

# 2026 Michigan 4-H Shooting Sports State Tournament

## MUZZLE LOADING RIFLE EVENT RULES

**\*\*NOTE: PLEASE BE SURE TO REVIEW "GENERAL INFORMATION" PAGES FOR GENERAL TOURNAMENT RULES. CONTACT YOUR COUNTY 4-H OFFICE IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION.**

**Number of Individual Entrants Per County:** Each county may enter a maximum of **8** contestants.

**Number of Team Entrants Per County:** Each county may enter four 2-member teams.

**Age Division Determination:** Age on January 1<sup>st</sup> the year of the tournament

NOTE: An adult 4-H leader, coach or parent must accompany all muzzle loading contestants at the event site.

### **Individual Muzzle Loading Rifle Contest Divisions:**

Traditional Muzzle Loading Rifle	Age 12-19
Open Class Muzzle Loading Rifle	Age 12-19

### **General Muzzle Loading Rules**

- **Arrival Time:** Muzzleloading contestants are to arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of shooting time for equipment inspection, equipment setup, and a safety meeting. We will attempt to work in late arrivals between the 25 and 50 yard targets. However, arriving late may lead to disqualification.
1. At the State Competition, muzzleloading stands will be provided for all competitors. However, competitors may bring and use their own stand if it is inspected and approved by the Chief Range Officer. The decision of the Chief Range Officer will be final.
  2. Traditional class muzzleloaders WILL be allowed to register in the open class as long as they meet ANY of the sighting options listed below. Open class muzzleloaders will NOT be allowed to register in the traditional class.
  3. Traditional class muzzleloaders may use metallic peep sights and open metallic sights. These MAY be click-adjustable.
  4. Open class muzzleloaders may use peep sights and open iron sights. These MAY be click-adjustable. They may also use magnifying optics, "scopes", and red-dot sights.
  5. Laser sights are NOT allowed for use in either class.
  6. *No Spit patching of any kind; loading, swabbing or cleaning on the firing line.*

### **Traditional Muzzle Loading Rifle Equipment**

1. Any caliber Traditional Flintlock or Caplock muzzle loading rifle with metallic sights may be used. **(No telescopic sights will be allowed.)**
2. Set triggers and double triggers will be allowed.
3. The following are prohibited: Schutzen type butt plate, adjustable butt plates, palms, slings, and **electronic ignition devices.**
4. All contestants will shoot "**patched round ball**" only (no conical or Sabot bullets).
5. Maximum powder charge shall not exceed 60 grains.
6. Contestants will provide their own powder, patches, round balls, percussion caps and cleaning supplies. These items should be brought to the loading bench in a range box, shooting bag or pouch.
7. Contestants may use spotting scopes or binoculars, as long as they do not interfere with other participants.

### **Open Class Muzzle Loading Rifle Equipment**

1. Any caliber In-line muzzle loading rifle with or without a scope or any caliber Traditional Flintlock or Caplock muzzle loading rifle with a scope may be used.
2. Set triggers and double triggers will be allowed.
3. The following are prohibited: Schutzen type butt plate, adjustable butt plates, palms, slings, and **electronic ignition devices.**
4. Contestants may use "**patched round ball**," Conical or Sabot bullets.
5. Maximum powder charge shall not exceed 60 grains.
6. Contestants will provide their own powder, patches, round balls (Conical or Sabot bullets), percussion caps or primers, and cleaning supplies. These items should be brought to the loading bench in a range box, shooting bag or pouch.
7. The actions of all muzzle loading firearms equipped with a, bolt, falling-block or break action priming/firing system shall be open when brought to the loading bench to ensure that the firearm is not capped or primed. The action

must remain open until at the firing line preparing to fire the shot.

8. **Break action firearms:** Once verified as safe by a range official at the loading bench, the action may be closed to allow for proper support during the loading procedure. Once the firearm has been loaded, the action must be opened and remain open until at the firing line, preparing to fire the shot.

## Range Safety Rules

\*\*\*\*\*NO SMOKING ALLOWED IN THE VICINITY OF THIS EVENT\*\*\*\*\*

1. **Only Black Powder, Pyrodex, or other commercially available black powder substitute may be used.** All bulk powder must be in the original container clearly identifying the manufacturer and powder type. Powder cans may be equipped with a pour spout. **No smokeless powder will be allowed on the range.**
2. **Powder flasks or powder horns** may be used, provided they are filled at the loading line under the supervision of a range official. No unmarked containers (speed loaders, plastic or glass condiment containers, etc.) will be allowed.
3. **The spectator line** will be established well behind the loading line. All spectators and coaches will be required to stay behind the spectator line.
4. **The loading line** will be established well behind the firing line. All loading will be done at a loading bench located along the loading line.
5. **Range rods** with palm savers will be required for loading. All range rods will have an inscribed line or high visibility tape to show when the firearm is unloaded, and a second line inscribed to indicate when the firearm is loaded with a properly seated charge. When the firearm is not in use, the range rod must be inserted down the barrel of the firearm to verify that the firearm is not loaded.
6. **Powder measure** must be used to measure each powder charge prior to dropping the charge down the barrel of the firearm. (No Pyrodex or other pellets)
7. **The firing line** will be established well down range of the loading line. No firearm will be capped or primed until the shooter is at the firing line. No powder will be allowed on the firing line (except as needed for priming flintlock firearms).
8. **Procedures for misfires or hang-fires:** The range officer and/or assistants will handle all misfires. A shooter with a misfire should call the range officer at once while keeping the muzzle pointed down range at all times. The range officer will make *one attempt* to clear a misfire. If not successful, the range officer will use a CO2 unit to clear the barrel.
9. No direct loading from bulk containers, can, bottles, powder horns, etc. is permitted.
  - Charges shall be transferred from horn or flask to the muzzle using a powder measure or similar device at the loading table. No pre-measured powder charges allowed.
  - Capping or charging will take place on the firing line.
  - Except while measuring a powder charge, no powder container shall be left open. Any open container will be confiscated by Range Officer.
  - No wooden ramrods allowed.

## Targets, Rules, and Course of Fire

- **25 Yard Novelty** – Bottles and Haffner Critters Combo
  - **Targets:** NMLRA Bottle Target (TG2427), and NMLRA Haffner Combination Target (TG0901)
  - **Distance:** 25 yards
  - **Course of Fire:** 5 record shots on each scoring target, 1 per bull, (10 record shots total for the two targets).
  - **Time Limit:** 40 minutes total running time, including practice shots, for both targets (20 minutes per target).
  - **Scoring:**
    - **Bottles:** as outlined on the target. Completely within neck- 10pts; nicking the neck- 7pts; within body- 5pts; nicking the body- 3pts. Bottom 5 bottles will be used as scoring targets; The top target may be used as a practice target.
    - **Haffner:** Highest scoring area touched by the ball. X closest to animal's eye will be used for scoring.
- **50 Yard Bullseye**
  - **Target:** NMLRA Single Bull Buffalo Target (TG2410).
  - **Distance:** 50 yards
  - **Course of Fire:** 10 record shots standing. Practice shots are NOT permitted.
  - **Time Limit:** 40 minutes time for series of 10 shots.
  - **Scoring:** Highest scoring area touched by the ball.

Unless specified above, the current rules of the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association, P.O. Box 67, Friendship, Indiana 47021, will apply.

**All firearms must be transported to the range in a proper gun case. No firearm will be removed from the case until directed to do so by the range officer. Participants who violate this rule will be disqualified. This rule has been established to promote and maintain a safe environment for everyone at the tournament site.**

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