

# Tomahawk Throwing

## Standard Operating Procedures

## **Tomahawk Range Standard Operating Procedures.**

### **Authorized Programs**

Tomahawk throwing is approved for the following programs

- Scouts BSA.
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- Venturers.
- Sea Scouts.
- Adult Leaders.

### **Range Procedures**

There is not currently a permanent tomahawk range established at DWC properties. This shooting sports activity is typically conducted on a temporary range established for the activity. However a range is established, it is incumbent upon the Rangemaster to maintain a safe shooting range. Tomahawk targets are typically located at distances from 10-25 feet from the firing line.

- A tomahawk range may only be opened by a certified BSA Rangemaster.
- The certified Rangemaster must also hold current DWC Shooting Range Privileges.
- A list of currently certified Rangemasters holding valid DWC Shooting Range Privileges is maintained by the DWC Shooting Sports Committee.
- Tomahawk throwing for Scouts BSA, , Venturers, and Sea Scouts may be done during resident camps, District or Council Shooting Sports events, or during unit events.
- A red range flag is to be displayed whenever there is potential activity on a range.
- Only individuals authorized by the Rangemaster may access the range when the red range flag is not displayed at full staff.
- There is no smoking allowed anywhere on the range area.
- When the range is open, general access to the gallery/waiting area may be granted at the discretion of the Rangemaster.
- Permission to enter the throwing station area may only be granted on an individual basis by the Rangemaster.
- The Rangemaster must conduct a Range Briefing for each group of throwers prior to the throwing session.
- No unnecessary running or talking is allowed on the range.
- No horseplay is allowed on the range.
- No one may touch the tomahawk without receiving permission from the Rangemaster.
- Always keep the blades pointed in a safe direction (e.g., downrange).
- Retrieve tomahawks only when given permission by Rangemaster
  - Walk at all times
  - Place one hand on target and with the other hand, firmly grasp the handle of the tomahawk.
  - First push down on the handle, and then pull up on the handle to release the tomahawk from the target.
  - Remove the highest tomahawk first and drop it to the ground.
  - Once both tomahawks have been removed, pick them up, and grasp the head of each tomahawk in the palm of a hand with the blades facing away from the body.
  - Return the tomahawks to the throwing line and place them down with the blades facing in a safe direction (e.g., downrange).



- Anyone may call a Cease Fire if they believe there is an unsafe condition on the range.
- Only the Rangemaster may issue a Commence Fire command.
- Personally owned or hand-made tomahawks may only be allowed on a DWC Range if it has been evaluated and approved by the Rangemaster.
- The Rangemaster may remove anyone from the range for any reason.

### **Range Setup**

- A tomahawk range must have adequate space and provide participants a clear line of sight.
- Each range must have a clearly marked perimeter with signage that alerts bystanders of potential shooting sports danger.
- The tomahawk range must have sufficient buffers all around, with 15 to 25 feet on each side and 25 to 50 feet at the rear of the range.
- Access to the range should be restricted with a clearly marked gate.
- The range should have a staging area where safety information and instructions can be shared.
- Firing and safety lines should be clearly marked and a minimum of 5 feet from each other.
- Safety stands or a stack of target rounds on the firing line can help designate safety observation areas.
- Each lane should be 5 feet wide to accommodate sufficient throwing space.
- The distance from the target face to the firing line is generally 15 feet, but it can be reduced to 10 feet for younger Scouts.

### **Range Inspection Prior to Throwing Activity**

Prior to each throwing activity and after each break or change in Rangemasters, the Rangemaster on duty shall conduct a range inspection:

- Review the general condition of range. Remove any litter, or lost-and-found items.
- Consider environmental conditions forecast for the time of the activity:
- Is shade from Sun or precipitation needed?
- Is a supply of ice water needed?
- “Environmental conditions” as used in this SOP include all impacts due to weather including temperature, humidity, wind, precipitation, etc. as well as the estimated number of throwers, parents, and others attending the event, other programs or distractions taking place near the tomahawk range, the time of day, and the overall level of energy or participation at the event.
- Will the environmental conditions demand a reassessment of the throwing stations or program planned for the event?
- How will the environmental conditions impact traffic flow through the gallery and range?
- How will the environmental conditions or estimated attendance at the shooting sports event impact crowding in the gallery, and hence, your ability to deliver an effective range briefing?
- How will the environmental conditions impact your effectiveness as Rangemaster?
- How will the environmental conditions impact the duration of each throwing cycle?
- Walk the impact area making sure that the backstop is functional and the impact area is clear

- Check that all safety lines surrounding the range are intact and that the appropriate signage is present.
- Confirm that the range area is clear of personnel.
- Check that there is an adequate supply of tomahawks, and targets available for the planned activity.
- Confirm that the communication system working (phone, radio, etc.).
- Check that the first aid kit for the range is accessible.

### **Required Equipment**

The following equipment list should be considered to be required whenever a tomahawk range is in operation.

- Targets and target stands (4).
- Tomahawks different styles/sizes/handle lengths if possible.
- First aid kit.
- Trash can with liner.
- Range flag.
- Supply of drinking water for Scouts, Assistants and Rangemaster
- Two-way radio/phone
- Emergency plan

### **Emergency Plan**

The Rangemaster in charge of the range must take immediate charge in the event of any injury or emergency. The Rangemaster must follow the Emergency Procedures for DWC Shooting Ranges found in [Appendix A](#).

### **Range Opening Procedures:**

- Inspect tomahawks, including spares.
- Inspect targets and target stands.
- Set out tomahawks, three per firing station.
- Set out first aid kit on table
- Confirm operation of radio or phone
- Set out radio or phone on table
- Raise range flag – Range is OPEN.

### **Range Closing Procedures:**

- Have all throwers, parents, and observers exit the range.
- Lower range flag – Range is CLOSED
- Inspect tomahawks
- Flag any broken handles or tomahawks for repair/replacement
- Store all tomahawks in storage cabinets
- Secure range flag, and first aid kit in storage cabinet
- Return radio or phone as appropriate
- Lock storage cabinet on range



### **Throwing Cycle:**

Determine an appropriate throwing cycle for the event planned. A typical throwing cycle calls for each thrower to throw 3 tomahawks at a single target, one at a time.

### **Range Briefing**

The Rangemaster shall administer a safety briefing to all shooters before they enter the firing area. The Range Briefing should cover the following:

- Welcome to the Range. This should be a friendly and sincere welcome – if it wasn't for the Scouts, you wouldn't be there.
- Introductions of Rangemaster and any Range Assistants. Introduce yourself to your shooters and parents. We prefer that Rangemasters use the convention "Ms./Mrs./Mr. Your-Last-Name" when functioning as a Rangemaster on the range. In other areas of Scouting your Scouts may only know you as "Your-First-Name" or "Ms./Mrs./Mr. You- First-Name", but on the range, we really prefer the extra bit of formality. Be sure to offer your Scouts the same degree of respect. Also make everyone aware that this is "your" range and that as the Rangemaster, YOU are responsible for the safe operation of the range. It isn't about an ego trip, but you do need to convey to everyone that the shooting ranges are a special place where special rules apply.
- Review how to safely throw a tomahawk.
- "Permission to Enter". This range command involves the thrower asking the Rangemaster for permission to enter the range ("Permission to enter?"). If the range is safe and ready for use (and the Rangemaster is ready to allow Scouts to enter), then the Rangemaster replies "Permission granted". This process is used throughout Scouting on almost every shooting range. It is especially important to use this command for each Scout seeking entrance to a tomahawk range. Rangemasters are strongly encouraged to ask adult coaches to follow the same process to seek permission to enter the range (this sets the example for Scouts).
- Range Operation. This provides the opportunity to explain how Scouts should enter the range and approach a throwing station (e.g., "WALK to the last available throwing position and WAIT for further instructions – do not touch a tomahawk until given permission to do so").
- Range Commands (include Cease Fire). Review the range commands that you will be using to control the activity. Remember to keep the range commands age appropriate. One command that MUST be reviewed is the "Cease Fire" command. Emphasize to all shooters that if this command is issued they must IMMEDIATELY

stop throwing and place their tomahawk down. Explain that anyone can call a "Cease Fire" if they observe an unsafe condition. Note that only the Rangemaster can call a "Commence Fire" (or "resume fire").

### **Throwing Procedure**

- Keep elbows and wrists locked.
- Draw tomahawk back over top of head.
- Bring tomahawk forward until initial aiming point is reached.
- Release the tomahawk.
- The key to sticking a tomahawk is consistency.