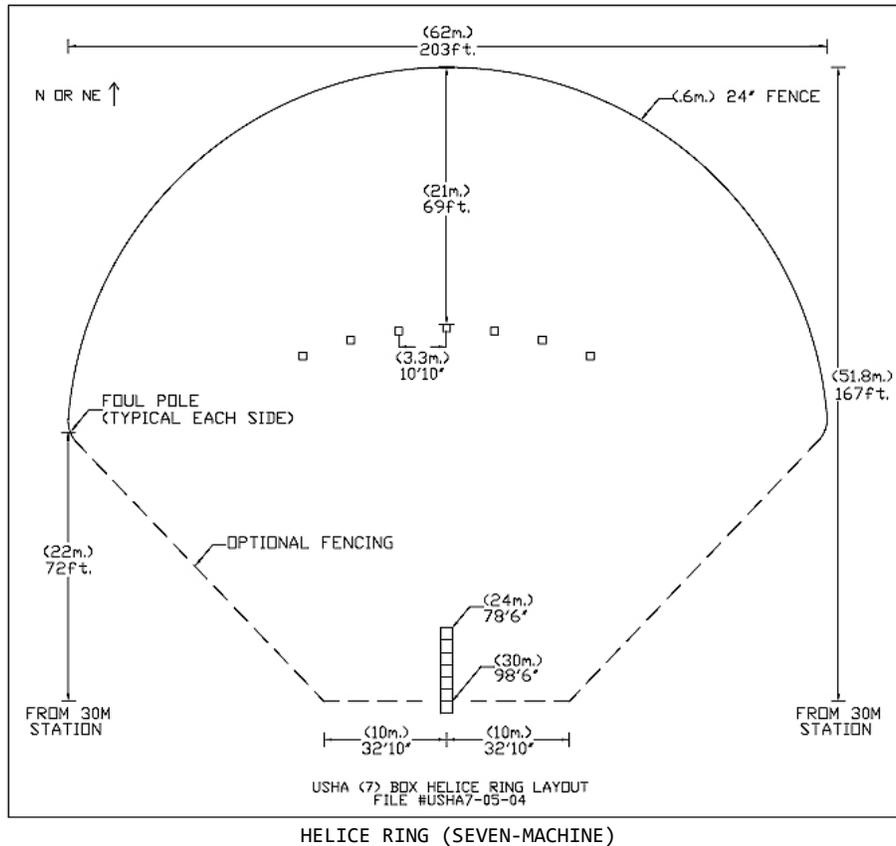
## Section 8: Sanctioned Event Host Responsibilities

- 8.1. Shoot hosts shall conduct their USHA sanctioned event in accordance with the rules and directives defined herein.
- 8.2. Hosts will appoint a Shoot Director. The Shoot Director should be knowledgeable in all aspects of the game and its governing rules. Shoot Directors will act as the head referee and/or appoint a panel to do so, coordinate the appointment of ring referees, establish a Shoot Committee, and assist the host to bring about a safe, efficient, and rules-compliant shooting event.
- 8.3. The Shoot Committee will be composed of two or more shooters in addition to Shoot Director. Their primary task is to adjust/tune the machines prior to each day's race and in between cranks when necessary. If adjustments are made in between cranks, the Shoot Committee will inform all shooters of the adjustment(s) made.
- 8.4. Event hosts will ensure that "NO BIRDS" are re-loaded when:
  - a). A machine or target malfunctions on the first bird of a given crank.
  - b). It is necessary to keep at least three available machines in play (following multiple "NO BIRDS", for instance) so that the shooter may complete their crank.
- 8.5. Event hosts will not charge shooters for "NO BIRDS" resulting from machine or target malfunctions.
- 8.6. Event hosts will conform to the Ring Layout dimensions addressed in Part II Section 1 of this document (see diagrams also).
- 8.7. Mandatory or compulsory purses are prohibited at USHA-sanctioned events.
- 8.8. A "Missed Target" buzzer or noisemaker, operated by the scorekeeper, is required for each ring in use. These devices are necessary to alert both the shooter and fellow competitors alike how the shot was scored.
- 8.9. In addition to the responsibilities defined above, event hosts will ensure that they collect and submit to the USHA any applicable Association fees.

## Section 9: USHA Responsibilities

- 9.1. The USHA will make these rules available in a manner accessible to all members. Further, the USHA will conduct an annual review of these rules seeking input from members both on and off the Board of Directors.
- 9.2. In the event that a shooter lodges a written grievance, the USHA Board of Directors shall adjudicate the matter and respond via written correspondence within a reasonable timeframe.





1.4. Seven (7) Machine Set-Up

- a). Position machines such that they are evenly spaced 3.3 meters apart.

1.5. Fence Set-Up

- a). Enclose the perimeter of the ring with a fence measuring two feet in height (see also 1.6 below).
- b). Size the fence mesh appropriately to prevent the witness caps from passing through.
- c). The distance from the fence to specific machines should be 21m (refer to diagram).
- d). If utilizing a pigeon ring, the distance between the machines and the fence may be slightly less than 21m.

- 1.6. The shooting stand surface, machine bases, and the reference point from which the 24-inch fence height is measured should lie on the same plane.

## Section 2: Target Description / Specifications

- 2.1. This section dictates target specifications required for USHA / FITASC approval.
- 2.2. Target system dimensions:
  - a). Target Wingspan: 11in (28cm).
  - b). Witness Cap diameter: 4.01in.
- 2.3. Total target system weight: wings and witness cap must weigh 70 grams maximum.
- 2.4. Target system material:
  - a). The wings are to be of a material fragile to impact (Polystyrene).
  - b). The witness caps are to be made of a material resistant to impact (minimum of 50% Polyethylene).
- 2.5. Witness caps must properly fashion to the targets.
- 2.6. Color
  - a). The wings are to be orange or red.
  - b). The witness cap must be white.
  - c). Blue witness caps may be used for winter conditions.
- 2.7. Machines
  - a). There should be a beak on the end of all throwing heads.