

THE FASTEST GUNS THAT NEVER LIVED

This article is a combination of reprints from “The Fastest Guns That Never Lived” articles and some new entries. Since many of the first articles (and the most famous stars) appeared in issues of *Strategic Review* and *The Dragon* that are out of print, it seems logical to reprint them so that new readers and players of the revised BOOT HILL game could enjoy them. It must be stressed that these “guns” are far stronger than most player characters and will unbalance the game unless caution is exercised, but special scenarios using one or two of them might be enjoyable.

Movies and television have given us some of the greatest gunslingers of all time. Their abilities are far superior to those of any gunfighter who really lived, or so it seems from the old shows. Some of those heroes and villains are presented here for the benefit of those who would like to see what they could do. The ratings correspond to terms of TSR’s *Boot Hill* game rules for gunfights with counters or miniatures.

		GUN	THROWING				SPECIAL
NAME	SPEED	ACCURACY	ACCURACY	BRAVERY	STRENGTH	EXPERIENCE	ABILITIES
The Lone Ranger	9 2	98	78	98	95	11+	A,E,F,G,H,J
Tonto	80	91	96	89	83	9	
The Rifleman	9 0	9 8	51	91	91	11+	C,D,E,F
Matt Dillon	8 8	95	45	95	99	11+	E,F,G
Paladin	98	98	80	98	94	11+	A,B,E,H
Josh Randall	91	90	66	91	82	11+	E,F
Hopalong Cassidy	87	8 6	65	91	79	11+	A,E,F,G,H,J,K
Yancy Derringer	94	97	70	90	77	11+	B,E
Pahoo	9 0	8 4	100	90	95	8	D
Johnny Yuma	91	8 8	65	90	66	11+	E,F
The Cisco Kid	8 8	9 6	66	96	67	11+	A,B,E,G,H, J
Pancho	3 8	66	3 4	34	76	8	G
Bret Maverick	89	76	47	88	77	8	E,G,K
Bart Maverick	85	77	45	72	79	8	E
Beau Maverick	85	77	45	72	79	8	E

Will Sonnet	9 0	9 9	72	92	58	11+	A,E,H,K
Jeff Sonnet	8 6	88	76	89	8 4	5	A,E,H
Jason McCord	88	88	79	92	91	11+	E,G,H,J
Ben Cartwright	75	76	51	92	75	11+	A
Adam Cartwright	8 6	90	47	94	87	11+	A,E
Hoss Cartwright	70	75	45	92	100	9	A
“Little Joe” Cartwright	81	75	47	92	75	7	A
Don “Red” Barry	92	96	66	98	59	11+	A,B,E,H
“Wild Bill” Elliot	95	90	78	96	84	11+	A,E,F,H,K
“Hoot” Gibson	88	90	81	98	91	11+	B,G,J
William S. Hart	8 9	9 0	72	96	77	11+	A,E,F,H
Tim Holt	91	91	4 8	94	63	11+	A,E,F,H
“Rocky” Lane	97	90	52	95	97	1 1 +	A,B,E,H
Col. Tim McCoy	88	99	69	9 4	82	11+	A,B,E,H
Joel McCrea	95	94	59	95	77	11+	A,E,F,H
Tom Mix	9 6	90	88	98	98	11+	A,B,C,E,G,H,J,K
The Durango Kid	97	95	42	96	45	11+	A,B,E,H
Bob Steele	99	9 6	55	97	59	11+	A,B,F,H
John Wayne	96	96	60	96	97	11+	A,B,C,E,G,H
Clint Eastwood	100	100	96	99	85	11+	A,B,E,H
Lee Van Cleef	98	98	63	99	77	11+	B,E,H
Eli Wallach	95	85	80	60	78	11+	E,F
The Magnificent Seven:							
Yul Brynner	92	95	94	98	92	11+	B,E,H
Steve McQueen	91	92	80	98	90	11+	B,C,D,E,H
James Coburn	95	83	100	99	92	11+	B,E,F,H
Charles Bronson	91	89	74	100	91	11+	A,B,D,E,H
Robert Vaughn	88	92	68	15/99	85	11+	E,F,H,K
Horst Buchholz	88	90	62	95	85	11+	A,E,H,K

Juan Mateos	72	80	71	97	77	2	B,H
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SPECIAL ABILITIES

- A—½ penalty when shooting from horseback.
- B—Never surprised.
- C—Double the length of medium range when shooting.
- D—Shoulder arms are considered as “fast”.
- E—May “hipshoot” with no penalty.
- F—No penalty for giving opponent first move.
- G—Treat wounds as one type lower when shot. A “Mortal Wound” result becomes a “Serious Wound”, etc.
- H—½ penalty when shooting at moving target
- J—Must use Sharpshooting rule, and must fire at “gun arm/hand” only
- K—No penalty for “wrong hand” shooting

The Lone Ranger (Clayton Moore) is probably the premier hero of the western sagas, going back into the days of radio adventures. Together with Tonto (Jay Silverheels), his faithful Indian companion, they were a match for any bad men.

The Rifleman was played by Chuck Connors on TV in the early Sixties. Deduct 20 from his chance to hit when he uses any weapon but a rifle.

Matt Dillon, the marshal of Dodge City on “Gunsmoke,” was portrayed by William Conrad on radio and James Amess on television.

Paladin (Richard Boone) was the finest example of the paid gunman. His card read “Have Gun, Will Travel”—which was also the name of the show.

Josh Randall was played by Steve McQueen on “Wanted: Dead or Alive.” Josh was the perfect bounty hunter; he carried a special handgun which has the effect of a single-action revolver, except that it is “very fast” and has a range that is 2” (or spaces) longer in all categories.

Hopalong Cassidy (William Boyd) was one of the early TV heroes of the Fifties. “Hoppy” was the two-gunned champion of justice. Yancy Derringer (Jack Mahoney) and Pahoo, his Indian sidekick, were a tough pair. Yancy has a Gambler Rating of 14. Johnny Yuma was played by Nick Adams on “The Rebel,” a TV series of the early Sixties.

The Cisco Kid (Duncan Renaldo) and Pancho (Leo Carrillo) wisecracked their way across the television screens of the late Fifties and early Sixties. “The Cisco Kid” is still in syndication in some areas.

Bret, Bart, and Beau Maverick were played respectively by James Garner, Jack Kelly, and Roger Moore in one of the most popular and well-written television shows ever produced. The “tall, dark strangers” all have Gambler Ratings of 02, and they all prefer talking their way out of trouble to shooting; they will, however, support their friends to the end.

Will (Walter Brennan) and Jeff Sonnet were grandfather and grandson, looking for a missing gunslinger (Will’s son and Jeff’s father) on “The Guns of Will Sonnet.” Will claimed the prodigal son was the third fastest gun in the West. “He’s good, but Jeff’s better—and I’m better than both of ‘em.” No brag, just fact.

Jason McCord was portrayed by Chuck Connors in the TV series “Branded.” Every time

McCord comes into a town there is a 75% chance that someone will recognize him who had a close relative who was killed at Bitter Creek, and will challenge McCord to a gunfight.

Ben, Adam, Hoss, and Little Joe were the Cartwrights of "Bonanza," played by Lorne Greene, Pernell Roberts, Dan Blocker, and Michael Landon. Little Joe was the only left-handed gun in this powerful ranching family, and he also had the quickest temper.

Don "Red" Barry is probably most remembered for his starring role in the movie series "The Adventures of Red Ryder" from 1940 to 1944. His last starring role was in "Iron Angel" (1969) but he has appeared constantly in supporting roles in movies such as "Johnny Get His Gun" (1971) and "Showdown" (1973) since then.

William "Wild Bill" Elliot rose to fame by starring in the movie serial "The Great Adventure of Wild Bill Hickok" in 1938. In 1944 he took over the lead of the "Red Ryder" series from Red Barry in 1950 and 1951 he ran the "Wild Bill Elliot" series on the radio. He continued to make top westerns until the later 50's.

"Hoot" Gibson was one of the first cowboy stunt men. "Action" (1921) began his rise to stardom. During the 1920s. Hoot ranked second only to Tom Mix as the leading cowboy star. His pictures were fast, full of action, but mainly nonviolent. By the 1930s Hoot's popularity declined with the rise of the talkies, but he kept some attention by starring in the first of the "Three Mesquiteers" series (which would later feature such greats as John Wayne and Bob Steele). He later starred in the "Trail Blazers" series in 1943.

William S. Hart, probably more than any other of the early western stars, portrayed the Old West as it really was. Films such as "Tumbleweeds" (1925, 1939) are now classic westerns. When realism in the westerns no longer had box office appeal, Hart retired from his movie career. He never made a talkie!

Tim Holt was a real star. Admittedly, much of the acting, in even the finest of the old western movies, was not top notch. However, Holt displayed a quality of acting ability far above most of his contemporaries. In the late 30's and into the 40's Tim was one of the leading box office draws. In 1946 he made "My Darling Clementine" along with Henry Fonda, Victor Mature, Walter Brennan and Ward Bond which portrayed the events leading up to the famous Gunfight at the OK Corral. It was a top effort. His career ended in the early 50's, but he appeared as late as the 60's in a segment of "The Virginian."

Allan "Rocky" Lane achieved cowboy stardom in the mid-40's. He developed a character who was neat, kind, pleasant, handsome, quick on the trigger and tough in a fist fight. In 1946, he replaced Wild Bill Elliot as the lead in the "Red Ryder" series. His career faded out, along with most of the other movie cowboys, with the rise of TV in the early 50's.

Colonel Tim McCoy was most remembered for the series of films in which he played Lightning Bill Carson. McCoy developed a screen character who was "The Detective of the Range." His character frequently donned disguises during the course of a movie. He starred from the late 20's through the early 40's when he joined the army and attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Joel McCrea rose to stardom in the mid-30's on the strength of some fine non-westerns. His popularity was slipping when, in 1944, he made "Buffalo Bill." After 1945 Joel made mostly westerns, including the title role in "The Virginian." He portrayed various historical figures including Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson and Sam Houston. In the late 40's and early 50's, he did the radio serial "Tales of the Texas Rangers" and in 1959 starred in TV's "Wichita Town." He is still active (starring in "Mustang Country" in 1975) and is currently the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Cowboy Hall of Fame.

Tom Mix was, before becoming a movie actor, once a U.S. Marshal and a Texas Ranger. By 1921 he was the "King of the Cowboys" of the movie western. His films had lots of action, chases and fight scenes. He never smoked or drank on screen and usually no one was killed. He did all of his own stunt work and suffered over eighty injuries during his professional career. He retired from the movies in 1935 and died in an auto wreck in 1940.

The Durango Kid (Charles Starrett) rode across the screen in 56 movies starting in 1940. The "Return of the Durango Kid" appeared in 1945 and continued until 1952. The Kid would appear from nowhere, save the day and reappear as the mild-mannered nobody.

Bob Steele was probably the fastest draw of all of the old movie cowboys. He rose to fame in the late 20's. In the 40's, he did a series as Billy the Kid and made 20 pictures in the "Three Mesquiteers" series. He also starred in the "Trail Blazers" series. He has continued working until the present and the younger generation may remember him as Trooper Duffy on TV's "F Troop."

John Wayne has appeared in a great number of western movies. These ratings represent a composite of his various roles.

Clint Eastwood did appear in westerns on TV, but his career wasn't in the "star" category until he played the "man with no name" character in the "Dollars" movies. Definitely one of the finest gunfighters ever seen, Eastwood has a Gambler Rating of 12.

Lee Van Cleef is one of the few "bad men" who has made it big in the western movies. He played heavies on television and movies from the early Fifties all the way to his most successful role, one of the three gunfighters in Clint Eastwood's movie "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." This launched him in a starring career in European westerns.

Eli Wallach has also achieved some notoriety as a villain, especially in "The Magnificent Seven" and "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." He was a scrappy, trouble-making gunfighter.

Yul Brynner has made several westerns, and the ratings are a composite of these, most notably "The Magnificent Seven," "Catlow," and "Westworld."

Steve McQueen played Yul Brynner's friend in "The Magnificent Seven," where he was a superb rifle shot.

James Coburn is always as "cool as ice" in his best westerns. In "The Magnificent Seven" (on which the ratings are based) his favorite weapon was a stiletto throwing knife with which he had deadly accuracy and speed.

Charles Bronson has been excellent in many movies, including "The Magnificent Seven." His fearlessness and strength have won him the reputation of being a very tough hombre in a fight.

Robert Vaughn was also in "The Magnificent Seven." He portrayed a cowardly con man who overcame his cowardice at the end of the movie, where he died bravely. Before play begins roll percentile dice and a score of 75 or below indicates that the lower bravery score should be used.

Horst Buchholz played the last of the professional gunfighters of "The Magnificent Seven." He was greedy and careful about the odds in a fight, but was dependable and steadfast when in action.

Juan Mateos played Chico in "The Magnificent Seven." Brynner and McQueen were uncertain about taking this brash, untried youth along, but finally gave in because he would make their number seven— "for luck". He survived that movie and reappeared in "Return of the Seven."
