



The first Bianchi Cup competition was held 30 years ago in 1979 at the Chapman Academy Ranges just outside of Columbia, Missouri in the USA. It was specifically designed as a training match to enhance and develop the shooting skills of Law Enforcement Officers by retired police officer John Bianchi (of Bianchi International holster manufacturers) who together with top I.P.S.C shooter Ray Chapman created a match that was made up of 4 separate stages, with each one requiring 48 rounds to complete. The complete 192 round course of fire is made up of the Mover, Barricade, Practical and falling Plate matches which has a maximum possible score of 1920 points, and 192 x's. Each match requires a different technique to master and they all demand a fine balance between speed and accuracy in order to achieve a good overall score!

At first, some of our newer Gallery Rifle shooters will certainly find some of the timings pretty quick and this is especially true if shooting with an underlever but like all things, it does get a lot easier if you practice the right things and put a bit of thought into it! The GRCF & GRSB start position for the Bianchi is rifle loaded and held in both hands at waist height with the barrel pointing towards the targets. For all matches except on the Barricade match, LBR's & LBP's will be loaded and holstered (safety catch applied on LBP's) with both hands held up above shoulder height, which is commonly referred to as the "surrender" position.

Just like in the "shorts" matches, a fast target acquisition is essential when shooting the Bianchi and the only difference here is the Start position. "Drawing" the rifle up into the aim is made easier if the rifle is pushed forwards and then brought

round in an arc into the shoulder. Just lifting the rifle straight up will usually cause the butt pad to get snagged on your clothing or ammunition belt, causing you all sorts of problems wasting valuable time in the process. For those wishing to shoot this match with an underlever, the only way you will be able to shoot the rounds off quickly enough is to shoot with your "thumb up" as you will simply not have enough time to keep wrapping your thumb back

over the top strap each time. Those people who have fitted a cocking lever on their hammers should definitely remove them before trying to shoot this match as they simply just get in the way! I've been told many times that these devices make cocking the hammer much easier and they may well do, but my Marlin still cocks the hammer back every time I rack the lever... without one! One final thing to remember is that you may load with as many rounds as you like in Bianchi so you can simply rack the action quickly to clear a jam if needs be, rather having to reload another loose round or magazine. Unless you count your rounds as you fire them though (which you should be doing anyway) I wouldn't recommend loading any extra rounds as you will incur penalty points should you fire more than the required number of shots on any stage, so be warned! Below are the courses of fire for the 4 individual Bianchi matches along with a few ideas about how to shoot each one.



The Practical match - There are two targets placed 4½ feet from centre to centre and about 6 feet to the top of the targets, and the shooting is from the "Standing unsupported" position unless otherwise stated. Especially at the closer distances, you should make sure that your body is

lined up with the last of the two targets that you will engage, as this will make your body unwind slightly so that it naturally points at the 2nd target without any tension in the core area. This will help you to release the last remaining shots quickly and more accurately than it would if your body was twisting over to the side slightly. As usual, you should take your final sight picture on the first target that you will engage, making sure that you keep your head still and eyes focused on the centre of the target as you lower the rifle back down into the ready position. Racking the lever fast and then squeezing the trigger in a controlled manner will produce much better results when using an underlever and you should also make sure that you pull the rifle firmly into your shoulder with your supporting hand when shooting from the weak shoulder at 10m. If you don't, you will probably find it very difficult to keep the sights on the target during the racking action, or even worse, it may cause the butt to slip down out of your shoulder which will lead to lost shots so be very careful!

Different ranges will have their own range restrictions but at Bisley you can shoot from the kneeling position at 25m, and have the option of either kneeling, sitting and now prone (with rifles or pistols) at 50m should you want to. In my experience you don't really gain much at 25m if you kneel down as the time it takes you to adopt this position in the first place means you will have to shoot much quicker to stay within the time limits. At 50m however it may well be worth adopting a more stable hold if you can get into the position quickly enough. This is certainly true when shooting with the rimfire rifles as the targets are much smaller, but make sure that you practice this before hand and don't just decide to try it on the spur of the moment as it may well end up costing you dearly! LBP shooters must remember to apply your safety catches each time before re-holstering.



The course of fire for the Practical match is:

10m

- 1 shot on each target in 3 sec
- 2 shots on each target in 4 sec

3 shots on each target in 8 sec GRCF/GRSB Weak Shoulder hold. LBR/LBP Weak Hand freestyle (the weak hand must hold the grip and pull the trigger but the other hand may be used for support)

15m

- 1 shot on each target in 4 sec
- 2 shots on each target in 5 sec
- 3 shots on each target in 6 sec

25m

- 1 shot on each target in 5 sec
- 2 shots on each target in 6 sec
- 3 shots on each target in 7 sec

50m

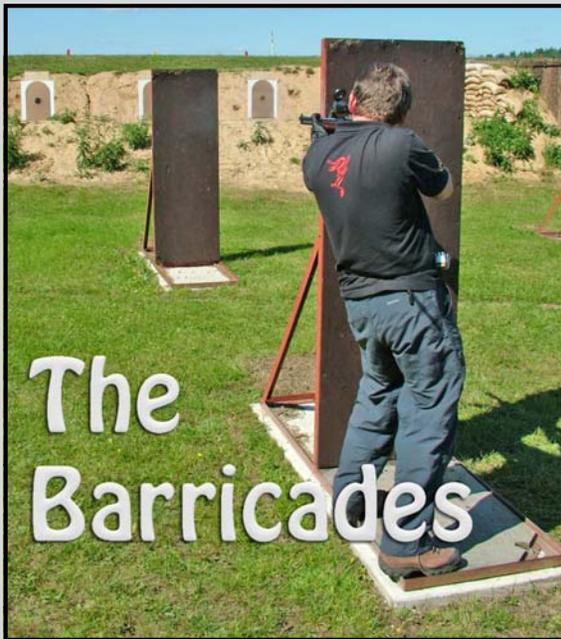
- 1 shot on each target in 7 sec
- 2 shots on each target in 10 sec
- 3 shots on each target in 15 sec



The falling Plate Match – There are six 8in diameter hinged steel plates for GRCF/LBR & LBP's or six 4in plates for GRSB that are mounted on a frame 20in center to center and are placed about 4 feet from the ground to the bottom edge of the plate. They are painted white so that they stand out against any colour backstop but some ranges may require you to shoot at paper plate targets instead. The NRA at Bisley will revert back to using the proper "steels" again from 2010 onwards which will be great as it will eliminate any possibility of shooting the same "paper" plate twice by accident, as they obviously don't "fall" when hit. Hearing steel plates "ping" as you hit them helps you to get settled into a good rhythm whereas the paper ones just sit there and do nothing when hit. Be aware that the rules state that one shot must be fired at each plate, so if you miss one make sure you carry on to the next, otherwise you may incur penalty points! Just like in the Practical match you should always turn your body slightly towards the last targets that you will shoot, and shooting the plates is done by either "scanning" or "deliberate" shots. "Scanning" is basically keeping the gun moving continuously across the target frame as you shoot and probably sounds harder than it is but it's really down to good timing and good trigger control. The key is to keep the gun moving at a constant speed then as the sight moves

over the leading edge of each plate, you increase the pressure on the trigger blade so that each shot is released smoothly. With practice, you will soon discover the timing needed to place your shots in the centre of the plates using this technique, and when perfected it will enable you to shoot the plates both faster and smoother. “Deliberate” shots are when the shooter stops the gun on each plate, aims, then releases each shot and this is how many people shoot them, especially when shooting with an underlever due to the racking action needed in between each shot. It is slightly slower this way but it does tend to be a bit more accurate for some people so ultimately you must choose the way that works best for you. Ideally you should master how to use both techniques to help you perform better in some of the other multiple target matches out there that we shoot. At Bisley you may shoot the falling Plate match from the Prone position with any GR firearm and at any distance and the course of fire is:

- 10m** 1 shot at each plate in 6 sec (shot twice)
- 15m** 1 shot at each plate in 7 sec (shot twice)
- 20m** 1 shot at each plate in 8 sec (shot twice)
- 25m** 1 shot at each plate in 9 sec (shot twice)



The Barricade Match – Two targets are placed 7ft centre to centre with the top of the targets set at 6ft from the ground. The barricade frame is made from 2in angle iron which is faced with 12mm plywood and measures 6ft tall and 2ft wide, with the base measuring 2ft wide by 3ft deep. The shooter may stand on the edges of the frame but no part of their feet or body may touch the floor outside the width of the box. For safety reasons, as the barricades

were originally made for use with pistols and not rifles you are now allowed to step rearwards outside of the box, providing that no part of the foot breaks the width fault line.



A strong, firm grip is essential when shooting Barricades!

The Barricade match is certainly a hard match to shoot properly if you don't have a good technique to start with, and to shoot well in it I recommend that you practice securing the barrel (if possible) against the side of the barricade using the hold or grip that suits you best. Most shooters in this match shoot from their “strong” shoulder from both sides of the barricades but it is possible to use both, with practice of course! If your club doesn't have a barricade to practice with then I would strongly suggest making one if you are going to shoot Bianchi on a regular basis. They are not very expensive to make but even if you can only afford to make one, you can always just move the targets out to the correct distance when you need to. Make sure you fix them firmly to the ground though to stop them rocking from side to side, and don't use anything smaller than 2in angle iron for the frames as they will simply flex when you lean against them making them unstable, which is not what you want them to do when you are practicing on them.

Keeping the rifle in the “strong” shoulder, here are some examples for a right handed shooter to help find out which type of grip/s may suit you best. Shooting on the left side of the barricade, place the left index finger over the top of the barrel (1) with the thumb and remaining fingers underneath the magazine tube. Cup the hand around the frame of the barricade so that the barrel rests tightly against it and use the fingers to grip the leading edge of the angle iron whilst the thumb applies opposite pressure against the plywood. If you have a barricade wing fitted, leaning into the butt pad with your shoulder will help increase stability and this is a very secure hold if you can achieve it. For those who cannot reach forward

enough to grip the barrel, try holding the fore end (2) instead and see if this works for you instead.



For shooting on the right hand side of the barricade you may want to start with holding the fore end as normal but stick your thumb outwards (3) so that it contacts the face of the barricade,

whilst the barrel or fore end rests against the side of it. You can then apply pressure with your thumb to help pull the rifle into the barricade, thus allowing you to lean into it to help produce a stable hold. Again, this is made easier if you have a "wing" fitted but if you haven't, another alternative is to place your fingers on top of the barrel/fore end with your thumb underneath and then simply use the side of your hand in a fist shaped grip (4) to apply pressure against the barricade. Quite a few shooters use this hold when shooting with an underlever as it helps stop excessive movement of the rifle during the racking motion which helps to keep you on target.



The rimfire rifles have very little recoil so try supporting them underneath the barrel or fore end with your thumb, and then use either the side (5) or flat of your hand (6) to grip against the face of the barricade with. Again you should pull the rifle in towards the side of the barricade for extra support, and at the same time, make sure that your fingers stay close together and in contact with the wood otherwise they will wander in front of the lens and block your sight picture! You can obviously try shooting with the rifle in your left shoulder but this will take a lot of time to perfect, especially with an underlever; but it may well suit you so don't discard the idea until you have given it a try. The "ready" position for LBR & LBP shooters in the Barricade match is loaded and holstered (safety applied on LBP's) with both hands level and placed flat against the face of the barricade. Failure to do this will incur you penalty points so make sure you do it properly!



After the appropriate commands have been given by the Range Officer, this is the routine I go through when preparing to shoot the barricade match. I step into the shooting box at each distance with at least 16 loose centre fire rounds or two magazines with 8 rounds either on my belt or inside my right hand shooting vest pocket, as I always load with 8 rounds in Bianchi to allow for any malfunctions or light strikes. I then set the range and adjust the focus on my scope before adjusting my stance and testing my preferred hold on the barricade. Making sure I keep this position by not moving my feet I then load and make ready, and then bring the rifle back up onto the barricade to take a final sight picture on the centre of the target. I always lean out to the side so that I can



Barricade wings that either slide on or just screw into your stock are not hard to make but can make a big difference!



see the targets turning easier and this also allows me to align the rifle up better with the target rather than shooting with the rifle canted over to the side. Releasing my grip on the barricade I keep

my hand in a cupped position so that it can be replaced quickly back onto the frame when it's needed, and I make sure that I keep my head still with my eyes remaining focused on the x ring before lowering the rifle back down into the ready position.

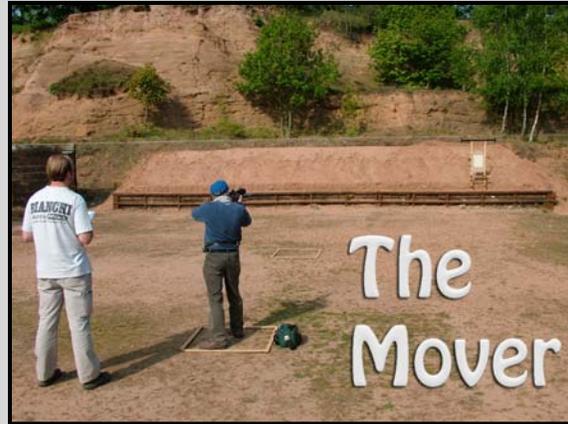


Barricade "ready" position!

If I don't get a good hold instantly when the targets turn to face, I will always take the extra time needed to make sure that everything is aligned and locked up as much as possible before releasing my shots. At the two closest distances this simply means just hitting the trigger blade as I close the lever each time (or 6 quick shots with the .22) as my grip will usually keeps the crosshairs inside the x ring all the time at these distances. At 25 & 35m however every shot is well aimed before it is released as it is much easier to "pull" shots at these distances. The side

that you start shooting from at each distance is your choice, and the course of fire is:

- 10m** 6 shots in 6 sec from one side of the b/cade
- 10m** 6 shots in 6 sec from the other side of the b/cade
- 15m** 6 shots in 7 sec from one side of the b/cade
- 15m** 6 shots in 7 sec from the other side of the b/cade
- 25m** 6 shots in 8 sec from one side of the b/cade
- 25m** 6 shots in 8 sec from the other side of the b/cade
- 35m** 6 shots in 9 sec from one side of the b/cade
- 35m** 6 shots in 9 sec from the other side of the b/cade



The Mover match - One target is mounted on a frame with the top about 6ft from the ground and it will travel a distance of 60ft in 6 seconds between 2 large screens. At each distance the shooter will fire from within a 3ft square shooting box and the competitor may only start to "draw" their firearm once the target becomes visible, and must cease firing once it travels out of sight. Deliberately shooting through the end covers or screens will incur penalty points, so don't do it! The moving target is definitely the hardest Bianchi match to shoot as you have to shoot quite quickly and keep the rifle moving steadily as you shoot. If you haven't got a mover base fitted to your rifle, you will also have to aim in front of the target at various points at each distance in order to give the correct amount of "lead" necessary to hit the centre of the target. Basically, if you aim at the middle of a moving target and release the trigger, the bullet will travel in a straight line but it will strike the target behind the point of aim as the target has moved x amount of inches or feet forward during the time it has taken for the bullet to reach it.

A mover base is simply a two piece mount that enables the top part to move sideways in both directions (around 1 to 1.5mm) which will moves the scope alignment so that you can aim at the centre of the target, while the barrel is actually aiming slightly in front of it. This gives the bullet the correct amount of "lead" whilst allowing you to concentrate on keeping the



You don't have to have a mover base, but aiming at the centre of the target rather than in front does make it easier!

cross hairs inside the black x ring as you track it across the range. However, having one of these bases is not essential as there are a number of shooters out there who can shoot some very good scores without one, but they do tend to make life a little bit easier for us mere mortals! Mover bases are pretty hard to get now but there will be a small number available early in the New Year from Rude Fat Dog, so if you are interested make sure that you check out their website. The best way to work out your lead if you haven't got a mover base is to first chronograph your ammunition to find out the FPS (foot per second) that it is travelling at. Then, looking at the Mover Chart you will be able to see how far in front of the centre of the target you will have to aim at each distance. It is much easier to start with if you simply mark some lines or other reference points onto an actual target for each calibre and keep this (or a reduced photocopy) with you whilst practicing and competing until you can remember them all.

When shooting the Mover it is essential that you line yourself up so that you are naturally pointing at the target over the last 1/3rd of its travel before it disappears again behind the screen. Then keeping your feet fixed in this position, rotate your upper body until you are in the ready position facing where the target will appear from. This way, as you are shooting your body will "unwind" smoothly as you track the target

across the range, and this will help you to avoid snatching your shots. You must never "stop" on the target to release a shot so **always keep the gun moving!** At the closer distances of 10 & 15m you must make sure that you pick up the target and start shooting as quickly as possible (especially if shooting an underlever) or the target will disappear again before you have got all your shots off! During my last couple of rimfire matches I have rattled all of my shots off before the target reached the half way point at these two distances as there is minimum recoil with the .22, and I got some really good results this way so I'll definitely be practicing this method over the winter months to see if it's the best way forwards! Unless you rack your underlever fast then calmly squeeze each shot off slowly during this match you will definitely be putting holes in all over the target so try to keep your cool and watch the sights all of the time. At the 20 & 25m distances you only have to shoot 3 shots per run which is fired twice, so adjust your shooting pace accordingly but remember to keep everything smooth. If you use a telescopic sight, don't be tempted to turn the magnification up too much or you'll be in big trouble either trying to find the target in the first place, or certainly after every racking action. You should also remember to re-focus your scope at each distance before you reload so that you don't forget, and as the target is out of sight behind the screen I simply aim and focus on the wire or bank at the halfway point to do it. The course of fire for the Mover is:

- 10m** 6 shots, target moving right to left in 6 sec
- 10m** 6 shots target moving left to right in 6 sec
- 15m** 6 shots, target moving right to left in 6 sec
- 15m** 6 shots target moving left to right in 6 sec
- 20m** 3 shots, target moving right to left in 6 sec
- 20m** 3 shots target moving left to right in 6 sec
- 20m** 3 shots, target moving right to left in 6 sec
- 20m** 3 shots target moving left to right in 6 sec
- 25m** 3 shots, target moving right to left in 6 sec
- 25m** 3 shots target moving left to right in 6 sec
- 25m** 3 shots, target moving right to left in 6 sec
- 25m** 3 shots target moving left to right in 6 sec

Next month I'll look at the "alternative" Bianchi matches that can be used if no Mover or Barricades are available, and see if there's anyone out there willing to have a go at putting on their own Bianchi match next year. It's not that hard to do, and there are people who would be willing to travel to help you out on the day should you need it!

LEAD FOR BIANCHI MOVING TARGET																		
Feet Per Second	650	700	750	800	850	900	950	1000	1050	1100	1150	1200	1250	1300	1350	1400	1450	1500
Lead (inches) @ 10yds	5.54	5.14	4.80	4.50	4.24	4.00	3.79	3.60	3.43	3.27	3.13	3.00	2.88	2.77	2.67	2.57	2.48	2.40
15yds	8.31	7.71	7.20	6.75	6.35	6.00	5.68	5.40	5.14	4.91	4.70	4.50	4.32	4.15	4.00	3.86	3.72	3.60
20yds	11.08	10.29	9.60	9.00	8.47	8.00	7.58	7.20	6.86	6.55	6.26	6.00	5.76	5.54	5.33	5.14	4.97	4.80
25yds	13.85	12.86	12.00	11.25	10.59	10.00	9.47	9.00	8.57	8.18	7.83	7.50	7.20	6.92	6.67	6.43	6.21	6.00