EXTERNAL STANDING POSITION: FOOT POSITION

OUR FEET GIVE US A GRIP ON THE GROUND, AND THEY ALSO BALANCE OUR STANDING POSITION. OUR STANCE IS DETERMINED BY THE POSITION OF OUR FEET AND CAN BE CHANGED IF NECESSARY. CHANGES OF OUR FOOT POSITION ALSO INFLUENCE THE ALIGNMENT OF OUR FIRING POSITION.

• FEELING AND CORRECTING

Even within the five to ten second period of aiming and releasing a shot, the feet are intensively occupied. With a load of one to two centners of weight on their bones, the pressure sensors on the soles of the feet register incessant shifts of pressure. With this information, our brain calculates changes of position which can be externally observed as fluctuations. As soon as the firing position is offset in one direction, the muscles within the foot and the legs react with counter-movements. The more accurate this feedback control system functions, the steadier the rifle is held on the mark.

The more often and more consciously this balancing mechanism is trained, the smoother it functions. The task of the feet is enhanced by a favorable position and pleasant working conditions.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FIRING POSITION

The recommendations, that have already been defined for the leg position, also apply to the external firing position:

- Small and light persons should choose a relatively wide interval to reach the target height more easily when their hip is pushed forward.
- Medium and heavy weight shooters have more freedom in the choice of their interval and therefore largely decide on narrower distances.

Decisive is the symmetry of the position. The interval and the rotation of the feet should emanate from the exact same basic position every time you shoot. This zero position is then minimally varied to conform to the conditions of the shooting range and to guide the gun into the center.

• CORRECTING THE ZERO POINT WITH ONE’S FEET

With a properly adjusted external firing position and a more proper distribution of statics, balance and tension, your rifle is held steady at a given point. This holding range usually does not lie in the center of the target right off the bat. To bring the holding point in direct alignment with the mark, it has proven worthwhile to use the foot position for corrections.

- To make rough adjustments when you start shooting, that is during trial shooting
- To make fine corrections during the series with minimal deviations.

The adjacent picture shows a recommended basic position that can be used by shooters with average proportions. What happens at target level, when the feet are shifted, is indicated by the shaded silhouettes and matching arrows on the targets. Whoever turns his left foot inward (light green foot silhouette) heightens his position on the target. Shifts in the reversed direction have the opposite effect. We recommend that you test all possible corrections on the range, until you know them "by heart". Learn to shift your feet to guide your muzzle onto the mark.

• SHOES AND MOVEMENT

Your feet work better when you place them in adequately large shoes (1 cm of space beyond the toes!) The heel of the shoe should be as flat as possible since it comes closest to the natural balance. Fresh socks of natural fibers and moderately tightened shoelaces provide for a dry climate. Move your legs and feet during the series to keep the musculature supple. This practice also prevents pain caused by pressure.

Whoever’s feet become tender after only a short period of standing should try foot gymnastics and, if need be, consult an orthopedic doctor: Well fitted arch-supports are as good for the flatfooted as glasses are for the nearsighted.

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