



## Side Judge's Handbook

### **Introduction**

The Side Judge at a MSA match performs a number of important functions. He / she acts as a second pair of eyes for the Match Judge and acts as a safety rider during the match, in the event of a dismounted contestant, a dropped gun or other event.

### **Before the First Shot**

Before the match starts the Match Judge should meet with all Side Judges to explain the courses of fire to be engaged that match. This is where everyone has input on how to set up stages safely.

### **Communication**

It is important that the Side Judge and Match judge can communicate during the match. It is recommended that 2 way radios be used. Hand signals can also be implemented.

### **Placement**

The Side Judge should be able to view the entire arena, making certain he /she can see the balloon setters and entry gates along with a clear view of the Match Judge.

### **Responsibilities**

The Side Judges main function is to act as a safety rider, picking up dropped guns from a contestant, assisting a dismounted rider, and insuring the balloon setters are clear during the running of a stage. The Side Judge also watches each contestant during the running of a stage, making sure all the proper calls are made.

1. When assisting a dismounted rider, it may be prudent to dismount yourself to keep the rider's horse away from the fallen rider. Each circumstance is different so you must be able to think fast. The rider's health is most important, DO NOT move a fallen rider until medical help arrives. You may have to encourage a fallen rider to lie still until this help arrives.
2. If a dropped gun occurs during the running of a stage make certain the balloon setters (typically young children) do not pick up the gun. Only you as a Side Judge or the Match Judge should have access to a dropped gun.
3. Check the arena before each rider starts the stage, making certain the gates are closed and the balloon setters are out of the arena.
4. The Side Judge also acts as a second Match Judge. You should be watching each rider, counting any missed targets or procedural in the running of a stage. Watch how the Match Judge calls each contestant's run making sure you agree with his calls. These stages are run fast and as a Side Judge you are assisting the Match Judge insuring that the proper calls are made. The Match Judge has final say on ALL calls.