



## SMOKIN' GUNS AT RABBIT RIDGE 2025 MISSISSIPPI STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

BY PADRE DE CINCO, SASS #111846  
AND DEANNA CASWELL (PADRE'S WIFE)

If you think rain ruins a Cowboy Action match, you must have missed the 2025 Mississippi State Championship. This Memorial Day weekend, the skies opened and tried to drown us, making for soggy boots and dripping hats, but this match is always fun — come rain or shine.

This is more than a competition, it's like a family reunion with gunpowder, and a celebration of the sport we love. This year's event drew more than 100 shooters, including many new faces. With a hard cap of 140, next year's slots will go fast. Whether you're an old hand or a greenhorn, this is the match to circle on your calendar.

## GUNFIGHTING IN A GULLY-WASHER

This year's stages were fast and fun thanks to a bunch of new BIG and beautiful targets. Jered Maddox (SASS #28216), our ever-creative scenario writer, made the most of this year's theme, *Support Your Local Sheriff*, celebrating a classic western comedy.

The event officially started with a Friday night black powder match. Everyone likes to shoot fast, but at night the real stars light up the sky. Little did we know all that thunder was ushering in the rain.

Saturday started with a torrential frog-strangler, but Cowboys aren't quitters. Let's Go (SASS #82713), the Senior Gunfighter and Overall Men's winner with his very own high-stepping style, didn't let the puddles slow him down a bit. The posse around him cheered as his boots kicked up the spray.

By Sunday morning, the skies over Rabbit Ridge were clear, bright, and full of gunsmoke.

## HELPING HANDS & HOSPITALITY

You'd be hard-pressed to find a match with a friendlier bunch of folks, and we're not just talking about the locals. Every year, competitors from out of town show up early, pitch in, and treat each other like kin.

Frontiersman winner Preacher (SASS #20408) arrived days ahead of the first shot, hammer in hand and a smile on his face — cleaning, changing out shotgun target ropes, and even hanging photos in the clubhouse! Two days before the shoot, he's indistinguishable from the locals. This year, we installed his very own outdoor shower, hereafter known as The Preacher Frontier Bathhouse of Eternal Refreshment.

Cattle Baroness and Mississippi State Ladies Champion, Sunny Girl (SASS #45500), answered her posse's call before they could even finish the sentence. Timing, scoring, spotting — whatever needed doing, she was on it, rain or shine.

That same spirit carried through



every corner of the match — especially around the food tables.

## FULL PLATES, FRIENDLY FOLKS

If you've never been to a match where you're fed all weekend long, let me introduce you to Mississippi hospitality. Here you're treated like you've just come off the trail and haven't seen a square meal in months.

From pulled pork and Popeye's chicken to authentic Mexican tamales and street tacos, the Mississippi River Rangers serve serious food from Friday afternoon to Sunday evening. And when there isn't a meal on the table, there's still trail mix, fruit, muffins, chips, and coolers full of drinks.

Even amidst Saturday's ponchos and puddles, calories and conversation were never in short supply. Shortcake (SASS #105517) and Lawdog Dago Dom (SASS #105516), who together swept their Frontier Cartridge Gunfighter categories, brought enough farm-fresh, individually packaged, boiled eggs for everyone.

Dualist winner, Leroy Luck (SASS #112928), and his Ladies Gunfighter winning woman, Misses Luck (SASS #112980), rolled in from Missouri with enough homemade cookies to fill the dessert table all weekend — and dang, they were good. They didn't come alone either; they brought a whole crew of new faces who fit right in.

## A COWBOY TOWN HIDDEN IN NORTH MISSISSIPPI

The Cowboy Town of Gunsight sits on some of the most beautiful ground you could ask for — rolling woodlands and cotton fields open into a green valley that feels like a private slice of cowboy heaven. The clubhouse porch, with its rocking chairs and wide view of the hills, is only half the charm.

Step through the main street and you'll find a cantina, jail, livery, saloon, and even a bordello that all look ready to open for business. The façades have porches, windows, hand-painted wooden signs, and life-size cutouts that make each stage feel like a living movie set.

And just when you think you've seen every helping hand, Brazos Belle (SASS #82399), Ladies Senior and



OVERALL WINNERS LET'S GO AND BRAZOS BELLE



MS STATE WINNERS: SEA GOAT (SASS #111673) AND SUNNY GIRL

Overall Women's winner, and her clean shooting husband, Crooked Bullet (SASS #70870), show up — from Texas, no less — and work like they're lifelong locals. She was lending a hand all over the range and he was up on the roof repairing flashing before the first stage was fired.

## LIMITED SPACE — DON'T WAIT!

This year proved again why Smokin' Guns at Rabbit Ridge is a favorite across the country. Rain, mud, and soggy hats didn't slow us down, they became part of the story we'll tell for years.

Whether it was the fast stages, the sharp costumes, or just the sound of good friends laughing over lunch, this event hit every note. With a 140-shooter cap, next year's slots will go fast — so mark your calendar early and come join the reunion.

If you're looking for a match that respects your wallet, treats you like family, and feeds you better than your grandmama did, go to [MississippiRiverRangers.org](http://MississippiRiverRangers.org) to register today.



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