WPSF · APPLICATION NOTE AN-01

Duel Match — Seeding, Swiss Rounds and the Shoot-off

Explains Rule 5.3 of the WPSF Competition Rules 2027, Draft 2 · November 2026

1. What this note is for

A duel match has two phases: everyone shoots every Swiss round with nobody knocked out, then a fixed number of top shooters go to a knockout shoot-off. This note explains how the pairings and standings are made, with worked examples you can check by hand.

It is written for shooters, Match Directors (MD) and Range Officers (RO). It explains Rule 5.3 of the **WPSF Competition Rules 2027, Draft 2**; it adds no new rules. Where this note and the rulebook differ, the English rulebook decides.

The platform at wpsf.info makes every pairing automatically. The point of this note is that nobody has to trust it blindly: every step below is fixed, so any shooter can recompute it with a pencil.

2. The match in one picture

Every shooter shoots every Swiss round. A loss never sends you home; it only means your next opponent has the same record as you. After the last round, a fixed number of shooters at the top of the table go to the shoot-off, which is a knockout.

1. **Registration closes** before the first bout. A division needs at least 8 shooters for a ranked duel match (5.3.1).
2. **Swiss phase.** A fixed number of rounds, one bout per shooter per round. Winners meet winners, losers meet losers, and nobody meets the same opponent twice (5.3.2–5.3.3).
3. **Standing.** After every round the table is sorted by wins, then opponents' wins, then head-to-head (5.3.4).
4. **Shoot-off.** The top shooters, a number announced in advance, go into a knockout bracket seeded by the Swiss table (5.3.5).
5. **Final places.** The shoot-off decides the top places; everyone else keeps their Swiss place (5.3.7).

SHOOTERS IN THE DIVISION	8–16	17–32	33–64	65 AND MORE
Swiss rounds	5	6	7	8

SHOOT-OFF SIZE	WHEN
4 shooters	fewer than 12 shooters in the division
8 shooters	the default
16 shooters	Level 3 with 64 or more shooters

Both numbers are printed in the match announcement and do not change on the day.

3. Seeding and round 1

Round 1 is not a random draw. Shooters are listed by WPSF ranking, then unranked shooters in the order they registered. The list is cut in half, and the top half meets the bottom half in order (5.3.3 a).

Example: 10 shooters. The cut falls between seed 5 and seed 6, so seed 1 meets seed 6, seed 2 meets seed 7, and so on.

BOUT	LEFT LANE	RIGHT LANE
1	#1 Kovalenko	#6 Kravets
2	#2 Bondar	#7 Oliinyk
3	#3 Shevchuk	#8 Polishchuk
4	#4 Tkachenko	#9 Savchenko
5	#5 Melnyk	#10 Rudenko

Why not 1 v 10? Because the strongest and weakest meeting first is a wasted bout. Pairing 1 v 6 gives every bout in round 1 a real contest, and the best shooters still avoid each other until the table has sorted them.

The higher seed takes the left lane in round 1 (5.3.3 f). With 16 shooters the pairs are 1 v 9, 2 v 10 … 8 v 16.

4. Pairing in rounds 2 and later

From round 2 on, you meet someone with the same number of wins as you. The platform does it in six fixed steps (5.3.3 b–g):

1. **Sort the table** by the current standing (section 5).
2. **Group by wins.** Everyone on 2 wins is one group, everyone on 1 win the next, and so on.
3. **Odd group: the lowest moves down.** If a group has an odd number of shooters, its lowest-placed shooter moves down into the next group and is paired there.
4. **Top half meets bottom half.** Inside each group, cut the list in half and pair in order, exactly as in round 1.
5. **No repeats.** If a pair has already met, the lower shooter is exchanged with the nearest shooter in the same half who gives a new pair.
6. **Bye.** With an odd number of shooters in the division, the lowest-placed shooter who has not had a bye sits out and gets a win. Nobody gets a second bye.

The higher-placed shooter takes the **left lane in odd rounds** and the **right lane in even rounds**. Pairings for the next round are published only when every bout of the current round is recorded.

Example: round 4 of the match in section 6. Before the round the table read: Kravets 3 wins; Tkachenko, Melnyk, Savchenko, Bondar 2 wins; Oliinyk, Polishchuk, Kovalenko, Shevchuk 1 win; Rudenko 0.

GROUP	WHO IS IN IT	WHAT HAPPENS	PAIRS
3 wins	Kravets	Alone, so odd: moves down	—
2 wins	Kravets, Tkachenko, Melnyk, Savchenko, Bondar	Five, so odd: Bondar moves down. Top half Kravets, Tkachenko; bottom half Melnyk, Savchenko. Kravets v Melnyk already met in round 3, so Melnyk is exchanged with Savchenko	Kravets v Savchenko, Tkachenko v Melnyk
1 win	Bondar, Oliinyk, Polishchuk, Kovalenko, Shevchuk	Five, so odd: Shevchuk moves down. Bondar v Polishchuk already met, so Polishchuk is exchanged with Kovalenko	Bondar v Kovalenko, Oliinyk v Polishchuk
0 wins	Shevchuk, Rudenko	Two left, new pair	Shevchuk v Rudenko

A shooter who moves down is placed at the top of the next group, because they have more wins than everyone already in it.

5. Standing and tie-breaks

Wins come first; everything else only separates shooters with the same number of wins. After every round shooters are placed by (5.3.4):

1. **Wins.** A bye counts as a win.
2. **Opponents' wins.** Add up the current wins of every shooter you have met. A bye adds nothing. Beating strong shooters counts for more than beating weak ones.
3. **Head-to-head.** If two tied shooters met, the winner of that bout is placed higher.
4. **Sudden death.** If shooters are still tied on the shoot-off cut line, one extra bout decides it. Anywhere else, tied shooters share the place.

Opponents' wins are recounted after every round, because your opponents keep shooting. A shooter you beat in round 1 who goes on to win three more bouts raises your number.

Worked calculation: who takes the 4th shoot-off place? In the match in section 6, Shevchuk and Bondar both finished with 3 wins.

SHEVCHUK MET	THEIR WINS	BONDAR MET	THEIR WINS
Polishchuk	2	Oliinyk	3
Savchenko	2	Rudenko	0
Tkachenko	4	Polishchuk	2
Rudenko	0	Kovalenko	2
Melnyk	2	Savchenko	2
Total	**10**	**Total**	**9**

Shevchuk is 4th and goes to the shoot-off; Bondar is 5th. Bondar did nothing wrong: he won as many bouts, but against shooters who won less. They never met, so head-to-head was not needed.

6. Worked example: 10 shooters, 5 rounds

Ten shooters, seeded #1 to #10, shoot the 5 Swiss rounds the table in section 2 prescribes. Every pairing below follows the six steps of section 4; the winner of each bout is in bold.

Round 1. Seeded: top half v bottom half. Higher-placed shooter on the left.

BOUT	LEFT LANE	RIGHT LANE
1	Kovalenko	**Kravets**
2	Bondar	**Oliinyk**
3	Shevchuk	**Polishchuk**
4	Tkachenko	**Savchenko**
5	**Melnyk**	Rudenko

Round 2. 1-win group has 5: Savchenko moves down into the 0-win group. Higher-placed shooter on the right.

BOUT	LEFT LANE	RIGHT LANE
1	Oliinyk	**Melnyk**
2	Polishchuk	**Kravets**
3	**Shevchuk**	Savchenko
4	**Tkachenko**	Kovalenko
5	Rudenko	**Bondar**

Round 3. All groups even, no repeats: straight top half v bottom half. Higher-placed shooter on the left.

BOUT	LEFT LANE	RIGHT LANE
1	Melnyk	**Kravets**
2	Oliinyk	**Savchenko**
3	Polishchuk	**Bondar**
4	Shevchuk	**Tkachenko**
5	**Kovalenko**	Rudenko

Round 4. See the walk-through in section 4. Higher-placed shooter on the right.

BOUT	LEFT LANE	RIGHT LANE
1	Savchenko	**Kravets**
2	Melnyk	**Tkachenko**
3	**Kovalenko**	Bondar
4	Polishchuk	**Oliinyk**
5	Rudenko	**Shevchuk**

Round 5. Kravets (alone on 4) moves down to meet Tkachenko. In the 2-win group Savchenko v Oliinyk would repeat round 3, so Oliinyk is exchanged; Polishchuk (alone on 1) moves down to Rudenko. Higher-placed shooter on the left.

BOUT	LEFT LANE	RIGHT LANE
1	Kravets	**Tkachenko**
2	Savchenko	**Bondar**
3	Kovalenko	**Oliinyk**
4	Melnyk	**Shevchuk**
5	**Polishchuk**	Rudenko

Final Swiss table.

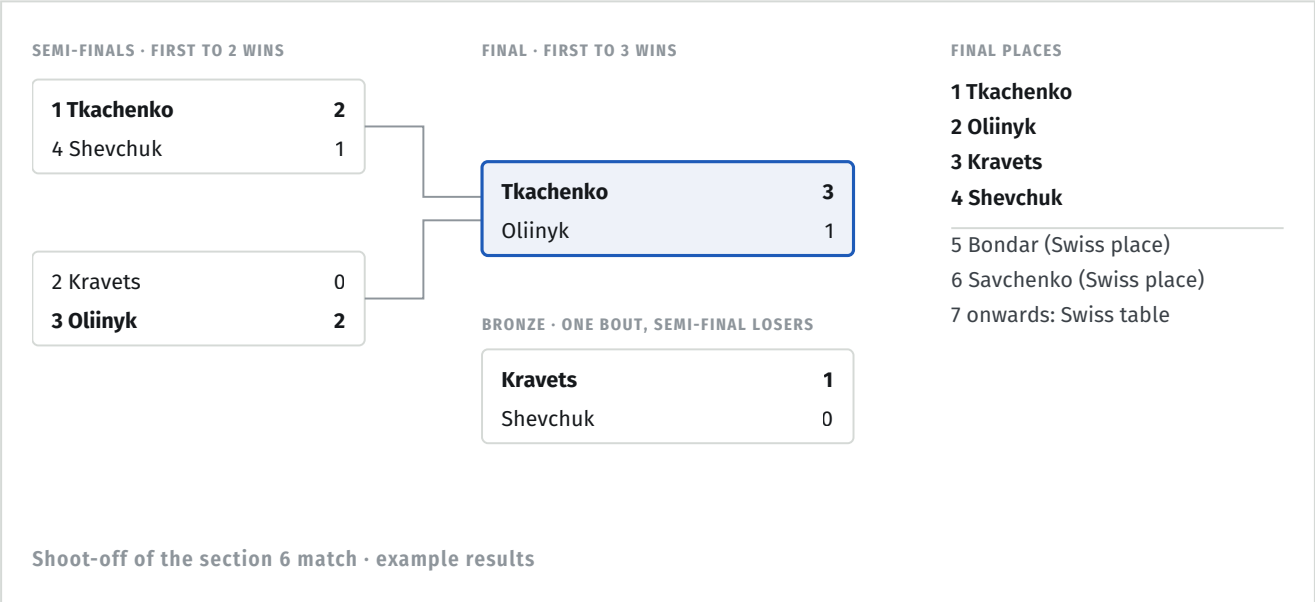
PLACE	SHOOTER	SEED	WINS	OPPONENTS' WINS	
1	Tkachenko	#4	4	13	shoot-off
2	Kravets	#6	4	12	shoot-off
3	Oliinyk	#7	3	11	shoot-off
4	Shevchuk	#3	3	10	shoot-off
5	Bondar	#2	3	9	
6	Savchenko	#9	2	17	
7–8	Kovalenko	#1	2	14	
7–8	Melnyk	#5	2	14	
9	Polishchuk	#8	2	13	
10	Rudenko	#10	0	12	

Three things to notice. Top seed Kovalenko lost round 1 and finished 7th; seeding only shapes round 1. Tkachenko and Kravets both have 4 wins; Tkachenko is first on opponents' wins (13 v 12) and also beat Kravets in round 5. Kovalenko and Melnyk are level on wins and opponents' wins and never met, so they share 7th–8th.

7. The shoot-off

The shoot-off is a knockout among a fixed number of top Swiss shooters, seeded by the Swiss table (5.3.5). The number is in the match announcement: 4 when the division has fewer than 12 shooters, 8 by default, 16 at Level 3 with 64 or more.

- **Seeding:** 1 v 4 and 2 v 3 with four shooters; 1 v 8, 2 v 7, 3 v 6, 4 v 5 with eight. The top two seeds cannot meet before the final.
- **Semi-finals and earlier rounds:** first to two wins.
- **Bronze:** the two losing semi-finalists shoot one bout.
- **Final:** first to three wins.
- **Lanes may change:** the shoot-off lanes can be rebuilt to a new design announced after the Swiss phase, so nobody profits from having studied the Swiss lane (5.3.6).



With 10 shooters the shoot-off takes 4. The scores above are example results. Places 1–4 come from the shoot-off; from 5th down, everyone keeps their Swiss place (5.3.7). Kravets was 2nd after the Swiss rounds but finishes 3rd, because the shoot-off result decides the top places.

8. An odd field: 9 shooters and the bye

With an odd number of shooters, one shooter sits out each round and is credited with a win. That is the bye (5.3.3 e).

Round 1. The bye goes to the lowest seed, #9. The other eight are cut in half and paired 1 v 5, 2 v 6, 3 v 7, 4 v 8.

Round 2. Four shooters won in round 1, and #9 has a win from the bye, so five shooters are on 1 win and four are on 0. The bye goes to the lowest-placed shooter who has not had one: the last shooter in the 0-win group. That shooter now also has 1 win.

Every later round: the same rule. The bye moves up the table from the bottom, and nobody gets a second one.

Two details matter for the standing:

- A bye counts as a **win** for the shooter who gets it.
- A bye adds **nothing** to that shooter's opponents' wins, because there was no opponent. A shooter who had a bye usually has slightly fewer opponents' wins than one who shot every round.

9. Questions shooters ask

I lost my first bout. Am I out? No. Nobody is eliminated in the Swiss phase. You shoot every round, and your next opponent also lost.

Why did I meet a much stronger shooter after winning? Because winners meet winners. Two wins in a row puts you in the group of shooters with two wins, which is where the strong ones are.

Why didn't I meet the shooter next to me on the table? Pairing is top half against bottom half inside your win group, not neighbour against neighbour. In a group of six, 1st meets 4th, 2nd meets 5th, 3rd meets 6th.

Why was I paired with someone who has more (or fewer) wins than me? Your group, or the one above it, had an odd number, so one shooter moved down. Or a pair would have repeated an earlier bout, so shooters were exchanged.

We have the same wins. Why is he above me? Opponents' wins. Add up the wins of everyone each of you has met. Section 5 shows the calculation.

My opponents' wins changed though I didn't shoot. They are recounted after every round. Your old opponents kept winning or losing.

Is a bye a gift? It is a win, but it adds nothing to your opponents' wins, so it can cost you a place in a tie.

Can two shooters meet twice? Not in the Swiss phase, except in the last round when no other pairing exists. In the shoot-off, yes: it is a new knockout.

I was 2nd after the Swiss rounds but finished 3rd. The shoot-off decides the top places, not the Swiss table. The Swiss table decides who gets into the shoot-off and the seeding.

I was top seed and finished 7th. Seeding only sets round 1. After that, only your results count.

10. Checklist for Match Directors and ROs

- **Before the match:** put the number of Swiss rounds and the shoot-off size in the announcement. Neither changes on the day.
- **At registration close:** check the division has at least 8 shooters, and that the seeded list (ranking, then registration order) is correct.
- **Before each round:** the RM checks the platform's pairings against section 4 and publishes them. Check that no pair repeats an earlier bout.
- **During the round:** record every bout before the next round is drawn. The higher-placed shooter goes left in odd rounds and right in even rounds.
- **After the last round:** print the Swiss table with wins and opponents' wins. If shooters are tied on the shoot-off cut line, shoot one sudden-death bout before seeding the shoot-off.
- **Shoot-off:** first to two wins, final first to three, one bout for bronze. Announce any rebuilt lanes before the first shoot-off bout.
- **Explaining a pairing:** walk the shooter through the six steps of section 4 using the published table. Every step can be checked by hand.

11. Open points for the Rules Committee

Writing the examples for this note exposed four points where the rulebook is silent or the platform does something else. Until they are settled, this note follows the rulebook as written.

1. Groups that cannot be paired without a repeat. Rule 5.3.3 d allows a repeat only in the last round. Earlier, a group can end up with, say, two shooters who have already met, and the rules give no next step. A simulation of 2,000 random matches per field size, using the procedure in section 4, shows how often this happens:

SHOOTERS	ROUNDS	PAIRED BY THE RULES AS WRITTEN	NEEDED AN EXTRA MOVE-DOWN	COULD NOT BE PAIRED AT ALL
8	5	0%	5%	95%
10	5	0%	21%	79%
12	5	2%	18%	80%
16	5	3%	18%	79%
24	6	5%	12%	83%
10	4	33%	20%	47%
16	4	100%	0%	0%

The example in section 6 was chosen from the matches that pair cleanly. Two changes would fix this. First, fewer rounds for small fields: the number of rounds that halves the field each time, rounded up (3 rounds for 8 shooters, 4 for 9–16, 5 for 17–32). Second, a written move-down rule for any group that cannot be paired, as for an odd group.

2. Order of shooters still tied. The rules say tied shooters share a place, but pairing and shoot-off seeding need an order. This note uses seed order for that.

3. The platform does not yet follow Rule 5.3. The duel system at wpsf.info:

- draws round 1 at random instead of seeding it;
- pairs neighbours on the table (1st v 2nd) instead of top half against bottom half;
- plays 4 Swiss rounds for 10 shooters, where the rulebook table says 5;
- takes the top 10% into the shoot-off instead of a fixed 4, 8 or 16;
- shoots every shoot-off bout as a single bout instead of first to two and first to three.

Shooters who compare a match on the platform with this note will see different pairings. Either the platform or the rule has to change.

4. Ranking points with a 4-shooter shoot-off. Rule 11.1 gives 30 points to Swiss places 9–16 and 20 to the rest. With a 4-shooter shoot-off, places 5–8 fall into “the rest” and score less than 9th.

This application note explains the rules and adds none. Where it and the rulebook differ, the English rulebook decides.
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