



ACWSA Michigan-Ohio Group Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 3 - April 2010

Buck-and-Ball!

In last month's news we announced a website created for the first shoot. If you went to that site you may have noticed that the smoothbore team match held at the Civil War Field Trip Shoot coming next month will allow the use of buck-and-ball cartridges on the pigeon board. The inspiration for this comes from the countless examples of the use of this deadly charge during the war. Perhaps the most notable example is of the famed Irish Brigade as they crossed the field at Antietam heading towards the sunken road, and leveled their muskets loaded with buck-and-ball at Posey's Mississippi brigade. The Irish fired effectively enough to dislodge the southerners and continue to press toward the road until ammunition ran low. In this case, despite being antiquated technology by the standards of the rifle-musket and minie ball, the old muskets did tremendous work.

With that in mind, as a demonstration to students, teams will be allowed to use buck-and-ball charges on the pigeon board. In the time that has passed since the last newsletter some of us have done some experimenting with buck-and-ball charges in preparation for this event, and I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of those experiences with you so that you could be guided in preparing charges for the event. For reference, an original buck and ball charge is shown below along with one loose ball and three loose buckshot.



The following excerpt is taken from the internet's "infallible" source of knowledge, Wikipedia, but it is still right on point. "Buck and ball was issued in paper cartridges that combined the projectiles with the black powder propellant charge to facilitate rapid loading of the weapon. The buckshot would set in front of the ball, so that the ball would act as a gas seal for the buckshot. Like any other paper cartridge, the rear of the cartridge would be torn open to expose the powder, which would be loaded, and the remaining paper, balls, and buckshot would be rammed down on top."

In researching this type of round I found a neat article on the internet that was useful in understanding how they were made originally. Patrick Reardon wrote an article a while back for a publication known as the "Watchdog" in which he described how to make buck-and-ball cartridges. He has posted the article about cartridges on the Lazy Jacks website at <http://www.lazyjacks.org.uk/cartridge.htm> and the specific segment of the article that relates to loading Buck-and-Ball can be found at <http://www.lazyjacks.org.uk/cartridge2.htm>

This article is focused on loading blank charges for the reenacting community and for obvious reasons suggests using toilet paper wads to fill the void instead of a real lead ball so that the external

appearance of the completed cartridge is correct but that no bullet is introduced into the reenactment. For our purposes, by replacing the toilet paper wads with lead projectiles we can make a very accurate copy of the original round.

Some people have expressed concern about finding the small buck shot. Buck shot are just round balls, so if you have a round ball mold that is around 31 caliber, such as the one I have for my 1849 Pocket-model Colt, you could just cast your own. This size round ball is also commercially available from local gun shops. The most readily available ball would be buckshot commercially made for reloading shotgun shells. Single-ought buckshot measures .32 caliber or 8.1mm and works well in .69 caliber barrels. If you have a smaller bore, such as the U.S. M1851 cadet musket, or a larger bore like one of the large varieties of imported European muskets you may need a larger size than single-ought. Use the included chart as reference.

Size	Type	Weight	Diameter
#TriBall(12 Ga.)	Buck	20.41 g (315 gr.)	15.24 mm (0.60")
#0000	Buck	5.51 g (85 gr.)	9.40 mm (0.380")
#000	Buck	4.54 g (70 gr.)	9.14 mm (0.360")
#00	Buck	3.49 g (53.8 gr.)	8.38 mm (0.330")
#0	Buck	3.18 g (49 gr.)	8.13 mm (0.320")
#1	Buck	2.62 g (40.5 gr.)	7.62 mm (0.300")
#2	Buck	1.91 g (29.4 gr.)	6.86 mm (0.270")
#3	Buck	1.52 g (23.4 gr.)	6.35 mm (0.250")
#4	Buck	1.34 g (20.7 gr.)	6.09 mm (0.240")

It should be noted that original balls used in these rounds were somewhere around .65 caliber, so those of you who use tight balls in target shooting may have difficulty loading rounds in the original manner with your regular projectile. In this case, perhaps you might get an opportunity to play around with some more modern methods of replicating the buck-and-ball charge. One modern method I have played with is petty simple and can be done without the use of paper. Using the longer red rubber tubes available for .69 caliber arms,



pour a powder charge in the tube and then seat an unlubed round ball in the tube deeper than normal, allowing room enough above the ball for the three buck shot to be inserts on top of the ball. Then using a thick lube such as Tamarack or something with a lot of bee's wax in it, fill the top of the round with melted lube so that when the lube cools the buckshot will be adhered to the round ball and encased in lube. This seems to work well if not a lot of rammer pressure is required to load. The downside is that the lube breaks up easily when fired, so the buckshot are not held together very closely as they travel down range. Without paper to act as wadding it is likely that the pattern thrown by this round will be wider and therefore less effective than rounds loaded in the original manner.

Another modern method is described in Joe Bilby's book *Civil War Firearms* on Page 32-33. In this book Bilby describes the following method: "In the modern experiment, the .69-caliber guns were loaded with .662 roundballs behind fifty grains of Goex FFFg black powder...while the .75 caliber was stoked with eighty grains of Goex FFg and a .729 round ball. The round balls were loaded without a patch and followed down the muzzle by three #O buckshot, .320 in diameter, wrapped tightly in bond paper held together by clear tape." This system seems easy to manufacture, and the author noted that the paper around the buckshot acted to take up any windage left between the three balls and the walls of the barrel. I think light aluminum foil would also work in this method instead of paper.

However you prepare the cartridge, it is important that the buckshot get loaded on top of the ball so that the larger ball pushes the buckshot out of the barrel. If the round is loaded the other way around, with the buckshot nearest the powder charge, the buckshot will not have enough energy to puncture the target. In testing a round fired this way, backwards, had a clear impact in the drywall square from buckshot, but the rounds did not make it through the board. Loaded the other way, ball first, the buck shot always broke the board. Get out and give this some testing!

Coming Events

Memorial Day Parade, Dearborn - May 31st

I am happy to announce that the ACWSA has been invited to join the annual Memorial Day parade in Dearborn, to be held Monday, May 31. We will be marching in a combined effort with the Sergeant John S. Cosby Camp 427 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) organization in Dearborn. My understanding is that the route will duplicate the route of last year's parade and is about 2 miles long, proceeding down Michigan Ave. We will park behind the police station/train station and meet behind the Henry Ford Centennial Library at 9:30 AM (parade starts at 10:00 AM) and march east to city hall, disbursing at about 11:30 AM. The Henry Ford Centennial Library is located at 16301 Michigan Avenue Dearborn, MI 48126

We have no limit of how many members can participate in the parade, and it is my hope that we can have as many people as possible, considering the cause of honoring the men and women who have died in the service of our nation. I can think of few causes higher than honoring those who "gave the last full measure of devotion." I recently read a book titled *Race and Reunion* by David Blight focused on varied reconstruction and reconciliation efforts in the United States following the Civil War. I was amazed to read how a day that many modern Americans regard highly only because it forms a three day weekend was of such significance to healing the wounds of the Civil War. In addition to *Race and Reunion*, a book I highly recommend, www.usmemorialday.org is an awareness website dedicated to Memorial Day that many of you might find interesting.

Given that Memorial Day developed as a Confederate observance as well as Union remembrance, Rebels will be accepted to march along with Union troops. Please let me know if you are interested in marching with us. Hopefully, our men are up for another effort to celebrate the efforts of the Boys of '61!

Civil War Field Trip Shoot - May 8-9 - <http://civilwarfieldtripshoot.weebly.com>

The first shoot is getting very close now, and I am very excited about it. Students who will be involved in the field trip portion also are excited. One female student told me this week how much she was looking forward to the trip, and once they started checking out the website with the details of the event, others seemed as excited. Even with that in mind we all know it will be somewhat of an experiment in attempting to incorporate more elements of our live-fire team shooting into the class field trip. The Saturday shooting events include a smoothbore-musket team, artillery match, and a long range (200 yard) rifle match for which a description is included below in this mailing. There will also be a period where students will load and fire live ammunition under your supervision, so please bring a variety of arms out, and some extra ammunition.

I want to remind you that because Saturday is going to be very Civil War focused, please wear your best available uniform and equipment. They are just now completing a research project about uniforms, so this will be of interest to them. However, don't let the uniform request get in your way of coming out and having a good time, or helping the kids out. As previously announced, Sunday will be a one-day shoot that will include musket team in the morning and carbine team in the afternoon.

Please note that both days include a FREE LUNCH provided to volunteers/shooters.

A website has been put together to provide a schedule, information about specific events, target types, and a registration form. Please use this information and the on-line registration form provided on the website to submit estimated team entries by May 1st. If you plan on having a team shoot in any of these events, please get your registrations in as soon as possible! Use the form on the website for the event at <http://civilwarfieldtripshoot.weebly.com> Remember there is no need to send a check or cash before the shoot. Registration will be handled on site, as described last month and further on below.



ACWSA Blue Water Field Trip Shoot

SHARPSHOOTERS' MATCH

Saturday May 8th, Approx. 4PM

This match will be shot at 200 yards and is open to any firearm of the American Civil War period. This match will be fired as two man teams. The match will be fired in two relays, with one man spotting while the other is shooting. Each relay will be 40 minutes long. Firing will be from any safe position. There will be two separate classes of firearms. Teams must be comprised of guns of the same class. Since your teammate is on another relay, one rifle may be shared by the two shooters.

Firearms

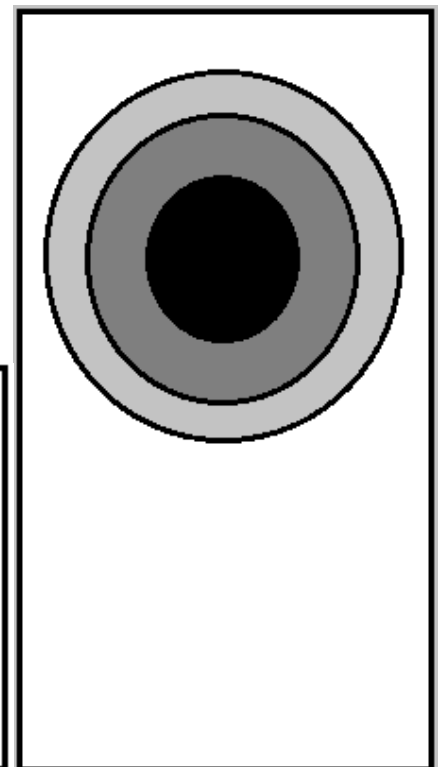
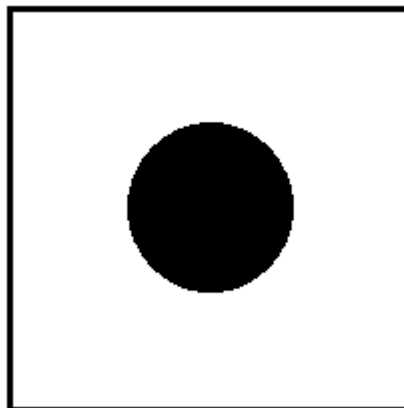
Class 1. Standard-issue arms. Rifle or rifle-muskets issued as general service weapons during the Civil War.

Class 2. Sharpshooter/ Target rifle. Includes all target rifles of the period, regardless of sights, scoped and otherwise. Also includes Volunteer Rifles, Whitworth's, Kerr's, special mounted Sharps, etc.

Targets (Drawn almost to 1": 1' scale)

Standard-issue arms (Class 1) will shoot at a target that will be 2" x 4". A center of 8" diameter, located slightly above center, will be worth five (5) points. Around which will be a 14" ring worth four (4) points and a 20" ring worth three (3) points. Anywhere else will be 1 point. Five shots will be shot for score by each team member. Each team member will also shoot at five tiles which will count as five points each. Sample bull shown at far right.

Sharpshooter/ target rifles (Class 2) will fire at a 2" square target with an 8" diameter circle in the center as shown at near-right. Five shots for score which is determined by measured length of string. Five tiles worth 5" of string each (25 inches total) will also be fired with 5" being deducted from the string measurement for each tile that is hit. Any safe position or rest will be allowed.



Recap of Registration at ACWSA Shoots

The following information is most useful to Team Commanders and Adjutants, but I have repeated a bit here from last month, and edited to make it clearer, to make sure everyone has an understanding as to what is expected. Registration for ACWSA works a bit differently than some of you may be used to. Rather than pre-registering teams and paying for those teams ahead of time, all funds are collected at the range on the day of the shoot. This is the reason the registration form for the Field Trip Shoot says "do not send funds". Filling out the form is a courtesy to the host team and serves as a tool to help plan on the amount of supplies needed for the shoot. Again, the pre-registration process does not require a financial commitment up front.

In addition to this change, teams pay for each shooter they have entered in an event rather than each unit paying for the teams they have participating. The per member, per event fee will be provided on each event invite. For instance, if the 146th New York has 7 people who are intending to shoot musket team, the 146th New York will pay the \$6.00 per shooter at registration. Because musket teams are only 6 person teams, and the 146th New York had 7 people wishing to shoot musket, they have one extra shooter. Regardless of the overall, all shooters have paid, and all will be able to shoot.

Meanwhile, let's say the 7th Wisconsin only has 5 people who want to shoot musket. They would pay the \$6.00 per shooter but would be one person short of having a full team. They could pick up the extra shooter from the 146th New York, if both parties agree. Since the pick-up shooter has already paid, the 7th Wisconsin does not have to bear the burden of paying for their pick-up. A very important difference to note is that this is a per shooter fee, not per team. If you cannot field a full team, you do not pay for the empty slots. Everybody plays, everybody pays.

Teams are free to find their own pick-ups, and can pre-arrange that if they choose, just make it known at registration that you are picking up X amount of shooters from whatever team it is. We will have a roster available on hand at the shoot which will list all current members for 2010. At registration the current roster will be on hand, and each team will be accountable for the entry fees of each shooter on their team. This will also serve to verify membership for all members who are competing, in the absence of visibly worn membership cards. It will also give an actual number of people who participate in each shoot.

When you show up, your Team Commander will register the shooters your team is entering and provide the appropriate payment for those individuals. A check or cash will be acceptable for the entry fees. How your team decides to collect those fees from team members is entirely up to you. For example, at this point in the 146th New York, since we are brand new and do not have an established bank account of treasury, the Team Commander will just collect cash from shooters as they arrive at the shoot. For a team like the 1st South Carolina who is a long standing organization it may be easier for the team to write a check and team mates square up formal team meetings. For each team this may be handled differently.

We have no preference as to whether the team commander or the adjutant signs their team in at registration, but it should be done by them or their designee. In other words, we don't want to be signing up individual shooters as they arrive unless they are the only one from their team at the event. That being said, if your team needs to later add someone that shows up unexpectedly, that won't be a problem. The system is fair, and functional, even if it takes some getting used to.

Hosting Duties

It must be clear by now that the expectations of hosting shoots will be different. The concept is much closer to the "Volunteer Shoot" idea than it is to all the responsibility being on the "hosting team." Simply put, ALL TEAMS will be expected to assist in basic shoot operations. There are a few reasons why this is needed. First, everyone shoots at the ACWSA events including the host team, if they choose.

This can only work if everyone is lending a hand. Additionally, a portion of each shoot's profits will go toward the ACWSA Michigan/Ohio general account to be used for purchasing necessary items and keeping overall shooting expenses down for everyone. As such, everyone who attends is indirectly financially benefiting from the event in the form of reinvestment of profits by the organization. Finally, we want to encourage teams, regardless of size or age, to volunteer to put on, organize, or sponsor a shoot. Teams without significant resources will be overwhelmed if the entire responsibility falls on them alone. To give an example of the active participation expected by all, each team will be provided with a listing of their targeting for the day. The targeting will be made available by the host team at a specified location. Your team will take your targeting list to the targeting supply depot and gather the necessary amount of pre-drilled targeting. Due to the weight, we will drop off the metal targets at the target frames for you, if the schedule calls for metal targets. Of course, everyone is expected to also participate in cleanup and assist with setting up your team's target frames, providing safeties for individuals, etc.

Women's Team(s)

Another cool aspect of ACWSA is that women are free to form their own teams and are allowed to fire at shorter distances than the men if they choose. For the female shooters this is the paramount of inclusiveness in that it allows the option of either shooting in uniform or in period women's attire, and either with and against men or with and against themselves. In some regards it may be more welcoming to female participants who may otherwise not be interested in shooting. That in mind, there has been some discussion going on between several female members about how this will work, and if there is sufficient interest in forming female teams. If you would like to be involved in these discussions, and/or have interest in forming a female team, please contact Dianne Gibson (dianne@firstsouthcarolina.com) who has agreed to coordinate the efforts at this early stage. My understanding is Dianne and a few others have done some research into several historical examples of female companies or military organizations as an added element of their interest.



While the targets have been ordered we are still awaiting their arrival, so I cannot report that they are ready to go for the first shoot at this point. We have ordered around 900 targets and they will still have to be drilled for 1/4 inch holes once they are received from the supplier, and be painted. Our plan remains to get together at Brian Haack's and set up a series of drill presses to accomplish this, but the date is still to be determined. I still feel confident that they will be completed in time for the shoot in May.

Metal Targeting

One element that we have made progress on is the fixture to bend the hardened wires used to hang the targets. Brian Haack has designed and constructed a device that makes making the wires very efficient, and we have already bent the 300 wires or so needed for the first shoot. He made two sets of presses, one set for Michigan/Ohio and one for Wisconsin/Illinois. I have made an instructional video on how the device works, along with some information regarding why it is needed and have posted it on Youtube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-o1PKiAXKk> and in the [Facebook Group](#). Brian did a great job on building the machines. Thank you, Brian.

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Featured Uniform Sources

As discussed last month, I am going to use a portion of the monthly news to highlight a supplier of uniforms and/or accouterments so that ACWSA members may get exposure to what is available in the rather large Civil War market. Our sole hope here is that over time the overall appearance or impression given by ACWSA members will be closer to that of the soldiers we represent in our matches.

This month I would like to introduce you to Wambaugh, White, and Company, based out of the Charlotte, Michigan. They can be found at <http://www.wwandcompany.com>. W, W, & Co. is run by Dan Wambaugh and Brian White, both of whom figure high in the authentic or hard corps reenacting community here in the Midwest. W, W, & Company has a growing reputation for fantastic customer service, and quality products. Dan apparently runs most of the business, and is first rate in dealing with his customers, and from my experience, also with his suppliers. For most of us there is the added benefit of spending our money within the borders of our own state.



W, W, & Company offers a variety of products that will be of interest to either Union or Confederate enthusiasts, as you will see when viewing the website. One item for the Union soldier that would be of interest to many in the ACWSA is the contractor four button blouse offered by W, W, & Co. From the description on the website: "Copied from an unmarked original in the Don Troiani collection, our blouse is appropriate for any Federal infantry impression from any theater or time during the war. We



place a sizing stamp into the sleeve linings of our blouses, but otherwise leave them unmarked. The blouse is mostly machine sewn, with all exposed machine work done with our original 19th century treadle machine (yes it DOES make a difference,) and with hand sewing where appropriate."

One product they offer that should be of interest to the Confederates among our ranks is the four button jacket, described on the website as follows: "The mysterious four button jacket that has been found in dozens of images and existing examples can be found across the nation, yet no one has identified which depot, if any, they came from! Our reproduction is based on an original in the Ross County Ohio Historical Society collection. The jeancloth in our reproduction was custom woven for us by Family Heirloom Weavers and comes very close to replicating the original material. Our reproduction jean is of a slightly higher quality than the original cloth chiefly because it is impossible to find a weaver willing to do as shoddy of a job as the original weaver did!"

Another really cool element about Wambaugh, White, & Company is that they offer a wide variety of kits so that someone who was interested may put together a very high quality uniform item for a relatively small amount of money, in many cases much less money than the price for a bad reproduction. A little sweat equity, and a few needle pricks, goes a long way. Wambaugh also is a fabulous source for fabric yard goods made by Family Heirloom Weavers for use in making a wide variety of Union and Confederate uniform items.

I know from firsthand experience, you will not be disappointed!

ACWSA Rank System

Some of you may not have noticed but another uniform related element of ACWSA that I find really cool is the "functional rank" system provided for in the By-Laws. Section 3 reads as follows: "The National Commander will hold the rank of Sergeant-Major. All other elected National Board Members to hold the rank of Quartermaster Sergeant. Regional Commanders will hold the rank of Ordnance Sergeant. All other elected Regional officers to hold the rank of First Sergeant. All Company Commanders will hold the rank of Sergeant, and all Company Adjutants to hold the rank of Corporal. All other members to hold the rank of Private." Next month I will include an article on proper chevrons, and where to get them! There are some significant differences between Union and Confederate chevrons, and some really outrageous early war or homespun examples that can be seen in photographs. Also, just as shown in the image from www.cjdaley.com above, there are some high quality reductions available. More to come!



T-Shirts

Our hope is to distribute the shirts as soon as they are ready and to have them ready at the first shoot. We did order some extra shirts that will be sold after delivery with proceeds going to the ACWSA at the same fund raiser rate which will be available after the pre-orders have been distributed. If you missed out on ordering a shirt this time around, we may be able to put future orders in.

Team Webpages

Gary Van Kauwenbergh has put a page on the www.ACWSA.org site for every team that has joined the Association. They can be seen at <http://www.acwsa.org/Team%20Pages/Teams.htm> . As you can tell, many of those sites are currently empty, but some have had information added recently. We would like to populate some of the empty sites with new information, pictures, and recruiting contacts for each team. If you have something that is ready to go on the site now, please send it along to Gary at garyvank@aol.com

Facebook Group

As you have gathered by reading this newsletter, most of the information contained here has been posted in one form or another on the Facebook discussion group for ACWSA Michigan/Ohio. If you have a Facebook account, log on and search for "American Civil War Shooting Association" and you will find it, or follow this link - <http://www.facebook.com/#/group.php?gid=123117631965> . The Facebook group has been a great communication tool and will continue to be a main mode of communication and discussions among members, so if you're not on Facebook, join up!

See you in three weeks!



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ACWSA Michigan Calendar Dates			
2010			
Date	Location	Hosts	Notes
May 8-9	Blue Water Port Huron, MI	146 th New York	LSHS Field Trip/ 1-Day ACWSA
May 31	Dearborn	Chris Hubbard	Memorial Day Parade
June 12-13	Richmond	8 th Arkansas	
July 24-25	Blue Water Port Huron, MI		Includes Artillery
July 31-August 1	Grayling	Loomis'' Battery	Long Range Artillery
August 14-15	Richmond	1 st South Carolina	
September 24-26	Grayling	7 th Wisconsin / Loomis'' Battery	Includes Artillery
October 9-10	Richmond		
October 23-24	Blue Water Port Huron, MI	146 th New York	LSHS Field Trip/ 1-Day ACWSA

ACWSA Wisconsin/Illinois Calendar Dates			
2010			
Date	Location	Hosts	Notes
June 5-6	Appleton, WI	66 NC & 2 WI	
July 17-18	Bristol WI	56VA	
August 7-8	Boscobel WI	15 WI & 8 WI	Civil War Days
September 4-5	Rhineland WI		
September 11-12	Bristol WI		ACWSA/N-SSA