



Pentathlon Canada Policy for LASER Shooting and Combined Event

Background:

Historically shooting for Modern Pentathlon was introduced and conducted in full compliance with Shooting Sport regulations as it involved projectiles. Transition to LASER shooting resulted in athletes newly introduced to the sport of pentathlon not necessarily having the exposure to the safety protocols and guidelines associated with this oversight.

Use of LASER pistols does have the advantages now of allowing use in different venues both for training and competitive situations, however some risks have been identified. Two key areas are noted here:

- Athletes newer to the sport of pentathlon may not have not been trained on safety protocols associated with pistols and firearms in general, yet will have an overall sense of confidence in their use. This may result in situations where such an individual is presented with a “gun” that appears to be similar to a LASER pistol but may in fact be capable of discharging a projectile. Firearm awareness and protocols should be followed when using LASER pistols.
- Use of the LASER pistol may occur in venues and near individuals who would have no way of understanding that the pistols are not discharging projectiles. In some cases, it has been noted that pentathletes have not been allowed to use their LASER pistol or have been asked to leave venues. Pentathletes, coaches and volunteers must ensure consistent best practice in public settings to minimize any risk of creating fear or raising alarm at any site by following certain guidelines including working with venue personnel.

1. **Resolution:** *coaches and athletes should be familiar with fundamental guidelines of handling pistols in general and should follow these guidelines in all situations when using LASER Pistols. Athletes are to be taught and required to follow best practice guidelines. Regular review of guidelines is recommended for all participants.*

1.1. Treat any pistol (LASER or otherwise) you come across as if it were loaded and capable of discharging ammunition/a projectile. If you do not know the gun, you cannot be sure it is not loaded until verified. Follow the ACTS of gun safety

- Assume every pistol/firearm is loaded. Regard it as a potential hazard.
- Control the muzzle direction at all times. Identify safe muzzle direction; keep muzzle pointed in safe direction, do not point towards any person or yourself.
- Trigger finger must be kept off the trigger and out of the trigger guard when picking up the firearm.
- See that the firearm is unloaded. Do this by either verifying the pistol is a LASER or if it is not and it has a barrel, rely on an empty-chamber indicator to prove it is unloaded.

1.2. Treat anything that “looks like a gun” in this manner and with appropriate care and respect.

1.3. It is the responsibility of the pentathlete to handle the gun safely. Handling of a LASER gun in a reckless manner such as if it were a toy or pointing at anything other than a target is to be strictly prohibited. Maintain the respect of the gun at all times and under all situations.

1.4. Guns should only be out of their case when at the range. The gun must be brought to the shooting position/ table in its case. Athletes must not remove the gun from its case until instructed to do so. When removing the gun from its case, be sure to control direction of the muzzle down-range. An athlete must not walk away from the range location with the gun in hand. Guns are only to be removed from the range once it is returned to its case.

1.5. The laser must only be pointed down-range towards the targets at all times. Athletes must take care to avoid turning with a laser in hand in such a way that the muzzle points in any direction other

than down-range toward the target. For instance, if an athlete turns to engage in a conversation with a person standing beside or behind the athlete range location, it is recommended the athlete set the laser on the table, with the barrel pointing in the direction of the target.

1.6. Pentathletes must not disturb the other pentathletes at the range.

1.7. No persons other than the training or competing pentathletes, officials, or approved coaches shall be permitted at the shooting range while lasers are in use.

2. **Resolution:** *the shooting range and management of the shooting range must be conducted in such a way as to minimize the risk of startling or causing fear to observers passing the shooting range or coming across it unexpectedly.*

Some critical features of the range to be addressed here include:

- *Information clearly on display*
- *Setting up the range in such a way to control the area where the pistol is pointed (downrange)*
- *Ensuring pistols are observed and controlled when athletes are running.*

2.1. Information must be on display clearly indicating the use of LASER Pistols without ammunition (sample attached). Prepared signs for regular use are recommended.

2.2. When training is being conducted in a clubroom or closed space, ensure signs are posted on entry doors or in doorways indicating use of LASER shooting equipment.

2.3. When setting up the shooting range in an open area (such as along the side or a track) ensure information is clearly on display in such a way as to be visible to people approaching from different directions.

2.4. When setting up the shooting range in any venue, ensure the range area (between the shooting location and the targets and including area just beyond the targets) is restricted by some means (caution tape for instance) so that it does not permit people to pass through.

2.5. When setting up the shooting range, ensure the range is backed by a solid or at a minimum a non-transparent surface (building wall or solid screen or wall for instance). That will ensure that the muzzle end of the pistol, when pointed at the target, does not appear to be aimed at a person walking past beyond the target location. This will help to minimize the risk of someone approaching an area and unexpectedly looking at a pistols being pointed in their direction.

2.6. If it is not possible to control the area behind the targets in this way, pedestrian traffic should be restricted by roping off an area beyond the targets and making certain that signs or information strategically posted.

2.7. When a range is in use for COMBINED event competition or training where the athlete leaves their pistol unattended at the range, the range area and pistols must remain under the observation and direct control of a dedicated official, coach, or responsible volunteer who must remain at the range at all times.

This document is intended to provide conduct guidelines while remaining in alignment with UIPM combined event rules. Of note, several items included here are reflected in the UIPM rules document. This policy is to provide support to those rules by encouraging education, standard conduct of training and events, and safety awareness during all aspects of athlete development regarding use of LASER pistols. In any instance where there is a disagreement between this policy and the UIPM rules, the UIPM rules are to take precedence. All athletes, coaches and officials are expected to conduct training and competitions in compliance with the UIPM rules and to review the rules on a regular basis.

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