

New Jersey Junior Bullseye Newsletter

November - December 2013

Dear Juniors,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

This is the time of year to think about the future! What do you want to accomplish in 2014?



My “survey” this month is “aimed” at helping you reach your goals!

“The difference between a goal and a wish is that you take action!” ~ Lanny Bassham

Best wishes for 2014,
Mary noalibis.mary@gmail.com

Lanny Bassham recently emailed a "[Mental Coach Newsletter](#)" describing what winners do: 1) they choose their "primary" (a system that yields best results for them); 2) they master what they have chosen (consistency is developed by training using the primary you have chosen); and 3) they TRUST what they have chosen ("*Champions trust instead of try in competitions.*")

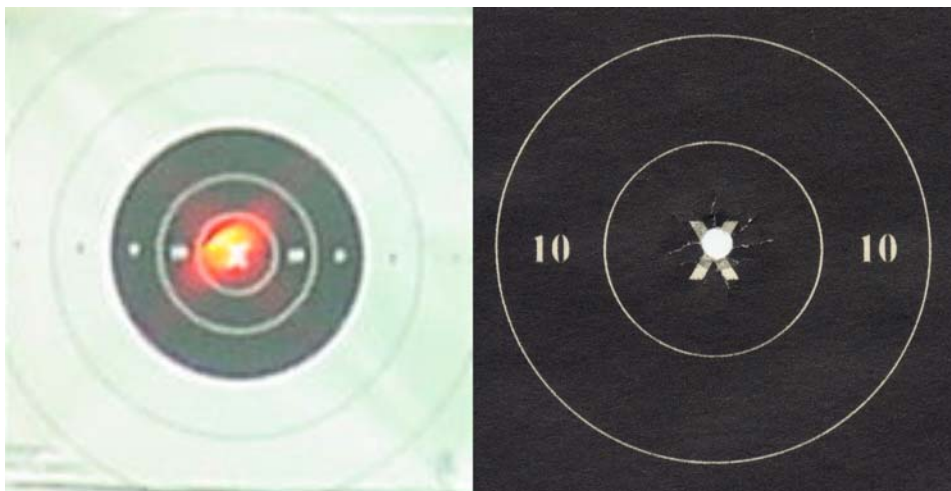
Another wonderful shooter forwarded me an article, "Ten Lessons I Wish I Had Learned as a Young Shooter," by Gary Anderson! (http://www.odcmp.com/Comm/OTM/13/OTM_Summer2013.pdf -starting on page 4.) Lesson 4 – "Never Go Without a Shot Plan"

These inspired the following "survey" of our "local" shooters/contributors – I hope it will help YOU toward your first step in becoming a CHAMPION – making your own SHOT PLAN!

DO YOU HAVE A WRITTEN SHOT PLAN?

HM - I do not have a written plan in my box any longer. I did years ago. Haven't really made a change in my process, at least that I'm aware of. [He's the 12-time Nat'l Champion...I guess he's got his process figured out!] I wouldn't share my written process with anyone. Not for selfish reasons but for reasons that I don't want to influence another's process. Do what you do and are comfortable doing and able to replicate from shot to shot and can use for slow fire and sustained fire without changing.

HM - In my mental program I visualize my red dot in the center of the bull, I tell myself to focus on the red dot and squeeze the trigger. I imagine the shot breaking and the bullet going straight through the center of the red dot. Then I imagine a target with a hole in the center of the x-ring and say, "and you've got an X". Next I aim my gun at my target NUMBER and then at my target, I focus on the red dot. While I concentrate on focusing on the dot, I automatically start squeezing the trigger until the hammer falls. (I aim at my target number to ensure I am shooting at my target).



(This is in his gunbox!)

HM - I definitely keep a shot plan in my box all the time, and it is only about the basics. I some times write a small supplemental on say a name card if I find I have gotten away from an important item on my plan. I will stick that on my lid of my box so I can work on it only, until I get it back where it should be.

A shot plan should have all five steps of an entire plan so if some thing is wrong you can check it to find where it may lie. My plan is some thing like this.

- 1 Stance- feet should be shoulder with apart toes spread slightly, body about 45 degrees to the target. (I know, text book but that is where I made myself get comfortable when I started)
- 2 Grip- using the left hand place the gun in the center of the web of shooting hand. Take a firm grip around with primary pressure back to front. Keep pressure even from top to bottom on the rear of the frame..... (for right handed shooters by the way)
I have had a fair amount of notes on the grip also.
- 3 Lockup - stiffen arm attention on the wrist, no movement. (This is one of my cards that I have put on my lid in the past few years. It says, slight bend downward of wrist,) ARTHRITIS PAIN
- 4 Sight alignment- used to say focus on front sight. Now it says focus on the black of the target hold dot in center of tube.
- 5 Trigger control- I must think only about the trigger when pulling it straight and smooth. Move ONLY one knuckle, prevent chicken finger!!!!
FEEL THAT METAL WITH YOUR WHOLE BRAIN !!!

This one is the kicker it is the cause of most of the notes I have stuck on my box lid over all the years as I have tried to make it better.

HM – I do have a written shot plan and it lives in my gun box. It took me a few years from the time I started shooting to finalize most of it. It was a living document that changed as I learned. To this day, I'm still tweaking it because now I am changing (getting older). What once worked now needs to be done a bit differently. It began as full paragraphs and then sentences to finally phrases and single words. It is a reminder to apply the fundamentals and do what you found through trail and error **what works for you.**

Whenever I am in a shooting funk, I read my shot plan and start fresh.

MA - I had one for years that was stuck in the lid of my box. Helped me break 2600. Now I do it mentally and it is much less effective because I sometimes leave out a step.

I plan to write one again and staple it to the lid.

The beauty of a shot plan is that it builds focus that is required once in ready position. Clears our minds of distractions that can only hurt our perfect execution of a well aimed shot.

Here is my most recent shot plan:

- * Raise the pistol to check and adjust alignment with MY target. (During, Is the line ready?)
- * Raise pistol on ready on the left command.
- * Take slack out and apply slight trigger pressure at ready on the firing line.
- * Count to three and start unhesitating SQUEEZE until the gun is in full recoil. (This ensures follow through.)
- * Recover sights to aiming area.

HM - I do not have a current, written shot plan. I have a good deal of confidence in my non-written one.

I made my last change this past Monday, when I gave up on the plan I had been using and, based on recent "failures," tried something new, which worked out very well! I had been holding my arm stiff and straight, trying to keep the grip gentle, in .45 rapid fire. Sometimes this worked and many times "not so much." Having shot a poor

score on my last target, I decided to do the "bent" arm, still stiff, but "not too gentle" grip. It helped me get my shots off much faster, the gun recoil to the center of the target, and produce a much better score. Sometimes, when your "best idea" fails, you have to try something else!

MA - [Never have a written plan in the gun box - if you are reading it, you're not focusing on the plan. It's too late at that point :-\)](#)

MA - Yes I have a written shot plan taped to the inside of my gun box:

I am a 300 shooter
Two deep breaths
Sights super sharp
Wrist & elbow tensioned
Start reward trigger finger movement above the black
Be aggressive
I will shoot tens
THINK FIELD!

I am delinquent making changes to my plan

[What does "Think Field!" mean?] Something I have to work on all the time. I have always been a chicken finger shooter, if I hold a bit longer I can make it better, I can get it stiller, I can get closer to the absolute center. Vicki & I spent 16 hours with AMU air pistol shooters, and that's where I heard think field. Accept little imperfections in the hold and get the trigger moving to the rear. It will be ok. And you know what, it works! Get the hold good, not perfect, i.e. "my field," and get the bullet in the target. AMU air pistol shooters teach good stuff!

MA - Yes I have a shot plan. Last updated in 2011 but still good for me and I freely offer to youth. There is one warning in my process that may be a bit advanced for new shooters. I offer for the help of the youth. Yes I have a laminated print out inside my box.

[See BELOW]

The Prep I found very comforting. Sort of a check list to make sure all was in order. It also kept me from getting all worked up about what I was forgetting.

That "Prep" section should probably be put on the outside of my box or somewhere I can see it prior to opening boxes on the line.

What does it mean?

1. Tie down open and clamp box. Means just that. I have a long Velcro strap that holds my box to the bench. Not a Normal requirement but at Camp Perry a pretty good idea and I keep it as an option everywhere I shoot. Better to have the box tied down and not need it than to need and not have. Not just the wind will push on the box, someone else on the line has equipment failure and you want to be the one who stopped the domino effect. I put one of those big spring clamps between the box lid and box on the far end (you'll see why later)
2. I don't often use the spotter during competition but I do verify first few slow fire and first string of sustained. Brass screen is always a good idea. Don't always need but it does help to keep other brass from distracting you during competition.
3. I use a pistol bag. Made from the pant leg of old pair of jeans. Filled with popcorn kernels. Cylindrical shape with round sections sewn in to bottom and top. Gives a stable comfortable place to rest my hand or pistol.
4. Brass net clamped to bench. This is to catch my brass but also prevents me from tossing empties and the competitor to my right.
5. I believe you can't have too much lube on a pistol particularly a 1911. Keep all sliding surfaces wet. Any powder residue will stay in solution rather than becoming hard and crusty.
6. Load mags, don't laugh. I have raised my hand for an alibi only to find I inserted a dry mag. And no the alibi was not allowed. I put a small drop of light oil on the top round in the mag then store it upright on a magnet in my box lid.

The oil runs down the cartridges and lubes the follower. Might be an old wives tale but it works for me. I rarely have an alibi.

7. NPA and backstop. I don't put a lot of effort on this step other than to verify what is behind my target. Make sure you are looking at the correct target. Look at the number on the bench and Verbally say your target number. I look for a reference point that I can see when my arm is up and in firing position. Could be a dirt shadow on the hill or a range flag to the right of my middle knuckle. Look for some kind of reference point that tells you that you are in fact looking at your correct target.

8. Dry fire a few time as time allows. How's my squeeze today? Which way is my sight (dot) moving as the sear releases the hammer. It will always move. How is it moving today? Which direction? North & West? How much? Is my grip right? Is my trigger finger placement right? I'll see that in my movement.

Now for the noisy phase. Are your plugs/muffs in and settled?

1. Call stage and position for each stage. I say it out loud for each stage. "Slow fire target twenty one" say it loud enough so the shooter to the right & left of you can hear. If they are on spot 21 they will probably say something. Plus it will lessen the likelihood of them cross firing onto your target. (don't ask)

2. Again out loud, as you grasp the pistol, say "my sights are set for50ft or 50yd or 25yd." You would be amazed how many times I said this out loud but it was "my sights are set for, Oh crap where's my screwdriver - Not READY" This is where I put the pistol in my proper shooting grip.

3. Check mags, as the load command is given look at the mag. "3 for me" means I can see 3 rounds in the window indicating it has 5 total loaded.

4. Load (**warning**, you can mess this up and have an unintentional discharge) Slide is locked back, My pistol is in my proper shooting grip. Squeeze and hold trigger back. Lower the slide gently. Insert mag until it clicks. Try to pull mag out, if seated it will not come out. Keep the trigger squeezed all way back, with pistol as always pointed down range, pull the slide back and release, chambering the first round. Rotate your body back into your NPA (I check that my left foot is perpendicular to the target.)

5. This is Fun - It isn't work, it is fun. I'm here because I want to be no where else other than right here, right now, pok'n holes in that X on target 21.

6. Breath song. It says breath grip raise but this is where I start my X song. Listen to the commands and they form a little tempo, Make it like a familiar song, you just hum along and chime in during the chorus. Is the line ready - deep breath, the line is ready - deep breath, Ready on the right - Breath, pick up pistol sideways (knuckles up) and put it on the box lid clamp, Ready on the left - breath, pick it up sideways to the target, find your front sight, look for the scratch on the sight, Ready on the firing line - last breath, Rotate pistol, start the chorus beat, dah, dah, reset disconnect, squeeze to steer, mind your sight gap, bang, Recoil, recover, find the sight, reset disconnect, steer the gaps, bang.... Keep going.

7 and 8. Be able to play the tape back in your mind, third shot the gap went tight on the right side or the sight was a bit high as the hammer fell. Know what squeezing the trigger does to your sight alignment. (you will note I never said anything about sight picture. As should you. Matters not if you shoot 6:00, sub-6 or center mass, that will occur by itself automatically. Keep your mental focus on the sight gap.

9. Keep going until the gun runs empty then pull it back to you (don't turn it sideways to check chamber) Remove magazine, inspect chamber, Insert ECI on last string for the target. Shift your body position if needed but the muzzle always points at target. Set the pistol on the bag with ECI clearly visible. Reload mags

Drop of oil on top round just before sticking them to magnet in box lid.

Go count your X's

	Prep		READ – Shot Plan
1	Tie down, Open and clamp Box	1	Call stage and position
2	Adjust Scope, brass screen	2	My sights are set for.....
3	Pistol Mat/bag	3	Check Mags, 3 for me
4	Brass net and clamp	4	Load = Hammer back release
5	Lube and cycle action	5	This is FUN
6	Load Magazines	6	Breath, Breath, Grip, Raise
7	NPA and backstop reference	7	Straight Back, Steer the sight
8	Dry fire	8	Call the Sight
		9	ECI on last shot, ECI

EX - I do not have a written shot plan as of yet, but it is important to have one. Currently, I am still in the learning/observing phase of shooting in discovering in what works for me.

I have learned that shooting good requires the sub-conscious mind to shoot for you, what I refer to as Self 2. Self 1 is the conscious mind, that mind that "tells" us what to do, typically in a negative tone. Self 1 will tell us "don't jerk the trigger", which immediately raises the chance of that happening. The same can be said of "don't hold that long", or any other critical thought that enters your mind.

Some of my best shooting occurred when I literally had no idea what I just did. I was humming a song in my head, or staring at the dot so intensely I saw a smiley face and was trying see the shape of her eye brows, or staring at a black hole that was the X ring. The point here was that this shooting occurred when Self 1 was occupied and quiet. Since the mind can not focus on 2 things, Self 1 did not have the chance to give me any critical messages.

With that in mind, I do my best to quiet Self 1 when on the line. The process begins with me when the command to "load" is given. The first thing I do is close my eyes and focus on my deep breathing, which I do to relax. I hear the air flow in and out of my lungs and nose only. When I hear the words "ready on the left", I start to raise the gun with my eyes closed still and, start to settle in. At this part, I may envision the dot on the X ring in my head with my eyes closed. When I hear "ready on the firing line", I open my eyes and hope to see the dot onto top of the X ring with minimal adjustment. I start to apply pressure on the trigger and sound the word "release" in my head when I see the target starting to turn. The word release commences my action of squeezing the trigger with a constant build up of pressure until the shot breaks. I have been told, and I do believe it, the best shots are those taken within 4 to 7 seconds, during slow fire. This is confirmed in part if you have the chance to witness some of the country's best shooters. Their slow fire is typically done in about 2 to 3 minutes, with an apparent rhythm that they follow.

After a shot is taken, I confirm where I thought it broke with the hit on the paper. At these points, when scoping, I do my best to focus on "observing and learning". I am not critical of any shot. If I made a functional error such as flinching, jerking, etc., I do my best to go right into closing my eyes and breathing deep and hearing the sound to start all over again. This minimizes the opportunity you allow Self 1 to rear his ugly/critical self and telling you "See! I told you not to do that you dummy".

As I mentioned earlier, my process is not written and is still "work in progress". I share this as I love shooting Bullseye and hope this helps you along your path of finding "what works for you".

Good Shooting!

EX – [See shot plan below]

I used to keep it in my box until I memorized the order of the plan.

When I first developed my shot plan, I'd rewrite it about every two or three matches. For the most part I was chasing my errors and thought this would be a good way to overcome them. I've settled into this current version and haven't changed in about two years. Although, I'm not opposed it changing it if conditions or new errors warrant it.

As an example, here's my shot plan for slow fire after my equipment is ready and properly laid out:

- 1) Look at the placement of my feet relative to the firing line.
- 2) Grasp pistol with the weak-hand and firmly align it into the web and life-line of the strong-hand.

- 3) Do a preliminary NPA check (adjust if necessary).
- 4) Do a final NPA check with emphasis on proper sight (or tube) alignment.
- 5) Place finger on trigger at the appropriate location then lighten grip.
- 6) Visualize (those two magic seconds) for a perfect release with excellent follow through.
- 7) Rack the slide. Make grip and wrist rigid again, level the gun above the bullseye and settle in for MAM*, then dry-fire.
- 8) After the command to "Fire" is given and the target is faced, dry-fire another shot.
- 9) Rack and lock slide open.
- 10) Load gun.
- 11) Visualize a perfect shot and release.
- 12) Make grip and wrist rigid on the bench. Look down and align the sights (or dot through the center of the tube) while the gun is on the bench.
- 13) Look up at the target and check head alignment.
- 14) Yawn or start a deep breathing exercise.
- 15) Raise the gun above the bullseye and feel the palm-shelf pressure at the base of the palm.
- 16) Stabilize the sight (or dot) within the 8-ring.
- 17) Have your inner-monologue say the three word mantra and start applying pressure to the second stage.
- 18) Watch the MAM play-out in typical fashion. If it's not, abort and return to #11.
- 19) If MAM is being properly replicated, release the shot just prior to your steadiest point of hold.
- 20) Follow through.
- 21) Call the shot.
- 22) Scope the shot.
- 23) Adjust grip, trigger finger or stance if necessary. Relax grip and wait 20 seconds, then return to #11 before proceeding to the next shot.

EX - Written shot plan - not anymore, all the basics seem to naturally occur. Currently I am experimenting with different methods of trying to obtain a clear, sharp dot/front sight blade. The scores for each 900 are recorded and identified with the technique used when one is found that is superior to the rest I will make that a component of my shot plan.

JR (about to be EX) - I've never printed a shot plan. I just zone into the black, clear my head with a deep breath and slowly squeeze the trigger.

JR (already EX) - I do have a written shot plan and I keep it in a journal that I have in my gun-box. For bullseye, I keep track of the specific things I do that work for me in order to maintain consistency in my fundamentals. I also have separate list of physical processes for .22 and .45 as well as slow fire and sustained fire. I do the same for air pistol, but I don't have to worry about sustained fire. For both disciplines, I keep track of my mental processes and find a specific phrase to say to myself as I take a shot. Whenever I train, I keep my journal around so that if I find something that works well I write it down. If I am having trouble shooting, I will try different things and if I find something that helps, I will write it down. After a few sessions, I will write an entire list on a new sheet of paper in order to keep organized.

SLOW FIRE

inhale while raising gun
 let half of the air out while settling
 "squeeze, follow through, squeeze, follow through"
 shot breaks
 return to center
 rest

- *shoulder curled in
- *center hold
- *loose grip

SUSTAINED FIRE

- normal breathing
- deep breath and raise gun on "ready on the left"
- exhale fully while settling
- take half breath
- "dot on X, squeeze"
- shot breaks
- reset and continue

- *shoulder curled in
- *center hold
- *solid grip

AIR PISTOL

- lock arm and tighten wrist
- loosen hand
- deep breath raising the gun above target
- exhale half breath while settling
- "front sight, squeeze"

- *6 hold
- *loosest grip possible
- *shoulder curled in

Collegiate SS (Air Pistol EX) - I do have a shot plan. Mine is 3 steps. 1.) front sight 2.) squeeze 3.) follow through. I have it written on my towel I lay my gun on. I will send a pic when I get back to ohio. I actually haven't changed my shot plan since sophomore year of college. I like to keep mine simple and in plain sight so that even when frustration hits I can look at my towel and figure out if I have been doing these basic the last shots. If not I focus on these while waiting for my next shot to go off. The more in my shot plan I have, the less likely I am going to do all the steps when I get into my zone.

Junior Classification Congratulations:

Michael B – Indoor Conventional Pistol EXPERT – Dec. 3, 2013

[NOTE: At age 17, he is the youngest NJ Junior to achieve an EX rating!!]

Junior Match Reports:

Oct. 26 – Riverdale 2700 – Michael B won SS/MK class with 2462-68X, including 852-32X in .22 and SETTING A JUNIOR NATIONAL RECORD 196-9X IN .45 RAPID FIRE!!!

Nov. 9 – Riverdale 2700 – Michael B won SS/MK class with 2473-66X!

Nov. 23 – Falls Twp 2700 – Michael B SET THREE NATIONAL JUNIOR RECORDS!!! His 187-4X in .22 cal. Slow Fire broke the record he had set in March 2012! His 200-13X in .22 Timed Fire tied the standing record, and his 874-31X in .22 Aggregate was actually the first time IN HISTORY a Junior has fired an Indoor HIGH MASTER .22 Aggregate!



...WOW...!!!

Dec. 8 – SCFGPA PARENT-JUNIOR 900 – Our 2nd Annual NRA Registered .22 Cal. 900 for Juniors and Parents had THREE relays, with a total of 27 participants – ten of these, 4 juniors and 6 parents, were firing their first official pistol match! Competitors had to brave some snow (both traveling to and from...and even *inside the range!*)

Our overall winner was Michael B, age 17 (who beat his father by 8 points!) firing 851-25X! Mike G and Michael B also took top Team honors again this year, with 566-15X!



The Club's pot-belly stove helped thaw fingers between strings as needed - hot soup and pasta, and sharing the sport with families from all three Junior Bullseye leagues made this a very memorable and enjoyable event!



We are particularly proud of our newest shooters, Samuel and OhSang, all three members of the Potomos family, and Matt and Steve, who have only recently come to this sport!



We are also very proud of our "graduate," Joseph, who fired his last match as a junior (he turns 21 in 2014) and qualified for his Indoor EXPERT card for the occasion!



Upcoming NJ Matches:

Jan. 10-11 – Riverdale, NJ – **Indoor 2700** – 6 PM (Friday) 8 AM, 1 PM – JUNIORS SHOOT FOR HALF PRICE! – contact Dave Lange at 201-251-0933 or DL2700@aol.com OR sign up at www.NJPistol.com

Jan. 25-26 – Old Bridge, NJ - **Indoor 2700** - 8 AM, 1 PM each day – JUNIORS SHOOT FOR FREE! – contact Mary 908-788-5503 or noalibis.mary@gmail.com or sign up at www.NJPistol.com

Feb. 1 – **SPECIAL EVENT** - Old Bridge, NJ - **INDOOR .22 Cal. 900 (at 50 ft.) +TEAM MATCH FOR JUNIORS ONLY!!!** Relays at 9:00 AM, 11:30 AM and 2:00 PM - JUNIORS SHOOT FOR FREE! – contact Mary 908-788-5503 or noalibis.mary@gmail.com or sign up at www.NJPistol.com

Feb. 7-8 – Riverdale, NJ – **Indoor 2700** – 6 PM (Friday) 8 AM, 1 PM – JUNIORS SHOOT FOR HALF PRICE! – contact Dave Lange at 201-251-0933 or DL2700@aol.com OR sign up at www.NJPistol.com

Feb. 14-15 – **International and Conventional Pistol Sectionals** - Riverdale, NJ – see website for relay details – JUNIORS SHOOT FOR HALF PRICE! – contact Dave Lange at 201-251-0933 or DL2700@aol.com OR sign up at www.NJPistol.com

Feb. 15-16 - **Conventional Pistol Sectional** - Old Bridge, NJ - **INDOOR .22 Cal. 900 (at 50 ft.) +TEAM MATCH** Relays at 9:00 AM, 11:30 AM and 2:00 PM, each day - JUNIORS SHOOT FOR FREE! – contact Mary 908-788-5503 or noalibis.mary@gmail.com or sign up at www.NJPistol.com

Junior Leagues Report:

- **Old Bridge (2nd, 3rd, 4th (and now also 5th) Sundays at 5 PM – unless we have matches then!):**

Chairman: Ed Glidden at <mailto:eqlidden@yahoo.com>

- **CJRPC in Jackson, NJ (Thursdays 6:00 PM):**

Chairman: Mike Westock (WE HOPE...??!!) at <mailto:topgun22x45@aol.com>
(alternate contact Ray Badiak at <mailto:raybadiak@embarqmail.com>)

- **SCFGPA in Bridgewater, NJ – (1st Sunday at 5 PM, last 2 Wednesdays of the month at 7 PM): Chairman:** Ray Badiak at <mailto:raybadiak@embarqmail.com>
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TIP OF THE MONTH:

"The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a person's determination." ~ Tommy Lasorda



Juan is doing GREAT!!! He shot for the first time after surgery, for about 2 hours on Dec. 5 – check out his all-in-the-black 3rd Slow Fire target ... and his BIG SMILE with a 94-3 Timed Fire!

PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER ISSUES CAN BE FOUND AT:
http://www.njpistol.com/Junior_Newsletter.htm