

## What to Expect at your first F-Class Match

This document will attempt to answer any question a new participant might have about the F-Class matches the club organizes at JBER in Anchorage. A new shooter should also review the videos and information about Pulling Targets in the Pits here: [www.akrifleclub.com/competitions/highpower-rifle/#Pits](http://www.akrifleclub.com/competitions/highpower-rifle/#Pits)

**Location:** Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER) in Anchorage. The Pedneau KD (Known Distance) range has shooting positions from 100 to 600 yards and is located in the JBER Small Arms Range Complex east of the Glenn Highway. The Army has tightened the rules on bringing firearms onto the base. Because Pedneau is not on the main base, we do not have to worry about them. If you go through the main gate you must register all firearms.

**Directions:** Traveling North from Anchorage exit the Glenn Highway at JBER-Richardson exit, turn right at top of ramp, turn left at the open gate onto frontage road. Go 2 miles and turn right at the Small Arms Range Complex. Turn right at Y and follow the signs to Pedneau Range (first range on left). We meet in the big parking lot near a large brick pit toilet building just past the range. Here's the location on Google Maps [goo.gl/maps/4T7MexH7VM22](http://goo.gl/maps/4T7MexH7VM22) GPS: 61.267881, -149.627692

**Weather cancellations:** The Army requires a minimum cloud ceiling due to small aircraft that often fly overhead between Birchwood and Merrill Field. If the ceiling is not high enough, we will not be able to start the match. There have been times (usually in the morning) when the ceiling hovered around the limit and we waited for it to lift and got a delayed start. This link to the weather at Birchwood airport shows the current ceiling 'Height AGL (ft)' column if you scroll down past the forecast for Palmer airport: [flightaware.com/resources/airport/PABV/weather](http://flightaware.com/resources/airport/PABV/weather). If you are driving a long distance and concerned the match may be cancelled, contact the match director. This webcam is the best I've found. [www.borealisbroadband.net/cams/downtowneastcam/](http://www.borealisbroadband.net/cams/downtowneastcam/) It looks East from downtown, so you can see if clouds are covering the mountains.

**Rules:** These matches follow the [NRA Highpower Rifle Rules](#) with additional section 22 for F-Class. However, you don't need to memorize the rule book and the rules are most important when you are concerned with your scores counting towards NRA F-Class Midrange Classification.

**Rifle:** Generally, any rifle up to .35 caliber is acceptable although the Army sometimes limits the use of high velocity magnums when nearby ranges are in use. If you shoot .223 or .308 then you will be in a special F-TR rifle class. Other rifles compete in an F-Open class. NRA does not allow rifles using suppressors or muzzle brakes to count for score. The club does allow them to participate in a Club/Tactical class. When signing up you'll be asked if you have a muzzle brake so that you can be assigned a target on the right side of the range, to limit the muzzle blast impact on other shooters.

**Show up with your rifle zeroed within 1.5 inches at 100 yards.** Even if you don't know elevation adjustment needed for further distances, we can easily use a ballistic calculator and get you on target at 600 yards with the first shot. Show up without a good 100 yd zero and it's a frustrating time of someone directly behind you looking for your bullet trace through a spotting scope and estimating large sight adjustments until you finally hit the target.

**Sights/Scope:** You could use iron sights or a cheap hunting scope but you'd be at a big disadvantage. You'll want a decent scope as your goal is to place as many shots as possible in a 1/2 MOA X-ring. Most

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shooters use 12 to 24 power magnification and like finger adjustable turrets for windage and elevation adjustments. MIL or MOA turrets work equally well but target rings are based on MOA so serious F-Class shooters tend towards 1/8 or 1/4 MOA click turrets.

**Front and Rear Rests:** F-class uses a bipod or adjustable front rest with a sandbag and a rear bag or rest for support. Neither rest is allowed to lock the rifle into a fixed position. An F-TR .223 or .308 rifle must use a bipod as the front rest; otherwise it competes in F-Open class. If you want to shoot with a sling without a front or rear rest, then join the “Midrange Prone” shooters that compete alongside us and enjoy shooting at a target with a 1 MOA X-ring. Not as easy as it may seem however.

**Ammunition:** Each match program indicates the number shots recorded for score. Weekend matches are usually 60 rounds for record and after work matches 20 rounds or 40 on a long summer evening. You must bring extra rounds for sighting shots. Some matches allow only 2 sighters per stage, others unlimited sighters in a fixed block of time.

### **Other equipment:**

- Eye and ear protection are required
- Open chamber indicator flags are required (sold at match for \$1)
- Shooting mat – ideally with something up front to load your bipod feet against (or share with someone else on your target)
- Spotting scope on tripod or 8-10 power binoculars for scoring (or share with others on your target if you don't have this)
- Data book/DOPE book/Plot sheets if you like to track shots while shooting
- Kestrel/barometer/thermometer, etc. Usually these aren't very necessary
- Ballistic calculator app is optional, if you like using it
- Stopwatch/Timer – can be helpful if you shoot slow and are concerned about running out of time
- Ballpoint pen for sign-in and scoring. A small clipboard is also handy for holding scorecards
- Dress for the weather and being outside continuously up to 9 hours on a weekend.
- Bring a lunch for weekend, snacks for evening and water bottle.
- Extra toilet paper – sounds funny until you realize a latrine has run out
- Bug dope (you only need it when you don't bring it) and sunscreen (hoping you get to use it)
- Small folding stool or chair – a small luxury worth bringing when outside all day
- Something to carry your all your gear between from the car and between firing points. Some guys carry everything in a backpack, others use little 2 wheeled carts or wagons
- Small daypack to bring your food, water and rain jacket to the pits can be handy

**Course of Fire:** F-class is shot laying on the ground in the prone position, using a bipod or front rest and a rear bag or rest. Weekend matches usually have 20 shots for record, in 20 minutes, at 300, 500 and 600 yards. Weekday evening matches will typically be 20 shots for record in 20 minutes at 600 yards only. On long summer evenings we may try two strings of 15 or 20 shots at 500 or 600 yards. Rounds are loaded one at a time and fired. Then the person in the pits pulls the target down, puts a spotter in the shot hole and an bright orange disk at locations around the edge of the target to indicate the shot value. When the target is raised back up, the shooter fires again. Repeat until all shots for record fired or time expires.

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### Order of events day of match

**Arrival and registration:** Upon arrival at the Pendeau parking lot, you should bring to the match director a printed and filled out [Hold Harmless form](#) that the Army is requiring everyone to sign. You only have to sign it once for the year and the club keeps them. We have extra copies if you can't print one. You will also want to fill out the [ARC Membership Application](#) if you are not an active member. You may also participate as a "one day member" and pay an extra \$5 at your first match of the year.

Everyone is required to sign in with the match director and pay the match fee (exact cash preferred) and you'll need to fill out an NRA match card if you want your scores to be reported to the NRA to get a classification.

**Squadding:** The information you provide when signing up online will help the match director do initial target and relay assignments ahead of the match. Final adjustments are made after participants register. You will be given a score card with your target # and relay # written on it.

**Move gear & setup targets:** As soon as you get a target and relay assignment gather your gear and take it behind the firing line approximately in line with your target. Then if you are in relay 3, bring everything you'll need (eye and ear protection, extra clothing, snack/water) and head to the pits. Relay 2 will also head to the pits and relay 2 and 3 will put target boards on the target carriers and spray glue clean target faces. The RSO running the pits will know which targets get F-class faces and which get standard faces (for the sling shooters). Relay 1 can hang out near the firing line so they don't get all worked up moving to and from the pits then have to start shooting (it isn't a biathlon)

**Safety briefing:** We may have a group safety briefing or separate briefings in the pits and on the line. Everyone will hear the same rules that are very important to follow. If anyone sees an aircraft flying within the safety fan of the range, they can call a cease fire, and firing line timer is paused until aircraft is clear.

**Sealing pits and hot line:** After the shooting and spotting relays are back behind the firing line, the pits are sealed and the pit relay must not leave the pits until the line is clear and pits are unsealed.

**End of match:** All scorecards should be signed by competitors and scorers and turned in to match director. Those that can, head back to the pits to help put targets back into the club trailer, remove the weights from the target carriers and return the pits to same condition or better than we found them.

**Score reporting:** Time permitting, all scorecards will be sorted and top shooters in each class announced. Match results will be posted to website and turned in to NRA within 2 weeks at the latest.

### How Relays Work

A "relay" is a group of shooters that fire a match stage at the same time. We typically run 3 relays and try to be efficient at the time when relays switch between firing, spotting and pits. Below is an example of relays in action for a full day match at 300, 500 and 600 yards. Relay 3 goes to the pits twice but all relays pull the same number of targets. A single-stage 600 yard match would be much simpler and relay 2 never has to work the pits!:

300 yards – Relay 1

Relay 1 is on the firing line shooting

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Relay 2 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 3 is in the pits pulling targets

**PIT CHANGE** – Relay 3 comes out of the pits, Relay 1 moves to the pits

300 yards – Relay 2

Relay 2 is on the firing line shooting

Relay 3 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 1 is in the pits pulling targets

300 yards – Relay 3

Relay 3 is on the firing line shooting

Relay 2 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 1 is in the pits pulling targets

**TARGET CHANGE**– while Relay 2 and 3 move equipment to 500 yards, Relay 3 changes targets to 500 yard faces

500 yards

Relay 2 is on the firing line shooting

Relay 3 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 1 is in the pits pulling targets

**PIT CHANGE** – Relay 1 comes out of the pits, Relay 2 moves to the pits

500 yards

Relay 3 is on the firing line shooting

Relay 1 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 2 is in the pits pulling targets

500 yards

Relay 1 is on the firing line shooting

Relay 3 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 2 is in the pits pulling targets

**TARGET CHANGE** – while Relay 1 and 3 move equipment to 600 yards, Relay 2 changes targets to 600 yard faces

600 yards

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Relay 3 is on the firing line shooting

Relay 1 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 2 is in the pits pulling targets

**PIT CHANGE** – Relay 2 comes out of the pits, Relay 3 moves to the pits

600 yards

Relay 1 is on the firing line shooting

Relay 2 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 3 is in the pits pulling targets

600 yards

Relay 2 is on the firing line shooting

Relay 1 is on the line behind the shooter recording shot values on the shooter's scorecard

Relay 3 is in the pits pulling targets