

THE TIME FACTOR

Compared to shooting 600 yards, everything takes longer at 1000. 1000 yard shooting is not an extension of 600 yard shooting. It requires a different style. We can automatically add time to every shot at 1000 with respect to getting factual feedback (shot location and value). Couple that with condition changes that may be occurring during this lag, and couple that with the greater influence of any given condition on the bullet, and then add the extra time the shooter needs to work toward his shot, and we have increased exposure to condition changes and decreased the value of the factual information. Shooting from the 1000 yard line has essentially clouded the usual sequence of events.

tion exercise and staying in a timely tempo, whereas 1000 yards the tempo that we were trying to run at 600 is at least twice as long based on the fact of the shot travelling a longer distance and the target operation. Of course, they also give us a little more time because of all these things.

One reason I am comparing 1000 yard shooting to 600 yard shooting is because I think that fits along the lines of how most shooters new to long range will want to digest it. Until they get to the 1000 yard line they may have been harboring the idea that 600 yards is “long range.” Well, after some experience, the 600 will look entirely different to them. That’s not to say 1000 yard shooting is that difficult, but is to insinuate there will be a learning curve that, while not out of proportion to what a shooter went through to attain competency, or at least comfort, at 600, will be steep to start with. Shooting 10s and Xs at 600 is like shooting all Xs at 1000, if we compare square inches of target surface, whereas at 1000 the 9-ring is close to the 7-ring on a 600 yard target.

Following along, comparing methods or procedures for 600 yards to those for 1000 yards depends on conditions at 600. Sometimes I’ll take more time there if conditions are harder to compass. Again, the consequence is that firing two equivalent shots in equivalent conditions (assuming scaled corrections), one at 600 and one at 1000, a 10 at 600 means a quick glance at conditions, a couple of clicks on the sight, and another

shot downrange, all in the time span of maybe 10 seconds. The extra time it takes for the target to come up and show the same 10 at 1000 has, by itself, essentially closed the window of opportunity I had to make a quick correction and go again.

The shooter side of long range stems from believing that each shot is more important. It is, but even if it really wasn’t more difficult or more demanding, the perception remains the same. It’s like walking a narrower plank or a longer plank to cross the same stream.

It’s more difficult to line the sights up to equal the same degree of shot placement at 1000 yards than it is at 600. It’s easier for me to fire a shot quickly at 600 than it is at 1000 because I am paying more attention to sight alignment at 1000. Not that I don’t pay attention to it at 600 yards, but it’s just easier at 600 yards — it’s easier to see it. On top of that, I come down on the target to make the shot, and I double check my target number. The way the targets are situated from the shooter’s perspective makes a mistake more easily possible. At 600 it takes no time to double check, but at 1000 it is much slower. *Everything* slows you down at 1000. I shoot it with a different style. The consequence of a mistake is greater, and there are no two ways about that. It’s easier to get caught at 1000. At 600 if I miss the wind I get a 10; at 1000 I can get a 9, easily.

I don’t want to make it sound as though 1000 yard shooting is anything to be fearful



of or that you have no control over things. The main thing is changing your shooting style. In this regard, 1000 yards is not simply an extension of 600 yard shooting, for me. I cannot always follow my preferred or usual procedure at the longer distance.

CONDITIONS

I see more changes from light conditions at longer ranges. Light’s up, sights up. Light’s down, sights down. It always works. This Service Rifle shooter’s adage stems from light influencing their sight picture, but light effect is not only seen just on post front sights.

Scopes are not unaffected, and aperture sights aren’t either. Even though we’re shooting “centers” in alignment or sight picture, the light is affecting us too.

I will look at lighting conditions in comparison to what I base my zero notes on and adjust elevation, and, possibly, wind. Lighting direction can play a part too in that the aiming black can lose definition along its outside edge. For example, a strong side light from the shooter’s left will over-illuminate the left edge of the aiming black, possibly washing out its defining line. The shooter’s evaluation or estimation of target center may then be skewed toward the right. What looks to be the target center, and that which is used as a reference for front sight location, may not be the true center. Take a correction toward the light, to the left in this example.

You will find out how good your rifle-ammo combination is at 1000 yards. No question. A 25 foot per second velocity spread translates into a whopper of an elevation change at 1000, and it’s insignificant at 600.

Another reason I can go back and forth on calibers is that the mirage moves everybody the same, in my opinion. It doesn’t matter what they’re shooting. The wind is a different factor. The wind moves some bullets more than others. Obviously if we have mirage we have wind, usually, but it’s the displacement of the target by mirage or the bullet by wind, or a combination.