



# How to improve your scores with an LSR rifle (or how to do nothing and win!)

If you are shooting in competitions, your scores won't improve on their own! Practice helps, but rehearsing the same mistakes over and over again will just make matters worse; or at



best, won't result in improvement. This introduction refers to a right handed shooter. Reverse the instructions if you are a left handed shooter.

The greatest challenge to overcome is .....

## Wobble!

Your set to squeeze the trigger when the cross hairs move away from the 10 ring. You adjust by moving the rifle in the opposite direction. Then it goes too far and you bring it back. You repeat the process numerous times on two axes and eventually pull (unfortunately, not squeeze) the trigger when your left arm is protesting or when you have turned purple because you have forgotten to breathe! There is a better way.

Our muscles are arranged in antagonistic pairs. One pulls in one direction, whilst another tries to pull it back. If we rely on muscles to keep the cross hairs on the 10 ring, we enter the tunnel of doom! Wobble will always win. The only way to score a 10 by this means is by luck. Oh, by the way, do you ever get 'flyers'? These are caused when muscles twitch in protest to the load they are taking. So what's the solution to twitch and wobble? Simply put – **DO NOTHING!**

SCATT trace showing the point of aim for one shot. The shooter had problems with lateral 'wobble' and over-corrected a number of times. The point of release (shown in yellow) whilst good, could equally well have landed anywhere out to the 7 ring. Luck was on the shooters side this time!



## How to do nothing and win

When we 'do' something we move. Movement involves our muscles. As soon as this happens in shooting, we twitch or wobble. The trick in LSR shooting is to reduce to a minimum the use of muscles that contribute to movement of any kind *i.e.* **do nothing**. That way, the cross hairs remain in the 10 ring long enough for a thoughtful squeeze, not a panic-attack-induced pull. How do we achieve this? Through our body position.

## Body position

Let your bones take the strain! Some LSR shooters tend to adhere to the myth that anything goes as long as it works for me (sometimes). Whilst it's true that there is more variation of position in LSR shooting than say, prone shooting, we ignore the basics at the cost of **consistency**.



Your body should be about  $45^{\circ}$  to the target.



Your left foot and shoulder should be forward of your body with your left foot pointing in the direction of the target. Your feet should be about your shoulder width apart.



Your position should feel 'natural' to you. Now lean back *slightly* and a little to the right. This gives you a centre of gravity between the left leg and the centre of the body.



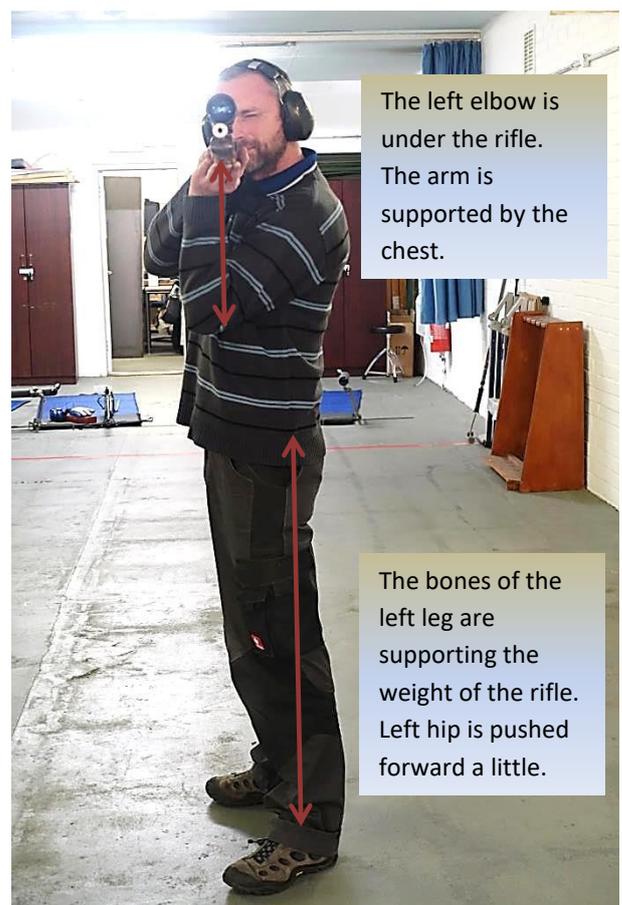
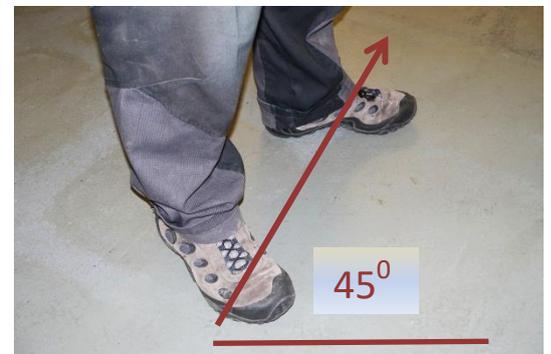
Your left hip will now be pushed forward a little which provides support for your left elbow (see below).



The weight of the rifle will now be supported by the bones of your left leg, not by muscles.



Shoulder your rifle with the butt firmly in position. **VERY IMPORTANT:** Your left elbow should come across your chest so that it is under the rifle. If this is uncomfortable for you, then move it as close under the rifle as you can.





Over a period of time (weeks), you may be able to move the elbow further over once your soft tissues adjust. In any case, your left arm must be anchored into position **on your chest**.



In this position the bones of your left arm will be supporting the rifle, not your muscles. If your left arm is stuck out and unsupported, you will never become a consistently accurate LSR shooter!



The left arm is anchored in position on the chest.



With the butt in your right shoulder\*, you should position your left hand on the fore-end of the rifle. The exact position of your left hand will vary according to the length and strength of your left arm. However, **do not** reach forward since this will involve a heavy loading on your left arm muscles. It's fine to have your left hand under the trigger guard. Don't grip the rifle with your left hand. This will cause muscle fatigue in your hand and transmit a pulse. Use your left hand as a rest only. Flatten your hand. This will prevent your fingers being singed and bruised by ejected cartridge cases!



All of the butt plate should be in contact with the shoulder\*.



Bring the rifle to your eye level. Canting the rifle to the left or right is fine provided this is consistent every time you shoot. Rest your cheek on the stock of the rifle. Keep your eye in line with and about 6 cm (3 inches) behind the scope. If you see a tunnel, move your eye closer to the scope.



Make sure your scope is in focus for you. Get a fellow shooter to help you with this while you hold the rifle in position. The cross hairs and the target both need to be in focus. A magnification of more than 6x magnifies wobble beyond control.



Take your shots in a pause on an inhaled breath to reduce the need to use weak muscles in your rib cage. Squeeze gently on the trigger. Try not to pull. **Take your time.** Don't try to empty the magazine on one breath! It's OK to rest between each shot if you feel the need.

\*"All of the butt plate should be in contact with the shoulder." Well, this is correct in theory, but may be more difficult in practice. If you are using a club LSR rifle, it may not be possible to adjust the butt plate up or down to suit

your body shape. The same may be true for prone and benchrest rifles. There is no easy answer to this. If you eventually purchase your own LSR rifle, make sure it has butt plate adjustability. You can also purchase different length risers so that your scope sits at the correct height for you.

Well, that's quite a lot of nothing to be getting on with!

Happy, safe and wobble free LSR shooting to you all.