



# NRA's Air GUN COMPETITION



**NRA COMPETITIONS DIVISION**  
11250 Waples Mill Rd., Fairfax, VA 22030  
E-Mail: [competitions@nra.org](mailto:competitions@nra.org)  
Membership Information: 1 •800•672•3888

# NRA's Air Gun Competition

Air guns, traditionally regarded as guns for beginners, have now made the transition to guns for everyone. Some types, such as the familiar BB gun, are excellent as a "first gun"; other types are designed and used by the seasoned international competitor.

Whether they are used for recreation or sport, for field use or as an inexpensive training tool, air rifles and air pistols are an excellent way to enjoy shooting. In recent years, air guns have undergone dramatic improvements making them more reliable, durable and accurate. Air guns offer flexibility - they can be safely fired by shooters of all ages and experience levels on a wider variety of ranges than any firearm.

NRA has developed and sponsored a variety of coaches' schools, training clinics and qualification courses, and offers various levels of competitive events which include air rifle and air pistol. They are available to junior, collegiate and adult shooters.

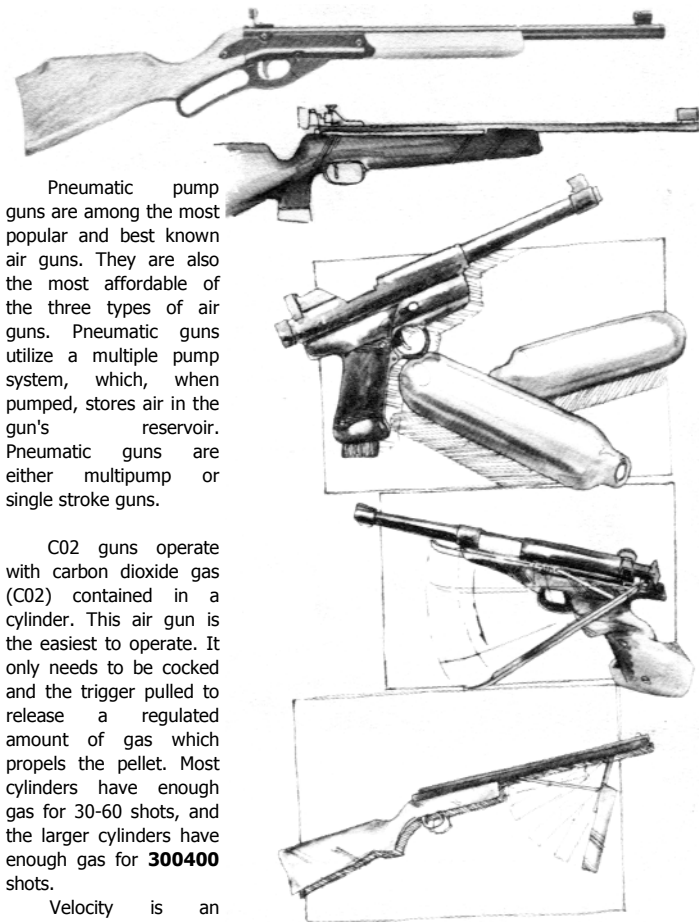
This folder provides general information for tournament competition for the following events: air rifle, air pistol, air silhouette, 10 meter running game target and BB gun. It will also discuss construction of air gun ranges from the very basic home range, to setting up a portable range for schools, to designing and constructing a permanent air gun range. Air guns can be found in nearly every shooting discipline and air gun programs have been adopted by many national organizations. These groups include the National Wheelchair Athletic Association, National Association of Sports for Cerebral Palsy, U.S. Jaycees, Boy Scouts of America, Explorer Scouts, 4-H, Police Athletic League.

## Which Air Gun?

There are many brands of air guns on the market today. Anyone new to air guns may find the choices overwhelming and in need of advice on selection.

There are three major types of air guns: Spring-piston, Pneumatic and CO<sub>2</sub>. All three systems are used in both air rifles and air pistols.

The spring-piston air gun is powered by the compression of a mainspring when the gun is manually cocked. The compression spring is released when the trigger is pulled, driving the piston forward, thus building up air pressure that pushed the pellet out of the barrel. Spring-piston guns are of three different types: Break-barrel, Underlever and Sidelever. BB guns are also in this category.



Pneumatic pump guns are among the most popular and best known air guns. They are also the most affordable of the three types of air guns. Pneumatic guns utilize a multiple pump system, which, when pumped, stores air in the gun's reservoir. Pneumatic guns are either multipump or single stroke guns.

CO<sub>2</sub> guns operate with carbon dioxide gas (CO<sub>2</sub>) contained in a cylinder. This air gun is the easiest to operate. It only needs to be cocked and the trigger pulled to release a regulated amount of gas which propels the pellet. Most cylinders have enough gas for 30-60 shots, and the larger cylinders have enough gas for **300400** shots.

Velocity is an important factor in airgun

accuracy and pellet velocities can vary, depending on the type of air gun used. The most consistent muzzle velocity is from a single pump precision match-grade air gun. The muzzle velocity of CO<sub>2</sub> guns will vary with the pressure of the gas on the container. Consistent velocity is important when aiming at a 10 ring the size of a pin head (1mm), and precision air rifles and air pistols produce consistent velocities.

There are many other questions that come to mind, such as, choosing an Olympic-grade, precision air gun or a low cost, light weight, targetgrade air gun; or choosing a sporter air gun over one just for plinking and informal shooting. The buyer must determine the intended use of the air gun and this will help to pinpoint just the right air gun to do the best job.

There are air guns of all prices and air guns for all ages. That's what is so great about this event! Everyone can shoot an air gun and enjoy the sport!

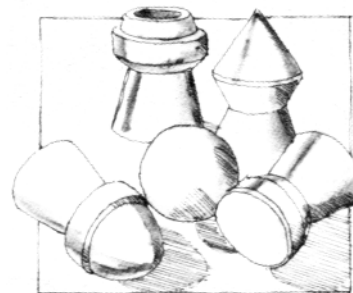
## Air Gun Ammunition

There are two basic types of air gun ammunition: pellets and BBs. Pellets weigh much less than firearm projectiles which makes the striking energy much less. They are molded from soft lead and most are an hour-glass shaped which gives them increased stability in flight. They are designed for every air gun and come in a variety of head shapes. Pellets are able to be fired in either smoothbore barrels or rifled barrels, unlike the BB which should be fired only through a smooth-bore barrel.

Pellet quality is second in importance only to the overall quality of the air gun itself. In competition, the .177 caliber is considered standard. This is true in all types of competition, from the BB gun through the Olympic-grade air rifles and pistols.

There are four basic types of pellets: wadcutter, used for paper target competition; Pointed, designed for field-use, producing more kinetic energy for penetration; Hollow Point,

used for silhouette competition and field-use and; Round Nose, considered for any use needing knock down power. The spherical BB is the most familiar air gun ammunition and is made from either steel or lead.

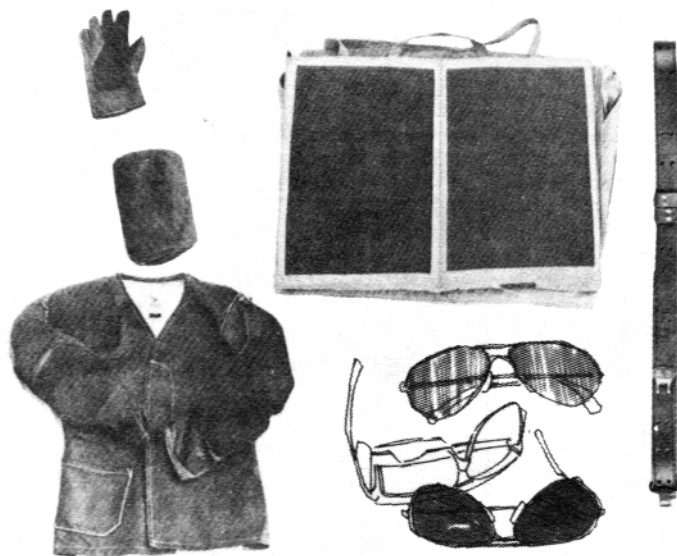


## Other Equipment and Accessories

The type of air gun competition a shooter is interested in will determine how much equipment is necessary for the shooter to invest. According to the NRA rules, a BB gun shooter only needs a BB gun, and BBs. A sweatshirt is optional.

In 10 meter air rifle and air pistol competition, accessories can be a major part of the shooter's equipment list. Depending on the competition, this list could include a cloth or leather shooting jacket, kneeling roll,

padded glove, sling, shooting mat, shooting shoes, shooting glasses, and the list goes on. All these things aren't completely necessary to be a competitive shooter, but they can help as the shooter improves in skill.

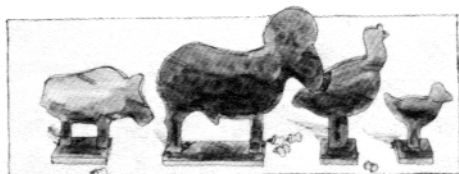


Clothing and other accessories are covered in the NRA Rule Books. There are many sources of shooting clothing and accessories. Write the NRA for a list of those sources.

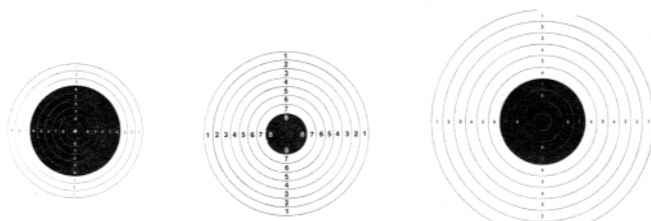
## Air Gun Targets

The NRA has licensed a number of companies to print official NRA targets. Air gun targets may

be purchased from these companies for use in competition and qualification. Write for the NRA Target Manufacturer's List.



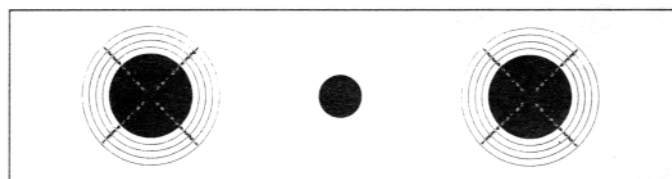
*Silhouette*



*Air Rifle*

*BB Gun*

*Air Pistol*



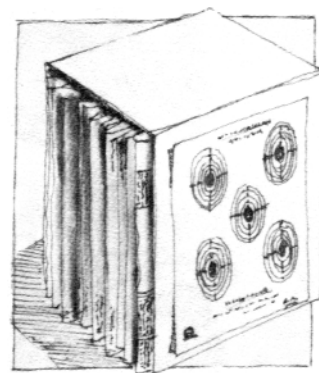
*UIT Running Target AR-6*

Of the many different targets available, the most commonly used in competition are the air rifle, 10 meter (AR-5) target; air pistol, 10 meter (B-40) target; BB gun, 5 meter (AR-4) target and; running target, 10 meter (AR-6) target. The **AR-5 and B-40** targets replace the old air rifle (AR-1) and air pistol (B-32) targets. The RB-10 running target will remain in print and will be used for national competition events and for novelty shooting activities. Numerous qualification targets are available for distances of 15 feet, 5 meters, 25 feet, 10 meters - both for air rifles and air pistols, including BB rifles and BB pistols.

Another exciting target is the ever popular metal silhouette sized for air guns and fired at reduced distances. Air silhouette has brought many 'big bore' shooters to practice and even compete on these small silhouettes.

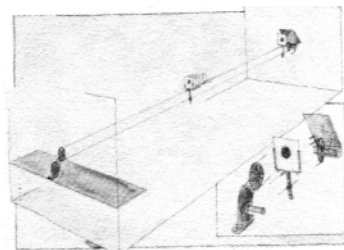
## Building a Home Air Gun Range

Possibly the best reason given for air gun shooting is the ease of setting up a range. Air gun ranges can be constructed for easy set-up-and-take-down, or they can be built as a permanent structure. Most air gun classes are conducted in school rooms or at club houses and use cardboard boxes, stuffed with paper, as backstops. No matter how limited the budget, anyone with a fair amount of open space can set up an air gun range right at home or at school.



A simple and inexpensive pellet trap can be constructed from a cardboard box stuffed with newspapers or old phone books. The

simplest and fastest way to set up an air gun range is to use inexpensive, portable metal pellet traps. These are safe and will stop pellets and collect them in the trap.



A more expensive way to build a range is to use target carriers. These can be mounted for permanent use or as a temporary range set-up, and can be easily taken down and stored

until the next class or practice. Any range, regardless of location and construction, is only as safe as the manner in which it is used. Range safety must always be stressed, regardless of whether the range is to be used for air guns or firearms. Eye protection should always be used by anyone in the vicinity of a shooting range. Ear protection may be worn but is not a safety requisite for air gun shooting.

## How to Start Shooting in Air Gun Competition

An individual interested in any level of air gun competition, from intracub matches through the Olympics, should find a tournament that is near home and go watch. This will allow the chance to see how a tournament is operated and also to see the equipment of each shooter. Most tournaments are conducted on the 'local level', meaning the NRA-affiliated clubs are the sponsors and conduct the match themselves.

After the match may be the best time to ask questions to the shooters and the match sponsors

about air gun competition and possibly even joining the club. Most clubs are pleased to see newcomers in the sport and will help get there started in the right direction.

NRA sanctions over 11,000 tournaments of which 1200 are specifically air gun. The NRA



has a current list of the tournaments which are fired around the country. These are available to all competitors upon request. There are so many types of matches that there should be no trouble getting started. NRA sanctions all tournaments from the local club level to state championships, sectional and regional championships, Junior Olympic matches, and even national and international championships. All these tournament levels include air gun shooting. Many clubs participate in the NRA leagues which include shooting matches with neighboring clubs in a rotation-type competition. Leagues act as a competition as well as a social time for the club members.

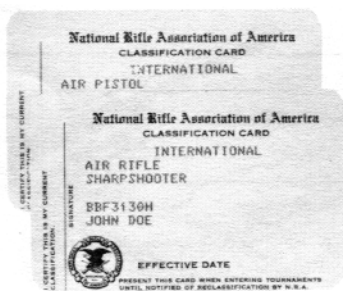


## NRA's Classification System and Tournament Entry

When beginning competitive shooting, it is only natural that a shooter's first fired score will probably not be the highest score of the match. That is why the NRA Classification System was developed. This places all shooters in a particular skill level: marksman, sharpshooter, expert or master, according to score averages. The scores fired in NRA sanctioned tournaments are sent to the NRA by the match sponsor. Shooters starting out in an event keep a temporary classification book until 120 shots have been fired. After that time the NRA issues the shooter a classification card. Reclassification occurs after an additional 240 record shots have been reported to NRA.

Tournament awards are usually given out in one of two fashions: either by classification or by category, such as open civilian, service, junior, college, woman, etc. More information on the NRA Classification System can be found in the NRA Rule Books.

Every competitor entering a tournament registers by filling out an entry card (SR-1 card). This card gives



the sponsor the information needed to place the shooter in a class and category. Part of this card is sent to the NRA, by the sponsor.

It is very important that the shooter's proper NRA membership ID number (if an NRA member) be placed on the SR-1 card. This will assure that scores are posted properly and quickly.

## Get to Know the NRA Rule Books

The **NRA** has 14 rule books which govern and regulate all of NRA's sanctioned tournaments. Every aspect of the tournament operation is covered by these rules. All shooters and match officials should become familiar with those rules pertaining to their shooting event. It isn't necessary to memorize the rules, just to know what can and can't be done at a match. Here are the rule books that pertain to air gun shooting, and may be purchased through the NRA Sales Department, P.O. Box 5000, Kearneysville, WV 25430-5000.

### International Rifle Rules

(including air rifle)

(#C116490, \$2.50)

International Pistol Rules (including air pistol)

(#C116500, \$2.50)

International Running target

(#C15N3606, \$2.50)

Position Air Rifle Rules (3 & 4 position, 25 ft. & 10 meters)

(#CC16400, \$2.50)

Rifle Silhouette Rules (including air pistol)

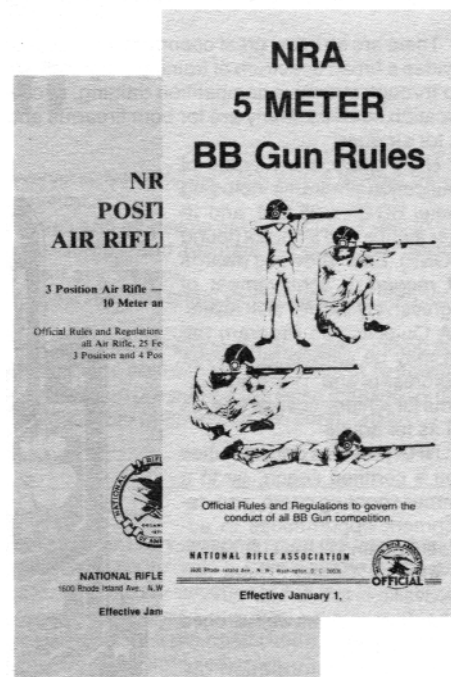
(#CS16820, \$2.50)

Pistol Silhouette Rules (including air pistol)

(#CS16830, \$2.50)

5 Meter BB Gun Rules

(#CC16410, \$2.50)



## Air Gun Source List

Here are some of the major companies which manufacture or distribute air rifles and air pistols in the U.S. Write these companies for their catalog and any program brochures. There are, of course, other distributors and brands not listed here. Check local gun shops, sporting goods dealers and gun magazines for information on additional suppliers of air guns.

Beeman's Precision Air Guns  
Div. of SIR Industries, Inc.  
5454 Argosy Drive  
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

Benjamin/Sheridan Co.  
Rt. 5 & 20  
East Bloomfield, NY 14443

Crosman Air Guns  
Rt. 5 & 20  
East Bloomfield, NY 14443

Daisy Mfg. Co., Inc.  
2111 S. 8th St.  
Rogers, AR 72756

Precision Sales  
P.O. Box 1776  
Westfield, MA 01086

Marksman Products  
Div. of SIR Industries, Inc.  
5482 Argosy Drive  
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

Dynamit Nobel/RWS, Inc.  
81 Ruckman Road  
Closter, NJ 07624

Champion Shooters Supply  
P.O. Box 303  
42 North High St.  
New Albany, OH 43054  
[www.ChampionShooters.com](http://www.ChampionShooters.com)

# Hooked on Air Guns?

## Notes:

There are so many great opportunities in shooting with air guns. NRA provides a broad spectrum of training programs - from basic marksmanship through intensive competition training, to coaching and instructor education courses. Many are for both firearms and air guns - some are just for air guns.

NRA offers many types of qualification programs including 5 meter BB gun, 25 feet, and 10 meter air rifle and air pistol (found in JOSP). Each provides awards that recognize achievement of progressively harder skill levels. NRA Qualification Program ratings may be earned by anyone regardless of age. There are programs for juniors, college age, as well as for adults.

NRA provides opportunities to be a certified coach, go to a summer shooting camp, and development opportunities in advanced training at the U.S. Olympic Training Center. There are films available to help learn shooting fundamentals as well as ones covering safety.

For more information on air gun shooting, write for a copy of: Air Guns: A Guide to Air Pistol and Air Rifle, How to Organize A Youth Shooting Program. NRA's Air Gun Training, NRA's Competition Price List (including rule books, tournament operation guides, scoring devices, etc.), and



NRA's Educational Materials and Training Aids Price List (including qualification brassards, handbooks, instruction material, etc.). Come join in the fun of competitive shooting and enjoy it with an air gun!

## NRA GUN SAFETY RULES

The fundamental NRA rules for safe gun handling are:

- Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
- Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
- Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.

When using or storing a gun always follow these NRA rules:

- Be sure the gun is safe to operate.
- Know how to use the gun safely.
- Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
- Know your target and what is beyond.
- Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.
- Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.
- Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.
- Be aware that certain types of guns and many shooting activities require additional safety precautions.

To learn more about gun safety, enroll in an NRA hunter clinic or state hunter education class, or an NRA safety training or basic marksmanship course.

# SAFETY FIRST!-With BB Guns and Pellet Guns

The practice of gun safety is vital for any owner or user of a BB gun or pellet gun. Young shooters must be supervised by a knowledgeable adult whenever using the gun. Adults and children should carefully read and understand all instructions that come with their air gun, and understand the proper safe use of such guns.

AIR GUNS ARE NOT TOYS! Improper handling due to carelessness or ignorance can cause injury or even death. Young gun owners can have years of enjoyment with air guns if they are used properly and safely.



The NRA gun safety rules, as printed on the previous page of this brochure, must be read and understood by all children and adults who will be using or supervising the use of BB guns and pellet guns. Although all the NRA safety rules are important, the most important are the first three rules. If these three rules are applied in every situation, there would be no more accidental injuries involving air guns, or any guns for that matter.

## Other Special Rules for BB Gun and Pellet Gun Shooters:

1. Never reuse ammunition.
2. Never shoot at a hard surface or at the surface of water. The BB or pellet may bounce off and hit someone or something not intended to be hit.
3. Stop using the backstop if it becomes worn. Replace the backstop with new filler material, or buy a new backstop.
4. Do not attempt to disassemble or tamper with the gun. Always take the gun to a competent repairman if repairs are necessary.
5. Do not put away an air gun when it is loaded. Make sure there are no pellets or BBs in the gun and then store the air gun unloaded.



Thousands of Americans have found that BB gun and pellet gun shooting is challenging, exciting and provides the whole family with a fun sport. Just like any other sporting equipment, BB guns and pellet guns must be treated with respect. Know the safety rules before handling and shooting any air gun and make sure other users of the gun also have the knowledge, skills and attitude necessary to be a safe shooter. Following these simple safety rules makes common sense, but most importantly will allow everyone to enjoy the shooting sports throughout their lifetime.



This document was put in digital format by:



**Champion Shooters Supply**

P.O. Box 303

42 North High St.

New Albany, OH 43054

[www.ChampionShooter.com](http://www.ChampionShooter.com)

Phone: (614) 855-1603 ; (800)-821-4867

Fax: (614) 855-1209