

Thompson Mountain Action Rifle

Qualifier Procedures

Document Version 2.1

March 12th, 2013

This qualifier was adapted from the IPSC Rifle qualifier available at <http://www.ipsc.org/ipsc/rifle.php>

Adaptations were made to suite 5 round magazines under Canadian laws. While some firearms may accept pistol caliber magazines, qualification exercises should cater to multiples of 5 rounds.

Adaptations were made so that no more than 5 magazines are required to complete the qualification course.

The intention of this qualifier is to ensure that everyone using the TMAR practice area for dynamic rifle shooting has sufficient proficiency operating their firearm to do so safely and in a controlled manner, even while under pressure as is typical for timed/scored competitions.

While some qualification exercises are timed, the intention is to see how the person being tested reacts under pressure. The times are set to be challenging, however the primary concern is that the exercise is completed safely with correct firearm handling and trigger control.

Participants taking the qualifier may be permitted to redo exercises for which they do not meet the time requirement or accuracy requirement; however, if disqualified due to a safety violation you will be asked to leave for the day and try again in the future.

Timed stages may be relaxed at the ROs discretion to accommodate firearms which are not magazine fed (SKS, Garand, etc) or other unique circumstances. The intention is to be challenging enough that you feel pressure similar to what you would experience at a competition to see if you can maintain safety even while under pressure. We are not intending to test skill at a competitive level, but rather to evaluate participants' safety habits and instincts while under pressure.

We reserve the right to make further modifications to this qualification procedure if any other unforeseen safety issues arise or if requested by club officials.

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ACTION RIFLE SHOOTING COURSE

Carrying a Rifle on the Range

The rifle is always carried barrel up or down, hammer down, magazine out, and chamber flag fitted. Preferably slung from the shoulder or in a slip. We strongly recommend using a sling; this will make life on the range much easier and safer for all. Good one- or two-point sling designs are easily obtained at relative low cost. Get one! The shooter is not allowed to handle the rifle for any other purposes than transporting it in the prescribed manner to and from the firing line, the gun rack or the Safety Area, unless in a Safety Area or ordered to do so by a Range Officer on an active firing line. It must be stressed that since a rifle is not holstered, but often carried openly, the chamber flag must be fitted as this is the only visual indication that the rifle is made safe and can not be fired.

Correct Techniques

On the range, correct instructional techniques require instructors to introduce, explain and demonstrate a skill. Having been exposed to the techniques you will then practice with unloaded (empty and proved) rifle while the Range Officers coach.

Listen, Learn, and Ask Questions

This is the time for students to ensure they have a good understanding of each technique. Students are encouraged to take advantage of this stage to ask questions, seek assistance and listen to the advice given by the Instructors and Range Officers.

SAFETY DISCIPLINES

Eye and hearing protection must be worn on the firing range.

Safety Rules

Adhere to all safety rules. The rifle should remain in its case until it can be removed in either a designated Safety Area or on the line under the command of a Range Officer.

Obey Range Officers

All commands from a Range Officer must be obeyed immediately. Failure to comply may result in a shooter being asked to leave the range.

Pointing Downrange

During and after the loading process the rifle must remain pointed straight downrange at all times.

Off Target, Off Trigger

When not engaging a target the finger must remain off the trigger.

Safe Muzzle Direction

Never let the muzzle of the rifle point in any direction, which would let a round exit the range.

Safe Handling

If you are not on the firing line under the command of the Range Officer, rifles may only be handled in a designated Safety Area.

Ammunition in Safety Area

Do not handle loaded magazines in Safety Area.

Load Only on Command

Load the rifle under the control of a Range Officer at the command Load and Make Ready. Do not load at any other time.

Eyes and Ears

All instructors and students must wear appropriate eye and ear protection at all times while on the shooting range.

RANGE COMMANDS AND PROCEDURES

From this point on, all magazines and speed loaders should be fully charged, except for one stripper magazine, which should have only one round.

Never handle ammunition in any Safety Area. If you handle ammunition in the safety area it will result in immediate match disqualification.

The following exercises must take place on a shooting range under the supervision of an instructor or range official. Shooters must always wear eye and ear protection while on a shooting range.

Repeat the above Dry Fire Exercises with live ammo. Do not fire any rounds and do not put your finger on the trigger.

Load and Make Ready

1. Smoothly move the rifle from the carrying position to a position where the barrel is parallel to the ground with a straight trigger finger, muzzle pointing straight downrange. Open the action and remove the chamber flag.
2. Cant the rifle so the magazine well can be seen. Fully insert the stripper magazine (the magazine with only one round).
3. Close the action and apply the safety catch.

4. Release the magazine into your weak hand and visually check that the magazine is empty ensuring a chambered round. Put your stripper magazine in your pocket and replace with a fully charged magazine. Muzzle always pointing downrange and trigger finger always straight and well clear of the trigger guard.

5. Now assume the prescribed starting position with the fully loaded rifle. The safety must always be applied.

If You are Finished, Unload and Show Clear

6. Lower the rifle as in Step 1 above.

7. Remove the source of ammo as in Step 4 above.

8. Remove the round in the chamber by working the action. With the bolt held or locked back present the rifle to the Range Officer for inspection.

If Clear, Fire The Action, Open The Action

After the Range Officer has visually inspected the chamber and magazine well, and issues the above command.

10. Close the bolt, fire the action by pulling the trigger and open the bolt again. This is the ultimate check of empty chamber. At this point insert the chamber flag, usually assisted by the Range Officer. Always pointing downrange

11. Sling the empty and unloaded rifle, and move it to a carrying position.

Since in IPSC Rifle one makes use of mainly three shooting stances, standing offhand, kneeling and prone, dry fire exercises and the repetition of these with live rounds should include moving directly into and from these shooting stances. The shooter must be able to safely and smoothly move from a standing start position and directly to prone or kneeling while at all times maintaining safe gun handling.

Range is Clear

Not until the Range Officer issues the command Range is Clear may you move from the line, pick up brass, bend down, or move downrange.

Stand easy until you hear this command.

The above exercises should be done enough times so that the shooter becomes comfortable with the live loading and unloading sequences.

At some point during this live exercise, after the loading procedure, the shooters may be asked to present the rifle for inspection allowing the Range Officer to check if the safety catches have been applied.

LIVE FIRE DRILLS

Shooters must always wear eye and ear protection while on the range. IPSC targets must be used for the following exercises.

Shooters may not, under any circumstances, handle the rifle, other than in the Safety Area or on the firing line under the command of the Range Officer. This safety procedure will be strongly enforced.

All the following exercises must have all shots on the target, with at least 50% A-zone hits in order to advance to the next level. Concentrate on a smooth shouldering, safe muzzle control, and keep checking the correct hold and stance. Score and patch between all stages.

The distances for all stages are short, allowing the use of pistol ranges if available and approved for rifle. The main object here is not precision as such, but safe gun handling. This also allows for quick resetting of stages.

Stages 1 - 9 must have all shots on the target and at least 50% A zone hits before proceeding to the next stage. Stages with overtime shots also need to be repeated.

5+5+5+10+10+10+8+18+4+4+4+6+6+10+10 = 117 rounds

Exercise 1 – Shooting Offhand

Distance: 7 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 1

Rounds: 5

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: Fire 1 round. Done 5 times.

On the start signal, fire one round at the target offhand in your own time. Re-apply the safety each time and lower the rifle to the start position. This will be done five (5) times. When completed score and patch the target.



TIP

Sights on the target ~ finger on the trigger

Sights off the target ~ finger off the trigger



Exercise 2 – Transition to Kneeling from Standing while holding Rifle

Distance: 15 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 1

Rounds: 5

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: From kneeling fire 1 round. Done 5 times. On the start signal, assume a kneeling stance and fire one round at the IPSC target in your own time. Re-apply the safety each time, stand up, and assume the start position. This will be done five times. When completed score and patch the target.



TIP

Moving to kneeling and shouldering the rifle can be done in one smooth move. Move your weak side foot forward as you drop down on your strong side knee and at the same time bring your rifle to the shoulder. Wear kneepads or pants with padded knees!



Exercise 3 – Transition to Prone from Standing while holding Rifle

Distance: 25 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 1

Rounds: 5

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: From prone fire 1 round. Done 5 times. On the start signal, go to prone and fire one round at the IPSC target in your own time. Re-apply the safety each time, stand up and assume the start position. This will be done five times. When completed score and patch the target.



TIP

Going prone in a hurry can hurt if you get it wrong! At the signal go to a kneeling position as in Exercise 2 but as you lean forward to go prone let go of the rifle with your weak hand and use it for support. As soon as you achieve balance kick out your legs and let yourself fall into prone.

At some point during these exercises, the shooters may be asked to present the rifle for inspection allowing the Range Officer to check if the safety catches have been applied.



Exercise 4 – Shooting while Standing

Distance: 15 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 1

Rounds: 10

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: Fire 2 rounds. Done 5 times. Same procedure as Stage 1.



TIP

Even for rifle moving to 15 meters requires a much more deliberate sight picture.



Exercise 5 – Reloading in the Kneeling Position

Distance: 25 meters

Time: 4 seconds

Targets: 1

Rounds: 10

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

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Procedure: From kneeling fire 2 rounds. Done 5 times. Same procedure as Stage 2.

Exercise 6 –Reloading while Standing

Distance: 25 meters

Time: 7 seconds

Targets: 1

Rounds: 10 (5 magazines, each loaded with 2 rounds)

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: Fire 2 rounds, reload, fire another 2 rounds at the same target. Repeat for all 5 magazines, a total of 10 rounds on the same target. The reload should be smooth and unhurried.



TIP

Rifles vary in the way magazines are inserted and magazine catches are operated. There are mainly two systems (AR or AK), but quite a few variants. Insertion will be mainly straight in (AR) or mainly with a rocking motion (AK). Whatever system, familiarization is the key to success. Know your rifle! The same goes for operating the magazine catch. AR style rifles will allow you to just push the magazine catch with your trigger finger and the magazine will drop free, and while holding the rifle by the pistol grip your weak hand can go straight down to retrieve a fresh magazine. Much like on a handgun. For non-modified rifles with AK style magazine catches the process requires the shooter to push the magazine catch forward with the weak hand thumb and pulling the magazine from the rifle with a forward rocking motion and dropping it manually before retrieving and inserting a fresh magazine with the weak hand. No matter what system, move the trigger finger outside of the trigger guard before you start the process! Watch your muzzle!

Once the empty magazine is free of the rifle grab the fresh magazine with your weak hand. Use a solid grip with fingers around the magazine about two thirds up on the magazine, fingers pointing in the same direction as the bullets. Cant the rifle slightly so that you can see the magazine well. Insert the magazine firmly and make sure it is positively seated.

Your weak hand moves immediately back to grip the forearm. Ideally the rifle should never leave the shoulder.

Your trigger finger can now move inside the trigger guard.

Your trigger finger cannot be inside of the trigger guard at any time during the reload procedure and the rifle must be pointed in a safe direction at all times.

Note! On rifles based on the bull-pup designs it is impossible not to have fingers inside the “trigger guard” at any time while maintaining a solid grip on the rifle, as the pistol grip and the trigger guard are integral parts where the pistol grip makes up the rear of the trigger guard. The trigger finger must still be clearly visible outside the trigger guard!



Exercise 7 – Reloading in the Prone Position

Distance: 25 meters

Time: 10 seconds

Targets: 2

Rounds: 8 (4 magazines, each loaded with 2 rounds)

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: From prone fire 2 rounds, reload and fire another 2 rounds at alternating targets. Repeat procedure with another 2 rounds in each target until all 4 magazines are consumed. The reload should be smooth and unhurried.

Exercise 8 – Transitioning through Standing, Kneeling and Prone Positions

Distance: 25 meters

Time: 15 seconds

Targets: 3 (2 target widths apart)

Rounds: 18

Start position: Facing up range (back to targets), hands at shoulder height. Gun placed on a table, pointing downrange. Chamber empty, bolt closed, magazine inserted (Option 2)

Procedure: Turn, retrieve and shoulder the rifle, fire 2 rounds on each target standing, reload, fire another 2 rounds on each target from kneeling, reload and fire 2 rounds at each target from prone.

Exercise 9 – Safely Moving Between Engagement Areas

Distance: 25 and 15 meters

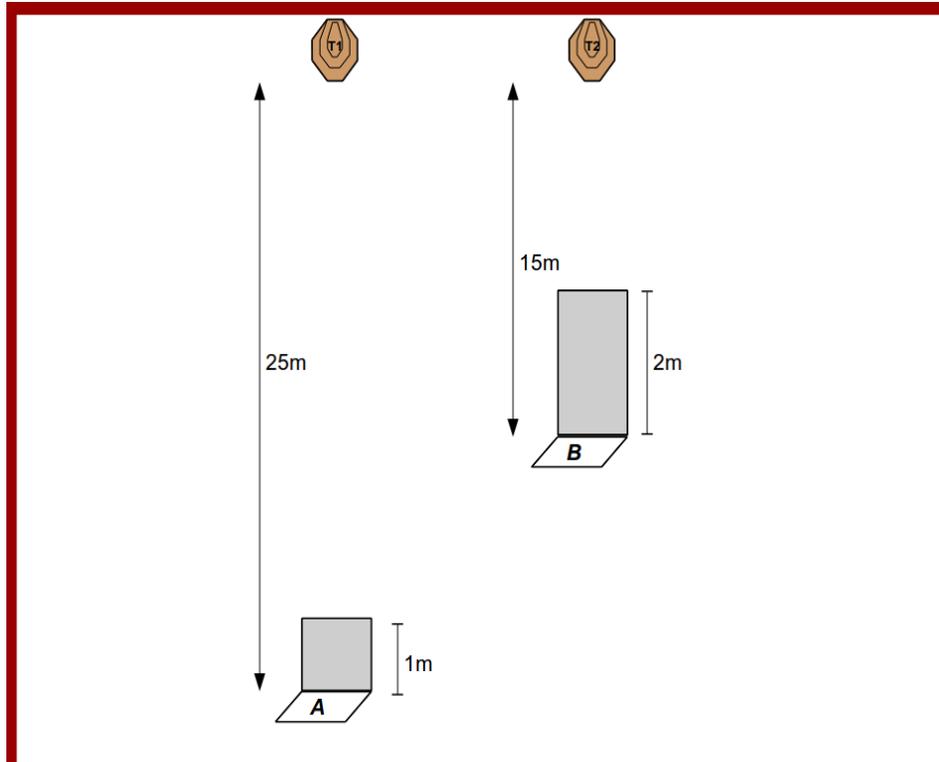
Time: Not timed

Targets: 2

Rounds: 4

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: From area A engage T1 with 2 rounds, proceed to area B and engage T2 with 2 rounds. The trigger finger must always be outside trigger guard during movement and the muzzle must always be pointed downrange.



TIP

Stages 9 through 15 are for technique and not timed. Watch for muzzle control, safe muzzle direction and finger well out of the trigger guard.



Exercise 10 – Reloading while Moving

Distance: 25 and 15 meters

Time: Not Timed

Targets: 2

Rounds: 4

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: Same as Stage 9 with a reload between area A and area B.



TIP

When reloading on the move you need to ensure that your trigger finger is outside the trigger guard and that the rifle is always pointed in a safe direction. Initially when you start practicing this technique take your time and do not rush. Once you are comfortable with this technique, progressive speed will develop.

During movement, when not engaging a target, the trigger finger must be outside the trigger guard. The best position for the trigger finger during movement is to have it anchored alongside of the receiver. This allows the shooter to maintain better control of the rifle and a more reliable control of the muzzle direction. Another advantage of this technique is that the trigger finger can be clearly seen outside of the trigger guard. It is also recommended that the safety be engaged during movement.



Exercise 11 – Moving with Change in Shooting Position

Distance: 25 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 2

Rounds: 4

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange.

Procedure: From area A engage T1 with 2 rounds standing, proceed to area B and engage T2 with 2 rounds kneeling. The trigger finger must always be outside trigger guard during movement and the muzzle must always be pointed downrange. Repeated 3 times.

Exercise 12 – Engaging Target after Standing from Kneeling while Loaded

Distance: 25 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 1

Rounds: 6

Start position: Kneeling with both knees on the ground facing downrange, hands above shoulders. Gun placed on ground on the shooters strong side pointing downrange. Chamber loaded, magazine inserted (Option 1).

Procedure: Stand up and fire 2 rounds. Done 3 times.

Exercise 13 – Engaging Target after going Prone from Standing while Loaded

Distance: 25 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 1

Rounds: 6

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange. Chamber loaded, magazine inserted (Option 1).

Procedure: Go prone and fire 2 rounds. Done 3 times.



TIP

Make sure that the rifle is always pointed in downrange in a safe direction and that your finger is outside of the trigger guard when you are going prone.

The most commonly employed prone positions is:

Step forward with the weak foot, and then bend at the waist until you touch the ground with your weak hand. Then punch the rifle forward in front of you and kick your legs out straight behind you. Spread your legs as you kick back and use your toes to land on, your body prone, as if doing a one handed push-up. Pull up your strong side leg and bend it at about 90 degrees at the knee. This will allow you to rest mainly on your weak side preventing your diaphragm to be in direct contact with the ground. With the strong side arm bring the rifle to the shoulder and your weak hand to the forearm as close to the magazine as comfortable. With both elbows now supporting the rifle, take the safety off and you are ready to shoot.



Exercise 14 – Shooting around Obstacles while Standing

Distance: 15 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 1

Rounds: 10

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange. Chamber loaded, magazine inserted (Option 1).

Procedure: From standing fire 5 rounds, right side barricade, reload, 5 rounds left side barricade. Done once.



TIP

Barricade shooting in IPSC rifle is quite different from IPSC handgun. In HG you try to pretend there is no barricade, in RI you try to use the barricade to your advantage. With any distance of say 75 meters or more, any support you can get will be to your advantage. Just watch where your ejection port is! If in the wrong place, spent brass can be knocked back off the barricade into the action and cause malfunctions.

If you are going around to your weak side of the barricade, transferring the rifle to the weak shoulder can be beneficial.

When shooting IPSC rifle wear a glove on the weak hand! You'll be glad you did. Not only can the forearm get rather hot. Your weak hand is also what you use for support when going prone, and what knocks into barricades when you try to get into the most advantageous position.



Exercise 15 – Shooting around Obstacles with Transition from Standing to Kneeling

Distance: 15 meters

Time: Not timed

Targets: 1

Rounds: 10

Start position: Rifle held in both hands, stock touching the competitor at hip level, muzzle pointing downrange. Chamber loaded, magazine inserted (Option 1).

Procedure: From standing fire 5 rounds, right side barricade, reload, transfer the rifle to the left shoulder and fire 5 rounds left side barricade kneeling. Done once.

Note: Left-handed shooters can start from the left and transfer the rifle to the right shoulder.



TIP

Transferring the rifle from shoulder to shoulder while in transit between shooting positions is accomplished as follows. A transfer from strong to weak shoulder can be done smoothly and easily as follows. With your weak hand support the rifle approximately at the balance point. Let go of the rifle with your strong hand and move to the same point. As soon as the strong arm is in control of the rifle, push the rifle slightly away from your body with the strong arm and let the barrel slightly drop and the butt-stock slightly rise as you transfer the rifle to your weak side. Move the weak hand back and complete the transfer by gripping the pistol grip and pulling the rifle into the shoulder. If you are using a sling make sure you lift the butt-stock enough to clear the sling. A well-designed sling makes child's play out of shoulder transfers once you master the technique.



Congratulations! We hope you had fun and enjoyed the shooting.

If you did not enjoy the challenge or if you got stuck on some of the exercises (could not complete after three attempts), let it go for a while and think about doing the entire course again. It's fun!

TMAR Qualification Record Sheet

Applicant Name: _____ TMSA Member #: _____

Qualifier Name: _____ TMSA Member #: _____

- Exercise 1 – Shooting Offhand ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 2 – Transition to Kneeling from Standing while holding Rifle ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 3 – Transition to Prone from Standing while holding Rifle ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 4 – Shooting while Standing ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 5 – Reloading in the Kneeling Position ⌚ 4 SECONDS
- Exercise 6 –Reloading while Standing ⌚ 7 SECONDS
- Exercise 7 – Reloading in the Prone Position ⌚ 10 SECONDS
- Exercise 8 – Transitioning through Standing, Kneeling and Prone Positions ⌚ 15 SECONDS
- Exercise 9 – Safely Moving Between Engagement Areas ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 10 – Reloading while Moving ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 11 – Moving with Change in Shooting Position ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 12 – Engaging Target after Standing from Kneeling while Loaded ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 13 – Engaging Target after going Prone from Standing while Loaded ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 14 – Shooting around Obstacles while Standing ⌚ *not timed*
- Exercise 15 – Shooting around Obstacles with Transition from Standing to Kneeling ⌚ *not timed*

NOTES: _____

Applicant has passed all exercises in a safe and competent fashion and is qualified to use the TMSA TMAR practice area for dynamic rifle shooting practice.

Qualifier Signature: _____ Date: _____