**WHAT IS HUNTER FIELD TARGET (HFT)**

March 28, 2011 | Author Brian Samson

August 62019 | Edited by Steve O’Mara

Hunter field target (HFT) is a target shooting sport derived from the air gun disciplines of field target shooting and hunting. Primarily an outdoor sport, shot with UK legal air rifles (rated at a maximum of 12 ft·lbf), a typical HFT course is made up of 30 lanes, with each lane comprising of a peg and a metal “knock down” target placed in a position to simulate a hunting scenario. The peg marks the shooting spot and the shooter must touch the peg with part of his or her body or gun for the shot to count.

The targets are made from metal and mainly based on typical UK-based quarry such as rabbit, rat, crow, magpie and grey squirrel. Each target has a generally circular “kill zone” that varies in size, (typically 15-40 mm in diameter), and are set out at varying ranges (typically 8-45 yards/7.3-41.1 m). A direct hit to the “kill zone” triggers a mechanism that makes the target fall back flat, simulating a “kill”. Successfully “killing” a target rewards you with two points and the target is reset by pulling the “reset cord”. “Plating” a target (hitting the target anywhere but the “kill zone”) rewards you with one point. Missing the target altogether results in a zero.

The main skill in HFT is the ability to range the target as accurately as possible. Ranging is either done using the traditional method of “visualising” the number of yards separating you from the target or, more scientifically by using a telescopic sight fitted with a reticle designed to aid ranging – the popular “mil-dot” reticle for example. There is no dialing in for range finding, this is the domain of the normal Field Target discipline.

When shooting, contestants may adopt one of three stances: prone (laying down), kneeling, and standing. Sometimes contestants will be forced to adopt a certain stance, for instance a lane that has “STANDING ONLY” sign must be shot in the standing position. If the shooter fails to follow this rule, the score for the target will be marked as a zero, even if it was “killed”

**Equipment**

A typical HFT rifle set-up consists of an air rifle fitted with a telescopic sight. The rifle can vary from the very basic break-barrel spring-powered rifle to the most advanced electronic recoil-less pre-charged pneumatic (PCP) rifle. The most popular calibre for HFT is .177 because of its flat trajectory and telescopic sights capable of x10 magnification are favoured.

HFT does not discriminate to what rifle or scope is used, A rifle could be a Chinese spring or pneumatic rifle with Chinese optics or the very latest Field Target rifle with the most expensive scope.

Participants of HFT are separated by class, and it is primarily the equipment used that will affect the class shooters shoot in.

**HFT Classes**

Open - Any shooter. Primarily contains shooters using pre-charged pneumatic or semi recoiling rifles in .177 or .20 calibre

Ladies – ladies using pre-charged pneumatic or semi recoiling rifles in .177 or .20 calibre

Junior - Shooters aged between 9 and 16 (2 classes - 9 to 13 & 14 to 16)

Recoiling - Spring-powered or gas-ram air rifles (any calibre)

22 - Any rifle in .22 or .25 calibre

**Competition**

The competition side of HFT has a controlling body in the form of the United Kingdom Association for Hunter Field Target] (UKAHFT). The UKAHFT series that has run every year since 2003 currently consists of nine rounds held at different venues around the United Kingdom. Each round attracts shooters from all over the United Kingdom, with varying abilities and equipment.

When a club hosts a UKAHFT round, it must adhere to various strict rules controlling the format of the course. The main rules for a UKAHFT round are:

Target “kill zones” must be 15 mm to 45 mm in diameter.

Targets must not be placed closer than 8 yards (7 m) or further than 45 yards.

15 mm targets must be set at a range of between 13 and 25 yards.

20 mm targets must be set at a range of between 8 and 30 yards.

25 mm targets must be set at a range of between 8 and 40 yards.

Full details of the rules and format generally used by the UKAHFT and associated clubs can be found on the UKAHFT website at <https://www.sites.google.com/site/ukahft/>