

Olympic Pistol Shooting in Minnesota 2010

The Minneapolis Rifle Club and the Oakdale Gun Club, under the auspices of the Minnesota Rifle and Revolver Association, each host a monthly match where shooters from throughout the state come to participate, testing their present ability against their prior performance, and benchmarking themselves against the best in the world as measured by Olympic records and World Cup records.

The match rules for Free Pistol are simple. The pistol has to be a .22 caliber rimfire with open sights. The grip may not contact the hand beyond the wrist. There are no restrictions on barrel length, sight radius or trigger weight, although the pistol must be set off by the trigger finger of the shooting hand. A repeater may be used but one round must be loaded at a time. Match duration is a limit of two hours for 60 shots, with unlimited sighters (all of which must be fired before the first competition shot). Targets are the same as used for the Standard Pistol except shot at twice the distance.

This is regarded by most as the most difficult of the Olympic shooting events and is a frustrating discipline to master because of its simplicity of equipment yet its absolute demands on the shooter.

The pursuit of this, the essence of shooting, is for many an end in and of itself. The discipline or sport itself emphasizes individual technique and minimizes equipment so as to place emphasis on the shooter rather than on the equipment. The matches are set up to allow long periods of time where in the shooter only has one focus, the shot at hand. The intensity of the concentration required assumes zen like or meditation proportions from the shooter. The hustle and bustle of the match activity disappears from awareness as one focuses on the finite task at hand, losing or firing the one shot with perfect sight alignment and release,

The matches at Oakdale start at 8:30 am, and those at Minneapolis Rifle Club range in St. Francis start at 10:00 am. The fee will be \$10 per match. Some of the matches will be sanctioned and in those cases, there will be an addition \$5 for the sanctioning organization which will be either USA Shooting or NRA. Directions to each range can be obtained from the club's website. Both ranges have sheltered firing points so they will be shot in any weather. There are more than a dozen firing points at each range. The schedule is below:

	Oakdale	MRC
May,	1 st	15 th
June,	12 th	19 th
July,	11 th Sunday	17 th
August,	7 th	21 st
September	4 th	18 th
October	State Championship	9 th

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