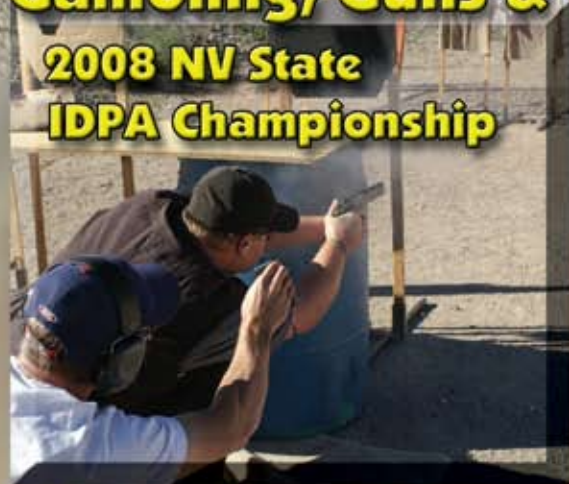


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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEFENSIVE PISTOL ASSOCIATION

Third Quarter 2008
Volume 12 - Issue 3

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Medic Musings

In Volume 12 - Issue 2 "Why Do We Need a Medic", Mr. Pickett makes the statement "Most of us... have heard of injuries or deaths that resulted from accidental shootings at a range."

I would like to point out that the civilian gun ranges in Canada have an incredibly low accidental gunshot wound rate. There have been as many as three deaths from gunshot wounds - all suicides - on ranges open to citizens in Canada. Gun ranges are very tightly regulated in Canada and a safety incident can get a range closed by federal officers very quickly - no injuries need to occur. In fact there have been several instances of closure of gun ranges for a single stray bullet leaving the range and causing property damage.

To date ALL of the accidental gunshot wounds and deaths that have occurred on gun ranges in Canada have been on closed military and police training ranges during training. It is also worthy of note that when some police agencies rent civilian ranges there are rare incidents that raise the issue of safety at those ranges and sometimes threaten the continued operation of those ranges. These incidents are documented and part of the public record.

In fact shooting is so safe in Canada our gun organizations offer liability insurance that covers individuals while they are engaged in the shooting sports for \$6.00 or less per year. Compare that to auto insurance.

Yes medics are needed at civilian gun ranges but it is highly unlikely they will be needed for a gunshot wound. There are shooters with allergies to bee venom, heart conditions, bad backs, and bad knees. There is a chance that an individual may slip or trip and injure themselves. The most common safety concern at any gun range is hearing damage and that is a real concern. Jerrold Lundgard F00466

Jerrold, I think that you will find that the incidents of injury at gun ranges here and Canada will pretty closely parallel each other in regards to safety and the incidents of injury if adjusted for population. Because of the very nature of a gun shot wound (ugly no matter what caliber or impact site) when one happens, it is well told among people in the sport. I don't think that he was implying that it happened with any real frequency. The point of the article is just like the need for protective glasses (and the hearing protection as you noted), competitors and range personnel need to think about First Aid, from basic to advanced. It is an important part of our sport and each IDPA member and range should give some thought to how to handle an emergency. Editor

Non-Threat Thoughts

There seems to be a real disconnect between the stated purpose of IDPA and the Course of Fire Rules. Specifically, the Purpose states "...to solve simulated "real world" self-defense scenarios." Yet CoF Rule #4 states that "Only one (1) non-threat target may be used per every three (3) threat targets in any string of fire." The issue is that the vast majority of "real world" self defense scenarios include a single threat, usually with multiple "non-threats".

A simple check of the news verifies this. In my general area alone, there have been a few high-profile events where only a single "bad guy" killed or injured multiple victims. The Lane Bryant shooting in Tinley Park, IL and the NIU shooting in DeKalb, IL. Other high profile crimes also come to mind- the Virginia Tech shooting, the Omaha, NE mall shooting, and the Colorado Church shooting. All of these crimes had only a single shooter but multiple victims. While I understand that having only a single threat in a stage makes for a short stage and very limited "trigger time", there are ways to work around these limitations (multiple strings from different starting positions, for example). I believe that allowing stages that include

only a single threat and multiple non-threats would be well suited to IDPA's stated purpose.

Tom Ropers A21351

I am afraid that you mention the key to why this is not really feasible in your letter. You reference "a few high-profile events." The events that you mention happen very rarely when held up against the number of other self-defense related shootings that only involve a small hand full of people. Because of our media's fixation with "if it bleeds, it leads", we really don't see the coverage of the "lesser" but most frequent confrontations. Ultimately the chances are very small that any of us will be involved in a self-defense situation. In an effort to keep things to the most realistic level, the founders of the sport settled on the 1 in 3 ratio. This kept out the possibility of a shooter having to run though a sea of non-threats while engaging targets which I feel is the right course. Editor

Tactical Trouble

My dictionary defines tactical as: of arrangement or system especially in military or naval maneuvers characterized by or showing cleverness and skill in tactics. A journal is defined as: a daily record of entry. Being retired from the United States Army and have been taking part for several years of tactical maneuvers and making journal entries it certainly is not a military or naval arrangement but, it is a record of original entries.

I do feel that over the past six years that I have enjoyed shooting IDPA. It certainly is the use of cleverness of movement, decisions and position and

(Continued on page 7)

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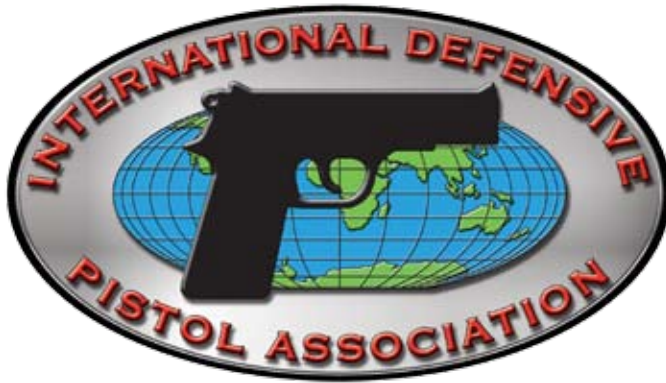
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August 2008

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IN THIS ISSUE

We want to welcome the return of Julie Goloski to the TJ. Julie missed last issue because she was busy welcoming a new baby shooter to the world. Glad to have you back Julie. As always, 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

What NOT to do in an IDPA match.

In this installment let's discuss some things that have been done that should not have been or did not work.

First and foremost, *make sure that you follow the rules listed in the Official IDPA Rule Book*. It is always a good idea to start there. In the past years some of the rules that have been added or modified are due to these very instances. I have been to some matches in my time that had stages that were not legal for our sport. I have seen some that showed little or no similarities with an IDPA course of fire. While poetic license can be fun and even make a CoF real world, be careful not to abandon the rule book. Real problems come from that and it will create more problems than it solves.

Never make a stage of fire be a math test. In the early days I sometimes wondered if a calculator would have been needed to see my best performance. Keep the target engagements simple in a way that makes sense. When the buzzer sounds, it should be a no-brainer what gets it next. I have seen CoFs that would say engage this target with three, this target with two, and this target with six. Not cool! If it is not clear and fairly easy to make your way through, don't use that one! Give the shooter a reason to do the task you have for him. Two on each until you see the guy with the shotgun who is on meth and it takes six to the body and one to the head to take him out.

Whatever you plan for the shooter to accomplish must be doable. I have seen some stages that made a shooter start out with a down loaded magazine or in some way not to IDPA capacity and with target engagement and the rules it was impossible to finish the stage with the ammo available. If the stage has built-in dropped points for a competitor in a certain division while others would be fine, that is unfair, besides being the most ridiculous approach possible to making a point I have ever seen. Years ago a match we attended had a CoF where the procedure called for engaging four targets in tactical sequence (1-1-1-2-1-1-1) while retreating after the signal. The range was very shallow and there was no cover available, so a revolver was just out of luck, or could run into the next range and use the berm between for cover. None of the above is a good idea! The course designer shoots CDP and never considered revolver shooters at all. Simple fix; remove one target. While not every course of fire has to be completely neutral for each division, each division must be able to finish the stage. Building a CoF to one division's advantage is not acceptable. Sometimes it works out that way, but it should never be in the plan.

Tactical Sequence and Tactical Priority, what are they and how to use them? Tactical sequence is when threats are all equal and the idea is to get one round on each before placing the addition rounds on the others. Tactical Priority is in essence shooting them as they are visi-

ble to you. Example: Engaging three targets using cover will require one to engage them in tactical priority. Engaging three targets with one at 5 yards, one at 10 yards and one at 15 yards, then the answer would be near to far in the order of engagement. Tactical sequence would be three targets at same distances that are of equal threat being engaged one on each of the first two, two on the third followed by one on each of the remaining two targets (1-1-2-1-1). You should never combine the two! You may dictate which target is engaged first, but you should never use cover or distance to make this decision. These two concepts do not fit together. Starting from cover engage T1 through T3 with two rounds each in tactical priority using tactical sequence, I've seen it in a course description, but it is dead wrong. Pick one!

Introducing a memory test to a stage of fire is always a mistake. You will find it near impossible for a new shooter to get through one of these. Even the most experienced shooter may have trouble with it. A good stage of fire is supposed to be a test of shooting skills and nothing else. Turn over this to find that and remember it throughout the rest of the course. Don't think so! You all have seen them, while sometimes a good idea in tactical training, not a good idea in IDPA matches. This target takes two, this one three, and the fourth from the end gets six, can't do it.

Color coded threat identifiers don't work. Years ago, I was running a CoF that called for the shooter to



Women's Perspective

by Julie Goloski A19366

How do you prepare for matches? Is it just a matter of filling the shooting bag with ammo and putting the rest of your gear in the car? Maybe you just shoot for fun and don't consider yourself a "serious" competitor. Matches may be a way to spend time with friends with the added perk of improving your gun handling and shooting skills. In the end though, seeing your name high in the standings and performing well is always rewarding. Even if you aren't the "serious" competitor type, you can still benefit by creating a plan. You can achieve success by being **focused, dedicated** and by being able to **evaluate** yourself and your performances.

FOCUS

The first step to improvement is to set goals. Without goals, your shooting is unfocused, inconsistent and your potential to improve is diminished. The two types of goals to set are long-term and short-term goals. Some examples of long-term goals are to win your class at the IDPA Nationals or to move up from Sharpshooter to Expert within one year. Long-term goals are much broader than short-term goals. Think of

long-term goals as the top of a pyramid. Short-term goals are the building blocks that make up the base of the pyramid. Short-term goals can be as specific as being able to draw from concealment in under 1.5 seconds or having no miss penalties at a local match. Short-term goals help you identify the specific skills that will help you meet your long-term goals.

The best goals are realistic and well thought out. They are specific and state exactly what you want to improve. Is it reasonable to think that as a novice you will become a master class shooter within a month and only 100 rounds of practice ammo? Probably not. It is important to be completely honest with yourself and ask precise questions. How often can you train? How much can you spend on ammo? What is your budget for matches? Identify your resources to help you come up with a realistic plan. It doesn't matter if you want to become a national champion or have a good performance at your state match. Goals setting will help get you there.

DEDICATION

The key to successful goal setting is to be dedicated.

Identify the steps that will help you achieve your short-term goals and follow them. If one of your short-term goals is to be able to draw in under 1.5 seconds, you need to be dedicated to that goal until you can execute the skill consistently. Until the short-term goal is something you achieve the vast majority of the time, it is still a goal for you.

Commit to staying on track. If one of your goals is to shoot your next match without any misses and on the very first stage you throw one off the paper, don't give up! I have seen so many shooters have a bad stage and then shoot beyond their ability on the remaining stages. They "go for it" thinking they have nothing to lose. Remember that you are in a constant state of training. Being able to come back from a miss or bad performance and stay on track will move you much closer to your goals than if you just abandon them and say "this one doesn't count." It always counts. Bad habits and negative reinforcement only serve to move you further from success.

EVALUATION

The first step in evaluating is to track your progress by maintaining a training log. A log that links the specifics of your training (date, number of rounds, skills trained, personal bests, etc) to your goals is going to help you stay focused and dedicated. You can use your training log to track things like your IDPA classifiers, local match

(Continued on page 30)

Long Term Goals

Short Term Goals

Behind the Badge

by Rob Haught CL068



I'm sitting at the computer putting this together late as usual for the publishing deadline. It's been one of those weeks at work. You all know what I'm talking about. To make it worse, I'm closing in on a vacation that's been in the works for several months. Trying to get all the last minute details together caught me thinking about how stressful our jobs can be and how important it is to be able to decompress and recharge.

One of the details to consider is traveling with firearms. With the passage of HR218, it's now possible for us (LEO'S) to carry pretty much nationwide and I encourage you to do so. Going on a trip with the family presents some safety and security issues that we need to be thinking of. Flying with your blaster is relatively simple but can be frustrating. It seems that every airport has its own procedure of going through the stated procedure. This will vary from airline to airline and even with employees of the same airline. It can literally be luck of the draw when you walk up to the ticket counter.

What has worked well for me is to smile and try to be patient, be knowledgeable about the FAA regulations and TSA procedures and go online and print them out and carry a copy with me in the event of a question. My procedure is to tell the ticket agent politely that I am a LEO and that I have an UNLOADED firearm to declare in my checked luggage. I show them my ID, and sometimes they will hand me the paper work to carry on the plane. If that happens, I just tell them I need to check it through and need one of the little orange tags to put inside my suitcase or guncase.

Sometimes they will ask to inspect the guns at the counter. It's not an FAA regulation that they do that, but some airlines have a company policy to do this. Most of the time, the ticket agent is clueless about what he is looking at, but humor him. Once you put the tag in the case, be sure to lock it. FAA regulations state that it must be declared and in a locked case that you alone have the key or combination to. Once your bags are tagged, most airports have you carry the bags to the TSA screeners. Once there, again ID yourself and tell them you have an UNLOADED and DECLARED firearm in the case. They will open it with your key or combination and check for the tag. Make sure they lock the case up before they send it on the conveyor. I fly almost monthly with my guns and have had very few issues.

Remember, just like when folks have to deal with us, courtesy goes a long way. If you have a problem that can't be resolved, ask for a supervisor or the Ground Safety Coordinator to come speak to you. One of the recent issues I have seen is the requirement for having the handgun in a locked hard case even if it's in a locked hard shell suitcase. This varies from airline to airline it seems. Be safe and have a small hardcase with a little padlock inside your hard suitcase. They also seem to love seeing a triggerlock or cablelock on the pistol or having it field stripped inside the hardcase. FAA regulations outlining procedures for carrying onboard the aircraft are available and are very specific about the circumstances in which a state or local officer can do so. If you don't fit the criteria, don't attempt it. I just read

where the Mayor of a small town who, by charter, was the head of the Police Dept. He was writing his own letters, carrying onboard and was not even a certified LEO. The Mayor was jammed up eventually.

When traveling by car, be aware of theft issues and security if the little ones are along. When staying in a motel, take advantage of the room safes or take along a lockable case to keep children safe from an unattended firearm. I know... you carry all the time. You still gotta shower sooner or later. Play it safe and take precautions to keep your firearm from being stolen or misused. Same thing goes with your ID or Credentials. Remember, the badge is no good without the gun and vice-versa.

On my vacation I will be going overseas to South Africa. I will be taking firearms and other shooting gear. Some countries are specific on what types of firearms are permitted. Be sure you know the laws of any country you are traveling to or through, for that matter. It's forbidden to even change planes in some countries with a firearm even if it's legal in your final destination. I will be hunting and teaching a shooting program for a group of IDPA shooters there. IDPA is truly an international sport and it's great to meet folks from other countries who share your interest in shooting. I have found that shooters are shooters regardless of where they come from and that's enough common ground to get along well.

The shooting season is full underway and I hope you are taking advantage of it. Remember, a golf course is a terrible waste of a rifle range!

Good Shooting.



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A Small Club's 2nd Sanctioned Match

by Aaron Goodfellow A18734

A few months after our first sanctioned IDPA match the call went out to the locals, "Are we going to do it again?" It must have been a long enough wait after the first match had passed because everyone was ready to do all the hard work all over again. The old saying goes, "One year older and wiser, too." Maybe this should be modified to "One year older and forgetful, too!" Putting on a sanctioned match was a ton of work and here we were getting into it all over again. All in the name of fun, right?

After agreeing to do it again, the wheels were put in motion. At the first meeting we decided that if we were going to do this, we wanted to be better than the first time. We asked ourselves what this would take. After the first match a survey was emailed to the shooters asking them for a critique of the match. We listened to what they had to say and decided to start there. Because we are a small club (our monthly matches draws between 20 and 30 shooters) we have limited resources as far as money and local help is concerned. Nonetheless, we wanted to put on a good show regardless of our size and how many shooters that we would draw. From that meeting we came away with a few goals in mind. We wanted to have good officiating, fair Courses of Fire, and a prize table that had something for every shooter. With these items on our lists and minds we divided up the workload and went to work.

In our first match almost every stage was of the home grown variety taken from a span of probably 4 years. At Parma Rod & Gun we tend to do things that some might frown upon, but we have a lot of fun doing them. We run a hot range for local matches (and have never had an accident), we like to shoot



SO Ty Mabry runs a shooter

from moving vehicles, and we have even shot with bags over our heads to simulate lights out scenarios. Some of these fun things made it into the first state match and they were a big hit. Many of the traveling shooters had not shot from a moving vehicle and thought it was a blast. What we discovered with stages like these is that they could easily turn into match makers or breakers. Meaning that if a shooter has a really good or bad run on a difficult stage, that score could dominate the rest of the math. We wanted to still have fun and challenging COFs, but we wanted to be fair. The COF wrangler from the first year took on the challenge again and set out to find the right COFs for Parma. In the end we had 10 COFs that people enjoyed shooting, but from this we learned a huge lesson. The lesson learned was that... Courses of Fire will either make or break the match for the majority of your shooters. Focus on having COFs that are memorable, fun, and safe to shoot. If you do not do this then what does the shooter have to remember your match? Don't be afraid to set yourself apart, just be safe and remember that it is all in the name of fun. If you are looking to come to our match next year, be looking for that moving vehicle again.

One of the largest obstacles that we deal with as a local club is developing shooters into SOs. Being a good SO involves more than holding a timer and pushing the button. So, how do we overcome this? One thing we did was put out the request with the registration forms for out of state talent. We did get a few responses and had some really great SOs show up not only for the shooting but for the setup as well. Now that we had a few from out of state it was clear that we were going to need the locals to step up to the plate. One of our shooters is active on the internet forums and chat

(Continued on page 13)



SO Ken Reed waits for a squad

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groups and forwarded some really great info on being an SO. As great as this info is, there is nothing like learning by doing. At our local matches we put some effort into getting other people than the “usual suspects” to be SOs. We all know that we are there to have fun but we are also there to play by the same set of rules. In the past we have been rather relaxed and as we have tried to right the ship there has been some turbulent times. Everyone has a different opinion and sometimes these get interjected when they should not.

The last major item on the to do list was a prize table. What a daunting task it is to solicit prizes from companies and people that get hit up year round. For us we really did not even know where to start as we had no prior experience with a prize table. The call went out to ask the local shops but this did not generate enough response. The call went out for people to make lists of possible sponsors and again not much response. So the idea was formed to get on a national forum and pose the question about prize tables. This time we got a lot of great tips and suggestions. A few of the replies even offered to send their sponsorship lists from their matches. This was great, some people had already done a ton of work and we did not have to reinvent the wheel. A few more names were added to these lists, a letter was written, and then they were mailed. What happened next was truly amazing and almost overwhelming. Almost immediately we had our first major match sponsorship from HiViz. Wow! As the weeks passed more and more packages were showing up and eventually we had a prize table that exceeded any expectation that we had. What was really nice was some of the local companies really stepped up and donated some outstanding prizes. In the end the prize table was



SO Tom Janstrom (right) scores a target worth all of the hard work that was put into it. We gave away some guns (we even had one just for the SOs) and some other great prizes. The running joke was having a prize table that was really nice because if you drew something you really wanted it might assuage the pain of your performance!

The week of the match was finally here and we were ready for it. The number of volunteers we had to help setup and get things right was amazing. I think it is easy to show up to a match, shoot, leave, and then forget how much work goes into the match. As the MD I was so grateful to those that took time off of work or showed up early to help with the match. Without volunteers we would not have the great shooting sport that we all enjoy. Thanks again to all volunteers everywhere that make these great events happen!

The match went great and all seemed to leave with a smile on their face, especially those that left with a new Springfield handgun. What a relief! All the hard work and planning had paid off and our second sanctioned match was a success. We accomplished our goals and we had a larger shooter turnout. To sum it all up, one shooter told me, “I have never shot a sanctioned match before, but this one makes me want to shoot more of them.” You may remember reading about us last year and our first sanctioned match. We are a small club and we have made a name for ourselves because of the work of some great people. If your club is thinking of holding a sanctioned match, you should at least try it once. There are some great people in our sport that have a lot of experience and know how to offer. I urge you to talk to them, or someone from my club, and get the wheels rolling. You will be glad you did, what a great feeling it is to be a part of something larger than yourself. Parma Rod & Gun Club, Parma Idaho
www.parmarng.org



Prize Table

Who'da Thought?

by **Todd Gould** A24170

Who'da thought that the most frequently asked question at IDPA practice would be, "Anyone know where I can find cheap bullets?" That question seems to be on the mind of every serious shooter in every discipline these days.

When I started shooting IDPA three years ago, my 230 grain favorites were selling for \$34.99 per 500. Today they are \$74.99! Who'da thought? I wish my wages would make the same increase. Who'da thought copper and lead would ever become "precious metals?" No wonder stealing wire and plumbing, even stripping aluminum siding off vacant homes has become a popular sideline for some. Who'da thought the hoarders and stockpilers were right? And who'da thought every time I drive by the junkyard on my way to the club, I would salivate over acres of wrecked cars? (An automobile contains about 50 pounds of copper and today's luxury autos average about a mile's length of wire).


So, why in the world are shooters facing this unexpected dilemma? From what I can determine, the world has a lot to do with it. In August 2004 the price of lead was \$975.00 per ton on the London Metal Exchange (www.batteriesdigest.com). As of February 2008, the price was \$3,400.00 per ton. According to goldworld.com, prices of copper have more than doubled in the past two years driven by the booming economies of China and India. In an article by Glenys Sim seen

February 29th on bloomberg.com, copper inventories in China increased for a third week to a three month high. A quote from Jia Zheng at Southwest Futures Company in Shanghai stated: "The stockpiles are just moving from the LME to Shanghai warehouses as earlier this month price conditions were still favorable for imports. The country still needs copper." Jia went on to say: "Metals have been rising alongside other commodities as more money enters the market...we'll probably see base metal prices track those of gold, oil, and other commodities quite closely in the near term."

Who'da thought a communist country would ever have a booming economy? Who'da thought America would be in a multi-billion dollar trade deficit with China? Who'da thought they could beat us capitalists at our own game? And who'da thought the anti gun crowd might inadvertently reach its goal via the global economy? Like philosopher and sage, George Carlin once stated, "We don't need to get rid of guns. Guns aren't the problem. Just get rid of the bullets. It's the bullets that are the problem!" Well...who'da thought?

It seems everyone is paying the price for "globalization," shooters included, and we are all looking for ways to mitigate costs. I now think twice about the number of rounds I burn up in practice. I no longer discard split casings at my loading bench but toss them into the "metals box" along with

other scrap to be recycled later. Certainly, dry-fire practice, which we ought to be doing anyway, becomes more attractive. I'm even considering something I thought I never would consider – buying an airsoft. Don't knock it. Because they can't have handguns in Japan, airsoft training won Tatsuya Sakai the Steel Challenge championship in 2004, much to everyone's surprise/chagrin.

These are just a few feeble ideas I have in order to stay viable in the sport we love. I am sure there are others. Perhaps one last idea. Maybe all we have to do is simply scrape the lead off our kid's toys. Hmm...who'da thought? 



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Adventures in Creative Stage Design

by Rob Reid A19639

In my previous article I related some of my experiences in building a stage with four moving targets for my local club match. I am happy to say that it generated some interest in the actual construction of the stands used. Well, a little interest anyway. Here I am going to delve a little into the construction, and what I learned along the way.

Movers can really spice up a match. They force the shooter to the edge, or out of, their comfort zone. But, like spices, they can be overpowering. A little can go a long way. I refer you to John May's excellent article, "Run a Better Match" in TJ V1114, and rule #4.

The three most important rules for a mover stage are, reliability, reliability, and reliability. The stage needs to WORK. It needs to work EVERY TIME. And it needs to work the SAME WAY every time. You can have the coolest stage design ever, but if it doesn't work, well...you should always have your escape route planned out.

The next rule is that the reset should be quick,

simple, and obvious. If the stage can be reset in the time it takes to score and paste, you're good to go. Simple, the KISS method is always a good idea. You really don't want to refer to a manual during a match. And the reset should be obvious. This was where I dropped the ball in my first mover stage. It was quick to reset, if you knew what to do. It was simple, if you were familiar with the reset, but it was NOT obvious to someone just walking up. This would have been fine in a big match where the SOs stay with the stage, but in our local matches the SOs move with the squads. The majority of the failures were due to a simple error in the reset.

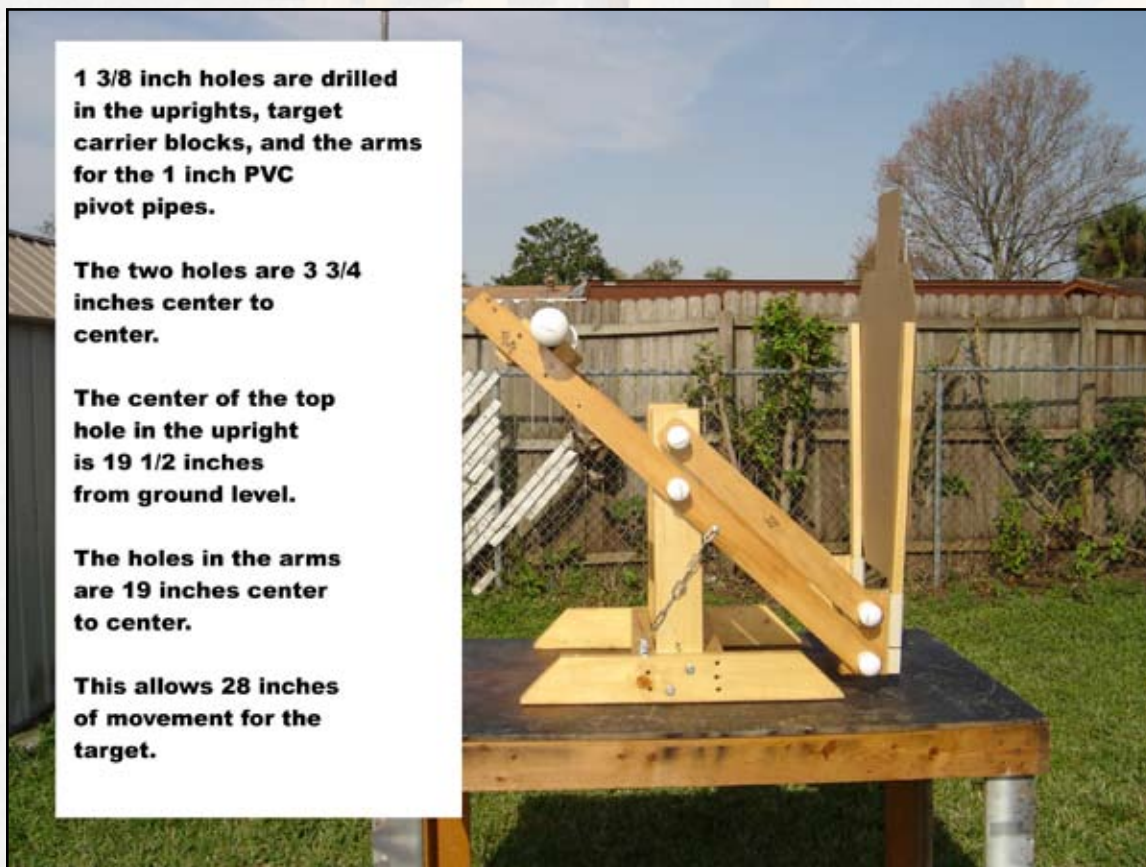
And the last rule is to challenge the shooter just enough. That, my friends, is an art. I have the greatest admiration for those of you that can do it well.

My goal was to build moving stands that were simple, inexpensive to build and repair, transportable by an old guy with bad knees, and that would fit in my car.

I made two types of stands. One is the Up/Down.

It would raise the target, and then let it back down. The other was a Lean-out. The target would lean out, like peaking around a corner, and then go back. Both worked on the principle of a lever arm with a weight. When the arm was released, the weight would push the arm down, roll off, and the arm would return.

My Up/Down stands met my goal exactly. They were simple. I built the first one in a day, and the next two



Adventures in Creative Stage Design

in an afternoon. They were inexpensive, just 2x4's, 1x3's, 1x2's, (target sticks), PVC pipes, some hardware, and sand. They were light enough to carry, even assembled. Broken down, no problem at all. I used deck screws for the build, the longer the better. I did find the uprights needed to be bolted to the base. Since I always removed them for transport I used T-nuts. At the range assembly only took four bolts, sliding in the four pivot pipes and pushing on the caps.

And they were easy and cheap to repair. On my first mover stage I used three of the Up/Downs. The problem was the shooters would follow the targets down as they hid. I had hits to five of the pipes, and three shot in two, and several hits to the wood. Replaced the pipes, and some strapping tape, and that was it. About \$2.

The rolling weights were 2in PVC pipe filled with sand. The hardest part of building these stands was determining the weights. I found the timing could be adjusted by changing the weights.

The Lean-out turned out to be not so simple. If I had known the time I would put in on it I would have saved it for my retirement. But I finally had a working stand. It also turned out to be temperamental. I had problems coming up with a sand filled rolling weight heavy enough to make it work. I ended up adding lead bullets to the sand. Once I had it working it was too quick, so I had to add a timing adjustment.



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Adventures in Creative Stage Design



On its first outing it ran fine. I thought I had it nailed. I used it the next month, set to its slowest. Here's where its shortcomings really became evident. Setting up at the range I was not on level ground. That forced me to shorten the timing a bit. And it was windy. The wind would either hold the target out or push it back early. Once I got called over because it was hanging up and the target would not return. It was because they had stapled a second target over the first. That was enough to throw off the balance.



Recently I used my stands in another stage. To correct the issues with my Lean-out, I had to increase the weights. I had been using 11 lbs. of counter weights. I bumped them up to 18.5. That meant I had to increase the rolling weight. And that meant I had to go to buckshot. I had not gone that route before because it was too expensive. Turns out that was a mistake, because the buckshot went up about 30% in the interim. I now had more money in the rolling weight than in the rest of the stand. And increasing the weight shortened the timing. I added longer timing sticks and took it out again. This time it ran just fine.

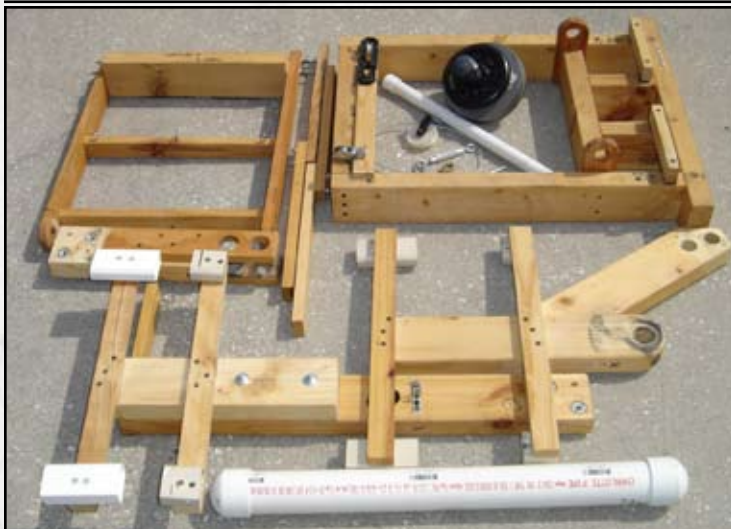
Previously I had used prop sticks as triggers for the stands. I figured it was as simple as it could get,



and everyone would be used to using props. Well, that was one of the problems, as it was possible to put the props in a position to not release correctly. This time I switched to a pin release. There was only one way to reset, it was obvious, and it worked!

The big issue with the Up/Down stands was the shooter following the targets down, and shooting the stands. I still have not come up with a good portable way of protecting them, but side stepped the issue for this stage. Instead of using rolling weights, I used stationary ones, and the targets just popped up. This added visual stimulation without adding timing constraints. I used some hardcover to up the difficulty.

Adventures in Creative Stage Design



Another benefit of the simple construction is the ease of modifying the stands. For the last stage, with the use of longer pipes and additional target carriers, I adapted the Up/Down stands to carry three targets instead of one. In similar fashion I added a stationary target to my Lean-out. This time a non-threat “ducked down” briefly to reveal the threat target.

The design of these stands has been evolutionary, and is ongoing. I am hopeful my next iteration of the Up/Down will give me more flexibility in the timing.

Additional thoughts:

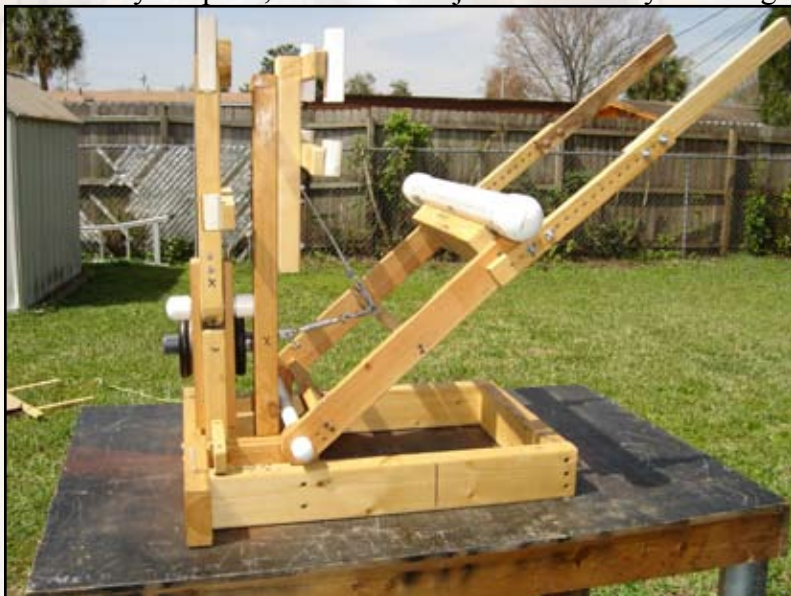
The stages with movers need to be tested, and timed. What seems like a very long time to engage a target when running it in your backyard, can turn into an extremely short amount of time when the timer goes off, and you actually shoot the stage. So, if you cannot test shoot it ahead of time, (that's not



cheating is it), at least time it. In it's last outing I used the Lean-out to trigger the Up/Down. I was surprised to find that the target was visible 0.38 seconds longer than when it was not used to trigger the next mover.

When running cables for the movers you can get away with just an eyelet, especially for a short local match. But the use of pulleys greatly enhance the smoothness and reliability. The plastic pulleys designed for clotheslines work exceedingly well, and are very inexpensive.

When I first started working on a mover stage I fully intended to use steel cable. But for the work-up I used hollow braid poly rope. That turned out to be an excellent way to connect movers together. It is flexible, easy to splice, and can be adjusted on the fly to change



the tension. And it's as cheap as it gets. But steel cable is preferred when the shooter activates the stage. That adrenaline burst on the beep can be something!

And finally, though not really needed, a little silicone spray on the PVC and wood pivots really smooths the action, and provides protection from high moisture environments.

I certainly have nothing against those wonderful professionally made target stands, and wish my club would invest in more of them. But the point is, if all you have is a beer budget you can still have a champagne match.

More information available at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-O6Fr1bhT8s>

Gambling, Guns & Good Times

2008 NV State IDPA Championship

by Robert Ray A05118

They say that what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas but I have never been one to follow the crowd so I thought I would tell you about my personal experiences in Sin City. If you are hoping for tales of hookers, mobsters and life changing wins in the casino, then I am afraid you will have to look elsewhere. If, however, you want to hear about a great time, good people and a challenging match, then sit down and follow along.

My trip to the Nevada State Championship did not get off to a

great start. You have to remember that this was early April and Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkan-

sas were getting hammered by our second round of flood waters. Just getting away from the house that Thursday morning was almost impossible. There was a foot of creek water in the basement when I left and a five minute drive on gravel roads turned into thirty minutes worth of detours to find an un-flooded path out. I managed to make it to the airport on time only to be told by American Airlines that my

flight was cancelled. Not because of the weather, which by that time had become blue skies, but because of their inability to fix their planes

(this was during their wiring harness problems that grounded most of their fleet).



The river at War Eagle Mill, 30 ft. above normal.



So a return to the house, one more night in my own bed and a loss of time at the Chicken Ranch... errr I mean the gaming tables at the casino. Finally on Friday, off into the wild blue yonder I go and into Las Vegas I land. I have stayed on the Strip before, so

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Killing wolves

being right in the middle of it did not appeal to me. I chose to stay at the Silverton Resort and Casino. It is owned and operated by the Bass Pro Shop. Too cool, right? A casino with a huge salt water aquarium, a Bass Pro Shop store attached and an indoor gun range. It is only a few minutes cab ride from the Strip if that trips your fancy as well.

The match was held at the Desert Sportsman Rifle and Pistol Club. This range is located very close to the edge of the beautiful Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. As a matter of fact, if you drive in the back way from the Silverton, the road runs right along the edge of the park. It really is something to see at sunset and sunrise. The men and women that helped put on the match did a great job. The SOs were friendly, courteous and knew their jobs. This was a good thing as the match had been structured

as a two day match with 14 stages spread over nine shooting bays. The decision was made to try and finish the match in one day and use the second for the awards and a man on man steel shoot side match.

I am going to be completely honest here and say that this was the most

to Las Vegas with a high in the high 80's with clear blue skies and no shade just about killed this fat boy. I was not alone either. Even the skinny people from Oklahoma that I shot with were having a rough time of it. Luckily, I bought a great chair from Bass Pro the night before and could sit down on occasion. Sun and heat aside, I did have a good time and there was some challenging shooting to be had.

One of the more challenging stages really made you bear down and pay attention to the front sight.



It was simply called 7 Wolves and it really was a simple set up but difficult to shoot. There were seven IDPA targets turned on their side representing, you guessed it, wolves. The targets were 28 to 30 yards away, some with different degrees of hard cover painted on them. The competitor started kneeling with a knife in their hand cleaning a "mule deer" when threatened by the pack. On signal, the competitor had to

grueling match I have ever shot.

drop the knife and engage each

Don't get me wrong here though. The stages were fun and challenging and the SOs great but to come from Arkansas where it was high in the low 60's





Looking out the outhouse.

target with two rounds each. There were a lot of dropped points on this stage.

Another quick and fun drill was Rock & Sock'em Retention. This involved the shooter holding an 8 D cell Mag-Light in their weak hand with the main body of the light resting on their shoulder. On the signal, the shooter engaged a target 4 feet away with two rounds from



retention. Time was recorded and this was repeated at the 5 and 6 foot ranges. Simple, fast and a blast.

Saturday in the Park had you start seated in an outhouse when your family is attacked. You kick open the door and, while seated, engage a threat target with two rounds and then a pepper popper that activates a swinger. After engaging the swinger

with two rounds, you slice the pie on the doorway while engaging three other targets with two rounds each. From there, you move to a low wall and engage the final three targets with two rounds each. A fast and furious stage with a little thinking in-



involved. You started with your gun and ammo on a shelf in the outhouse. If you forgot to pick up your ammo before you left, you came up short of BB's before engaging the last target.

I'll leave you with one last stage. This one was called Leaving Las Vegas and had you start facing two threat targets with strong hand on a pepper popper. You push over the pepper popper and then engage each target with two rounds each. You then had to grab a dolly loaded with lead bars painted gold to represent all the money you won in Vegas. Pulling the dolly with

your weak hand, you then engaged two more targets with a swinging non-threat between them and then step on a plate that activates a drop turner. You then move across to

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Don't drop the baby!

a low wall and engage two more targets hiding behind the wall and finish by going prone and engaging the final two targets with two rounds each.

There were a number of other

great stages in this match but unfortunately, just not enough room here to list them all. After finishing the match on Saturday, I drug myself back to the casino and into a cold shower after which I crashed

for the night. Sunday comes and it's back out to the range for the Man on Man steel shoot then a big lunch and awards. There were some very nice prizes given away about then as well. I lucked out and came up with a copy of Unintended Consequences. This is a great book and one that every gun person should read.

I had a great time out there in Las Vegas. I want to thank Dennis Hull, the Match Director, and all of the hard working people that helped make this match happen. Putting on a sanctioned match is a lot of hard work and these guys and gals did a great job of it. If you get a chance to get out there and shoot with those fine folks, I highly recommend it. Stay safe and have a great shooting season.



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Random Shots

Thought provoking ideas to stimulate discussion on

"You can always get a waiver..." the continued growth of IDPA

by Thomas Pinney A24541

There is an old saying in the Navy, "You can always get a waiver." This is not necessarily true, but it does illustrate a point – rules can be flexible. That said there are times when waivers should be provided with extreme reluctance. Safety is not something that should be subject to waivers. Not only is this true because someone might be hurt or even killed, but also because of public perception. Even though our sport has a better safety record than other hobbies such as softball, there are those who view it as unacceptably dangerous. We must never forget that there are many people who react to the concept of firearms with horror. These people will always oppose any use of handguns. They are capable of distorting and publicizing any perceived unsafe action during an IDPA event into a campaign to outlaw our sport. So we have a real responsibility to not only be safe, but also to look safe as well.

Waivers should be rare during serious competitions such as major matches. In general, the bigger and more important the match, the fewer and more stringent the exemptions should be.

When should waivers of our rulebook be allowed? That brings up the two-headed nature of the IDPA. From its very inception, IDPA has emphasized it is not simply competition; it is practical competition. IDPA strives to induce a much greater element

of self defense reality into our matches. We strive to include some scenarios that might include real world situations. A fair number of shooters who attend local weekly matches come primarily just to practice shooting. No where else can a casual shooter move beyond mere target practice. IDPA scenarios give a shooter a much greater challenge; it is not merely "familiarization firing". Even practice matches provide an element of training in the effective use of a sidearm for personal defense. IDPA clubs should expect to see a fair number of shooters that only come out once in a while. Clubs should have a more or less standard policy for new shooters participating in local club practice matches.

There is no question that the rules for occasional shooters should be the same as for those who participate on a regular basis. What I am suggesting is that there are times when a waiver of certain aspects of competition should not be enforced as rigidly as for the shooters who are vying for the fastest times in the group. I have heard visiting shooters complain that there were too many rules in IDPA.

"Why are you shooting here, then?" I asked one new shooter who had driven a considerable distance to participate in one of our practice matches...

"Well, there are a lot of little rules in IDPA. The people at the other club yelled at us if we did

something wrong. You guys are not so strict."

This does not mean we do not enforce the rules. What I am suggesting is that during local practice matches, Safety Officers should take into account the experience of the shooter he is running. Rather than ring up a newbie for failing to take proper cover, consider waiting until after the run is safely over and then talking to the new shooter, demonstrating what was meant by the "cover" call. Other relatively minor mistakes such as loading the wrong number of rounds in the magazine, or dropping a magazine with ammunition still in it might be a discretionary penalty for an inexperienced shooter, depending upon the circumstances. When a new shooter is penalized for infractions such shooting targets out of order, the SO should explain the penalty with a smile, and let the newbie know that "we all do it from time to time." Even the more significant penalties such as shooting a no-shoot or the dreaded 'failure to neutralize' need to be soft-pedaled to a new shooter. I have personally seen a first time shooter become very upset at the idea of engaging a no-shoot. Once again, the SO needs to mitigate any undue concern by the novice. In the unhappy event that an SO has to disqualify a shooter, the SO and other shooters should go out of their way to try to make the poor disqualified shooter feel better about the situation.

Random Shots - "You can always get a waiver..."

There is one significant exception to that method. Any new shooter that flaunts or obviously disregards safety rules should be disqualified and informed politely but firmly that he or she should really reconsider their attitude about safety before returning. Such situations are rare, but they do occur.

Another situation which can make a new shooter's initial experience with IDPA events revolve around equipment. Every shooter has to have proper eye and ear protection. Most experienced shooters carry spare ear plugs and an extra set of clear shooting glasses in their shooting bag as loaners. Another potential hard spot is the lack of a proper holster. If a newcomer arrives with an unapproved holster, I say, let them shoot with it the first time, provided it is safe. I also carry a spare holster in my gun bag in case it is needed. It is not exactly the best holster for competition, but first time shooters are not there for competition; they are there to see what our matches are like and to become more familiar with their firearms. As far as I am concerned this sort of one-time waiver should also be extended to firearms that do not make power factor as well. If a new shooter comes out with a small caliber handgun the first time, why not let them shooter participate?

Speedloaders and magazines are another issue. New revolver shooters show up at local matches without Speedloaders. Sometimes this is not a problem. Most revolver shooters are willing to let another shooter borrow a speedloader to shoot a scenario. However it also happens that people show up for

a match with five, seven, or even eight shot revolvers and no way to quickly reload their gun. I submit that on their first visit they be allowed to load their revolver to full capacity and then let them reload manually. Tell them it will take a while longer, but not to worry, just reload safely one chamber at a time.

Magazines can be a bit more of a problem. Should a shooter arrive with a semiautomatic and only one magazine the first option is to see if any other participants have a like firearm and determine if they would be willing to share a magazine with the new guy. Of course, people who come to a match with only one magazine almost never have a typical gun. In cases like that if the newbie wants to shoot, let them. If they have a magazine with fewer than twelve rounds they will just have to eject the magazine, holster the unloaded gun, reload the magazine by hand, redraw the pistol, and reinsert the magazine. If they have a high capacity magazine, I suggest the simplest solution is just to allow the first timer to either full the magazine up or perhaps allow them to put the same number of shots as is required for the scenario, such as 12. They will be able to shoot the scenario without reloading which gives them an advantage. However, in most cases they will still be far slower than experienced shooters. Should they turn out to be a talented sleeper, you can always add a three second procedural to each run or even a Failure to Do Right penalty with a wink and a nudge. It is more common for shooters to show up with only two magazines. Sometimes these only hold seven rounds. That is fine for most scenarios which usually

only require 12 rounds or so. Occasionally club practice matches do have scenarios which force shooters to use three magazines by having 18 round scenarios or limiting the initial load out to six rounds. Practice club matches should avoid those types of scenarios. If a new shooter needs an additional magazine, the MD should consider allowing them to top off their first magazine. They can be allowed to perform a reload with retention after the first six shots, or simply allow them to continue to shoot their scenarios and "forgive" them the final target. Is that fair to the other competitors? Of course not; new shooters should not be viewed as competitors, but as "future competitors."

By cutting first time IDPA shooters a break on some of the non-safety issues we can involve more people in the fun and firearms education and training we provide for so many people around the world. The goal is not to see how many penalties we can give the new shooter — it is to make their first experience a positive event. Get them through their first match with their self-esteem intact, give them a copy of the rules when they are done, and when they return, help them learn the rules of the game.



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The Tactical Advantage

By: Robert Ray



Wilson Combat's CQB and ETM magazines in 9mm

I have admitted before my love for the 1911 platform. I personally feel that it represents the peak of engineering genius (although I know a few round gun enthusiasts that feel that same way about their revolvers). I know there are some very nice platforms available and I have had the pleasure of shooting several of them but everyone has a favorite and my Custom 1911 spitting its big old fat .45 ACP bullet is it. Well... at least it was.

For the last several months I have had the pleasure of trying out Wilson Combat's CQB in 9mm using



the new 9mm ten round ETM magazines. I know, what a sacrilege, a 1911 in 9mm. But with the jump in ammo prices for factory and the rise in the cost of lead, that 9mm round is looking more and more attractive. It's not like I have never shot a 1911 in 9mm before. There are

several out there but most of them I have seen on the range tended





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The Tactical Advantage

to be cranky and unreliable. They either needed “tuned” magazines to work or they did not work at all. Well I am here to tell you that has all changed.

The Wilson Combat 9mm ETM magazine is built from the ground up as a 10 round magazine. This is not some reworked .45 mag. Wilson starts with a high grade stainless steel magazine body. They then add a super tough nylon spacer inside the back of the tube to force the smaller 9mm shell into the optimum position for reliable feeding. The same tough nylon is used for the specially formed follower and base pad. The base pad also has preformed numbers set into it for ease of tracking magazines.

The magazine performed flawlessly over the course of about 1000 rounds put through the 4 mags combined. I used these in the course of several sanctioned matches as well as a couple of practice sessions. I did not clean any magazines for the time period I had them and I had repeatedly dropped them in the dirt and mud. At most they got a quick wipe along the leg to knock off the



excess crud. I admit that the tenth round is a little tough to get in at

whole and it deals with well, holes.

The ETM has slots cut in toward the rear third of the magazine as witness hole. I really like this arraignment over the more widely seen single holes in other magazines. The problem is they stop a little short of showing the tenth round. A small nit to pick and one that most certainly would not stop me from buying these magazines.



The CQB is a work of art in itself. I must admit that I will be very depressed to return it to its owner. Decked out in an all black Armor Tuff® finish and

first but that did not effect function at any time. I really only found one problem with the magazine on the

near black Diamondwood grips, it looked sleek and almost sinister. A high cut 30 lpi checkering on the frontstrap and 30 lpi checkering on the main spring housing made the gun feel solid in the hand, an extension of the fist. The sights were the Wilson Tactical Combat Pyramid rear with a Tritium front and very fast to acquire and track under recoil. All this combined with a crisp 3 ¼ pound trigger made fast accurate shooting a breeze (well, as long as I did my part). The gun is very soft recoiling with very little muzzle flip. I actually had a little





problem going from the .45 to the 9mm at first as I was over driving the gun and pushing some shots low.

The gun performed flawlessly. The only trouble I had was a few failures to lock back that were entirely shooter induced. The

couple of times this happened was because I was riding the slide too hard with my thumb. This is not an issue for me with a .45 but became a quickly corrected problem with the lighter recoiling 9mm. I have admitted that it will be hard to see this one go; I may just have to pony up and buy one. Those little 9mm rounds are real attractive to me from a cost point of view. Of course the switch to ESP may be attractive to me because of my bump up in classification in CDP earlier this year. I'll let you make up your own minds on that.

If you would like to pick up

these magazines for yourself, they run \$34.95 and the CQB is going to run you \$2350. You can find out more about these products by visiting www.wilsoncombat.com or calling 1-800-955-4856.

Smith & Wesson M&P Pro in 9mm

Back in Volume 10 Issue 2 we reviewed the then new M&P 40 pistol. Since then Smith & Wesson has introduced several new models to this innovative line. These include the compacts and the thumb safety models. Recently they introduced the new M&P Pro in 9mm. This model is perfect for the IDPA shooter and I had the opportunity to get my hands on one and give it a work out.

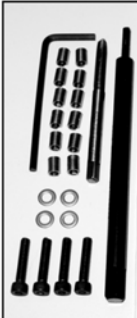
The M&P Pro is a full size pistol with a 5 inch barrel. This extra barrel length increases the sight radius which translates to ease and speed in lining up the sights. This is made even easier by the factory installation of a Novak fixed rear and a green fiber optic front sight. The added barrel length also translates into a lessening of the felt recoil which is very light to begin with in 9mm. This gun is very fast

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that works for you. The medium feels best in my hand but the small insert is more comfortable for my wife who has much smaller hands. The M&P is also great for you lefties out there. The M&P comes

matches and put approximately 500 plus rounds through it while I had it. The gun ran to perfection with zero problems. I usually run a 1911 but I had no problems stepping across to this platform. My initial grip and drawstroke was the same and I had no problems with finding the sights. The problem was that I did not always use them which in turn lead to my mediocre performance at those two matches. People tell me that a regular practice regimen will help with that but so far I have not managed to make time

from the holster. Because of its light weight polymer frame transitions from target to target are lightning fast as well. These are just a few of the features that combine to make it a very attractive gun for IDPA members.

One of the other features in the M&P line that really stands out is that it comes with a set of three different sized back straps. This allows the end user to adjust the gun to more comfortably fit their hand. With small, medium and large inserts you are going to be hard pressed to not find something

standard with ambidextrous controls. This is not going to correct the bias towards righthanders in stage designs but it will make it easier to manipulate the gun.

I ran this gun in two sanctioned



for that. All in all, the M&P Pro was a great gun and with the price of ammo going up a 9mm gun becomes more and more desirable. If you are looking for a new match blaster or just now getting into IDPA, I would recommend giving the M&P line a look and especially the new Pro. I don't think you will be disappointed. The Pro is delivering to dealers now so stop in and get a look at one. The Pro has a MSRP of \$758 and you can find out more by visiting www.smithwesson.com or calling 1-800-331-0852.

A Champion's Stance

by Nancy J. Champion (A30514) and Charles Ward Champion (A29709)



Card Carrying Members

Yes, WE are the Champion's, my friend. Yes, we are IDPA card carrying members. One of my favorite quotes attributed to the late Jeff Cooper is, "Owning a handgun doesn't make you armed any more than owning a guitar makes you a musician." We do have a dusty unused 6-string in the corner, yet we aren't making that same mistake with our six-shooter.

As a member in USCCA, <http://www.usconcealedcarry.com/>, we've read articles about training classes, and in addition to formal courses they sometimes mention sport oriented ways to maintain and improve shooting skills, of which IDPA has the most appeal. Teaching is deep – you learn a lot about the subject, while training is broad – it sticks inside you for a longer period due to exposure of multiple senses. A training class gives you one time enrichment, while monthly participation in IDPA gives you skills sustainment.

Jeff Cooper also stated, "Remember the first rule of gunfight-

ing... 'have a gun'". That part we have covered in a few varieties, nothing fancy, but just right for what IDPA called for - an "out of the box" gun without any special

hardware requirements. We would use equipment that was already part of our inventory.

By searching the web, a local gun range popped up that has monthly events. The West End Gun Club, <http://www.wegc.org/idpa/index.shtml>, shows they have a few different events: IDPA; three gun action pistol; steel challenge; cowboy action; etc. After speaking with each of those key contact liaisons and learning a little about their complexities and what was involved, we decided to proceed with the straightforward IDPA approach. The online membership registration is easy and reading the IDPA Tactical Journal magazine fueled the

(Continued on page 31)



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results and how often you dry-fire.

It is important to remember that sometimes the timeline for specific goals can be unrealistic. You may meet the goal for your 1.5 second draw in just a few weeks of dry-fire practice, but your goal to reload under 2 seconds might be much harder to achieve based on your plan. If one of your short-term goals is to be able to perform a slide-lock reload in under 2 seconds and you never practice reloads on the range or in dry-fire, it isn't reasonable to expect to see progress. I know that sounds obvious, but many choose to practice to their strengths and not the areas they need to improve. Tracking your progress can help you to identify ways to meet goals and help you evaluate what to change in your training. With a detailed training log, you can identify trends that will help you meet new goals.

Finally, remember to ask "why". Why aren't you meeting your goal? Why did you meet a particular goal faster than you anticipated? Why are you not progressing as you planned? Be your own best critic. Initially you may set a goal that just isn't realistic based on your time and resources. That's OK. Addressing the why's can help you identify how to modify the goal so that it is one you can achieve.

Goal setting is an evolutionary process. Being focused will help you stay on track. Dedication to the goals you set will help you reach them faster. Being able to evaluate yourself and your performances will keep you moving upward and make your shooting even more rewarding.

IDPA for Women

An Introductory Match

by Donna Vandermolen A13683 eight scenario match. Running

IDPA clubs looking for ways to get more women involved in shooting matches should consider hosting women only IDPA style matches. These introductory matches set up just for women are a great fun way to introduce them to our sport. This is exactly what the monthly Women's Pistol Program at PSC (Pearland Shooting Club) in Friendswood, TX did. This program was started by three women instructors to fill the need for a pistol class for women taught by women. The class is aimed at women who are interested in learning about handguns for personal protection and for sport. The basics of firearm safety and shooting are covered in every class using a brief opening discussion and then basic shooting drills. The class is completed with the introduction and practice of advanced shooting drills. Some of these advanced skills are shooting on the move, use of cover, moving targets, and shooting from different positions.

There has been spark of interest in action pistol shooting flickering in the discussions at our monthly Women's Pistol class. This spark of interest was fanned into a crackling fire during our May class when we held our first Women Only IDPA style match. Fifteen women came out to learn about competitive shooting and participate in the match. The match was designed to give women actual experience with competitive action pistol shooting. The idea was to create an atmosphere where there was competition but very little pressure.

Four basic scenarios were designed for the match with an opportunity for "do overs". This was accomplished by running the scenarios twice to create an

the scenarios twice gave the women the opportunity to improve their first round scores by shooting better, faster, and/or running the scenarios differently. This is something a beginner competitor doesn't have the opportunity to do at a sanctioned IDPA match. The women loved the chance to show they could do better and came up with some excellent alternate ways to shoot a scenario and stay within the course description.

We ran the match just like any other IDPA match with a few changes to accommodate our women shooters and the equipment they have. We didn't give any penalties, require concealment garments, or care what caliber of gun the shooter used. Several of our women don't even own a gun, but were able to borrow pistols for the match. Two of these shooters, a mother and daughter team were new to the class. The mother had taken one shooting class prior to coming to the match and the daughter had never held a gun before! The daughter told her mother halfway through the match that they needed to buy their own guns. The daughter won the most improved shooter award.

The shooters were given three scores: first round, second round, and combined rounds. Certificates were awarded to the top shooter for each of the three scores. A special certificate was awarded to the most improved shooter determined by the difference between the first round and second round scores.

The general consensus was "Lets do it again!" And we will. Another match is planned for our November class. Our goal is to get women feeling confident enough in their abilities to go out and shoot at the local IDPA club matches.

itch to get out and shoot.

Mister Champion's Perspective

My birthday was approaching and my wife's gift this year was to, "Go out and do what you want." That kind of talk could get you in trouble. Yet although my wish list included non-shooting activities plus some formal self-defense classes, I chose to skip any headaches with airfare logistics, hotel, and rental cars, therefore I opted for the local gun range. It just so happened the next local IDPA club event was on my birthday. I met a few great gentlemen who pointed me in the right direction. Once signed up, I was assigned to a squad safety officer, whom turned out to be top-notch. We shook hands and I met the other members, then we started having a grand time.

The first stage conclusion put to rest my prior nights impatient sleep and replaced that with a full morning of excitement. Hey, this is really fun!

On one of the next stages, after I had a perfect zero points down, the regulars teased me for not only beginners luck, but there must be some birthday luck in my favor. After another perfect stage, I was questioned as to how many rounds I'd ever shot through that pistol? I just smiled, nodding my head up and down, and shrugged my shoulders with the reply, "Just beginners luck."

I understand there are beginners without much practice, and even new shooters that may have their very first trigger squeeze at an IDPA match. That speaks well for the confidence and trust placed in this organization to get them started. My first day at IDPA prob-

ably did have some beginners luck, but only after having done lots of unstructured practice, then trying my hand at the techniques required in the IDPA Classifier stages. That gave me the appreciation of, wow, shooting is a lot different on the move, and made my first IDPA match a little more comfortable and fun.

Misses Champion's Perspective

We had both plinked with our fathers in our youth, yet only took to owning handguns in the last few years. I found it very appealing that the IDPA match stages provide exercises in simulated real life encounters that are practical for home defense and everyday life defense with concealed carry weapon situations.

Scary, that's how I felt at first arrival. I was the only woman that day. I later found out there are normally several ladies in attendance. There was so much that was unknown with a lot of new people. The Match Director (MD) covered a full list of safety rules, then specifically introduced guest that were first time IDPA shooters. Like myself, there were four of us new that day. We were split amongst the squad Safety Officers (SO), and on our way.

The first stage seemed really hard, as I was the 2nd shooter. I was timid when the SO said: "Shooter ready?"; "Standby", then the "click" from the timer sent me slowly finding the targets. I know the SO had given me special attention, yet all through the day he was granting the same concern for every participant. When all our members had finished the first stage, I realized it wasn't so scary after all, just anticipation and excitement.

Having practiced the Classifier stages before this day gave me an idea of the many different scenarios we would start at each rotation: sitting, standing, kneeling, gun loaded, or gun unloaded. Most exciting were the hits to steel targets, when they flipped and made this funny sound. The metal ones on top of a stand went spinning off. Helping collect empty brass casings and take down the targets, I realized my legs were sore plus I was also tired from mental stimulation.

The members in our squad had a good mix of veterans, novices, and two beginners – myself and one other new shooter. Everyone was very friendly, and willing to share stories or tips. Lucky we had two pure newbies together, as we were able to talk about, "Was that hard for you?, Did you hit that target? Holy smoke, that guy shoots fast!" Trading similar remarks made us feel not so out of place or way off the mark. We could see even the 'pros' miss sometimes. We became familiar around each other to the point of being comfortable joking with chitchat.

The very last stage was a simple three target layout - yet challenging: first pass strong hand, second pass weak hand, and third pass freestyle (both hands). During the middle of running through the course, I said out loud, "This is harder than it looks." Observers on our squad were laughing and commented, "You're not supposed to talk during competition!" Whatever I said, or had learned throughout the match, paid off with achieving my best success of the day, with all hits on all targets. Then the teasing remarks switched to congratulations.

My morning was fun, meeting

(Continued on page 37)

My Personal Safety Officer Guidelines

by Steven Vandermolén A08637

When you attend a major match, there are a lot of things that will make it memorable. The location of the match, the scenarios, the weather, the props, food, prizes and trophies all combine to make a match a memorable experience. In my humble opinion, the greatest single factor in the quality of a match, though, is the quality of the Safety Officers. At matches I have attended, I have seen safety officers do some pretty amazing things. All of them made the match memorable, some in a very negative way.

In thinking about how to write this article, I could think of no way to present some of my observations in a way that would protect the innocent or the guilty. So I will present to you things I have adopted as my personal guidelines when I am acting as a SO. The goal of this article is not to point fingers at others, but to force each of us to analyze how we perform the duties required of a Safety Officer.

I will ensure the safety of everyone involved: There is no compromise on safety. I will do all I can to avoid a problem and if I see one, I will correct it immediately. I will not embarrass the shooter with any correction, I will correct them in a way that ensures safety while at the same time protecting the dignity of the shooter.

I will always treat the shooter as a paying customer: Face it, IDPA is entertainment. People pay a lot of money on travel, food, lodging and registration fees to shoot a major match. They expect the match to be a quality experience and, as the SO, I am responsible to ensure

they receive it on my stage. They want to have fun. They don't expect training or coaching so I will not attempt to provide it. I won't share my opinion on the best gun, caliber, holster or other equipment. They are shooting what they want to shoot, for their own reasons. I am there to help them have fun, not to impress them with my knowledge and skill, or lack thereof. When they are shooting, it is all about them.

I will always be consistent in how I run a scenario: Nothing is more frustrating than putting your all into a scenario to shoot it as it was presented to you by an SO, only to have the next group get different instructions that significantly simplify the strategy for shooting it. When I am an SO, I will always read the scenario exactly as it is written on the course description. I will read it exactly the same way every time. If I am asked a question, I will note the question and my answer on the course description so I can answer future questions the same way. I will set all props the same way and make all procedural calls the same way for all shooters. If shooters understand what is expected in the scenario and see it run consistently, they will have little cause to blame anyone except themselves if they don't do as well as they wish.

I will give the benefit of any close calls to the shooter: I will not try to find a way to "beat the shooter" on any calls. I want the shooter to do their best. If my attitude is that I want to find something to "get them on" it will show. I am there to help them do a good job safely, not nit-pick.

If I have to think about it, if I have to stare at it for more than a

couple of seconds, or anything else that causes me to have to study an item, I will give the benefit to the shooter. If a shooter knocks a piece off from a prop and it makes a scoring hit in a target, the shooter gets credit for the hit if the hole is larger than the bullet diameter, regardless of the shape of the hole. It's not the responsibility of the shooter to prove their bullet followed the object through and I can't prove it didn't. If I mess up and miss that a target wasn't taped, the shooter gets the benefit of the highest scored shots, even if the holes are a different size. It is their day, their match, and their performance.

My one exception to this is the "perfect double." If there is only one hole in the target, and it is not oblong, it will only be scored as one hit unless the score keeper tells me he saw the two bullets go through the same hole. Sorry, that's just the way it is.

I will not take any pleasure in giving a penalty: It is never a pleasure to give a procedural or other penalty. If the shooter makes an error that incurs a penalty, I am truly sorry for them. I take no satisfaction in having to make the call. I will do nothing to point out their error in a way that is embarrassing to them, like shouting the penalty to all within hearing range. I will, however, enforce the rules and call penalties when necessary. If you have a problem with my call, let me know and we can invite the Match Director to join our discussion.

I will never touch a shooter except to prevent a safety problem: Really, do I need to expand on this one?

(Continued on page 37)

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828-446-8778 h & w
celticmith@yahoo.com
Gary Hoyle
828-963-6307 h
828-963-6671 fax
gary@wgc-idpa.org
www.wgc-idpa.org

August 17, 2008 MT State Championship

Logan, MT
Larry Baker
406-522-0918 h
406-579-3747 w
larry_a_baker@yahoo.com
John Mingo
406-686-4280 h
406-223-6635 w
john@johnmingo.com
www.geocities.com/mt.idpa/

August 31, 2008 2008 OH State IDPA Championship

Circleville, OH
Michael Craig
614-348-8463 w
matchdirector@defensivepistol.org

Jon Santini
614-571-5760 - cell w
bigbarbyidpa@defensivepistol.org
www.pcsirange.com

August 31, 2008 Thunder Tactical 'Labor Day Regional II'

Conroe, TX
Alan E. Liczwek
281-288-7522 h
281-355-7467 w
281-288-1366 fax
liczwek@sbcglobal.net
Eric Cooper
936-273-9547 h
713-408-7990 w
coop1911@comcast.net
www.tts-idpa.net

September 6, 2008 2008 OR State IDPA Championship

Bend, OR
Michael Boyd
541-416-8416 h
541-447-8330 w
mboyd@webfoxmair.com
Tom Allen
541-593-7202 h
541-293-7202 w
doublealpha@chamberscable.com
www.oregonshooting.com

September 6, 2008 Mountain Valley Shoot Rattle and Roll

Hot Springs, AR
Larry Powell
501-939-2788 h
501-984-2228 w
501-922-6217 fax
ldpowell@wildblue.net
Steve Freeman
501-620-4374 h
501-545-9939 w
danafreeman@cablelynx.com
www.mvsaonline.com

September 6 - 7, 2008 IDPA Italian National Championship 2008

Mazzano, Italy
Giorgio Acerboni
3934372148 h
giorgio@idpa.it
www.idpa.it

September 13, 2008 The Masters IDPA

Championship

Birmingham, AL
Ron Holland
205-601-5400 h
205-995-8870 w
ron@dirtyair.com
Mike Lunsford
205-655-9606 h
205-369-6859 w
mlunsford112@charter.net
steelcityidpa.com

September 13, 2008 8th Annual WI State Championship

Ripon, WI
Jim Williams
920-229-5079 h
920-229-5079 w
acwiscidpa@live.com
www.wisconsinidpa.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
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September 20, 2008 Commonwealth Cup 2008

Charlottesville, VA
Jim Wilson
804-779-3850 h
804-347-6790 w
turbomarine@yahoo.com
Dave White
434-242-6453 w
www.geocities.com/
vacommonwealthcup/index.html

September 20, 2008 2008 ID State IDPA Championship

Parma, ID
Aaron Goodfellow
208-454-6518 h
208-724-0595 w
aarongoodfellow@hotmail.com
www.parmarng.org

(Continued on page 38)

interesting citizens, facing physical and mental challenges, gaining knowledge and practice, exciting to see the highlights in my scores, and once again – it was fun.

After exposure to a few matches, the basics of Gun Safety, Range Commands, Acronym Definitions, and Stage Drills will become old-hat. It worked for us.

Another quote by Jeff Cooper, *"Safety is something that happens between your ears, not something you hold in your hands."* With that in mind, even though we defensively benefit from building repetitive muscle memory along with mental exercise, here is the main reason we participate in IDPA - it's a safe way to have fun shooting.

We hope to see you at a match, and if we do, I can guarantee you'll be shooting in the company of Champion's.

If I see a problem with a scenario, I will correct it: If I find that some shooters, because of physical limitations, cannot shoot a scenario or the scenario doesn't run well, I will work with the Match Director to accommodate special needs or change the scenario. I realize this may cause a bunch of shooters to have to re-shoot a scenario, but it may be worth it to ensure that all participants get a fair opportunity. If I find I am giving a bunch of procedural penalties it is my obligation to evaluate why they are happening and see if it is due to faulty stage design.

The best way to address both of these issues is to ensure that every scenario is carefully evaluated by the director and match staff during set-up. Don't wait until the customers show up.

I will know the rule book: I won't guess. If I don't know the call,

I'll look it up. If I still have questions, I will call the Match Director. I will know the rules and how to enforce them. Under no circumstances will I call a target with no holes a "failure to engage." I will call it "two misses and a failure to neutralize" and a procedural if warranted.

So, the bottom line is that I will be fair to every shooter and treat them with dignity and respect. I will never do to them some of the stupid things I have had done to me. I will do this even if the shooter I'm running is the one that did it to me.

As an SO, I am acting as an ambassador for our sport and part of the marketing team for the match. If I apply my personal rules, shooters will have fun, feel they are being treated fairly and return to shoot future matches. If I don't, I damage the credibility of our sport and the experience for the customer. Stay Safe, Shoot Fast, Don't Miss

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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 1 - 4, 2008 IDPA National Championship

Allentown, PA
870-545-3886
870-545-3894 fax
info@idpa.com
www.idpa.com

October 4, 2008 KY / TN Regional Championship

Puryear, TN
Ken Cooper
731-584-2182 h
731-441-0265 cell w
731-584-7340 fax
kennyc@aeneas.net
Terry Riley
919-217-8356 h
919-816-7457 cell w
trcubed@earthlink.net
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
www.prado-idpa.com

October 11, 2008 1st Annual ME State IDPA Championship Match

Scarborough, ME
Richard Austin
207-829-5458 h & w
Glock172630@yahoo.com
Clinton Staples
207-636-1597 h & w
clinton@gwi.net
www.scarfg.org
Foul weather date of 10/12/08

October 18, 2008 TN State Championship

Manchester, TN
Kurt Glick
931-455-7056 h
931-455-1121 w
931-454-1767 fax
kglick@tullahoma-tn.com
Tom Foster
931-455-2846 w
www.midtnshooters.com

October 25, 2008 West TX Regional

Lubbock, TX
Brian Morris
806-797-1325 h
806-796-2858 w
806-796-2859 fax
bmorris@lobbockisd.org
www.patriotfirearms.com

October 25 - 26, 2008 Blackwater Shootout

Moyock, NC
Jim Wilson
804-779-3850 h
804-347-6790 w
turbomarine@yahool.com
Ron Reiner
757-672-4971 w
www.defensiveshooters
confederation.com

March 28, 2009 Tri-State Regional Championship


Arlington, TN
Larry Hill
901-233-7557 h

901-233-7557 w
ljhill3@comcast.net
Myrin Young
901-826-3300 h
901-826-3300 w
twoalpha@comcast.net
www.memphis-ssa.com

April 18, 2009 The AL State Championship 2009

Montgomery, AL
David Rawlinson
334-324-3257 h & w
866-724-9829 fax
deadidave43@aol.com
Joe Peel
334-548-2625 h
joe.peel@gmail.com
www.centralalabamagunclub.org

May 16, 2009 Cherokee IDPA Wheelgun Championship

Gainesville, GA
Paul Tod Rieger 404-274-6106 (After
7PM)
www.cherokeegunclub.org 

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:

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or

e-mail: TacticalJournal@idpa.com

Submissions can be sent as:

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

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