

WBR and SAFETY

Due to the firearms issues at the 130th National, the National Commander issued General Order 2015.1 that required Unit Commanders to verify that all of the members of our units conduct their loading and shooting activities safely. This was to be accomplished by April 15, 2015. A unit's ability to participate in the 131st National was at stake if it was late in conforming. A significant number of Unit Commanders took exception to this Order which we felt placed an unacceptable liability burden on us as individuals and did not allow enough time for compliance. As a result the National Board rescinded the Order on January 31, 2015.

This is a good time, however, for each of us to take stock of our practices and procedures. We will have a Safety Topic at each of our Meetings this year. Each of you is an adult capable of recognizing that our chosen pastime can be dangerous if we don't practice it safely. You are responsible for your safety and that of those near you. If you see someone behaving in an unsafe manner, bring it to the attention of the party in question in a friendly and helpful manner. If this is not effective, bring it to my attention.

Below are the points that were contained in the rescinded General Order as I see them. Please read these and take steps to make them part of your everyday business as we embark on a new Skirmish season. If you have questions ask a Blue Rifle. Chances are excellent that someone on the Team knows the answer.

- 1) Know what Black Powder looks like and be sure you are using only Black Powder. If someone gives you a can of powder and tells you it is Black Powder it is your responsibility to verify that it is Black Powder. The safety of your teammates is in your hands. Don't put anything in a can that is labeled Black Powder except Black Powder.
- 2) Know how to prepare and handle the various types of cartridges used in our sport. Have a teammate who has experience with a firearm type that is new to you check you out. We all had to learn from someone.
- 3) If you are buying lead from a new source find out how to check it for hardness. Ask a Blue. There are ways to check for hardness. The thumbnail test is not the best one.
- 4) Make sure your projectiles fit your barrels properly.
- 5) Use the right lube. Crisco is not a bullet lubricant.
- 6) Clean your firearm properly. Be sure the ignition passageways are clear of dirt and oil. Make sure there is no excessive caking in the breach.
- 7) Read the Skirmish Rules, especially Sections 1 through 27. It's your sport know how to play by the rules. Don't count on others to know.
- 8) Also Review Sections 4.14 (General Duties of Line Judges) and 4.15 (General Duties of Safety Officers).

Take advantage of the off season to make yourself a better, smarter, and safer Skirmisher.