

The Rules

Course of Fire

- Standard NBRSA Hunter-class targets
- 5 stages, each including 5 shots for score and unlimited sighter shots. 250 is a perfect score.
- 7 minutes per stage, except 10 minutes on the first stage. Time is allowed for cleaning/loading between stages.

Rifles

You can shoot any center-fire rifle you would take varmint hunting – no weight limits, no scope magnification limits. There are a few limits, though:

- We do not allow big, loud magnums, nor loud ported muzzle brakes.
- All rifles must be fired single-loaded.
- All rifles shall have stocks. No rail guns.
- No custom bench-rest actions.

Classifications

- Shooters fire in two classes: Varminter class, and the X-League. Scores are reported separately for the two classes.
- All shooters start in Varminter class. After a shooter shoots three clean scores (250 points), that shooter fires in the X-League for ever more.
- Recognition and awards go to the Varminter class. X-League shooters are just in it for bragging rights.
- We track standings over the whole season, and make awards at the end of the year. Standings points are awarded to the top finishers at each match: 3 points for a 1st, 2 for 2nd, 1 point for 3rd.
- Year-end awards will be based on the shooter's best five finishes. To be eligible, you must shoot 5 matches, one of which must be at the 200 yard range.

Schedule, fees, etc

- We shoot at the South range on the 4th Sunday of the month, April through October, starting at 9 AM. April – August are at 100 yards, September & October are at 200 yards.
- Match fee is \$10.
- Bench assignment is first come, first served. When you sign in and pay the fee, you get your bench. Show up on time!
- We will shoot in relays when we have more shooters than benches. If relays are required, shooters will be squadded together by classification, so the members of the class shoot together under the same conditions, for fairness.

The Reasons for The Rules

First and foremost: The objective is for the shooters to have fun, enjoy themselves, and build their precision shooting skills. This includes novices and old pro's, so the rules have to be flexible enough to accommodate both groups.

The course of fire is that for the IBS Varmint for Score Bench-rest matches. We just don't impose the full IBS restrictions. We use the red NBRSA targets rather than the black IBS targets so you can see your bullet holes more easily, especially at 200 yards.

Loud rifles and brakes are just too nasty to tolerate. The magnums really rattle your brains, taking the fun out of the game. The brakes send out a shock wave that will actually move the rifle at adjacent positions. This is simply not fair to the shooters next door.

The single-loading restriction puts auto-loaders on the same footing as bolt guns: Everybody has to load and cycle the action manually every shot.

The purpose of the classifications is to ensure that the beginning shooter can get into the game at reasonable cost, while still allowing advanced shooters to continue to advance their skills.

The informal VFS matches provide an opportunity for the accuracy-minded shooter to get into bench-rest shooting without having to pay a huge up-front price. You can start shooting with an ordinary varmint rifle. If you find you like the game, you can build up your skills and shooting rig over time, but you don't have to buy a fancy rig before you start.

Indeed, there's no point in spending a whole lot before you start; a fancy rifle will not win the match by itself. Your skills - at hand-loading, at reading the conditions and at shooting off the rests - are at least as important as the rifle. It takes time to develop these skills enough to really make use of a fancy rifle.

At the same time, there's no point working to improve your skills if you're not allowed to progress. You can't get better when you've reached the limits of your machine. When you know you're better than the rifle is capable of being, you've got to move up. The VFS matches allow you to advance at the pace you find comfortable and affordable, building a better rifle when/if you feel your skills have out-grown your present rifle.

We've been progressing this way for over a decade now, and some of our guys have gotten very good indeed, and so have their rifles. We know this has reached the point where we're turning off some shooters. Some folks come to check out the match, and give up on even trying the game because the top-end guns are so plainly expensive. We have struggled with rules to try to keep the VFS matches accessible to the guy with the ordinary varmint rifle. We have repeatedly tried to define rules that would rule out super-duper full-custom bench-rest rifles, yet still let us progress. We failed every time. Since we can't classify the rifles sensibly, we have chosen to classify the shooters. These rules are the result.

If you want to try bench-rest shooting with us, you do not have to get a rifle to compete with the X-men, you just need a varmint rifle that shoots as well as you can. Grab your rifle, load up a batch of your best, and get started! Work on your rest shooting skills and hand-loading skills. Work on reading the conditions. Improve your gun when you need to, but take your time - building the skills takes longer than building the rifle.

When you reach the point where you can shoot clean scores repeatedly, you have graduated into the X-League, so called because the only competition is over the tie-breaker Xs. Work on shooting a perfect 250-25X. (Hey, it's been done, by some guy in South Carolina.)