

Cavalier Cowboys

Sunday – June 02nd, 2013

“The Rifleman”

Stages Written by: Striker

The Rifleman is an American Western television program starring Chuck Connors as rancher Lucas McCain and Johnny Crawford as his son, Mark McCain. It was set in the 1880s in the town of North Fork, New Mexico Territory. The show was filmed in black-and-white, half-hour episodes. "The Rifleman" aired on ABC from September 30, 1958 to April 8, 1963 as a production of Four Star Television. It was one of the first prime time series to have a widowed parent raise a child.

The Rifleman's rifle is a modified Winchester 1892 that Lucas McCain always carries. As with the guns in many Western movies, it is anachronistic in that it was first manufactured twelve years after the time in which the show is set. The unique feature of the Rifleman's rifle was a screw pin attached to a large loop lever positioned to trip the trigger when the ring was slammed home; this allowed Lucas to fire the rifle as fast as he could work the lever, emptying the magazine in under five seconds. The trigger-trip screw pin was used in two configurations: with the screw head turned inside (close to the trigger) or, more often, outside the trigger guard with a locknut on the outside (to secure its position). In some episodes the screw was removed, when rapid-fire action was not required. When properly adjusted, the screw “squeezed” the trigger when the lever was fully closed.

McCain fires 12 shots from his 11-round rifle during the opening credits: seven shots in the first closeup and five more as the camera switches to another view. The soundtrack contained a dubbed 13th shot, to allow the firing to end with a section of the theme music. The rifle was chambered in .44-40 caliber, which could be used as six-gun cartridges or rifle rounds. He could supposedly fire off his first round in three-tenths of a second, which certainly helped in a showdown.

Gunsmith James S. Stembridge modified two Model 1892s for use in regular and close-up filming. In addition, a Spanish-made Gárate y Anitúa "El Tigre" lever action, a near-copy of the Model 1892, was modified for use as a knockabout gun. The El Tigre is seen in scenes where the rifle is in a saddle scabbard and is not drawn; and in stunts where the rifle was thrown to the ground, used as a club, or in any stunt where there was the possibility of damage to the real Model 1892s. These three rifles were the only ones used by Connors over the run of the series.

The 1892 Winchester caliber .44-40 carbine with a standard 20-inch barrel used on the set of The Rifleman appeared with two different types of levers. The backwards, round-D-style loop was used in the early episodes. Sometimes the rifle McCain uses has a saddle ring.

The style later changed to a flatter lever (instead of the large loop) with no saddle ring. The 8-32 set screw tapped through the trigger guard for the rapid-fire action also came in different styles. Some were silver; others were black with a silver nut under the head of the screw. Sometimes Connors had the screw head turned inside close to the trigger, but he mostly had it on the outside of the trigger guard. In some episodes, the screw was taken out completely when rapid-fire action was not required.

The rapid-fire mechanism was originally designed to keep Connors' finger from getting punctured by the trigger as he quickly fired and cocked the rifle. The rifle and ammunition were provided by the now-defunct Stembridge Gunsmiths. Ammunition was quarter-load 5-in-1 blank cartridges containing smokeless powder, which did not produce the thick clouds of smoke the genuine black powder cartridges of the 1880s did. Most (if not all) of the sound effects for the rifle shots were dubbed, which is why the rifle sounded so different from the other gunshots on the show. The 1892 Winchester rifle holds 12 shots, although a 13th shot was dubbed in to the show's opening scene. It is actually an echo from the 12th shot; his hand moves the lever only 12 times.

The 1892 Winchester is a top-eject rifle (the top is open when the lever is cocked forward). The empty shells are ejected straight up when the lever is pulled towards the shooter. When the rifle was spin-cocked down to Connors' side, the cartridges would have fallen to the ground. Therefore, the rifle was modified with a plunger which would hold a round in place. The Model 1892 Winchester rifle, a descendant of the Civil War-era Henry rifle and Winchester Model 1866 "Yellow Boy" rifles, was made from 1892 to 1941; total production was over one million. Many variations and calibers were introduced over the course of production, but the basic design was largely unaltered. Winchester made 27 different variations of its 1892 rifle. Like the earlier 1873 model, the light and handy Model 1892 was chambered for handgun cartridges, favored by many Westerners to simplify ammunition supply problems by using the same cartridge for both your handgun and rifle. The Winchester Model 1892 rifle was designed by John Moses Browning.

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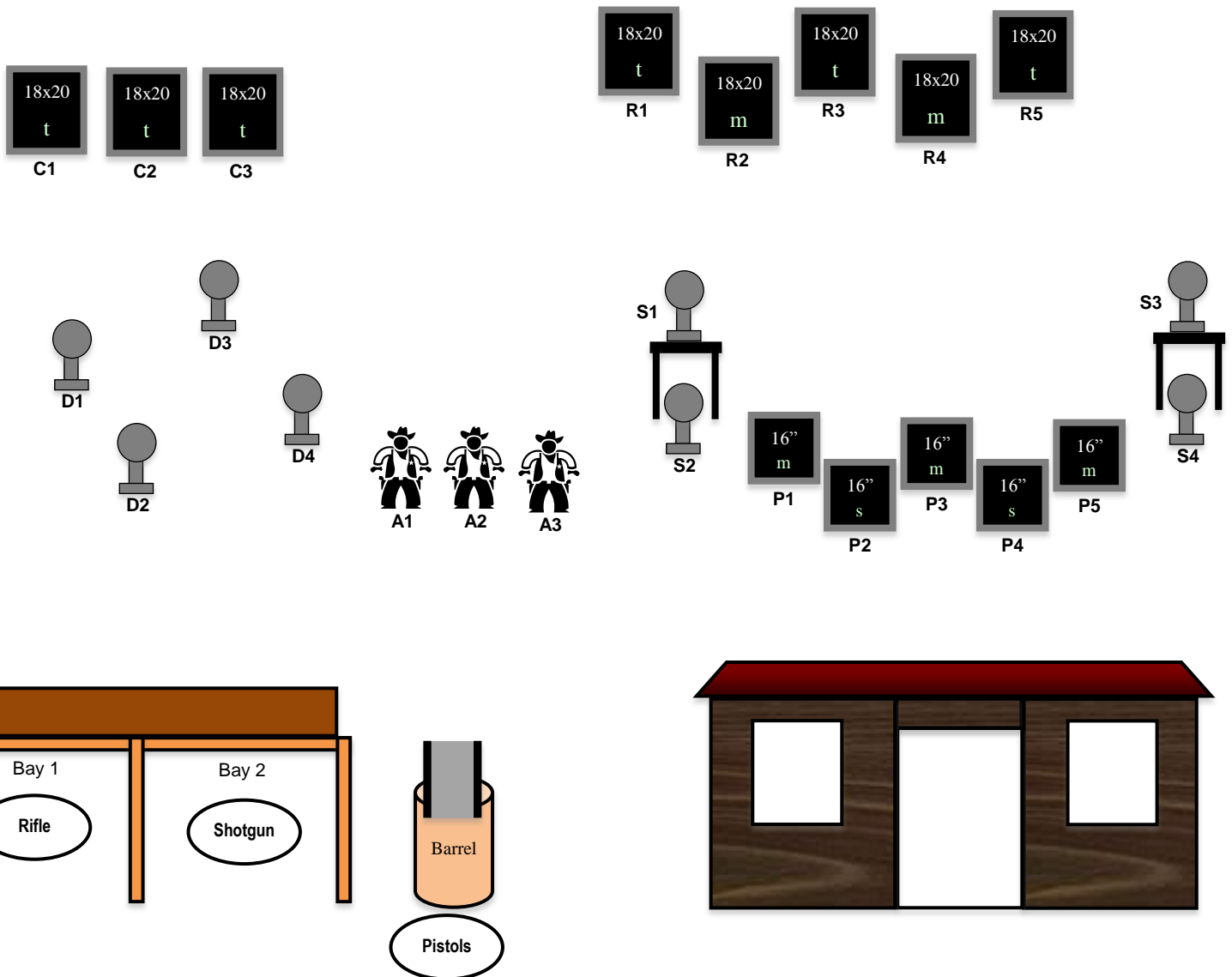
STAGE ONE

Round Count: 10 pistol, 10 rifle, and 4+ shotgun

Shooting Order: Rifle, Shotgun, Pistols

Staging: Rifle is loaded with 10 rounds and staged safely. Both pistols are loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Shotgun is staged safely.

Procedure: Shooter starts in Bay #1 with hands above shoulders and when ready says “**Winchester**”. At the beep, with rifle engage the (C1, C2, C3) targets in a Double Tap Nevada Sweep, for example (C1, C1, C2, C2, C3, C3, C2, C2, C1, C1). Move to Bay #2. With shotgun engage the (D1, D2, D3, D4) knockdown targets in any order. Move to the Barrel. With pistols engage the (A1, A2, A3) targets using the same instructions as the rifle.



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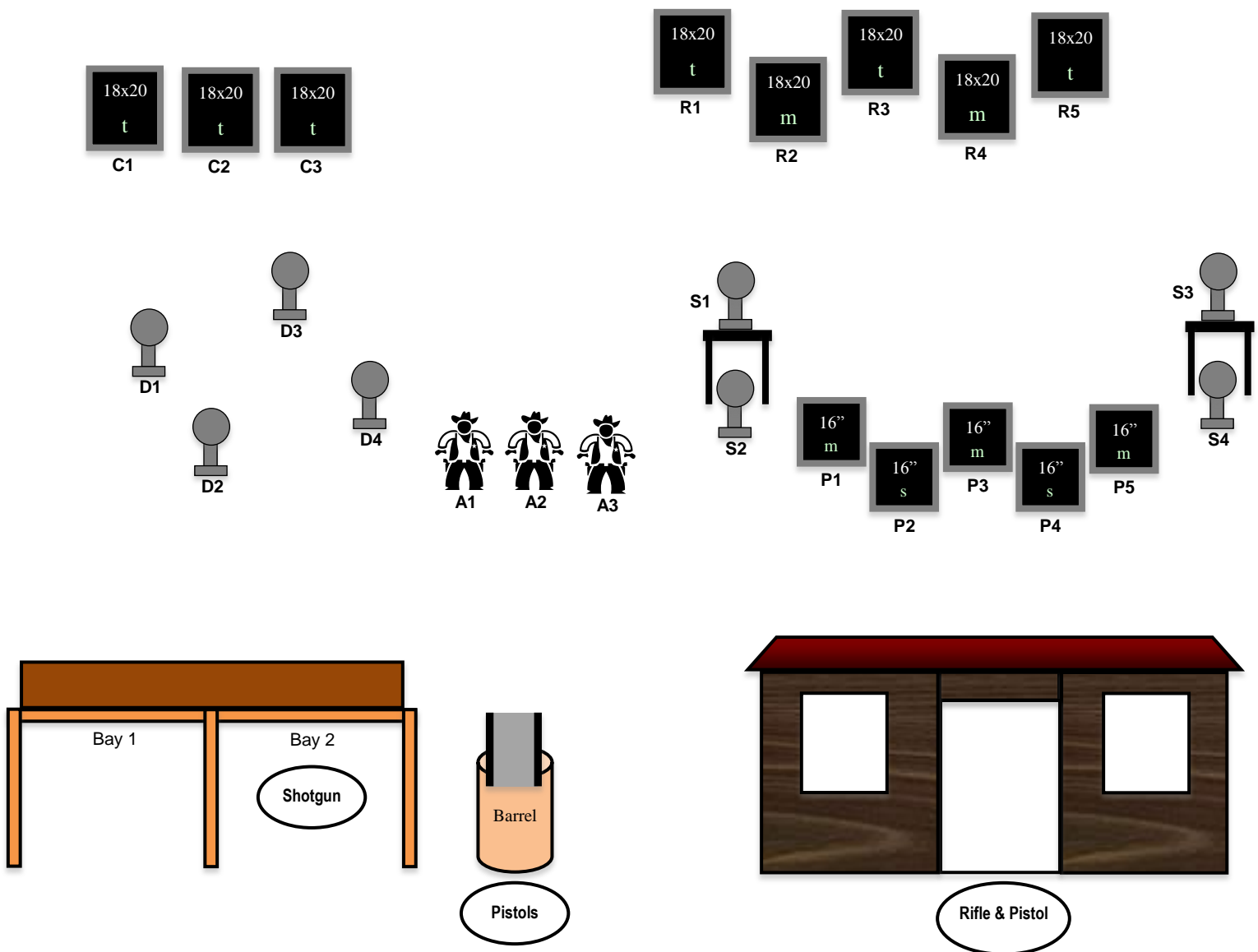
STAGE TWO

Round Count: 10 pistol, 10 rifle, and 4+ shotgun

Shooting Order: Rifle, Pistol, Pistol, Shotgun

Staging: Rifle is loaded with 10 rounds and staged safely. Both pistols are loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Shotgun is staged safely.

Procedure: Shooter starts at the Door and when ready says “**Winchester**”. At the beep, with rifle engage the (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5) targets in a continuous 10 round sweep, for example: (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5). With pistol(s) engage the (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5) targets in a 5 round sweep, for example: (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5). Move to the Barrel. With pistol(s) engage the (A1, A2, A3) targets with 5 rounds and at least 1 round on each target. Move to Bay #2. With shotgun engage the (D1, D2, D3, D4) knockdown targets in any order.



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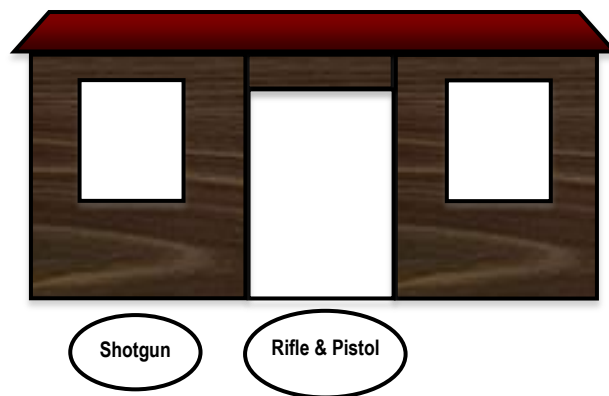
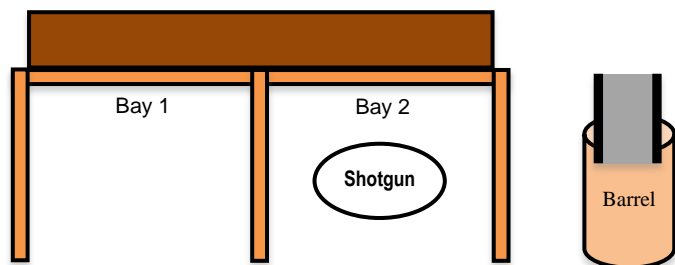
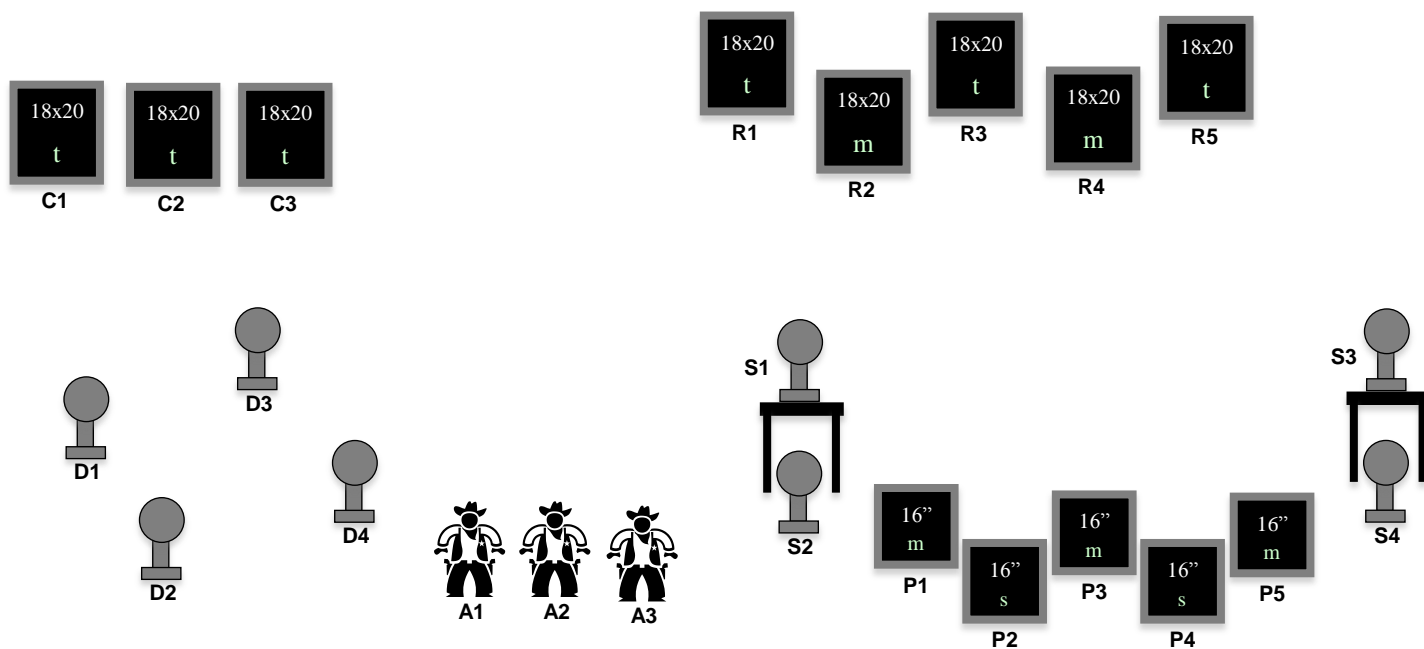
STAGE THREE

Round Count: 10 pistol, 10 rifle, and 6+ shotgun

Shooting Order: Shotgun, Shotgun, Rifle, Pistols

Staging: Rifle is loaded with 10 rounds and staged safely. Both pistols are loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Shotgun is staged safely.

Procedure: Shooter starts in Bay #2 and when ready says “**Winchester**”. At the beep, with shotgun engage the (D1, D2, D3, D4) knockdown target in any order. Move to the Left Window. With shotgun engage the (S1, S2) knockdown targets in any order. Move to the Door. With rifle engage the (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5) targets in the following order: (R1, R3, R5, R4, R2, R1, R3, R5, R4, R2). Lastly with pistols engage the (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5) targets using the same instructions as the rifle.



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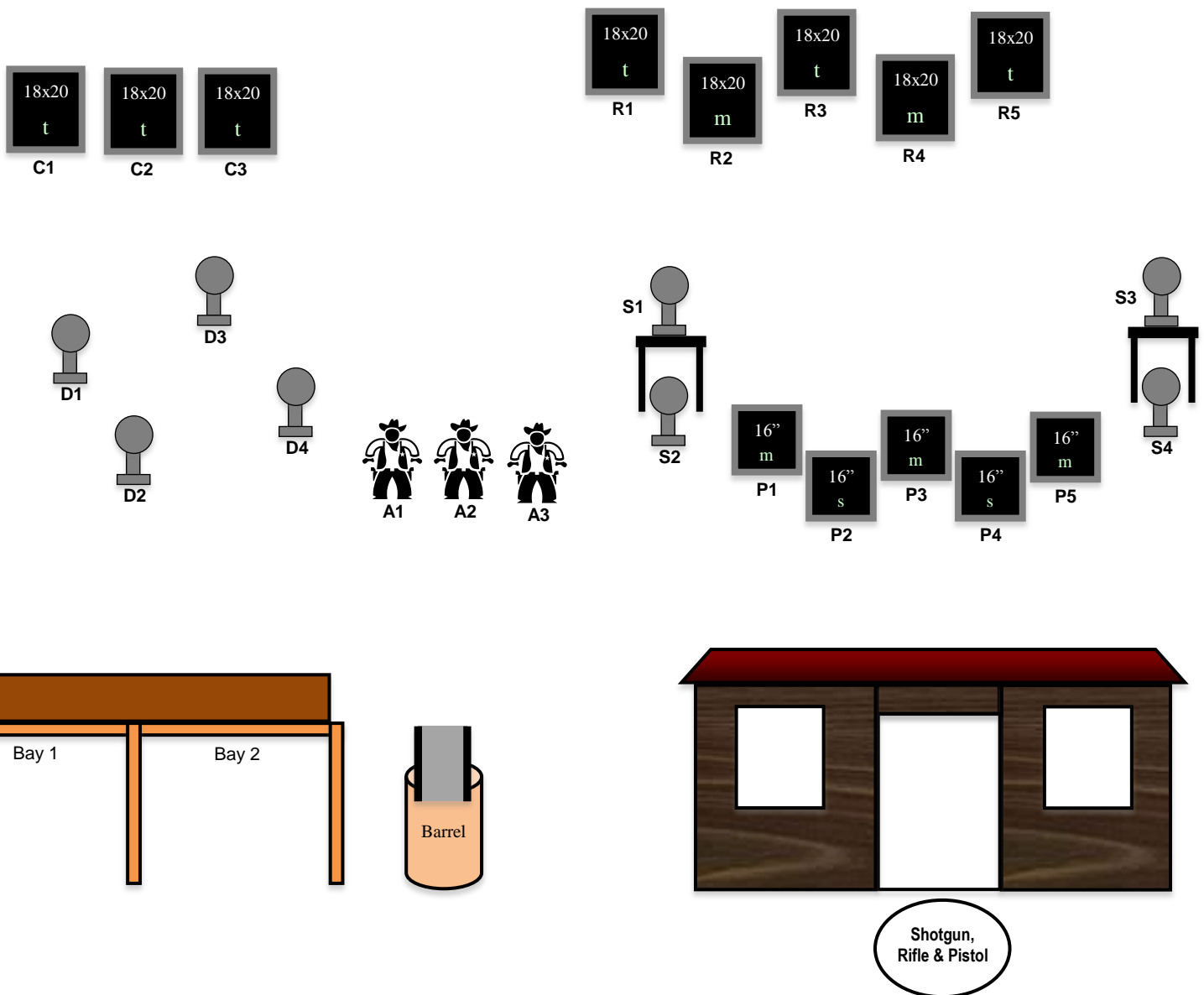
STAGE FOUR

Round Count: 10 pistol, 10 rifle, and 4+ shotgun

Shooting Order: Rifle, Pistols, Shotgun

Staging: Rifle is loaded with 10 rounds and pointed safely down range. Both pistols are loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Shotgun is staged safely.

Procedure: Shooter starts at the Door with rifle pointed safely down range and when ready says “**Winchester**”. At the beep, with rifle engage the (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5) targets in the following order: outside, outside, inside, inside, middle, middle, inside, inside, outside, outside. With pistol engage the (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5) targets using the same instructions as the rifle. Lastly, with shotgun engage the (S1, S2, S3, S4) knockdown targets in any order.



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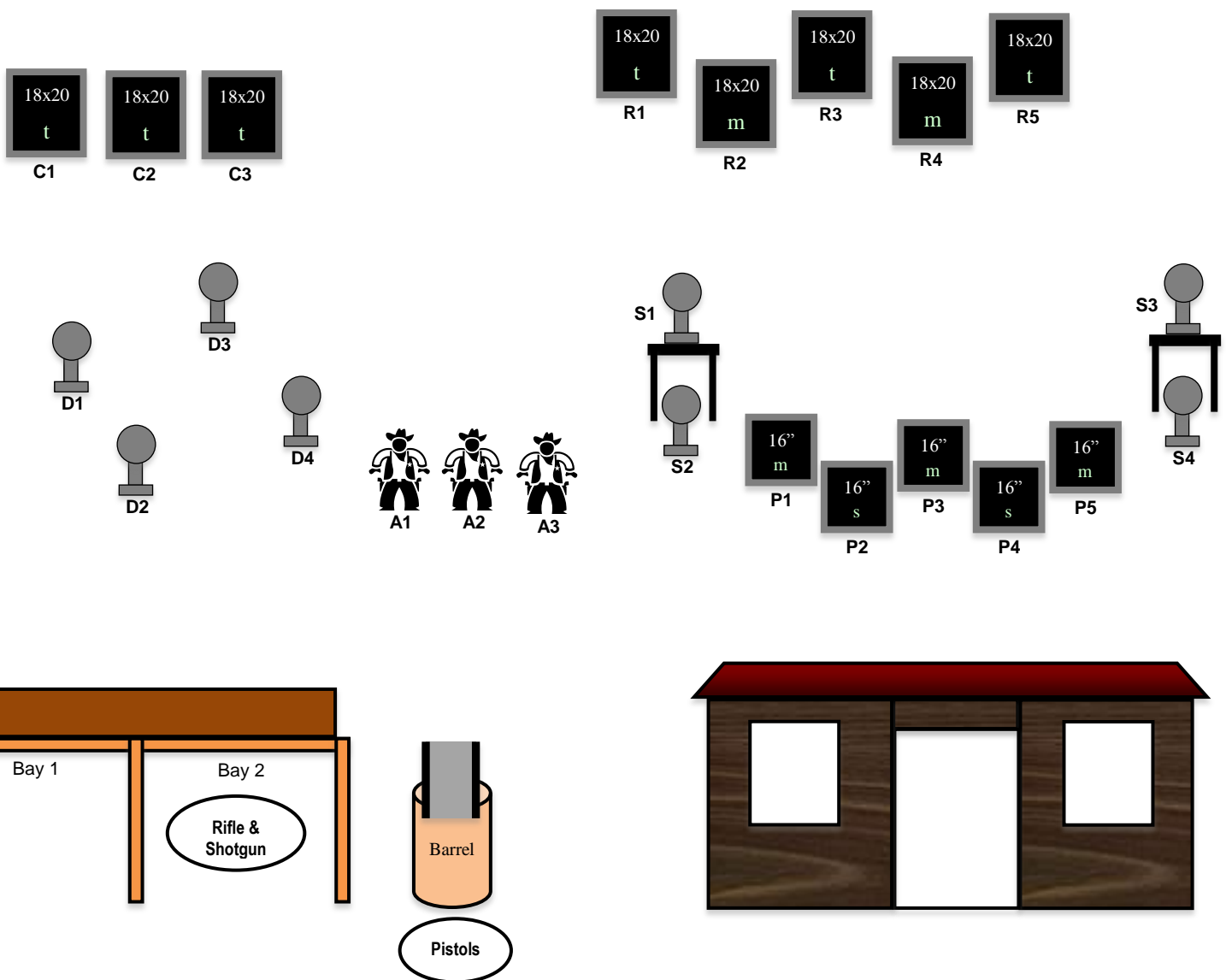
STAGE FIVE

Round Count: 10 pistol, 10 rifle, and 4+ shotgun

Shooting Order: Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun

Staging: Rifle is loaded with 10 rounds and staged safely. Both pistols are loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Shotgun is staged safely.

Procedure: Shooter starts at the Barrel with hands on pistols and when ready says “**Winchester**”. At the beep, with pistols engage the (A1, A2, A3) targets in the following order: (A1, A1, A1, A2, A2, A3, A3, A3, A2, A2). Move to Bay #2. With rifle engage the (C1, C2, C3) targets using the same instructions as the pistols. Lastly, with shotgun engage the (D1, D2, D3, D4) knockdown targets in any order.



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STAGE SIX

Round Count: 10 pistol, 10 rifle, and 4+ shotgun

Shooting Order: Shotgun, Rifle, Pistols, Shotgun

Staging: Rifle is loaded with 10 rounds and staged safely. Both pistols are loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Shotgun is held at cowboy port arms.

Procedure: Shooter has the option of starting at the left window and finishing at the right window or vice versa. Shooter starts at a window with the shotgun at port arms and when ready says “**Winchester**”. At the beep, engage the (S1, S2) or (S3, S4) knockdown targets in any order. Move to the Door. With rifle engage the (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5) targets by sweeping the five targets and then engage the (R2, R3, R4) targets in a 5 shot Nevada Sweep, for example (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R4, R3, R2, R3, R4). Next with pistols engage the (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5) targets using the same instructions as the rifle. Lastly move to the opposite window from the start and engage the (S1, S2) or (S3, S4) knockdown targets in any order.

