

INVITATION TO BE A GUNFIGHTER

(Originally Written 2018 / Updated 2025)

By: Quick Cal

CFDA, along with many of our CFDA Affiliated Clubs, have been conducting what we called ***“Town Folk Alleys”*** since 2006. There are several positive aspects about conducting these events, such as, public exposure of our sport and having the opportunity to provide a very positive, fun and safe shooting sport experience to numerous people. In fact, by our calculations, together we members of CFDA have introduced over 100,000 people to these positive experiences not only to our sport, but on behalf of all shooting sports. And, for a very high percentage of these, a number of them children, it is their first experience with any firearm. ***We should all be very proud of that!***

A few years ago we came to the realization that advertising our events in print, broadcast, and social media outlets as ***“Town Folk Alleys”*** did almost nothing to give name recognition to the sport of Cowboy Fast Draw. Sure, we know who we are, but the general public was not making the connection. So, we changed the name of these events to ***“Try Cowboy Fast Draw”***. While this is helping the general public know who we are, we are still actually recruiting a very small percentage of these participants into our clubs. We have been trying to convince our clubs to gather names, phone numbers and emails in order to follow up with folks who tried our ***“Try Cowboy Fast Draw”*** events. But, that is a lot of contacts to make with people, of whom a majority just wanted to try something fun and new, but never had any intention of anything more than that. So, if you begin calling those numbers or sending emails to them, they are actually surprised and somewhat non-responsive. **That is known as a “Cold Call” in marketing.**

NEW IDEA!

In 2018, we decided to try a new idea. We, The Great Basin Gun Hawks, booked a gun show known as the “Big Reno Show”, which is one of the largest gun shows in the Western U.S.. We had a television showing videos about our sport, plus some other items to demonstrate how wax bullets are loaded. We also rigged up two CFDA Gunslinger Timers on the tables, complete with Audience Displays. We installed Reaction Trainers, which replaces target lights and sensors, so that show attendees could not only test their reactions but could challenge either their friends or members of the Gun Hawks. Since the Audience Display were elevated, this proved to be a real attention getter.

The entire point of this is what came next... We ran a “Prize Drawing”, that anyone could enter by filling out a card and placing into a really cool looking box that we made. The Prize, **WIN a FREE 2-Hour Lesson to be a Gunfighter!** We called it ***“Invitation To Be a Gunfighter”***. We also advertised that the guns, holsters and wax bullet ammunition were supplied. We also had one of our people actually filling out the cards on behalf of the drawing entrants, just to make sure that we could read them later. The results? In a 3-Day show, we had about 50 cards filled out, of which about 30 were from the Northern Nevada area!

The Follow Up is Everything!

You can have all of the great leads in the world, but if you don’t follow up and contact them within a few weeks of the event, you have wasted your time!

I began every call like this, ***“Howdy my name is Cal from the Cowboy Fast Draw Club, and you entered a drawing at the gun show.”*** It’s very important to have a rehearsed line that is distinct from what normal phone marketers say, who normally get hung up on within seconds 9 out of 10 times. As soon as they realized that I wasn’t a “cold calling” phone marketer, they ALL responded very positively. They immediately became very ***“Warm Calls”***.

Next, I said, ***“You’ve won an Invitation to be a Gunfighter, and it’s FREE! We have two dates available coming up very soon where you can collect your prize.”***

It immediately turned into a ***“Hot Call”***! After they eagerly accepted, next I said, ***“Great, we are going to supply everything you need, a single action revolver, a holster, the wax bullet ammunition, an instructor, and a veteran gunfighter for you to team up with.”***

Next, I offered two dates to choose from. Since our club had a meeting and agreed to pick a Saturday and a Sunday one week apart in a few weeks later, so I knew what dates to offer, this is very important. Some accepted

Invitation to be a Gunfighter - Drawing!

Name _____

Phone # (_____) _____ - _____

Email: _____

immediately and picked one of the two dates. Others were very interested, but could not make the dates, but wanted us to call again when we had the next choice of sessions.

Everyone who agreed on a date, all had very interesting and happy responses and were really excited about the opportunity. I also used a bit of humor to set the tone and usually said something like, ***"I guarantee you're going to have fun and a great time, or if this wasn't already free, I would double your money back"***, which usually got a laugh from them. Then I told them, ***"I'll check in with you during the week prior, just to confirm that you'll be there."*** Which I would do by mid-week before that weekend. Some that I did this second confirmation call with even asked if they could bring a friend, for which the answer was always "Yes".

Finally, I would confirm their email and let them know I would send them more details and directions to our location.

The results were that we recruited members that are still with our club, and they have recruited friends and family. It also resulted in some new clubs being formed in other areas. The Gun Hawks have held several more of these events, except in the Covid years. We have recently held a few more with great success!

Conclusion

While nothing beats personal invitations from existing club members to friends and family members. This is the best recruiting tool we have found so far to bring in new groups of folks. It does not require setting up mobile shooting ranges at outside events and the club manpower it takes to run a "Try Cowboy Fast Draw" events. The only thing I would recommend adding, would be an event that allows setting up Gunslinger Laser targets. But, it would still take quite a few club members to fit the public with holsters and give some basic lessons, while processing a line of folks wanting to try it.

Event Agenda

It's important to have a clear agenda for the Invitation to be a Gunfighter Session. Here is the agenda we used, with some comments on why we did things in this order.

Invitation To Be a Gunfighter

Session Agenda

- I. Greeting Arriving Guests (Greenhorns), fitting them with holsters, pairing them with Veteran Gunfighters.**
- II. Introduction to the Sport of Cowboy Fast Draw (approx. 30 minutes)**
 - A. Safety First, Fun Second, and Competition Third - CFDA Motto (Short Explanation)**
 - B. Safety First (Safety is really first, last and always)**
 - Explaining CFDA Safety Rules and Why We Must Uphold Them.
 - 1. Only 3 Places a Gun Be Out of a Holster.
 - 2. Explain Range Rules Poster.
 - C. About Cowboy Fast Draw & Our Club.**
 - 1. Spirit of the Game & The Cowboy Way.
 - 2. Based Upon 1800s Equipment
 - 3. Target Sizes & Distance Emphasize Balance of Speed & Accuracy.
Wyatt Earp Quote, *"Fast is Fine, Accuracy is Final"*
 - 4. Explain How Basic Elimination Competition Works
 - A. Man vs Man Formats and how X-Counts work in Major Matches
 - B. Explain or Club No X Out Format we use in Club Matches. So, members don't get left out.
 - C. Bracket Matches in most Club Events, so that everyone has a competitive opportunity.
 - 5. Explain Club Shoot & Events Schedule, i.e. Monthly Matches & Practice Sessions.
 - D. Introduce Equipment**
 - 1. Guns - Based Upon Availability in the 1800's.
 - 2. Holsters - Based Upon 1800's Patterns, but With Additional Specifications.
 - 3. Wax Bullet Ammunition.
- III. Hands on Session (Approximately 90 minutes)**
 - A. Reaction Demo & Tests (Guests)**
 - (Show's how holding an unloaded revolver against a target will record a reaction time)*

- B. 3 X - Reaction Contest (All Greenhorns and Veterans)
(Inspires the Guests, that they have better reactions than they may think they have, and really gives them experience in how the six-guns and a contest scenario actually works)
- C. Learning a Basic Draw
 - 1. Demonstrating the Basic Draw
 - 2. Dry-Firing Practice *(Guests, with Veteran Gunfighter Coaches)*
 - 3. Command & Clap *(Veterans should give individual commands and have the Guests draw when they clap their hands, this readies them to draw on the start signal better.)*
 - 4. 1st Shooting Drill 7' Distance Greenhorns (With Veteran Gunfighter Coaches)
(Best to do this at 7' distance at first to promote confidence.)
 - 5. Run a 2X Contest at 7' Distance Guests Only (veterans Gunfighters Do All Loading)
(Gives them the real feel of an actual competition.)
 - 6. Hand Out Club Schedules & Invite to Club Practice Sessions to Learn More.
- IV. **Present Gunfighter Certificates** *(This makes them feel part of the group)*
- V. **Invite Them to Practice.** *(You are all Gunfighters now so practicing together for a while will be fun and they will have a lot more questions to ask the Veterans.)*

Additional Notes:

- 1. **Always keep it fun and light!**
- 2. **Benefits All Club Members** - It's good to have your newer club members participate in the ranks of your Veteran Gunfighter Coaches, because teaching also reinforces the personal knowledge that they have learned too.
- 3. **Follow Up One More Time by Phone**
- 4. Make sure that you have one club member to team up with each guest. Our club has enough spare holsters and belts to outfit Guests. Club members as Coaches should wear their own holster and gun, and lend their gun to the Guest only while they are on the line and shooting. Club members do all loading and unloading, since time is limited and it is not our mission in this time limited event to teach Guests how to load and unload at this time.
- 5. Limit the event to two hours, but it might be a great idea to schedule a practice for club members, right after. You may find that a few Guests may choose to stick around and learn more.
- 6. Try to conduct **"Invitation to be a Gunfighter"** events at least two times a year.
- 7. Always remember that clubs must continue to recruit members. Members can come and go due to life situations, if a club is not continually trying to grow, it will fade away.
- 8. Invitation to be a Gunfighter, Drawing Entry Cards is a PDF Page Document, available for downloading in the Clubs Section of the CFDA Website.