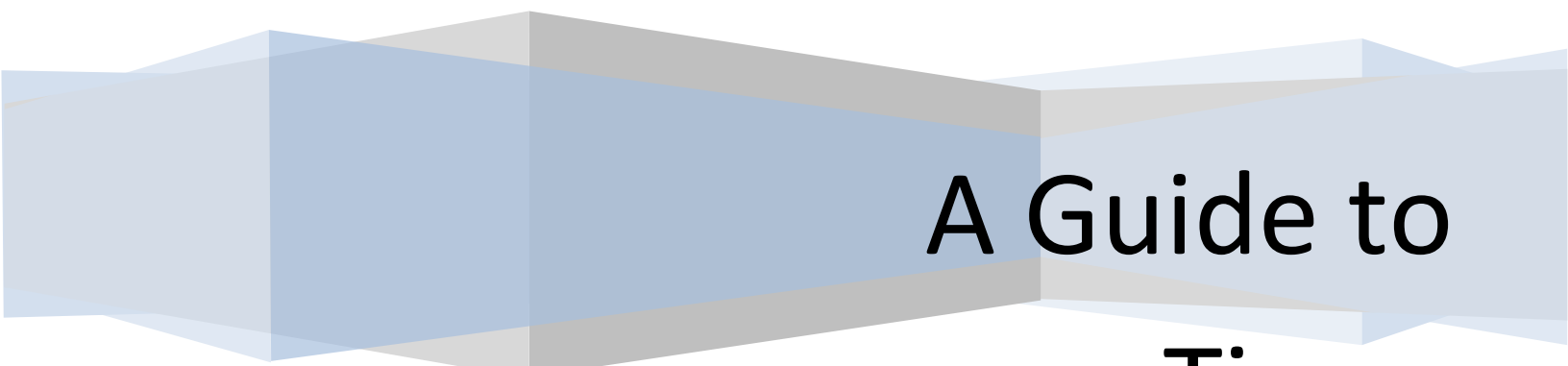


Timer Operator Proficiency Course

(TO Pro Course)

Mississippi River Rangers and Memphis Gunslingers



**A Guide to
Timer
Operator
Skills and
Techniques**

Timer Operator Proficiency Course (TO Pro Course)

A Guide to Timer Operator Skills and Techniques

Responsibility:

The Timer Operator (TO) is the Chief Range Officer for that posse on that stage.

Prep for Stage:

Battery Timer – Does it work, do you understand it? Does it beep on push or release? Does the screen time ok? Do you know how to ‘review’ shots?

Shooter doesn’t approach the line until called, and Timer Operator (TO) doesn’t call him until there is a clear path for him to carry loaded guns. Brass pickup should be finished as well as any targets reset.

As Shooter Approaches:

If unknown, check if shooter wants help through the stage (some don’t). Your job is to help guide him successfully and safely through the stage.

Check shooter for safety equipment (eyes and ears) and ammo. Verbally state ‘targets are reset’ if they are.

Announce shooters alias to scorekeeper.

Check for counters being ready visually and verbally.

Assure shooter is not faulted, with guns properly staged and shooter in starting position per stage instructions.

Tell shooter how to proceed with you: “When you’re ready, say the line, I’ll give you a standby and beep” or something to that effect. Speak distinctly and loud enough you will be understood through ear protection.

A delay of approximately one full second between ‘standby’ and the beep is about right. Be consistent from shooter to shooter.

During Course of Fire:

The timer recording of the beep and the last shot is most important. The rest of the shots are nice to have, but don’t interfere with shooter recording them.

The TO generally should be an arm’s length away from the shooter off the strong side, to the rear just right of centerline, focusing on the gun, not targets. This will let him stop the shooter in the event of a squib or a problem with the 170. Depending on the stage shooting positions and the speed of the shooter, it isn’t always possible to be there, but is a good rule of thumb.

Best way to hold timer:

- **Timer clip toward hand, mike to the front.**
- **Chest level during course of fire.**
- **Careful with fingers, do not repress button.**
- **Check timer for recording coming up on last shot.**

The TO should watch the firearm and count rounds during fire. Anticipate squibs and what you will do. The most effective range command is usually ‘STOP!!’ to assure the desired behavior. A firm hand placed on the shooters shoulder is suggested as an additional aid.

If stopped by the TO for a suspected squib, and the shooter hasn’t recocked the gun, the shooter will make the gun safe by grounding it, as on a table pointing downrange, or safely handing it off. Then continue on. See more about squibs in Special Situations section.

Counters are watching targets for hits, not TO.

On restaging, watch for rounds on carrier of long guns, shooter must clear.

See holstered pistols are not cocked.

Anticipate shooters next move after firing each gun and stay out of the way of next movement. TO interference with shooter are appropriate grounds for a reshoot.

After Completing Course of Fire:

Cover timer microphone with finger. Don't bump timer, as time may change.

Announce time to shooter and show him timer results.

Poll counters for misses and penalties.

Announce time to scorekeeper and check what's recorded.

Encourage counters to report their own counts and not ask each other for opinions. Shooter gets benefit of doubt.

Miscellaneous:

The TO, as well as the counters, may call a stage or shooting procedural.

A miss cannot create a procedural. Please have this explained if you do not understand.

TO takes all dropped or malfunctioning guns to unloading table, not the shooter.

Encourage scorekeeper to keep loading table full.

MRR and MSSA Cowboy Ranges

Special Situations

Interpreting Spotter Counts:

➤ **Definition:**

Misses to be recorded are the largest number at least two of the three spotters agree on.

Example: 1,2,3 = 2 misses. 4,2,5 = 4 misses. 3,5,6 = 5 misses. 5,1,2 = 2 misses. And the easy one, 1,1,2 = 1 miss.

Grounding a malfunctioning firearm:

- Positions for grounding a gun may include a table or suitable prop, muzzle pointed downrange.

Helping the Shooter through the stage:

- Determine if shooter wants help through the stage. Some don't.
- Posse members are Safety Officers and may announce an infraction when observed. The TO, as Chief RO, should be responsive to this.

Can posse members announce shotgun targets as 'UP' or 'DOWN'?

- No. Only the TO and Counters may announce shotgun targets as 'UP' or 'DOWN' to the shooter. While target 'bounceback' is not a big problem at either MRR or MSSA, improper calls are made too often by posse members during the shotgun strings.

Shooter holsters a cocked pistol after firing 5 rounds. What is TO's next step?

- Stop the shooter and stage, emergency safety stop by TO.
- Stage DQ for shooter, cocked pistol left shooter's hands.
- Under TO's supervision, shooter slowly removes gun, 'fires' downrange, reholsters gun, takes all guns to unloading table.

Shooter fires less than 5 rounds and holsters a cocked pistol. What is TO's next step?

- Stop stage and shooter, emergency safety stop by TO.
- Stage DQ for shooter, cocked pistol left shooter's hands.
- Under TO's supervision, shooter slowly removes gun, fires live round under the hammer downrange, reholsters gun, and takes all guns to unloading table.

Squibs:

While not common, squibs do occur, and require immediate action by the TO.

Squib fired, gun not recocked

- Upon hearing a squib, TO announces 'STOP' to the shooter, tells shooter to ground the gun if possible, points to where.
- If grounding is not possible, shooter hands off gun to TO. (The gun then goes through a double or triple handoff, not the best option compared to grounding.)

- **Clock is still running. Shooter proceeds to next gun and finishes stage.**
- **If squib is present in barrel, shooter is penalized any unfired rounds as misses and the time to deal with the problem.**
- **If no squib is present in barrel, shooter is awarded a reshoot.**

Squib fired, gun has been recocked

- **TO announces 'STOP' to Shooter**
- **If rifle, TO instructs shooter to open the action, then make safe on the stage.**
- **If pistol, TO places thumb between hammer and firing pin of cocked gun. TO takes pistol from shooter and lowers hammer (on possible live round of gun), makes safe on stage, instructs shooter to continue.**
- **Clock is still running. Shooter proceeds to next gun and finishes stage.**
- **TO announces time and counter misses as usual, 'hands off' timer, and carries squib gun to unloading table for shooter to inspect.**
- **If squib is present in barrel, shooter is penalized any unfired rounds as misses and the time to deal with the problem.**
- **If no squib is present in barrel, shooter is awarded a reshoot.**

Mentor Program

A MRR/MSSA Mentor program exists, whereby there is a list of experienced TO's who are available to help and assist new TO's

through their first match or two, or until they feel comfortable with the job.

It is suggested the new TO picks a mentor or may be assigned one, and arranges to posse with him during a match. He might time perhaps 5 shooters per stage before handing off the timer, during this period. Comments by the mentor will be helpful in getting the new TO up to speed.

Whenever the new TO is confident with how he's doing, he can elect to work on his own.

List of suggested Mentors

Boomerang

Bill Carson

Blackfish Kid

Easy Lee

Cherokee Sergeant

Loco

Tarantula Jack

Buster

Sunny Girl

Jared Maddox

Widowmaker Bill

This document compiled by members of Mississippi River Rangers and Memphis Gunslingers

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