



**SSAA GUIDELINES
FOR THE USE OF BLACK POWDER**

2012

No. 1

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF BLACK POWDER
ON
SSAA RANGES

1. BLACK POWDER

- 1.1. Only commercially made Black Powder or Black Powder substitute is to be used.
- 1.2. When Black Powder events are being held smoking or naked flames are not permitted within 10 metres of the firing line or the designated safe area for open bulk container and to comply with legislation.
- 1.3. A designated safe area will be allocated at each match for measuring out powder charges and loading cartridges, such an area shall be a minimum of 10 metres from the firing line and to comply with legislation.
- 1.4. Supplies of bulk powder are to be kept in designated areas at least 20m from any open flame.
- 1.5. Powder should be stored in its original container.
- 1.6. Powder in bulk is not allowed on the firing line.
- 1.7. All Black Powder on the firing line must be held as pre-measured loads in separate containers.
- 1.8. Only enough black powder for immediate reasonable use may be brought to the firing point.
- 1.9. No firearms may be loaded directly from a bulk Black Powder container. This includes the use of powder flasks or powder horns.
- 1.10. Powder may not be measured into loads from bulk containers on the firing line.
- 1.11. All spilt black powder must be immediately, safely and properly disposed of.
- 1.12. Powder shall not be placed in direct sunlight.
- 1.13. As well as the above, the various Disciplines need to adopt safety measures which may only apply to their Discipline.

2. MUZZLE LOADING

- 2.1. Flintlock and Matchlock events in particular require screens between each individual shooter.
- 2.2. Where practical, all priming flasks should have some form of fusible plug and hold no more than 16 grams (250 grains) of powder. The use of plastic priming flasks is recommended.
- 2.3. In Matchlock events, the slow match needs to be pinned to the serpent. Matches shall be stored in a fireproof container (an empty soft drink can serves the purpose very well) except when ready to fire, and may only be lit in a safe area, as determined by the Range Officer.
- 2.4. Percussion caps must always be in a closed container except when priming the arm. No loose caps allowed; keep them covered. Caps should be kept in the original factory containers until put in a capping device. No breakable containers such as glass.
- 2.5. No more than one tin of caps per shooter allowed on the firing line. All other cap containers must be in a closed range box or bag kept behind the firing line.
- 2.6. Never blow into your barrel at any time. The practice of blowing down a barrel between shots may cause a flash of unburned powder.

3. RE-ENACTMENT AND RENDEZVOUS GROUPS

Re-enactment and Rendezvous groups should consider the following

- 3.1. Firearms are to be loaded with measured amounts of powder, either from paper cartridges, or a bandolier of flasks (wooden / tin chargers etc.)
- 3.2. Where pre-made paper cartridges are used, all cartridge boxes are to be buttoned closed except during the actual act of loading. Cartridges may not be carried inside clothing.
- 3.3. Paper cartridges should only be prepared at events in approved designated locations.
- 3.4. Consideration should be given to the use of campfires, candles and smoking in tents if Black Powder is in close proximity.
- 3.5. Never blow into your barrel at any time. The practice of blowing down a barrel between shots may cause a flash of unburned powder.

4. EVENTS USING CANNON

- 4.1. Black powder should be brought to the event in pre-made cartridges, kept in ammunition boxes. Powder charges should be wrapped in heavy-duty aluminium foil.
- 4.2. The ammunition box shall be located 8 metres behind gun and attended at all times or locked.
- 4.3. The interior shall be lined with a non-sparking material and the box itself shall be stoutly constructed.
- 4.4. Ignition of the piece shall be by fuse.
- 4.5. When dumping powder or projectiles into the muzzle, care will be taken to prevent any part of the body to cover the muzzle of the piece.
- 4.6. Particular care shall be taken by the operator to ensure no person is standing behind the vent at the time of ignition. Debris & flash from vent on firing use flash diversion board.
- 4.7. Once the match has started, the lid of the ammunition chest shall be closed at all times except when removing a powder charge. No powder charges may be kept outside of the ammunition chest.

5. BLACK POWDER CARTRIDGE EVENTS

- 5.1. Ammunition taken to the line shall be in a suitable ammunition box.
- 5.2. Where cartridges are used for breech seating there shall be no loose powder in the case. A wad must be in place over the top of the powder.
- 5.3. Paper cartridges should only be prepared at events in approved designated locations. Care must be taken to make sure spilt powder in the action and on the bench does not accumulate to become a hazard.