

# Team Communication

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As more Illinois teams participate at Camp Atterbury and Camp Perry, and Illinois shooters compete at a higher level, consistent intra-team interaction becomes very important. This not only helps any given team to perform their best but it also helps shooters as they move from team to team. Illinois shooters, across all teams, should have the same expectations and understand the same commands.

This paper documents the communication system used on the Illinois State Gold service rifle team. Any team can use whatever system they are comfortable with, but it is hoped that other Illinois teams will adopt these methods for a more efficient and enjoyable team experience.

## General

Communication starts with a good attitude. All the members of the team are working towards the same goal and the tone of what is said should reflect this. When communicating amongst each other, remember to speak in a calm, positive, and encouraging manner. No matter how one shooter performs or how the coach makes decisions, everyone is trying their best and each deserve the respect of their teammates.

- **Standing**
  - Coach asks shooters if they have their no-wind zero on the gun
  - Coach provides initial wind call. Shooter repeats the correction back to the coach and puts correction on rifle.
  - Shooters let coach know when they are ready to begin shooting
  - Coach keeps track of time remaining.
  - To the best of their ability, shooters provide coach with a call (scoring ring and clock position) after each shot. If no call, then shooter says so.
  - Coach gives occasional words of encouragement during string
  - Coach will remind shooters of target number a few times during string
- **Rapids**
  - Coach asks shooter if they have their no-wind zero on the gun
  - Coach provides initial wind call. Shooter repeats the correction back to the coach and puts correction on rifle.
  - Coach reminds shooter of target number when targets come up for string
  - Coach watches shot traces in spotting scope and gives feedback to shooter
    - X - "Good, right there"
    - 10 - "Good at (clock position)"
    - 9 - "Out at (clock position)"
    - Any directional language ("left", "right") is a favoring direction, **not** a shot result.
    - Favoring is done by the coach saying "favor a little (left/right)" or "hold a little (higher/lower)". Exact increments of these favors depend on the ability of the shooter and should be agreed by both coach and shooter before the string.
  - After string, shooter will count off wind and elevation on his rifle and confirm with the coach that this was the intended sight setting.

- **Slow prone**
  - Coach asks shooters if they have their no-wind zero on the gun
  - Coach provides initial wind call. Shooter repeats the correction back to the coach and puts correction on rifle.
  - When pair-firing, unless the zeros of the shooters do not match, wind corrections are given for the pair rather than individual shooters.
  - Shooters let coach know when they are ready to begin shooting.
  - Coach keeps track of time remaining.
  - Shooters can provide the coach with a shot call but if the shot looks good, merely saying "looked good" or similar will suffice. If no call, then shooter says so.
  - When pair-firing, if the shooter is not completely sure it is his turn to shoot, he must confirm with the coach before firing.
  - When coach announces any sight corrections, shooter will repeat the correction back to the coach before adjusting sights.
  - Coach tracks wind settings for each shooter. At any given point in time, the coach must know how much wind correction each shooter has on their rifle.
  - After firing is completed, shooter will count off windage on rifle and coach will confirm that this matches the coach's windage tracking

In addition to verbal communication, it would be wise to understand the responsibilities of the shooter and coach.

- **Shooter's Responsibilities**
  - Know their no-wind zero for each stage of fire
  - Be able to adjust their sights correctly based on the coach's instructions
  - Be able to break the best shots they can
  - Provide honest feedback of their shooting back to the coach
  - Accept the coach's directions without resistance
  - When pair-firing, if the shooter on the right is complete, he should stay in position until his partner fires his last shot.
  
- **Coach's Responsibilities**
  - Instill the shooters with a sense of confidence, both in the coach's abilities as well as the shooter's ability to perform.
  - Create an atmosphere of "relaxed focus" within the team. Focus on performing but maintain a relaxed, friendly attitude.
  - Provide direct, easy to understand, and decisive commands to the shooters
  - Track shooter's windage at 600
  - Keep track of time during slow-fire block time

No team, coach, or shooter is perfect. Mistakes will happen. But all members want the team to succeed and the best way to do this is to put the team first. Perform your best, but you are out on the range to have fun so don't let the inevitable hiccup get in the way of that goal.