

# The Rimfire X Count<sup>®</sup>

Official Newsletter of the BCGC – Rimfire Benchrest (RFBR)  
Competition

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**Buffalo Creek Gun Club, Inc.**

Owen Maddox President



**Match Director Message**

Treat each shot as a one shot match

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# Rimfire Benchrest 101 - Part 2

## Rimfire Benchrest 101 – Part 2

Setting up your gear, bench manners, doping conditions and shooting in a match

Written by John “jp” Perizzolo

Ok, you have lugged all your gear up to the line, so now what?

First off, unless no one is squaded on the bench to your right, keep all your gear behind, under or on your bench, or on the various “ready” tables behind the line. If no one is squaded on the bench to your right you can stage some of your gear there if needed.

I am going to start this with the statement that there is no 100% right or wrong way to set up your bench, read and compensate for the wind, or handle your rifle, but this how I do it. Never be afraid to ask questions about the details, I have not yet met a BR competitor who was not more than willing to help out their fellow shooters.

I start by setting up and leveling my rest and/or bags and aligning them towards my designated target. Once it is safe to do so, I center all my adjustments and make sure I can cover the whole target with my rest’s windage and fine elevation adjustments. I then set up my loading tray, ammo, stopwatch and notebook where I can reach them easily and so I can load the rifle with a minimum amount of movement on my part. The goal is to set things up so you are doing the same thing every shot, and laying things out so you can shoot fast if needed.

Some people shoot what is called “Free-Recoil”, where the only thing touching the rifle is your trigger finger. Some people do this while pressing their thumb against the back of the trigger guard or lightly on the stock just to help stabilize their trigger hand.

Make sure the fore end is always bumped into the fore end stop before starting your final aim. Some rifles do better with pressure of some sort, shouldering them into the fore end stop, and/or cheek pressure and maybe even gripping the pistol grip as well.

Generally ‘Free-Recoil’ works best with very light BR triggers ( 2 ounces or so) and heavy rifles with 3” fore ends, “Sporters” and rifles with heavier triggers generally work better with a firm grip and solid pressure against the fore end stop. Just try to be very consistent on how you handle your rifle.

Once your record time starts and the range is ‘Hot’, I shoot 5 or so “Foulers” outside of the scoring/target area to warm up the barrel. Most cold, clean barrels will put the first few shots high and left, and then they settle down.

In this game your ability to read and compensate for the wind is probably the biggest factor in where you will stand in the results at the end of the day. Keep in mind a 1 mile per hour wind, which is hard even to feel, moves the bullet 1/10" at 50 yards.

The X-ring on the IBS target we use is approximately .07", so if you aim dead center with even a slight wind, then throw in the group size your rifle/ammo/rest combination is capable of, and you just dropped an X. Most of our matches seem to come down to who had the highest X-count.

Make that a 5 mile per hour wind and you just dropped a point. That being said, I cannot stress enough how important wind flags are.

I always set my wind flags a bit differently depending on the range and terrain, but generally use 2 to 3 flags plus a bench indicator. Keep your flags with in your shooting lane so as not to interfere with the shooters next to you, and keep them below an imaginary line from your bench top to the bottom edge of your target.

My flags are a rimfire specific modification of the basic Mike Ratigan design (Author of "Extreme Rifle Accuracy") that I made myself with a minimal investment. I would be glad to share the plans with anyone who wants to make a set.

There are 2 basic techniques for shooting in the wind; you can be a "Waiter" or a "Chaser". It is of course best if you are familiar with both, that way you can adapt to whatever the prevailing conditions are that day.

If you are a "Waiter", you will pick a condition and aiming point that allows you to shoot X's, and you will only shoot when you have those conditions. Just as when you start a target and shoot a few foulers, if you have to wait very long for your conditions to come back, make sure to shoot a few foulers or sighters before going back for your record shots. The one disadvantage to this system is if conditions are changing a lot, you may run out of time.

If you choose to be a "Chaser", you must be very familiar with what conditions do to your POI when they change. I mostly play the "Waiting" game, and shoot very rapidly when I see the conditions I want. But if I sense myself running out of time, I am confident about chasing my shots if I need to. Be aware that a full value cross wind from 3 or 9 o'clock does not deflect a bullet just to 3 or 9 o'clock, but they will disperse in more of a line from 4 o'clock to 10 o'clock. A wind from 12 o'clock will drive the POI down, and a 6 o'clock wind will cause your bullet to hit a bit high. Nothing beats experience when shooting in the wind, and I would urge you to practice in windy conditions rather than only shooting when it is calm, other than when you are testing or tuning.

When shooting in a match, proper etiquette means talking very quietly, or not at all, unless you need to make the Line Officer aware of something. This goes for spectators as well. No one should be coaching anyone when a relay shooting record shots is on the line and active.

The last thing I want you to ponder, is always remember to have fun, it is just a game after all, no matter what is going on condition wise, no matter what the distractions may be in your life, treat a match as a chance to concentrate on one thing for a while and just enjoy the process.

There was a quote on the wall at the OTC in Colorado Springs when I used to shoot there that read, “Never let score get in the way of performance”. What that means is if you concentrate on fundamentals, the score will take care of itself.

I have been blessed to be able to compete at a high level in multiple sports, and one of my favorite songs is “The Lucky One” by Allison Krause. One line from that song is my inspiration when competing, “The next best thing to playing and winning is playing and losing”.

“Nuff said”, hope to see you out there.

We always welcome and encourage new shooters to join us.

Please refer to [bcgc.us](http://bcgc.us) for information on .22 Rimfire Benchrest Competition.



### **Editor’s Note**

#### Biography of John “jp” Perizzolo

Regional champion, Sectional Champion, State champion, classified in NRA smallbore 3P and 4P Prone, International smallbore 3P and Prone, ARA RFBR, High Power XTC and Palma, SB and HP Rifle Silhouette, Cowboy Silhouette, NSCA and CSCA Sporting Clays.