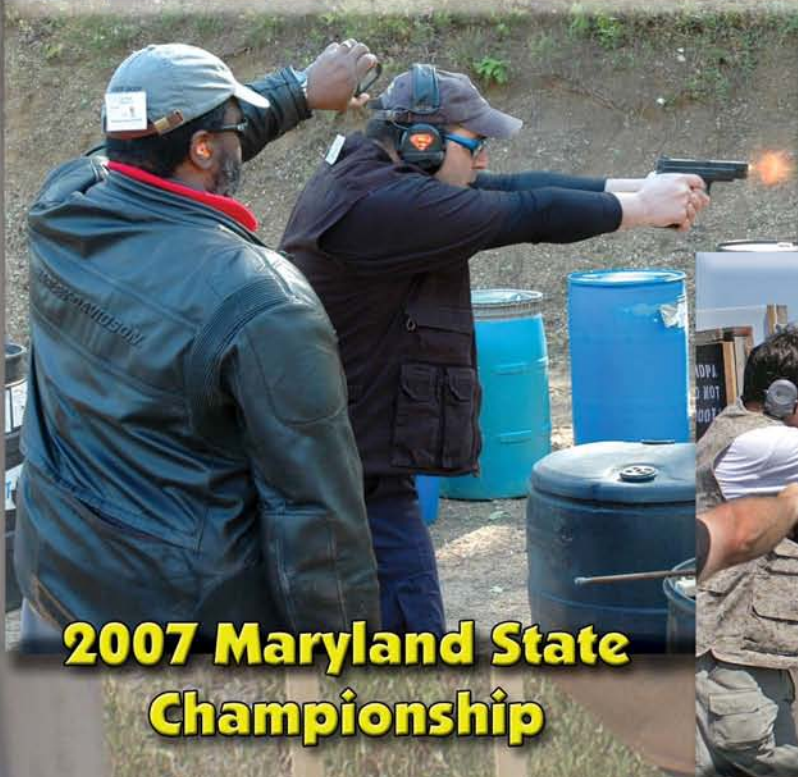


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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEFENSIVE PISTOL ASSOCIATION

First Quarter 2008
Volume 12 - Issue 1

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What's bugging me?

Straight-to-the-point: I feel the 3-inch specification for a revolver is incorrect. I have shot in matches where other competitors are using K-Frame S&W's, loading just the 5-rounds. These would include Model 10's, 15's, 19's and their counterparts in stainless. Also observed were a 2-1/2 inch Colt Python, a Smith model 27, and the Ruger offerings, their 2-3/4 inch "SpeedSix", "Police Service Six", and the "Security Six" models. I would venture that somewhere someone is using a Dan Wesson 357 with a two-and-a-half-inch tube.

I believe the intent of the B-U-G is the traditional S&W Chief Special and its variants: the Centennial and Bodyguard models, both in steel, stainless, or alloy (and the Taurus and Rossi clones), or the Colt Detective Special (including the Agent and Cobra light-weights). In other words, the "J-frames". Now that would mean a barrel of inch-and-seven eighths (for the 38's) to two-and-one eighth (for the 357's).

To include the hand-filling and heavier K-frames seems like gamesmanship, or not playing "in the spirit of the game", to borrow from the Single-Action-Shooting-Society.

I really don't give a crap what others are using, but it just doesn't seem fair, you know, level playing field?

I know this probably isn't high on your priority list, but I felt it worth mentioning. Thanks for the opportunity to express my point of view.

Mike Larney A19717

Mike, I understand where you are coming from but there is always going to be the problem of where to draw the line. It is kind of like the arguments about Glocks, M&P's and the XD's. Some feel they all should be in SSP, some feel they are in the right Division and some feel that none of them belong in SSP but should have a division of their own. The BUG rules were drawn to try and allow the vast number of small sized guns out there a place to compete. It would not be right to ask those short barrel guns to compete in the stan-

dard categories. To add divisions within the BUG Division would not be the right move either. Ultimately the BUG is a fun little division and gives people the chance to try out their pocket rockets, big or small. Editor

Vested Interest

This shouldn't be a very popular idea but here goes. I think we've come to the point where concealment should be more realistic. By now the vest has become the equivalent to a T-shirt that says "I am carrying a gun." Yes, I realize that the vest works very well at the match. Banning the vest is comparable to when it was proposed that NRA Action Pistol competitors not be allowed to steady their guns upon the edge of the barricade at Bianchi Cup with the aid of a lug connected to the side of the pistol. "You gave us a practical problem and we solved it", was the cry from angry competitors. The competitors had a good point. But, those were Open division guns none of which were ever meant to be used in the real world.

I would like to see IDPA shooters compete with less conspicuous every day clothing that would really help them develop their concealed carry skills. Seasonal jackets, sport jackets, untucked shirts and sweatshirts are what most of us really wear. Is controlling what the shooters wear a part of competition in any other setting? Actually, yes. In USPSA competition Army-type fatigues and related gear are not allowed. It is not because the military gear works so well it offers an unfair advantage, (much like the vest in IDPA). The reason is the USPSA does not want media or other spectators to misinterpret their matches as being a militia or para-military gathering. I don't think we have a problem from this perspective in IDPA. To be jocular for a moment I have never heard anyone at an IDPA match gasp, "Call the FBI, it is the armed photographers!"

Perhaps banning the vest is unnecessarily strong wording. But, I think we would all be better served to compete wearing a means of concealment that not only covers our guns but deceives the eyes of those

we encounter just as we do when we carry concealed in our daily lives.

R. Eckstein A25095

While there is some truth behind the "hmm, that guy is wearing a vest. He must have on a gun" thinking, I believe it comes mostly from our side. We see each other wearing vests and assume that because we are carrying a gun everyone wearing a vest must be carrying one too. There are simply too many retail stores, Macy's, Dillard's and the like, that are carrying or have carried vests in their stores. I can't believe these retail giants brought in these lines just to cater to the IDPA or CCW crowd. I even saw a guy wearing a vest in a commercial for Visa. You know, the one where the guy paying with cash slows down the whole choreographed procession paying with their credit card. Ultimately I think that the vest is a good thing and does not scream "gun" to the world at large. Besides, as I accumulate more stuff to go in my pockets, the vest is a good alternative to carrying a purse! Editor

SO, You want to help?

I thought I would throw out a couple of ideas and see what everyone thinks of them.

First, due to time restraints and the physical resetting of targets, SOs are reluctant to show movers more than once. I've noticed the normal human reaction of everyone crowding to the front of pack to watch any movers, twisters or any of the other amazing moving targets that people are devising. I would like to see the first 2 or 3 shooters (if known) in the squad be brought to the front so they are assured of getting a good look at the motion targets. Everyone else will usually get multiple

(Continued on page 32)

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Tactical Journal

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEFENSIVE PISTOL ASSOCIATION

February 2008

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IN THIS ISSUE

A new year is here and the shooting season will get cranked up before you know it. We have some great articles to start off the 2008 shooting season, including the return of The Tactical Advantage column with some great gear. 2007 was a great year for IDPA and we think that 2008 will be even better. Best wishes for a great shooting season in 2008. If you would like to write, please do so at editor@idpa.com. Letters to the editor may be edited for brevity and clarity. RR

Run a Better Match

Build a Better Club



by John L. May A03563

Our first sanctioned match

Back in 2001, we decided that we wanted to hold our first ever sanctioned IDPA match. The Labor Day Shootout, which later became known as the Labor Day Cookout, was our first. As I now recall, temperatures exceeded 100 degrees for most of that weekend. Somewhere there is a picture of me soaked to the skin, hat sideways, and looking like I was just mugged. That weekend was so tough that I still avoid shooting on that holiday weekend to this day. Even with the conditions being so bad, the match was so well received that we got CASA on the map as a place to shoot in the local IDPA circle. Courses of fire were pretty good and the match ran as smoothly as possible considering that we all spent the weekend shooting from an oven. Archie and I shared duties as Match Director for this one; it turned out to work very well. Since it was our first sanctioned match, we wanted to make sure we had all the experience possible leading the event. The match also proved to us all that IDPA had something for the entire club. Remember, CASA was, until that match, mostly an USPSA driven club. IDPA had just been introduced as a method to get shooters for USPSA. It was later proven that cross-over in all directions was possible, all shooting is good shooting. IDPA was

now established as the other sport at our club.

Our first attempt at running a sanctioned match was a success and we all learned a bunch. Prepare for whatever comes your way. Make sure you have enough liquid refreshment for the possible weather. Get some extra staff because you might just need them. Make sure you have a full understanding of the rules since some of your attendees will know them well. You can build your club with well planned matches. The Labor Day Shootout was a milestone for CASA, showing us what was possible for the future. This was our first in a series that finished with the IDPA Nationals coming our way.

If I had it to over again, some things I would now do a little different. First, I would work a budget and set some goals for club building. It seems the thing that was always missing was funds to do the really cool stuff. Since CASA has the good fortune to own its own land and all that you find there, we had to make sure we could cover the bases. I know that some of you shoot on borrowed property, some use indoor ranges that are operated by commercial enterprises, and some even just get by with what they can find each month. I have heard of some clubs that move from range to range with no permanent home. At CASA we owned the

land, all the props, targets, and buildings located on the property. Most were built with the proceeds from matches. At the beginning of each year, the board of directors would meet and set our goals for the next year. Most of the time it was about what we needed to add to the club's facilities, other times it was cool targets and the like. Since we had no real budget, we just shot from the hip and made the best of what we earned the next year. One of the rules we tried to follow was no more debt. We still owed for the land in those days, but never added to that. One of my favorite things about IDPA is the fact that most of the revenue stays with the local club. I know that some of you look for a big prize table, but I am telling you now that clubs need revenue to grow and in some cases to just survive.

Second thing you have to have is support. I never had any trouble with that at our club. After joining the Board and moving up the ranks, most all of our members shared my same vision. Get a plan and make sure you have the rank and file support. Shooters are what make a club. Just remember that they come in all sorts of packages. From the occasional plinker to the diehard, race-gun wear'n, steel-kill'n match master. I think back to the work days where the same folks that were there the previous



Women's Perspective

by Julie Goloski A19366

Overcoming Strength and Sizes:

Husbands, boyfriends, fathers, uncles and male friends have brought many women I know into shooting sports like IDPA. A "Daddy's Girl" myself, I am very grateful that my father took me to the range when I was young. These wonderful male figures have taught us so much when it comes to shooting and competition. They often teach what they personally know to be true about shooting based on their own experiences. There is much to learn from them, but at the same time many don't have to counteract lack of strength and/or size to perform at the same level because they simply have never had to deal with these issues.

Women often ask me how to improve their shooting based on their size and strength. Many tell me that they can shoot just as well as their fellow male competitors when it comes to accuracy. They often find though, that when they are performing under the clock, they don't do as well as they would like in comparison.

It's no secret that the vast majority of women have less upper body strength than the average male. Does this mean that women can't shoot well in speed/action shooting competitions? No. I have found that technique can really help overcome many strength obstacles and it begins with the fundamentals in stance and grip.

Freestyle Stance:

Many instructors teach a shooting stance with feet shoulder width

apart. I prefer an even wider stance with my strong side foot (right foot for me) back so that the toes on my right foot are even with the back of my left heel. This helps me lower my center of gravity and create a very stable platform while still allowing me to twist at the waist. Knees should be slightly bent while leaning forward. Bending at the waist, into the gun, and keeping your joints loose, helps the body acts as a shock absorber. When the gun recoils, much of the recoil energy is absorbed by the entire body instead of having to counteract recoil with upper body and grip strength.

Some have found that locking their elbows straight while shooting helps them to control recoil. Though it may work for these shooters, I strongly discourage it because of the stress it places on the elbow joints, and in turn may lead to injury. I have found the isosceles position with my arms (arms form the two sides of an isosceles triangle when extended) to be the best way to be able to control recoil while still maintaining the ability to transition from left to right quickly. The goal is to be able to keep your arms rigid while shooting. When not firing, this position allows the freedom to quickly bend

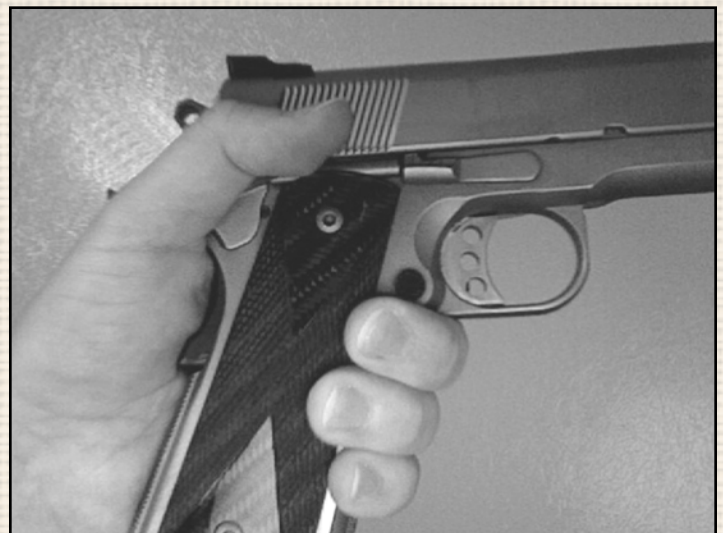
your elbows in toward the body to increase your speed on wide target-to-target transitions, leaving a shooting position and also settling into a new position. You can still create a solid upper body platform for the gun by bending the elbows slightly and tightening the muscles in your arms, shoulders and chest.

I have found that the lighter/smaller the woman, the more aggressive her stance should be especially when shooting stock guns that recoil. When I shoot, I change my stance based on the power of the recoil. The more recoil, a stock 1911 in .45 caliber with major powered loads for example, the more I used my body to counteract the recoil lift by widening my stance, and leaning forward at the waist.

Grip:

Having a good, high grip on the firearm can really help control recoil. Start with positioning your strong hand by getting as high as possible along the back of the gun with the web of your strong hand.

(Continued on page 26)



Behind the Badge

by Rob Haught CL068



I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable holiday, and Santa brought all the Goodies for the coming shooting season that we asked for!

At this time of year, most of the local clubs have shut down for the winter months. This leaves us with the weekends and nowhere to go to shoot a match. Everyone looks forward to the first match in the spring to dust off the gear and see old friends again.

As LEO's we don't have the luxury of taking the winter off from the reality of needing to stay proficient with our sidearms and we work outside in all kinds of weather. My suggestion is that you form a small group of buddies who come to the range on the weekend throughout the year and train. Notice I said "Train" not plink. At home, we have a small group of diehards who show up each Sunday, rain or snow or shine and go through a few hours of pistol drills and socialize. It is a tradition that has lasted several years and allows us to shoot with cold weather clothing and gear and keeps the very perishable shooting skills sharp.

Cold weather shooting allows you to test your ability to draw from the concealment of heavy coats and shoot with gloves such as you will wear on duty. This is something most Agencies don't do on a formal basis but you need to be able to do. It will allow you to select what type of gloves allow you the best shooting dexterity but

will still keep you from freezing.

One of the best side benefits to the shooting group over the years is it has become sort of a informal testing ground for equipment and firearms. I have been able to procure better equipment for my Department based on actual experience in using it during cold weather training sessions and seeing what works and what doesn't during our Sunday Shootfests. Things like Gore-Tex, Polarfleece, Polypropylene and Smartwool have made our lives much more comfortable at work.

Let's say you are stuck inside and don't have anywhere you can go to do an off season shooting program, what can you do? Two things I have found that will help to keep you sharp and pass the snow days are Dry Practice and Reloading.

Dry Practice is just that. All the manipulations and movement without the noise. The combinations of skills you can practice without firing a shot are numerous. The very first and most important component to any Dry Practice routine is SAFETY. You must insure that ALL ammunition is secured in another room while you train. Pick a particular skill set that you want to work on such as the draw stroke, or tactical reloads, etc. and set a time limit such as 15 minutes. When you are finished with your task, then you are FINISHED! Where the danger lies is when you are finished and have put your gear back together

with the ammo and decide to do one last sight picture..., you can see where I'm going with this. Pick a safe area with a wall that is fairly bulletproof with nothing living on the other side. You might want to avoid aiming at the new plasma TV you just got for Xmas also. More TV's have gone to their reward when the owner tries to out draw Matt Dillon during the opening credits of Gunsmoke than can be counted. (For you younger readers, "Gunsmoke" was a very popular western TV show.)

One of the very best training aids I have ever used is a product called Beamhit. It is a laser aiming device that emits a laser pulse whenever you dryfire and has a target that records your hits and can be set to give an audible beep when hit to give you some feedback. This is the best way to hone your trigger control that I have seen. I use it when training new shooters to teach the fundamentals of sight picture and trigger control. It's in use by a lot of tactical units and the military because it is so effective. I have seen the difference between shooters who have had a few hours of Beamhit dry practice and those who haven't on their first range session with a handgun and it's dramatic. When I was shooting major matches on a more regular basis, I used to travel with one and dry fire in the motel room the night before the match. I have a few units at work and on the backshift I run Deputies through a few minutes of dry prac-

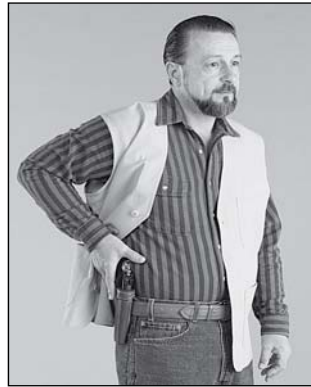
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The Great Texas Shoot-out

by John Banister A12693

On June 2, 2007, Collin County IDPA hosted the Texas State IDPA Championship Match at the Jacob's Plain Gun Club north of Greenville, Texas. One hundred seventy-five shooters gathered to compete for Texas IDPA glory, and, by all measures, it was a resounding success.

This was the third consecutive sanctioned match and 1st Texas State IDPA match hosted by Collin County IDPA (CCIDPA) and run by Match Director and CCIDPA President Cody Ray (A03452). He gave his vision for the match in the shooter's briefing: "We're here to have fun, be safe, and follow all the IDPA rules; especially cover."

The Weather

Last year's North Texas Regional sanctioned match had been plagued by a heat wave with 105+ degree temperatures, making shooting conditions uncomfortable. This year was the exact opposite. Prior to the Saturday match

North Texas had suffered from four weeks of almost constant rain. By Friday two days of sun had dried things. Late that day, I asked Cody if he felt lucky about the weather, and he answered, "I think we've dodged a bullet."

This must have tempted fate because that night brought a down-pour. Match day dawned with all of the seven shooting bays muddy, and two looked more like rivers than IDPA stages. The sun just peeked out by scheduled match time, so we delayed the start 90 minutes to let things dry out. When the first shot rang out, all the stages were muddy but safe. By lunchtime the ground was firm in most stages. By 3:00 p.m. all that remained of the mud was a few wet spots and the two or three pounds of dried Texas mud everyone carried on their clothes and shoes. As Cody said, "On the positive side, this mud sure beats the 105+ degree heat at last year's North Texas Regional Match."

(Continued on page 13)



How Collin County IDPA Got Out the Scores 9½ minutes After the Last Shot

CCIDPA scorekeeper Lee Neel tells the story of the 2007 Texas Championship Match:

"I wrote a Microsoft Access database that enters the scores bar-codes from their score sheets. The program is called "IDPA Score Major Match." We have used it for the past 3 sanctioned matches hosted by CCIDPA. For the 2007 TX State match Jim Morgan, and Ken Cobb and I did all the data entry. We had 3 computers with LCD monitors and bar-code scanners. The bar-code made data entry simple. All that was needed was to enter the time, points down, and penalties and then push 1 button. We had only 2 errors out of 2100 score sheets, one of which was caught before the scores were posted. If a club doesn't have bar-code reader the program also can be used by entering the shooter number and stage in the event.

"With this system we posted the final scores less than 10 minutes after the last shot was fired. We received many, many compliments on how quickly and how accurate the scores were. I have two versions of this program on my website, both of which are available for any IDPA club. There is a version for regular club matches that keeps shooters data to use again and again and then there is the major match version. I am currently working on the documentation for the major match version so other clubs can use it more easily. My web site is

www.commencefiring.com, and people are free to contact me for assistance anytime at info@commencefiring.com."

A man wearing a blue baseball cap with "Team Springfield" on it, blue ear protection, and a dark vest over a white shirt is aiming a handgun. The background is a blurred green wall.

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The Stages

CCIDPA's recent past president Lee Neel designed 9 of the 12 stages, and every stage presented the shooter with a different challenge to his or her shooting skills. Some, such as "Reload Prez", were deceptively simple, requiring fast shoot-

ing and quick reloads. Others were more complicated, incorporating movement, swingers, falling poppers, and multiple Mozambiques. Here are three stages that shooters will remember for a long time:



ing and quick reloads. Others were more complicated, incorporating movement, swingers, falling poppers, and multiple Mozambiques. Here are three stages that shooters will remember for a long time:

"Close Business." This stage started behind a closed door. To the right and left of the doorway were nearby targets which had to be engaged first. Once the "outside" targets were neutralized, it was time to go through the closed doorway. To do this the shooter had to pull a cable and then open the door knob, all with the weak hand. Once the door was open, he saw that pulling the cable had activated a no-shoot

the IDPA Box is a wooden box with a hinged top which measures the maximum allowable size for pistols. If the box will close on your gun, it's OK. If it won't, you're in trouble. Many pistol shooters (myself included) have come to hate the box, not because they have non-IDPA compliant guns but because opening it on the clock is a necessary pain. On the start signal, the shooter opened

the box and retrieved his gun. In front of him were two targets at almost contact distance which had to be engaged in Tactical Sequence while seated. Once this was done, the shooter got up and advanced down a hallway, engaging targets to the right and left while maintaining cover in the hall. This seemed simple until the shooter realized that cover changed depending on which side of the hall he used. A couple of quick appearing no-shoots spiced up this stage, as did the mud.

"Save Joe Bob." Without a doubt this was the most reviled (and therefore the best) stage in the match. At first glance this "all Mozambique" stage seemed simple. The shooter started standing behind a set of barrels. On the start signal he engaged a close target and then advanced to another set of barrels, accomplishing a moving Mozambique along the way. From the barrels he took a knee and did three



The Great Texas Shoot-out



more Mozambiques, all from close range. Piece of Cake!

Until the shooter met Joe Bob. Joe Bob was the ungainliest life-size dummy anyone had ever seen. Once the shooter finished with the first target, he had to pick up Joe Bob in his weak hand and carry him forward while doing that moving Mozambique (obviously strong hand only -- thanks to Joe Bob)

from about 10 yards. That made the head shot quite a challenge.

The shooter then had to drop Joe Bob behind a barrel before advancing to the final kneeling targets.

The catch was that Joe Bob had to be dropped in such a way that he was completely shielded by the barrel. That meant that the shooter had to carefully lay Joe Bob down with his head against the barrel and his body aligned with cover so that the entire dummy was hidden from the next target. If Joe Bob stuck out from behind the barrel the shooter had to stop and put Joe Bob right.

The Prizes

The prize table was a sight to behold. CCIDPA raffled off over \$19,000 worth of prizes. Thirteen pistols were on the table: 12 Springfield XD Tacticals in 3 calibers and one Smith & Wesson M&P. The single M&P that went first-- to CCIDPA's own C.J. Pruszynski. A list of match sponsors can be found on CCIDPA's web site at www.ccidpa.org

The Staff

This shoot could not have been done without our staff. Over 35 CCIDPA SO certified members, supplemented by SOs from other Texas IDPA clubs (including WHIDPA-Houston, Paris IDPA and CTIDPA-Ft. Worth) set the stages up and acted as ROs, scorekeepers, score sheet runners, administration, etc. Special appreciation goes to the

(Continued on page 16)

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match, and that is really something. Congratulations again to you and your staff for a great Texas State match.” -George M.

“Cody, Good Morning! Margo and I had a GRRRRRRrrreat time. With the exception of the sloppy conditions, we LOVED the activities; the socializing on Friday night; the folks; the food; the classy plaques; and the prize table even WITHOUT bringing home a gun!” -Bob B.

“It was the best run match I shot so far this year. I had better resharpen my pencil and try to outdo you this year. Man, that’s going to be a hard project to overcome.” -Greg B.

official scorekeepers Lee Neel, Jim Morgan, and Ken Cobb. Lee Neel’s computerized bar code scoring system had all the scores out accurately within 9 ½ minutes of the last shot being fired. This has to be a record for a sanctioned IDPA match (see page 11). Safety was provided by John Piper, CCIDPA’s own Chief SO as well as an IDPA SO Instructor. Photography was provided by Larry Howard.

The Shooters


Any of the CCIDPA staff will tell you that the shooters make the match. We had them from everywhere. As Cody said, “We had shooters from eleven states, the District of Columbia, and two foreign countries: Italy and California.” This was the 5-man Italian contingent’s second IDPA sanctioned match this year, and they plan to return for two or three more this year.

Feedback

The members of CCIDPA are proud to have sponsored the 2007 Texas State Championship Match. We feel that it was one of the best run and the most fun sanctioned matches in memory. Lest you think we are biased, here are just a few of the responses that Cody received in the days after the match. They tell the story:

“Hey Cody, I hope you are getting rested up from the Match. You are probably planning the 2008 match by now. Other than the mud, I have not heard one person say anything negative about the entire

“Just wanted to say again what a great job you and your crew did with the State Match. I thought the COF’S were Great! Straight forward, no gimmicks, good movement and a few options on how to shoot them. Awesome Job! The RO’s did a solid job and remained friendly and helpful through the entire match. I have not heard of anyone not having had a good time (with the exception of their final score.)” - Gordon C.

“Cody, ol’ boy!! Thank you a million for a wonderful shoot. It was well-done... all of it... from the setting up to the tearing down. Ray, Bill, and I were pooped out Saturday but we decided today that if it was coming up this weekend, we’d shoot!” -Ron T. 



CCIDPA’s C.J. Pruszynski and Shooter

The Maryland 2007 IDPA Championship

by Gordon MacPherson A09219

They roll in past the Lone Star Steakhouse, the display of parked Vietnam era jets, past Naval Air Station Patuxent River Gate One. They take a right on Shangri La Lane, another quick right onto Great Mills Road and then a left at the golf driving range. Driving past a weather-beaten sign they read "Sanner's Lake Sportsman Club, Since 1951." They slow down for two white swans that are holding their ground on the now unpaved road beside the lake and in 30 more seconds they are there. They are blue collar, white collar, urban, suburban, rural, geeks, rednecks, law enforcement, retired, employed, civilian, military and ex-military, males and females. They are very young and in their late sixties. They are couples, fathers and sons, some whole families. Forty-nine come from Virginia, 48 from Maryland, 20 from Pennsylvania and the remaining 24 from

states as far away as Florida to the south, Massachusetts to the north and Tennessee to the west. A few are spectators. They have all come for the Maryland 2007 IDPA State Championship Match held in Lexington Park, Maryland on May 4, 5 and 6.

They don't yet know it, but they've entered a high crime area. In the next few hours they will be assaulted by armed robbers, gangs, even three gents who invite them for a "friendly" poker game. They won't be able to enjoy the neighborhood pizza parlor without a fight. And never mind Club Boz, where

they might have expected a deadly encounter - even the local grocery store and boutique will be robbed! About the only thing they might have expected, that actually didn't



Muzzle flash on Stage 11

happen, was that they didn't have to drag an 80 pound dummy named Earl to safety during a shootout in the gas station.

Setting Up

Setting up the match is accomplished two days before general (non-staff) competitors arrive, by a work party of 14 under the leadership of Match Director James "JJ" Jackson, Assistant Match Director Gregory "Greg" Knapp and Range Master Rick "Boz" Boswell. The sky is overcast and a little rain is in the forecast for the afternoon, a mere glimpse of things to come.

After a few unkind words directed at hard-to-start machinery and power tools, targets and range equipment are set in place. Each stage is airgunned and checked for safety. Yellow caution tape is put up where needed to keep back anyone not shooting. With an eye to



Safety Officer Lou Abbott watches a shooter handle the Knife Threat on Stage 4 during the rain on Saturday afternoon.



A shooter reloads on Stage 5 after knocking down the popper (upper left of photo) that activates a clamshell device, causing two threats to “stand back up”.

the berm, special attention is paid to target placement and the angle of fire that would result from shooter height. Anticipating the movements and angles of fire of left-handed shooters is also a concern, along with other safety issues. Every stage is double-checked by different members of the setup crew.

Most of the setup crew shoot through at the end of this day and a few are overheard saying how challenged they were by the very stages that they had set up or even designed.

Range Officers Shoot the Match

The next day, Friday, the first official match day, is reserved for the R.O.s to shoot. The day is partly cloudy and in the sixties throughout, a great day for a match. Joe Paige, the IDPA Area Coordinator, is onsite.

The match consists of 11 stages: three drill/standard stages and eight scenario stages. One stage is shot in the shoothouse using a flashlight. Five stages require shooting on the move; six are stationary. On one stage knocking down a popper causes two threats to “stand

back up.” A non-threat swinger gets in the way of threat targets on one stage. A slider (mover) is activated by opening a door in one scenario and traverses laterally across the entire stage, appearing and disappearing behind non-threats and props. On one stage a popper has to be knocked down by getting a solid hit in the center of mass of a partially obscured paper target. When the popper falls, it activates a double turner. One stage makes use of an activator plate that, when stepped on, causes a non-threat turner to temporarily block shooting at threats.

Shots Fired

The next morning, Saturday, the shooter’s briefing for general competitors is held in front of the clubhouse under a beautiful blue sky inhabited by scattered white clouds. When it’s over, squads of shooters move off to the range. Stage briefings begin and then commands of “Stand

back up.” A non-threat swinger gets in the way of threat targets on one stage. A slider (mover) is activated by opening a door in one scenario and traverses laterally across the entire stage, appearing and

by!” are shouted, followed by the buzzer. Everywhere on the range shooters listen for the first rounds and when they are heard someone says “Shots fired!” to mimic television cop shows. R.O.s start to worry about their stage falling behind when they hear shots fired first on another stage. The match is really underway now.

The Tricky Stages

Shooters learn quickly from the mistakes of those who shoot first and word spreads across the range:

Remember that on Stage 1, called the Warren Drill after IDPA Master Scott Warren, each string of fire starts with a different target and must be shot in tactical sequence from that point to avoid procedurals. It’s the string of fire starting with the middle of three targets that is throwing people off because they’re used to starting at the far left (T1) or far right (T3), not the middle (T2).

On Stage 4, “Knife Attack,” remember to shoot T1 and T2 from retention, elbow by your side. And no moving while shooting from retention, as some have done. Either infraction will cost a procedural.



Ryan Brammer, center, receives his award for SSP Champion from James “JJ” Jackson. To Ryan’s immediate left is Greg Knapp, Assistant Match Director.



Scott Warren engaging threat targets. Notice the position of the ejected shell. The shell has not ejected far, but Scott is already back on target.

On Stage 5, “Double Trouble,” when the second popper goes down, it triggers a clamshell device that causes two fresh targets to “stand back up” in place of the two targets you just hit with body shots. This is because they are wearing body armor. The newly appearing targets must be engaged with two shots each to the head. Body hits don’t count on these targets. Since these targets do not disappear, if they do not have at least one head shot each, there will be a failure to neutralize.

On Stage 9, “Pizza Hut Shoot-out,” the mover must be engaged with two rounds *while it is moving* before a make-up shot can be made when it stops.

On Stage 10, “Bad Day at the Boutique,” you must shoot through the clothing rack and hit the paper target in the center of mass to knock down the popper which is directly behind it. This is what triggers the double turner.

Scott Warren and Donnie Burton

Everybody is soon aware that Scott Warren and Donnie Bur-

ton are among the match’s Saturday morning competitors. Scott was High Senior at the IDPA Nationals in 2006 and Donnie, a freshman at Marietta College in Ohio, was High Junior at that match. Both say very little and smile not at all while competing, but they do ask detailed questions of Range Officers concerning each stage they are

about to shoot. When the opportunity is presented, they go down-range to peer around barrels and barricades and mentally rehearse their run. Make no mistake about it, they are “in the zone.”

On Stage 6 Donnie Burton doesn’t wait for both feet to be on the ground after advancing to a barrel. Instead, he speeds things up by shooting accurately while balancing on the foot that gets there first.

When the match is over, Scott Warren will be High Senior and Donnie Burton will be High Junior, just as at the Nationals. Burton will also be ESP Division Champion.

When Eviscerating a Non-threat is a Freebie

Over in another shooting bay, at Stage 11, IDPA Area Coordinator

Joe Paige explains a little known IDPA rule. A shooter has “eviscerated” the non-threat turner, hitting it from the side and creating a lateral tear in the target. “If it was a shoot target, it would be a miss, so this is a miss,” says Joe. Therefore, no five second penalty is given.

Nobody’s Pasting but Me!

The Saturday morning shooters are finished. It is precisely 1:30 P.M. now, time for the Saturday afternoon shooters to begin. It begins to rain steadily. Targets are covered with clear plastic drycleaner’s bags. Shooters don parkas and some carry umbrellas. Many shooters are reluctant to leave the scant cover provided by a few leaky tarpaulins to paste up targets. Things slow down considerably. Safety Officer Lou Abbott shouts to anyone who will listen, “Nobody’s pasting but me!”

On Stage 4 one of the most



amazing competitors at this match is shooting. He is 13 year old Sonny Morton. Sonny is here with his Mom, Robin Morton and his Dad, Nevitt Morton, who are also competing. Sonny will rise to be

The Maryland 2007 IDPA Championship

the top SSP Sharpshooter at this match. Fellow competitors jokingly tell his Dad that Sonny might just “spank” him. He does, with a match score of 213.18 compared to a joyful father’s 233.71. As his Dad is an ESP-Expert, Sonny Morton is a competitor to watch. Could shooting skill be genetic?

Following Sonny on the now swampy Stage 4 (Knife Attack) is Ann Marie Trew of Cleveland, Tennessee. That’s right - Tennessee. She will be remembered as

the Purple Lady. Some say she sets the new standard in Lady Competitor fashion. Study her photo carefully and you’ll see why.

Improved? “Dramatically So”

Sunday’s shooters encounter fair skies and beautiful weather.

Travis Inouye has returned. When he last competed at Sanners Lake Sportsmen’s Club in 2000,

he was a senior at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis. Now that his military career is well-launched and he has a family, he wants to get back into shooting after a seven year hiatus. Asked if, in his opinion, the average shooter is better today than



Heidi Shintani on Stage 10, “The Boutique.”
 Notice the popper is going down behind the clothing rack and the turner to the left on the red stand is beginning to appear.



Ann Marie Trew, The Purple Lady, makes a fashion statement.

seven years ago, he doesn’t hesitate to answer, “Dramatically so.”

It is now 1 P.M.. All shooters are packing up to leave.

Here is how it all ended at The Maryland 2007 IDPA Championship:

Numbers in (parenthesis) are target points down.

CDP Champion:	James Jackson	Expert	182.05 (34)
ESP Champion:	Donnie Burton	Master	132.32 (26)
SSP Champion:	Ryan Brammer	Master	158.88 (30)
ESR Champion:	Dave White	Sharpshooter	257.42 (62)
SSR Champion:	Steve Hammer	Sharpshooter	292.51 (96)
High Senior:	Scott Warren	ESP - Master	152.61 (40)
High Lady:	Cindy Bowser	SSP - Sharpshooter	224.64 (27)
High Law Enforcement:	Scott Warren	ESP - Master	152.61 (40)
High Veteran:	Grag Knapp	SSP - Master	232.01 (107)
High Junior:	Donnie Burton	ESP - Master	132.32 (26)
High Military:	Michael Morton	ESP - Expert	214.53 (45)
High Distinguished Senior:	Richard Baker	SSP - Sharpshooter	299.80 (34)

On The Road

by **Dennis Hull A06549**

This article is about two things. First, to encourage you fellow shooters to take in an IDPA match when traveling, and second to invite all of you to shoot with the Las Vegas Nevada IDPA Club when visiting Sin City. Well, it's really about three things, but I'll get to that later.

edge of Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, 197,000 acres of some impressive geology.

I have had the opportunity to visit other clubs. From a Match Director's perspective, those experiences were

national championships. In April 2008, the Las Vegas IDPA Club and DSRPC will be hosting the Nevada State IDPA Championship.



“educational”. I discovered innovation, in-

This is the third thing and a shameless plug.

In my travels, other clubs with



physical limitations revealed some novel ways to maximize what they did have. Here, stage designs were critical. Indoor facilities could not

We hold monthly matches at Desert Sportsman Rifle and Pistol Club (DSRPC) every second Saturday. The range is situated on the



tegrity, and also some strange hybrid varieties. As a shooter, it was just plain fun.

Las Vegas is fortunate with DSRPC to have free-style bays to accommodate pistol, long-range rifle and shotgun. We have trailers overflowing with props and have hosted numerous

allow shots off the sidewalls and the floors for obvious reasons. With attention to safety, movement could be limited and directed to allow the stage to be both challenging and safe.

Another club shot in a covered outdoor bay due to the frequency of rain. Some smart folks built in sliding panels that served as cover or physical barriers. When it came

On the Road



I encourage you attend an IDPA match when you travel. It is a relief to break up that business trip with a match. Your vacation is about having fun, right? Why not take in a match or two? If your travels should bring you to Las Vegas, then

need to borrow. Gabbing about guns with fellow shooters is enjoyable, no matter where you may be. Plus, you can take back match knowledge to your own club.

So, in between the gambling and the shows in Sin City, join us. At the Las Vegas IDPA club monthly matches we can promise you 6 stages of honest defense scenarios with an occasional exercise to hone your skills. We shoot once a month on the second Saturday of each month. Visit our website – www.LasVegasIDPA.com - for exact times and directions. Make plans to join us for the 2008 Nevada State IDPA Championship the second weekend in April. Arizona is holding their state match the first weekend in April. Why not make it a two-fer? See you on the road. 

time to shoot the next stage, like the crew of a Broadway stage play – zip/zoom, props were shuffled in and out to create a new scenario. That club and many indoor clubs I have visited capitalized on what they did have



please join us. We can also let you know about other shooting events scheduled in our area.

We have had visitors from as far away as Britain

by designing stages that shared props.

Unfortunately, some “Defensive Pistol” matches I visited have morphed into some mutant species barely resembling our sport. At least some of them had the integrity to not call it IDPA. Allowing magazines to be dropped at any time and including machine pistols were a couple of “rules made better” at the whim of one club.



and the Philippines shoot in our matches. We can usually scrounge up whatever equipment you may

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Random Shots Those Darned Gamers!

Thought provoking ideas to
stimulate discussion on
the continued growth of IDPA

by **Steven Vandermolen A08637**

Through out my career in IDPA I have heard people talking about how the “gamers” are ruining our sport. At almost every event I have attended, someone has complained about “those darned gamers.” The problem I have is that how the term “gamer” is defined.

All too often the word gamer and cheater are used interchangeably. One of the things I appreciate about IDPA is the fact that we have good rules. People who intentionally shoot outside the rules are cheaters and we have methods within our structure to deal with them. People who fail to violate the rules of IDPA should suffer consequences. Procedural penalties, Failure to do right penalties, disqualification, and even banishment are all remedies for people who try to gain a competitive advantage through cheating. There is no place in our sport for cheaters.

If a cheater is a cheater, what then is a gamer? I submit that a “gamer is a shooter who shoots a match in the most innovative and efficient manner within the rules. While IDPA is a great opportunity to refine our gun-handling skills, it is a competition – a game. As long as we keep score, and none of the targets shoot back, it will continue to be a game. Until we no longer declare a winner in any match, competitive shooters will try to win. The title gamer is not an insult; it is part of our sport.

I have a couple of examples of how I have seen the term gamer applied.

Ammunition – As we all know, IDPA rules specify 125,000 power factor for the SSP, ESP and SSR divisions. CDP and ESR require 165,000 power factor. Power factor is determined by multiplying bullet weigh by the velocity of the load. I regularly hear that shooters are gaming the sport by using ammunition that runs very close to the specified power factor. This is not fair, it is claimed, because (a) it is not as powerful as full defensive ammunition or (b) it gives reloaders an unfair advantage. To both of these claims I reply “so what.” If the rules state the power factor floor, and the ammunition makes power factor,

there is no discussion. It is within the rules. If you feel the ammunition is not powerful enough for you to use in a defensive situation, you are welcome to use more powerful ammunition. If you choose to use ammunition that just makes the power floor, you are not a gamer, you are an economical shooter.

Holsters – I have heard many times that any shooter who uses one holster for carry and another for matches is a gamer. To a certain extent this is true. I use my match holster for carry occasionally, but mostly use another holster for carry. My match holster is a straight drop Kydex belt holster and my carry holster is a Kydex paddle holster with an FBI cant. The difference is that my straight drop holster is safer in a match because there is little risk of pointing the muzzle at the people behind me during reholstering. The FBI cant on the paddle holster conceals the butt of the pistol better against my body. Also, once I have my match holster on, it can stay on for the duration of the match; my carry holster may have to be removed during the day if I have to enter places where I cannot legally carry. Both of my holsters are well within the holster requirements in the IDPA rule book, both are legal for matches. Again, if the shooter is using equipment that is legal according to the rules, they may be gaming, but they are not cheating.

“The Spirit of the Scenario” – The most controversial discussion of gamers relates to trying to determine how a scenario should be shot in the spirit of IDPA. Personally, I have no way of knowing what the designer was thinking when they set up a scenario. I just look for the most efficient way to get through it, within the current rules. If I find a way to shoot it that saves me time, I don’t see that

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Random Shots - Those Darned Gamers!

as gaming, rather it is being innovative. If I can shoot a scenario better, faster, cleaner than my opponent, I win, just like in the real world.

My favorite example of this occurred in the 2002 Texas State championship. The course description for Scenario #4 read: "Shooter may begin at P-1 or P-2. At the signal, draw and engage all threat targets with a minimum of two shots each. Targets may be engaged from a position of cover behind the barricade, from around the barrel, or while moving between cover positions." A diagram of the scenario is shown in Figure 1.

The group I was shooting with spent a lot of time debating which position would be the best to start, whether to shoot while moving or run to the second position and engage targets and if we should transition from one side of cover to the other. All of us, that is except my good friend Frank Lynn. Frank studied the scenario and said little. As he was the last shooter in our group, he stated that he would wait until his

turn to decide. All of us did a pretty credible job of running the scenario and were pretty pleased until Frank came to the line. At the buzzer, Frank engaged all of the targets from the left side of position one, only moving enough to "slice the pie" to the next target. When he finished and his time was announced, he had shot it in about half the time of the rest of us.

Frank didn't cheat, but he sure gamed the scenario! The best part of this story is that all of us shooting with him were really pleased for him and admired the way he shot it. He had the fastest time in our group, and he earned it.

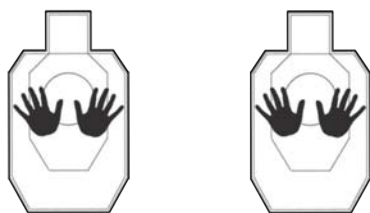
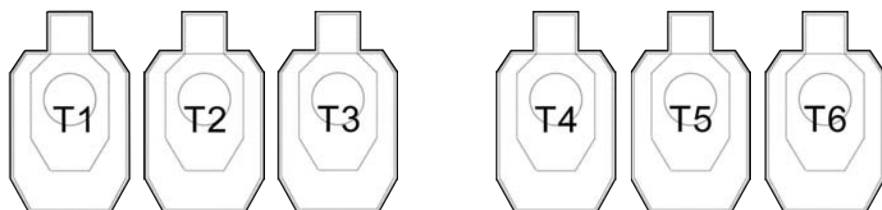


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Gamers exist in every sport from NASCAR racing to Curling. Traditionally, the greatest advances in any sport have come from the people who are working close to the edge of the rules. It is a talent to understand the rules and work within them to be the most efficient participant. This isn't bad, it's human nature. If the situation gets out of control, a well thought-out change of the rules may be in order to keep the situation under control. The only way to eliminate "gamers" is to stop keeping score and posting the results of matches. Without the competition though, the sport would die.

For now celebrate the gamers. Learn from them and apply the things that work, as long as they comply with the existing rules. The improvement in your times may surprise you. If it gets out of control, we can always change the rules...

Stay safe...Shoot fast...Don't miss...



P1



P2

The Tactical Advantage

By: Robert Ray



Wilson Combat ETM

Wilson Combat has long been the standard in the world for reliable .45 ACP magazines. The first thing that a lot of us do when we buy a new 1911 is toss the factory magazines and re-equip it with the Wilson 47D. Simply put, it just didn't get any better than that. Until now.

Recently, Wilson released the ETM. ETM stands for Elite Tactical Magazine and although I did not think you could ask for any better, some people did and Wilson responded with the ETM. Unlike most 1911 magazines, the ETM is not a 7 round magazine reworked to accept 8 rounds. The ETM is designed to be an 8 round magazine from the ground up.

Using Wilson's 30 years of experience combined with modern manufacturing processes and materials, the ETM will be the new standard in magazine performance.

The magazine body is a high quality stainless steel that has been designed to help eliminate feed lip cracking and body fatigue. These are two areas

the follower and base pad. These two components were made out of super tough nylon. The redesigned



follower has an extended skirt and this, combined with the slick finish and the smooth interior of the magazine body, makes for positive and flawless operation. The base pad has been designed with a slight flare out from the width of the magazine body. Anyone that has ever tried to draw a wet or muddy magazine in

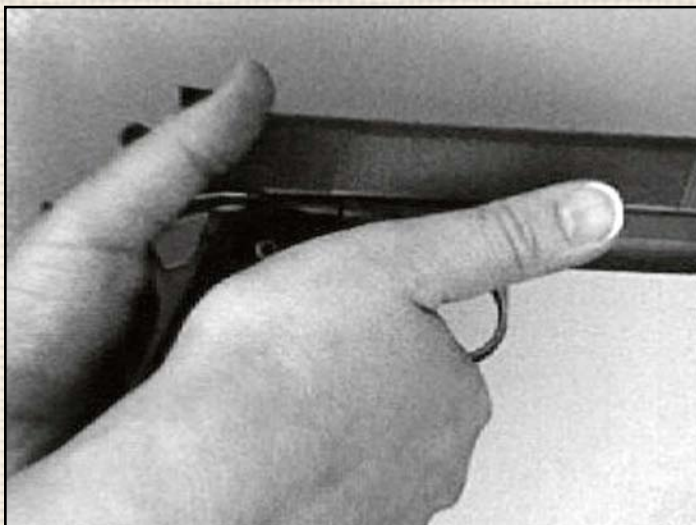


that plague magazines built with lesser materials and poorer design specifications. The ammunition observation slots have been moved from the center of the magazine tube towards the rear. This move was made to help improve and maintain structural integrity. There are also the numbers 2 through 8 marked along the port so as to easily be able to tell how many rounds remain in the magazine.

Strict attention was also paid to

a match will appreciate this grip enhancing design. For those people that like to keep track of their magazines, the bottom of each base pad is numbered 1 through 10. This is very handy if you like rotate your magazines for competition or concealed carry. The base pad is also designed to add a little extra space for the spring. This combined with the new stainless steel spring will increase the spring life. This should put to rest the fears of those that

(Continued on page 28)



If using a 1911 or firearm with a 1911-style thumb safety, consider riding the safety with your thumb in order to keep it from engaging while you are firing. This will also help you maintain a high grip. The higher you can get on the back-strap of the gun, the more you can counteract the gun's recoil by providing resistance.

Next, bring your support hand up by touching your index finger beneath the trigger guard and wrapping the rest of your fingers around the front of the grip. By canting your support hand wrist forward, your support hand thumb rests under the thumb on your strong hand. Ideally, the knob or ridge where the base of your thumb meets your support hand wrist should fit right at the base of your support hand thumb. You will need to cant your wrist forward at an angle towards the ground to get into this position. This may not seem comfortable at first and will take some practice to get used to but joining your hands in this manner, eliminating as much space as possible, helps lock the gun into your grip.

I squeeze the gun pretty tightly, like I would a very firm, but not "crushing" handshake. Many in-

structors will tell you that you don't have to grip that hard, but I have found that I grip the gun as hard as I can while I am firing while still being able to move my trigger finger quickly and easily. I won't maintain that very tight grip throughout an entire course of fire and will loosen it up when I am not shooting to a firm grip in order to maintain control of the gun at all times. Finding the delicate balance between too much grip and trigger finger freedom is the challenge. Generally the more recoil, the tighter your grip should be to help control it.

Modifying your grip and stance is not the easiest thing to do especially if you have been shooting for a while. Reinforcing the technique with lots of dry fire is the best way to ensure that you won't revert back as soon as the buzzer sounds. Any change may seem exaggerated at first, but applying changes to your practice will help you decide what works for you. Use a timer, photos and video to help keep you on track for improvement.

Try to be open to new techniques or suggestions. Study top shooters and analyze their shooting styles and skills. Some of these things may work for you and some

may not. Take into account body types, a shooter's mass/size and shooting styles when studying others. A technique used by a 6-foot tall, 200-pound competitor may not work so well for you if you are 5 feet tall and 120 pounds. Don't discard it however. You may simply need to make some modifications to make it work for you.



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tice every so often between range days just to keep them from losing too much trigger skill.

One of the other ways to help pass the winter is by reloading all the brass you have gathered up over the season. If you don't reload then I suggest you look into it as both a means of shooting cheaper and as a hobby. Yes, there are some folks who actually enjoy reloading. Then again, I suppose you can get used to anything! If you are interested in getting started, I'm sure that someone in the club will be glad to show you the basics.

Equipment for reloading is available from several makers but sooner or later you will buy a Dillon product if you are wanting a progressive machine. I've not used anything better. Their customer

service is superb and for loading large amounts of pistol ammo, they are the way to go. There is a model to fit your budget and skill level. Like anything else, there are safety issues that must be understood when reloading, so please get good advice and read the loading manuals to understand the process before you start. It's not that hard to do. With the rising cost of ammunition, it makes sense to try to stretch the ammo budget a little.

If you live in an area where there is an indoor range available then that's a good way to practice over the winter. Many commercial ranges have strict rules about drawing from a holster and "rapid fire" type shooting. At the very least, you can concentrate on fundamental shooting skills such as trigger control and grip, etc. It wouldn't hurt any of us to spend

a few sessions shooting bullseye groups and polishing the basics. If you talk to the owners and they know you are LE then they may relax some of the rules and you can get some more realistic practice done. Safety and damage to their facility is the big concern for them. I've never been able to understand how folks can shoot the ceiling and the lighting fixtures in these ranges, but I see it in every one I've ever been to so I guess the concern is valid.

I hope this will help you find ways to practice over the winter and get the most from your training sessions.

As always, please email with comments or questions at my work email, wcsok9mauser@yahoo.com.



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worry about fully loaded magazines left setting for extended periods. All this is in a package that is almost no different in length than most standard 7 round magazines.

The last feature is one that all Wilson Combat products share and one that is becoming increasingly harder to find in the world. Each Wilson product comes with a Life Time Satisfaction policy. Wilson stands behind the products that it makes and if you, by some odd chance, get one that does not work as designed, Wilson will fix or replace it. You can't beat that.

I have been using these magazines since September of 2007 and in that time I have them in everything from \$2,500 custom jobs to hunks of junk. In each case the magazine performed flawlessly and improved the overall reliability of the gun. I am not a super secret, Jack Bauer, government type, but I do carry daily and I want to know that the products that I am using are going to

do their job. I have trusted the old Wilson 47D for years and I will be putting that same level of trust in the new ETM. The 47D is still a great magazine. In the world of magazines, the 47D is a Cadillac in a sea of Yugo's, but the ETM, now that's a Ferrari. Now comes the ugly part, right? How much does it cost? The old 47D was only \$29.95 so how bad is the new ETM going to be...why not bad at all! In fact the new ETM retails for only \$34.95. You really can't beat that. For more information on Wilson Combat products please see their website at www.wilsoncombat.com or call 1-800-955-4856.

Pocketsmith

While we are on the subject of 1911's, I have something else that you might find interesting. It is called the Pocketsmith and it's available through Caspian Arms. 1911's are one of the most customized handgun platforms out there. We are constantly doing something to them. New grips, new sights, new internals, something always

"needs" changed or "improved." This leads to us carrying a small sack in our range bag with punches, bushing wrenches, allen wrenches and all manner of other small tools. What the Pocketsmith does is take the most common items and combine them into one easy to carry tool.

The PocketSmith at first glance looks similar to lot of other multi-tools that you might find, like Gerber or Leatherman. The real difference is when you unfold the handles to find a product with a purpose. The first thing you see is a pliers head with an integrated wire cutter at the back. The pliers head has an odd look to it because of the large round hole where there would normally be serrated gripping jaws. But with a flip over to the backside of the plier's head, you find that it looks that way because it also doubles as a bushing wrench.

Hidden in the handles of the tool are a plethora of tools needed to take down a 1911 and do field work. One side of the handles



The Tactical Advantage

include a punch that fits a main-spring housing pin, two straight slot screw driver heads, one large and one small enough to fit a magazine release screw, and a file to help take off those pesky burrs and relieve sharp edges. Hidden in the other handle is a knife blade, two allen head wrenches, one fits most standard grip screws and the other fits most two piece full length guide rods, and a mid-size straight slot screw driver that also doubles as a bottle opener.

From the time I

have picked this little tool up, it has proved its worth several times over. It is always in my range bag and has more than

once helped keep someone's match from premature finish. It comes with its own sheath and is suitable for everyday carry or like me, a great range bag addition. Caspian has really added a "have to have" item for 1911 shooters with this product. Since I have acquired this slick little tool, Caspian has released a Pocketsmith II with upgraded handles and refined tools. If you would like to find out more about this great little tool, please go to www.caspianarms.com or call 802-472-6454. With a price of only \$35.00, you can't go wrong.



NOTICE

The editorial staff of the Tactical Journal is always interested in articles from the membership pertaining to IDPA, guns or other relevant topics. **Pictures with articles are encouraged and welcomed.** Submission or editorial information should be sent to:

**IDPA HQ • Attn: T.J.
2232 CR 719**

Berryville, AR 72616

or

e-mail: TacticalJournal@idpa.com

Submissions can be sent as:

#1 WORD Via e-mail

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Include high resolution photos too if possible (COLOR Digital is preferred but B&W is OK).

Rethinking IDPA Target Indicators

by **Chip Hammond** A01482

It's my privilege to teach the *Introduction to IDPA* class that our club requires for each new shooter. At the outset of the class, I start by defining what IDPA *is*, based on the description in the Rule Book: "IDPA is a sport which makes use of practical equipment to solve simulated 'real world' self-defense scenarios."

I then say a word about what IDPA *is not*: "IDPA is not self-defense or tactical training. At its best it will drill you in a skill-set that is applicable to self-defense and sound tactics, but it is not self-defense or tactical training."

Let me say it again. IDPA is not tactical or self-defense training. I want to emphasize this because whenever an article like this is written, people send in letters or dissents saying, "Competition is one thing – reality is another!" There certainly is a kernel of truth in that. But if it were *absolutely* true, we would not have jump simulators – we'd just put parachutes on people and push them out of planes. Behavioral scientists understand something that a few people just don't get: what you do repetitively (even under artificial conditions), you'll do for real.

IDPA competition will certainly not prepare you for dealing with incoming, nor the realities of three-dimensional, moving (unpredictably), thinking targets. What it will

do is drill you in the skill set of presentation, sighting, trigger manipulation and reloads so that these skills become automatic – the program runs on its own, so to speak, so you can keep your head on what's going on.

AirSoft guns have made force-on-force training affordable and thus attainable to all. Having done a fair amount of it, if I were to wager on two "AirSoft opponents," one who shoots his gun only twice a year to maintain his qualification, and the other a skilled IDPA shooter who competes monthly, the smart money would be on the IDPA shooter every time.

IDPA is not training, but it will drill you in a skill set applicable to training and/or real life (I take it that's why stages are supposed to "simulate real-life scenarios or test skills that might reasonably be used in a real life self defense confrontation."). I would like to suggest that IDPA competition could improve on how it achieves this goal by changing how Shoot and No-shoot targets are indicated.

In the early days of IDPA No-shoot targets were indicated by the old "IPSC X" (see *Photo 1*). Marking No-shoots required no special tools, only a can of paint. Some clubs still default to it because it is quick and easy. Far more common these days is the "double-hands" stenciled onto the target (see *Photo 2*). This is certainly an improvement in realism, as many trainers teach



Photo 1

students to shout the challenge "Show me your hands!"

The problem with so designating No-shoots, however, is the assumption that everything without hands gets shot. In other words, in the plethora of humanoid torsos present in a typical IDPA stage, we've set



Photo 2

Rethinking IDPA Target Indicators



Photo 3

up a condition that says, “Give me a reason *not* to shoot you.-otherwise, tap-tap.”

This conditioning can get you into real trouble if forced to go for your gun on the street. And before the letters come in whining and taking me to task, along the way on my strange journey though life, I picked up a degree in Psychology, so if you disagree with what I’m about to say, proffer your Ph.D. in Psychology or cite proof. Anyone who regularly shoots in IDPA and who thinks that if things happen “for real” he will draw his gun, acquire a firing grip, or do reloads in some way that is *different* than what he conditions himself to do at matches every month is kidding himself. And once the shooting starts, if he’s conditioned himself to approach what is happening to and around him with the dictum, “Give me a reason *not* to shoot you,” that’s what he’ll do.

I’d like to suggest that clubs consider marking Shoot targets with indicators such as knives

or guns (see *Photo 3*). It would be fine (and more challenging) to mark *all* targets: Shoot targets with weapons and No-shoots with hands. But the default ought to be that a clean target does *not* get shot. Only those targets which present a positive reason for being shot should be.

When it comes to making the decision of “to shoot or not

to shoot?”, to be more consistent with IDPA’s stated goals, CoFs should reinforce the making of that decision *positively* rather than *negatively*. We should not condition ourselves to shoot everything unless it gives us a reason not to. Rather, we should be conditioning ourselves not to shoot unless there is positive indication to do so.



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chances of viewing them as the shooters go through the stage. We don't need any rule for this, just consideration and courtesy for the people who have to shoot a stage first.

Second, at the local level many times there are just enough SOs to man each of the stages, so shooters help by "running the clipboard". I think that is a good thing. It helps in learning other shooters names and gives a greater appreciation of the work done by the regular SOs. The problem begins when, by nature, we don't want to "tattle" on other shooters. So when they see an infraction, they don't speak up, the offending shooter walks away giggling that they got away with something. Expecting the SOs, who volunteers their time to enable the rest of us to enjoy a day of shooting, to monitor everything with no help is a bit much. I'm still amazed, after 9 years of shooting IDPA, at the great job they do. The SO should watch the gun and can use help with shooting out of priority, failure to do specified reload, ammo left behind or anything else the COF calls for. I think when you accept the clipboard; you accept the responsibility to help the SO. Sometimes there is a lot going on in a stage and helping the SO is where your allegiance should lie, it takes priority over fellow shooters. If you don't want the responsibility, don't take the clipboard.
Clifton York A01298

You make some great points here and I hope MD's, SO's and competitors take note. Having to reset and reshow movers can take a lot of time. This can really slow down a match. As for the part about scorekeeping, this is absolutely true. The scorekeeper is a very important part of the team, not just a human recorder. The SO with the timer has a hard enough time just watching the gun and keeping everyone safe. The scorekeeper is important in watching for the other things like shooting out of order (which is where I normally mess up). As a score keeper, by not speaking up when you see and infraction, you are effectively penalizing the entire division and class that person is shooting in. Most competitors know when they mess up. You are only giving them what they earned. Editor

Match Cancellations

A group of us recently committed to support a "state championship" in another

state. It seemed like a good idea at the time to support clubs outside of our normal match sphere. In anticipation of the match we submitted our registration and received confirmation of slots to shoot the match. With great anticipation we put in for vacation, purchased our airline tickets, made our hotel reservations, secured rental cars, arranged for shipment of ammunition and started our practice regimen. This was going to be a great time and all of us had committed significant time and money to supporting this match.

Thirty days before the match date, we received email notification that the match had been cancelled due to lack of participation. The club claimed they needed 75 participants to break even and they only had 60 participants when they cancelled. This created a significant hardship on our group and created significant ill-will toward the organization that had enticed us to attend their event.

The hardship was related to trying to reschedule vacation and cancel travel arrangements. A couple of people in our group were unable to reschedule their vacation. While hotels and rental cars are fairly easy to cancel, the airline tickets are another matter. The initial cost of the tickets was \$225 per person. Change fee on each ticket was \$100. When we go to use the credit, we cannot use the credit to purchase discount air fare but can only use the credit for full-fare tickets. So the cost will be significantly higher. By the time we are done, the cancellation will cost us over \$400 per person.

So, what's the point? If you plan on holding a major match and are not sure you have the support to actually go through with it I have a couple of suggestions.

1. Don't advertise it with IDPA HQ. Listing a match on the IDPA web page opens up registration to all IDPA members world-wide. If you don't feel you have the support, don't ask for a commitment from people to whom you are not willing to commit your club's resources.
2. Don't accept registrations from people who have to pre-commit financial resources to support your event. Anyone traveling to your match will have to schedule vacation time and travel accommodations. If you are not willing to commit to holding the match, don't

ask people to commit their resources and time.

3. Stay the course. If you plan on holding the match, don't cancel it. Show respect for the people who have committed to support you.

This entire incident has caused our small group to reconsider our planning process for matches in the future. It is very unlikely that we will plan on attending a match beyond reasonable driving distance again unless the matches have a history being held. There are plenty of good matches for us to attend where we only have to commit our match fee and can make last minute, cancelable reservations. I sincerely hope a trend does not develop where clubs who do not have the resources and resolve commit to holding major matches. Failing to respect the people who are willing to support you could severely damage the credibility of our sport.

Steve Vandermolen A08637

I am glad to say that match cancellations rarely happen but sometimes things are beyond your control. Tornados, fire or other acts of God or man, have in the past caused matches to cancel but that is extremely rare. Where most clubs get into trouble is with finances. Everyone wants to put on a great match and sometimes they can let their spending get carried away. New clubs, or clubs that have had a large turn over in leadership, may not have a good idea of where you can save money. This is where a call to your AC or to headquarters can really help. Even a talk with another local club may provide the help you need. Match organizers need to remember that your club is not the only one laying out money and even if the event is not the one you envisioned, you can always use that experience to grow. Most every competitor I know will give you some slack on a match if you get the essentials right. Good, solid, IDPA legal CoF's, timely scores at the end and giving out the correct number of trophies are it. Everything else is cake and can be worked out once you get the basics. Lunches, super big prize tables and open bars will not keep competitors coming back if the courses of fire stink, they have to wait 3 hours for results and the awards are wrong (well the open bar might). If your club wants to hold a sanctioned match, go for it, but remember that there is help and knowledge available. Editor

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Jack Ostendorf
918-438-2669 h
918-438-2669 w
jack38@att.net
www.tulsashooters.com

May 2 - 4, 2008 MD State Championship

Lexington Park, MD
James Jackson
301-274-0214 w
jamesdjackson@comcast.net
Greg Knapp

301-904-6182 w
treerats2@yahoo.com
www.geocities.com/
sannerslakeidpa/2007

May 3, 2008 AR State Championship

Berryville, AR
Marvelle Stines
870-545-3400 w
870-545-3819 fax
marvelle1@alltel.net
Carroll Lawrence
870-423-2338 h
cap1911@cox.net
www.acpl.net

May 16 - 18, 2008 3rd Annual Great Lakes Regional

Munger, MI
Gary Cuttitta
989-928-2796 h & w
cheetahs@hotmail.com
David Alexander
989-329-0257 h
dwalex@hotmail.com
www.linwoodbaysportsmans.com

May 16 - 18, 2008 2008 PA State IDPA Championship

New Tripoli, PA
Tim Kirkpatrick
484-894-4542 h
570-722-0017 w
Qtrt@ptd.net
Walt Schneck
610-799-2480 h
610-799-5792 w
610-799-2480 fax
hotshotspt@aol.com
www.ontelaunee.org

June 6 - 8, 2008 12th Annual 2008 IDPA MA State Championship

Dartmouth, MA
David Bold
508-984-9589 h
filthydave@hotmail.com
Jay Litchfield
774-766-0944 w
diver4life@verizon.net
www.rodgun-nb.org/ap/action.htm

(Continued on page 38)

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UPCOMING MAJOR MATCHES

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June 7, 2008 2008 TX State IDPA Championship

Greenville, TX
Cody Ray
972-783-0683 h
214-232-8267 w
delta1cody@tx.rr.com
Lee Neel
214-789-2493 h
214-789-2493 w
leeneel@verizon.net
www.ccidpa.org

June 14 - 15, 2008 1st Annual Armed Forces Shoot Off, In Memory Of Those Who Have Served

Little Rock, AR
Mike Plato
501-326-8014 h
501-326-8014 w
platomikevan@att.net
www.casarange.com

June 19 - 21, 2008 The Carolina Cup

Oxford, NC
Frank Glover
919-693-6313 h
919-691-7686 w
therange@gloryroad.net
www.the-range.com

June 22, 2008 MO State Match

Wright City, MO
Charles Parisi
636-745-0616 h
636-262-6237 w
636-745-0616 fax
brrcidpamatchdirector@yahoo.com
Tim Conrey
314-401-2573 h
314-423-5626 w
conrey_t@charter.net
www.benchrestidpa.com

June 28 - 29, 2008 OK State IDPA Championship

United States Shooting Academy
Tulsa, OK
Curt Nichols
918-663-2730 h & w
e.nichols@cox.net
Jerry Biggs

918-625-3619 h & w
jerry.biggs@dhs.gov
www.usshootingacademy.com
SO/Staff will shoot the previous
weekend

July 27, 2008 The GOAL Cup Match

Harvard, MA
Jon Green
508-641-0116 h
508-641-0116 w
508-393-5222 fax
jongreen@goal.org
Michael Joffe
617-803-1307 h
617-803-1307 w
253-322-6675 fax
anotherhooya@yahoo.com
www.metrowesttactical.com

August 15 - 17, 2008 2008 New England Regional Championship

Dartmouth, MA
David Bold
508-984-9589 h
filthydave@hotmail.com
Jay Litchfield
774-766-0944 w
diver4life@verizon.net
www.rodgun-nb.org/ap/action.htm

August 31, 2008 2008 OH State IDPA Championship

Circleville, OH
Michael Craig
614-348-8436 w
matchdirector@defensivepistol.org
Jon Santini
614-571-5760 - cell w
bigbarbyidpa@defensivepistol.org
www.pcsirange.com

September 13 - 14, 2008 MI State Match 2008

Mt. Pleasant, MI
Ed Van Voorst
989-539-2293 h
989-429-6120 w
989-386-4996 fax
doubletap@charter.net
Jeff Myers
989-205-1872 h
989-205-1872 w

989-832-5755 fax
myersj@wmfc.org
www.blackcreekcc.com

September 20, 2008 2008 IDPA GA State Championship

Conyers, GA
Capel English
770-346-7771 h
678-324-2005 w
770-953-8917 fax
cenglish@snapsinc.com
Brett Hanus
404-936-7166 h
justcallmebrett@juno.com
www.gadpa.com

September 27 - 28, 2008 CT State IDPA Championship

East Granby, CT
Mike Critser
203-459-2783 h
203-601-3740 w
203-268-5874 fax
mtcritser@sbcglobal.net
Craig Buckland
413-258-4499 h
203-796-4686 w
buckland.ca@pg.com
www.matchreg.com

October 4, 2008 KY / TN Regional Championship

Puryear, TN
Scott Rob
270-493-6077 h
scott@auteninteractive.com
www.hcgc.net

October 4 - 5, 2008 2008 CA State IDPA Championship

Chino, CA
Van Duncan
714-713-7979 h
714-713-7979 w
714-826-3011 fax
vpduncan@hotmail.com
Steve Partridge
949-702-1833 h
949-702-1833 w
wheatens1@cox.net
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