From watching you both shoot previously and from videotaping you both, and reviewing those videos, I have a pretty good baseline of where you both are now in regard to ability and experience. Having that established baseline will allow us to get to the shooting right from the first session. Let me know if you still want to continue after reviewing my draconian methodology.

Pecos

I realized we were on the right track. After a series of training and dry-fire practices, Cody shot a 243 in his next shoot (a 41-second average and raw times in the mid-20s). He was more confident and his misses started decreasing. We decided to shoot in The World Championships, End of Trail, after seven months, and seven local competitions. “Pecos” was there for support and filmed several stages. Cody came in seventh with a proud family and coach behind him.

What happened next was the biggest surprise to come. After watching the final stage, my daughter Jessica, approached her mother and wanted to join SASS. Jessica was on a traveling soccer team, running cross country, and playing basketball. She had only one day with a firearm, shooting a .410 and .22 when out with family. Before the day ended, my wife and daughter went to the SASS office to sign up, and after several minutes of brainstorming, “SASS Kicker” was born.

Instead of purchasing another set of firearms, I immediately called our coach to see if he would take on the challenge of another new shooter. He gladly accepted, and Jessica began learning under his direction. I can still remember Jessica’s first shot with Pecos’ 12 gauge; eyes closed and a look I had never seen before – SHOCK. But after just a few more attempts, she was just fine. “Pecos” advised us on the right firearms for her. We had made costly mistakes along the way without his advice. A knowledgeable coach, however, will lead you right. When you have gunsmiths like “Johnny Meadows” and “Palo Verde” in the area, you don’t have to look much further.

Cody’s scores continued to improve in the 25- to 32-seconds-per-stage range the following month. Recently, Cody placed 17th out of 112 shooters at an ACSA (Arizona Cowboys Shooting Association) Match with 164 seconds in six stages. The improved training, dry- and live-fire practice, and match experience was paying off for Cody. We all know it’s hard to correct bad habits, but “Pecos” stayed with us all the way.

“She was there for support and filmed several stages. Cody came in seventh with a proud family and coach behind him.”

“SASS Kicker,” on the other hand, knows only one way – the “Pecos” way! In just her first match, “SASS Kicker” had two stages with raw times under 30, but with a few misses. Just three matches later and six lessons under her belt, “SASS Kicker” shot 12 stages in the Eldorado Nevada State Championships with raw times between 23 and 30 seconds; and a 12 match time of 352.07 (or 29 seconds per stage average). Some contribute her shooting to her athletic ability. She is an example of what excellent coaching can produce. I believe perfect practice makes perfect shooters.

With three shooters in the family, much of our time is now spent in the reloading room, cycling our Dillon press, dry firing, live firing on the practice range, and attending matches. Under supervision, it is common for Cody and me to crank out 3,000 rounds a month to keep up with the demands. Reloading is a huge part of the sport, and it is a family affair. Quality equipment and supplies are a must in order to shoot accurately.

Some of the fastest shooters in the country are at the buckaroo and junior levels. To be top in this sport, you have to train and be dedicated. Improved firearms can come in time, but poor habits have to be broken before improvement takes place. Treat your children and yourself to time with a coach. Perfect practice makes future world champions.

Recent accomplishments since this article was written: “SASS Kicker” – 2012 National Buckarette and World Junior Champion; “Cody James” – 2012 World Buckaroo Champion. In the far right photo above, “Cody James” and “SASS Kicker” pose with their coach, “Pecos Clyde,” at End of Trail 2012.