



# PISTOL NEWS



## Announcing a change to ISSF awards and events

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has recently made quite significant changes to the program at the Olympics with effect from the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, in particular their decision to remove the 50-Metre Free Pistol event, and the 50-Metre Prone .22 smallbore rifle event from the program has been rather controversial, to say the least, but it's now final.

What makes this decision even more significant is that the Free Pistol event, which was introduced in 1896, was the longest standing event in the shooting program, so it's removal is quite a major change for our sport!

The IOC have replaced these two foundation shooting events with two "gender-friendly" events, which the IOC feels will be more spectator friendly, a major consideration for the IOC, since TV-coverage is the largest single source of income for this organisation today.

This newsletter serves to identify how the SAPF plans to react to the removal of the Free Pistol event in the future, with effect from January, 2019 onwards.

The event that will replace the 50-Metre Free Pistol event in the ISSF program will be a new gender-focussed event in which a male and a female two-person team will compete against other two-person teams from all other competing countries **in the 10-Meter Air Pistol event.**

This means that countries must immediately begin developing highly competent male and female shooters who can represent their countries in the Air Pistol event rather than in the Free Pistol event, which has been confined to the history books forever.

For South Africa, the loss of the Free Pistol event has even more significance, since we have traditionally been quite strong supporters of the Free Pistol event, and over the years, we have produced several shooters who have represented our country really well in this high performance event.

The Free Pistol event is thus reaching the same status as has the Centrefire event – it is shot by ISSF countries at country level, but no more at International level.

One of the driving forces behind this decision to remove Free Pistol parallels the decision to remove Centrefire shooting – neither event was a gender friendly event, meaning it was too hard for many female competitors, but Free Pistol was also not really a TV-friendly event, in spite of the introduction of the Finals in all ISSF events in recent years.

So the ISSF Olympic shooting body has decided that their new two-person Team events are more spectator friendly, and they think that the air pistol



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event would generate higher interest and create better international TV-coverage because of the Male-Female interaction.

So this means that we in SAPF need to change our ISSF shooting to train our future Olympic representatives to be able to perform on the Olympic, and probably also the Commonwealth stages successfully.

This means that we need to refocus our ISSF shooting around three disciplines, i.e. Air Pistol Shooting, Sport Pistol shooting, and Rapid Fire Pistol Shooting, since these will be the only events that will be offered at the Olympic and the Commonwealth Games in the future.

The SAPF does not wish to dis-continue the Free Pistol event, and feels that we have a loyal following for this event, but it makes no sense to ask shooters to spend hard-earned monies practicing for events that cannot gain their international honours any longer.

Reality dictates that we should focus on the Sport Pistol, Rapid Fire Pistol and the Air Pistol events specifically in the future, and that we should teach, train and develop expertise in these disciplines specifically.

If we reduce the involvement in ISSF events from the present seven events to just these three disciplines, we effectively reduce the cost of shooting immediately, and we think the cost of shooting is one of the major reasons for the continuing reduction in the number of shooters, and more especially, the lack of new shooters to our sport.





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The thought process is therefore to make the following changes to the shooting calendar in 2019:

- a. Reduce the number of ISSF events at Provincial and National level in 2018;
- b. Re-structure the awards for ISSF to mimic the ISSF's decisions;
- c. Introduce the Shooting of Finals at Provincial and National level from 2019 onwards; and
- d. Give the Provinces the option to include or eliminate the Free Pistol and the Centrefire events from their programs, as they see fit.
- e. Include the Military Rapid Fire event in all Championships, since it leads shooters towards the Olympic Rapid Fire event.

The nett effect of this change to the ISSF shooting program is to bring direct and specific focus to the OLYMPIC disciplines, but to also reduce the number of days required to complete a Provincial and a National Championships in the future.

The SAPF Exco recognises that it is becoming more and more difficult for competitors to take off a full week from work to be able to attend a National Championships, in fact it is even becoming difficult for shooters to get one or two days leave from work to attend a Provincial Championships.

Necessity dictates that a change be made, and the IOC's decision implies that worldwide, changes to the ISSF programs will become necessary.

So the SAPF EXPO would like to propose the following changes to the 2018 ISSF Nationals that are planned for September, 2018:

1. The Nationals will be shot over four (4) days, being Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, instead of during a working week;
2. The new dates proposed for the 2018 National Championships are:  
**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September to Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.**  
(Previously planned for Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.)
3. Sunday shooting is voluntary, and thus the events planned for Sunday are those events that "are not officially" part of ISSF shooting any longer, but which the SAPF would prefer to continue offering to it's members.

4. The new ISSF Nationals program is revised as follows:

- a. Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2018:
  - i. Sport Pistol;
  - ii. Standard Pistol; and
  - iii. Air Pistol.
  - iv. 4:00pm: **Finals:** Sport Pistol.
- b. Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2018:
  - i. Air Pistol;
  - ii. Rapid Fire Pistol;
  - iii. 50 Yards Deliberate.
  - iv. Military Rapid Fire;
  - v. 4:30pm: **Finals:** Air Pistol.
- c. Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2018:
  - i. Free Pistol;
  - ii. Centre Fire Pistol;
  - iii. Rapid Fire Pistol.
- d. Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2018:
  - i. 9:00am: **Finals:** Air Pistol Team;
  - ii. 10:00am: **Finals:** Rapid Fire Pistol;
  - iii. 12 noon: Presidents Cup.
  - iv. 14:00pm: Mayleigh Cup.
  - v. 16:00pm: Prize-giving.

5. Entries to the ISSF Nationals may have to be limited to the top 40 shooters per event, based on National log position as of July, 2018, but that will be decided closer to the Nationals, based on entries received;
6. In the IOC's current format, medals are presented immediately following the Finals event, which eliminates the need for a prize-giving. The EXCO may yet do away with this function, or have a short function simply to announce SA Colours awards and/or any other awards the EXCO deems fit to make.

Please discuss the recommendations suggested here with your club and provincial management structures and then compose a response to reach the SAPF EXCO by end of July, 2018.

**Best wishes in Shooting.**  
Shaun Kennedy, Vice – President

